

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the research methodology used to explore students' experience in presenting at the Siliwangi International English Conference (SIEC) 2025. The research focus clarifies the specific aspects examined in the study, while the setting and participants section describes the university context in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia, and the selection of four students from the fifth-semester who presented at the Siliwangi International English Conference (SIEC) 2025. The data collection section explains the use of semi-structured interviews as the primary method to gather in-depth information about students' experiences. The data analysis section presents the use of thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2016) approach to identify patterns and themes within the data. Finally, the chapter concludes with the research schedule, which outlines the timeline of the study.

#### **A. Research design**

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design. A qualitative approach was appropriate because this study focused on exploring students' experiences, which required rich, descriptive data rather than numerical measurement. Qualitative research enabled an in-depth understanding of participants' subjective interpretations of their involvement in the Siliwangi International English Conference (SIEC) 2025.

A case study design was selected because it enabled an in-depth exploration of a bounded system within its real-life context (Yin, 2018). In this study, the "case" refers to the four students currently in the sixth semester who had completed the ALS course and participated in SIEC 2025. Yin (2018) emphasizes that case study research is instrumental for investigating contemporary phenomena over which the researcher has little control. This aligns with the study's objective of understanding students' authentic experiences in a naturally occurring educational event.

## **B. Setting and Participants**

This study was conducted in one of the universities located in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. This setting was chosen for its ease of access. This setting was considered highly relevant as the Academic Listening and Speaking (ALS) course has, for several years, required students to present their academic papers at international conferences as a project in the Academic Listening and Speaking (ALS) course, including the Siliwangi International English Conference (SIEC) 2025.

The participants in this study consisted of four students currently in the sixth semester who had completed the ALS course and participated in SIEC 2025. The participants included one male and three female students aged between 20 and 21 years old. They were selected based on their achievement of the Best Speaker Awards in the conference's parallel sessions, which indicated strong academic presentation performance and active engagement throughout the presentation process.

## **C. Data Collection**

This study employed semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allowed participants to express their experiences in their own words while still being guided by predetermined open-ended questions. This aligned with the research objective of exploring students' experiences of participating in the Siliwangi International English Conference (SIEC) 2025.

Before conducting the interview, each participant received an informed consent form. Only those who provided signed consent were included in the study. The interviews were conducted individually to allow participants to share their views freely. The interviews were conducted using both face-to-face and online formats. Three participants were interviewed in a comfortable on-campus location, and one was interviewed via Zoom Meeting. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 50 minutes. The interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission to ensure data accuracy. The interview questions focused on students' experiences

during the parallel session, their feelings about presenting in front of audiences, and their reflections on how the experience affected their speaking confidence and engagement.

This study relied solely on semi-structured interviews and involved a relatively small number of participants. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted in the context of the participants' experiences and may not represent those of all students in similar settings. Nevertheless, several procedures were undertaken to enhance the credibility of the findings. Following the interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed and prepared for analysis. To enhance the study's credibility, the researcher returned the interview transcripts and summaries of the findings to the participants for verification. Participants were invited to review the accuracy of the data and confirm whether the interpretations appropriately represented their experiences during SIEC 2025. Any clarifications provided by the participants were considered in the final analysis (member checking). In addition, the coding process, theme development, and interpretation of the findings were discussed with a fellow researcher who was familiar with qualitative research procedures. The feedback obtained from these discussions was used to evaluate the consistency between the data and the identified themes and to strengthen the interpretation of the findings (peer debriefing).

To ensure ethical research practices, participant confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. Pseudonyms were assigned to participants in transcripts and reports. Audio recordings and transcripts were stored securely and accessible only to the researcher. The collected data were used solely for research purposes and were destroyed after the completion of the study.

#### **D. Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2016) six-step approach. This approach is chosen because it provides a systematic yet flexible method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data. The steps are as follows:

## 1. Familiarizing with the Data

During this phase, the researcher became acquainted with the data by carefully reviewing the interview transcripts multiple times.

## 2. Generating Initial Codes

During this phase, the researcher began organizing the data by assigning symbols or markers that aligned with the study's objectives. The researcher used a color-coding technique to distinguish the various aspects identified by the participants, resulting in the creation of initial codes.

**Table 1. Generating Initial Codes**

| Extracts                                                                                                                                                                                | Initial codes                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <i>Honestly, presenting at SIEC 2025 made me really nervous, especially because it was an international conference. Even though the room was cold, I was sweating from nervousness.</i> | Nervousness<br>During<br>Presentation  |
| <i>I was afraid of making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes because sometimes, when I feel nervous, I slip up.</i>                                                                  | Afraid of Making<br>Mistakes           |
| <i>The most challenging part was when the audience asked questions. I was worried that my response might not be accurate</i>                                                            | Handling<br>Questions                  |
| <i>I realized that presenting in SIEC 2025 is different from presenting in class. It is more formal and requires better preparation and a more structured approach.</i>                 | Academic<br>Presentation<br>Adjustment |
| <i>Before the SIEC 2025, I prepared some notes or a script to make my explanation more structured.</i>                                                                                  | Making Notes of<br>the Presentation    |

|                                                                                                                                                       |                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <i>We usually discussed the material together to check whether our explanations were already clear.</i>                                               | Group Discussion                         |
| <i>We practiced our presentation on Zoom Meeting many times before SIEC 2025.</i>                                                                     | Online<br>Presentation<br>Practice       |
| <i>We tried to predict what questions might be asked by the audience because it can reduce our anxiety.</i>                                           | Predicting<br>Questions                  |
| <i>I did not want to just read from the script. I tried to explain the material more naturally and adjusted my words when I forgot certain terms.</i> | Communication<br>Delivery<br>Improvement |
| <i>After finishing the presentation, I reflected on my performance and realized there were still areas that I need to improve.</i>                    | Reflecting on<br>Performance             |
| <i>Mmmmm, I felt more confident about my speaking ability based on the preparation and the audience's reaction to our presentation.</i>               | Confidence<br>Growth                     |
| <i>I felt proud of myself for presenting at an International Conference.</i>                                                                          | Sense of<br>Achievement                  |
| <i>We supported each other during the preparation and presentation. Practicing together helped me feel less nervous.</i>                              | Peer Support                             |

The researcher identified 13 initial codes, each representing different aspects highlighted in the participants' interview transcriptions. These codes encapsulated various themes and patterns observed in the data, providing a comprehensive framework for further analysis and interpretation of the participants' experiences and insights.

**Table 2. Calculating Initial Codes**

| NO. | Initial Codes                      | Total |
|-----|------------------------------------|-------|
| 1.  | Nervousness During Presentation    | 8     |
| 2.  | Afraid of Making Mistakes          | 5     |
| 3.  | Handling Questions                 | 5     |
| 4.  | Academic Presentation Adjustment   | 4     |
| 5.  | Group Discussion                   | 3     |
| 6.  | Online Presentation Practice       | 3     |
| 7.  | Making Notes of the Presentation   | 4     |
| 8.  | Predicting Questions               | 2     |
| 9.  | Communication Delivery Improvement | 5     |
| 10. | Reflecting on Performance          | 5     |
| 11. | Confidence Growth                  | 4     |
| 12. | Sense of Achievement               | 4     |
| 13. | Peer Support                       | 3     |

### 3. Searching for themes

The third phase is searching for themes. The goal here is to identify patterns within the data. During this stage, the researcher analyzed the codes and grouped them into broader themes.

**Table 3. Searching for Themes**

| Initial Codes                   | Potential Themes                                   |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Nervousness During Presentation | Emotional Pressure During Presentation             |
| Handling Questions              | Challenges in International Academic Communication |

|                                    |                                             |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Academic Presentation Adjustment   | Adapting to Academic Presentation Standards |
| Afraid of Making Mistakes          |                                             |
| Group Discussion                   | Rehearsal Strategies                        |
| Online Presentation Practice       |                                             |
| Making Notes of the Presentation   |                                             |
| Predicting Questions               |                                             |
| Reflecting on Performance          | Reflective and Personal Growth              |
| Confidence Growth                  |                                             |
| Communication Delivery Improvement |                                             |
| Sense of Achievement               |                                             |
| Peer Support                       | Peer-Supported Learning Experience          |

#### 4. Reviewing themes

For the next step, the researcher revisits the themes identified in the third phase. The researcher carefully evaluates the themes to determine their appropriateness for the study. If any themes are deemed unsuitable, the researcher either rejects them or modifies them until the most suitable and acceptable themes are established.

**Table 4. Reviewing Themes**

| Sub-Themes                                         | Themes                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Emotional Pressure during Presentation             | Encountering Emotional and Linguistic Struggles in Academic Presentation |
| Interactional Challenges in Academic Communication |                                                                          |

|                                             |                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adapting to Academic Presentation Standards | Strategic Adaptation to the International Conference in an Academic Context |
| Rehearsal Strategies                        |                                                                             |
| Reflective and Personal Growth              | Development of Academic Communication                                       |
| Peer-Supported Learning Experience          |                                                                             |

## 5. Defining and Naming Themes

The researcher analyses and interprets each identified theme as an answer to the research question posed.

**Table 5. Defining and Naming Themes**

| Theme                                                                       | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Encountering Emotional and Linguistic Struggles in Academic Presentation    | This theme refers to students' emotional feelings, such as nervousness and pressure during the presentation, and students' challenges in handling the audience's questions.                                                                                           |
| Strategic Adaptation to the International Conference in an Academic Context | This theme reflects how students adjusted to the conference setting and their strategies for preparing for the presentation.                                                                                                                                          |
| Development of Academic Communication                                       | It refers to the students' development in terms of their psychological aspects, including self-confidence, awareness of how academic presentations should be delivered, and being more prepared after receiving support from their teammates. The group collaboration |

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helped them feel less alone and more confident during the presentation.

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## 6. Producing the Report

The final phase in thematic analysis involves the researcher creating a report on the research findings. Once the central themes have been identified and analysed, the researcher synthesizes the results and presents them in a comprehensive report. This report typically includes an overview of the research question, a description of the methodology employed, a presentation of the central themes and their supporting evidence, and an interpretation of the findings. The report aims to provide a clear and coherent account of the research outcomes based on the identified themes.

## E. Research Schedules

This research was conducted at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya, from November 2025 to February 2026, as described in the setting and participants section. The research time can be seen in the table below:

**Table 6. Research Schedule**

| Description                   | Sep/<br>2025 | Oct/<br>2025 | Nov/<br>2025 | Dec/<br>2025 | Jan/<br>2026 | Feb/<br>2026 | Mrc/<br>2026 | Apr/<br>2026 | May/<br>2026 | Jun/<br>2026 |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Research Proposal writing     |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| Research Proposal examination |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |              |

Data  
Collection

Data  
Analysis

Report

Thesis  
Result  
Seminar

Thesis  
Examination

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