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Examining Students' Linguistic and Non-Linguistic Speaking Issues and Coping Strategies in English Presentations

Siti Khasinah¹
Saiful Akmal^{*1}
Khairul Izza¹
Amiruddin¹
Muhammad Farhan²

¹Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh 23111, INDONESIA

²Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, 55281, INDONESIA

Abstract

This study investigated types of speaking problems faced by students in English presentations and their strategies to overcome such problems. This was a mixed-method study, in which data were collected using a set of questionnaire and interviews. A purposive sampling technique was used to select students in the academic year of 2017 at the Department of English Language Education, Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh. In addition, this study employed descriptive statistics to analyze the questionnaire data, and Miles' data analysis approach to analyze interview data. The results reveal that the students encountered both linguistic and non-linguistic problems in their English presentations. Linguistic problems include incorrect grammar, lack of vocabulary, and inaccurate pronunciation. Meanwhile, non-linguistic problems include fear of making mistakes, nervousness, shyness, lack of confidence and motivation, and hesitation in using the mother tongue. To overcome these problems, students used several

* Corresponding author, email: saiful.akmal@ar-raniry.ac.id

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strategies, such as being physically and mentally well-prepared, memorizing the materials, and rehearsing the presentation materials. Furthermore, they also used other strategies, such as preparing notes and making minimal eye contact in their presentations. The result of this study is expected to offer a practical yet realistic reflection and anticipative coping strategies for English lecturers to address students' problems in EFL speaking classrooms.

Keywords: Coping strategy, English presentation, linguistic problems, non-linguistic problems, speaking issues.

1. INTRODUCTION

English is now a global language that connects people and is extensively used in language education. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language, which is taught from high school to university level. For foreign language students, four English language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—are necessary. According to [Susilawati et al. \(2017\)](#), speaking is a skill frequently measured based on external performance in various circumstances and presentations. As a result, speaking is considered an important skill that helps students learn English. In speaking, a speaker and listener must interact reciprocally for effective communication ([Xu et al., 2022](#)). When a speaker's objectives are understood by the listener, communication occurs. [Inayah et al. \(2019\)](#) stated that an intelligent communicator anticipates what audiences want to hear or believe and makes it easy for them to understand the context. Therefore, conveying one's experiences or perceptions and expressing one's point of view are the two main purposes of communication. Since speaking ability is considered a language skill when providing oral presentations, only speakers with high speaking skills can clearly transmit information or messages. [Leong and Ahmadi \(2017\)](#) believed that students can succinctly and clearly express their thoughts, ideas, and impressions to audiences through speaking.

However, [Akbari \(2015\)](#) revealed that after spending years studying English at junior and senior high schools, most students still cannot communicate or express ideas verbally in English. [Nakhalah \(2016\)](#) further stated that students only speak English frequently in their classes. Therefore, the students feel less familiar with the language and experience difficulty conversing in English. To gain more confidence in using English, foreign language students must improve their English-speaking abilities both inside and outside classroom settings.

Several prior studies have explored difficulties faced by EFL students' difficulties in English oral presentation. For example, [Wahyuningsih and Afandi \(2020\)](#) investigated students' speaking difficulties in oral presentation (such as the lack of grammar, vocabulary, and confidence), which have implications for speaking curriculum development. Similarly, [Daud et al. \(2019\)](#) conducted a study on the factors contributing to speaking anxiety experienced by pre-service English teachers at an Indonesian university. They measured the anxiety level in relation to presentation assignment and found three most instrumental factors contributing to the level of anxiety in speaking, namely, social, linguistic, and personal factors. Meanwhile, in another study by [Abedini](#)

and Chalak (2017), inhibition is the most influential factor in Iranian students' speaking skills. Although this could be strongly influenced by cultural factors, the need to act in a more relaxed way during the presentation must be properly addressed by the lecturer. Another comparable topic in investigating students' oral performance in a flipped EFL classroom was conducted by Lin and Hwang (2018), who also found that before-class learning participation can improve students' oral performance in the learning process. Their study results revealed that sufficient preparation before class presentation was very helpful for EFL students.

While the aforementioned studies have provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by EFL students during their English presentations, there remains a notable research gap in investigating the current linguistic and nonlinguistic problems and the coping strategies employed by students in delivering oral English presentations, especially in Islamic higher education contexts. In light of these earlier studies and the requirements to identify students' speaking issues during English presentations, it is crucial to disclose every issue that EFL students face when giving a presentation in the language as well as how they resolve it. Thus, two research questions were developed for this study:

1. What are the problems experienced by students in delivering English presentations?
2. How do students cope with the problems they experienced in delivering English presentations?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review, a comprehensive exploration of existing studies and relevant research related to speaking skills in EFL classrooms and English presentations is presented. Drawing upon an array of academic sources, this review aims to critically analyze and synthesize the wealth of knowledge that has contributed to understanding the topic addressed in the present study. Through an examination of peer-reviewed articles, scholarly journals, books, and other credible publications, this study seeks to identify key themes, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings from the current body of literature. By investigating the work of esteemed researchers and scholars, this review endeavors to offer a well-rounded perspective and contributes to the ongoing discourse in the field.

2.1 Speaking Skills in EFL Classroom

Numerous definitions of speaking have been outlined by experts in English language education. Speaking is one of the most crucial skills for English language learners, particularly EFL learners, because it is one of the most dynamic and useful talents (Rao, 2019). In addition, Leong and Ahmadi (2017) claimed that one way to convey ideas, thoughts, and messages orally is through speaking. Epstein (2019) and Khan and Ali (2010) further stated that the ability to communicate and speak fluently helps students share ideas and acquire knowledge. Moreover, Alexander (2018) defined speaking as speech or utterances intended to be recognized by the audience. Additionally, the key of learning a second or foreign language is the capacity to carry on a conversation; this ability

determines success (Humaera & Pramustiara, 2022). Furthermore, how one speaks is determined by the difficulty of the information delivered as speaking is very much defined by their ability to express ideas verbally (Namaziandost et al., 2019).

Additionally, the contemporary world requires that students be able to communicate in real-world situations as it is a fundamental component of learning a language (Rao, 2019). A learner's objective in speaking is to be able to converse in their first language or in a language that speakers can understand with friends, family, co-workers, visitors, or even complete strangers. The level of mutual understanding between speakers and listeners is a good indicator of how effective a speaker is. These definitions allow one to conclude that speaking is an important skill in learning a language, along with the capacity for interpersonal communication.

In light of the fact that communicating successfully is the primary goal of speaking, students are expected to understand what they are saying in order to connect to the audience's expectation despite the fact that the students occasionally have difficulties in explaining what they want to say (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). Speaking difficulties can be caused by six factors, i.e., lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, grammatical errors, reluctance to make mistakes, lack of confidence, and fear of other evaluations (Susilawati et al., 2017). Additionally, Hawalaina et al. (2018), Heriansyah (2012), and Nu'man (2022) classified these problems into two categories: linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties, which are discussed further below.

2.1.1 Linguistic issues in speaking

Lack of vocabulary and improper pronunciation and grammar are linguistic problems in speaking (Akmal et al., 2020). Due to limited word knowledge, Alharthi (2020) explained that EFL students often find it difficult to express their thoughts and ideas clearly, thus hindering their ability to communicate and use overall language skills. In certain cases, interference from learners' native languages, pedagogical approaches, and the ways each person perceives speech sounds may contribute to persistent incorrect pronunciation among students (Ahmed, 2017). The last linguistic problem that may significantly hinder EFL students' confidence in achieving fluency and accuracy in English presentation is grammar. Amoah and Yeboah (2021) observed that the potential impact of individual learner differences, such as age, motivation, and language aptitude on grammar acquisition in speaking is crucial in overcoming grammar-related obstacles in English proficiency. Thus, linguistic issues can also be separated into phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic categories.

2.1.2 Non-Linguistic Issues in Speaking

Conversely, nonlinguistic issues include low participation, the feelings of worry and fear, lack of motivation, interest, and confidence (Auliyah, 2019). In line with this, Akmal et al. (2020) and Jannah and Fitriati (2016) assumed that most students are anxious when they start speaking in front of the audience because they pay full attention to other students when they talk. In reality, our preliminary study observation in the classroom also showed that students encountered similar issues with speaking abilities, such as a lack of exposure

to speaking English and limited vocabulary size, and problems with syntax, intonation, and pronunciation. This is in line with the observation made by [Muluk et al. \(2021\)](#) who claimed that fear of making mistakes (inhibition), lack of confidence and apprehension of other people's evaluations are common problems for EFL students in speaking. In addition, gestures, postures, eye contact and body language can also be regarded as non-linguistic factors in speaking ([Dewi & Wilany, 2022](#)). Furthermore, [Grieve et al. \(2021\)](#) added that uncertainty about a topic can also be considered as a non-linguistic problem in speaking.

2.2 English Presentation, Types, and Its Challenges

English presentation is defined in numerous ways by several experts. [Chen and Yang \(2019\)](#) stated that doing presentation is a means for students to learn new information, such as a text, a phrase, or a way to carry out a task. The initial experience with understandable input, whether it is spoken or written, as well as various forms of explanations, directions, and discussions of new language objects or activities are all referred to as presentations. [Levis \(2018\)](#) added that an oral presentation is an intelligent and practical communication technique that EFL teachers frequently employ to enhance oral proficiency. In light of these considerations, students' academic performance, including their speaking skills as future teachers, can be evaluated ([Khasinah et al., 2019](#)). Students, for example, can use various instructional media to prepare presentation material ([Young & West, 2018](#)). In summary, oral presentations are exercises that students can participate in to improve their oral communication skills. Audiences are present during these presentations to listen to the thoughts and the information shared.

[Alim \(2018\)](#) divided English presentations into informative, persuasive, and demonstrative formats. Given that it presents or summarizes specific information, informative presentations tend to be descriptive. It is possible to ask a presenter in an EFL class to give the audience theoretical, factual, and empirical information. The audience is influenced, persuaded, and convinced to agree with, support, and accept the presenter's beliefs or ideas in the persuasive presentation style, which is the second type of presentation. An EFL teacher can apply a variety of strategies in persuasive presentation, such as the use of figurative language or rhetorical arguments. The other type of presentation is demonstrative presentation. This includes the presenter's ability to exemplify complex phrases or concepts in a more applicable and straightforward perspective, which makes demonstrative presentation as an effective type of presentation.

In English presentation, oftentimes students or presenters encounters some challenges. [Al-Nouh et al. \(2015\)](#) identified at least three challenges in English presentation, namely personal traits, presentation skills, and audiences. Personal traits are understood in terms of the presenter's own expectations in connection to their typical pattern of action, emotion, and thought ([Cao & Meng, 2020](#); [Parks-Leduc et al., 2015](#)). The overall performance of a presenter in a presentation can be significantly affected by their personal trait. During a presentation, for instance, their anxiety, stress, and overconfidence may affect their performance. Presentation skill is another challenge, including how to address difficult or unfamiliar topics and overcome linguistic and non-linguistic problems, such as vocabulary retention, time management, and thematic

visualization (Salem, 2019). The audience is the other cause of presenter's difficulty. In a presentation, the anxiety of being unable to answer unexpected questions or understand comments from the audience can be a challenge in English presentation (Hanifa, 2018).

3. METHODS

This study used a mixed method design, combining the use of a questionnaire and interviews for data collection. Dawadi et al. (2021) stated that most mixed-method research is flexible, in which a researcher derives the conclusions from the intricate demand of present scholars. In the quantitative phase, a researcher engages with a large number of participants within a relatively shorter time for collecting the data. In this study, the data were collected from English speaking presentation-related courses by inquiring the 2017 cohort students' linguistic and non-linguistic issues when giving the English presentation through a questionnaire.

Meanwhile in the qualitative phase, a researcher relies on participant perspectives, poses broad and general questions, primarily collects participant data in the form of words (texts), describes and analyses the theme words, and conducts the investigation intuitively and idiosyncratically (Leavy, 2017). In this study, the interview in the qualitative phase aimed to gain in-depth insights into the linguistic and non-linguistic speaking problems faced by students during their English presentations, as well as the coping strategies they employed to overcome these challenges.

3.1 Participant of Study

Purposive sampling is a sampling technique where members of the target population meet certain practical criteria to be selected (Gates et al., 2020). Therefore, the samples for this study were based on predetermined criteria rather than using a random selection technique (Janusheva et al., 2022). The participants of this study were 1) willing to participate, 2) students of Department of English Language Education at the 2017 academic year (cohort) from Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, 3) having time availability. A Google-form questionnaire was distributed to students who had passed English speaking presentations related subjects, and 32 responses were obtained for the data in this study. The researchers endeavoured to find information from students who had passed English Speaking Presentations related subjects because the preliminary observation from the Department of English Language Education management showed that some classes did not use the speaking presentations as the final projects or assignments. Therefore, this study only selected English speaking presentations related subjects that used individual speaking presentations as the final projects or assignments.

Then six students out of 32 were recruited for interviews. From the six selected participants, five of them consented to participate, and their names were anonymously coded. First, from their presentations in English speaking presentations related subjects classes, three students received A grades, and three students received B grades. This arrangement was made because we wanted to determine if students who received A and B grades experienced similar problems and used similar coping strategies. One participant

ultimately dropped out of the study for personal reasons. These individuals as seen in Table 1 were students from the English Language Education Department at Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry who had taken English presentation skills related courses and completed all English-speaking skill courses during the 2017 academic year.

Table 1. The profile of the interview participants.

No	Participant	Age	Gender	Subject	Score of English Speaking Presentation Related Subjects
1	P1	22	Female	Public speaking	A
2	P2	23	Female	Intermediate Speaking	A
3	P3	22	Male	Basic speaking	B
4	P4	22	Male	Public speaking	A
5	P5	23	Female	Intermediate speaking	B

3.2 Research Instrument

The data was gathered through a questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire which consisted of 12 items and was distributed using Google-form was used to find out the answer of the first research question, which is related to the prevalence linguistic and non-linguistic issues encountered during oral presentation. It was distributed for 32 student of cohort 2017 from the Department of English Language Education. The questionnaire asked the participants' demographic information, and contained Likert-scale items to assess the average level of the problems encountered in delivering English presentations. Measures were also taken to ensure data integrity, including ensuring anonymity, preventing multiple submissions from the same respondent, and checking for incomplete responses.

The interviews used in this study were semi-structured interviews. According to [Canals \(2017\)](#), a semi-structured interview helps participants feel more at ease and relaxed since it transforms the interview into more of a conversation as opposed to a methodical examination of students' speaking linguistic and non-linguistic issues and their coping strategies in English presentations. Therefore, an interview guide was designed for the purpose of data collection, addressing the first and the second research question. The interviews consisted of eight questions and were used to investigate the five students' problems and their coping strategies during their English presentations in the classrooms. The sample consisted of five students, with three of them received "A", and two of them received "B" for English speaking presentation related subjects. One student with "B" score declined to be interviewed for personal reasons, making the previously intended equal participants for each "A" and "B" score unreachable. The English interview duration was allocated between 40 to 60 minutes for each participant. This study sought the consent of the participants before recording and transcribing the interview data.

3.3 Data Analysis

In the first quantitative data collection using a questionnaire, the data analysis involved descriptive statistics. By using descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages,

means and standard deviations, the questionnaires dissected the findings into three structures, namely the demographic information, the linguistic issues, and non-linguistic issues during English presentations. Meanwhile, the qualitative data analysis for the semi structure interviews was analyzed using the procedure proposed by Miles et al. (2019), in which data reduction, data visualization, conclusion drawing, and conclusion verification were employed.

The data reduction stage involved selecting, concentrating, simplifying, and transforming raw data with care. This procedure ensured that the most relevant data about the problems and coping strategies in English presentation from the dataset were easier to handle and more logical for subsequent analyses. It also involved the process of reducing data, especially those irrelevant to the first and second research questions of the study. The clustered data was then classified into some main themes and subthemes accordingly for future elaboration in the findings section. Following this, graphs or charts were used to visualize the data. This was particularly instrumental in writing the research finding section because the data visualization helped reveal patterns, trends, and relationships within the data, making complex information comprehensible to readers, particularly for addressing the first findings concerning the linguistic and non-linguistic problems encountered by the students during English speaking presentations as well as the coping strategies for the problems.

Upon reaching the conclusion stage of the study, the data visualization was used to pinpoint the significant findings, generating the conclusion. A rigorous process of conclusion verification was further carried out to check the validity and reliability of the conclusion. Furthermore, in order to confirm the generalizability and consistency of the findings, we cross-referenced the findings with previously published research and conducted peer reviews.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Type of Speaking Problems Experienced by Students

The first research question focused on the different speaking issues encountered by the students at English Language Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry when delivering oral presentation in English. The results of the questionnaire and interviews showed that the participants had experienced both linguistic and non-linguistic issues in delivering their English presentation. The following explanation elaborates the findings from the questionnaire and interviews about the linguistic and non-linguistic problems.

4.1.1 Linguistic problems

The students reported that they encountered linguistic problems in English presentations including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. These linguistic problems collectively created a barrier for effective communication, underscoring the need for targeted support and practice in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation to

improve students' skills in English presentations. Below is further elaboration of the linguistic problem found from the students' experiences.

a. Vocabulary

Students' limited vocabulary was one of the most frequent challenges found in oral presentation. The students' ability to speak English was currently stagnating due to a lack of vocabulary. Having limited vocabulary resulted in lack of ideas, thoughts, and opinions conveyed by the students, particularly since they found it difficult to communicate their ideas. Figure 1 summarizes the students' response concerning vocabulary as one of the linguistic problems they faced in English oral presentation.

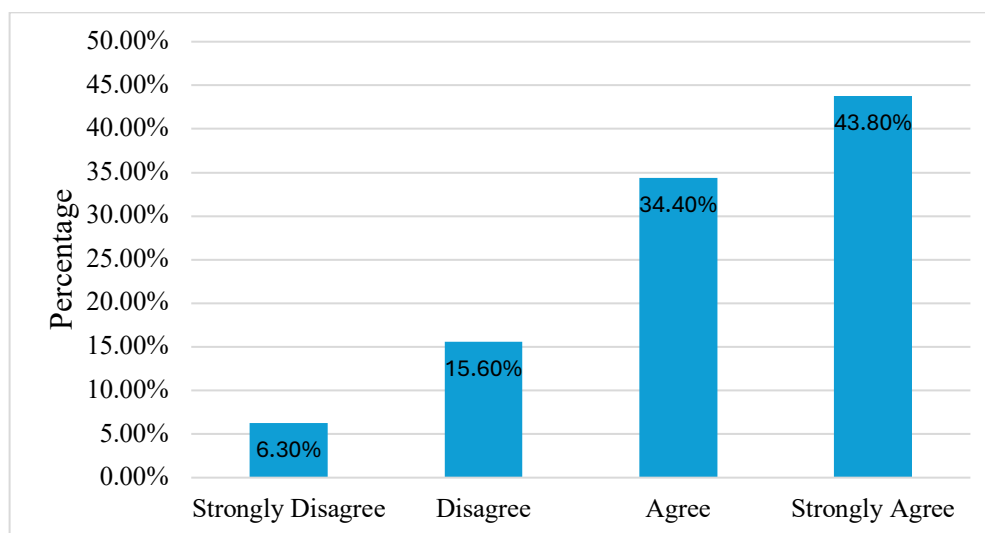


Figure 1. Response to linguistic problems (vocabulary).

From the chart above, almost half of the students (43.8%) strongly agreed and many of them (34.4%) agreed that vocabulary was a problem in English presentations. This means that the majority of them admitted that vocabulary was a challenge for them in speaking English. During the interview, P1 also confirmed that:

- (1) I also have a limited vocabulary, which makes it difficult for me to express what's on my mind (Excerpt 1, P1-12).

b. Grammar

One of the key components of English speaking is grammar. The time marker is indicated using grammatical features in English language. The use of proper grammar when speaking in English is very important because it reduces uncertainty in conversation and makes the presentation easier to understand. Figure 2 summarizes the students' response on grammar as one of linguistic problems they experienced in English presentation.

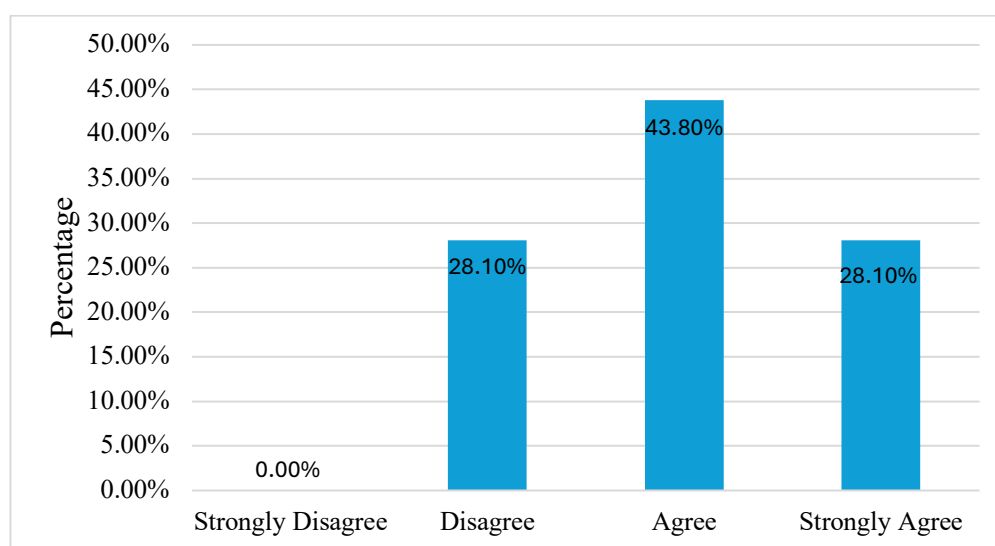


Figure 2. Response to linguistic problems (grammar).

Figure 2 shows that many students (43.8%) agreed and some of them (28.1%) strongly agreed that grammar was a problem in delivering a presentation. On the other hand, 28.1% of students disagreed that grammar was a problem in speaking. Excerpt 2 shows the opinion of P2 from the interview.

(2) I find it challenging to talk with the proper grammar when I do the speaking (Excerpt 2, P2-18).

Accurate grammatical usage in a statement was a challenge for students. They found it challenging to explain events that occurred in the past, present, and future. Furthermore, poor grammar might cause miscommunication between the speaker and the listener.

c. Pronunciation

In speaking English, pronunciation is very important. Every word should be pronounced appropriately in English to prevent misunderstandings. Participants' responses to two questions revealed that the students needed to work on pronouncing the words more accurately because it might be challenging for EFL students to speak English with appropriate pronunciation. In Figure 3, students' responses regarding pronunciation as one of the linguistic problems is illustrated.

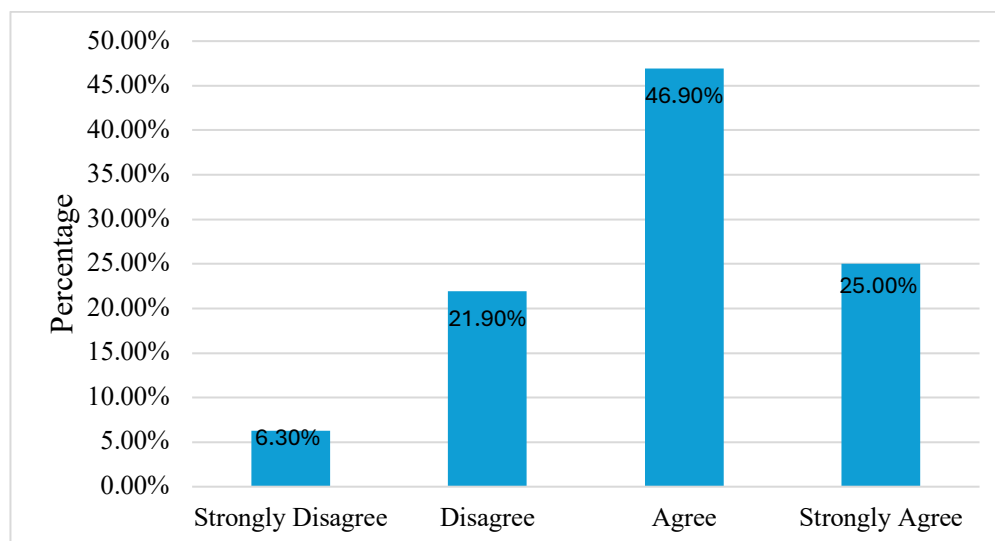


Figure 3. Response to linguistic problems (pronunciation).

Figure 3 indicates that most of the students claimed to have a challenge in using appropriate pronunciation in delivering English presentations. In particular, 46.9% of the students agreed – and other 25% strongly agreed – that they had trouble pronouncing words correctly. According to this response, most students find pronunciation a crucial area of concern. It indicated that improving the students' pronunciation abilities was necessary to enhance their overall efficacy when giving presentations in English.

- (3) It's incredibly difficult to have good grammar, good pronunciation, and to memorize a lot of vocabulary (Excerpt 3, P5-21).
- (4) It's challenging for me to pronounce words clearly (Excerpt 4, P3-23).

4.1.2 *Non-linguistic problems*

a. Fear of making mistakes

There is a fear of making mistakes experienced by most of the students in delivering English presentation. The feeling that their performance was evaluated by teachers and audience, and those who doubted their proficiency in speaking English was the cause of this problem. Figure 4 describes students' fear of making mistake during English presentation.

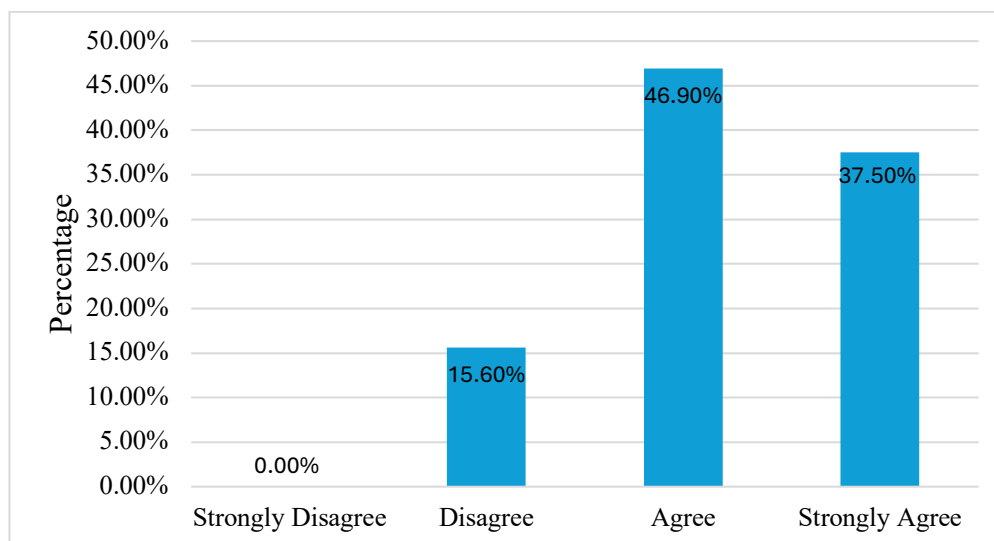


Figure 4. Response to non-linguistic problems (fear of making a mistake).

Figure 4 displays that almost half of the students (46.9%) agreed and many of them (37.5%) strongly agreed that a fear of making mistakes was a problem for them in speaking English. This widespread apprehension about making errors suggests that anxiety and lack of confidence were major barriers to effective communication in English, highlighting the importance of addressing these psychological factors in language learning and presentation skills training. In this light, P2 confirmed his worry during the interview based on Excerpt 5.

(5) However, I also worry that I'll say something incorrectly (Excerpt 5, P2-17).

b. Reticence or Shyness

When students wanted to deliver a speech in front of a large audience, they frequently encountered this issue. They experienced shyness, which made them less effective orators. This figure explains the frequent appearances of shyness and reticence in English presentations.

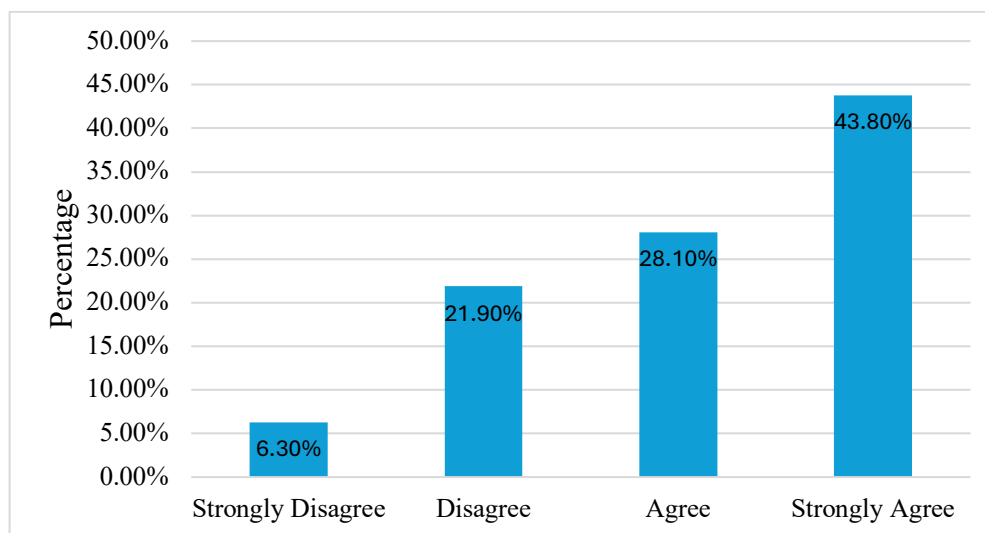


Figure 5. Response to non-linguistic problems (shyness).

Figure 5 shows that many students (28.1%) reported their agreement, and almost half of them (43.8%) strongly agreed that their shyness in presenting was a problem for them. This data highlights the prevalence of shyness among students during presentations. It also indicates that nearly three-quarters of respondents found shyness to be a notable issue impacting their ability to present effectively.

In addition, P3 expressed that this difficulty contributed to the fear of speaking in front of audience. P3 also emphasized how pronunciation issues significantly impacted their confidence and willingness to engage in public speaking, underscoring the need for targeted support in this area. Performing public speaking presentation with foreign language was indeed demanding for students.

- (6) To pronounce words clearly and accurately is challenging. One of the reasons I'm afraid to speak in front of people is because of that (Excerpt 6, P3-11).

P1 also expressed concerns about speaking in front of the audience. She noted that the attention of the crowd heightened their anxiety. This comment underscored the common issue of public speaking anxiety, where the awareness of being the center of attention could trigger nervousness, making it difficult for a speaker to maintain composure and effectively deliver their presentation:

- (7) When I start speaking in front of a crowd, I get nervous since everyone is looking at me (Excerpt 7, P1-10).

c. Lack of Confidence

Errors in a conversation or speech often revealed the students' lack of confidence. Students chose to remain silent rather than addressing the errors because they lacked the confidence to initiate conversation. The students' development in speaking English was severely hampered by a lack of confidence to speak in English. Lack of confidence can be

indicated by a number of ways, including speaking softly, averting eye contact, and faltering or fumbling over words. The chart below illustrates how common this non-linguistic issue (lack of confidence) happened among students. To enhance the students' presentation skills and help them become more proficient speakers, it is imperative that they address issues related to their confidence.

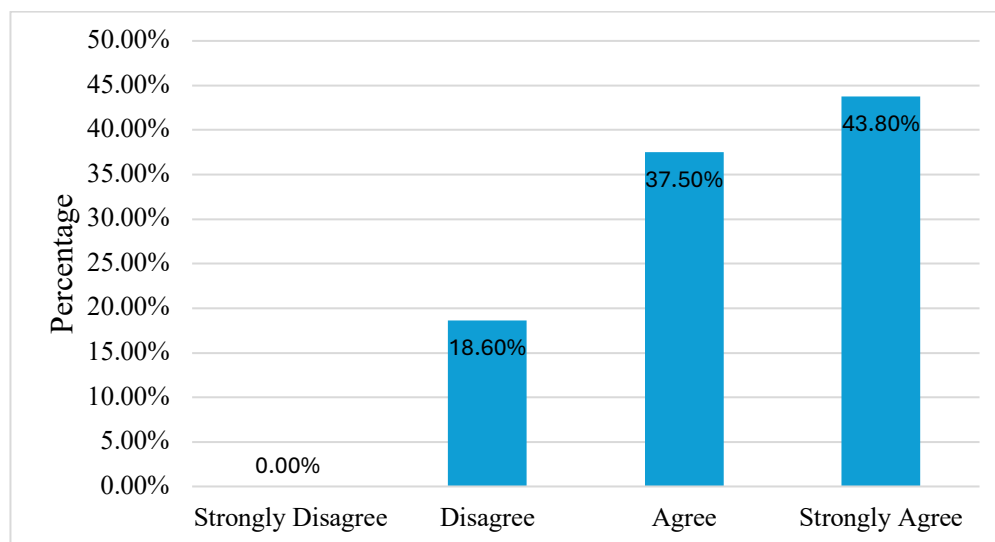


Figure 6. Response for non-linguistic problems (lack of confidence).

As observed in Figure 6, lack of confidence was reported as a problem in English presentation as claimed by the majority of students. Most students indicated that their speaking was hampered by a lack of confidence. Precisely 37.5% of students concurred, and 43.8% strongly concurred that this lack of confidence problem influenced their presentations. The participants also emphasized the significance of confidence toward their public speaking skills as in Excerpt 8.

(8) As I started to speak in front of the people, I lost my confidence (Excerpt 8, P1-15).

P5 also brought attention to a typical physical sign of anxiousness that undermined her self-assurance when speaking in front of an audience. This comment highlighted how physiological symptoms affected speakers' confidence and showed how they reacted to nervousness could compromise the presenters' effectiveness. This experience was representative of a larger problem known as performance anxiety, which affected not just mental and emotional states but also physical health in a way that could make it more difficult to speak effectively in front of an audience.

(9) When my hands start shaking, I become less confident when speaking in front of others (Excerpt 9, P5-30).

d. Motivational deficit or lack of motivation

Students need to be very motivated to master English speaking skills. Students' motivation to learn increases their interest in the subject. The lack of interest in speaking in front of the audience was a problem for students who believed their English language proficiency was poor. To improve their English-speaking skills, they needed to have motivation learn and practice.

Students' answers to non-linguistic difficulties are highlighted in Figure 7, with a particular focus on lack of motivation. The information in Figure 7 shows that a large percentage of students found it difficult to stay motivated when giving presentations. There were a number of possible reasons causing the lack of motivation, such as fear of public speaking or negative past experiences. This is a common problem that affected the students' performance in general and their readiness. To help students become more involved and proficient presenters, it is imperative to address the underlying causes of this motivational shortfall.

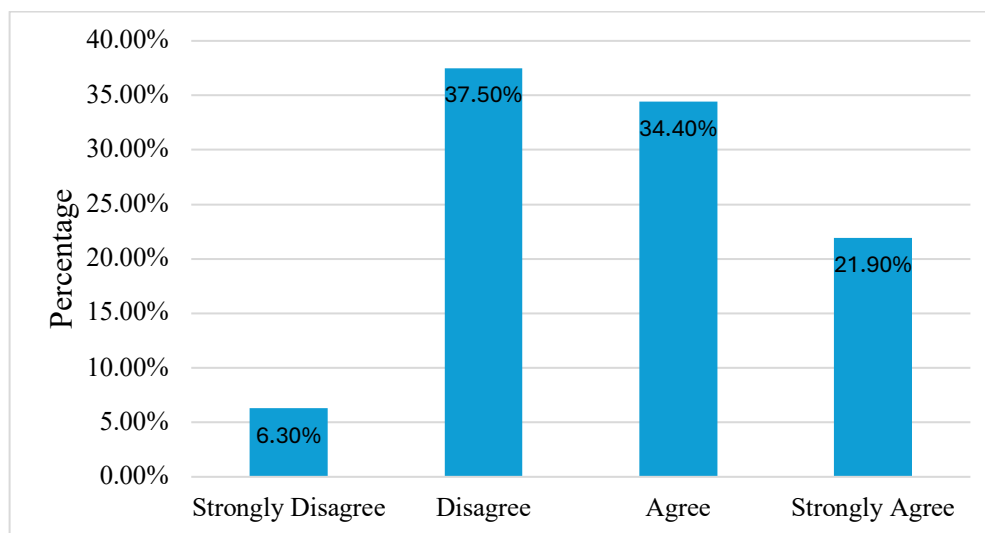


Figure 7. Response to non-linguistic problems (lack of motivation).

In contrast to lack of confidence, lack of motivation was claimed with disagree responses by 37.5% students as a source of problems in delivering English presentations, even though more than half of the students (34.4% and 21,9%) showed their agreement. P5 additionally informed that:

- (10) I occasionally lack motivation to give a public speech because I believe that I have very low English-speaking skills (Excerpt 10, P5-33).

e. Inhibition

One's confidence is negatively affected by inhibition. Inhibitions occurred in situations when speaking or presenting materials in front of others drew attention from other students, which was similar to feeling nervous. Students' answers to non-linguistic

issues are shown in Figure 8, emphasizing inhibition. According to the findings, inhibition was a major obstacle that many students faced in public speaking. Figure 8 highlights the significant proportion of students impacted by this problem, which impeded their capacity for self-assured and assertive communication. Establishing a nurturing environment and teaching students the techniques to make them feel more at ease and less self-conscious in front of an audience were considered essential in helping them overcome inhibitions.

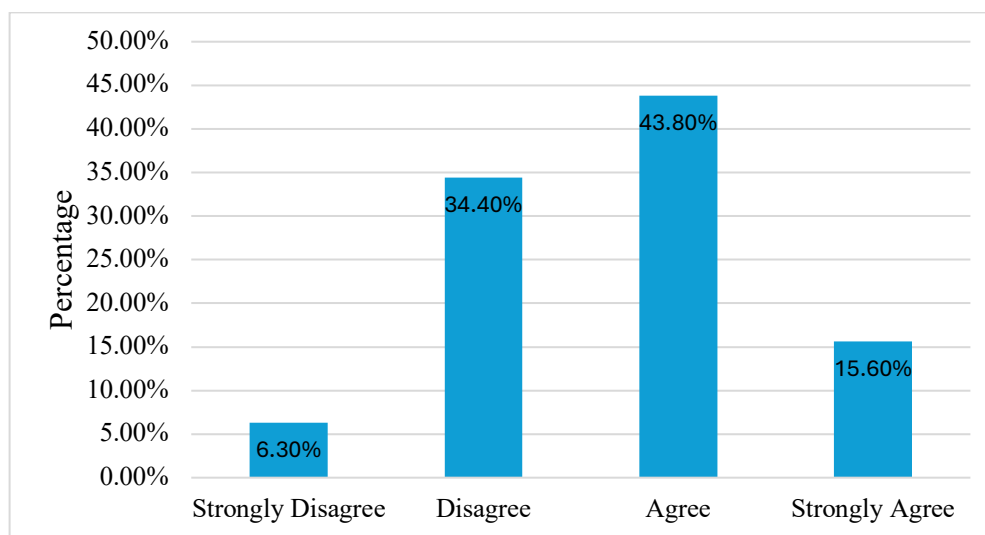


Figure 8. Response to non-linguistic problems (inhibition).

Figure 8 shows that almost half of the students considered inhibition as difficulty in delivering presentation. With nearly half of the students recognized inhibition as a problem, i.e., 43.8% agreeing and 15.6% strongly agreeing, Figure 8 emphasizes that inhibition was a substantial speaking challenge. This figure illustrates the significant negative effects that self-consciousness and judgmental dread can have on the students' skills for successful communication. P1 acknowledged this feeling:

- (11) Because everyone in the audience is focused on me when I speak in public, I can get anxious at times (Excerpt 11, P1-13).

P3 continued to describe his experience giving a speech in front of an audience, highlighting their worry and terror. When a student presented in front of an audience, they often carried a heavy emotional load. Due to trepidation, uncertainty, and apprehension, anxiety can have a significant negative effect on performance.

- (12) I am anxious and frightened when I speak in front of others (Excerpt 12, P3-11).

f. Mother tongue influence

For students who speak their own native language, English is a foreign language. Instead of using English, students would rather speak in their own language. Therefore, English might be challenging to use in everyday communication at times. Figure 9

represents students' responses regarding non-linguistic problems, especially on the influence of their mother tongue on their English presentation.

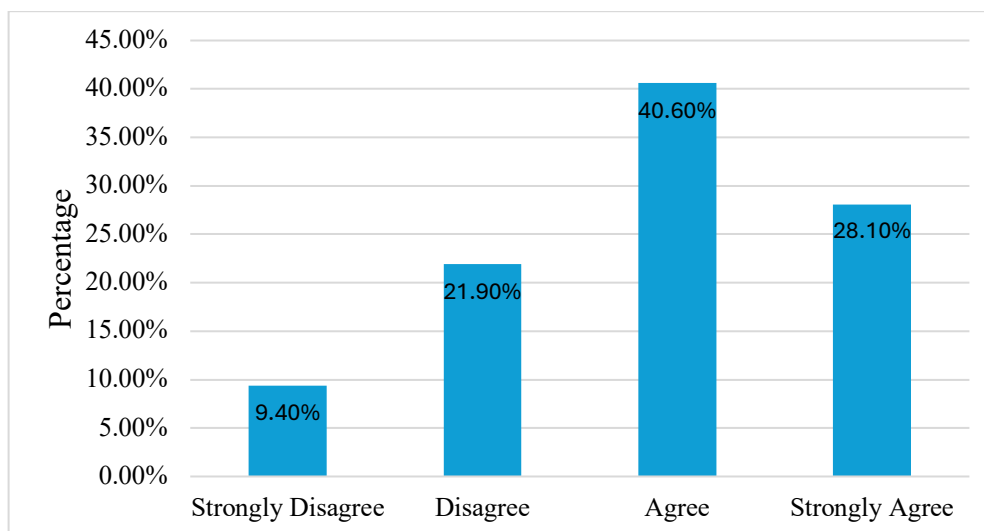


Figure 9. Response to non-linguistic problems (mother tongue influence).

Figure 9 indicates that the majority of students agreed (40.6%) and strongly agreed (28.1%) that mother tongue influence was a challenge in delivering a speech in English. Based on the data, the majority of students perceived mother tongue influence as a challenge when delivering a presentation in English. P4 echoed this sentiment in Excerpt 13.

- (13) When I try to construct a statement in English, I struggle. It's because I don't use English often. I find it easier to communicate in my first tongue (Excerpt 13, P4-19).

4.2 Students' Strategies in Overcoming the Speaking Problems

This section presents the findings on how the students overcame their speaking difficulties in English presentations. The results of the interviews show that each student had a unique strategy to overcome their speaking difficulties. Some students practiced extensively to improve their vocabulary and grammar, while others sought feedback from peers and instructors to refine their pronunciation and presentation skills. Additionally, several other students employed context-specific approaches to manage their anxiety and build confidence.

4.2.1 Self-preparation

The students responded to having a coping strategy to handle their problems in delivering English presentations. The strategies include (1) to be well-prepared, (2) to try to be relaxed, and (3) to find friends with the same problems. These approaches collectively helped students navigate their speaking issues more effectively and build their confidence in delivering English presentations.

a. Material Preparation

Before giving a presentation, students should prepare their material. Additionally, the materials must be mastered, so that the students did well when speaking English. All relevant information about the topic in the presentation can be accessed from various sources, including books, journal articles, and YouTube videos. P3 made shared his perspective on material preparation as shown in Excerpt 15.

- (14) I need to gather information or the key points linked to the subject before I talk. At least I know what I'm going to talk about (Excerpt 14, P3-27).

P5 made his presentation preparation strategy by highlighting the value of a comprehensive material analysis and the utilization of multimedia tools. P5 showed a proactive approach to adding pertinent and easily accessible content to their presentations by making use of resources such as YouTube videos. This approach not only enhances the material but also makes the information delivery more engaging and accommodating for the audience's varied learning styles.

- (15) I have to get ready for some of the materials. I frequently cite YouTube videos (Excerpt 15, P5-42).

b. Mental Preparation

Before speaking in front of the audience, students take preparation into consideration. By mastering the material, they can gain better confidence. The students did not need to worry about the speaking performance when they had taken adequate time to prepare their presentation intensively. P2 affirmed that:

- (16) Before I go speak in front of a crowd, there is one thing I really need to do: prepare my mentality, exercise in front of a mirror. To do well when speaking English, speaking rehearsal is essential (Excerpt 16, P2-12).

To build confidence in their presentation, some students employed rehearsal techniques, such as practicing in front of a mirror. P4, for instance, emphasized the importance of this method. Rehearsing helped the students identify areas for improvement and enhance their vocal clarity and their overall performance readiness.

- (17) I rehearsed a lot in front of the mirror to make sure I'm ready to perform in front of others (Excerpt 17, P4-33).

As reported by P1, thorough preparation was essential before delivering a presentation. This sentiment underscored the value of rehearsal in ensuring readiness and confidence when facing an audience. By dedicating time to practicing their content, the students could refine their delivery, internalize key points, and identify areas that required further attention, as expressed in Excerpt 18

- (18) I need to practice my topic before giving a public speech, so that's what I'll do to prepare. (Excerpt 18, P1-22).

4.2.2 *Using a context-specific strategy*

It is imperative to have plans in place to deal with the difficulty issues during the English presentation. These following strategies were useful in managing and resolving the students' speaking difficulties when presenting in English.

a. Taking notes

P4 highlighted a strategy to enhance their speaking performance. This approach demonstrated P4's proactive approach to ensuring clarity and coherence in their presentations. By jotting down essential phrases and terms, P4 likely aimed to maintain focus, organize thoughts, and ensure they covered key points effectively during their speech.

- (19) I used to write down a few key phrases and terms that I would use during the speaking performance on a small piece of paper before I began. To make sure I'm ready to perform with the little note in front of others, I practice it frequently in front of a mirror. (Excerpt 19, P4-28).

According to the participant's explanation in Excerpt 19, having a brief note on hand makes it easier for them to practice speaking English and helps them recall key themes.

b. Learning the information by heart before speaking in front of an audience

The majority of students tried to memorize the content of their presentations. It is one of the ways that students used to ensure effective speaking performances. P5 expressed a pragmatic approach to delivering a presentation despite personal feelings. In this case, P5 recognized importance of delivering effective presentations although they did not inherently enjoy the process. By emphasizing the need to memorize information, P5 underscored the effort and dedication required to ensure a clear and comprehensible delivery.

- (20) Even if I find public speaking to be less interesting, I still have to do it. Therefore, I must memorize the information (Excerpt 20, P5-15).

c. Avoiding eye contact

P1 explained that he made a deliberate effort to avoid direct eye contact with the audience during presentations. This suggests that one of the common challenges among speakers was discomfort or anxiety about engaging directly with their audience members. However, avoiding eye contact can impact the speaker's ability to establish rapport, convey confidence, and maintain audience interest.

- (21) I make an effort to avoid making direct eye contact with the audience. One of the interactions between speaker and listener is making eye contact with the crowd. (Excerpt 21, P1-9).

However, not all students were comfortable making eye contact with the audience. For these students, the arguments they have previously developed might be forgotten when they looked at the audience. P1 shared an important insight regarding their experience in English presentation, revealing that the fear of forgetting their content made them avoid making eye contact with the audience. By recognizing and actively working to overcome this fear, P1 and other speakers could improve their confidence, maintain coherence in their presentations, and establish stronger connections with their audience. P1 also expressed:

- (22) Since it causes me to suddenly forget what I am about to say, I actually hardly ever look the audience in the eye. (Excerpt 22, P1-17).

The methods used by the students to overcome their speaking issues during English presentations were, in general, successful. Their speaking performance primarily improved when they used those strategies. This is reflected in Excerpt 23.

- (23) Yes, it definitely works on me. I can compare how well I talk with and without making eye contact, and when I utilize the strategy, I feel better than when I don't make eye contact (Excerpt 23, P4-32).

P3 shared the effectiveness of a technique she implemented to improve her comfort level when speaking in front of a crowd. By continuing to refine and adapt to these methods, P3 demonstrated a proactive approach to overcoming speaking challenges and achieving greater comfort and competence in public speaking situations, including giving presentation.

- (24) Yes, I believe the method is working. Although it is not 100%, I feel more comfortable than before speaking in front of a crowd (Excerpt 24, P3-26).

Based on findings, it can be inferred that overcoming the speaking issues required having specific techniques that contextually suited the situation. These techniques helped students minimize their speaking issues when presenting in English, and the students' presentation improved.

5. DISCUSSION

The present study aims to examine the linguistic and non-linguistic speaking challenges faced by students during English presentations and to explore the coping strategies they employed to overcome these challenges. The findings shed light on the multifaceted nature of the difficulties encountered by English as a foreign language (EFL) students in the context of performing English academic presentations and highlighted the significance of operative coping strategies adopted by students in enhancing their presentation skills.

Speaking difficulties related to the participants' native languages were noted as one of their main challenges. EFL students frequently had issues with grammatical accuracy, vocabulary limitations, and pronunciation problems, which hampered their presentation

fluency and coherence. These difficulties escalated with the interference and structures of the learners' first language, which resulted in faults and inaccuracies in their spoken English.

According to the interviews, speaking issues among students in English presentations may be divided into two categories: linguistic and non-linguistic issues, which align with those discovered by [Hawalaina et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Heriansyah \(2012\)](#). Linguistic issues revealed that participants struggled with proper grammatical usage, inadequate vocabulary, and improper pronunciation. These language issues were also found in several previous studies. [Amoah and Yeboah \(2021\)](#) asserted that the importance of vocabulary in L2 performance and competency is widely acknowledged. Ineffective vocabulary use significantly hinders an effective EFL communication ([Al-Jarf, 2022](#)). [Riadil \(2020\)](#) discovered that rather than only requiring accurate grammar or strong pronunciation and vocabulary, teachers frequently ask students to learn how to speak the language. Additionally, students' skill to speak more clearly also refers to accurate pronunciation ([Ilham et al., 2020](#)).

Non-linguistic issues were equally salient in the students' presentation experiences. Participants' emotional difficulties are included in those issues, which cover fear of making mistakes, shyness, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, inhibition, and mother tongue influences. This phenomenon resonates with studies investigating the impact of public speaking anxiety on language learners as found by [Leong and Ahmadi \(2017\)](#), illustrating the profound implications of affective factors on oral proficiency. [Nguyen \(2020\)](#) further claimed that EFL students who are not requested to speak out observe in silence as others try to engage in spoken contact. It is possible that every student in the class also experiences those non-linguistic issues.

Despite these difficulties, the study also shows that students used a variety of coping strategies to overcome their speaking difficulties during the presentations. To improve their speaking performance, participants said that they used such techniques as rigorous rehearsal. They began by preparing themselves, which includes rehearsing, mental preparation, and material preparation. These strategies align with research emphasizing the importance of pre-presentation preparations in reducing anxiety and enhancing overall presentation quality, where subject-related materials may present different level of difficulties for students ([Jiang & Dewaele, 2019](#)). They occasionally have to present on an unfamiliar topic in front of an audience. Students must therefore thoroughly prepare for the topic-related resources. These findings were in line with previous research highlighting the benefits of rehearsal as emphasized by [Mridha and Muniruzzaman \(2020\)](#). Therefore, independent practise should be promoted to students. As students become more self-sufficient with their thoughts and ideas, they should speak English frequently. They also need to use contextual strategies to improve their speaking performance. To prevent them from forgetting the important information, they need to employ such techniques as preparing a small note, practising in front of a mirror, and avoiding direct eye contact with the audience. Hence, the majority of the strategies used by the participants were successful in their respective cases, and they even felt more comfortable speaking in front of an audience afterward.

6. CONCLUSION

The current study has attempted to provide a thorough examination of the linguistic and non-linguistic speaking difficulties that EFL students encountered during English presentations, and the coping strategies they used to overcome these difficulties. The result emphasizes the importance of addressing both language-related and affective aspects to improve EFL students' presentation skills, which is by illuminating the varied nature of the challenges they experienced while giving English presentations in front of their peers.

Participants struggled with grammatical accuracy, vocabulary constraints, and pronunciation issues, which negatively affected their performance in English presentations. These linguistic obstacles appeared as a key concern and escalated with the interference of the learners' first languages. Hence, the need of personalized language training that targets particular pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary problems is highlighted by the fact that these barriers are persistent.

Non-linguistic problems also played an essential part as students reported feeling anxious and frightened, which affected their confidence and other presentation success. These sensitive obstacles influenced the students' linguistic proficiency as well as their participation in the learning process. To have supportive learning settings that foster students' self-assurance and motivation, it is crucial to integrate this component of language learning into the curriculum design.

The study also shows that EFL students used a variety of coping strategies to successfully manage their speaking difficulties. Preparatory techniques, such as rehearsal at home and script memorizing, were essential for improving students' English presentation skills. This highlights the significance of including pre-presentation exercises in language learning so that students can gain self-assurance and sharpen their speaking skills before speaking in front of an audience. In addition, it was determined that using particularly multimedia tools like PowerPoint presentations, short video clips, and YouTube videos, was helpful to cope with language problems, ensuring of the students' presentation success, and increasing their motivation and engagement.

Language educators, curriculum developers, and language institutions can all get benefit from the results of this study. Language educators can create focused, specialized treatments to improve language competency by acknowledging the unique linguistic difficulties EFL students encountered. Additionally, creating a welcoming and accepting learning atmosphere where the emotional difficulties of public speaking are acknowledged might improve students' overall language learning experiences and increase their self-confidence.

This present study also provides valuable insights for curriculum developers and language institutions seeking to enhance students' speaking skills in English. By analyzing both linguistic and non-linguistic challenges faced by students during the presentations, the study encourages curriculum developers to use these findings to revise existing speaking modules that address specific linguistic issues such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Understanding the prevalent non-linguistic challenges like anxiety and lack of confidence allow for the integration of targeted strategies and exercises into the curriculum. Language institutions can also develop tailored support programs based on the coping strategies identified in the study.

However, despite the fact that this study offers insightful information about the speaking difficulties and coping techniques of EFL students, it is subjected to some limitations. The generalizability of the results may be constrained by the relatively small sample size and the particular institutional context. To further evaluate and build upon the outcomes of the current study, future research should consider using bigger and more diverse sample in a variety of educational contexts at higher education institutions.

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