Investigating Lecturers' and Students' Perceptions of Oral Presentations in EFL Reading Class: A Qualitative Study at the English Education Study Program of Sriwijaya University

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Article Info	Abstract
	This study explored students' and lecturers' perceptions of using oral presentation to improve reading comprehension, as well as the challenges students faced and the strategies they used to overcome them. A qualitative approach was employed, and the data were collected through semi-structured interviews with ten English education students and two English lecturers. The findings revealed that students perceived oral presentations encouraged them to read more thoroughly, prepare more carefully, and gain a deeper understanding of the material. They also reported that oral presentations increased their motivation and responsibility in delivering clear and comprehensible explanations to their peers. Moreover, lecturers also perceived oral presentations as an effective way to assess students' actual understanding and promote deeper engagement with texts. However, several challenges were also faced by students, including linguistic factors, psychological barriers such as anxiety and lack of confidence, and environmental aspects. To address these challenges, they employed various strategies, including preparation and practice (e.g., repeated reading, summarizing, and rehearsing), self-motivation strategies (e.g., positive self-talk and affirmations), and attention control techniques (e.g., maintaining eye contact, voice modulation, and using ice-breakers). This study provided recommendations for future researchers.

Artikel Info	Abstrak
	Studi ini mengeksplorasi persepsi mahasiswa dan dosen tentang penggunaan presentasi untuk meningkatkan pemahaman bacaan, serta tantangan yang dihadapi mahasiswa dan strategi yang mereka gunakan untuk mengatasinya. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan, dan data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan sepuluh mahasiswa pendidikan bahasa Inggris dan dua dosen bahasa Inggris. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa menganggap bahwa presentasi lisan mendorong mereka untuk membaca lebih teliti, mempersiapkan diri dengan lebih cermat, dan memperoleh pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang materi tersebut. Mereka juga melaporkan bahwa presentasi lisan meningkatkan motivasi dan tanggung jawab mereka dalam menyampaikan penjelasan yang jelas dan mudah dipahami kepada rekan-rekan mereka. Selain itu, dosen juga menganggap presentasi lisan sebagai cara yang efektif untuk menilai pemahaman mahasiswa yang sebenarnya dan mendorong keterlibatan yang lebih dalam dengan teks. Namun, beberapa tantangan juga dihadapi oleh mahasiswa, termasuk faktor linguistik, hambatan psikologis seperti kecemasan dan kurangnya kepercayaan diri, dan aspek lingkungan. Untuk mengatasi tantangan ini, mereka menggunakan berbagai strategi, termasuk persiapan dan praktik (misalnya, membaca berulang-ulang, meringkas, dan berlatih), strategi motivasi diri (misalnya, berpikir positif dan afirmasi), dan teknik pengendalian perhatian (misalnya, menjaga kontak mata, modulasi suara, dan menggunakan *ice-breaker*). Studi ini memberikan rekomendasi bagi peneliti masa depan.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the essential English skills that should be considered because reading plays a significant role in academic success, particularly for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). It can help learners enhance their language acquisition by activating their background knowledge of words, vocabulary, and grammar while reading (Raajitha, 2019).

Therefore, learners must have good reading comprehension to understand the text's meaning. Related to that, developing reading comprehension skills for learning English as a foreign language is essential in the learning process (Kondra, 2023). By having good reading comprehension, students can gain a deeper understanding of the material and increase their knowledge outside the classroom (Nguyen & Du,

2024). Thus, enhancing students' reading comprehension is important for their progress in acquiring the English language learning process (Sara, 2017).

However, the latest results from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, published in December 2023, revealed that the reading ability score of Indonesian students was 359, which is a decrease of 12 points from the results obtained in 2018. This decrease reflects the lowest performance recorded since Indonesia began participating in the PISA evaluation. This finding shows that the literacy level in Indonesia for teenagers, including at the university level, is still low. This emphasizes the need to explore effective approaches to improve students' reading comprehension and overcome the challenges faced by students. Additionally, previous studies indicate that students' reading comprehension skills at the university level remain inadequate. First, Isma and Nur (2023), in their study, revealed that students' reading comprehension of English Department students from the Faculty of Teachers Training and Education at Universitas Sulawesi Barat, Majene, Indonesia, was still low because they often face difficulties in understanding English texts. Indeed, the study indicates that students encounter several obstacles, including finding detailed information, interpreting the main idea, understanding cause-and-effect relationships, analyzing the order, making conclusions, and comprehending text meanings. Second, Rusgandi (2023) revealed that students' reading comprehension remained low due to various issues, such as poor reading style, lack of motivation, inability to think critically, and lack of strategy. In summary, students' reading comprehension is still low due to many challenges, such as finding detailed information, interpreting the main idea, relating the main idea to the topic, limited vocabulary, and lack of motivation.

Moreover, before conducting this study, a mini-preliminary survey was conducted to explore challenges faced by English Education students at Sriwijaya University when they were taking the Universitas Sriwijaya English Proficiency Test (USEPT). The results revealed that 83.33% of the respondents found the reading section the most difficult part of the test. They mentioned several challenges, such as long and complex texts, limited vocabulary mastery, and difficulty understanding key ideas.

Therefore, one potential method that has been explored is the use of oral presentation. Fikni and

Ningrum (2021) emphasize that through oral presentation activity, students are encouraged to think critically and actively in finding information from reading texts. Bersal (2022) also points out that students' critical thinking skills can be improved through oral activities like presentations. It allows students to express their thoughts, analyze information, and evaluate different opinions. Using oral presentation in an English language classroom is a great way to enhance their presentation performance and engage with all four English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (Agustian, 2019).

However, despite the significant relationship between oral language and reading, the effectiveness of instructional strategies like oral presentations in enhancing reading comprehension remains unclear. While existing studies have explored the use of oral presentation for reading comprehension, most have focused on experimental research that assesses reading performance through tests rather than investigating students' perspectives. Therefore, to address this gap, this study would like to identify the effectiveness of oral presentations in improving reading comprehension through students' and lecturers' perspectives by using an interview, under the title Investigating Lecturers' and Students' Perceptions of Oral Presentations in EFL Reading Class: A Qualitative Study at the English Education Study Program of Sriwijaya University.

Considering the information provided in the study's background, the research has framed the following questions:

1. How do students perceive the use of oral presentations in enhancing their reading comprehension skills?
2. What are lecturers' perceptions of the effectiveness of oral presentations in improving students' reading comprehension?
3. What challenges do students face when using oral presentations to improve reading comprehension?
4. What strategies do students use to overcome the challenges they face?

II. METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative design as it aligns with the research objectives, focusing on providing a comprehensive description of the participants' perceptions and experiences. Moreover, an interview was utilized as an instrument in collecting the data for this study. By using semi-structured interviews, this study explored deeper information about how

EFL students and lecturers at Sriwijaya University perceived oral presentations and their effects on reading comprehension.

A purposive sampling technique was used to obtain the data, as its purpose is to focus on a specific characteristic to provide valuable information, which leads the researchers to understand the problem and answer the research questions better (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Ten students out of the 34 who used oral presentations in reading class were selected to ensure a manageable scope for in-depth interviews as an instrument for data collection of this study. In addition, two lecturers were chosen based on their experience implementing and encouraging oral presentations in the reading classroom.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
A. Research Results
1. Students' Perceptions of Using Oral Presentations in Enhancing Their Reading Comprehension Skills

   The findings revealed that students mostly considered that oral presentations helped them to deepen their understanding through preparation and increased their motivation and responsibility. Many students mentioned that oral presentations encouraged them to read more thoroughly and carefully. This was because they had to present the material to their peers, which made them responsible for mastering their topic.

   "This preparation forces me to really understand the material, not just skim through it. When I know I have to present, I feel a stronger responsibility to master the topic. It's very different from reading just for myself." (Student 5)

   "Oral presentations have helped me improve my reading comprehension. When I know I have to present something, I read more carefully and try to understand the main ideas. It makes me more active when reading." (Student 8)

   Additionally, one of the students mentioned that oral presentation also increased her motivation to read. The need to prepare the material before the oral presentation and explain in front of their friends motivated them to read more seriously. Moreover, oral presentation also made them take responsibility for their task to explain the material to their peers clearly and concisely.

   "Oral presentations have positively influenced my reading comprehension skills by increasing my motivation to read." (Student 6).

2. Lecturers' Perception of Using Oral Presentations for Improving Students' Reading Comprehension

   The findings from the interviews revealed that lecturers considered oral presentations helped them to check students' understanding of their reading and also helped students improve their reading comprehension. Moreover, it also developed students' critical thinking skills. Lecturers perceived oral presentations in the reading class as a way to assess students' comprehension of the material that they have read. One of the lecturers mentioned that listening to students' oral presentations shows their real understanding, whether they truly got the idea or just copied it from Google. Compared to the written tasks, oral presentations require students to read more and understand the material better, ensuring that they clarify their explanation using their own words in order to present it to their peers.

   "By listening to students during oral presentations, I can tell whether they really understand the material or just copy it. Compared to written work, where students might just copy from Google, oral presentation pushes them to understand and deliver the ideas in their own way" (Lecturer 1)

   Additionally, oral presentation also enhances their reading comprehension by requiring them to engage with the material more deeply. One of the lecturers mentioned that they have to report what they have read. In order to do that, they cannot just skim their reading material, but they must read carefully and master their content, and then they can present it to others.

   "The purpose of oral presentations in extensive reading is for students to report what they have read. It means they should read the material first so that they can deliver their idea orally." (Lecturer 2)

   Besides checking and enhancing students' reading comprehension, oral presentations also encouraged them to think critically. When students have a

presentation, they are expected to organize their idea and present it in their own words clearly and coherently.

"If the presenter knows the audience will ask higher-order questions, they will try to understand the text well so that they can answer them correctly." (Lecturer 2)

"When they present, they should present logically, coherently, and clearly. Then, during the question-and-answer session, they should be able to answer clearly and appropriately. It doesn't always have to be 100% correct, but it should be correct based on the text they have read." (Lecturer 2)

3. Students' Challenges in Using Oral Presentations for Improving Reading Comprehension

The findings from interviews identified some difficulties, including linguistic aspects, psychological aspects, and environmental aspects. Most of the students mentioned that they struggled to understand the texts since the topic was new or unfamiliar to them. When the contexts were too specific and used uncommon words, they felt hard to re-explain. Moreover, they stated that they found it harder to understand the topic when the text used advanced vocabulary.

"The most difficult part is when the lecturers give us a topic or material that is unfamiliar." (Student 6)

"Some difficulties, especially when the reading includes difficult words or unfamiliar topics." (Student 8)

"Sometimes the reading had a lot of new words or complicated stuff." (Student 2)

Moreover, most students struggled with physiological factors, including lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and anxiety, which have a substantial impact on their performance.

"I often struggle with nervousness and lack of confidence. It is very challenging for me to present in front of people even though I understand what's the topic." (Student 1)

Additionally, some students expressed that they feared making mistakes, giving wrong answers, and being judged by their peers, especially in the question-and-answer sessions. These pressures often resulted in students turning blank during their presentations.

"Sometimes I lose confidence when I think people might judge me. It makes it hard to focus on what I want to say." (Student 8)

"I'm very nervous when I have to present. I get scared, and my mind suddenly goes blank. So, I forgot what I wanted to say." (Student 6)

Despite linguistic and psychological aspects, some students reported that the environmental aspect also impacts their oral presentations. Some of the students expressed that the noisy classroom made it harder to concentrate. They also felt unappreciated when their classmates did not pay attention to their presentation.

"When the audience is not paying attention or talking while I'm presenting, sometimes the room is noisy, which also affects my focus and confidence." (Student 8)

4. Students' Strategies to Overcome Challenges in Oral Presentation for Reading Comprehension

The findings from the interviews revealed several strategies that were applied by students, including preparation and practice, self-motivation, and attention control. One of the most important strategies students employed to overcome the challenges during oral presentations is thorough preparation. In order to help them in presenting the material, many students indicated to read the content multiple times, summarize it in their own words, and create clear and engaging PowerPoint slides.

"The strategy is I try to read the text many times and make notes using my own words." (Student 7)

"Creating the PowerPoint with only the key points, not full sentences. So, when I only include the main points on the slides, it pushes me to explain the content in my own words. That way, I stay more engaged, and so does the audience." (Student 5)

Moreover, students usually practice their presentation by themselves or with peers to boost their confidence, to make sure their explanations are clear and understandable. By having this practice and preparation, they also helped them to check the difficult words using dictionaries

or AI tools, which allows them to improve their comprehension and reduce their nervousness or misinformation about the material.

"I try to overcome it by practicing beforehand, and I try to really practice in front of the mirror or my friends to make sure that my explanation is understood by the audience." (Student 4)

"The strategies are I try to read the text many times, make notes, and search for difficult vocabulary and rewrite it using my own words." (Student 7)

"Take notes where parts that were hard to understand and try to find with AI to reexplain." (Student 9)

Another strategy students applied to overcome the challenges was self-motivation. This strategy comes from their inner self, which can directly boost their confidence and stay focused on giving oral presentations.

"I also remind myself that making mistakes is normal and it is part of the learning process." (Student 10)

In addition, when students present, they do not just deliver their content, but they also have to make sure that the audience is paying attention to them. Therefore, staying focused was also a crucial strategy that students used, both on the audience and on themselves. They try to keep the audience interested by using strategies such as eye contact, including quick games, or adjusting their voice to grab attention.

"I make eye contact with the audience and the lecturer to stay focused and connected." (Student 10)

"For example, if the audience seems distracted, I might include a quick game or directly encourage them to focus." (Student 4)

"I need to control my voice and present more seriously so that the audience stays engaged." (Student 5)

B. Discussion

1. Students' Perception of Using Oral Presentations for Improving Students' Reading Comprehension

Students stated that they became more involved with the reading material as a result of the oral presentation preparation process. They prepared by reading the text several times thoroughly, summarizing the main ideas, dividing the material into parts, and finding more information related to the material. This is aligned with a study by Penrose (2022), which revealed that students frequently prepare and read the reading materials several times as a way to increase their comprehension and make sure they understand the material completely. Students were encouraged to thoroughly comprehend the subject before their presentation because this activity also gave them a sense of responsibility to present the information understandably. This is in line with a study by Gurbuz and Cabaroglu (2021), who emphasized that the preparation process for oral presentations helps students overcome anxiety while also increasing their motivation to attend class and engage in learning activities.

2. Lecturers' Perception of Using Oral Presentations for Improving Students' Reading Comprehension

Based on the findings of this study, lecturers revealed that oral presentations enable them to assess students' true understanding of the material. By listening carefully during students' presentations, this activity allowed lecturers to determine whether students truly understand the material or just copy from outside sources like Google without fully understanding it. Lecturers emphasized that oral presentations require students to process, comprehend, and present the material in their own words, which is a more powerful way to assess comprehension. This is supported by Theobold (2021), who stated that oral assessments provide more meaningful insights into students' understanding than written tasks. Written assessments often provide limited answers, which do not fully reveal students' understanding. Lecturers also highlighted that oral presentation must also be combined with a written assignment. For example, they should read the content, highlight the important points, and drop it into the PowerPoint slides. Then, they can report the results orally in front of their peers.

Furthermore, when preparing for oral presentations, students are encouraged to organize their ideas, comprehend the material completely, and express their ideas clearly and logically. This is aligned

with what has been mentioned by Fikni and Ningrum (2023), oral presentations engage the students' motivation to think critically and creatively in finding the information in the reading text. Moreover, the need to answer audience questions, especially when they ask higher-order thinking questions. This pushed the students to analyze the text more deeply and be responsible for the correct answer.

3. Students' Challenges in Using Oral Presentations to Improve Reading Comprehension

Students reported that they struggled to understand the key points when the topic was unfamiliar and often found it difficult to explain the material in their own words. This is in line with a study by Ha (2021), which found that one of the biggest challenges in reading comprehension is a lack of background knowledge. Without enough prior knowledge, students may struggle to extract meaning from the text, which limits their ability to present the material. Therefore, the unfamiliar topic is frequently caused by students' lack of background knowledge. Additionally, when students encountered uncommon or difficult words, they found it harder to fully understand the text and explain it in their own words during the oral presentation (Ha, 2021).

Despite facing linguistic challenges, students also faced psychological challenges during the oral presentations. Most students also reported feeling nervous, anxious, and lacking confidence when presenting to their classmates. It is in line with a study by Hanifa and Yusra (2018), which found that being nervous normally occurs during the oral presentation, this is because they are not used to speaking in front of their peers. Additionally, many students are concerned about making mistakes, forgetting what to say, and being judged during the question-and-answer session. One of the students admitted that she suddenly forgot what to say because of trying to organize her thoughts and say everything correctly. This is also supported by Hanifa and Yusra (2018), who found that losing ideas during the oral presentations was due to a lack of information and too much focus on grammar.

4. Students' Strategies to Overcome Challenges in Using Oral Presentations to Improve Reading Comprehension

The findings from the interviews revealed that students employed several strategies, such as through preparation, regular practice, self-motivation, and attention control. These preparations included making their notes, summarizing the material in their own words, and creating clear PowerPoint slides with only key points. This is supported by Naelufah et al. (2023), who highlighted that the use of PowerPoint in oral presentations can enhance students' understanding and retention, especially if the slides contain only important points rather than full text.

Another important strategy employed by students was self-motivation, which included positive self-talk and affirmations. Ritonga et al. (2020) in their study found that one effective way to reduce students' anxiety about speaking in front of class is by giving themselves motivation and affirmation. Moreover, making eye contact during the presentation is a crucial strategy that students have to apply to connect with their audiences. This is in line with a study by Mardiningrum and Ramadhani (2022), which used this approach to overcome audience challenges and nervousness. In addition, creating an icebreaker to attract the audience during the presentation was also one of the strategies students applied. As found by Normansyah (2019), students may lose audience engagement and become unstructured when they are too focused on the slide while presenting. Therefore, implementing an interesting ice-breaker, such as asking a question, showing pictures, or using humour, can immediately grab the audience's attention.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
A. Conclusion

This study explored students' and lecturers' perceptions of using oral presentations to enhance reading comprehension, alongside the challenges students encountered and the strategies they employed. Both students and lecturers generally viewed oral presentations as beneficial, helping students read more thoroughly, prepare more effectively, and understand content more deeply. Lecturers

saw oral presentations as a valuable tool for assessing students' real comprehension and fostering critical thinking through discussion and analysis. Despite these advantages, students faced linguistic, psychological, and environmental aspects. To overcome them, students used various strategies: thorough preparation, repeated reading, summarizing, practicing, self-motivation techniques (e.g., affirmations, positive self-talk), and attention-control methods. In conclusion, oral presentations are an effective approach to support reading comprehension.

B. Suggestion

There are several suggestions provided for future researchers. It is suggested to explore more about the use of oral presentations in different educational settings, student levels, or subjects to gain broader insights. In addition, future research could expand the number of participants and combine interviews with other data collection methods, such as classroom observation, which would enrich the findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of oral presentations in improving reading comprehension.

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