

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents 1. Research background, 2. Research objective, 3. Research question, 4. Significant of the study, 5. Research's limitation, and 6. Key terms

1.1 Background of the research

Speaking is one of the most important skills that must be mastered by the students. It can be defined as an ability that people have in talking and conveying idea, information, or something to other people orally. As stated by Wulandari (2014), the ability to communicate effectively through language is considered to be the most critical aspect of speaking. It involves conveying thoughts, opinions, or emotions to others by utilizing words and speech sounds to inform, convince, and entertain. In the other hands, speaking is used differently in some situations to instruct other people and get things done. For instance, it is for describing something, advising people, and among other things (Meilyaningsih, 2015). Afterwards, one of the skills of speaking that must be comprehended by students is public speaking. In addition, academic speaking is one of the parts of public speaking which is often conducted by student in academic settings moreover in educational field.

Academic speaking involves complex tasks such as participating in scholarly debates or delivering verbal presentations, requiring students to frequently talk, convey ideas, and engage in discussions (Seong, 2017; Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). This practice enhances students' confidence, critical thinking skills, and language competence, particularly in idea articulation. It encompasses various types of oral presentations and discussions, including classroom presentations, colloquia, guest lectures, debates, and conferences.

Conferences, a form of academic public speaking, involve organized gatherings where individuals with similar interests or professions discuss and share ideas. Academic conferences, typically held by students or lecturers in college, provide a platform for researchers to present their findings (Sári Erna, 2022). These events are crucial for sharing research, exchanging ideas, and discussing developments in specific fields. They also facilitate research dissemination and collaboration opportunities (Knott et al., 2020; Campos et al., 2018). Presenting papers at conferences allows scholars to share their research, receive feedback, and enhance their academic standing through effective public speaking and presentation skills (Rendle-Short, 2016).

However, it is challenging for English as Foreign Language (EFL) students in presenting paper at academic conference because they must be able to deal with all of the factors that hinder them in presenting the paper such as anxiety factor, and language barrier such as vocabulary, grammar, and also pronunciation. Lack of practise is also determined as the aspect causing them feel challenging in doing presentation. As revealed by Wei (2022), EFL students have to struggle a lot with public speaking anxiety during presenting at conference. Same as Tribe, R., & Marshall, C. (2020) stating that for many people, public speaking such as presentation can be anxiety provoking. Amelia (2022) also states that oral presentation is challenging for EFL students. It comes from psychological and non-psychological aspect.

Some of the previous studies related to EFL student challenges in doing English presentation have been conducted by some researchers. Research by Rohmawati et al, (2022) found that the biggest problems that EFL sutdents face in thir presentation were unconfidence, anxiety, lack of knowledge, and grammatical error. A research from Al-Nouh et al., (2015) revealed that EFL students were at medium level in doing presentation. Fear of evaluation, avoiding eye contact with audience, and forgetting what they want to say became the factors

causing them not performing well in doing presentation. Amelia (2022) also revealed that anxiety, lack of confidence and, insufficient preparation are the factors that the EFL students felt challenging in doing presentation. The only research that focused on presentation challenges especially on conference presentation was research conducted by Wei (2022) finding that during their international conference presentation, Chinese EFL postgraduates had a high level of public speaking anxiety that was measured by three categorical variables: public speaking apprehension, self-behaviour management, and fear of negative evaluation.

In conducting this research, the researcher was inspired to bring up the similar issue as prior aforementioned researches. In the interest of conducting this research, research gap was vital. After doing some examinations of the previous studies, there was only one research focusing on challenges conference presentation as conducted by Wei (2022). Furthermore, the focus on that research was on Chinese EFL undergraduates. while other research that were conducted by Rohmawati et al, (2022), Al-Nouh et al., (2015), and. Amelia (2022) only discussed and focused on presentation in general not in conference. All of that, there were not enough research focusing on conference presentation. Therefore, the researcher conducted research that focused on academic conference presentation and Indonesian EFL students in one public university in Jambi as the object of the research. The focus of this research was on the students' challenges in their experience when presenting at conference and strategies to overcome the challenges.

1.2. Research Question

The formulation of the problem of study above was determined into 2 aspects below:

1. What are EFL students' challenges when presenting paper at conferences?
2. How do they overcome the challenges when presenting paper at conferences?

1.3 Purposes of the research

According to the problem above, this research gained some objectives, as follow:

1. To identify the EFL student's challenges in presenting paper at conference.
2. To explain their strategy to overcome the challenges in presenting at conference presentation.

1.4. Limitation of the research

Firstly, this research was conducted with a relatively small sample size, focusing on a group of EFL students from one public university in Jambi, Indonesia. Secondly, it is not for all conferences but, it is only for national and international conferences which were delivered by using English. Thirdly, data was collected only at one specific time, so it may not capture changes and developments in student challenges and strategies over time. Lastly, This research primarily focused on general challenges and strategies without delving into specific factors such as gender differences, academic backgrounds, or individual personal characteristics

1.5. Significance of the research

1. For the students

The findings of this research are hoped to be meaningful for student to know and deal with challenges in presenting paper at conference. On the other hands, they will find plenty ways that are necessary to be prepared before presenting and to be done while presenting in conference presentation.

2. For the researchers

The results of this study are expected to provide additional information for the future researcher so that next researcher can cite more reference moreover the topic of this research is rarely found in Indonesia especially in Jambi.

1.6. Definition of key terms

1. EFL (English as a Foreign Language):

Refers to the process of learning and use of English by individuals living in countries where English is not the primary language. In this research, EFL refers to students in Indonesia who study English as a foreign language.

2. Challenges

The challenges faced by EFL students in the context of this research include various difficulties and obstacles that arise during the preparation and implementation of presentations at academic conferences. These include public speaking anxiety, difficulties with grammar and pronunciation, and lack of self-confidence.

3. Strategies

Strategies used by EFL students to overcome challenges in presenting at academic conferences. It includes various methods and techniques applied to reduce anxiety, improve speaking skills, and build self-confidence, such as regular practice, independent learning, and support from lecturers and peers.

4. Presentation

The act of conveying information, ideas, or research results in front of an audience at an academic conference. In the context of this research, presentation refers to the activities of EFL students who present their papers or projects in front of conference participants.

5. Conference

Formal meetings attended by academics, researchers and professionals to discuss and present the latest research, ideas and findings. Conferences in this study refer to academic events where EFL students deliver their presentations.