

Classroom Oral Presentation: Students' Challenges and How They Cope

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Abstract. Classroom oral presentation is one of the techniques that has been used in any language classroom to provide an opportunity for language practice. This research investigates EFL students' challenges in classroom oral presentation and their strategies to face the challenges. The presentations covered group and individual presentations. Using a qualitative research approach and a descriptive design, authors collected data through in-depth interviews. Participants were four students of the English department of one private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, who had multiple experiences performing oral presentations in the classrooms that they had been attending for at least three years. The study found nervousness, group dynamics, audience, missing points, challenging content, language boundaries, and high self-expectation as the challenges the participants faced in classroom oral presentations. In addition, the study also discovered that strategies used to overcome the challenges were self-assurance, better preparation, peer discussions, directed eye contact, direct communication, backups, self-isolation, and presentation aids use. The implication is that in EFL classroom contexts, all factors surrounding the students might play a part in the way students view their experience and their success in an oral presentation. It also implied that eventually, students will have the ability to utilize the resources around them to solve their issues in an oral presentation. This gives an insight to how teachers can provide the environment that enables students to independently solve their problems.

Keywords: *Classroom Oral Presentation, Challenges, Strategies To Face The Challenges, CBI, CLT*

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INTRODUCTION

As a global language, English is one of the most highly used tools for communication. People having different first languages use English to communicate and engage in business and other fields. Thus, mastering English for communication will bring many advantages. Commonly, mastering English is seen from someone's mastery of four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four are usually how classroom teaching is aimed at. The current practices commonly combine two or more skills in one classroom to build a comprehensive communicative ability. This need to focus on communicative ability has triggered the teaching approach called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

CLT was a teaching approach proposed in the 1970s to fulfill the need for more teaching practices considered lacking in what is considered as the more traditional approach (Mohd-Asraf, Hossain, & Eng, 2019). Richards (2006) proposed CLT principles, namely focusing on authentic communication, allowing students to try out knowledge, tolerating learners' error, developing fluency and accuracy, connecting the four language skills, and letting students discover grammar rules. One of the methodologies to meet these principles is labeled Content-Based Instruction (CBI) (Richards, 2006). CBI focuses the lesson on the content or information learned through a language instead of learning the language (Richards, 2006). One of the everyday activities used in a CBI-led lesson is classroom oral presentation.

At the higher education level, the skill to do an oral presentation might be considered an essential skill for future careers. In this level of education, teachers usually only provide the topics discussed and delivered in a presentation. It is primarily content-based, and students are to present the content or topic provided by the teachers. Therefore, the lesson aims mainly to understand specific information rather than language mastery, although the language is an integral part of understanding and successfully delivering the materials. To support learning, oral presentations need careful planning and clear guidelines since they also involve multiple skills (Živković, 2014). In the current study, classroom oral presentation is one of the most chosen activities and assessments.

Classroom oral presentation is a type of public speaking. It is generally known that speaking in front of an audience can be challenging for many people. When it is done in a foreign language classroom like English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, it can give a more significant challenge since the presenters have to not only master the technical skills on the delivery but also need to think and speak in the language that they are not used daily or still trying to learn. Therefore, studies investigating classroom oral presentations have been conducted to understand the nature of the activity supporting more autonomous and communicative learning.

Studies on the use of oral presentation in EFL classrooms within higher education contexts have been conducted in the past. The past studies have investigated the role of self-regulation (Hasanah, Salam, & Riyanti, 2013; Soureshjani, 2013), anxiety (Chen, 2015; Tian & Mahmud, 2018), motivation (Liang & Kelsen, 2018), willingness to communicate (Soureshjani, 2013), collaborative learning

and group discussion (Hasanah, Salam, & Riyanti, 2013; Sundrarajun & Kiely, 2010), confidence and language use experience (Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015), sources such Google and Wikis (Awada & Diab, 2018) on students' English oral presentation performance. Others have focused on how students and teachers assess or view the students' oral presentation performance (Miles, 2009; 2014; Salehi & Drayabar, 2015). There were only few that studied students' challenges in English oral presentation (Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem, & Taqi, 2015; Benraghda, Radzuan, & Ali, 2018; Whai & Mei, 2015). This is where this study could contribute to fill in the lack. In addition, the previous studies took place in different context of higher education and only two was conducted in an Indonesian context, where the current study took place. To be more specific, this study took a dive into the experiences of EFL student-teachers, who might bear certain characteristics from other EFL students since they were prepared to be future teachers. Therefore, it is expected to bring meaningful insights on the experiences of future teachers and the field of EFL teacher training programs. To meet the need of filling the gap, two research questions were developed:

1. What are students' challenges in doing an English oral classroom presentation?
2. What are students' strategies to cope with English oral classroom presentation challenges?

Oral Classroom Presentation in CBI Classroom

The oral presentation is one of the lessons Richards (2006) listed under the CBI program. In a presentation, the target language serves as the medium of instruction (Richards, 2006). In CBI, the primary focus of learning is on the meaning or content, but there is still a space for language-focused learning, although it means that the instructor should pay careful detail to facilitate language learning through content (Rodgers, 2014). However, this is not always the case in practice and poses a challenge. Many students ignore grammatical accuracy because they focus on content mastery (Richards, 2006). In a study of students and teachers, Rodgers (2015) found that teachers also mainly focused on communication of meaning because they had to cover the target content. In addition, after analyzing various studies, Mohd-Asraf et al. (2019) found that many teachers would choose to code-switch or use much of their first language in teaching. Despite this lacking, a proficiency test in one study still showed an improvement in language mastery from incidental learning (Rodgers, 2015). This sheds some light on the skeptical view on CBI.

Classroom oral presentation is hoped and believed to be beneficial for students. Hasanah et al. (2013) found that students experienced constructive, self-regulated, and collaborative learning through oral presentations. In line with this, Soureshjani (2013) also found a positive correlation between self-regulation and oral presentation. Some studies also found that students felt that presentations have improved their language mastery or have, at some point, have achieved some linguistic improvements (see Miles, 2014; Rodgers, 2015) such as in grammar knowledge, vocabulary mastery, and language features (Riadil, 2020). Many students and teachers also believed that presentations could improve their speaking skills, especially in front of people (Miles, 2009), their ability to express

their ideas, to use verbal and non-verbal cues in communication strategies, and create a cohesive spoken texts (Riadil, 2020). The benefits of oral presentations might be due to the joint construction if the students perform the presentation in groups through their preparation because they would have the space to reflect on their language and communicative issues (Sundrarajun & Kiely, 2010).

Challenges Students Face in Classroom Oral Presentations

Conducting an oral presentation might give many benefits to students. However, it also poses some challenges, whether done individually or collaboratively. One of the most common issues that students face is related to the anxiety or nervousness of performing in front of an audience (see Al-Nouh et al., 2015; Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015; Benraghda et al., 2018; Chen, 2015; Hasanah et al., 2013; Okada et al., 2017; Tian & Mahmud, 2018). This feeling of nervousness is something that the students might feel the moment they know they would have to perform in front of the public (Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015) because they believe that doing an oral presentation is difficult (Whai & Mei, 2012) or simply because they are just not confident (Whai & Mei, 2012). It can also happen during the presentation (Okada et al., 2017). Additionally, Tian and Mahmud (2018) also found that classmate reaction and audience familiarity contributed to the anxiety of performing the presentation.

Another issue is in the way students perceive their language mastery. Thinking that they do not have adequate language mastery is one of the common issues that the students face, which relates closely to their nervous feeling. Mastery can relate to the lack of language proficiency in general (Chen, 2015; Hasanah et al., 2013; Whai & Mei, 2012) or something more specific, such as pronunciation (Chen, 2015; Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015; Okada et al., 2017) vocabulary (Benraghda et al., 2018), and oral proficiency (Tian & Mahmud, 2018). Szyszka (2011) found a negative correlation between the students' self-perception on their pronunciation and language anxiety. Students also have been found to believe that their fluency in speaking for daily communication is better than the one for a formal presentation (Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015). Lastly, formal technical vocabulary has also become students' challenge in oral presentations (Benraghda et al., 2018).

Having adequate preparation and practice can also be challenging for students. Studies have found that some students believed they lacked practice or preparation prior to oral presentations (Benraghda et al., 2018; Chen, 2015; Hasanah et al., 2013; Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015; Whai & Mei, 2012). This lack of practice might be because the presentation is students' first time, so they lack experience (Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015). To top it all, Tian and Mahmud (2018) have found that the content of the presentation as the most anxiety provoking among other influencing factors.

Many classroom oral presentations are conducted collaboratively. This means that students have to deliver the presentation in groups, which poses its own challenge. Dysfunctional groups can be caused by the presence of more dominant members or the ones who are free-riders (Hasanah et al., 2013). Hasanah et al. further found that the disturbance in group dynamics potentially happens when the group consists of students who do not usually work together. It might also be related to students' personalities as Liang and Kelsen (2018) found that

extroversion correlates positively to a collaborative oral presentation. This means that extrovert students, who tend to be more social and outgoing, might better work well with other people in groups.

In their study, [Liang and Kelsen \(2018\)](#) drew an implication that teachers need to set a conducive situation to lower students' anxiety in an oral presentation. However, sometimes, the challenge comes from the student's view of the audience. It has been generally known that speaking in front of the public might be face-threatening because of the audience's presence. The audience's existence alone could make students feel nervous ([Chen, 2015](#)). Many student presenters also believe that other students observe them to find their mistakes or to try to understand what they are talking about ([Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015](#)). Others get distracted when the late students enter the classroom during a presentation or when other students talk and laugh while they are presenting ([Al-Nouh et al., 2015](#)).

Finally, teachers play a significant role in students' experience of delivering an oral presentation. Although [Whai and Mei \(2012\)](#) found that teachers were the last reason for students' difficulties in performing an oral presentation, they were the ones designing the lesson in the classroom. Possibly, teachers' decisions will influence the challenges that students might face. For example, one group of students in [Whai and Mei's \(2012\)](#) study felt that their challenge in the oral presentation was due to a teacher's lack of interaction and guidance. On the contrary, teachers might be able to minimize the challenge. For instance, a study by [Živković \(2014\)](#) found that students felt that their organizational skills improved because the teacher assisted them in understanding the needed structure, helped them be organized, and boosted their critical thinking skills.

Strategies to Cope with Presentation Issues

No study has investigated directly what the students usually do when dealing with presentation challenges. However, an oral presentation is an activity or a skill that can be mastered after the frequent performance, and challenges might be eliminated by diminishing what causes the challenges. Students believe that adequate time to practice is the key to a successful presentation, improved fluency, and less nervousness ([Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015](#)). In addition, [Whai and Mei \(2012\)](#) found that students felt they lacked the opportunity to speak English. Thus, making themselves that opportunity with or without the help of others might be one of the solutions to the problem in oral presentations.

Diminishing the challenges in an oral presentation can also be done by having needed preparation. [Wilson and Brooks \(2014\)](#) proposed three steps of conducting an oral presentation: researching and writing the presentation, using visual aids, and understanding the presentation skills. Although Wilson and Brooks proposed these steps designed by teachers for lesson planning, students can use this preparation strategy to eliminate their challenges. In line with this, [Torrez and Rodríguez \(2017\)](#) found strategies to cope with oral presentation issues include preparation and rehearsal, code-switching, and translating to deal with fluency problems. This preparation could be done by necessary pre-presentation research, which could be incorporated in the activities. [Awada and Diab \(2018\)](#) investigated

the use of Wiki and Google Earth in assisting the preparation of classroom oral presentation and found that students perceived the two tools as beneficial.

Preparing necessary visual aids can also solve students' challenges in an oral presentation. [Torrez and Rodríguez \(2017\)](#) found that students created a PowerPoint presentation containing the information they needed in an oral presentation. [Brooks and Wilson \(2014\)](#) stated that students found visual aids to help them present the details related to the topic of their presentation and help the audience understand their delivery. Interestingly, visual aids might also solve the problem with group dynamics because in some cases, the less proficient students in a group presentation can take the role as the ones preparing the visual aids, which gives them the sense of contribution, and eventually, can maintain group harmony ([Brooks & Wilson, 2014](#)). Visual aids can also be in notes ([Hasanah et al., 2013](#)). Students have been found to look at note cards to decrease their anxiety in an oral presentation ([Chen, 2015](#)).

Lastly, it has been reported that self-regulated learning correlates positively to oral presentation production ([Soureshjani, 2013](#)). Self-regulated learning can be achieved after students experience oral presentations repeatedly ([Hasanah et al., 2013](#)). Doing self-regulated learning, in this case, means that students should use their meta-cognitive ability and self-awareness, for example, to prepare what would be necessary for the presentations even without the cue from the group leader.

Meanwhile, a study by [Tian and Mahmud \(2018\)](#) found that social affective strategies were the ones most commonly chosen by the students in handling their anxiety of presenting orally in front of the class. These strategies were done by convincing themselves, encouraging themselves to relax and enjoy the activity, not minding to take a risk, and trying to leave a good impression to the audience.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is aimed to explore the students' challenges and their strategies to face those challenges in classroom oral presentations. This research was conducted under a qualitative research approach and descriptive design. According to [Creswell \(2012\)](#), qualitative research is suitable for researchers that do not know the variable of research problems and need to explore more detailed information. This research was conducted in an English teacher training program in one Private University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. In this program, oral presentations were conducted in almost all classes. In their first year, students conducted their presentations in language-skill-based classrooms, while in the following years, presentations were conducted in theory-based classrooms. All classrooms are under the CBI context. Therefore, the focus is on the content, even though language-related materials might be discussed for skill-based classrooms. Presentations are conducted primarily in groups.

The participants of this research were four students in their sixth semester or third year of study. Participants are presented in pseudonyms, namely Umi, Ine, Oki, and Nia. The participants were chosen since they were considered as having enough experience in classroom oral presentation regardless of the forms. In order to collect the data, this research used standardized open-ended interviews. Cohen, Manion, and Marison (2011) stated that all interviewees are asked the same basic questions in the same order in standardized open-ended interviews. After gathered through interviews, the data were Analyzed using Saldaña's (2016) steps, namely data layout, where audio materials were transcribed and transformed into written data, pre-coding, where transcripts were highlighted, preliminary jottings, where notes and memos were made to the data, and lastly creating the findings to the existing body of literature.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study are presented based on the research questions. The first finding presents the participants' experiences, and the second relates to how they cope with those challenges. Sample excerpts are added to give further explanations.

The Students' Challenges in Classroom Oral Presentations

Not all challenges were expressed by all participants equally. Hence, in the current study, the challenges are presented from the most popular among the four participants to the least ones. The participants' challenges in classroom oral presentations are categorized into nervousness, group dynamics, audience, missing points, challenging content, language boundaries, and high self-expectation.

Nervousness

All four participants mentioned fear, nervousness, and worry; categorized into nervousness here. Feeling nervous when speaking in public is a commonly known problem. In the current study, the nervousness was caused by the participants' lack of confidence about their ability to present, their language skills, and mastery of content. All participants also mentioned similar concerns about their peers whom they believed to be more knowledgeable than them in their perspective when they explained what made them feel nervous. Nia, for example, explained it in the excerpt below:

[I was] afraid to make mistakes in front of them even though I have studied, but yeah, [I was] still afraid.

They (other students) have studied previously too. Some people would not present [that day], but they might have studied previously.

It can be seen from the extract above that even when Nia had done necessary preparation for her presentation, her perspective of others and what they knew still caused her concern and eventually made her feel nervous. Therefore, the nervousness is originated from the participant's self-perception. This is shared in one way or another by other participants.

Studies have found nervousness as one of the most common issues experienced by students in oral presentations (Al-Nouh et al., 2015; Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015; Benraghda et al., 2018; Chen, 2015; Hasanah et al., 2013; Okada et al., 2017; Tian & Mahmud, 2018). Lacking experiences in an oral presentation is one of the reasons for nervousness (Chen, 2015; Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015). This is a different situation from the participants in the current study. They were all experienced in oral presentations since they did the activity in almost all subjects. Whether their nervousness was something they remembered feeling in the past or something they still had was unknown. Hasanah et al. (2013) also found that some students feared making a mistake, while Al-Darwish and Taqi (2015) found that students kept thinking they did something wrong. In addition, Salehi and Daryabar (2014) found that students tended to be overly critical of their performance in oral presentations than of others. This might explain what the participants felt.

Audience

This category is closely related to the first. However, the second finding refers more to the identity and attitude of the audience than merely the participants' self-perception. The audience in public speaking can be intimidating. All four participants mentioned their peers as the challenge they had to face. The audience was reported to be ignorant, giving certain intimidating facial expressions, and inattentive. Ine, for instance, explained below:

Sometimes when there were many [groups] presenting on one day, they were busy preparing their presentations, and they were still reading the book for the question and answer session. So, they just ignored the ones [currently] presenting in front of the class.

Besides minding their presentations, the audience could also be ignorant because they might not understand the presentation. As Umi said, only one or two students responded to the presentation, which she believed to be the sign that others might not know what to respond to or simply felt bored because some presenters used longer time than the one allocated by the teacher.

Challenges caused by the audience were also found in several studies. Hasanah et al. (2013) found that some students felt that the most unpleasant experience they had in an oral presentation was when the audience laughed at their performance. This aligns with the participant's feeling that the audience made unpleasant facial expressions. The audience could also cause a particular challenge because students believed that they paid attention carefully to their performance to understand what was being delivered or to watch for mistakes that the students might make (Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015). What Umi felt when students ignored her presentation was also similar to Hasanah et al. (2013), which found that when late students came into the classroom during a presentation, it could cause the presenter's confusion. Both findings showed that the audience might be a distraction.

Group Dynamics

As mentioned earlier, some presentations were done in groups. Therefore, it is predictable that group dynamics became one of the challenges in a group presentation since the students had to create a group harmony besides preparing a good presentation. The challenges mentioned included the group members who just wanted to present the minor challenging part of the materials, late group members, and some members' lack of participation and initiative. Ine shared her experience as follows:

When we had to do group work, it was challenging to meet, and usually [there was] only one person who really understood [the material] while the rest just followed along.

All participants shared that they have experienced being in a group where few members behaved, not under the group dynamic. This had caused a disturbance in the group's preparedness to present.

Working in a group can be challenging (see [Al-Nouh et al., 2015](#); [Hasanah et al., 2013](#)). [Hasanah et al. \(2013\)](#) found that when a mix of students not accustomed to working together have to perform in a group oral presentation, most of the members are reluctant to participate actively and that only one or few members dominate the presentations. In the current study, the issue was slightly different due to one or few individuals that disturbed the group dynamic.

Missing Points

The subsequent finding is closely related to the first. The participants' nerves became one of the reasons for points missing from their presentations. Three participants mentioned that they experienced presentations where they forgot what they wanted to present or missed some points. This was caused by high nervousness, lack of preparation, and bad time management. Oki, as an example, mentioned that missing some points could be caused by the less-prepared group member in a group presentation. Oki further explained that group presentations resulted in missing points more than her individual presentation since she was a student who always made sure to be well-prepared prior to a presentation. She stated:

[I felt] more fear of skipping [some points] in a group presentation. Say, I wanted to present a specific material, but that part belonged to my friend, and my friend skipped it. I was like, "Oh my! Why didn't you present this part?"

Lousy time management was also reported in group presentations since the students had to share their time with other members. Therefore, time was minimal, and not all materials were successfully delivered with a lack of preparation.

Forgetting a line is another phenomenon found in two previous studies (see [Okada et al., 2017](#); [Al-Nouh et al., 2015](#)). This is an understandable situation

when the students feel too nervous; they tend to lose control of their memory. When the student failed to calm down, they felt more frustrated and could not do as planned (Okada et al., 2017). In the case of the current study, the missing part could also be done in a group presentation when one member simply forgot the line or did not know he/she had to deliver it because of a lack of preparedness.

Challenging Content

Most presentations that the participants had to undergo during their study in the department were assigned in theory-based classes. These classes are designated to teach the students about language teaching and learning theories. Therefore, the materials for presentations were taken from textbooks containing materials using academic English, which is considered challenging for the students. However, only two participants mentioned this challenge relating to the presentation material. Oki's concern with her material tended to emerge when she discussed what she would present with her peers. She stated that sometimes, her peers had more materials than she prepared, and that discomforted her. Umi, on the other hand, had an issue understanding the material. She explained:

*I have tried to learn the material deeply, but I still missed something.
...because when I was enrolled in this major, even though I like English, I still lacked my understanding [of the material].*

Both Oki and Umi showed uncertainty about their understanding and preparation of the materials, although for different reasons. Since the subjects asking students to do an oral presentation contains material that they are not familiar with, this became a challenge. This supports Chen's (2015) study, which found that when the students had to deliver something that they were not familiar with, they were worried. In the case of the current study, the difficulty was also caused by students' low mastery of the medium language. In another study, Tian and Mahmud (2018) found that the number one factor to cause oral presentation anxiety was the content of the presentation. This is likely to be the cause of the participant's nervousness in the current study since as they progressed to the theory-based classes, the presentation content was from reading materials that were highly academic, which were not always easily comprehended.

Language Boundaries

Language mastery can also be a challenge for students in an oral presentation. When students had to present in English, they had had a particular belief about the accuracy of the language they used to present. Umi mentioned that the way some words are pronounced was her challenge and unfamiliar words hindered her understanding, while Ine mentioned unfamiliar words were difficult to present. Both participants did not explain further about this.

Previous studies also found language-related issues (Benraghda et al., 2018; Chen, 2015; Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015; Okada et al., 2017; Tian & Mahmud, 2018; Whai & Mei, 2012). This is likely because, in many language classrooms, students see oral presentations as tools to improve speaking skill and their English mastery in general

(Miles, 2009). However, in the current study, most classes in which the students performed an oral presentation focused more on the content than on language mastery, as CBI classes would. Parts of the language, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, might be part of the grading, but they only took a small portion. However small, though, students' perception about their pronunciation has been found to correlate to their anxiety (Szyszka, 2011). This is likely why not all participants paid so much attention to it or saw it as one of their challenges, although their struggle to understand the material implied language boundary.

High-self Expectation

One participant interestingly mentioned her high self-expectation as a challenge. When asked if it was the same feeling as her nervousness, she said it was a different feeling. Oki stated that she always expected to perform well in any presentation because she knew she was always well-prepared. This jittery excitement to do well at times became her challenge because she had to calm herself down. She elaborated her feeling as follows:

*My adrenaline was pumped because I kept thinking if it was correct or not. It's because the presentations were done in front of the teacher, who was more experienced, who understood [the material] more.
It was like I wanted to prove if I could do it.*

This finding was only found in Oki. This might be due to her nature as an A-straight student. Oki's adrenaline rush does not seem to be ideally in line with any previous study finding. However, it is pretty similar to nervousness, but this is in a different form and cause. Her high expectation might be related to the fact that the teacher watched and graded the presentation. Her excitement to prove herself is what caused this feeling. In their study, Whai and Mei (2012) found that few students had chosen teachers' roles as causing difficulty, and Al-Nouh et al. (2015) also found that grades could cause certain uneasy feelings. Oki's condition also relates to Al-Nouh's finding that few students were still worried even when prepared.

Strategies to Overcome the Challenges

There were eight strategies coded through the participants' interviews. Some strategies were used to overcome more than one challenge. They are presented in the order of popularity, although none of the strategies were used by all participants. The strategies are self-assurance, better preparation, peer discussions, direct eye contact, direct communication, backups, self-isolation, and presentation aids.

Self-assurance

Two participants did a type of self-assurance to overcome their challenges in oral presentations. Umi used this strategy to overcome her nervousness, language boundary, and audience-related challenge. Umi mentioned that her self-

confidence was built after having multiple experiences presenting in front of her peers. She said:

*My solution is just being confident with what I did.
I did not need to feel pressured by people who were smarter than me. For example, if they had better English pronunciation, sentences, or words.*

Meanwhile, Oki used this strategy to overcome her jittery feeling from her high-expectation Oki did a self-suggestion that she would receive the highest grade with her performance to gain more confidence and calm herself down from her adrenaline rush prior to presentations.

One that can hinder the success of a presentation is the lack of self-confidence (Whai & Mei, 2012). Therefore, when the students could build it, it can solve many challenges in the presentation. Umi's self-assurance that she did not need to worry so much about her performance was due to plenty of experience. This agrees with Chen's (2012) finding that students who had more experience presenting orally felt less nervous than their previous presentations. Tian and Mahmud's (2018) study found that the strategies mostly used by students in their study were the social affective strategies, where students made efforts to have control on the affective factors so they could still smoothly express their ideas. The self-assurance that the participants in the current study helped them maintain their affective well-being in their presentation. Further, Tian and Mahmud also found that students from English department did less of these strategies because of their many experiences of doing oral presentations in English, which also corroborates with the current study.

Better Preparation

Two participants mentioned that they would try to be more prepared in their presentations based on experiences from the past. Oki did her preparation by rereading the materials taught in class and recalling the teacher's explanation. She believed that by doing this, she had a foundation of knowledge to perform well and answer questions in a presentation. Meanwhile, Umi shared an experience to show her strategy of being more prepared for a presentation as follows:

... that night, I made a presentation material, but I did not know that I would present it the next day. When [the teacher] called me, I was surprised, but I had been prepared them last night. I had been prepared so that I could explain the material clearly. I felt so proud that I had prepared it so that I could explain the material smoothly. I felt proud because I could surpass people who had better English command than me.

Combining Oki's and Umi's experiences, the better-preparation strategy was used to overcome the challenges with material, language boundary, and audience. Preparation is the key to a successful presentation. Lack of preparation and practice will result in difficulty (Whai & Mei, 2012). Students believed that more practice would also help their presentation (Al-Darwish & Taqi, 2015; Hasanah et al.,

2013) because when students should present with little preparation, they struggle (Al-Nouh et al., 2015; Chen, 2015). The current study participants seemed to learn to be more well-prepared after previous struggles in oral presentations.

Peer-Discussion

Feeling unsure about their understanding of the presentation materials, two participants said they overcame the challenge by discussing the materials with their peers. Nia explained her experience:

I would ask a friend who was better than me—for example, Oki. I would ask her. I did it to help me explain clearly. I mean, have I said it correctly? Or, what is the right way to say it? Thus, later when I presented [my material], I did not make a mistake. I did not misunderstand the material.

Nia, in this case, relied on the view of a peer she considered having better language skills or better understanding of the material to check her preparation. On a similar note, Ine did a similar strategy to overcome her issue of challenging materials. She would ask friends if they had the same perspective and comprehension. This can be seen as one way of doing collaborative work for a presentation (Hasanah et al., 2013), although the students did not do it because they were in the same group. Hasanah et al's study corroborates to the current finding in a way that the students in their study also preferred to work with more familiar, friendly peers.

Directed Eye-Contact

Having good eye contact in public speaking is crucial for the success of a presentation. A presenter should connect to the audience with eye contact. However, this often causes nervousness in some people. Avoiding eye contact with the audience is thus often done by presenters. Interestingly, in the case of two participants of this study, Oki and Nia, the avoidance was done to a specific audience. Both participants directed their eye contact only to peers that they felt close to. They did this to overcome challenges relating to the audience and nervousness. Both Oki and Nia stated that looking at their close friends helps them feel safe and less nervous while maintaining eye contact. Oki elaborated why:

Even though we made mistakes in a presentation, these friends would still pay attention to us, and [it is as if they are telling], "It's okay. Keep going." These particular friends would nod their heads with their serious faces. [It made me feel], "Oh, I did it correctly all this time. It's okay. Keep going."

It can be seen that Oki felt like her close friends, without saying the words, seemed to give her encouragement. This is shared by Nia, who said that she also directed her eye contact to her group members and close friends for encouragement. She said that they seemed to send encouragement even when they did not look at her when she directed her eye contact to them. What Oki and Nia did was similar to what students did in Chen's (2015) study, where students said

that they only looked at their friends because other students made them nervous. The eye contact directed to the audience considered friends helped develop a sense of comradery.

Direct Communication

When it comes to group presentations, problems occurred due to the need to collaborate with members with their individuality. Two participants overcame the challenge with this group dynamic by communicating their issues directly with the person they considered hindering the group harmony. Umi and Nia said that they usually confronted the members who caused the lousy dynamic in the group. Nia, for example, shared her experience as follows:

I would just tell him, "This is your part if you want to be responsible for your own part." If he had already crossed the line, I would tell him, "You should be aware that we have been assigned in one group. You know your group. So, ask. At least ask what to do with the part, which one is your part. At least say something, although a little. Don't just stay silent and take everything for granted."

Based on the extract above, Nia directly communicated her concerns and expectations to her peer when he/she did not comply with the group's decision. Umi shared the similar idea that she usually chose to communicate directly with the whole members of the group if there was a problem with the group dynamic. [Hasanah et al. \(2013\)](#) found in their study that the way a group worked in an oral presentation differed, depending on the dynamics and the rapport among the group members. Some chose to be collaborative in their work, and some chose to work by delegations. What Umi and Nia experienced appears to be the non-collaborative one since everyone in the group has their own parts and these two participants were the leader type of students who wanted to make sure everyone did what they were assigned to do.

Back-Ups

When one group member does not take his/her responsibility well, it would cost the group. Therefore, when certain members were threatening the group dynamic, two participants, Oki and Nia, chose to have a backup plan. Oki chose to add some information in the question-and-answer session to missing backup points caused by her peer's lack of preparation. Meanwhile, Nia shared that some members would volunteer to be the backup for an absent member. She shared her story as follows:

Some people [often] did that (not as responsible). So, before the presentation, we had prepared a backup. We would also prepare the part we assigned to that person because we know what kind of person he/she is.

[Brooks and Wilson \(2014\)](#) argued that oral presentation often did not really contribute significantly to students' improvement in language skills because of the

lack of fluency from the students. They added that when preparation was not done properly, it would make students feel uncomfortable to present. Student that did not contribute a lot in the preparation process could experience this. Nia further said that this happened when one of her peers was late and failed to show up during the allocated presentation time. Clearly, Nia was a dominant student type. [Hasanah et al. \(2013\)](#) found dominant members in a group presentation as a challenge in an oral presentation. However, in the current study, the dominant members seemed to solve the problems in the presentation because they tended to be more prepared than their counterparts.

Self-Isolation

To be more prepared and to overcome the challenge with complex material, Oki isolated herself from her friends prior to her turn to present. She said that she would sit in the back of the classroom, away from her peers, so they would not try to talk to her, memorize and reread the material until she felt confident that she was ready. This strategy was not shared with any other participant. This action can be categorized as Oki's awareness of what worked for her. She showed self-regulated learning with her meta-cognitive ability to do necessary acts ([Hasanah et al., 2013](#)).

Presentation-Aids

She used Q-card and PowerPoint slides to help her presentation. She prepared small Q-cards that fit her palms not to miss any point. She said that Q-cards were very effective but had difficulty with the PowerPoint slides. She said that using power-point slides were tricky because the audience needed enough information from the slides to take note but having too much information on slides were not good either.

Having a note to help a presentation was also done by students in previous studies. [Al-Nouh et al. \(2015\)](#) found that many students feel the need to read from notes and some of them always bring notes during an oral presentation. [Chen \(2015\)](#) also found that some students looked at a notecard they prepared to handle presentation anxiety.

CONCLUSION

The current study has found seven challenges in a classroom oral presentation that overlap. The possible rationale behind it is that one challenge might cause another challenge. Nervousness, group dynamics, audience, missing points, challenging content, language boundaries, and high self-expectation were challenges that one way or another relate to what has been found in previous studies on classroom oral presentations. This implies that regardless of any student's background and individual uniqueness, the EFL classroom context might provide similar challenges. This can help teachers learn to help students work on more practical learning situations in a CBI classroom. Some of the notes that might be useful for teachers are that macro and micro-skills need to be part of what teachers need to teach before a classroom oral presentation ([Brooks & Wilson, 2014](#)).

The findings showed that the students tried to face the challenges through self-assurance, better preparation, peer discussions, direct eye contact, direct communication, backups, self-isolation, and presentation aids. All of them are related to what could help a good and successful oral presentation. Thus, the students solved the problems by conducting what they should do in the first place. The strategies also show the importance of peer support in their role as an entourage, group member, or audience. This implies that it is essential that teachers prepare and coach students enough (Liang & Kelsen, 2018) to deliver their presentation meaningfully and create a supportive class atmosphere.

The study's findings corroborate with the previous studies in different ways. This indicates that challenges and strategies to cope with them are repeated regardless the contexts. This implies that EFL teachers in higher education can mimic each other in what they did in class that have been proven successful and build a robust guideline of EFL oral presentation collaboratively.

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