



An analysis of students' perceptions on the difficulties of oral presentation based on the *Nowreyah Al-Nouh* framework

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the students' perception of the difficulties of oral presentation at the proposal seminar at the English Language Education Department of Halu Oleo University. The mixed method design, as described by Creswell, was employed. The sample was the students who were assigned to take a proposal seminar consisting of 24 students. The technique of sampling was purposive sampling. In collecting the data, this study used a close-ended questionnaire and an open-ended questionnaire. Students' perceptions of the difficulties of the oral presentation related to personal traits, and the students' problems were anxiety, feeling pale on presentation day, and dependence on notes. In relation to presentation skills, students' difficulties were: could not stand presenting without reading the thesis, imitating friends, extra focus on grammar, could not spontaneously speak in English, having problems with fluency and pronunciation, and preferring written exams to oral presentation. In relation to the audience factor, students' difficulty was afraid of the audience's reaction. In relation to the examiner factor, students' difficulties were the instructors' interruption, criticism, avoiding eye contact with the instructor, and afraid of getting unfair grades. The result of personality traits showed that students responded 36% positive, 25% neutral and 39% negative. In relation to presentation skills, students responded 33% positive, 26% neutral and 41% negative. In the audiences' factor, students responded 32% positive, 28% neutral and 40% negative. Then, examiner factors, students responded 42% positive, 27% neutral and 31% negative. The dominant factor affecting the students' difficulty in oral presentation was the examiner factors, with percentages of 42% positive, 27% neutral and 31% negative. Finally, it also found that nervousness, lack of confidence, spontaneous interruptions, a noisy class, poor material understanding and some additional factors of students' difficulties in the oral presentation.

Keywords:

Perception, Difficulties, Oral Presentation.

1. Introduction

Communication skill is essential because it serves as the key to success in one's life, career and relationships. Communication involves the delivery of ideas and feelings to others. Idrus & Salleh (2008) asserted that effective communication is conducted in a manner which is clear, fluent, and to the point and which holds the audience's attention, both in groups and one-to-one situations.). A person who cannot clearly articulate their thoughts may be wrongly judged as uneducated or poorly informed. Therefore, realizing the importance of mastering good

communication skills, most academic courses offered in college require students to conduct oral presentations as part of their course assessments.

Oral presentation is not an easy thing to master (Jabir et al., 2022). There are many problems experienced by many students in the process of improving their speaking skills. An oral presentation is a planned and practiced speech that is not memorized or read from notes but introduced by a presenter to the audience. Gupta (2008) defined an oral presentation as a formal way to convey your message to your audience. According to Joughin (2007) on his research, oral presentation has three perspectives they are presentation as a transmission of the ideas of others to a passive audience, perspective as an imparting of the material studied from which students seek to make their meanings from the ideas of others, and presentation as a position to be disputed and defended by persuading the audience. So, oral presentation means to present an idea or message to the audience where it has functions such as transmission of ideas, imparting material studied, and persuading someone or audiences.

Most students find it challenging when asked to present orally, especially in English. There are several issues which have become a major concern in oral presentation activity. Students often need more proficiency in using the English language correctly, as well as a lack of confidence when speaking in front of an audience. According to Ikzan et al. (2020), speaking is an oral interaction of the people, it can be applied by two people or more that, that it negotiate the meaning continued in ideas what has been stated in their mind, with speaking people can share their feeling to the other people orally. Then, Zainud & Komarudin (2011) explained that many students need help communicating well in English because they need help with pronunciation, the use of correct grammar and fluency. In addition, Zainuddin (2012) found out that many people have great difficulties communicating effectively at work. Despite having excellent technical knowledge in their areas, they are not well prepared for effective communication. Therefore, students often feel frustrated and intimidated each time oral presentations are assigned to them, especially when they are dealing with research matters and the communication skills required for a successful presentation.

Regarding the problems above, the common cause of them is the lack of self-confidence, lack of presentation skills, and fear of facing the audience and the instructor. Most of students felt anxious even if prepared in advance, felt their peers spoke better English than they did, felt uncomfortable and shy when they had to speak in front of others, and were afraid that the teacher would pay attention to their English mistakes. Al-Hebaish (2012), in his research, finds that there is a significant correlation between self-confidence and achievement in oral presentation tests. Self-confident learners were willing to speak out and take risks, while learners with low self-confidence tried less.

In addition, students worried about making mistakes, which resulted in their memorization of content. They also believed that presenting in English was difficult and reported problems with planning and preparing a presentation. Wolfe (2008) found students reporting audience reactions as an unpleasant experience in oral presentations as well as group presentations in which group members do not

share the work equally. Wolfe (2008) ultimately concluded that fear of public speaking was rated as the worst fear for many students.

The phenomenon of difficulties in oral presentation also happened to the students in doing a proposal, results and also thesis seminars for getting the degree of bachelor's degree from the Department of English Education at Halu Oleo University. It is based on the result of observation done on the students who had graduated. The result showed that most of the students still had difficulty performing an oral presentation. They had difficulties in organizing their ideas and feel worried about making mistakes in performing oral presentations. With the same intention as the previous study, this study tends to study students' perceptions of the difficulties of an oral presentation at the proposal seminar at the Department of English Education at Halu Oleo University. The purpose of this study was to examine students' perceptions of the difficulties of oral presentation at the proposal seminar. The use of mixed method design was considered a useful method for the researcher to reveal the difficulties and the dominant causative factors faced by the students in oral presentations.

2. Methods

The design of the study was a mixed method design or qualitative-quantitative, as described by Creswell (2012), who stated that the mixed method research design was a procedure of collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to understand the research problem. Qualitative data tended to be open-ended, while quantitative data usually included closed-ended responses such as found on questionnaires.

The population was all students who followed the proposal seminar. The sample was students who followed the proposal seminar from January until March, which consisted of 24 students. In collecting the data, this study used close-ended questionnaires and open-ended questionnaires. The close-ended and open-ended questionnaires were adapted from Al-Nouh et al. (2015). The questionnaire close-ended consisted of 38 items with a five-point Likert-type Scale, while the open-ended questionnaire consisted of 2 items.

To analyze a close-ended questionnaire, this study used descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to measure students' perceptions of the difficulties they faced during an oral presentation from four perspectives, namely personal traits, oral presentation skills, audience, and instructor. Then, it reported the statistical result, which was followed by the conclusion. This study applied SPSS 24 as the suitable application to calculate the results of the close-ended questionnaire. Another part, which involved open-ended questions, was analyzed descriptively, then identified and categorized each line of sentence on students' answers. Thus, this draws a conclusion from students' extensive answers.

3. Results

3.1. The Result of Close-Ended Questionnaire

Since the questionnaire is adapted from Al-Nouh et al. (2015) in order to measure students' perception related to oral presentation, the four factors that

included personal traits, presentation skill, audience and examiner are analyzed separately as follows.

a. Personal Traits Factors

This section presents the result of the personal traits factor that measures students' perception of the difficulties of oral presentation. In order to measure this factor, there are 14 items. The factor consists of 14 items; all items indicate the personal traits in giving oral presentation. The following chart below summarizes the result of student's perception of the difficulties of an oral presentation relating to personal traits aspect.

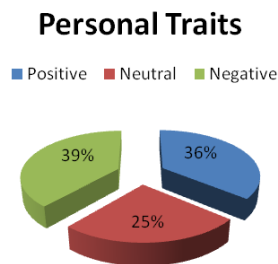


Chart 1. Percentage of Personal Traits Aspect

The chart above categorizes the students' responses into positive, neutral, and negative as the summary of 14 items of the questionnaire. Regarding students' perception of the personal traits aspect, the students who state negative responses (39%) are the highest in the chart. The students who state in neutral (25%) are lower than positive (36%). Thus, it can be concluded that the students have a negative response to the personal traits aspect.

b. Presentation Skill Factors

This section presents the result of the presentation skill factor that measures students' perception of the difficulties of oral presentation. In order to measure this factor, there are 15 items. The following chart summarizes the result of student's perception of the difficulties of an oral presentation on presentation skill factor.

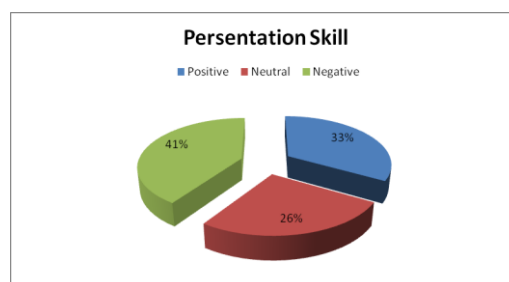


Chart 2. Percentage of Presentation Skill Factor

The chart above categorizes students' responses on presentation skill aspect into positive, neutral, and negative as the summary of 15 items of the questionnaire. Regarding students' perception of the construct of presentation skill factors, the students who state negative (41%) are higher than positive (33%), and the lowest response is neutral (26%). Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of the students do not have difficulties in the presentation skill aspect.

c. *Audiences Factors*

This section presents the result of the audience factor that measures students' perception of the difficulties of oral presentation. In order to measure this factor, there are 4 items. The following chart summarizes the result of students' perception of the difficulties of an oral presentation on audience factors.

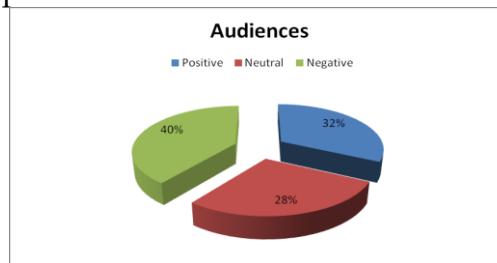


Chart 3. Percentage of Audience Aspect

The chart above categorizes the students' responses based on audience factors into positive, neutral, and negative as the summary of 4 items of the questionnaire. Regarding students' perception of the construct of audience factors, the students' responses negatively (28%) are higher than positive (32%), and the students' neutral responses are the lowest in the chart. In conclusion, students tend to have negative perceptions toward this aspect.

d. *Examiner Factors*

This section presents the result of the examiner's factor that measures students' perception of the difficulties of oral presentation. In order to measure this factor, there are 5 items. The following chart summarizes the result of student's perception of the difficulties of an oral presentation on the examiner factor.

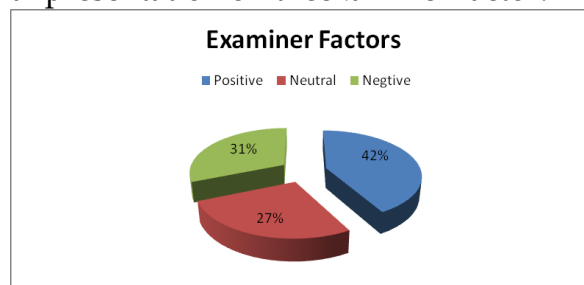


Chart 4. Percentage of Examiner Aspect

The chart categorizes the students' responses into positive, neutral, and negative as the summary of 5 items of the questionnaire. Regarding students' perception of the construct of examiner factors, the students who respond positively (42%) are the highest in the chart, and the students who respond neutral (27%) are lower than the students who respond negatively (31%). To sum up, students tend to have negative perceptions toward examiner's aspect.

3.2. The Result of Open-Ended Questionnaire

This section provides information about students' perceptions of the difficulties in oral presentation. Based on the data, 24 students have done proposal seminars and became the respondents in this study. The first question is about "Write down

other possible factors except four factors in a close-ended questionnaire!" For more clearer interpretation, the chart below will illustrate the students' answers:

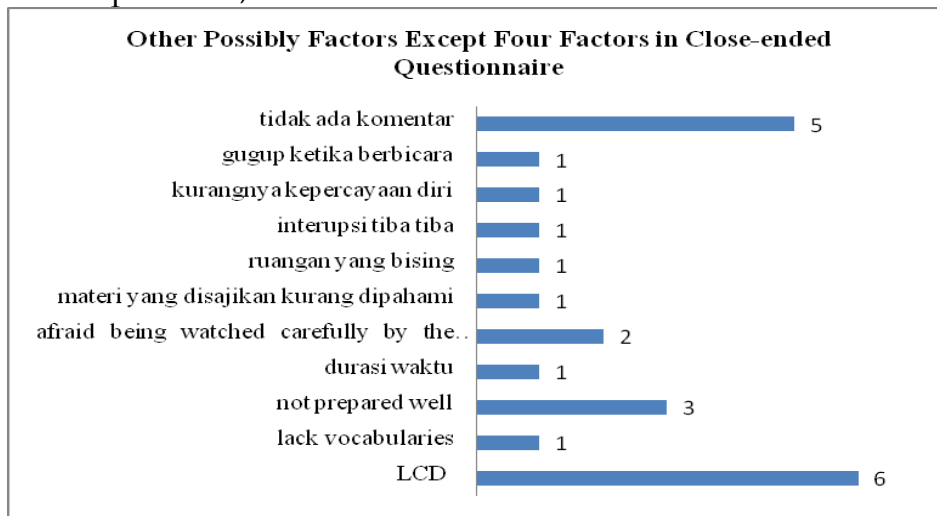


Figure 1. Students' Response of Other Possibly Factors

Based on the chart above, students give a variety of responses related to other possible factors that make it difficult to do oral presentations. They are nervous, lack of confidence, a spontaneous interruptions, a noisy class, material poor understanding, afraid of being watched, duration, not prepared well, lack of vocabulary, and lack of LCD. 6 students have the same answer about lack of technology, LCD as their problem in doing oral presentation. Moreover, 5 students do not give comments related to this question.

The first question is "Write down the unpleasant experiences you had during an oral presentation!" For more clearer interpretation, the chart below will illustrate the students' answers:

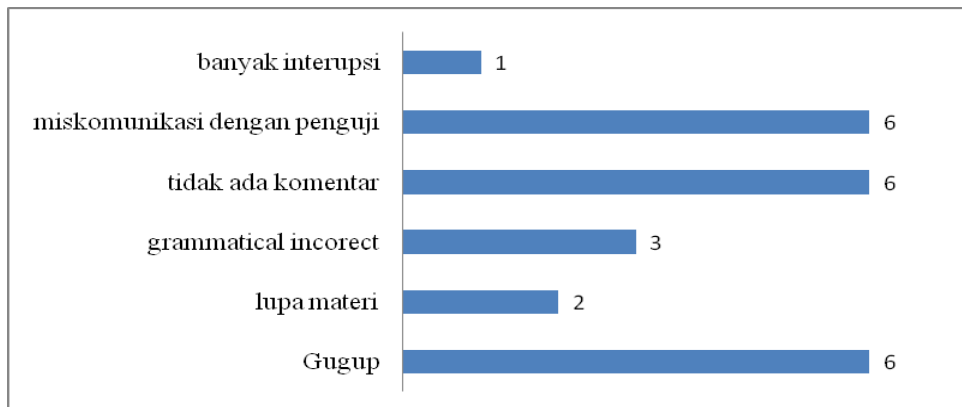


Figure 2. Students' Response of Unpleasant Experiences

The chart above shows students' answers related to their unpleasant experiences during an oral presentation. Students' unpleasant experiences are too much interruption, miscommunication with the instructor, grammatical incorrect, being blank, and nervousness. Related to this question, 6 students do not write about their unpleasant experiences.

4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to find out the difficulties that students have in oral presentations and also find out the dominant factor that causes difficulties for English Education at Halu Oleo University students. This section discussed the result above and answered the problem statements *"What is the student's perception of the difficulties in the oral presentation? And which factor is predominant of the three factors affecting oral presentation?"*

Students' perceptions of the difficulties of oral presentation in relation to personal traits reflected 36% positive, 25% Neutral and 39% Negative. It was clearly seen that students tend to give negative perception to the statements in relation to personal traits. It meant that personal traits were not the dominant reasons behind students' difficulties in oral presentation. Students' difficulties in oral speaking in relation to personal traits were identified. It identifies statements from a questionnaire that students positively choose as students' difficulties. Students gave a positive perception of statement 3, *"I feel anxious before an oral presentation skill"*, which had a negative meaning. Of 24 sample students, 12 students felt anxious before doing an oral presentation. Similarly, 15 students gave a positive perception toward statement 7 *"On presentation day, I feel pale"*. It means that students feel pale on presentation day. Statement 8: *"I bring notes with me during my oral presentation even if I am well prepared"*. Statement 9 *"I feel worried even if I have prepared well beforehand"*, also identified students' difficulties in an oral presentation. 13 students agreed that they felt worried even if they have prepared well beforehand. Hazila (2014) revealed that anxiety existed in oral presentations, and students experienced it. The symptoms were identified, such as bodily reaction, expressive reaction, and emotional reaction.

The students' perceptions of the difficulties in oral presentation assessment in relation to presentation skills are 33% positive, 26% Neutral and 41% Negative. It can be seen that students tend to have negative reactions to this aspect. Hence, presentation skill problems were not the dominant factor in students' difficulties in oral presentation.

It identified students' difficulties in oral presentation in relation to presentation skills. Students faced difficulty in speaking without reading their thesis. It was proved by statement 15 *"I need to read from my thesis during oral presentations"* from 24 students; half of them considered it as their difficulty. Then, students faced problems in imitating their friends. Students cannot stand on their own, so they prefer to see their classmate's presentation exam before starting their presentation. Statement 17 *"I prefer to see someone's presentation exam before starting my own"*, showed it. Of 24 students, 14 students considered it as their difficulties. Statement 20, *"I care about grammar more than fluency in oral presentation"*, was also considered a student's problem. Students focus more on grammar, so fluency is lacking. Whereas in speaking, fluency and accuracy cannot be separated. Students cannot spontaneously speak in English; they thought first in Indonesian and then translated in English. It was one of the students' difficulties relating to presentation skills. It can be seen from statement 21: *"During oral presentation, I think in Indonesian, then translate it into English."* 15 students consider it as their problem. This finding is supported by Chen (2015). He said that oral presentation in English was a demanding cognitive activity for students who had low English proficiency.

They spent time translating their presentation idea. Moreover, the difficulty faced by students was fluency and pronunciation. It was proved by statement 25 *"I have a problem with oral fluency and pronunciation during oral presentation"*. 15 students agreed with that statement. The last problem relating to presentation skills was students preferred written exams to oral presentations. It was proved by statement 26, *"I prefer to be assessed by written exams rather than oral presentations."* 14 students agreed with that statement.

The students' perceptions of the difficulties in oral presentation in relation to audience factors are 32% Positive, 28% Neutral and 40% Negative. The result showed that students tend to state negatively about this aspect. Thus, the audience factor cannot be a dominant factor in students' difficulties in oral presentation. Students' problem in this aspect was also identified. Audiences' reactions become students' difficulties in doing oral presentations. It was proved by statement 31, *"Students' reactions affect my performance in the oral presentation."* 14 students agreed with that statement. Wolfe in Al-Nouh et al. (2015) stated that fear of facing audiences was an unpleasant experience which rolled as a group presentation. They did not share the work equally.

The students' perceptions of the difficulties in oral presentation in relation to examiner factors are 42% Positive, 27% Neutral and 31% Negative. It was clear that most of the students gave positive perceptions relating to examiner factors aspect. It can be said that examiner factors become the dominant factor of students' difficulties in oral presentation. To support the fact that students experience some difficulties in relation to the examiner factor, 14 students agreed with statement 34: *"The instructor's interruption with questions or criticism affects my performance"*. The last problem faced by students in relation to examiner factors was the anxiety of getting unfair grades. As assessed in statement 37, *"I'm afraid that I would get an unfair grade for my oral presentation"*, 16 students responded positively to that statement. This finding was supported by Whai & Mei (2016). They said that the role of the teacher became the cause of students' difficulty in oral presentation. In Whai & Mei (2016) research, the teacher's role was lack of guidance and lack of opportunities to speak English from the lecturer. In this current study, the teacher's role played as an examiner in oral presentation.

To sum up, in every aspect, students faced difficulties in oral presentation. In relation to personal traits, students' problems were anxiety, feeling pale on presentation day, and dependence on notes. In relation to presentation skills, students' difficulties are can't stand presenting without reading the thesis, imitating friends, having an extra focus on grammar, can't spontaneously speak in English, have problems with fluency and pronunciation, and prefer written exams rather than oral presentations. In relation to the audience factor, students' difficulty was afraid of the audience's reaction. In relation to the examiner factor, students' difficulties are instructor's interruption, criticism, avoiding eye contact with the instructor, and afraid of getting an unfair grade. Based on the percentage distribution of each factor, the examiner factor was the dominant factor that affected students' difficulties in oral presentation.

Open-ended questions were also distributed to the students. Data from open-ended questionnaires were additional information to support students' perceptions.

Question 1 of the open-ended questions found that the lack of technology, in this case, is students frequently wrote a visual aid, lack of LCD, so it became students' difficulty when they want to do an oral presentation. LCD oral presentation assisted students in speaking systematically without memorizing all the material content, to be understandable by the audience and to be practical. Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan (2010) pointed out that technology in oral presentation changed the classroom atmosphere and added a new taste to foreign language education.

Question 2 of the open-ended questions tried to know students' unpleasant experiences during oral presentations. It was noticed that students' unpleasant experiences during the oral presentations include many interruptions, miscommunication with instructors, grammatical incorrect, being blank, and nervousness. Being nervous and miscommunication with instructors are the answers that are more chosen by students.

5. Conclusion

From the findings of the study and the discussions based on the theoretical proportions of the literature, the student's perception of the difficulties of oral presentation relates to personal traits. Students' problems were anxiety, feeling pale on presentation day, and dependence on notes. In relation to presentation skills, students' difficulties cannot stand presenting without reading the thesis, imitating friends, having an extra focus on grammar, cannot spontaneously speak in English, have problems with fluency and pronunciation, and prefer written exams rather than oral presentations. In relation to the audience factor, students' difficulty was afraid of the audience's reaction. In relation to the examiner factor, students' difficulties are the instructor's interruption, criticism, avoiding eye contact with the instructor, and afraid of getting an unfair grade. The dominant factor that causes students to face difficulty in oral presentation is examiner factors, with a percentage of 42% Positive, 27% Neutral and 31% Negative. In relation to the examiner factor, students' difficulties are the instructor's interruption, criticism, avoiding eye contact with the instructor, and afraid of getting an unfair grade. Other possible factors that make students difficult in oral presentation were also identified. They were nervous, lack of confidence, a spontaneous interruption, a noisy class, material poor understanding, afraid of being watched, duration, not prepared well, lack of vocabulary, and lack of LCD. The lack of LCD was frequently written by students. Furthermore, students' unpleasant experiences were too much interruption, miscommunication with the instructor, being grammatically incorrect, being blank, and nervousness.

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