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# Portrait of Teaching Oral Communication in Context: Input to A Teaching Model

# Jomar Francis P. Acosta

Graduate School, Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College, Tagudin Campus, Philippines

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#### ABSTRACT

This basic descriptive qualitative research looked into the strategies used by seven (7) Grade 11 English teachers in teaching Oral Communication in Context in Bacnotan National High School in the first semester for School Year 2022-2023. Specifically, it dealt with the following research objectives: Exploring how teachers teach Oral Communication in Context as a course and designing a teaching model for Oral Communication in Context. The video-recorded classroom discussions of teachers served as the main sources of information. Data were transcribed and analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings of this study revealed that the English teachers of Bacnotan National High School applied five (5) teaching strategies in teaching Oral Communication in Context as a course namely using oral communication strategies (OCS), promoting classroom Interaction through questioning, integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and media-based technology, stimulating higher order thinking skills through experiential learning, and inviting non-violent communication in the classroom. Moreover, a teaching model for Oral Communication in Context was designed based on the significant findings. The thematic model can help teachers in providing a vast amount of knowledge on teaching and learning Oral Communication using relevant, student-centered, and innovative teaching strategies to address the language needs of learners. Based on the findings and conclusions arrived at, the following actions are recommended: English teachers should apply these teaching strategies more often in their language classroom to address the language problems and deficiency of their learners. School administrators may endorse the institutionalization of using the designed Teaching Model for Oral Communication in Context to sustain the teaching strategies in teaching Oral Communication in Context. Further studies should be conducted to generate other strategies in teaching Oral Communication in Context. Similar study can be conducted t

Keywords: Oral Communication in Context, Teaching Strategies, Teaching Model, Dornyei and Scott's Taxonomy

# Introduction

In the communicative society that people live in today, it is important that they can communicate orally in English since it gives advantages in many different situations. Not only is it used in business and commerce and higher education, but also in science and technology, international relations, and diplomacy. In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) states that English language shall be used as the primary medium of instruction in all public and private schools in secondary level, including those established laboratory and/or experimental school and vocational and/or technical institutions. The role of English language is vital in the holistic formation of every learner (DepED Order No. 36, series of 2006). In addition, it is important for learners to develop their full potentials and capabilities in English language to the fullest possible means. By establishing the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, the Philippine educational system made a significant advancement in response to the need for education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to the issue of the nation's declining academic performance. The objective of this program is to generate Filipinos learners who are fully mature and equipped with 21<sup>st</sup> century abilities, such as the ability to communicate effectively in the target language. Consequently, Oral Communication in Context is one of the core subjects offered in the Grade 11 curriculum of the Senior High School. This discipline aims to provide numerous activities and opportunities to the learners that will cater to the development of their speech and oral communication in various situations (DepEd Curriculum Guide, 2013). In this subject, learners are required to participate in various communicative tasks, oral drills, presentations, reporting, recitation, and other performance-based activities that are geared towards developing the listening and speaking skills of the learners and ultimately intended to guide them to become fully equipped with oral communication skills (Flores & Lopez, 2

However, the English proficiency in the Philippines has dwindled down. In fact, official achievement tests given to Senior High School learners in previous school years showed that only 6.59 percent could read, speak, and comprehend English language well enough to enter tertiary education. Some 44.25 percent had no English skills at all (Geronimo, 2015). Sad to know, but it is true that is why it is a great challenge for all school institutions to produce competitive learners who can transact businesses in any countries by the means of good quality of English. Just like any bilinguals, Filipino learners encounter difficulties in communicating effectively in English and consequently struggle in the classroom. As observed while teaching the subject Oral Communication in Context in the Senior High School Department of Bacnotan National High School, learners have communication problems when

asked to speak in English. Some started their sentences in English, but then shifted to their vernacular language when asked to answer questions during class discussions. There were learners who kept on repeating words and/or phrases before they could complete their sentences. There were learners also who already stood up to answer a question and would simply sit down when reminded to speak in English. Few others would ask for the question again before they proceeded in answering the question being raised. From these situations, it can be concluded that such problems clearly impede their ability to communicate and ultimately have a detrimental impact to their overall competence and academic achievement. The researcher felt the need to assess and explore how teachers teach Oral Communication in Context as a course for instructional planning and academic performance with an end view of improving learners' oral communication. The account of the teachers' strategies will be beneficial in designing a proposed teaching model that will help enhance the English oral communication skills of the learners. Thus, this study is conducted.

#### Statement of the Problem.

This main purpose of this study was to determine the teaching strategies in Oral Communication in Context used by English teachers of Bacnotan National High School in the first semester of School Year 2022-2023.

Specifically, it answered the following questions: How do teachers teach Oral Communication in Context as a course?

What teaching model for Oral Communication in Context could be developed?

#### Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was purposely designed to look into the teaching strategies of seven (7) English teachers of Bacnotan National High School (BNHS), in Bacnotan, La Union during the first semester of School Year 2022-2023.

The inventory of participants' teaching strategies was based solely on the researcher's interpretation. This sought to find out how Oral Communication in Context is being taught as a course. Moreover, the results of the study were used as a basis in developing a teaching model in Oral Communication in Context for Senior High School.

#### Research Design

This study utilized the basic descriptive qualitative design. Basic descriptive qualitative design is a type of qualitative research that explores the characteristics of a phenomenon, rather than explaining the underlying causes or mechanisms. It involves the collection and data analysis in the form of words, images, or other non-numerical forms of information (Creswell, 2020). Tutuarima (2019) also stated that qualitative research was conducted to describe the status of a phenomenon that exist at the time of the study. It is the method to find out the answer of the problems and information normatively. Qualitative method is chosen as a method that is used in this research because the problem that is discussed in this research is more showing the quality of the research result. This study investigated how Oral Communication in Context is taught as a course. The researcher also identified, analyzed, and explained the different strategies used in teaching Oral Communication in Context. Thus, the researcher found the design as the most appropriate for the study.

## Population and Locale of the Study

The participants of this study were composed of seven (7) English teachers who are teaching Oral Communication in Context in Bacnotan National High School in the first semester for the School Year 2022-2023. In the selection of the participants of the study, the researcher utilized the purposive sampling as one technique often employed in qualitative investigation. Purposive sampling is a non-probabilistic sampling technique that intentionally selects the participants, sites, documents, and visual materials because it is believed that these sources of information provide or present the appropriate responses to the research questions (Creswell, 2020).

Specifically, this study utilized the homogenous purposive sampling. Homogenous purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that occurs when elements for the sample are chosen based on common characteristics, which contribute to the focal concern of the study (Black, 2020). With this sampling technique, the research has set criteria for the inclusion of the participants. They were chosen because they share common experiences of teaching Oral Communication in Context in the Senior High School. They are proficient teachers from Bacnotan National High School, have at least 18 units of credit in a certain graduate course, and have been teaching Oral Communication in Context for at least two to three years.

#### **Results and Discussions**

The first objective of this study dealt with how teachers teach Oral Communication in Context as a course. The analyses of the transcribed classroom discussions, done through intelligent transcription, revealed the different strategies utilized by the teacher-participants on how they teach Oral Communication in Context as a course. Using Oral Communication Strategies. The goal of English language teaching is to develop learners' communicative competence so that they will be able to interact and communicate with other people. Oral Communication Strategies (OCS) are techniques used to address language problems and difficulties of learners such as the lack of vocabulary, and grammar knowledge, and combined with the learner's

insufficient socio-cultural or contextual knowledge of the conversation topics that affect communication. The pressure of communicating in real-time and the limited time to think increases the learner's difficulty communicating. Using Oral Communication Strategies. The goal of English language teaching is to develop learners' communicative competence so that they will be able to interact and communicate with other people. Oral Communication Strategies (OCS) are techniques used to address language problems and difficulties of learners such as the lack of vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and combined with the learner's insufficient socio-cultural or contextual knowledge of the conversation topics that affect communication. The pressure of communicating in real time and the limited time to think increases the learner's difficulty communicating.

Code-switching. The first and most frequently used OCS by the participants in teaching Oral Communication in Context in the Senior High School is code-switching. Code-switching is where the participants use two or more languages during the classroom discussion, specifically the "taglish" variation. It is a combination of the English and Filipino language, but the discourse is dominated by English language. Teacher-participants use code-switching with the purpose of eliciting more responses from the learners in their activity orally and for them to easily express their ideas toward the topic being discussed. In addition, code-switching in the classroom increases communication and builds relationships between the teacher and the learners. The following are the excerpts where code-switching is used: "Let's say for example kapag sinabi nating posture, it is the way you carry yourself". (Let's say for example when we say posture, it is the way you carry yourself) (T1) "Okay, dito nagtatake place ang communication, what does it mean?". (Okay, this is where communication takes place, what does it mean?). (T2)"...so, meaning to say, when we say encoding, the sender mayroon na siyang naisisp na message, right?". (...so, meaning to say, when we say encoding, the sender already has a message in mind, right?). (T3)"...when talking to somebody, 'pag kinakausap natin' yung kaklase natin, pagkinakausap yung magulang natin, we are talking to our teachers, so do we need or not?" (...when talking to somebody, when we talk to our classmates, when we talk to our parents, we are talking to our teachers, so do we need or not?) (T4)"So, there are chances na binibigyan ng time to think about an answer to the question..." (So, there are chances that time is given to think about an answer to the question...) (T5) "Mayroon siyang connection between the sender and the receiver when we are going to use communication. Kailan ba natin ginagamit 'yung communication?" (He has a connection between the sender and the receiver when we are going t

Message Abandonment. Message abandonment is also evident in the Oral Communication in Context class of the participants leaving their message unfinished when they observe and notice that their learners could hardly catch up with them. The teacher-participants use this strategy when they see that their learners struggle to understand what they are conveying or discussing in the class. Thus, it is better for the teachers to abandon their message. However, this time the teachers would think of an easier way to deliver their topics or their utterances. The following excerpts show how the teachers used message abandonment during classroom discussion in Oral Communication in Context. "Okay, you are scared and hmmm... that 's why you talk so slow". (T1) "Okay, have you tried saying it to yourself, when you are assessing your behavior, your action hmm..." (T2) "We talked about Philippine Economy only uhmm...Now let's go to the third one... we have learned turn taking...." (T3) "Okay, then later on, you are going to...that is why I want you to share your ideas first..." (T4) "...receiver, the man or the male is the receiver on the encoder hmmm... we have there the sender..." (T5) "Okay, stage, right? That is a situation...haaa our speaker here is hmm?..." (T6). As reflected in the extracted verbal responses of the teachers, T1 and T2 left their responses or message by using some fillers, then they went silent for almost five seconds and waited for the learners to respond before continuing their statement. In the case T3, the sentence was uttered almost completely but in the middle of the discourse, a specific descriptive word was left unfinished. The same case occurred to T4, T5, and T6, the participants abandoned the statement. This is to make the learners easily grasp what they are saying.

Message replacement. This oral communication strategy was used by the teacher-participants with the consideration that their learners have limited vocabulary and insufficient grammatical knowledge. However, since it is necessary for the learners to speak the language to learn it, the participants must learn to tailor their message or utterances according to the limited linguistic resources of their learners. The following excerpts show how the participants used message replacement during their classroom discussions. "...verbal communication..........conveying message without using words..." (T1) "This is the place where communication takes place...speech context this is the environment..." (T2)

"Decoding.... interpreting or understanding the message conveyed by the sender..." (T3) It could be gleaned from the discourse of the participants the use of substitution process. In T1, T2, and T3, the teachers wanted to use terms "verbal communication, speech context, and decoding" but because they consider learners' lack of linguistic resources, and the participants restated it to "a more specific example and terms". Message replacement is described as the process of substituting the original message through avoiding specific language structure or topic which is considered problematic. For some cases, it would leave out some predetermined elements because of linguistic resources deficiency (Khan, 2017).

Circumlocution. When learners do not know the right terms to use or cannot remember the word they want to use, it can be difficult for them to speak. Learners in Oral Communication in Context occasionally struggle to find the correct word during classroom discussion or in any speaking activity. Hence, the teachers use the art of circumlocution for this reason. The participants use vocabulary terms that learners already know and familiar with, they try to think of another way to convey the message, they may use a synonym, a more general category word, point and use gestures, actions, and sounds during classroom discussions. "Posture is that is a way how one carry him or herself in communication." (T1) "When you are imagining or talking with yourself, assessing yourself or trying to reflect something..." (T2) "For example, in a telephone call... the caller gives you the message over a telephone..." (T3). As reflected in these excerpts, circumlocution happened when the participants did not express exactly what they wanted to say by describing it using other terms. Khan (2017) also defined it as the process of exemplification, illustration, or description of the target object or action.

**Approximation.** In this strategy, participants use an alternative expression which may not express exactly what it means. The participants try to use similar words to get the learners comprehension and to make learners catch the referred word themselves. It was found that the participants guided the learners with approximation strategy: "Very good! We could send messages through gestures, body movements, and facial expressions. So, let's have

non-verbal communication". (T1) Okay. You are checking your devices to see if there are messages. If there are checking on you. Okay, so today we are going to discuss the types of speech context. What does it mean when we say speech context? Anyone? If you want to recite you can raise your hand". (T2) "So, channel it can be a person to person, or we could say, it can be a telephone call, it can be through radio, it can be through television, channel is the way on how the sender transmit the message to the receiver". (T6)

Restructuring. In this OCS, the participants drop some terms and phrases that are difficult for the learners to understand during the discussion and change them to easier ones. This is where restructuring occurs in communication. This method is known as abandonment of verbal plan execution due to language challenges of the learners, and it involves discarding the utterance incomplete and talking to the intended message based on an alternate plan. "The speed at which you speak too fast that means.....maybe you are not sure what you say that's why you speak too fast..." (T1) "When was.......

Have you tried talking to yourself?" (T2). In these two verbal responses, it could be seen that the restructuring process was done when the teacher-participants gave their statements. In T1, the first line uttered by the participant was dropped because of language difficulty seen (lack of vocabulary) as experienced by the learners. Instead of finishing it, T1 restructured it to a new sentence "Maybe you are not sure what you say that's why you speak too fast".

Self-rephrasing. It is described as a "repeating term" but not quite as it is by adding something or using paraphrasing. The participants repeat and rephrase their utterances to a more understandable utterance. "Okay, so the process of communication, there is a sender and a receiver... the sender will give the message and the receiver will give the feedback and giving messages to each other, so that is the process". (T1) Based on this response, it may be deduced that in T1, the sentence was rephrased using a simple word. The teacher utilized simple terms to explain a phrase to the learners by employing self-rephrasing. According to Dornyei and Scott in Wedananta (2014), self-rephrasing occurs when a speaker repeats a word, but it is not exactly as it is. The speaker might add something or use paraphrase. The teachers in this study paraphrased their previous utterances to make the learners understand their intention easily. Self-repair. If there is a problem in understanding the conversation, the teacher-participants try to address and correct it as much as possible. This is also what allows the teachers and learners to understand one another. The following verbalization shows how self-repair is used in the classroom discussion. "When you are chitchatting with your friends... or I mean when you are talking with someone, like for example kapag may balita. So, you are talking with your friends". ("When you are chitchatting with your friends... or I mean when you are talking with someone, like for example when there is news. So, you are talking with your friends".) (T4) "Depending on how he or she interpret or interprets rather the message conveyed by the sender". (T6)

Verbal strategy markers. Verbal strategy markers such as hmm, well, okay, so, etc. are expressions that are used to fill pauses and to gain time to think. This strategy was used by the participants as they wanted to keep the attention of their learners in discussion, especially when they are having conversations. These are the verbal markers phrases before or after a strategy to signify that the word or structure does not carry the intended meaning perfectly in the second language. "Okay, have you tried saying it to yourself? When you are assessing your behavior, your action?" (T2) "So, basically, you don't have idea of what the communicative strategies are?" (T4) Based on this response, it could be seen that T2 and T4 utilized a verbal marking phrase "okay and so" before the intended response.

Verbal Fillers. Fillers are words such as "um," "ah," "hmm," "like," "you know," and "alright" that are used to give the participants as well as the learners time to think, express uncertainty, or make something awkward feel less awkward, or as a verbal tick. Filler words are also known as vocal disfluencies or hesitations. "When we say posture uhmm or body language that is when you move or carry yourself. Let's say for example uhmm when you sit with a chin up, what does it mean?" (T1) "...okay, if there are messages, why? actually because you are trying to what?" (T2)

"So, what are the other forms of talking with others? Hmmm have you tried?" (T3)

**Promoting Classroom Interaction Through Questioning.** The second general theme generalized from the classroom observations of the participants on how Oral Communication in Context is being taught as a course is *Promoting Classroom Interaction Through Questioning*. In English language classroom, specifically, in the teaching of Oral Communication in Context, verbal questioning techniques were evidently used by the teacher-participants. Classroom interaction involves a significant number of teacher questions directed at the learners. The act of verbal questioning and answering that occurs between the teachers and learners is more frequent than any other event in English language classrooms. The teachers ask divergent questions to involve the learners in classroom interaction. Through divergent questions, teachers try to encourage learners to talk and facilitate verbal interaction in the classroom, whether learners' production of language is a single word, a sentence, or longer utterances in conversational patterns. The following excerpts show divergent questioning as used by the participants: "So, why do you think it is possible for us to communicate without words?" (T1)

"Okay, if there are messages. Why? Because you are trying to what?" (T2) "Okay, any other ideas? Sa Extempo, yes?" (T3) "Anong paraan kaya ninyo ito ginamit? Please raise your hands if you have an idea. Sabihin niya diyan o' you try to open a topic, yes?" (How can you use it? Please raise your hands if you have an idea. Tell him there or you try to open a topic, yes?") (T4) "The word process (anak), what is a process?" (T4) "Okay, who wants to give an example, simple example lang on this process. Yes?" ("Okay, who wants to give an example, just a simple example on this process. Yes?"). (T6) "So, what is the speech?" (T7). Based on these excerpts, it could be seen that T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, and T7 used higher-order thinking skills type of questions. Divergent questions are more challenging. These include open-ended, referential, and non-retrieval and/or imaginative questions. To provide free production and active use of the English language in the classroom, divergent questions are a more important and necessary means of classroom questioning.

**Integrating of ICT and Media-based Technology.** All aspects of a person's life have been significantly impacted by information and communication technologies (ICTs). ICTs are crucial in facilitating teaching and learning in the educational setting. They have completely changed how learners learn

new things and how languages are taught. The current approaches of teaching languages have a lot of room for development, especially with the use of technology.

They altered instructional practices and communication techniques in the classroom. The use of technology in Oral Communication classrooms was evident in all the discussions of the seven (7) teacher-participants. This allows them to diversify their lectures, display more in teacher participants their learners' learning the language. Teacher 1 stressed that "Using different technologies in the classroom such as power point presentation or slide deck presentation may us (teachers) save time and energy and allow for more attention to be paid to the course content". Teachers 2, 3, and 4 made a rejoinder that "ICT has become a powerful tool in promoting learning, communications, and life skills for our learners." According to Teachers 5, 6, and 7 "ICT facilitates better learning. Our learners are very engaged and participative during our class discussions in Oral Communication class".

Stimulating Higher Order Thinking Skills Through Experiential Learning. In the Oral Communication in Context classroom where most of the topics are based on the context or situation of the learners, the teachers try to relate the learners' experiences and prior knowledge and provide more examples during the discussion. In the classroom discussion of participants, the following are activities were incorporated by the teachers- reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis, opportunities for learners to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results, opportunities for learners to engage intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, and physically. "Very good! So, everything we do is already communication. Words are not only a way for us to get the message or to communicate with others but also, we could also send our messages through signals, right? And we can call it the non-verbal. Do you have any idea about non-verbal communication?". (T1)"Okay, you are scared and hmm that's why you talk so slow. They have different meanings. So, let's have here the definition of non-verbal communication, may I ask someone to read?" (T1) "In every day, we are dealing with different kinds of conversation, right? Even if you wake up in the morning, what are you doing? You are checking your phone. What are you checking on your phone? If there are?" (T2)"When? When was the last time you talked to yourself and why? Just raise your hand if you want to recite. Have you tried talking to yourself?" (T2"Okay, when you are praying to God so there is an Interpersonal communication. But you can't hear the answer from God but at least you have a two-way communication. How about the others?" (T3) "Okay, for example for writing a position paper. You may write relevant information that can benefit the readers". (T4) "Okay, we have here an example. We are looking for the past, ayan tayo e, diyan tayo nakakarelate about sa mga past. Bakit ba kailangang pag-usapan ang past? As a communicative strategy hindi na pwede si past, present ang pag-uusapan. We also have this example, if you are in a debate, you are giving topics. Okay next, this is the only topic, we will only cover communicative strategy. Example...' ("Okay, we have here an example. We are looking for the past, this is where we can relate to the past. Why do we need to talk about our past? As a communicative strategy. We also have this example, if you are in a debate, you are giving topics. Okay next, this is the only topic, we will only cover communicative strategy. Example..."). (T5) "We talk about Philippine economy only. Now, let's go to the third one. We have here turn-taking, saan niyo ginagamit? Sa bahay pag kagising... good morning, ma'am, good morning love." ("We talk about Philippine economy only. Now, let's go to the third one. We have here turn-taking, where do you use it? In your home, when you wake up... good morning, ma'am, good morning love.") (T6) "Oh, bakit pwede namang love ang tawag kay ma'am. Diba we are using turn taking for example talking for something. Bakit importante na merong turn taking, how about you?". (Oh, why is it okay that we call ma'am, love? Right? We are using turn-taking, for example talking for something. Why is important that turn taking is present? how about you?"). (T7)

Inviting Non-violent Communication in the Classroom. The fifth and the last theme that was derived from this study Inviting Non-violent Communication in the Classroom. In teaching Oral Communication in Context, the teacher-participants employed positive and non-violent discipline through praising and acknowledging along with learning oral communication skills. The participants try to be kind and loving facilitators to let the genuine communication happen in the classroom. This would encourage learners to participate in various classroom communicative activities without making them feel frightened. "Very good! So, everything we do is already communication." (T1) "Very good! We could send messages to gestures, body movements, and facial expressions. So, let's have non-verbal communication." (T2) "Okay, very good. Addressing the problems of his fellow citizen. Okay, very good. Any other questions?" (T2) "Memorize. Okay. Before we are going to know what the meaning of this methods of delivery of speech are. I want you to find your pair. Okay, group yourselves into two." (T3) "Thank you. So, based on the definition, kindly tell ano po yung naiintindihan niyo doon sa model of Aristotle?" ("Thank you. So, based on the definition, kindly tell me what you understood about the model of Aristotle?") (T5) T1, T2, T3, and T4 utilized to compliment learners who participated in the discussion, as can be observed from their comments. Additionally, learners had the chance to interact with various groups. In this manner, they will sense that their peers and classmates value them. This technique for teaching oral communication in context encourages non-discrimination and respect for variety, intercultural conversation, social inclusion, and gender sensitivity among learners. As a result, students won't be frightened to utilize the English language.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: English teachers of Bacnotan National High School applied five (5) teaching strategies in teaching Oral Communication in Context as a course namely using oral communication strategies (OCS), promoting classroom Interaction through questioning, integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and media-based technology, stimulating higher order thinking skills through experiential learning, and inviting non-violent communication in the classroom. Teachers used these strategies because of some reasons. Oral Communication Strategies (OCS) are used to cope with the oral communication problems of learners and to achieve their communicative goals. Verbal questions were asked to generate different interaction levels according to the questions' features: level, complexity, type, and communication pattern. Experiential learning increases learners' engagement in learning oral communication skills. Technology in the classroom engaged learners more, thus, it promotes collaboration and allows learners collaborate. Non-violent classroom communication promotes non-discrimination and respect for diversity, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, and gender sensitivity. Moreover, a teaching model for Oral Communication in Context was designed

based on the significant findings. The thematic model can help teachers in providing a vast amount of knowledge on teaching and learning Oral Communication using relevant, student-centered, and innovate teaching strategies to address the language needs of learners. Based on the findings and conclusions arrived at, the study recommends that English teachers should apply these teaching strategies more often in their language classroom to address the language problems and deficiency of their learners. School administrators may endorse the institutionalization of using the designed Teaching Model for Oral Communication in Context to sustain the teaching strategies in teaching Oral Communication in Context. Further studies should be conducted to generate other strategies in teaching Oral Communication in Context. Similar study can be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the strategies using other disciplines and different participants.

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