CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explains the theories underlying the research. These theories are correlated with EFL students, learning strategies, and oral academic presentations.

2.1. Learning Strategies

All language students use language learning strategies in their learning process. Learning strategies are commonly defined as the operations or processes that are consciously (or unconsciously) selected and employed by the student to learn the target language or facilitate a language task. Aside from that Chamot as cited Kaur and Ali (2018) defines Learning Strategies as techniques, approaches, or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content-area information. Among the various strategies, there are many that students consciously choose to optimize their chances of success in achieving their goals in learning and using language. Students use speaking learning strategies consciously when processing new information and performing tasks. This strategy helps them to understand better and faster. Therefore, students' speaking learning strategies are very important for success in learning a new language.

There are many strategies that students can use in AOP. Oxford (1990) emphasized that learning strategies consist of direct strategy; direct strategies cover memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies while indirect strategies cover metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Below are definitions and examples:

a. Memory strategies

Memory-related strategies help learners link one foreign language item or concept with another and thus, allow new information, usually vocabulary, to remain in long-term memory. For instance, drawing pictures to help remember new words, pronouncing or writing new words to remember them, and making relationships with the materials that have been learned. These strategies can use

sounds, images, a combination of sounds and images, body movement, etc (Oxford, 1990).

b. Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies enable the learners to process and use the language for learning or for completing a task about the language, e.g., watching English movies or TV programs, listening to English radio/CDs, and using English computer programs.

c. Compensation strategies

Compensation strategies assist learners in making up for missing knowledge while listening, reading, speaking, or writing. For example, use gestures or body language (for speaking), rephrase (for speaking or writing), ask for help (for listening, reading, speaking, or writing), and make guesses based on the context (for listening and reading).

d. Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies enable the learners to manage their overall learning process by identifying, planning, organizing, monitoring, and evaluating one's learning style, e.g., organize time for learning, check one's progress, and analyse mistakes and try not to make them again.

e. Affective strategies

Affective strategies help the learners to cope with their emotions, motivations, and attitudes when learning English. For instance, by identifying mood and anxiety levels; trying to relax when feeling anxious about learning; talking about feelings; rewarding oneself; and using positive thinking.

f. Social strategies

Social strategies are how learners interact with others in the context of learning the target language and understanding the target culture, e.g., by talking with native speakers; asking someone to speak slowly; and exploring cultural and social norms of English-speaking countries.

By employing the right strategies, the process of learning the language will improve significantly. Appropriate language learning strategies result in improved, faster language proficiency. Language learning strategies play an important role in

the process of learning a language, especially in AOP. Learning strategies are specific thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them understand, learn, or remember new information (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

In brief, learning strategies can be seen as special ways of processing information that is used by students to improve comprehension, learning, or retention of the information. Learning strategies are used by students to help them understand new information better and to help them solve language problems. Students have to recognize the power of consciously using language learning strategies to make learning quicker, easier, more effective, more efficient, and more fun.

2.2 Academic Oral Presentation
2.2.1 AOP in EFL Classroom

At the university level, in the English department students are required to be proficient in public speaking. The students were given the dual role of public speakers and had to present their comments to the class. According to Sugiyati & Indriani (2021), public speaking is an essential ability to master, considering today's demands in many kinds of fields, including delivering information and giving a speech in a big forum or even running entertainment. The learners must demonstrate fundamental public speaking skills, such as product promotion, foreign interaction, speech, etc. One part of public speaking is presentation. Public speaking is defined as the skill of speaking in public while the presentation is presenting a situation/idea/offer in front of a certain audience.

In delivering public speaking, it is important to consider physical appearance and body language. The audience will understand more easily and believe more when non-verbal actions support your words. According to Gareis (2006), the important things of public speaking include appearance and body language, vocal behaviour, audiovisual support, and question and answer session. Appearance and body language involves various aspects such as eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, body posture, and movements. Likewise, vocal behaviour includes pitch, speed, and fluency. These things are reflected in the oral presentation. An oral

presentation is a form of part verbal, part visual communication (Ming, 2005). This definition highlights the importance of verbal and nonverbal elements in conveying messages effectively. When giving an oral presentation, it is important to consider not only what is said but also how the presentation is presented visually to ensure that the audience is engaged and able to understand the information being shared. Likewise, Baker (2000) claims oral presentations are like formal conversations which are structured and have a time frame. Presenters can use visual aids in their presentations and at the end respond to questions given by the audience. Therefore, during oral presentation, the speaker should also consider who the audience is. According to Mandal (2000), oral presentations refer to speech in a business, technical, professional, or scientific setting. Oral presentations are like lectures, a mono-logic discourse that deals with information transfer and has informal and conversational expressions of seminars (Hyland, 2009). Oral presentations can occur in academic settings, so there is the term oral academic presentation.

Academic oral presentation (henceforth AOP) is an academic discourse that is conducted in the university to show undergraduates' understanding of a subject to the audience. Academic oral presentations have been defined by various scholars. According to Kaur and Ali (2018), academic oral presentations in this study refers to any oral presentation where the undergraduates have to present on a given topic in their classrooms. Morita (2000) describes AOPs as 'routine' activities in university and are established as formal oral assessments to show the development of certain skills. He further adds that such presentations are usually very informal, audience-friendly, and extremely challenging for non-native English speakers. In brief, AOP for undergraduates is a classroom genre where students are expected to display their knowledge of the discipline as expected by the discourse community.

2.2.2 Benefits of AOP

There are many benefits of AOP for students. According to Pham et al. (2022), students view oral presentations as a tool that can help them improve their communicative abilities, and language proficiency, and help them in their studies

in general. This finding is in line with research by Zakaria (2023) which states that students overall understand the important role of oral presentations in preparing for their future careers. They consider the acquisition of proficient presentation skills imperative for achieving success in lifelong learning and securing enhanced career prospects. The benefits of presentations are not only for the present but also useful for the future. Amelia (2022) found that oral presentations can help students improve their language proficiency and help develop academic skills. Presentation skills as something they must master, to be successful in learning life, and obtain better career opportunities.

Meanwhile, the benefit of AOP is that it is used as part of the assessment. In English courses (EAP, EOP, or ESP) and discipline-based courses offered at universities, AOP is used as part of assessments, integrating research projects, and socializing students into academic discourse communities (Zareva, 2011; Duff, 2010; Zappa-Hollman, 2007). Furthermore, various studies have shown how AOP enhances teamwork (Yang, 2010; Chou, 2011 Zivkovic, 2014). Other benefits include developing confidence (King, 2002; Nor Fathiah and Gurnam, 2013), providing authentic practice of English, and improving their communication skills. Finally, undergraduates benefit from oral presentations which help them develop and integrate soft skills such as teamwork, critical thinking skills, presentation skills, leadership skills, time management skills, and interpersonal skills.

2.2.3 Challenges in AOP

Most of the students face challenges during oral presentations, and one of the biggest challenges they face is the lack of time for preparation. Imron and Hantari (2019) concluded that there are four challenges facing students: 1) self-esteem (their level of self-confidence); 2) feeling uneasy (fear of failure, embarrassment, and making mistakes); 3) lack of time preparation; and 4) unfamiliarity with the topic. Soomro et al. (2019) said that seven factors contribute to challenges for students. These factors are stress and nervousness (71%), lack of motivation (63%), poor oral communication skills (55%), and fear. and anxiety (52%), shyness (51%), and low self-confidence (51%).

Despite being prevalent, many EFL undergraduates consider AOP as one of the most challenging academic tasks various studies have reported on the challenges faced by students in giving AOP (Chen, 2011; Hafner & Miller, 2011; Mahani et al., 2014; Noor & Sarjit, 2011). This oral discourse is reported to be the most stressful communicative event as studies have indicated (Noor & Sarjit, 2011; Sabri & Qin, 2014; Vitasari et al., 2010). The most difficult part is presenting in English, especially for those less proficient students who eventually end up reading from the visuals. Thus, language deficiency is one of the main challenges for EFL students in AOP. No doubt being an effective presenter depends on natural ability, however, the more the presenter practices the better the speaker becomes. Another challenge in AOP is speech anxiety. Hayadi (2023), regarding students' anxiety in class presentation activity at the postgraduate in university of Bengkulu found that three main factors significantly influence their anxiety. They are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of evaluation. Students' lack of academic and research training also contributed to high anxiety in AOP. Lack of confidence to speak in AOP imposes the greatest challenge for EFL learners. Other challenges in AOP include working in groups (Chou, 2011). The academic presentation, especially the open discussion part, was a great challenge to them, related to their underdeveloped English conversation ability, their unfamiliarity with participatory communication modes in the Canadian classroom, and their limited experience with group work.

2.3 Study of the Relevant Research

This research is relevant to several previous studies. The first research was conducted by Wael et al. (2018). They explored students' learning strategies in speaking performance. The participants consisted of 12 students who were in their third semester and focused on language classes. The results of this study show that third-semester students majoring in English often use memory strategies in learning to speak. In second place is the metacognitive strategy, followed by the social strategy in third place. Fourth are affective strategies and compensation strategies in the fifth rank, followed by cognitive strategies in the sixth rank. Furthermore, other factors also influence students' learning strategies in learning to speak, such

as psychological factors, the role of the teacher, tasks, environment, and social factors. The role of the lecturer is as a giver of feedback, participant, and prompter.

The second research was conducted by Amjusfa et al. (2021) those who investigated the types of language learning strategies employed by higher and lower-achieving students on speaking skills and to find out the impacts of language learning strategies employed by them. The sample of this research were 82 students who were chosen based on the criteria (1) the students had already passed all the Speaking I to IV classes, (2) the students consisted of higher achieving students (score ≥B) and lower achieving students (score ≤C), and (3) the students allowed the researcher to obtain their speaking scores. The results revealed that the higher-achieving students used memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies in learning to speak. On the other hand, the lower-achieving students generally did not use the learning strategies in their learning activities. Therefore, as the impact of this learning habit, they do not possess good speaking ability and achieve low scores in speaking class.

Meanwhile, Puluhulawa et al. (2022) explore what kind of learning strategies students use in public speaking courses. Three students from the same class of public speaking course were selected as research subjects. They are selected based on the value criteria: high average value, medium average value, and low average value of students. This research is a qualitative descriptive study using questionnaires and interviews as the main instruments. The research results show that three types of students use three kinds of learning strategies: cognitive, socio affective, and metacognitive strategies, but the main difference lies in the frequency and consistency of using these strategies. This study concluded that students with high average scores used more cognitive techniques to improve their mastery of public speaking. It also recommends more frequent exposure to the language to improve public speaking skills.

Furthermore, this difference lies in the participants and previous research focuses on speaking performance, speaking skills, general speaking activities, and public speaking. Meanwhile, the participants in this research will be taken from the same class and this research will focus on investigating student strategies during

oral academic presentations by seventh-semester students majoring in English at a university in Tasikmalaya.