

Research Article

Tertiary Students' Challenges Toward the Use of Oral Presentation in Speaking Class

Alvi Raihan Utami*, Lulu Laela Amalia

English Language Education Study Program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

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*Corresponding author:

E-mail:

alviraihan@upi.edu

ABSTRACT

The use of oral presentations is expected to develop students' language skills. It helps the students to practice for improving students' communicative competence. However, the oral presentation was challenging for EFL students. Therefore, this study attempted to investigate students' obstacles in using oral presentations during their performance. The participants of the study were twenty-one first-year students of English Education Study Program at a university in Lampung. This study used qualitative study and the data were gained by delivering a Likert scale questionnaire to the students on their perspectives towards the use of oral presentation during one semester adapted from Nouh et al. (2015). In addition to this, an interview was used to verify the data and gain further information in depth. The result showed that two main factors brought challenges for students during oral presentation, they were personal traits and presentation skills. In addition, these two common factors should be put in attention during the process of learning oral presentation. Furthermore, the conclusion of the study showed that most of the students felt anxious, nervous, and not well-prepared during oral presentations.

Keywords: *Challenges, Oral Presentation, Speaking Skill*

Introduction

One of the communication skills that students should practice is an oral presentation, especially for freshmen at the University level. College graduates in the era of globalization are expected to have confidence in verbal communication, so they may help effectively in academic and professional settings (Khan, 2015). Becker (2004) states that teaching students to convey their ideas through presentations in front of many people is one of the essential skills students can obtain at a graduate school level. Nowadays at the university level, most of

lecturers assess students based on their oral presentation skills. An oral presentation is also used because the lecturers realize the importance of developing students' English language skills, especially for EFL students. It is an oral language practice method that may measure and show students' mastery of speaking abilities.

Moreover, oral presentation is one of the techniques and activities that could help EFL students enhance their speaking skills (Farabi et al., 2017). Many people think that learning English means being able to speak and

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communicate with other people fluently. Oral presentations can bridge the gap between language learning and language use. This is because presentation activities need students to focus on using the four language skills in a naturally integrated manner. In addition, presentations can help motivate students to become more active and independent students (King, 2002).

However, Hyland (2014) states that a range of requirements must be met for EFL learners to be able to speak in English. There are cases where the students still want to continue the presentation, however, some factors make presentations difficult when doing oral presentations, for example, many students lack vocabulary mastery which is useful for understanding their content and ultimately not able to communicate any further due to their lack of knowledge. It is in line with the statement by Antaris and Omolu (2019), that in reality, the students faced difficulty in mastering speaking skills or oral communication with respect to their pronunciation, lack of confidence, and also an uncondusive environment. Based on the facts and background above, generally, this study aimed at providing more insights into the students' challenges in their oral presentations and how these variables relate to their speaking proficiency.

Many previous researches talk about oral presentations. However, this study focuses on the oral presentation task of an individual which is included in a guided oral presentation. Throughout the process, the oral presentation needs students to use their oral or speaking skills more to present well the topics to the audience equipped with the media. Furthermore, the study of the implementation of oral presentations is still limited by qualitative design. Analysis into the EFL learners' perceptions toward their experiences of using oral presentation is much less researched, while student voice is important in the assessment of teaching practices. Therefore, in filling the gap, this paper investigates Indonesian students' perceptions toward oral presentation in the context of EFL learners, specifically, in light of the perceived challenges and overview for students to overcome the challenges during

oral presentation activities. Based on the background above, there is an urgent need for studies that explore students' perceptions of their challenges when doing a guided oral presentation in an EFL context. However, the previous studies do not specifically propose analyzing the perception of students of a guided oral presentation in the context of English language teaching.

Literature Review

Oral Presentation

Oral presentation assignments are significant communicative activities, by initiate critical reflection, discovery, and preparation, and end with an oral presentation (Graig, 2013). Moreover, the oral presentation can be construed as a professional conversation to the people as an instinctive activity whose purpose is to communicate (Baker, 2000). There exist some steps of presentation, such as preparation, practice, and presentation. Oral presentations as a method that EFL students can utilize through planning, preparation, training, and retrieval of audiences involved in the learning process. Based on the scientific studies and the author's experience, the oral presentation comes across as a challenging task because students have to deliver ideas in front of friends and teachers also make sure the audience knows the content. It is also worth noting for teachers that the most challenging task in teaching a language is improving spoken language communication abilities.

An oral presentation is a meaningful communication point to the public. In addition, an oral presentation is a brief discussion of definitions delivered consecutively to the general public to transfer knowledge or produce discussion. An oral presentation is an extension of oral communication skills. It is a practice where presenters demonstrate their knowledge of a particular subject. In brief, oral communication can be formal or casual. An oral presentation has similarities to a speech, although it usually involves only the person behind the pulpit. In addition, an oral presentation can also be delivered using technological media, such as slide displays, movies, audio snippets, or recordings.

Stages of Oral Presentation

Conducting an oral presentation means that the presenters need to do several steps during an oral presentation.

According to Zivkovic (2014), there are three parts in the presentation. The first is an introduction. The introduction consists of greeting the audience, introducing him/herself, telling the audience why they should listen to it, the purpose of the presentation, and explaining the outline of the presentation clearly. The second is the body. The body is the main of the presentation. In this part, the presenter could explain her/his ideas, giving examples, and visual aids to support the ideas. This part is where all of the information and topic is presented. Then, the last part is a conclusion. The conclusion is a summarization of the presentation. It highlights the main topic and emphasizes what the audience should remember and pay attention to. In this part also presenter can offer audiences to ask if they have any questions or statements in their mind.

Types of Oral Presentation

According to Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2010), an oral presentation is divided into three, which are controlled presentation, guided presentation, and free presentation. It is determined by a variety of criteria, including topic selection, presenting time, grammar, vocabulary, presentation methods, and, most importantly, student comprehension. Controlled presentation refers to beginner-level language skills. At this level, the teacher must limit the topic to what is in the textbook or something that the teacher thinks the student can present easily or according to the student's abilities at that level. The same applies to grammar and vocabulary selection. Furthermore, students with lower levels of language proficiency cannot be expected to stay present in a foreign language for a lengthy amount of time. Guided presentation is a level for students with lower-intermediate or intermediate English skills. At this level, students can be helped in presenting themes appropriate for their language level. The students should not be expected to use sophisticated structural and lexical items. Students should be guided to the appropriate level of grammar and lexical items. Although their

language level is better than students at lower levels, they shouldn't be expected to keep talking for a long time with no expectation to make a lot of language mistakes. So, students become confused and make many mistakes giving the effect of lack of confidence in students. This is especially relevant in contexts where accuracy is prioritized over fluency. At this level, students can be guided to prepare assignments or work using appropriate media such as PowerPoint or slides if adequate equipment is available. Lastly, free presentations are expected to have an intermediate to advanced level of proficiency. At this level, the students should be given the freedom to choose the topics they want to work on, plan the topics the way they see fit, and use all kinds of language levels. Students who are given presentations at this level can be trained to handle questions from their classmates after they have finished the presentation.

Advantages of Oral Presentation

Many previous studies have been proven that oral presentation is highly effective in improving learners' second language (L2) skills and increasing their autonomy. It aligns with the statement by Girard, Pinar, and Trapp (2011) that oral presentation leads the students to better the classroom for the students' interaction and participation. In addition, oral presentation increases students' interest in learning, and easier to notice students' improvement in communication and presentation skills. Besides that, an oral presentation is also an authentic task and learner-oriented. By doing oral presentations, students use all of the language skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading) that are highly useful for students, especially EFL students. This is because EFL learners are required to comprehend the materials they are presenting and communicate this comprehension to others.

Another benefit of using oral presentations is for future careers. Zivkovic (2014) has proven in his study that presentations improve students' abilities in numerous ways for their future employment. These are the facts, especially in the ESP or EAP contexts, where the learners are prepared to use English as their need in the real world of work. Besides that,

students beyond EAP and ESP who experience oral presentations also can get a high chance for their future jobs. It is because nowadays many employers are seeking employees or candidates that have great communication and presentation skills.

The Nature of Speaking

Speaking implies the use of grammar, phonemic regularity, intonation, and knowledge of pragmatic points (e.g., responding to compliments) (Hughes, 2010). Boonkit (2010) believed that speaking is one of the four essential skills in English that must be learned, especially if the speaker is from a different country of origin and speaks English as a mother tongue.

That skill is defined as the ability to use language in real-world settings, the ability to report acts using incorrect words, or the ability to communicate or transmit ideas effectively. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students must enhance their speaking skills because English is the primary global language used to communicate with people all over the world. For this reason, to achieve communication needs, English proficiency must be increased in conjunction with other English skills.

Speaking can be defined as a very essential aspect of language. Speaking helps to convey and express a feeling, message, idea, or information by communicating with one or more people. speaking can be defined as a very important aspect of language. In addition, speaking cannot be separated from language features, grammatical rules, lexical items, and expressions, so that people who hear might grasp the meaning and purpose of what is said.

Problems of Speaking

In learning speaking there must be obstacles and challenges to achieve learning goals. Ur (1991) and Mardiningrum & Ramadhani (2022) stated that there are four obstacles experienced by students in speaking English, especially EFL students, which are:

- **Inhibition**

Speaking activities require the listener to pay all their attention to the speaker. In this case, the exposure from the listener often attracts the stage action for the speaker.

The speaker may worry about making mistakes or being criticized in by others.

- **Nothing to Say**

Most of the students in learning and teaching speaking face they do not have an idea what they have to say about the point. It may happen when the students are not interested in the subject or they are too shy to join in the discussion. As a consequence, students will be less enthusiastic to speak in the classroom even if they have something to say in speaking activities. In addition, they are The students lack self-reliance in conveying their ideas.

- **Low Participation**

In classroom situations, when there are students who are active in speaking English, it will make it difficult for other students to express their thoughts voluntarily. Moreover, if there are students who often interrupt or seek the teacher's attention continuously. Then, this will create a situation where quiet students will continue to be passive and just watch the learning take place without meaningful participation.

- **Mother Tongue Use**

In EFL classrooms, it is often students who feel uncomfortable speaking a foreign language to fellow students in classrooms. It happens because most of the students have the same mother tongue which they usually use every day which is based on their regional or ethnic background.

Materials and Methods

Ary (2010) defines research design as the researcher's plan on how to proceed to achieve a knowledge of a group or phenomenon in its context. This research focuses on a guided oral presentation as students' assignments which is important for this study to fill the existing research gap. This study explored the students' voices of using the oral presentation method on undergraduate students' speaking skills. The current research used a qualitative method with a case study design. Descriptive qualitative research is the qualitative researcher dealing with that data in the form of excerpts from documents, field notes, and interviews or excerpts from videotapes, audiocassettes, or elec-

tronic communications used to present research results. The data collected is the participants' experiences and perspectives. The design was chosen because the purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth analysis of oral presentation cases toward undergraduate students' speaking skills. The participants participating in this study were twenty-one students second semester of the English Education Study Program at one of the Universities in Lampung. All of them have been familiar with oral presentations as their learning activity. The participants are chosen from purposeful sampling with the aim researcher to get depths understanding of the central phenomenon. They were chosen because they have experienced many oral presentations for one year as students at the university level. For collecting the data, this study used two instruments, they were questionnaires and interviews. The questions are modified the question based on the needs of this study from the oral presentation questionnaire by Al Nouh et al. (2015). The interview was conducted via Zoom meeting with semi semi-structured interview. In obtaining the interview, the researcher utilizes a screen record from the device to help the researcher analyze the data research. The participants were interviewed concerning their challenges during oral presentations, especially in speaking skills.

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data based on Sugiyono (2010): Data reduction is an analytical process carried out to sharpen, bark, and direct, research results by focusing on things that are considered important by researchers, in other words, data reduction aims to gain an understanding of the data that has been collected from results of field notes by way summarizing, classifying accordingly problems and aspects of the problems studied. Data display is a set of structured information that provides an overall picture of the research in other words presents data in detail and thoroughly by looking for patterns of relationship. Conclusion drawing is an attempt to identify the meaning of the explanation given to the evaluated data by looking for key points. This conclusion is presented in the form of a brief statement that summarizes the research objectives.

Result and Discussion

To answer a research question about students' challenges in making oral presentations based on students' perspectives and experiences, the findings are divided into two, they are students' perceptions of the difficulties in oral presentation according to personal traits and students' perceptions of the difficulties in oral presentation according to oral presentation skill.

Students' Perception of the Challenges in Oral Presentation Based on Personal Traits

According to the data from two participants who were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, they stated clearly what challenges they experienced in the oral presentations. They shared their experiences with the challenges of oral presentation, especially for speaking skills according to personal traits.

P1 stated that:

I felt very anxious before an oral presentation however the other side, I liked the ideas of oral presentation. It made me have the improvement of my speaking skills. I learned a lot during practice oral presentation. In addition, I also felt afraid that I made a mistake during the oral presentation. Usually, I bring the notes if it is allowed by the lecturer. It made me feel better and secure even though I did not read it.

Further P2 stated:

The challenge that I most experienced was not confident when speaking in front of the class. I felt shy when I did an English oral presentation, especially for my pronunciation. When I did my oral presentation, I forgot everything I had prepared to say. It could be happened maybe because I was excited to finish my presentation as soon as possible. Further, I could focus when the presentation was running after 1 minute later then I could be relaxed.

The data above showed that the participants had more than one challenges or difficulty when they did oral presentations. The factor of personal traits is one of the factors that influence the challenges of students in oral presentation, especially in speaking skills. The participants felt oral presentations have

advantages for them, however, the struggles are persistent as well. This data is supported by the result of the questionnaire that 20 out of 21 students agreed that using an oral presentation, it could help them to develop their English vocabulary and the phonetic and speech features of the English language such as intonation, tone, rhythm, etc. As stated by P1, she could feel her improvement in speaking skills by continuing to practice by using oral presentations, yet the feeling of anxiety when doing oral presentations becomes a challenge for her. She also took notes with her to make the oral presentation more comfortable and less nervous. It is in line with Chuang (2009) statement that anxiety could affect students' cognitive abilities. The students were unable to deliver what they had learned and prepared before the presentation. However, in other words, the students could overcome the anxiety and keep on the oral presentation. Moreover, the student was afraid of making mistakes during oral presentation. She worried about being given negative judgment by the audience. This statement is supported by the result of the previous study by Al-Nouh, et al (2015) and Sucia, et al (2023) that the students are afraid to be criticized by the audience either by the other students or the lecturer. This is supported by the occurrence of visual subjectivity when students do oral presentations. Differences in judgment will occur for each individual who becomes the audience (Irvine, 2012)

Furthermore, P2 stated that she felt embarrassed when doing an oral presentation in front of the class. According to many previous

researches, nervousness, anxiety, and lack of confidence become the problems that have not been solved yet especially for EFL learners although there have been many developments for increasing speaking competence. It is in line with Joughin (2007) stated that an oral presentation was more difficult than a written assignment. It puts more pressure and is too personal for the presenter. Further, it is in line with the result of a questionnaire related to challenges in personal traits that 66.7% of students felt anxious before the presentation and 71.4% of students were not self-confidence when doing an oral presentation. As explained by Ur (1991) less confidence made students have no idea what to say. This certainly greatly affects several components of speaking, namely vocabulary and fluency which students at the lower intermediate level to the advanced level. The component of speaking such as pronunciation also becomes a challenge for students as said by P2. Similar findings to Sahan et al (2022) the two most common difficulties were mispronounced/wrong pronunciation and a lack of fluency.

The placement of the oral presentation must be according to the student's level. In types of guided oral presentations like this case which are classified for learners at the lower-intermediate or intermediate level of English proficiency, EFL students in guided oral presentations are not expected to continue talking for too long with the use of sophisticated language features (Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan, 2010).

Table 1. The result of the questionnaire on students' challenges based on personal traits

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
I prefer to do an oral presentation with a group	7 (33.3%)	4 (19%)	6 (28%)	4 (19%)
I am quite nervous before an oral presentation exam.	6 (28.6%)	8 (38.1%)	5 (23.8%)	2 (9.5%)
I feel embarrassed when I do an oral presentation in English	7 (33.3%)	8 (38.1%)	4 (19%)	2 (9.5%)
I'm worried because of my limited English-speaking ability.	10 (47.6%)	7 (33.3%)	4 (19%)	0 (0%)
I dislike the concept of oral presentations.	4 (19%)	9 (42.9%)	4 (19%)	4 (19%)

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
I carry notes for my oral presentation, even though I am well prepared.	6 (28.6%)	9 (42.9%)	4 (19%)	2 (9.5%)
I feel worried even if I have prepared well beforehand.	7 (33.3%)	13 (61.9%)	1 (4.8%)	0 (0%)
When I began my oral presentation, I lost everything I planned to say.	4 (19%)	6 (28.6%)	8 (38.1%)	3 (14.3%)
When presenting in a group, I believe my classmates speak English better than I do.	5 (23.8%)	6 (28.6%)	7 (33.3%)	3 (14.3%)
I feel shy during oral presentations	4 (19%)	12 (57.1%)	5 (23.8%)	0 (0%)

In other words, the students are expected to continue to be able to practice speaking and practice the four English skills with guided oral presentation. As stated above all the participants have similar challenges. Problems during an oral presentation is always happening, especially if the factor arises from personal traits. Continuous motivation and practice are ways that can be used to reduce the anxiety that arises. Students' lack of confidence is one of the biggest challenges in oral presentation. therefore, by mastering of material is also needed, so that students can increase their self-confidence. This can also be supported by lecturers and the environment such as encouraging preparation, providing feedback, and a supportive environment. Considering that oral presentations have many benefits for students, motivation from students and encouragement from lecturers is needed.

Students' Perception of the Challenges in Oral Presentation Based on Presentation Skill

According to the two participants, they had different challenges experience when they did oral presentations. The second main factor of challenges felt by students when doing oral presentations is presentation skills. The following was their statement. P1 stated:

It was hard for me to see the audience. When I looked at their face, I panicked and could not concentrate. When I got panicked, then I would read my notes because my brain was blank, and could not continue my presentation immediately. Further, when I did my presentation, I stood like a robot and no body movement.

In addition, P2 stated:

I found it difficult when prepare an oral presentation. I felt troubled to compose a sentence that was right for my material. I could take quite a long time to prepare material and content for my presentation. Besides that, I also liked to run out of time during presentations because there were lots of pauses like saying eeee....eeee....in my presentation.

According to the statement by two of the participants above, it could be seen that presentation skill also one of the main factors that give an impact of oral presentation. As stated by P1 she could not hold eye contact with the audience during the oral presentation. She felt anxious when she saw the faces of the audience in the class. This problem ended up with students read her notes to prevent her from being panicked in the classroom. It is shown that the reaction could also give an impact for student's oral presentation performance. This data is in line with the questionnaire result that 57,1% of participants needed to read their notes during the presentation. Moreover, developing body language for EFL students was quite challenging. When the student did not feel comfortable and lacked confidence, it affected her performance in oral presentation. It might be argued that the preparation of students was not enough to make her feel more confident when doing oral presentations. Therefore, the high motivation and preparation of opportunities given by lecturers for practicing student's speaking skills and performance should be maximized. As stated by Reid (2007), motivation is identified as the most important aspect of successful learning, and the classroom environment has an impact on

students' learning. Alike to Budinski (2005), more practice can help students feel less nervous when presenting in front of an audience.

In addition, P2 had problems in delivering and content of presentation. The students also felt quite hard to deliver the ideas of presentation. Language features as components of speaking such as vocabulary, grammar and fluency become obstacles for students. Then it leads for student's fluency and affect clueless of speaking during presentation. Further, the result of questionnaire showed that 19 out of 21 students found difficulties to express their meaning or thought. As a second semester students, they have not done many oral presentations compared to students who were already in the upper semester. This identified that this common thing happened to students when doing oral presentations. It is supported with the statement by Putri, Sudarsono & Husin (2019) revealed that oral presentation method could help the students to develop their abilities in sharing their ideas and opinions about certain topic in front of people while practicing speaking skill. Pauses and nervousness during oral presentations were quiet common, especially for students who are newly introduced to oral presentations. However, pauses could be used strategically and appropriately to enhance an oral presentation, not to hinder it. In addition, Ka-Kan Dee & Shaibani (2018) stated in their study that preparing oral presentations well could assist students in the tertiary level of education to overcome the issues. As part of the learning activity, with the help from the instructor or lecturer in setting up adequate practice activities for students to have enough confidence, before the real presentation.

Based on results above, this analysis allows students to identify the problems they encounter during oral presentations, so as to prepare them to tackle those problems. Student should practice to get used to oral presentations and know their strengths and be able to overcome their weaknesses wisely. As such, students should realize that doing sufficient practice are crucial in helping them to better their oral presentation (Aziz & Mohammad 2022). Even though there are still many problems that need serious attention from both teachers and students to deal with, this study agrees that the

ability to make oral presentations is one of the skills that students need to acquire during their learning years.

Conclusion

The perceived challenges and overview for students to overcome the challenges during oral presentation activities were the objectives of this study. After analyzing the data and discussing the result of the study, it can be concluded that the majority of challenges of students in doing oral presentations come from personal traits and inadequate presentation skills during oral presentations. The researcher believed that although the application of oral presentation has many benefits for students' speaking ability, there were still many issues that arise when doing oral presentation. The psychological factor for students when doing oral presentations is anxiety that arises and causes students to be less comfortable speaking in front of the class. In addition, the factor of lack of preparation when making presentations is also something that needs to be highlighted. Mastering the material and preparing a script at the time of presentation may be able to help students to prepare before doing an oral presentation. However, in that way the obstacles that occur can trigger and train students' abilities in speaking and also their presentation skills. Gradually, they will be able to overcome the existing problems well and find ways to minimize the obstacles that will occur. Moreover, for future researchers is suggested to have classroom observation and may address how to maximize the practice of oral presentation skills at the university level.

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