

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of theories and previous studies that form the foundation of the present research. It is divided into two major sections: Theoretical Framework and Study of Relevant Research. The theoretical framework examines academic speaking in higher education, encompassing linguistic accuracy, pragmatic competence, and interaction in formal academic contexts. This is followed by a discussion of Academic Oral Presentation (AOP) as a specific form of academic speaking that combines verbal delivery with visual support in formal settings. The chapter then examines international conferences in higher education, including the benefits and challenges, as well as experiential learning as a perspective for understanding students' learning through experience. Meanwhile, the Study of Relevant Research presents prior studies on academic speaking, participation in international conferences, experiential learning, and students' challenges and strategies in academic presentations. This chapter establishes a comprehensive theoretical and empirical background to support the objectives and framework of the current research.

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Academic Speaking

Academic speaking is one of the most essential communicative skills in higher education, particularly the ability to present, explain, and defend ideas in professional and academic settings. According to Jordan (1997), academic speaking refers to the use of spoken language in institutional contexts such as lectures, seminars, and academic presentations, where communication is shaped by academic conventions and disciplinary norms. Within this framework, academic speaking requires students not only to produce grammatically correct language but also to organize arguments, explain academic content, and interact with an academic audience. As noted by Nurhayati (2021), academic speaking helps learners connect the gap between theoretical understanding and verbal

performance by enabling them to express complex ideas with clarity and confidence. Furthermore, Arifin (2022) argues that academic speaking integrates cognitive and metacognitive skills, as learners must plan, monitor, and evaluate their oral output while responding to real-time communicative demands. These perspectives show that academic speaking is a multidimensional skill that integrates language use, thinking processes, and interaction, making it essential for university students who engage in activities such as seminars, presentations, and academic discussions.

In language education, academic speaking is considered a medium for intellectual participation and professional preparation. It allows students to actively participate in knowledge exchange and engage with academic audiences through spoken discourse. According to Wahyuni (2020), academic speaking performance is shaped by exposure to authentic learning experiences that simulate real communicative contexts such as class discussions or conference presentations. These settings allow learners to experience English as a tool for academic reasoning and self-expression, rather than a subject to be memorized. When students are trained to speak academically, they develop pragmatic awareness and discourse competence that prepare them for teaching, research, and professional collaboration. Novita et al. (2022) emphasize that repeated participation in academic speaking activities leads students to become more confident and autonomous, underscoring the transformative potential of communicative practice in language education.

The role of academic speaking extends beyond classroom communication, as it supports the development of students' professional and academic identities (Kurniawati et al., 2023). Students who practice academic communication through formal speaking tasks begin to internalize the norms of scholarly interaction and academic argumentation (Kurniawati et al., 2023). They learn to manage tone, register, and evidence in their oral discourse, which mirrors how academic knowledge is negotiated in global scholarly communities (Jordan, 1997). Therefore, academic speaking serves not only as a linguistic competence

but also as a social practice that connects learners to broader professional and disciplinary contexts (Ilyas & Istaryatiningtias, 2025). This understanding positions academic speaking as the foundation for the present study, which explores how students perceive their academic oral performance in real academic forums such as international conferences.

a. Academic Oral Presentation

Academic oral presentation (AOP) is a specific type of academic speaking that combines spoken language with visual support and follows clear conventions in formal academic contexts. Ming (2005) defines AOP as a form of communication that integrates verbal delivery with visual aids, is conducted within a limited timeframe, and takes place in formal academic settings. Recent studies show that AOP requires students to organize ideas logically, use precise academic language, and consider their audience's understanding to communicate effectively (Novitasari et al., 2022). This involves structuring presentations in a clear sequence; introducing the topic, presenting arguments or findings step by step, and concluding with a summary, while using appropriate vocabulary and phrasing. Students also need to adapt their explanations, examples, and visual aids to match the audience's knowledge level and expectations, ensuring that their message is accessible and engaging (Nurjihan & Irmayani, 2025).

AOP can take different forms depending on the academic context and purpose. Jordan (1997) identifies various types of academic presentations, including group presentations, poster presentations, and formal research talks at academic conferences. Participation in international conferences, such as the Siliwangi International English Conference (SIEC) 2025, represents a form of AOP where students present research findings to audiences beyond their classroom. Novitasari et al. (2022) explain that conference presentations require careful planning, logical organization of content, and effective integration of verbal and visual information. Greenwood (2025) highlights that AOP in international contexts also develops students' intercultural

communication skills and professional confidence, as they must adapt their language and explanations for diverse audiences. In addition, Day et al. (2022) emphasize that audience interaction and feedback during presentations provide valuable opportunities for students to refine their presentation performance, strengthen communication skills, and reflect on their learning processes. These studies indicate that AOP involves not only delivering information but also engaging meaningfully with audiences and developing essential academic and social competencies.

Engaging in AOP positively impacts students' academic speaking development and professional growth. Nurjihan and Irmayani (2025) found that AOP practice improves students' ability to organize ideas coherently, use academic language appropriately, and respond effectively to audience questions. Similarly, Azhari and Novita (2025) argue that regular engagement in oral presentation activities promotes students' speaking development by enhancing their confidence, communication skills, and ability to express ideas effectively in academic settings. Mastering AOP is particularly important for undergraduate students because it builds professional communication competence essential for sharing research, and participating in scholarly communities (Kurniawati et al., 2023). Syam et al. (2024) emphasize that through structured AOP practice, students develop not only linguistic skills but also confidence, critical thinking, and audience awareness, preparing them for real academic and professional situations. Therefore, AOP serves as a bridge between classroom learning and authentic academic communication, making it a valuable component of language education in higher education.

b. International Conference as an Academic Oral Presentation

International conferences serve as formal academic forums where scholars and students present research ideas through academic oral presentations. Within this context, presenters are required not only to convey research content clearly but also to engage with an academic audience through discussion and question-and-answer sessions. Henderson (2015)

describes academic conferences as spaces where academic practices intersect with social interaction, performance, and emotional engagement. This perspective positions conferences not merely as dissemination events but as lived academic experiences that unfold before, during, and after participation.

For undergraduate students, participation in international conferences represents engagement with academic discourse within a formal academic forum. Conferences function as structured environments where participants present research, observe scholarly communication, and engage in academic discussion. Such forums require participants to navigate formal procedures, interact with diverse academic audiences, and adapt to the norms of academic communication. Previous studies describe conferences as spaces that combine academic practices with social interaction and emotional engagement, shaping participants' experiences of academic participation and professional communication (Henderson, 2015). These characteristics position international conferences as contexts in which students encounter and experience academic discourse through participation, interaction, and reflection.

1) Benefits of Participating in International Conferences

Participation in international conferences offers several academic and personal benefits, particularly in relation to academic oral presentation practices. Henderson (2015) notes that conferences offer presenters opportunities to position themselves as emerging members of the academic community. By presenting research, participants engage in knowledge-sharing practices that contribute to the formation of their academic identity.

Kurniawati et al. (2023) highlighted that participation in academic communication activities enables students to develop communication skills and gain a deeper understanding of academic interaction through authentic learning experiences. Similarly, Nguyen and Han (2024) reported that involvement in academic presentation activities supports

students' confidence, communicative competence, and readiness to engage in academic discussions.

In addition, conferences have been described as spaces that support personal and academic development. Henderson (2015) highlights that participation in conferences can foster increased confidence, a sense of academic belonging, and awareness of one's role within an academic setting. These benefits emerge through the experience of preparation, participation, and interaction throughout the conference process.

2) Challenges of Participating in International Conferences

Despite the potential benefits, participation in international conferences also presents various challenges for students. Research has shown that conferences can be demanding environments due to their formal nature, structured schedules, and diverse participants (Henderson, 2015). Students may experience uncertainty when adapting to unfamiliar procedures and expectations associated with conference participation.

Several studies report that emotional challenges such as nervousness, anxiety, and self-doubt commonly occur during participation in formal academic events. Rahmah et al. (2023) found that students participating in international conferences frequently experience anxiety and concerns about their performance when communicating in academic settings. These challenges may be intensified in conference settings where participants interact with unfamiliar audiences and operate within time constraints.

Furthermore, the interactive components of conferences, such as discussion sessions and audience participation, can pose additional challenges. Apriyadani et al. (2024) argue that academic presentations require students to communicate ideas clearly, respond to audience feedback, and manage spontaneous interactions, which can be demanding for those still developing confidence in academic environments. These challenges shape how students experience and interpret their participation in conferences.

2. Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is commonly understood as a learning process in which knowledge is developed through direct engagement with experience and subsequent reflection. Kolb (1984) explains that learning occurs through a cyclical and recursive process in which learners experience, reflect, conceptualize, and act in response to specific learning contexts and demands. In this process, concrete experiences provide the foundation for observation and reflection, which subsequently lead to understanding and informed action. Kolb (1984) conceptualizes learning as a cyclical process consisting of four abilities:

a. Concrete Experience Abilities (CE)

Concrete experience refers to learners' ability to involve themselves fully, openly, and without bias in new experiences. In this ability, learning occurs through direct participation in experience-based situations rather than through abstract instruction alone. Kolb (1984) emphasizes that learners engage with tasks by feeling, doing, and experiencing events as they occur. In the context of international conference participation, concrete experience is reflected in students' direct involvement in activities such as the feelings during the conference, delivering academic presentations, responding to questions, and engaging with audiences during and after the conference, which serve as a foundation for further learning.

b. Reflective Observation Abilities (RO)

Reflective observation involves learners' ability to observe and reflect on their experiences from multiple perspectives. During this stage, learners examine their actions, responses, and outcomes. According to Kolb (1984), reflection enables learners to identify patterns, challenges, and significant aspects of their experiences. In the context of international conferences, this ability is demonstrated when students reflect on their presentation performance, communication strategies, and interactions, thereby gaining insights that extend beyond the immediate event.

c. Abstract Conceptualization Abilities (AC)

Abstract conceptualization occurs when learners develop concepts or understanding that integrate their observations into coherent explanations. Through this ability, learners move from reflection toward forming generalizations or principles about what they have experienced. Kolb (1984) explains that this process allows learners to transform specific experiences into broader conceptual knowledge. In international conference participation, this ability is reflected in students' understanding of academic speaking, presentation structure, and effective academic communication.

d. Active Experimentation Abilities (AE)

Active experimentation is learners' ability to apply their understanding to make decisions and solve problems in new situations. In this stage, learners plan actions, try alternative strategies, and apply what they have learned in practice. Kolb (1984) notes that through experimentation, learners create new experiences that continue the learning cycle. In the context of international conferences, this ability is demonstrated when students apply their insights to improve future presentations or prepare more effectively for subsequent academic speaking tasks.

Kolb (1984) further emphasizes that learning does not occur merely from experience itself, but from the process of reflecting on and transforming that experience into knowledge.

In higher education, experiential learning is commonly used to support contextualized and practice-oriented learning. Engagement in experience-based learning activities enables students to connect theoretical knowledge with practical application and develop a deeper understanding (Potter & Kustra, 2022). Experiential learning has also been shown to foster critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and learner confidence through active participation and reflection (Nguyen & Han, 2024).

In language learning contexts, experiential learning encourages meaningful language use in real-life situations. Experience-based activities allow learners to use language for meaningful communicative purposes, supporting the development of communicative competence and pragmatic awareness (Farrugia et al., 2021). Tasks such as projects and presentations further enable learners to reflect on their language use and to adjust communication strategies based on their experiences (Liu & Brown, 2023).

a. International Conference as an Experiential Learning

International conference participation can be understood through experiential learning, which views learning as a process in which knowledge is constructed through experience, reflection, conceptualization, and application (Kolb, 1984).

Participation in an international conference involves activities such as preparing presentations, delivering academic talks, and engaging in academic discussions. Henderson (2015) reports that conference participation is influenced by the emotional experience of academic events. These activities influence conference participation, which involves direct engagement in academic practices.

Studies have shown that conference-related activities can function as experiential learning opportunities. Rowe (2021) finds that participation in conference-style learning activities supports students' engagement with disciplinary discourse and academic communication practices. Similarly, Nabila (2025) investigated EFL students' experiences and challenges in speaking at international conferences and reported that participation increased confidence, improved communicative skills, and provided networking opportunities, while students also encountered language barriers and anxiety during preparation and presentation.

These studies suggest that participation in international conferences can be viewed as an experiential learning context in which students engage in

academic activities and develop an understanding of academic communication.

3. Academic Listening and Speaking Course

Academic Listening and Speaking (ALS) is a key component of English language education that aims to develop students' competence in both understanding and producing academic discourse. Through listening, students learn to identify main ideas, supporting details, and organisational patterns in spoken academic texts, enhancing their ability to process information critically. Speaking activities, on the other hand, encourage them to express ideas clearly, use appropriate academic language, and interact effectively in discussions and presentations. Arifin (2022) emphasises that integrating these two skills enables learners to become active participants in scholarly communication, while Nurhayati (2021) notes that ALS courses foster control of academic vocabulary, critical reflection, and self-confidence in professional contexts.

Moreover, ALS courses are designed to promote communicative competence through multimodal, interactive academic experiences. They often include lectures, seminars, and collaborative discussions that simulate real academic situations, preparing students for authentic communication beyond the classroom. According to Novita et al. (2022), incorporating authentic, contextually relevant tasks within ALS courses increases students' engagement and reflective awareness by allowing them to perform tasks that mirror actual academic communication. Thus, ALS instruction not only develops linguistic and pragmatic skills but also encourages independent learning and confidence in using English for academic purposes.

Specifically, the ALS course integrates assessment through students' participation in the Siliwangi International English Conference (SIEC). Throughout the semester, students are guided to conduct research, write academic papers, and deliver group presentations as their final project. To support their preparation, the course offers academic workshops and webinars that help students strengthen their presentation skills, deepen their content

knowledge, and understand conference conventions. Conducted through on-site sessions, the course allows students to interact directly with peers, lecturers, and external audiences, providing a genuine academic platform to apply and demonstrate their communication skills. This integration of theory, practice, and authentic assessment reflects the course's commitment to preparing students for professional and global academic engagement.

B. Study of the Relevant Research

Previous studies on academic speaking have largely focused on the development of students' oral communication skills in academic contexts, including presentations, discussions, and formal academic discourse. Research indicates that academic speaking involves not only linguistic accuracy but also the ability to organize ideas, employ appropriate academic language, and demonstrate critical engagement with content (Jordan, 1997; Hyland, 2019). Amelia (2022) found that Indonesian EFL students frequently experienced anxiety and difficulties during oral presentations due to concerns about speaking performance and presentation skills. While these studies provide valuable insights into the components and challenges of academic speaking, they predominantly emphasize skill outcomes rather than students' subjective experiences during academic speaking activities.

Research on international conference participation has primarily examined its role in supporting academic and professional development. Studies suggest that presenting at conferences can enhance students' academic identity, disciplinary awareness, and confidence in scholarly communication (Henderson, 2015; Pérez-González & García-Rodríguez, 2025). Other studies highlight that conference participation exposes students to authentic academic discourse communities and allows them to observe and engage with disciplinary communication practices (Rowe, 2021). However, much of this research focuses on perceived benefits or institutional outcomes, with limited attention to how students experience preparing for and delivering conference presentations as part of a course-based learning activity.

Studies on experiential learning in higher education demonstrate that experience-based activities promote deeper learning through engagement, reflection, and application (Kolb, 1984). Empirical research shows that experiential learning supports the development of critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and learner confidence (Nguyen & Han, 2024; Potter & Kustra, 2022). In language learning contexts, experiential learning has been associated with meaningful language use and increased learner autonomy (Farrugia et al., 2021). Nevertheless, existing studies rarely explore experiential learning through the lens of students' lived experiences in academically situated events such as international conferences, particularly when these activities are embedded as projects within specific courses.