ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS AMONG LOW PROFICIENCY ESL UNDERGADUATES

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ABSTRACT

This research study seeks to examine the issues that are related to 'Oral Presentation Skills among Low Proficiency ESL Undergraduates'. The two research questions that have been constructed in this study focuses on eliciting the perspective of low proficiency undergraduates on the types of oral presentation difficulties that are faced by them and the types of communicative strategies that are used by this group in coping with their oral presentation difficulties. A total of fifty one low proficiency undergraduates from 3 local private universities with a MUET score of Band 1 and Band 2 have participated as respondents for the questionnaire on oral communication strategy inventory (OCSI) that has been adapted from Nakatani's (2006) framework. From the total number of participants, thirteen of them were selected for an individual interview session to understand their views on the types of difficulties and challenges that are faced by them when giving an oral presentation. The interview was a semi structured interview where the questions that were posed had been carefully constructed with reference to Dornyei and Scott's 1997 framework. The findings emphasises that despite facing similar types of difficulties as listed in Dornyei and Scott's (1997) study, this particular group of undergraduates also faces difficulties in aspects involving affective factors and topical knowledge. In terms of the type of strategies that were used, fluency oriented strategies was revealed to be the most used strategy based on the rankings of all the 8 strategies that were listed, while message abandonment strategies had been ranked the lowest and the least used

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strategy among them. The findings generated from this study would benefit lecturers in understanding the challenges that are faced by undergraduates in terms of oral presentation. This would help lecturers to choose and improve on their teaching approaches and methods that were used in ESL lessons to fit the learning style and needs of ESL undergraduates especially those from the low proficiency group. By exposing students with a variety of communication strategies, it could help students to overcome their difficulties in doing an oral presentation.

Key words: *Oral presentation skill, ESL, Low proficiency undergraduates, oral presentation difficulties, communication strategies.*

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KEMAHIRAN PEMBENTANGAN SECARA LISAN DALAM KALANGAN MAHASISWA YANG BERKEMAHIRAN BAHASA INGGERIS TAHAP RENDAH DALAM KONTEKS BAHASA INGGERIS SEBAGAI BAHASA KEDUA.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji isu berkaitan kemahiran pembentangan secara lisan dalam kalangan mahasiswa dalam konteks Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua. Dua soalan kajian yang digubal dalam kajian ini adalah berfokuskan dalam mengenalpasti jenis-jenis kesukaran yang dialami oleh golongan mahasiswa yang mempunyai kemahiran berbahasa Inggeris tahap rendah, dalam membuat pembentangan secara lisan dan juga mengenalpasti jenis strategi komunikasi yang biasa digunakan oleh mahasiswa yang tergolong dalam kumpulan ini dalam menangani masalah yang dihadapi semasa membuat pembentangan. Seramai lima puluh satu orang mahasiswa dari kumpulan tahap rendah daripada 3 universiti swasta tempatan yang mempunyai keputusan MUET Band 1 dan Band 2 menjadi responden kepada kajian soal selidik berkenaan dengan strategi komunikasi dalam pembentangan secara lisan yang diadaptasi daripada kerangka kajian OCSI daripada Nakatani (2006). Dari jumlah keseluruhan responden, seramai tiga belas orang mahasiswa, dipilih untuk mengikuti sesi temubual secara individu untuk mengenalpasti persepsi mereka berkenaan dengan jenis-jenis kesukaran yang biasa dialami dalam membuat pembentangan secara lisan. Temubual yang dijalankan merupakan temubual bersifat semi-struktur, dimana soalan-soalan digubal dengan teliti berpandukan kerangka kajian Dornyei dan Scott (1997). Hasil dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa selain mengalami jenis kesukaran yang serupa seperti yang disenaraikan dalam kajian Dornyei dan Scott (1997), kumpulan mahasiswa ini

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turut menghadapi masalah berkaitan dengan faktor affektif dan kefahaman topik pembentangan. Manakala bagi jenis strategi komunikasi yang digunakan pula, strategi kelancaran atau "fluency" memperlihatkan tahap pengunaan yang tinggi berdasarkan ranking kesemua 8 jenis strategi yang tersenarai, sementara strategi berbentuk pengabaian mesej atau "message abandonment" memperlihatkan tahap pengunaan yang rendah. Hasil dapatan daripada kajian ini akan memberi kelebihan kepada para pensyarah dalam penambahbaikan kaedah pengajaran untuk membantu pelajar dalam menangani permasalahan yang dialami berkaitan dengan kemahiran pembentangan secara lisan dan dalam mengimplimentasi kaedah-kaedah pengajaran yang bersesuaian dengan kaedah pembelajaran serta keperluan pelajar Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa (ESL) kedua terutamanya bagi golongan tahap rendah. Pendedahan kepada pelbagai jenis strategi komunikasi dapat membantu golongan pelajar mengatasi permasalahan mereka dalam penyampaian pembentangan secara lisan.

Kata kunci *: Kemahiran pembentangan secara lisan, Kemahiran Berbahasa Inggeris Tahap Rendah, Bahasa Inggeris sebagai Bahasa Kedua, Masalah Dalam Pembentangan Secara Lisan, Strategi Komunikasi.*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 provides the introductory details in relation to the research study which includes the background of the study, problem statement, the research aim and research questions as well as the significance and limitation of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

With the advancement of technologies in this era of globalisation, English language plays an important role in being the medium of communication among people from non-English native speaking countries (Somsai and Intarapresert, 2011; Idrus, 2011). In other words, English is considered as a language of unity, a lingua franca or a communication 'code' that is shared and mutually understood by most people around the globe, and that functions in breaking the language barrier that exists among non-native speakers in connecting with the native speakers of English.

As a global and international language that is widely spoken around the world, English is no doubt known to also be the language of opportunities. It provides benefits and open doors to people of all nations towards greater opportunity in life apart from being a medium to expand their social circle. As mentioned in Pandey and Pandey (2014), having knowledge of the English language in a non-native English speaking country opens a number of opportunities as the needs of effective communication have been greatly

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recognised in today's corporate world, more than just the technical knowledge. Therefore, having good English language proficiency is very crucial to allow one to be able to communicate with the world markets of different fields (Hamad, 2013 ; Le Thi , 2017)

Being well informed and aware of the importance of English language, the education system in most non-native speaking countries emphasises on exposing their students with the knowledge of the language. It is through the implementation of language studies and the teaching and learning process of English being taught either as a foreign language or as a second language. As Asmah (1977) has cited in Thirusanku and Yunus (2014), who have stated that in Malaysia, English is regarded as a second language, and also the second most important language based on languages ranking, i.e., after the national language, Bahasa Melayu. As stated by Mamat et al. (2014), the Malaysian government is aware of the importance of mastering English. Hence, the teaching of English is highly emphasised in creating generations and future leaders of the country that are proficient in the English language, allowing them to achieve greater heights in terms of career opportunities especially in the international job market where English is the main language.

Under the Malaysian education system and policy, English is taught as a second language and is a compulsory core subject to be taken in both primary and secondary education. Malaysian students are provided with a total of 11 years of English exposure through classroom teaching and learning (The Malaysian government official portal 2012, cited in Che Mat and Md. Yunus, 2014). The curriculum that is used emphasises on the teaching of all the 4 language skills- namely reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, in order to equip Malaysian students with the knowledge of the language and in providing them with a solid foundation of the language. According to Chitravelu et al. (2005), the aim of the language instructions in the Malaysian schools is to ensure that the

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students will be able to use the English language that has been learned, to communicate effectively in the context of social and in professional setting for various purposes. In addition to that, Ugla et al. (2013) touches on the aspect of language teaching, stating that unlike in the past where the aim and focus of English language teaching in ESL or EFL context have focused merely on teaching and exposing the students to the 4 main language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), in recent years, it has evolved and shifted towards the teaching of oral communication that involves listening and speaking skill.

There had been various measures taken by the Ministry of Education Malaysia in promoting and exposing the importance of English to the citizens of Malaysia especially to students and parents. The shift of teaching and learning of Mathematics and Science from Bahasa Melayu to English was first introduced and implemented in 2003 at primary and secondary schools level (Tao and Santhiram, 2007 ; Rashid et al., 2017) although after all the controversies surrounding its implementation which now has been replaced and re-shifted back to the old Bahasa Melayu system starting 2012, was one of the many steps that had been taken by the Malaysian government as its effort to improve the standard of English among students.

Apart from that, in preparing and enhancing the mastery of English among Pre – University students as a preparation for their tertiary level education, the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) had been introduced in the year 2000 (Mamat et al., 2014). It is similar to other compulsory English language proficiency examinations such as IELTS and TOEFL that are required to be taken as part of the requirement to study in universities abroad.

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The Malaysian University English Test (MUET) had been made a compulsory language examination as part of the entry requirements to enter the public local universities, and as requirements for some private universities throughout Malaysia. According to Kaur and Chuah (2012), the MUET syllabus is designed as a measure in bridging the gap of language needs between the secondary and tertiary education. This proves that the government is very particular with the standard of English among students due to a heightened awareness of the role of the English language ability in employment outcomes (Musa et al., 2012 in Zehan Shanaz et al., 2013).

At the tertiary level, the performance and credibility of a university are determined and reflected through the quality and marketability of their students or are often associated to as the 'product' of the university (Abd Wahab and Ismail, 2014). Thus producing employable graduates is an important agenda for any higher level institutions for both the public and private institution, as it would mirror and give an impression to the public the quality of education that is offered by the institution (Idrus et al., 2011). In producing market ready graduates, the teaching in the university is not only expected to provide students with the knowledge of their respective fields of study but also in equipping students with the soft skills that are required in ensuring that they are able to function well in a work setting, especially in their communication skill. (Pandey and Pandey , 2014).

One of the main goals of the language instruction at university level is to provide the necessary language skills to undergraduates. Given the scenario in most Malaysian universities, undergraduates are required to enroll to a specific credit hour allocated for English proficiency courses based on their MUET results (Low and Aziz, 2020). This is especially targeting on helping undergraduates who have not attained the desired level of competency following their low score in their MUET examination upon their enrollment at

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the university in order to cope with the demand of academic life, and as an ongoing preparatory stage of equipping them with the necessary language skills that are needed for their future job (Chan and Wong, 2004). Murray (2010) shares a similar view on the necessity of such a course because despite having met the English language entry requirement of their receiving universities, there is still a large number of non-English speaking background students who still struggles to cope with the linguistic demands of their undergraduate courses due to their inadequacy in the target language, hence, they require extra language support through English courses.

Apart from that, the language instruction at tertiary level also seeks to prepare undergraduates with crucial language soft skills such as oral presentation skills as preparation for the highly competitive professional environment upon their graduation (Zivkovic, 2014). Oral presentation skill as mentioned in Rajoo (2010) has become part and parcel in most university courses. This helps in developing the language proficiency among the undergraduates (Al Harun et al., 2015) where they are required to conduct oral presentation as part of the course assessments (Kho and Leong, 2015). Therefore it provides benefits in terms of encouraging independent learning among the undergraduates and giving them the exposure towards authentic references while they are preparing for their presentation topic. Moreover, this will also give the students the opportunity to practice using the English language in an authentic learning environment (Brook and Wilson, 2014).

As mentioned by Chan and Wong (2004), having good English proficiency is no longer a luxury but rather a necessity in today's modern workplace. Therefore, being well equipped with the soft skill that are required by employers, which is the oral presentation skills, adds value to the qualification of graduates especially when applying for jobs in

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multinational companies that uses English as the medium of communication among the workers (Idrus et al., 2011). Dixon and Thomas (2015) have added that employers and companies are in search for well skilled candidates in presenting information orally because impressive presentation is highly valued to face the challenges and compete in the work industry (Le Thi, 2017).

1.3 Statement of problem

The increasing rates of unemployment among graduates are becoming a serious concern among higher institution in Malaysia (Kho and Leong, 2015). Having a degree no longer guarantees a place in the job sector as graduates are not only required to be excellent in their field of study but are also expected to be proficient in English language and well equipped with soft skills such as oral presentation skill. As mentioned by Idrus et al. (2011), employers have started assessing candidates' communication skills even during the interview session. Failure in presenting information well could cause them to lose the job opportunity to other applicants who are well equipped with the desired skills that the future employers are looking for (AbdWahab and Ismail, 2014).

The lack of English proficiency to function in a work setting (Kaur and Chuah, 2012) and the inability to communicate fluently and accurately (Hoang and Tran, 2015) are some of the common reasons graduates failed in securing a job. The inadequacy in language proficiency and lack of oral presentation skill among graduates are often influenced by their learning experiences. In the context of language study itself, Dornyei and Scott (1997) have stated how learners spend too much time and effort struggling with language difficulties yet language courses do not provide students with the knowledge of

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strategies to cope with those challenges. Hence it is important to understand the core of the problem from the perspective of the students themselves as the types of problems might vary from one student to the other, and it is equally important to understand how they cope with such difficulties.

The present study aims to investigate the difficulties that are faced by low proficiency undergraduates in conducting an oral presentation and the communication strategies that are used by this group of students in dealing with the challenges. The aims that are derived are due to the lack of studies that have been done on oral presentation skills among low proficiency university students and the insufficient studies that have been conducted on the type of strategies that are used by them in coping with the challenges. Most past studies on oral presentation skills are often conducted using samples that are of mix abilities. For example, the past studies that have been conducted by Huang (2010), and Ugla (2013) involve participants with proficiency level ranging from high, medium and low proficiency. While Tsang (2017) on the other hand, focuses on the selection of participants that are based on the group of students who have enrolled in a 3 months presentation programme that are from the mix ability group. This study has also attempt to fill the gap in those research that have adopted Dornyei and Scott's 4 types of language problems in identifying other variation of problems that exist, apart from the problems that falls under the 4 categories that have been mentioned by Dornyei and Scott (1997). In addition to that, the focus of having undergraduates from East of Malaysia particularly in Sabah, where there is the lack of research from the perspective of the students from that region, especially a perspective that focuses on students from private institutions as most research have been conducted with students from the public universities.

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1.4 Aim of the study

This study aims to investigate the types of oral presentation difficulties that are faced by low proficiency undergraduates in Malaysian universities and the types of communication strategies that they have applied in coping with the difficulties in their oral presentation.

1.5 Research questions

With close reference to the aim that is stated above, the following are the two research questions that have been constructed, which will be the focus of this research.

1. What are the types of oral presentation difficulties that are faced by low proficiency undergraduates in Malaysian universities?

2. What are the communication strategies that are used by these low proficiency undergraduates in coping with the difficulties in giving an English oral presentation?

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1.6 Significance of the study

The findings from this study would benefit lecturers and language instructors because through thorough understanding of the common types of difficulties that are faced by undergraduates especially among the low proficiency group, changes can be made on the teaching approach that is used in the English language course to suit the way students would learn best. Besides, by knowing the type of communication strategies that are used by the students, it allows lecturers to enhance and expose students to a wider range of strategies to cope with their problems.

1.7 Limitation of the study

To achieve the aim of understanding the oral presentation skills among low proficiency ESL undergraduates, there are expected limitations in conducting the research. The limitation of this study would be the targeted participants. This is because the current study only focuses on the perception of low proficiency undergraduates. Therefore, with a small sample size of only 51 undergraduates from 3 private universities, the findings from the research study cannot be generalised or used as a representation of all low English language proficiency undergraduates.

In addition to that, the limitation of the study are also affected by factors such as the limited choices of research sites, as well as the criteria for participants selection that targets only on low proficiency undergraduates specifically those with the MUET score of Band 1 and 2. The strict focus of participant selection is a big challenge because of the nature of the entry requirements for most private universities where the MUET is not a compulsory entry requirement, hence the limited number of participants that the researcher has managed to gather for the data collection purpose.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides relevant conceptual definitions on oral presentation skills, the teaching of oral presentation skills, assessments of oral presentation skills, oral presentation difficulties, types of oral presentation difficulties as well as communication strategies. Apart from that, this chapter also provides a review of past studies that are related to oral presentation in ESL.

2.2 Oral Presentation

The English language skills cover 4 specific areas of language namely reading, writing, listening and speaking (Kaur, 2014). The English language curriculum in Malaysia according to Idrus et al. (2016) is constructed and designed to suit the aim of communicative language teaching (CLT). One of the areas in English language is the speaking skill, also referred to as oral skill which is known to be one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced for effective communication (Leong and Ahmadi, 2017; Al-Roud, 2016). In addition to that, Al Nakhalah (2016) has defined speaking as an action of conveying information or expressing thoughts and emotions, while speaking skill as the ability in speaking well, accurately and proficiently.

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Effective communication skills as mentioned in Pandey and Pandey (2014), includes the use of oral skills for various purposes such as knowledge-sharing, presentations, public speaking, negotiating as well as debate and conflict resolutions. Rajoo (2010) recognises oral presentation, also termed as public speaking, as a form of communication to convey ideas and information to the audience both in a formal and informal setting. According to Chan and Wong (2004), oral presentation skill is the indicator of one's language ability that portrays the credibility of an individual especially in a professional setting.

Since tertiary education is linked to the professional life as a preparatory stage for the working world, the effort in developing the students' oral presentation skills are crucial due to the nature of the professional setting that is challenging and competitive. This is because a person who fails to clearly articulate his or her thoughts might be proned to be wrongly judged as uneducated or poorly informed (Kho and Leong, 2015). In addition, Dixon and Thomas (2015) have stated how in today's professional setting, employees are expected by their employers and company to do more presentations on a day to day basis. This is supported by a statement made by AbdWahab et al. (2014) which has highlighted that the marketability of undergraduates is highly influenced by their communication abilities and skills.

2.2.1 Teaching of Oral Presentation Skill

Spoken language or speaking skill is not an easy task for most non-native speakers as they are required to have knowledge on a variety of linguistic components ranging from vocabulary, comprehension, pronunciation, grammar as well as the aspect that is related to

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fluency (Leong and Ahmadi, 2017). According to Thornbury (2005), a classroom culture and lessons that prioritise on communication is bound to promote and encourage on the development of speaking skills among their students. This can be done by proper planning on lessons and speaking activities. In planning a lesson, it is important to take into account important aspects such as learners' differences as some techniques and exercises that are suitable for students from the intermediate to advance group will not be suitable for those from the low proficiency group and vice versa. This according to Harmer (2007) is especially true in speaking tasks, hence it is crucial to adjust the language used and activity depending on the students' level of proficiency.

In the context of tertiary education, Al Harun et al. (2016) have stated, that for most English language courses at university level, oral presentation is considered to be the important part for the development of the learners' language proficiency. In addition to that, Zivkovic (2014) has added that the teaching of oral presentation skills for academic and professional purposes needs to be part of the language teaching classes as it will be focusing on the needs of specific professions, allowing students to present the knowledge of oral presentation skill both in the context of an academic and the professional environment. In other words, by providing students with realistic task to engage in, students will be able to improve and practice on their English (Brooks and Wilson, 2014) rather than being a passive course that only teaches based solely on textbook without providing students the opportunity to engage in active and interactive tasks where they would be able to relate to what they would encounter in a real work setting. Brooks and Wilson (2014) have also added that a properly scaffolded oral presentation activity would provide an enjoyable learning experience among the learners which will encourage interaction among them using the targeted language.

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This is supported by Dixon and Thomas (2015), that unlike other subjects, language teaching particularly oral communication must be learned through hands-on and practical experiences and cannot be studied simply through reading from a book. On another note, Wei and Zhang (2013) have mentioned how oral teaching should not only be the teaching of language but also strategies, culture acquisition and thinking training, taking into consideration that learners' will have to engage in conversation with people and audiences of different backgrounds and cultures.

It is a common scenario in language teaching where the emphasis is usually on the teaching of grammar while oral presentation teaching is given less exposure and focus. In this regard, Le Thi (2017) suggests that it is not enough to put a focus on the teaching of grammar in a language course, it is in fact crucial to combine both the teaching of grammar and speaking of oral skills in a natural way and in a right context. Al Harun et al. (2015) on the other hand, has added that the teaching module for presentation skill should put a focus on combining the teaching of linguistic aspects such as communicative vocabulary, conversation strategies, word stress, and intonation and also pronunciation issues to ensure students are well informed of all the necessary language aspects that would make a good presentation. In addition to the aforementioned, Chitravelu et al. (2005) have stated that in developing the students' speaking skills, it is important to maintain a balance between accuracy and fluency which are two of the objectives in spoken language. It is important for learners to not only be taught the element of accuracy in language learning especially in the production of correct words and sentence structures but to also, be well balanced with the fluency aspect in their speech production, to ensure that their speech have a normal flow. Therefore ample opportunity to expose and practice should be given to learners in achieving the desired outcome in oral skills as well as in oral presentation skills.

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2.2.2 Assessments of oral presentation skills.

Oral presentation is part of the assessments in most of the academic courses that are offered in Malaysian universities (Kho and Leong, 2015; Zivkovic, 2014). Language courses in Universities according to Rajoo (2010) are carefully structured by placing a great focus on equipping undergraduates with strategies and skills that are needed for effective oral presentation. Hence, the guidance that is received from the lecturers on the preparation, organisation, and delivery of oral presentation are to suit the requirements of both academic and professional purposes (Zivkovic, 2014).

The assessment of oral presentation varies depending on the focus of the courses. The criteria of assessment of oral presentation in language courses usually focus on the language skills that are used in the oral presentation especially in speaking skills. As stated by Thornbury (2005), a language based programme or course that prioritises on speaking should focus on assessing the speaking skills because "a test of grammar is not a test of speaking". Whereas for other non-language related courses, the assessment that involves oral presentation skills is usually assigned as an end-of-academic term assessment, and are usually conducted in groups or as an individual assignment. Whereby, grade and score for the course are tied to the students' performance in the oral presentation (Luthy and Deck, 2007).

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2.3 Oral Presentation Difficulties

Oral presentation difficulties are often referred to as challenges hindering one from making a good oral presentation. As far as the context of learners' differences is concerned, oral difficulties that are faced by each student vary from one to the other.

These difficulties and challenges could arise through different aspects involving the learners' own restriction either linguistically, motivation level or even outside factors, which will be elaborated through the reviews of past studies that are related to the different types of oral presentation difficulties.

2.3.1 Types of Oral Presentation Difficulties.

The type of difficulties that are faced by ESL learners varies depending on their own knowledge of the language, their proficiency level as well as the situation or language context they are in. Dornyei and Kormos (1998) look into problems that are related to the speech processing phase of language and have highlighted the 4 main problems that are known to be challenging for most ESL and non–native speakers of English. Their study categorised the difficulties that are found within the speech processing phase into categories such as resource deficits, time pressure, own performance problems and other performance problems. In the resource deficits category, problems or difficulties are usually faced in terms of linguistic aspects that are related to lexical items, grammar as well as phonology. Whereas in terms of time pressure, difficulties faced are usually related to the speech processing time whereby for ESL learners it takes longer to process speech in the target language (L2) as compared to their first language. As for the own performance category, ESL speakers faces difficulties in making adjustment to their speech, to which Dornyei and

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Kormos have stated that the speaker needs to check with the interlocutor on whether speech repairs and correction are necessary to ensure a mutual understanding of the message or utterances. The final problem that is mentioned by them involves other performance problem that concerns the aspect of comprehension and understanding between the speaker and listener.

It is known that frameworks and strategies are constructed and developed in an attempt to overcome the problems that occurs. In the ESL context, various language strategies are developed to help solve problematic challenges that are faced by learners of the target language. For instance, Nakatani's Oral communication strategies (OCSI) are developed based on the factors affecting oral communication. Some problems that Nakatani tries to tackle through the implementation of OCSI are difficulties involving affective factors such as anxiety, motivation, attitudes and behaviour towards the target language. Apart from that, problems that are related to fluency and communication aspects which include difficulties in intonation, rhythm, clarity and pronunciation are also major focus of the framework. Moreover, difficulties involving comprehension and meaning, language accuracy as well as problems involving comprehension breakdown are also being attempted to be solved, using OCSI.

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2.4 Communication Strategies

Communication strategies is one of the component in language studies especially in the context of English as second language (ESL), English as a foreign language (EFL) and in the field of applied linguistic. Tracing back on the history of Communication strategies research, which is dated back to the 1970s, as is mentioned in Dornyei (1995) the four pioneers of communication strategy research are Selinker (1972), Savignon (1972), Varadi (1973), and Tarone (1977). The term Communication strategy itself was first introduced and coined by Selinker (1972) in his article on *Interlanguage* (Pawar and Pawar, 2018), which focuses on communication strategies in second language communication and learning (Dornyei, 1995; Dornyei and Scott, 1997). Savignon (1972) on the other hand, produces a report on language teaching experience that incorporated communication strategies as one of the approaches in language teaching (Dornyei, 1995). Correspondingly, Varudi (1973) and Tarone (1977) have elaborated on Selinker's notion of communication strategies through their respective works, providing a systematic analysis of communication. Various categories and terms that are used within the communication strategy research were also introduced through their studies. Due to the increasing level of interest towards the scope of communication strategy as part of language studies, the continuation of communication strategy research was further conducted by other researchers in the year 1980s. Scholars such as Canale and Swaine (1980) have included communication strategies within their model of communication competency to which they have referred as a means to achieve strategic competence. Apart from that, Faerch and Kasper (1983) publishes their article on strategies in Interlanguage by compiling past research on communication strategies, and have written new studies related to communication strategies as well. These two publications on communication strategies had

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lead other researchers to conduct research on a similar topic in the second half of 1980s. A group of researchers from the Netherlands who was known and referred to as the Nijmegen University group had carried out a large scaled project, highlighting on the various aspects of communication strategies and at the same time, their work challenged some of the existing aspects found in the earlier communication strategies.

2.4.1 Conceptual Definition of Communication Strategies.

Regardless of the amount of interpretations and research that had been done by the pioneering scholars of communication strategies no agreement was made on one definite definition of communication strategies. Dornyei and Scott (1997) have mentioned that the notion of communication strategies was first brought to the attention of the language researcher following the identification that there are mismatched- discovered between the linguistic resources with the intended meaning among second language speakers. This leads to the construction of various taxonomies compiling different sets of systematic language strategies that aims on handling communication breakdown and difficulties.

The conceptualising of communication strategies are based on different variation of theoretical perspective which explains the reason why certain strategies are applied in certain taxonomy but not in another. Following Dornyei and Scott's (1997) review article, they have mentioned that the concept of communication strategies is viewed through traditional approaches and psychological approaches. Traditional view of communication strategies are related to the original focus of communication strategies which is seen as an aid in the form of non-verbal and verbal type of strategies that are used in compensating the gaps that are found in the language proficiency of a second language speaker. On another note, the traditional view of communication strategies are said to be more focused on the

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linguistic aspect of the strategy that is used. In other words, this view concerns dealing with language problems in the planning or production stage. This traditional conceptualisation of communication strategies *(refer to figure 2.1)* according to Dornyei 1995 are applied by the pioneer researchers of communication strategies such as Varadi (1973), Tarone (1977), Faerch and Kasper (1983), and Bialystok (1990).

Whereas the conceptualising of communication strategies based on psychological perspective *(refer to Figure 2.2)* is keen on the idea that communication strategies are a mental procedure, hence, communication strategies should focus on investigating the cognitive processes. This was proposed by the Nijmegen group researcher (1980) that challenged the existing notion of communication strategies that were highlighted based on the traditional view, which they felt was more towards product oriented strategies covering mainly the surface structure of the psychological process involved, and focuses more towards linguistic aspect. Hence, they have invented the taxonomy of communication strategies that are classified in terms of process-based strategies (Sukirlan, 2014).

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Communication Strategies Following Traditional Conceptualisation

Based on Dornyei and Scott's (1995) article.

Avoidance or reduction strategies

1. Message abandonment - leaving a message unfinished because of language difficulties
2. Topic avoidance – avoiding topic areas or concept which poses language difficulties.

Achievement or compensatory strategies

3. Circumlocutions – describing or exemplifying the target object or action *(e.g. The thing you open bottles with for corkscrew)*
4. Approximation – using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible *(e.g. Ship for sail boat).*
5. Use of all purpose words – extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking *(e.g. The overuse of thing, stuff, make, do , as well as using words such as thingie, what-do-you-call it).*
6. Word coinage – creating a nonexistent L2 word based on a supposed rule *(e.g. Vegetarinist for vegetarian).*
7. Use of nonlinguistic means- mime, gesture, facial expression or sound imitation.
8. Literal translation – translating literally a lexical item, an idiom, a compound word or structure from L1 to L2.
9. Foreignizing – using L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonologically (i.e. with a L2 pronunciation) and/or morphologically (e.g., adding to it a L2 suffix).
10. Code switching – using a L1 word with L1 pronunciation or a L3 word with L3 pronunciation in L2.
11. Appeal for help – turning to the conversation partner for help either directly *(e.g. what do you call…..?)* or indirectly (e.g. Rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression).

Stalling or time-gaining strategies

12. Use of fillers/hesitation devices – using filling words or gambits to fill pauses and to gain time to think *(e.g. well, now let me see, as a matter of fact).*

Figure 2.1
Communication Strategies following Traditional Conceptualization

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Communication Strategies as Conceptualised by the Nijmegen University group
Based on Dornyei and Scott's (1995) article.

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1. **Conceptual strategies** – manipulating the target concept to make it expressible through available linguistic resources.

    a. *Analytic strategies* – specifying characteristic features of the concept (e.g. Circumlocution)

    b. *Holistic strategies* – using a different concept which shares characteristic with the target item (e.g. Approximation).

2. **Linguistic/code strategies** – manipulating the speaker's linguistic knowledge.

    a. *Morphological creativity* – creating new word by applying L2 morphological rules to a L2 word (e.g. grammatical word coinage).

    b. *Transfer* from another language.

Figure 2.2
Communication Strategies as Conceptualised by the Nijmegen University group

The invention and construction of taxonomies of communication strategies are highly dependent on the type of theoretical views that they have adopted as a basis to construct the taxonomy. For instance, Faerch and Kasper (1983) have regarded communication strategies as verbal plans that are found within a framework for speech production. On the other hand, Tarone (1980) views communication strategies from a discourse analytical perspective which he then pursues the idea of interactional approach. Notably, Dornyei (1995) has extended the scope by the inclusion of strategies that are not entirely focusing on meaning. As for the psycholinguistic researchers Bialystok (1990) and

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the Nijmegen group, they have adapted cognitive approach to their framework and the taxonomy of communication strategies that focuses mainly on the mental process in the context of language and communication. Poulisse (1993) has extended the development of psycholinguistic perspective by incorporating communication strategies in a taxonomy that adapts Levelts (1989) speech production framework.

Two defining criteria of communication strategies are problem orientedness and consciousness. Problem orientedness refers to communication strategies that are used by the speaker only when there are problems occuring within their communication. This is regarded to be the main criteria of communication strategies. However, Dornyei (1995) has argued for the notion that problem orientedness holds a broad description of problematic area without specifying a specific aspect of the area or scope of the language difficulties, which need to be addressed and cope with. The main purpose of communication strategies are made to handle problems involving research deficits which only covers problems that are related to linguistic aspect of the communication. Hence, the extension of the types of problematic sources affecting communication have been highlighted by Dornyei and Scott (1997) together with a few other researchers who include aspects such as time processing pressure, own performance pressure and other performance pressure *(refer to Figure 2.3)*. The other second defining criterion of communication strategies which is consciousness is regarded as a conscious technique to achieve communicative goal.

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Dornyei and Scott (1995) 4 sources to communication difficulties
1. Resource Deficits ➢ Gaps in speakers' knowledge preventing them from verbalizing messages.
2. Own Performance Problems ➢ The realization that something one has said is incorrect or only partly correct; associated with various types of self repair, self rephrasing and self editing mechanism.
3. Other- performance problems ➢ Something perceived as problematic in the interlocutor's speech, either because it is thought incorrect (or highly unexpected) or because of a lack of understanding something fully; associated with various meaning negotiation strategies.
4. Processing time pressure ➢ The L2 speaker's frequent need for more time to process and plan L2 speech than would be naturally available in fluent communication; associated with strategies such as the use of fillers, hesitation devices and self repetitions.

Figure 2.3
Dornyei and Scott (1997) 4 sources of communication difficulties

There are also newer studies that have been done by researchers on the topic of communication strategies that hold different definitions as compared to earlier studies. A study by Littlemore (2003) has defined communication strategies as steps that are taken by

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language learners in enhancing the effectiveness of their communication. Lam (2006) on the other hand, has described communication strategies as 'tactics' that are used by second language learners in solving problems involving oral communication. Similarly, Daqaruni (2013) views Communication Strategies as means that are used in dealing with communication trouble spot and to enhance fluency in order to ensure efficiency of the communication; adding that it is useful for the second language speaker to provide for them security and viewed as the vehicle to promote success in the EFL and ESL context.

In addition, Oral Communication Strategies according to Chou (2011) are strategies that are employed by speakers in their speech in conveying meaningful and informative information to their audience. Somsai and Intaraprasert (2011) have further added that communication strategies are management strategies of oral communication that are used not only to bridge any gaps in terms of the linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge within an utterances or interaction but are also crucial in helping the conversation to flow smoothly. This current study employs the same understanding of communication strategies as Zulkurnain and Kaur (2014) where communication strategies are seen as methods to be used in overcoming any oral communication difficulties.

For non native speakers of English, in order to get their message across smoothly, apart from repeating words that they are familiar with, they often resort into using body language or sometimes go back and forth between using their first language and the target language due to their lack of knowledge of related grammatical structure of the language (Zulkurnain and Kaur, 2014). This is similar to the way Maleki (2007) portrays communication strategies, as the attempt of filling the communication gap between the intended message with the immediate linguistic resources such as words or expression that are available within their background knowledge. To which he added, the importance of

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teaching oral communication strategies and incorporating it within the language syllabus. Thus, this would expose students to a wider range of communication strategies that could help them improve on their comprehension apart from learning new vocabularies. The choice of communication strategies varies from one learner to another. Their choices are usually influenced by their proficiency level of the language, the differences in personality, learning context and situation, as well as their attitude and perception towards the gap and differences between the target language and their mother tongue (Hirano, 1987).

The current study will be using Nakatani's (2006) Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) as one of the framework and research instrument to collect data that would be useful to answer the research question on the type of communication strategies that are used by undergraduates. Nakatani's OCSI framework consists of 32 items focusing on coping with speaking problems and 26 items for coping with listening problems. As for this current study, only the 32 items focusing on the strategies on speaking skills will be used, as this study focuses mainly on oral presentation skill. There are 8 categories of strategies **(***refer to Appendix A***)** that are included in the speaking strategies namely, *social affective strategies, fluency oriented strategies, negotiation for meaning strategies, accuracy oriented strategies, message reduction and alteration strategies, non-verbal strategies, message abandonment strategies, and attempts to think in English strategies.*

Each of the speaking strategies in Nakatani's framework attempts to solve different areas of oral communication difficulties that are faced by learners. The different parts are to cater to the different challenges that are faced by different learners which vary from one to the other due to their personality, as well as knowledge and proficiency level of the target language. As has been mentioned by Karpati (2017), communication strategies are a necessity for any students of ESL and EFL to apply when they encounter a communication

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breakdown. Nguyen and Nguyen (2016), have suggested that the usage of communication strategies in oral communication should be incorporated in the schools' curriculum.

2.4.2 Taxonomies in Communication Strategies

A few taxonomies have been developed through the different strategies of communication research, that are conducted by various scholars.

2.4.2.1 Dornyei (1995) Taxonomy

Dornyei's (1995) taxonomy focuses on 3 basic strategies that include direct strategies, indirect strategies and interactional strategies. Direct strategies according to Dornyei are strategies to get the message across. An example of this type of strategies is the circumlocution strategy that serves as a means to compensate on the lack of words. He further explains that most traditionally identified strategies are originally from this category. As for indirect strategies, Dornyei has stated that it is not entirely ranging from problem solving type of devices, and elaborates that indirect strategies focuses on conveying meaning indirectly through a condition which aims on achieving mutual understanding between speakers and interlocutors to avoid any communication breakdown and in keeping the communication channel open by using strategies such as fillers and hesitation devices. The interactional strategies on the other hand refer to strategies that allow exchanges of interactions and strategies between the speakers and interlocutor to achieve better communication. Requesting clarification according to them, fall under this category where participants are said to troubleshoot exchanges cooperatively. In addition to

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that, Dornyei (1995) also explains that all the 3 strategies that have been elaborated earlier are related to the 4 types of communication problems that are highlighted by Dornyei which is research deficits, time processing pressure, own performance problem, and other performance problem.

Table 2.1 – Dornyei and Scott (1995) Taxonomy

Dornyei and Scott (1995)
Direct strategies **Resource deficits related strategies** ➢ Message abandonment ➢ Message reduction ➢ Message replacement ➢ Circumlocation ➢ Approximation ➢ Use of all purpose words ➢ Word coinage ➢ Restructuring ➢ Literal translation ➢ Foreignizing ➢ Code switching ➢ Use of similar sounding words ➢ Mumbling ➢ Omission ➢ Retrieval ➢ Mime **Own performance problem related strategies** ➢ Self rephrasing ➢ Self repair **Other performance related strategies** ➢ Other-repair

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Interactional strategies

Resource deficits related strategies

- Appeal for help

Own performance related strategies

- Comprehension check
- Own accuracy check

Other problem related strategies

- Asking for repetition
- Asking for clarification
- Asking for confirmation
- Guessing
- Expressing non understanding
- Interpretive summary
- Responses

Indirect Strategies

Processing time pressure related strategies

- Use of fillers
- Repetition

Own performance related strategies

- Verbal strategy markers

Other performance related strategies

- Feigning understanding

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2.4.2.2 The Nijmegen groups taxonomy

There are two categories in the Nijmegen group taxonomy. They are the conceptual strategies and linguistic strategies. Conceptual strategies are divided into two types which is analytic and holistic. Analytic strategies are characteristic that are included in a concept whereas holistic strategies are substitute item that shares similarity in terms of characteristic as the target item. The second category which is linguistic strategies refers to the action of manipulating the speaker's linguistic knowledge through strategies such as morphological creativity or language transfer.

Table 2.2 – Nijmegen group taxonomy

Nijmegen Group
Conceptual Strategies ➢ Analytic ➢ Holistic Linguistic/ Code Strategies ➢ Morphological creativity transfer

2.4.2.3 Bialystok (1990) taxonomy

This taxonomy focuses on the cognitive theory of language processing. The conceptualisation of communication strategies are divided into 2 classes, namely, analysis based and controlled based strategies. The analysis based strategies conveys structure of the intended concept by providing the definition of the concept. While for control based

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strategy, it focuses on using relevant representation technique or system to be used to convey the intended concept. This can be seen through action strategies such as resorting to the use of their first language as a way to provide reference to what is intended to be portrayed. Apart from that, using non-verbal action such as mime also falls under this category of strategies.

Table 2.3- Bialystok taxonomy

Bialystok Taxonomy (1990)
➢ Analysis based strategies ➢ Control based strategies

2.5 Past Studies on Oral Presentation Difficulties.

Research on speaking skills is widely studied and has become one of the focal interests in the field of language studies especially in language acquisition. This is because the teaching and learning of any languages shares a similar goal- which is to enable their learners to speak it for the purpose of casual and professional communication. In relation to studies on speaking skill, the research on oral presentation skill has became one of the topic of interest among language scholars and researcher as the oral presentation skill is seen as one of the most sought after skills in the professional world. Over the years, there is an increasing and growing number of research focusing on oral presentation especially involving English as a second language learner (ESL). Students' performance and

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achievement of skill are seen as the product of the teaching process. This is because the input through language task and lesson approaches affects the output of learning. Similarly, the cause and effect relation whereby in most cases, the effectiveness of teaching could be measured based on the students' results.

In 2013, Hamad in his study that explores the factors that are negatively affecting speaking skills at a Saudi College for girls, has raised an issue regarding the existing English language curriculum that is used in most schools and tertiary institutions in Saudi Arabia, to which the report is the lacking in terms of speaking exercises within the English syllabus. In addition to that, he has also pointed out the lack of task and assignments that promotes speaking skills to be implemented in the language classroom. This according to him resulted in students being able to achieve high scores in English language test involving grammar and reading comprehension but is at a loss for words when they are required to present a speech or when having to communicate with native speakers. The concern on the lack of speaking oriented activities and task in the classroom are shared by Brooke and Wilson (2014) through their study. For them, it put students at a disadvantage when they are unable to experience the benefits of oral presentation task as a medium of practice which could help in improving their language proficiency. In relation to their study, high school and university students in Japan are mentioned to be facing oral presentation difficulties due to the lack of opportunity to practice doing oral presentations. They have further highlighted on the importance of the suitability of a given task. Tasks according to them should suit the students' level and ability as students might not be able to perform tasks that are beyond their language capabilities and will not be able to benefit from either the teaching or the task given.

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Through a classroom observation conducted by Nguyen and Tran in 2015 that focuses on Grade 11 Vietnamese high school students at Le Thanh Hieh High School in Vietnam, they described the students' speaking performance as sounding 'unnatural'. This according to them is due to the students' inability to remember language structures because of their limited vocabulary. They further added that the students' speaking performance could be further improved, given the opportunity for students to have ample practice during their English lesson. In relation to that, Al Harun (2016) in his study explains how students are often noticed to be more familiar with grammar rules as a separate knowledge compared to using it within a sentence which hinders them from being able to speak naturally in English. He elaborated that based on the context of the Bangladesh tertiary level freshies who are the participants of the research study. Such a problem according to him has resulted into students mixing languages between their first language Bangla and the English language whenever they speak.

The previously mentioned findings and reports from past studies are closely related to the claim made by Le Thi (2017) on components such as grammar, pronunciation and teaching method having the most impact on the students' English speaking skills. Similar to his discovery among the targeted participants at the Foreign Language Department of Van Lang University Vietnam, his study indicated that grammar holds the biggest role and effect in the speaking skill therefore, it needs to be taught by incorporating real life context of language use to enable the students to learn in a natural way which also helps in boosting their level of speaking with confidence. In addition, he implies that the teaching of pronunciation should be practiced and given a specific focus. especially in phonetic focus courses as pronunciation is another important component that affects speaking skills.

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Based on the collection of findings of past studies that has been elaborated thus far, the cause to students' facing difficulties and challenges in their oral presentation could be seen to be the bias towards assuming that it is entirely due to the ineffectiveness of the teaching approaches that are used in the language classroom or courses. However Kho and Leong (2015) from their study have argued that the difficulty that students encounter with oral presentation is also caused by the students themselves. They indicated that the level of priority and importance that had been given by the students in terms of time allocated into learning a subject or practicing on a skill did affect the outcome of their skills and knowledge acquisition. Kho and Leong (2015) in their study that focuses on the comparison of the causes of oral presentation difficulties between Commerce and Engineering students have found that Engineering students prioritise more on their Engineering core course subjects, and as a result they lack oral presentation skills due to the lack of practice as they feel that it is not a crucial skill that they need in their Engineering field. This is in contrast with the Commerce students who are reported to be more confident in their oral presentation as a result of having adequate amount of communication practice that helps them in improving their presentation skills. This is believed to be influenced by the prospect of their future field of work that requires constant engagement in conversations; hence, they place a strong priority in brushing up their presentation and communication skill.

With regards to the studies on oral presentation that focus on the aspect of teaching and learning as factors influencing the students' oral presentation skills and challenges, there are also a number of language researchers who has carried out a study focusing on the psychological aspects as factors affecting oral presentation difficulties. As a receiver of knowledge or skill, the levels of acquisition or performance vary from one student to the

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other and this is caused by many factors. In the context of psychological factors, the students' emotional and psychological state are said to be influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic factor. Intrinsic factor is often associated with the students' own inner desire and perception towards their learning process which affect their interest and level of effort that they choose to put into their learning. Whereas extrinsic factors are outside factors that affect the students' emotions which could be caused by the learning environment, the teaching processes, topics, people or even their linguistic knowledge.

Lima's (2016) study has mentioned oral presentation to be the source of anxiety among students, to which their level of confidence in speaking English is depicted to be a major obstacle for most students especially ESL students. In relation to the factor affecting the students' psychological state, a study by Chin, Ting and Yeo (2016) on UITM Sarawak Diploma students, despite a majority of them are reported to be having moderate level of anxiety, their negative perception and feelings about having to attend English classes are reported to be a source of their anxiety. To avoid feeling such anxiety, they tend to avoid attending classes and this has not only affected their oral presentation performance but also contributes to them feeling fearful of having test and examinations. In addition, in the context of communication apprehension, the researchers have reported in their findings that students have felt anxious about getting a negative evaluation. They further explain that the students fear of feeling embarrassed, fear of making mistakes and of being unable to cope with the English lesson. The fear that is faced by the students contradicts the action that is taken by the students themselves, because avoiding classes would not help them to overcome their anxiety but instead add to the decreasing level of their study performance. Hence, it is important to tackle the issue on learners' anxiety from the core. Regarding the learners' lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes, Radzi and Animilom's (2014)

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study has reported similar findings involving 6 ESL Matriculation students from Perlis Matriculation College. It is crucial for learners to understand that making mistakes is part of the learning process.

In terms of extrinsic factor or outside factor that affects the students' emotional state teaching approaches that are used within the lesson also influence their emotions. This is clearly described by Chan et al. (2012) in their study, that students especially in Malaysian classroom are stated to be excessively guided by the language teachers in a controlled setting, i.e., during English lessons, which has caused them to be unskilled in producing automatic and spontaneous responses whenever they encounter a setting where real English conversations take place. This affects their emotion and confidence, hence, contribute to their anxiousness. On another note, Nguyen and Tran's (2015) research identified topical knowledge of the assigned topic for presentation to also be one of the factor affecting the speaking performance among the students, apart from other factors such as listening ability, confidence level and the pressure to perform well, that are found in their findings.

Audience according to Yanagi and Baker (2015) is also one of the extrinsic triggers to the students' oral presentation anxiety. They have found that students often feel that it is difficult presenting in classroom discussion but are more at ease in a one on one interaction and pair work task. The fear of facing their audience and course teachers is a challenge that students need to overcome in order to improve in their formal presentation (Al Harun, 2016). In regards to this, Rajoo's (2010) findings has affirmed that students become tongue tied, nervous and terrified whenever they are presenting in front of the audience even towards those they are familiar with. Leong and Ahmadi (2017) have included an example from their findings, on how students tend to stop talking when they encounter difficulties in finding the right words. This as a whole makes talking to

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foreigners a big challenge to students. Other than having the fear of using unsuitable basis of expressions, students are described to be self conscious of their non-native accent (Le Thi 2017; Lima 2016). Not only do these difficulties happen to students with low language proficiency, but it is also encountered by students majoring in English where they too find face-to-face oral communication to be a great challenge (Somsao & Intaraprasert, 2011).

A study by Al Roud (2016) identifies in general the problems that are related to speaking skills among university students by looking into domains such as psychological, instructor, social and linguistic domain. From his discovery, students tend to face problems in various areas under the social domain. This according to him is due to the lack of English conversation among the students with their family members and studentshaving to face mockery from the people around them whenever they tried to converse in English. The problem from that leads to problems that are related to psychological domain such as lack of motivation, interest, anxiety and shyness. Whereas in terms of the instructor domain, problems are reported to be due to the teaching in language classroom that lacks emphasis towards the teaching of speaking skills compared to the teaching of grammar, reading, and writing components. Apart from that, teachers are said to be using the mother tongue language whenever conversing with students in class. From his findings, it is identified that problems arise due to the combination of various factors from a variety of domains and context.

In terms of oral presentation difficulties caused by linguistic aspect, Ainon Jariah et al (2013) has claimed that despite years of English language exposure starting from primary to secondary school level, Malaysian students have still failed to produce error-free language structure. The study focuses on the grammatical errors made by English for Academic Purpose course students, who have been reported to make frequent errors

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usually in terms of misformation, omission, additional and misordering of sentence structures. On the other hand, Pathan's (2013) research focuses on identifying major linguistic barriers of oral communication in English among tertiary level ESL students in Bangladesh, and identifies problems that are related to students' pronunciation and their inadequate range of vocabulary which prevents them from understanding and conveying message properly. He emphasised on English language syllabus being taught based on real life context. In relation to pronunciation as the difficulty affecting the students' oral presentation Shak, Chang and Stephen (2016) carry out a study that focuses on pronunciation problems. They have mentioned that due to poor pronunciation, graduates often fail to impress and convince others of their capabilities resulting in them receiving unfair judgments. They further elaborated that in most cases, students do not lack any knowledge and skills but are disadvantaged for not having the language to express themselves properly apart from them reportedly having poor pronunciation.

Past studies by Al Nakhala (2016); Al Roud (2016); Kho and Leong (2015) have shown that most students tend to face difficulties in aspects such as fluency, accuracy and linguistic inadequacy involving vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and language structure. Due to such problems, students often resort to using their mother tongue during English task especially in oral presentation whenever they fail to identify the right English term or expression that is to be used (Wei and Zhang, 2013; Hamad, 2013).

From the review of past studies on oral presentation difficulties, it can be summed up that even though the studies that are conducted in the past have tackled almost all aspects of possible factors influencing the students' oral presentation, such as the teaching and learning context, psychological context and linguistic context, but it is detected that most of the studies only focuses on exploring the different types of problems

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without the intent to also explore on the ways the students tackle those problematic barriers in their oral presentation.

2.6 Past Studies on Communication Strategies

Communication strategies are formal and informal strategies used by students to cope with their communication difficulties that they encounter while conversing or communicating in the English language. This type of strategies are either verbal or non-verbal and are used by students to ensure that their conversation flow smoothly without interruption, which sometimes might be challenging depending on the students' level of proficiency and their ability to figure out the right strategies to overcome those communication barriers.

Yamani, Irgin and Kavasoglu (2013), in their quantitative study investigate both speaking and listening strategies that are used by English Second Language students in Mersin University Turkey on coping with problems during communication. Their study seeks to identify the different usage of communication strategy through gender based comparison between male and female usage of communication strategies. Apart from that, they also compare the type of strategies that are used based on the level of proficiency among the students. Their findings have reported that female students use communication strategies more than the male students. Meanwhile, in terms of language proficiency, the intermediate students prefer using negotiating for meaning strategies while advance learners prefer getting the gist strategies.

Aziz, Fata and Balqis's (2018) study also carry out a comparison between the usage of strategies between 2 groups. They focus on investigating the speaking skill

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strategies that are applied by two groups of EFL learners in two boarding senior high schools in Aceh, Indonesia. They have made a comparison between the successful and non successful group of learners. From their results, they explain that students from both the groups do not give up easily on their communication, and prefer to try different communication strategies in order to manage the difficulties that they're facing. However, both groups are reported to have shown differences in their frequency of strategy application. Less successful learners are found to rely usually on strategies such as literal translation, language switch and approximation strategies. Successful learners are reported to have also applied similar strategies such as approximation and literal translation strategies, but the difference is, they also uses the appeal for assistance strategy.

Research by Rabab'ah (2013) on strategies of repair in EFL learners' oral discourse examines how EFL learners in non English speaking communities such as Jordan and Germany handle communication through the usage of repair strategies. They observed students' oral production while performing story re-telling task and how repair strategies were employed in eliciting their message or stories. The participants of their study were 3rd year students enrolled in Linguistic Department at 2 universities in Germany and in Jordan. Their result is Jordanian learners utilise more repetition and self initiated repair strategies compared to German learners who are based in their performance. This could be due to the influence of the students' mother tongue which is the Arabic (Jordan) language, that has been described as 'verbose' in comparison to the German language in terms of producing the number of words. They reported that the usage of repetition strategies by both groups is viewed as an attempt to plan new utterances, to gain time and to recall the next lexical item. While self initiated repair that has been used by both groups is to monitor or modify their utterances when they feel that they have made an error but are not always successful due to

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their limited vocabulary. This usage proves the importance of exposure of other communication strategies to help overcome similar problems.

Siti Mariam's (2014) case study research on the other hand, investigates on the usage of fillers and hesitation devices by comparing the usage among diploma students from 2 groups, low proficiency and high proficiency level. The focus of her study is in finding the type of hesitation and fillers devices usually used in a group discussion and in identifying the different usage between the two compared groups. Her findings have indentified the types of fillers and hesitation devices that are commonly used in a group discussion, namely, non-lexical fillers, lexical fillers, repetitions, long pauses as well as short pauses. High proficiency students are stated to commonly use lexical fillers while for the low proficiency students they are found to commonly use long pauses. Based on the result of the findings, she pointed out that regardless of the level of proficiency among the students, the usage of fillers and hesitation devices are commonly found within their spoken discourse. This is because hesitation devices and fillers are commonly used by learners during speaking tasks. This strategy is used most of the time without a conscious decision or it is automatic for learners who are said to tend to resort into using this type of strategies in numerous problem situations in their discourse. The choice of strategies that are used by high and low proficiency students are affected by their level of mastery to the language. For example, high proficiency learner uses lexical fillers to gain time or in substituting for the gap in the language. Whereas low proficiency learners use fillers and hesitation devices to indicate that they are lost for words or ideas. This is due to their restricted ability of the language which influences the flow of communication.

Razak and Shah (2020) carry out a study to understand the students' belief on the usage of code switching in the ESL classroom. Their study uses a questionnaire survey

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that was distributed among pre-university students at SMK Seri Aman, Pasir Puteh, Kelantan. A total of 91 students of mix levels ranked their personal English proficiency ability ranging from okay, good, weak to very weak. The results reported that the majority of the students have a positive view on the usage of code switching as one of the strategies to acquire the target language. They felt that code switching as strategy helps in assisting them during the English lesson. In addition, code switching is described to provide affective support for students to be more confident and motivated compared to an all-English lesson. Moreover, code switching is seen as a bridge that connects students with their teachers without worrying about communication problems arising due to the limitation of proficiency. There are however a small number of participants who have reported to have suggested on minimising the use of code switching in language classes as the overreliance on the usage of code switching according to them would hinder the purpose of learning the target language.

Jusoh and Salim (2020) on the other hand focuses on investigating 7 student teachers or pre-service teachers, who are enrolled in a diploma in TESL undergoing teaching practicum in different primary schools in Terengganu, teaching pupils of year 2 -5. Classroom observation is conducted in collecting the data to observe the modification strategies that are used by the participants in teaching their students. From their findings, the usage of modification strategies is reported to be limited to only repeating and translating. Repetition strategies have been observed to be used by the participants to encourage responses from their students, whereas translation is a form of code switching to help with students' comprehension. Overall, their findings report on the limited usage of modification strategies that are employed by the target participants. This according to them are due to factors such as lack of awareness where they are unaware of other strategies as

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well as the lack of confidence in using other strategies to tackle problems that arise during lessons. From the implication of the study, it is stated that student teacher lack sufficient teaching strategies which affect the quality of teacher produce by the university or collages. In relation to Razak and Shah (2020)'s study, the usage of translation and repetition should be minimised for it defeats the purpose of the lesson as platforms for students to learn English. In addition to that, other strategies should be exposed and taught especially to teachers in training for their preparation to be a teacher themselves.

Adnan, Zainol Abidin and Hakim (2020) carry out a study on the usage of Oral Communication Strategies module as measure of improving the confidence level and willingness to communicate among Malaysian working adults. They have mentioned that the existing speaking modules in most academic institutions and even in the workplace setting is only focusing on promoting speaking skills without inserting any task, activities or teaching of strategies that relates to the improvement of both speaking skills and confidence level. Within their implementation of the Oral Communication Strategies module that focuses on increasing the confidence level and willingness to communicate among the participants through a step by step approach- from pair activities, to small group discussion before levelling up into requiring participants to do an individual presentation. Throughout the process, they have discovered that some participants are rather shy and anxious to communicate in the target language which is English and this affective or psychological related factor is considered to be an important factor in influencing the participants' level of confidence and their willingness to communicate. From their study, it proves that problems involving emotional and affective factors that influences the level of confidence and willingness to speak do not only happen among students in the context of having to perform an academic oral presentation in school levels or in university but this is

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also a common problem that is faced even by working adults. This as a whole proves the importance to ensure that students especially undergraduates to be well equipped with speaking skills before they enter the working world, to avoid them from having similar problems.

The review of past studies suggests that the usage and choice of communication strategies among learners are highly affected by their linguistic proficiency and their exposure to the different types of communication strategies that can be used to overcome their communication difficulties. With regards to the previous studies that have been done on oral presentation difficulties, this current study tries to overcome the existing gap in this topic by understanding the core of the problem that is related to the type of oral presentation difficulties from the perspective of ESL undergraduates as the receiver of knowledge, and the approaches that are used in the current teaching and learning practice in language courses. Apart from that, this current study also attempts to investigate the common strategies that are used by undergraduates in overcoming their oral presentation problems. This understands the level of exposure and knowledge students have towards the different types of communication strategies that are available. In addition, taking into consideration the lack of studies that have been conducted that focus mainly on low proficiency undergraduates, hence this study opted to focus on this group of students as they are the group that requires extra help in improving their oral presentation skill and speaking skill as a whole. Nevertheless, the choice of using students from the east side of Malaysia which is Sabah is also due to the lack of study that has been conducted among this group of students.

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Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will be focusing on presenting an in-depth explanation and justification that are related to the choice of methods and methodology that are used for this study in line with the aim of this research study. The methodological aspects that will be discussed in this chapter includes the research design, data collection method, participants, sample selection method, research instruments that are used for the collection of data as well as the research procedures. This chapter will also include a discussion in relation to the ethical consideration procedure in conducting the process of data collection.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This study will be adapting 2 theoretical frameworks as guides in determining and constructing the research instruments. The first framework adapted to this study is a study by Dornyei and Scott (1997) related to the types of communication difficulties. Their study looks into the classification of the problems that occur in communication, that are classified into a list of four major factors such as resource deficits, processing time pressure, own performance problems and other performance problems *(refer to Appendix B)*. Whereas the second framework is Nakatani's (2006) Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) which is a questionnaire that comprises communication strategies for both listening and speaking problems. However, due to the focus of this study, which is on oral presentation

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skill, only the eight categories of speaking strategies will be adapted in the questionnaire *(refer to Appendix A)*.

The present study opt in choosing to use and adapt both the frameworks as each of them serves a purpose in helping to gather the necessary information that would help to answer the two research questions that are constructed in this study. Dornyei and Scott's 1997 framework is a reliable framework that helps to identify oral presentation difficulties based on the 4 main problems stated in the study (Refer to Figure 3.1). Nakatani's OCSI Questionnaire on the other hand is known for it's reliability and validity as it is widely used in research studies like in Zulkurnain and Kaur(2014) . Nakatani's questionnaire is easy to be understood which will be convenient for students from low proficiency group to comprehend.

The first Research Question aims to explore the types of oral presentation difficulties that are faced by low proficiency undergraduates in Malaysian Universities. As for the second Research Question, it focuses on understanding the types of oral communication strategies that are used by the low proficiency undergraduates in coping with the difficulties when giving oral presentation. Nakatani's OCSI questionnaire will be used to collect data on the communication strategies that are required to answer Research Question (2). Meanwhile, the framework by Dornyei will be used as a guideline for the construction of the interview questions in order to collect the information needed to answer Research Question (1) which is related to the types of oral presentation difficulties.

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Figure 3.1 below provides an overview on the two theoretical framework used in this study.

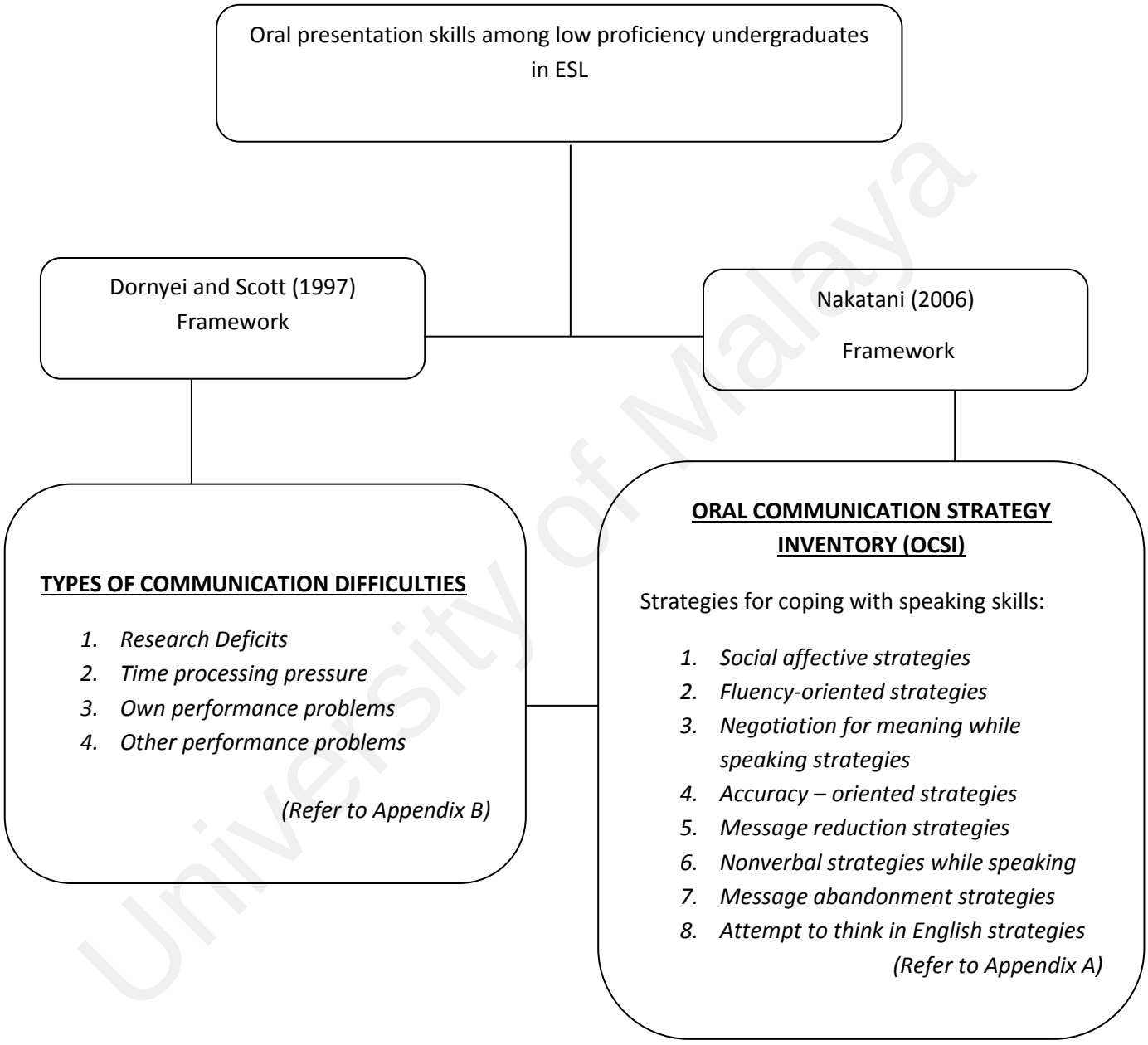

Figure 3.1: Theoretical Framework

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3.2.1 Dornyei and Scott (1997) Oral Communication Problems

Dornyei and Scott (1997) have highlighted that there are four main sources that causes communication breakdown in second language. The sources are categorised as problems related to *Resource Deficits, Time Processing Pressure, Own Performance Pressure* and *Other Performance Pressure.* Based on Dornyei and Kormos (1998), *Resource Deficits* are related to problems involving linguistic aspects such as lexical problems, problems with grammar and phonological problems. *Time Processing Pressure* on the other hand is a problem where speakers required a longer time in processing speech and utterances in the target language as compared to their first language. *Own Performance Problem* on the other hand is related to the speakers' awareness of their mistakes and errors within their utterances to which they cover through techniques such as self repairing process, paraphrasing, and editing their utterances. The final source of communication problem according to Dornyei is the problem related to *Other Performance Problem* where the source of this problem is the ESL learners or speaker's inability to comprehend the message spoken by their interlocutor resulting to misinterpretation and misunderstanding towards the intended meaning.

3.2.2 Nakatani (2006) Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI)

Nakatani (2006) developed a set of questionnaire called the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) the main purpose of which is to investigate the usage of oral communication strategies among learners in coping with communication difficulties. Chairat (2017) further added that the strategies focuses more on understanding the type of strategic behaviours that the learners resort to using whenever they are faced with

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problems during an interactional task. Nakatani's OCSI questionnaire is divided into 2 main parts. The first part consist of 8 strategies for coping with speaking problems while the second part consist of 7 coping strategies for listening problems. There are a total of 58 items in the questionnaire where 32 items are under the speaking strategies and the remaining 26 items are items under listening strategies.

This research study aims only to focus on the aspect of oral presentation; hence, the study only adapted the first part of the questionnaire which is the coping strategies for speaking problems. The 8 coping strategies for speaking are mentioned in Nakatani's questionnaire *(Refer Appendix A),* that consist of strategies such as, *Social Affective Strategies* which concern affective factors such as anxiety, behaviour and emotional management in social context. Items that falls under this category is item 23, 25,26, 27,28,29. The second factor is called the *Fluency Oriented Strategies* that looks into linguistic aspects that are related to the flow of conversation such as the rhythm, pronunciation and intonation that are used by the speaker in their communication to ensure clarity in their listeners' understanding and comprehension of what they are saying. In the questionnaire, items no. 9,10,11, 12,13 and 14 are found under this type of strategy. Next, items no. 19, 21, and 22 are found under *Negotiation of Meaning While Speaking* strategies which is the third strategy found in the questionnaire. These items are related to the negotiation process happening between the speaker and their interlocutor to ensure that no communication breakdown would happen within the interaction. The next factor is the *Accuracy Oriented Strategies* that concerns the learners' desire to make sure that their speech is accurate. Item no. 7, 17, 18 and 30 are mentioned to be in this group. Learners are described to tend to be conscious and pay attention especially on their grammatical accuracy. The fifth strategy is the *Message Reduction and Alteration Strategy,* which

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consist of items no. 3,4, and 5 are stated to be a type of strategy that learners use by simplifying and reducing their intended message and also by only using familiar words that they are confident with. This is to avoid communication breakdown. Nakatani also included *Non-Verbal Strategies* as one of the strategies for coping with speaking skills where this strategy involves the use of non-verbal cues and expressions such as eye contact, body language, gestures and facial expression within their interaction to fill gaps and to achieve their communicative goals. Items no. 15 and 16 are found in this strategy. *Message Abandonment Strategies* on the other hand, is a strategy that is associated with actions such as leaving messages unfinished, giving up on their attempt to communicate and seeking help from other people as a strategy when they face problems in getting their original verbal plan across to their listener. This type of strategy which comprises of items such as item no 6, 24, 31 and 32, according to Nakatani is the type of communication strategy commonly used and resorted to by low proficiency learners. The final strategy under the strategies for coping with speaking problem is the *Attempt to Think in English Strategies* whereby learners tend to think of their responses or their intended message in the target language which is the English language. Nakatani further explains that this type of strategy is used mostly by students of high proficiency level. Items no. 1 and 2 are grouped in this category.

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3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design employed in this study is the qualitative research design with the incorporation of the simple frequency count as one of the data analysis technique. The selection of applying this type of research design for this study is selected based on the aim of the study that seeks to understand the oral presentation skills among low proficiency undergraduates. The qualitative method according to Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacey (2016) is applied to seek answers for the questions that are related to experience, meaning and perspective from the viewpoint of the participants or based on the samples. This is gathered usually through the data collection technique involving group discussion as well as interview sessions. They further added that the scopes for sample selection in a qualitative study are usually convenient sampling, purposive sampling, and theoretical or even snowball sampling type. As mentioned, despite being a qualitative research, this study applied simple frequency count for the purpose of analysing the questionnaire responses. Incorporating the simple frequency calculation or numbers as stated by Maxwell (2010) is valid as the means to complement the overall findings and presentation of the research results. This is supported by McKim (2017), and it is done to further understand the students' view in the form of statistics.

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3.4 DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1 **Participants.**

The participants of this study comprises of 51 Low proficiency undergraduates from 3 private universities in Sabah. All the participants are undergraduates with low English language proficiency with a MUET score of Band 1 and 2. The participants are undergraduates from different courses and fields of study. All 51 undergraduates are involved as respondents for the survey questionnaire, and out of the total number of participants, 13 of them have been selected for the individual interview session.

3.4.2 **Sample Selection – Participants' Criteria**

Purposeful sampling method is applied in the process of selecting the participants. Purposeful sampling method is a selection method highly influenced by the purpose and aim of the research in understanding certain issues or event. Hence, the selection is strictly guided by specific criteria and characteristic of the target group of participants required by the study or that target samples that the researcher had in mind. (Mackey & Gass, 2005; Chua, 2016).

For this particular research, the selections of samples or participants are based on aspects such as purpose of the study, language proficiency and learning experience. In the context of purpose of the study, selection of participants is based on the targeted group that the researcher would like to study on, which in this case is the focus on low proficiency undergraduates. The researcher is focusing on getting participants who are undergraduates with low proficiency in the English language. In addition to targeting the low proficiency

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group of undergraduates, the researcher further specifies that the criteria of low proficiency undergraduates as only those with a MUET score of Band 1 and 2, who will be selected as participants. Language experience is also another criterion that the researcher emphasises in selecting the participants where only undergraduates who have experienced in doing an English oral presentation as part of their course assignments or assessments will be selected. This is to ensure that they will be able to provide authentic and relevant opinions and insights based on their experience in doing English oral presentation *(refer to Appendix C)*.

3.4.3 **Sample Selection: Procedure - Research Site & Number Of Participants**

For the selection of samples, the researcher first identifies possible research sites to conduct the data collection procedure. For this research, the researcher had decided to collect the data from private universities in Sabah. Originally, six private universities were identified and listed by the researcher as the possible research sites, but after going through the process of contacting the universities, proposing for a request to conduct data collection from their students at their institutions, only three of the private universities are available to accommodate the researcher's request for data collection involving their students. The other private universities unfortunately, are unable to approve the request since the timeframe which the data collection was scheduled to be conducted was at the end of November to December of 2018, their students are on their examination week and some are already on their study break. This leaves it to just three universities as the research sites for this research.

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As for the procedure for selecting samples or participants, the researcher had discussed with the representatives from the three private universities that were involved regarding the criteria of participants that are required for the data collection. And due to the specification of the required target participants of only low proficiency undergraduates, who scored Band 1 and Band 2 in their MUET examination, this justifies the reason for the small number of participants that the researcher managed to get for the collection of data. Taking into account the specified criteria for participants, the university also considered the availability of their students in terms of their schedule, which explains why some universities are able to gather a high number of participants whereas some only managed to get a few of their students to part take in the data collection especially as respondents for the questionnaire to which the total of participants are only 51 undergraduates.

Apart from collecting data for the survey questionnaire, the researcher also collects data through individual interview sessions. Considering the total number of participants that the researcher manages to get as respondents for questionnaire, the original plan for the interview session is to get at least 4-5 undergraduates from each universities to participate in the individual interview session. The selection procedure as the respondents for the individual interview session is solely based on the students' availability and willingness to participate in the session considering that they are from different field of studies and faculty, and that they have different schedules compared to the rest. Hence the total number of participants who are involved for the interview is 13 students.

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3.5 Research Instruments

Two research instruments were used for the collection of research data *(refer to Table 3.1)*. The first research instrument used in this study was a Questionnaire which is adapted from Nakatani's (2006) Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) framework to collect data related to types of communication strategies commonly used by undergraduates in their oral presentation (*Refer to Appendix D).* The researcher decided to adapt and use the framework by Nakatani because it is related to this study, and that it is considered to be a reliable instrument to collect the data required in this research. As mentioned by Mackey and Gass (2005), that specialised questionnaire is developed with the intention of addressing specific research focus or area, which is similar to the adaptation of Nakatani's OCSI questionnaire for this study, the finding from this questionnaire data analysis will be used to answer Research Question (2).

Apart from that, a specifically semi-structured interview was used as the instrument for data collection. A total of 5 semi structured interview questions was designed and constructed by the researcher to get information related to the types of oral presentation difficulties among low proficiency undergraduates (*Refer to Figure 3.4 and Appendix E*). The interview questions was constructed with close reference to Dornyei and Scott's (1997) four types of communication difficulties to elicit data that would be useful to answer Research Question (1). The semi-structure interview according to Mackey and Gass (2005) provides the researcher with guides on what to ask during the interview as well as freedom and flexibility in adding extra probing questions to generate more responses and information. In addition to that, Chua (2016) has mentioned that the researcher could modify the level of language whenever it is required or necessary throughout the interview

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process to suit the respondents' level of proficiency to ensure that they are able to understand the question and provide relevant response and answer.

Table 3.1: Research Instruments Details

1) Questionnaire *(refer **Appendix D**)*
2) Individual Interview *(refer **Appendix E**)*

QUESTIONNAIRE	INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW
➢ The questionnaire comprises of two parts : Part 1 :` Demographic Information Part 2 : Communication strategies based on Nakatani's (2006) OCSI framework. (To suit the aim of the present research, only items from the strategies for coping with speaking problems will be used to extract data of this study.) ➢ Responses will be categorised based on the *8 communication strategies for speaking(refer to Appendix A)* to identify the ranks of the strategies used and preferred by low proficiency undergraduates in dealing with their oral presentation difficulties.	➢ a set of semi structured interview questions is designed with reference to Dornyei and Scott's (1997) four types of communication difficulties : I. Resource Deficits II. Processing Time pressure III. Own performance problems IV. Other performance problems *(refer to Appendix F)*

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3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Figure 3.2 below provides an overview of the data collection procedure.

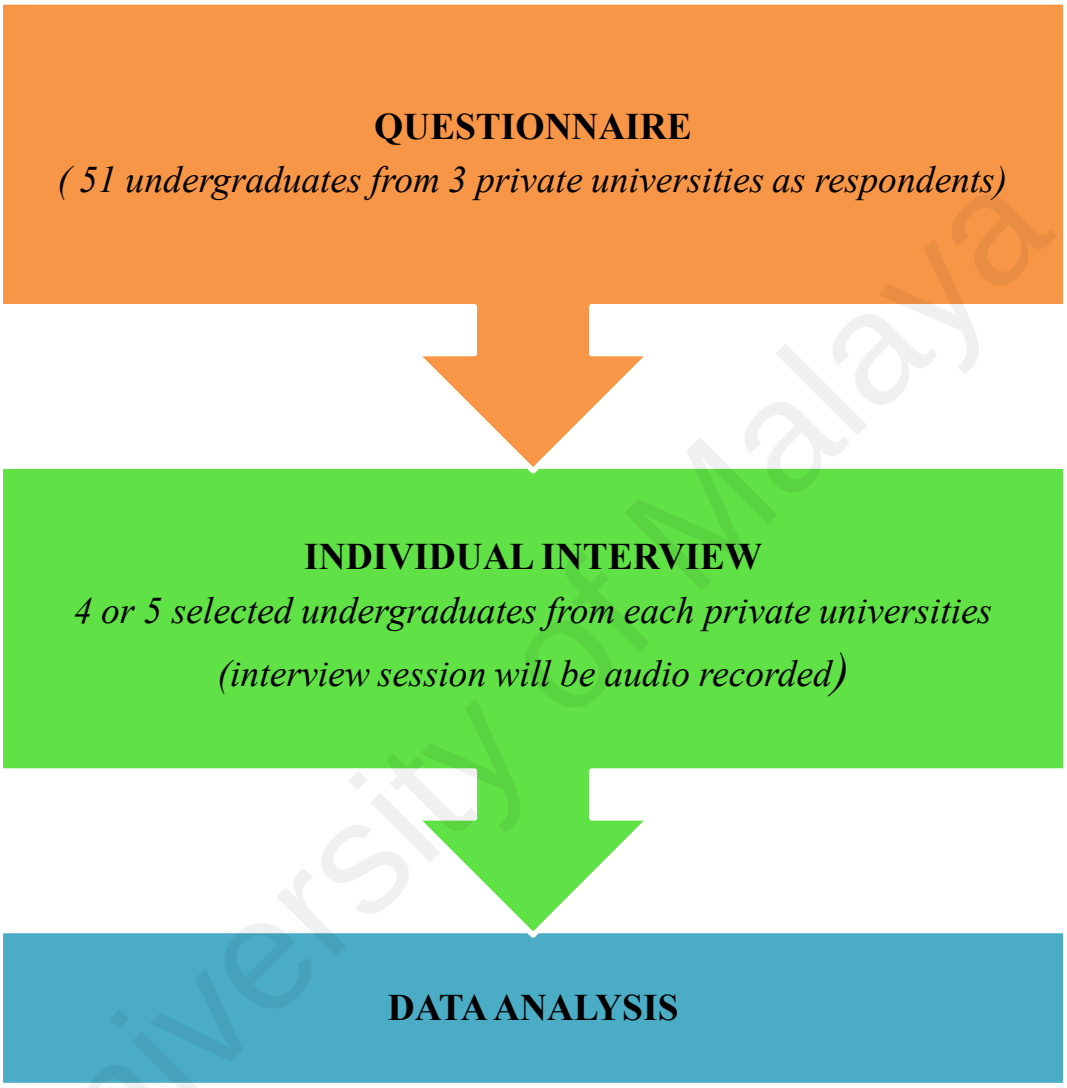

Figure 3.2: Data Collection

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3.6.1 Administrating Questionnaire

The process of collecting data through questionnaire was done separately for all 3 private universities. For 2 out of the 3 universities, the researcher passed the copies of the questionnaire to the lecturers in-charged during the first meeting with them. The lecturers in-charged distributed the questionnaire sheets to the participants involved in one of their classes with them, and the questionnaire sheets was then collected by the end of the class. The lecturers kept the questionnaire and handed them to the researcher during the day when the researcher came for the scheduled interview session with the students. The reason as to why the researcher requires help from the lecturers, in distributing the questionnaire to the students is because it is more convenient in terms of time as the students are from different courses and their availability varies according to their schedules. As for one university out of the three, the questionnaire was distributed by the researcher herself as it was conducted on the same day as the interview sessions with the participants.

Another reason as to why in the process of data collection, the questionnaire was administered first before the interview session, was to enable both the lecturer and researcher to identify the low proficiency students since not all the students in private universities had sat for the MUET examination. This would help the researcher to avoid having data and samples that would not fit the criteria of the research study. Nevertheless, by administering the questionnaire first, it is easier to select participants to participate in the interview session.

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3.6.2 Conducting the Individual interview session

Interview sessions on the other hand were conducted on a different day for students from 2 of the universities involved. The interview is a semi-structured interview conducted on a one-on-one basis or individually with 4 to 5 students from each university. The duration for each interview ranges from 10-15 minutes per session. At the beginning of each individual interview sessions, the researcher started by giving a short but detailed explanation to each of the interviewees about the research study and what the interview is all about. The interviewees were also told that they are encouraged to answer in English, but they are allowed to answer in Bahasa Melayu if they are more comfortable with the language. After briefing the interviewees about the research study, they are then asked to fill in a consent form as declaration for their willingness to participate in the interview session. The researcher then started the interview by asking the students to briefly introduce themselves to make them feel comfortable and to be able to get details regarding the students' background, information that the researcher felt influenced their views and responses. Then, the researcher proceeded with asking the list of questions that had been constructed for the interview.

Additional questions related to the existing list of questions were asked whenever necessary, during the session as probing the students to get more clearer explanations from the students regarding their points and responses that they had given. With consideration of the differences in the language abilities of each interviewee since this study is focusing on low proficiency undergraduates, therefore throughout the interviews, the researcher modifies her language and simplifies the questions whenever needed to ensure that the respondents are able to understand the questions allowing the flow of the interview to be

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smooth. Before ending each interviews, the researcher has also asked the respondents whether they have anything that they would want to add in regards to the questions that have been asked to allow the students to add any points that they feel is related and useful to be added to their responses. This step from the interview helps the researcher to gain additional information from the students.

3.7 Data Analysis

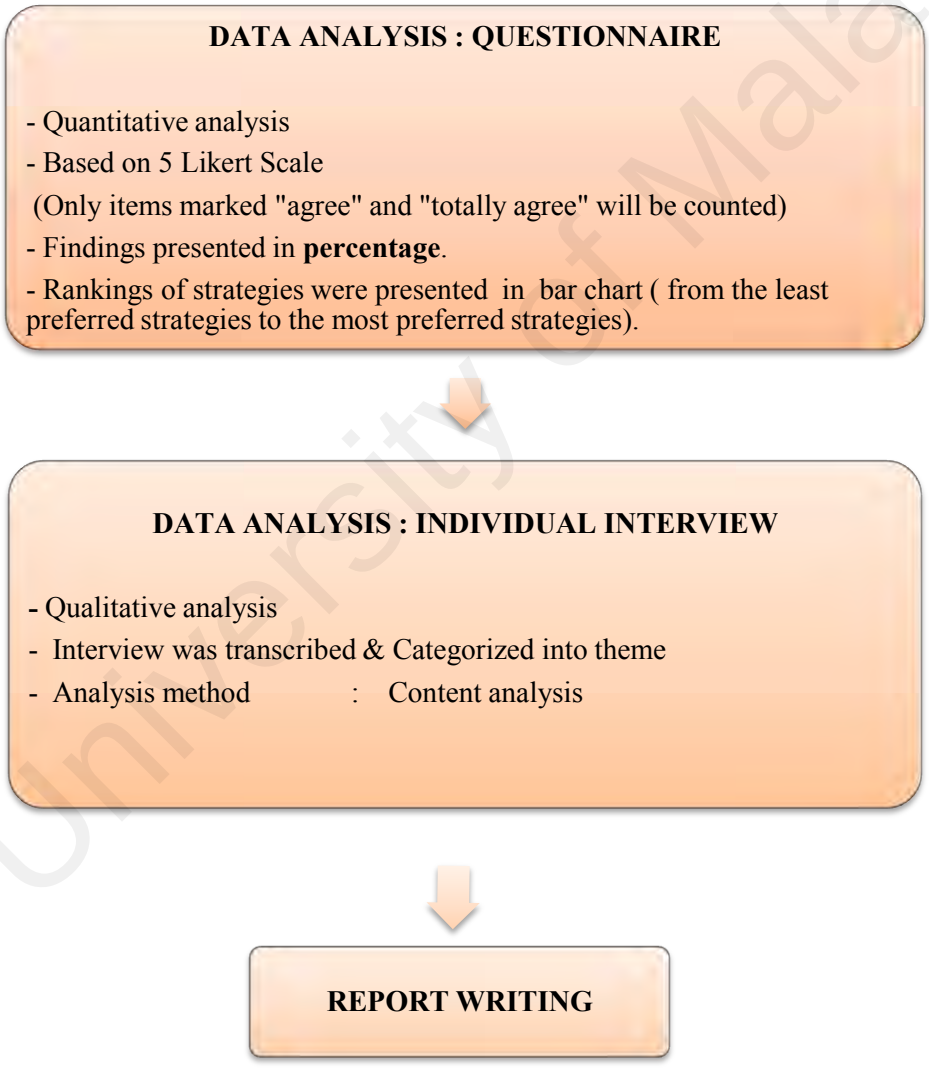

Figure 3.3 Data Analysis Procedure

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Upon completing the data collection from both the interviews and questionnaires, the researcher first compiled the interview recording into a folder in the researcher's computer for easy excess. In analysing the interview data, the researcher employs the content analysis method which is usually used to analyse interview transcripts (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009). All the 13 interview recordings were coded numerically starting from S1 to S13 (student 1-13) for referencing purpose (*Refer to Appendix G*). The researcher then proceeds with the analysis of the interview recording by briefly listening to each audio recording to ensure the clarity of each recording. The researcher listened to the recording thoroughly for the second time and transcribed it into interview transcripts. After transcribing all the interview recordings, the researcher took time to read through each transcript a few times. The researcher did the reading at least 3 times for each transcripts and added English translations to any responses that were answered in Bahasa Melayu by the respondents. The next step that the researcher did upon completing the third round of reading was highlighting important extracts from the transcripts that are considered important and useful for the data analysis in chapter 4. This step in content analysis according to Harnett (2016) is a step in classifying chunks of text or responses with similar meaning into categories. Next, the researcher categorised the extracts from the interview data based on the 4 types of communication difficulties as mentioned in Dornyei and Scott's (1997) framework *(Refer to Appendix B)*. The researcher concludes the interview data analysis by writing descriptive reports on the analysis to answer Research Question (1) on the types of oral presentation difficulties faced by low proficiency undergraduates in Malaysia.

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On the other hand, the analysis for the Nakatani's (2006) OCSI questionnaire data was analysed qualitatively using the 5 Likert scale method by counting only items marked as 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. The researcher started the analysis by checking each of the questionnaire papers that had been completed by the students to ensure that the questionnaire was completed by respondents who matched the criteria of low proficiency group (Band 1 & 2 students). The researcher carefully checks each of the questionnaires and put aside those that do not fit the criteria and also the incomplete questionnaires. Next, the researcher manually recorded the item counts for each item into table form. The items counted were then calculated and presented in the form of percentage (%) to identify the ranks of each strategy. The results were then used to answer Research Question (2) on the preferred type of oral communication strategies that were used by low proficiency undergraduates in Malaysia in coping with their oral presentation difficulties.

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Figure 3.4 Data Analysis of RQ (1)

"What are the types of oral presentation difficulties faced by low proficiency undergraduates in Malaysian Universities?"

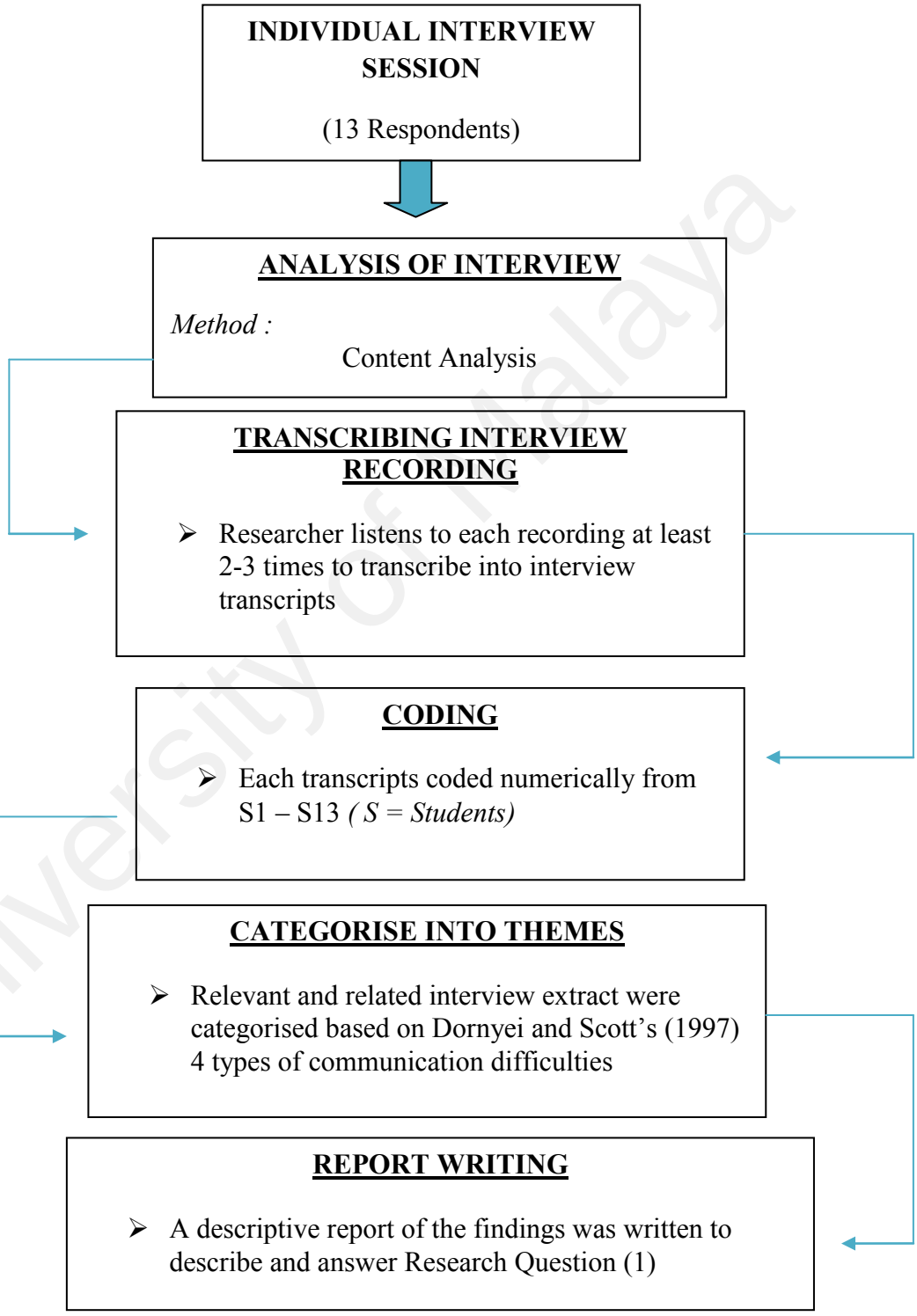

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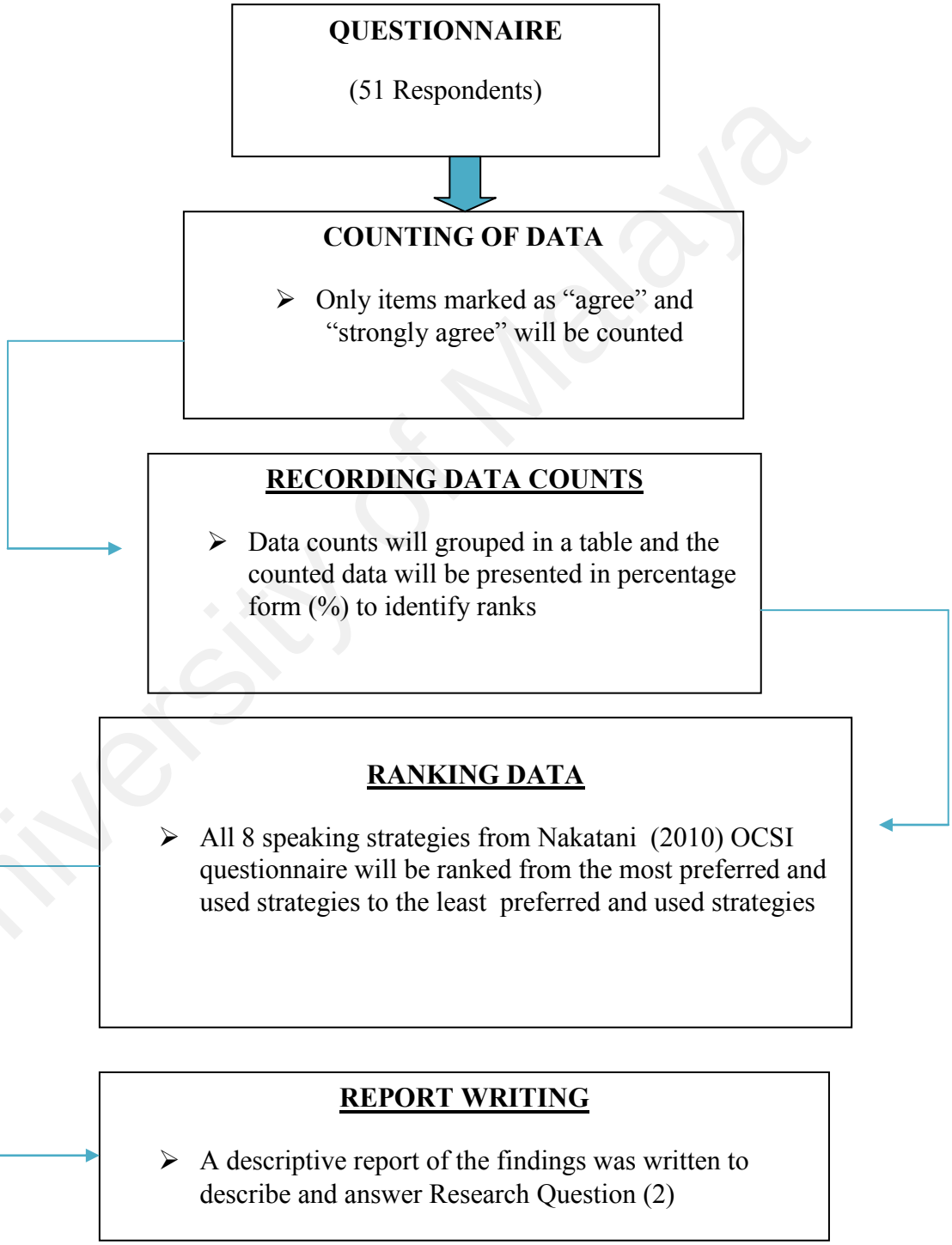
Figure 3.5 Data Analysis of RQ (2)

"What are the communication strategies used by these low proficiency undergraduates in coping with the difficulties in giving English oral presentation?"



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3.8 Categorising of data & Counting of Data

The previous pages on data analysis provides a general overview on how the data are gathered from 2 different research instruments that are used in this research study such as the data from a questionnaire and the interview recordings are extracted and will be analysed. The overview includes an explanation on how the interview recording has been transcribed through systematic processes involving the listening of each audio recordings of all the 13 interviews, to the transcribing of each recordings into interview transcripts and finally how the relevant data and extract from the interview have been selected using the method of content analysis which enables the researcher to group all related interview extracts based on the 4 main categories of Dornyei & Scott's (1997) types of communication difficulties. Through content analysis also, it enables the researcher to extract additional data which is considered to be relevant and useful as a new discovery that is different from the 4 types of communication difficulties that has been mentioned in Dornyei and Scott's (1997) that the researcher could use as a new discovery gained from this study. The overview of the process of analysis for the questionnaire was also mentioned, on how the questionnaires were checked to make sure it was suitable to be used as data based on the requirement standard set by the researcher in terms of the criteria of participants that the researcher aims to study. It also briefly explains the process of calculating the questionnaire data. This section of data analysis on the other hand, will focus on providing a thorough elaboration on the procedures conducted by the researcher in terms of counting the data.

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3.8.1 Analysis procedure for Interview data. Categorizing Data

The interview transcripts were analysed systematically by the researcher. With the gathered interview extract that had been grouped based on the 4 main categories of communication difficulties by Dornyei & Scott (1997), the researcher first place the data into a table as illustrated in *table 3.21 and table 3.3* below based on the 3 respective categories for easy referencing.

Table 3.2 – categorizing Interview data

STUDENT	EXTRACT	DIFFICULTIES & CATEGORY OF DIFFICULTIES

Table 3.3 – Adding extract of interview based on category

STUDENT	EXTRACT	DIFFICULTIES & CATEGORY OF DIFFICULTIES
S1	- Oh, for me the hardest part to present, especially English subject (28) - Because the subject that we took uses English language so we need to present in English. So for me the hardest part about it is how I express. (32) - How to express, how to show... it's hard for me to make sure the audience understand about what I'm going to say because I have problem in combining and arranging my … (34)	Difficulties : i. How to express ii. Combining & arranging sentences Category : ➢ Resource Deficit

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S1 : Represent Student (1), S1 was used as a code of reference to Distinguish the different students. Participants of interview will be coded numerically from
S1 to S13 *(S1, S2,S3,S4,S5,S6,S7,S8,S9,S10,S11,S12,S13)*

(Number) : The brackets with numbers in it such as (28) is an example of the lines

Where the extract was found from Student 1 (S1)'s interview Transcript.

All the responses from the 13 interview transcripts were arranged into tables as shown above. And as for the process of grouping responses into categories to be used for data analysis in chapter 4, the researcher carefully selected relevant extracts that showed the different types of problems that were mentioned in the extract of each interviews that fell under the 4 main categories of communication difficulties, to illustrate the different types of problems faced by the students based on the context of *Research Deficits, Time Processing Pressure, Own Performance Pressure, And Other Performance Pressure* as mentioned in Dornyei and Scott's framework; to be used as tables for presentation of findings for each category mentioned in Chapter 4. The table below shows how findings from the interview analysis will be presented in Chapter 4.

Table 3.4 Difficulties related to Resource Deficits

STUDENT	EXTRACT

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Table 3.5 Difficulties related to Time processing Pressure

STUDENT	EXTRACT

Table 3.6 Difficulties related to Own Performance Pressure

STUDENT	EXTRACT

Table 3.7 Difficulties related to Other Performance Pressure

STUDENT	EXTRACT

The researcher decided to present the finding in this manner to provide a clear illustration of data and this helped the researcher to elaborate each of the findings based on the group that they were in.

3.8.2 Analysis procedure for Questionnaire: Data Counts

Just as the interview data was analysed systematically, the calculation of data for the questionnaire was also done using a thorough calculation process. The data count was initially carried out by placing relevant information into a table as illustrated below.

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Table 3.8 – Table for Data Count

Type of strategies	Items No.	Number of students who chooses ***"agree & strongly agree"***	Percentage (%) for each item
■ **Social affective strategies**	23	(30) / 51	
	25	(45) / 51	
	26	(31) / 51	
	27	(48) / 51	
	28	(38) / 51	
	29	(42) / 51	82 (%)
TOTAL			
■ **Fluency-oriented strategies**	9	(37) / 51	
	10	(38) / 51	
	11	(40) / 51	
	12	(46) / 51	
	13	(34) / 51	
	14	(40) / 51	
TOTAL			
■ **Negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies**	19	(40) / 51	
	21	(36) / 51	
	22	(29) / 51	
TOTAL			
	7	(29) / 51	

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■ **Accuracy- oriented strategies**	17	(43) / 51	
	18	(33) / 51	
	30	(26) / 51	
TOTAL			
■ **Message reduction & alteration strategies**	3	(46) / 51	
	4	(38) / 51	
	5	(23) / 51	
TOTAL			
■ **Non-verbal strategies while speaking**	15	(44) / 51	
	16	(34) / 51	
TOTAL			
■ **Message abandonment strategies**	6	(33) / 51	
	24	(24) / 51	
	31	(40) / 51	
	32	(12) / 51	
TOTAL			
■ **Attempt to think in English strategies**	1	(27) / 51	
	2	(40) / 51	
TOTAL			

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Types of strategies	:	All the 8 speaking strategies in Nakatani (2006) OCSI Questionnaire.
Items No.	:	Refer the items in the questionnaire where in the table above it was placed based on its category.
Number of students	:	Refer to total of students who chooses the option of '*agree & Strongly agree'* on each item over the total number of respondents which is 51 respondents.

The presentation of findings for both research instruments in chapter 4 will include a thorough discussion of the items or categorization found in the presentation table and chart.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

3.9.1 **Permission and approval from the university**

In getting permission from the universities, the researcher had initially contacted the selected universities through phone conversation to enquire the students' information, the number of students who are of low English proficiency and to book an appointment to meet the university's representatives.

Upon securing the appointment for a face to face meeting, on the day of the appointment, the researcher had met the academic coordinator, and the English language lecturer from the first university and the second university, where a discussion was held with the English language lecturer from the language department as well as the Head of the Department, and at the third university a discussion was held with the Principal of the university. During the meeting with the individuals in-charged, the researcher had prepared

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for each of the universities- a copy of the research proposal, reference letter from the researcher's university (University Malaya- *refer Appendix H*) as well as the sample copy of both the questions for the questionnaire and interview questions for their reference. During the meeting also, the researcher handed a copy of the reference letter to be signed by the universities representatives as evidence and proof of permission to conduct research at their university. And this copy is kept by the researcher for future reference *(Refer to Appendix I)*.

During the meeting, discussions are carried out regarding the selection of students, number of students, date, time and venue for the collection of data. For two of the universities, questionnaires were passed to the lecturer during the meeting, to be distributed to the selected participants during their class time by the lecturer. And will be collected by the lecturer when it is completed. As for the other university, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the participants during the date of the data collection.

3.9.2 **Student Consent**

As for the undergraduates who are selected as participants for this research study, they are required to fill a student consent form as proof that they are willing to participate in this study. For those who are involved in both the questionnaire and the interview, they will be asked to fill 2 separate forms, one consent form for the questionnaire and the other would be the consent form as the interviewee for the interview session (refer Appendix J & K).

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Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on presenting the result of findings that are generated through the analysis of the interview and questionnaire data that have been conducted. In this chapter also, the researcher reports and presents a discussion on the result of the findings, to answer the two research questions that have been formulated for this study.

4.1.1 Analysis

As mentioned in earlier chapters, this study employs a qualitative research design which is combined with the simple frequency counts for the purpose of data collection and analysis of data. This chapter will be divided into two sections. The first sections will be focusing on the finding and discussion of the qualitative data that are generated from the interview transcripts to answer the first research question. While the second section will present the findings and discussion that are generated through the questionnaire data to answer Research Question Two. In relation to the discussion, references are made based on relevant findings and points are gathered from past research studies that are related to the topic of the current study.

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4.2 Analysis For Research Question (1) :

The Types of Oral Presentation Difficulties that are Faced by Low Proficiency Undergraduates in Malaysian Universities.

The interview was the method and instrument used by the researcher in collecting data related to the types of oral presentation difficulties faced by low proficiency undergraduates. In the interview, respondents shared their insight and experiences that were related to the different types of difficulties that they faced during an oral presentation. Content analysis was used as a method of filtering related responses to be then grouped and categorised into themes, and to be analysed. Dornyei and Scott's (1997) 4 types of oral communication difficulties were used as the main theme in the analysis process. In their framework, Dornyei and Scott (1997) highlighted 4 main oral communication difficulties raging from difficulties involving Resource Deficits, Time Pressure, Own Performance Pressure as well as Other Performance pressure (Refer to Appendix B). In analysing the interview transcripts, the researcher grouped the responses given by the students based on the related themes indicated in Dornyei and Scott's framework.

For the first theme, 'Resource Deficits', responses that will be placed under this theme would be the students' responses that addressed problems that are related to insufficiency in the knowledge and proficiency of the English language (Zulkurnain and Kaur, 2014), as well as problems related to English words, meaning, grammar and sound (Dornyei and Kormos, 1998).

As for the second theme on 'Time Pressure', extracts from the interview that indicated students who were facing challenges in terms of needing too much time in

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constructing and processing sentences in English compared to their first language, will be placed under this category. Apart from that, responses that showed the constant use of fillers and repetition of words as a sign of hesitation within their conversation will also be included under this theme (Dornyei and Kormos, 1998; Zulkurnain and Kaur, 2014).

'Own performance problem' would be the third theme, where any responses that is related to the learners' awareness of their own mistakes and errors in their conversation will be placed under this theme. Usually, this theme will most likely record responses of the learners' being aware of and alert to their mistakes resulting in self initiation and the desire to repair and correct their mistakes (Dornyei and Kormos, 1998; Zulkurnain and Kaur, 2014).

The final theme is the 'Other performance problems', where the responses that will be placed under this theme would be responses that indicate difficulties in understanding and perceiving messages or speech that are given by the interlocutors due to the students' lack of English language proficiency.

4.2.1 Qualitative Results and Discussion for Research Question (1):

Based on the analysis of the interview, the finding reveals that the low proficiency undergraduates face problems and challenges in aspects involving resource deficits, processing time pressure, own performance problems and other performance problems, all of which are similar to the 4 types of communication difficulties that have been mentioned in Dornyei and Scott's framework.

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Below are some of the extract from the interview transcripts that are grouped based on the 4 main themes. *(Refer to Appendix K for a sample of interview transcripts & Appendix L for analysis of interview)*

4.2.1.1 RESOURCE DEFICITS

Table 4.1 : Difficulties due to Resource Deficits

STUDENT	EXTRACT	Column No.
S4	"Based on my personal experience, the difficult or challenging in the oral presentation is ***how I pronounce and translate it by my language to English language***." - I don't understand the word and the word is so hard.	(26) (30)
S9	"Kadang-kadang ***kurang faham sama tu subjek*** la, sama .. kadang kadang ***kalau kita mau cakap dalam bahasa inggeris kan, kita tidak tau.. melayunya kita tau tapi dia punya english susah mau cari.***" *[Translation: Sometimes it's because we don't really understand the subject. Sometimes we wanted to speak in English but we do not know. We know the Malay word but the English word is hard to find]* "***Sebutan dan maksud ayat*** dan mungkin ***ejaan*** juga .. " *[Translation: pronunciation and meaning of the sentences and also spelling]*	(20) (26)
S11	"When I see ***spelling differentbut*** when you say macam dia punya perkataan tapi ***sebutan dia lain***. macam dalam ***bahasa melayu "air" dalam bahasa inggeris "air".*** Like that.." *[Translation: When I see the same spelling but different pronunciation. For example the pronunciation of "air" in Malay and "air" in English]*	(22)

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Table 4.1 above presents the findings that are related to the oral presentation difficulties cause by 'Resource Deficits'. From the table, students have mentioned having problems related to pronunciation apart from other problems that are related to their unfamiliarity towards the meaning of words and English language terms due to their limited vocabulary. Figure 5.1 is an extract from the interview that shows the responses that are related to students having difficulties in pronunciation.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S4	"Based on my personal experience, the difficult or challenging in the oral presentation is how I pronounce and translate it by my language to English language."	(26)
S9	*"Sebutan kadang-kadang tidak okay juga"* [Translation: pronunciation sometimes not okay]	(24)

Figure 4.1 Resource Deficits (a)

Having a limited set of vocabulary knowledge leads to unfamiliarity towards new words, hence, causing them to face difficulties in figuring out the correct way to pronounce those words. This is in line with the findings by Al Nakhalah (2016) that stated pronunciation to be a common type of difficulties that have been identified among their participants at the Al Quds Open University in Gaza, apart from other difficulties such as grammar and fluency. Al Nakhalah (2016) has also mentioned translation as being the most challenging especially when students have to translate from their first language into English

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before they are able to present. In relation to the response by Student 4 (S4) above, translating words or constructing a sentence first in their mother tongue language and then to translate to English is indeed very difficult especially among students who have limited knowledge of vocabulary leading to the inability to find words to explain and describe something in the target language.

Another extract from the interview, as shown in figure 4.2 below, reports on the response provided by student 11 (S11) who specifically mentioned having a problem with words that have similar spelling as the word or term found in their first language, thus causing confusion in terms of pronunciation.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S11	"When I see spelling different but when you say macam dia punya perkataan tapi sebutan dia lain. macam dalam bahasa melayu ***"air"*** dalam bahasa inggeris ***"air".*** Like that..." [Translation: When I see the same spelling but different pronunciation. For example the pronunciation of "air" in Malay and "air" in English]	(22)

Figure 4.2 Resource Deficits (b)

As seen from the above, the student has mentioned how the word 'Air' in English have similar spelling as the word 'Air' which means water in Bahasa Melayu but is pronounced differently. This response reflects on the statement made by Shak, Chang and Stephen (2016) that difficulties in learning English pronunciation arise due to the difference between English as a target language and the learners' mother tongue. They further

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describes a point from a contrastive analysis point of view, which explains that although the English language is known to share a similar alphabet system as the Malay language, the pronunciation of these alphabets and phonemes are different. Therefore, it is expected that students are likely to encounter confusion and make pronunciation errors when learning to pronounce English sounds and words.

Pronunciation problem is repeatedly mentioned by most of the respondents. Highlighting how this affects their performance in an oral presentation, one student has suggested that it would be better to have pronunciation practice- to be conducted before doing an oral presentation in order to avoid mispronouncing words.

Apart from that, sentence formation or constructing sentences have also been mentioned to be another type of difficulty that is faced, and is related to resource deficits. Most students fear that their intended message or points would be misunderstood by their audiences due to their weak sentence construction. This is also a result of the students' weak knowledge in terms of grammatical rules as has been mentioned by some respondents which is the reason that they are not able to construct proper or good sentences and to get their points across. This is related to Kho and Leong's (2015) findings that students tend to encounter difficulties in pronunciation, usage of correct grammar as well as problems related to fluency. Retrieving words in the target language is also one of the problems that have been identified which is related to the aspect of resource deficit problem and communication difficulties. Figure 4.1 provides an example of such difficulties where Student 9 (S9) has mentioned that knowing the Malay word or term but finds it difficult to figure out the English word that she intend to say.

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STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S9	*"Kadang-kadang kurang faham sama tu subjek la, sama .. kadang kadang kalau kita mau cakap dalam bahasa inggeris kan, kita tidak tau.. melayunya kita tau tapi dia punya English susah mau cari."* [Translation: Sometimes it's because we don't really understand the subject. Sometimes we wanted to speak in English but we do not know. We know the Malay word but the English word is hard to find]	(20)

Figure 4.3 Resource Deficits (c)

According to Jamshidnejad (2011), this scenario is due to the process of retrieving words or language structure of the target language which is not as automatic as the language system in their mother tongue or first language. Zulkurnain and Kaur (2014) have further added that the students tend to be unable to recall rules and language system of the second language when they need to use them within their conversation or in their speech causing them to face difficulties in verbalising their intended message or points (Ilyas, 2014). Following the problem, Al Harun et al. (2016) have suggested that the presentation skill module should emphasise on the teaching and learning of communicative vocabulary, conversational strategies, intonation and word stress as well as, on the pronunciation aspect of the English language.

Also from the analysis of the responses, it is identified that there is another factor which affects the students' oral presentation performance, i.e., the lack of confidence as

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aforementioned by the respondents, where their nervousness weakens their presentation. This type of difficulties is often referred to as the affective factors and is related to the emotional and psychological state of the students. Although this type of difficulties is not part of any of the 4 classification of oral difficulties that are mentioned in Dornyei and Scott, but it is worth acknowledging and requires further understanding as this aspect of difficulties highly affects the students' performance.

4.2.1.2 TIME PROCESSING PRESSURE

Table 4.2 : Difficulties due to Time Processing Pressure

STUDENT	EXTRACT	Column No.
S7	"Bagi saya ya, berapa lama sudah saya buat presentation , memang kalau presentation in malay tiada masalah tapi kalau english, kita akan macam yang ***"erm..", "ah.."*** itu yang membuatkan kita slow la untuk kita mau follow up itu apa yang kita mau cakap seterusnya. " *[Translation: For me, from my experiences doing presentations if the presentation is in Malay, it is not a problem. But if it is in English, we tend to go "erm..", "ah.." those are the things that slow us down to follow up on what we need to present next.]* "Pada masa yang sama memang saya buat begitu tapi difikirkan presentation ada masa, kalau tidak dapat saya akan cakap melayu terus. (when asked if he thinks in Malay first and then translates into English) " *[Translation: At the same time, I will do that but thinking that there are time limits in presentations, if I can't I will just speak in Malay]*	(32) (34)

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S9	"Ya lama la saya rasa sebab time fikir tu tergagap gagap lagi.. " *[Translation: Yes, I think it takes a long time for me because I think and I stutter too]* "Erm.. ya, tapi kadang-kadang kalau saya tidak tau sudah apa mau cakap, tu ayat tergantung seja terus saya pegi next. (asked if she thinks in malay and translates into english)" *[Translation: Erm..ya, but sometimes if I really don't know what to say, I just leave the sentence hanging and move on to the next point.]*	(30) (32)
S10	" Depends on my topic. Because I already understand that topic so it's not.. for me I don't take a lot of time to think about it." "Yes, I think in malay and then translate to english".	(46) (50)
S11	"Yes, but when I know this topic, I can faster to present la.." "I present in english depends to my know about topic. (when asked if she thinks first in Malay and then translates into English."	(28) (36)

Oral presentations as a form of assessment are known to have a strict time allocation for each presentation; one of the aspects that have been focused by Dornyei and Scott within their 4 types of oral difficulties includes time processing pressure. As shown in Table 4.2 above, based on the analysis of the interview a few pointers have been mentioned by the students, which affect the time that is taken in doing their presentation. Accordingly, the students are from the low proficiency group yet they have to do a spontaneous presentation; it is known that spontaneous presentation are prone to error,

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mispronunciation, hesitancy, pauses as well as stuttering as have been mentioned by some students, such interruptions would sometimes cause students to drag their time in order to correct their mistakes or to find the right term, which would sometimes lead them to resort to leaving their sentences hanging or end up using their first language in their presentation to avoid prolonging the time as there is an allotted time limit. This scenario is similar to the point that is highlighted in Dornyei (1995) that insufficient processing time is the main source that causes a communication breakdown. Hence, he has proposed stalling activities to be included as part of the communication strategies as an alternative to enable the speaker to have extra thinking time in planning their discourse to ensure a good flow of conversation or communication as a whole. Figure 4.4 below illustrates an extract of the student's response concerning hesitation which results into the dragging of time while presenting.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S7	*"Bagi saya ya, berapa lama sudah saya buat presentation , memang kalau presentation in malay tiada masalah tapi kalau English, kita akan macam yang* ***"erm..", "ah.."*** *itu yang membuatkan kita slow la untuk kita mau follow up itu apa yang kita mau cakap seterusnya."* [Translation: For me, from my experiences doing presentations if the presentation is in Malay, it is not a problem. But if it is in English, we tend to go "erm..", "ah.." those are the things that slow us down to follow up on what we need to present next.]	(32)

Figure 4.4 Time Processing Pressure (a)

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Similar to the above response, Dornyei and Kormos (1998) explain how learners will usually employ a variety of stalling mechanism through the usage of hesitation and filler devices to fill in any communication gap or emergency pauses while presenting in order to cover communication breakdown. This is supported by Ilyas (2014) explanation of the usage of fillers and hesitation devices to be related to the speakers' processing and thinking time. In relation to the responses provided by Student 7 (S7) from the extract above, Ilyas (2014) have mentioned that simple sound fillers such as 'erm', 'ah' as stated by the respondent, are known as non-lexical fillers. Non-lexical fillers are described by Ilyan (2014) as sounds without any specific meaning. This is a common strategy that is used by speakers to allow some processing time without affecting the flow of the conversation as opposed to just pausing- without filling in the gap through any non-lexical fillers. The nature of non-lexical fillers is simple yet effective in improving the efficacy and clarity of a speech or conversation which becomes the reason for speakers using them frequently. They can occur in various positions within their sentence, either at the beginning, middle or towards the ending.

The same student (S7) also added in his response that he will usually resort to using his first language to avoid prolonging the time taken to present in order to adhere to the time limit allocated for each presenter. This can be seen from Figure 4.5 below.

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STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S7	*"tapi difikirkan presentation ada masa, kalau tidak dapat saya akan cakap melayu terus."* [Translation: but thinking that there are time limits in presentations, if I cannot, I will just speak in Malay]	(34)

Figure 4.5 Time Processing Pressure (b)

His response is in line with the statement by Low and Aziz (2020) who have mentioned that code switching is a type of alteration method or strategy between languages within the course of a single conversation. Speakers usually code switch either at word level, sentence level or within the chunks of their speech.

Producing a sentence or an utterance involves the cognitive or thought process, hence, it requires a longer time for those who are of low proficiency. Most participants have mentioned that they usually require time to think, process and construct their ideas and thoughts in their first language, and then to translate them to English during presentation. This is considered as a challenge especially when there is the allocation of time limits, as they would not be able to finish their presentation. As aforementioned in Thornbury (2009), being pressured in terms of time limitation causes the increase in the difficulty levels of an already challenging speaking task such as an oral presentation. Which he adds, is due to the process in retrieving grammatical rules and list of vocabulary knowledge among students who are not instantly available or automatic yet, considering

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their low level of English proficiency. Hence, students are drawn towards formulating their ideas in their mother tongue first, before translating it to the target language.

To overcome such problems most students have mentioned taking the initiative to prepare scripts beforehand and doing presentation practices before the actual presentation day. Although such initiative is considered a good way to prepare for the presentation, but some students have mentioned that during the actual presentation, they will do their presentation by entirely reading what they have written in their scripts or have memorised it word by word. This type of presentation goes against the main purpose of an oral presentation which is supposed to be done spontaneously. Despite the aforementioned manner in delivering their presentation in such a way, there are also students who prefer presenting spontaneously and only refer to their scripts for main point- as a guideline to ensure that their presentation flow is on the right track, while presenting and elaborating their points using their own words. This could be due to them having ample experience in oral presentation which increases their confidence and skills in oral presentation. Figure 4.6 below presents the extracts from the interview in relation to students preparing scripts for their presentation.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S3	" Ya…usually I write my script"	(46)
	"Ya..sometimes I write my script and when I present, my script I not follow it."	(48)

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S4	*" saya bawa my script just read. (when asked if she memorizes her script for the presentation)"*	(46)
	"Ermm.. saya tambah sikit la my words and refer to the kertas yang saya tulis (when asked if she follows her script 100%)"	(48)
	[Translation: Ermm.. I added little bit of my own words and refer to the paper that I have written on.]	

Figure 4.6 Time Processing Pressure (c)

With regards to the responses that are gathered in relation to the need for scripts that help students with their oral presentation, Rajoo (2010) reminds on the importance of keeping notes as brief as possible, and to limit it only to important key words that students needs to refer to during their presentation. In addition to that Rajoo (2010) also urges lecturers and teachers to be cautious of students' tendency to write a whole manuscript instead of only focusing on the important key points to be elaborated. This is because there is a high possibility that most students would end up just reading the paper to their audience instead of speaking to their audience in a presentation manner. Students should be made aware that during presentation, focus should be mainly targeted to their audience and not on their notes or scripts.

Following the nature of an oral presentation, which is to be considered spontaneous and on the spot, having prepare a script to refer to while presenting does not ease the pressure of doing an oral presentation for most students. This is because they feel pressured having to think and organise their thoughts all at once, followed by the need to translate on the spot causing them to be overwhelmed and as mentioned in the extract in Figure 4.6 (d) below,

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the students have mentioned how such instances result in them to 'stuttering' while presenting.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S9	*"Ya lama la saya rasa sebab time fikir tu tergagap gagap lagi.."* [Translation: Yes, I think it takes a long time for me because I think and I stutter too]	(30)

Figure 4.7 Time Processing Pressure (d)

Following this response, Chan et al. (2012) have stated how not knowing what to be said and having to think too long- searching for the correct words for an oral context in question, result in debilitating anxiety that increases the pressure of presenting when held under a situation involving time pressure. The same respondent has also mentioned that sometimes she ends up leaving her message hanging or unfinished as seen in the interview extract that is presented in Figure 4.7 below.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S9	*" kadang-kadang kalau saya tidak tau sudah apa mau cakap, tu ayat tergantung seja terus saya pegi next."* [Translation:Erm..ya, but sometimes if I really don't know what to say, I just leave the sentence hanging and move on to the next point.]	(32)

Figure 4.8 Time Processing Pressure (e)

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Jamshinejad (2011) has stated how students often consider real time communication as a great barrier and challenge. This he has added could possibly be due to the lack of practice and exposure towards spontaneous, and authentic communication that is done in real time context as students' language practice are often limited to classroom speaking lesson and activity that do not represent real context of language use.

In addition to the types of problems previously elaborated, there are also students who explain how having background knowledge and understanding on the topic assigned for presentation help in the flow of presentation and would not cause them to spend too much time thinking and processing their speech.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S10	"Depends on my topic. Because I already understand that topic so it's not... for me I don't take a lot of time to think about it."	(46)
S11	"Yes, but when I know this topic, I can faster to present la..."	(28)

Figure 4.9 Time Processing Pressure (f)

From the analyses of these responses, it is found that a number of students have mentioned how familiarity and having background knowledge and understanding on the assigned topic also affect the time that is taken to present. This according to them is because when they are familiar and know the topic that is given, they are able to present it

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well and faster whereas for a difficult or unfamiliar topic it takes them longer to think, and generate ideas thus affecting the flow of their presentation.

4.2.1.3 OWN PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

Table 4.3 : Difficulties due to Own Performance Problem

STUDENT	EXTRACT	Column No.
S1	"I think the way I present." "Like the audience might not understand what I'm trying to say because I cannot.. hard for me to arrange my sentence correctly so there might be some misunderstand, misunderstood from the audience."	(76) (80)
S2	"Maybe when I speak, maybe my.. err what you call? " "Slang.. ah.. they are don't understand and I talk to fast.. because I need to.. what I .. I need to remember and I want to and I will speak fast."	(74) (76)
S3	"My language, pronunciation " "Ya, I don't know how to pronounce it. For me la.."	(68) (74)
S4	"Ya, the way I talk and my accent" "I think I speak too fast and kadang- kadang yang macam sekarang la, yang macam terberhenti berhenti, teragak agak," *[Translation: I think I speak too fast and sometimes, just like now, I keep stopping and i am hesitant]*	(62) (66)
S7	"Kalau kita fikirkan, ini ialah kefahaman, understanding daripada kita dan kita sampaikan kepada dorang di depan kita la, ada juga yang tidak faham la.. kadang-kadang ni.. macam	(40)

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	mana cakap ah, kalau english pun kita tidak lurus, bahasa melayu pun kita tidak dapat cuba bagi faham sama dorang ada sikit curiousity yang blur. Bila sama Nampak macam tu terus saya akan tukar saya akan kasi faham lagi, tapi dengan cara saya akan buat body language la.. kasi body language bagitau apa semua, itu baru dorang boleh faham la.. ” *[Translation: when we think about it, it is the comprehension, understanding what we are about to present to those in front of us, there are also those who didn't understand .. sometimes.. how do I say it ah.. when we are not fluent in english and even when we use malay but still unable to make them understand, they will be a little curious and blur. When I notice that, I will try to explain using other ways like using body language so that they will be able to understand.]*	
S8	“Erm.. maybe it's because of my language , maybe it's because of my style, maybe it's because of my attitude, personality, the way I'm talking.. ya..”	(52)
S9	“Kalau saya rasa sebab perkataan inggeris saya la yang kadang-kadang berbelit belit saya bercakap.. ” *[Translation: For me, I think it is because of my english words. Sometimes it gets tangled up whenever I speak.]*	(42)
S12	“Kita punya explanation tu tidak berapa ..” *[Translation: When our explanation is not clear]*	(44)

Own Performance Problem is also one of the 4 primary difficulties that have been mentioned by Dornyei and Scott (1997). This particular category of problem is often associated with the speakers' realisation of the problem within their speech or discourse and the way they resolve the problematic error that occurred. There are a variety of responses that have been gathered from the findings which include the mention on the delivery of presentation, especially in terms of presentation style, personality and attitude as

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factors that influence their audiences' comprehension of their presentation. Below are some of the responses pertaining to their delivery style that affects their performance.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S1	"I think the way I present."	(76)
S2	"Maybe when I speak, maybe my.. err what you call?" "Slang.. ah.. they are don't understand and I talk to fast.. because I need to.. what I .. I need to remember and I want to and I will speak fast."	(74) (76)
S4	*"Ya, the way I talk and my accent"* *"I think I speak too fast and kadang- kadang yang macam sekarang la, yang macam terberhenti berhenti, teragak agak,"* [Translation: I think I speak too fast and sometimes, just like now, I keep stopping and I am hesitant]	(62) (66)
S12	*Kita punya explanation tu tidak berapa ..* [Translation: When our explanation is not clear]	(44)

Figure 4.10 Own Performance Problem (a)

Based on the analysis of the responses that are provided in figure 4.9 above, it can be seen that the students are aware of their shortcomings in their oral presentation skills. Some of the problems that have been mentioned include their presentation style which is highly influenced by their individuality in terms of personality and attitudes that affect their oral presentation delivery.

As for the responses that are related to language use one of the factors affecting their listeners' understanding of their presentation, some have mentioned slangs to be an

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influencing factor. Below are the extracts that have been taken from the interview that are related to this matter.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S1	"Like the audience might not understand what I'm trying to say because I cannot.. hard for me to arrange my sentence correctly so there might be some misunderstand, misunderstood from the audience."	(80)
S3	"My language, pronunciation" "Ya, I don't know how to pronounce it. For me la.."	(68) (74)
S8	"Erm.. maybe it's because of my language , maybe it's because of my style, maybe"	(52)
S9	*"Kalau saya rasa sebab perkataan inggeris saya la yang kadang-kadang berbelit belit saya bercakap.."* [Translation: For me, I think it is because of my English words. Sometimes it gets tangled up whenever I speak.]	(42)

Figure 4.11 Own Performance Problem (b)

Viewing the responses that are grouped in Figure 4.10 above, it is identified that language aspects such as pronunciation, slangs and fluency are mentioned to be influencing their audience's comprehension of their presentation. Slangs are associated with the influence of the mother tongue or a person's first language, hence, Malaysian students especially those from the east of Malaysia are known to be from a diverse ethnic with their own ethnic languages are bound to be influenced in their way of pronouncing words from a

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foreign language or second language such as English. This as a whole affects the fluency and the flow of the presentation.

Apart from that, another highlight of the findings is related to own performance problem; it is found that according to one of the student's response- his own understanding of the topic and what he is presenting affects his overall performance and presentation.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S7	*"Kalau kita fikirkan, ini ialah kefahaman, understanding daripada kita dan kita sampaikan kepada dorang di depan kita la, ada juga yang tidak faham la.. kadang-kadang ni.. macam mana cakap ah, kalau English pun kita tidak lurus, bahasa melayu pun kita tidak dapat cuba bagi faham sama dorang ada sikit curiosity yang blur. Bila sama Nampak macam tuterus saya akan tukar ,saya akan kasi faham lagi, tapi dengan cara saya akan buat body language la.. kasi body language bagitau apa semua, itu baru dorang boleh faham la.."* [Translation: when we think about it, it is the comprehension, understanding what we are about to present to those in front of us, there are also those who didn't understand .. sometimes.. how do I say it ah.. when we are not fluent in English and even when we use Malay but still unable to make them understand, they will be a little curious and blur. When I notice that, I will try to explain using other ways like using body language so that they will be able to understand.]	(40)

Figure 4.12 Own Performance Problem (c)

The response generated from the interview as illustrated in Figure 4.11 is a very interesting discovery. This is because while other students seems to mentioned some common

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assumptions regarding their thoughts on their audience's ability to comprehend their presentation, which as previously mentioned are related to delivery and pronunciation, student 7 (S7) has managed to provide a rather critical evaluation of his own oral presentation performance through his response. It is a very interesting point to highlight that a speaker's own understanding of his own presentation affects the delivery and information transfer to the audience. Hence it is important for the speaker themselves to know their 'craft' in order for others to have a similar understanding on what is being presented. This is supported by Dornyei and Kormo's (1998) statement that the ability of a learner or speaker to be well informed of his or her performance problem will leads to them assessing their own shortcoming and will result to them doing self repair and correction towards the errors that they've detected within their utterances or speech. This is projected through the student's response on having to modify his delivery by using non-verbal cues such as body language to further enhance his audiences' understanding. Similarly to the point highlighted by Thornbury (2009), stating that speakers tend to adjust their delivery style to take into account the response of their audience and to cater to their beliefs in ways that their audiences would be able to understand better. As such most respondents have mentioned how they tend to sometimes revert back into using their mother tongue to present their ideas and in getting the message across as it is easier for them as a presenter to elaborate on their topic efficiently, and they feel that it is also easier for their audience to understand them.

This scenario had also been mentioned in Leong and Ahmadi's (2017) paper, where the reason for students to revert back into using their first language in their presentation is due to its usage being describe as 'natural' for the students and their audience. They added that, in a speaking class, the role of the teacher to urge the students to speak in English is

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important because the students will very often choose to automatically switch into using their first language to explain to their peers.

Dornyei and Scott (1997) on the other hand associates own performance problem with the learner's self monitoring and awareness of their own performance's shortcomings or problems. As much as being aware of their weak points in their presentation or their delivery styles, overanalysing of those aspects creates pressure and leads to anxiety among students. Lecturers should provide an environment where mistakes and errors are acceptable as part of the learning process, because making errors, and correcting them are also the kind of natural way of correction, even native speakers or fluent speakers make errors- whenever they misused a word to describe something or when they mispronounce words. It is believed that when students, especially ESL learners, feel strong pressure to make sure of being accurate so as to prevent errors, it is the indication that the monitoring process is being overused and prolonged (Thornbury, 2009), which usually causes the students to end up silent and stop trying, as has been mentioned by one of the respondents.

4.2.1.4 OTHER PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

Table 4.4: Difficulties due to Other Performance Problem

STUDENT	EXTRACT	Column No.
S1	"Problem is, erm.. how the presenter presents their presentation, I think the problem they speak too fast, the language that they use that I never heard before ."	(84)

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S2	"First, they talk too fast, second the words they use.."	(82)
S4	"My problem is when I listening to them it's hard for me to translate it to BM and I understanding the words that have been spoken" "Ya I think first what is the word that they talk about and then …" "Ya sometimes terlampau cepat kan, susah bah saya mau faham and catch up the words" *[Translation:Ya, sometimes it's too fast, so it's difficult to understand and catch up with the words.]*	(70) (72) (76)
S7	"Kalau terlampau laju mungkin diorang punya perkataan tu la.. ayat-ayat yang kita tidak pernah dengar semua. " *[Translation: If it's too fast, maybe it's their words, the sentences that we never heard]*	(48)
S9	"Ada yang cakap cepat ada juga yang perkataan yang dia guna tu kan tidak sampai. Contohnya kalau dia buat ayat kan, kalau kita baca… kalau orang lain yang baca kita faham tapi kalau dia yang baca macam terawang-awang seja, macam yang "apa yang dia cakap ni"? macam begitu.. " *[Translation: There are speakers who speak too fast and the words that they use didn't get to me. For example, if there is a sentence, if others read (speak) I will be able to understand, but if that person is the one who reads (speaks) I will be blur and I will think "what is it that this person is talking about?" (referring to a speaker's way of delivery)]*	(48)
S12	"Meaning.." "Ya, contoh ayat kan.. kalau saya tidak faham, tanya kawan atau translate sendiri." *[Translation :Ya,, for sentence examples, when I don't understand, I will ask my friend or I will try to translate on my own .]*	(52) (54)

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Table 4.4 shows the findings from the analysis on the difficulties that are related to other performance problems. The responses show that the students' inability to comprehend the message from a speaker are usually associated with the presenter's speaking speed where most respondents seems to have a similar view- that is they couldn't understand when a speaker speaks too fast as they can't catch up with what was being presented. Moreover, the students have mentioned that the language that is used especially in terms of choice of words within the presentation also affects their understanding especially for difficult words or unfamiliar terms that are used by the speaker. Apart from that, the respondents felt that they are having difficulties understanding a speaker who has a thick accent and who uses slangs especially that of a foreign or native English speaker.

Difficulties in understanding a presentation clearly affect the student's comprehension of the intended message. This is because mutual understanding between both the speaker and listener are the key to successful information transfer. In overcoming this, students have mentioned the importance of translating it to their first language to achieve a total understanding of the message as well as asking questions or requesting for repetition from the speaker to gain clarity of the presentation. Ilyas (2014) in a short and straightforward definition of other performance pressure explains that it is the types of problem learners have faced, involving the interlocutor's communication or speech performance. Similar responses were detected among the responses given by the interviewees. This includes problem involving the speed of the interlocutor's speech as well as the choice of words that are used within the interlocutor's messages.

Zulkurnain and Kaur (2014) have also stated that the problem that is related to a learner's inability to catch up with the interlocutors' speech speed causes them to receive an unclear message which affects their comprehension of the intended message that the

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interlocutor tries to get across and deliver to them. Likewise, the usage of unfamiliar terms, words of sentence choices by the interlocutor prevents the learner to achieve a total understanding due to the unavailability of those words within the learners' existing and limited second language repertoire (Jamshidnejad, 2011). On another note, there were also response indicating the need to translate the message into their first language to gain a proper understanding of what was said, which according to Dornyei and Kormos (1998) is affecting the comprehensibility of the intended message.

With regards to the responses concerning the accents of speakers affecting the listener's comprehensibility of the presentation, this finding seems to be contradicting the finding that has been generated in Lima (2016). Lima (2016) has found through her study that accents and comprehensibility are stated to be not completely related which means that one does not necessarily affect the other. Her study found no significant differences in the rating of comprehensibility of Chinese and non Chinese listeners listening to a Chinese speaker doing an English language presentation. Despite the contrast in findings, it is important to take into account that the participants in Lima's (2016) research study are those of high intermediate level as compared to the respondents of this study which are undergraduates from the low proficiency group, hence, there is a difference in perception from the findings.

On a separate note, Ekim's (2018) findings have mentioned the benefits of students' observing their friends or others' presentation which according to them helps the students to recognise and take note on aspects of the presentation on what they should and should not do during their own presentation. This leads to exposure towards the different styles of presentation, common mistakes and errors that are found within a presentation as well as the effective strategies that can be incorporated within their presentation in line with the

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alternative measure such as the use of body language to help enhance their audience's comprehension. And with regards to the responses that are given by the students such as those presented in Table 4.4 above, observing others' presentations helps students to learn to evaluate on the strength and weaknesses of a presentation from a critical view which they then can apply to improve on their presentation skills.

In addition to the 4 primary types of oral communication difficulties that was mentioned in Dornyei and Scott's (1997) framework, the current research findings have discovered 2 other types of oral difficulties based on the repetitive responses regarding the aspects of **Affective Factors** and **Topical Knowledge** that has been indicated by most of the responses, which are also factors or difficulties that affect their oral presentation.

Based on the analysis of data from the interview transcripts, one factor that seems to be constantly mentioned in the students' responses is their nervousness which highly affects their performance. Apart from nervousness and anxiety, the lack of self confidence, hesitation and some have mentioned stuttering due to feeling nervous have also been mentioned as hindering them from doing a good presentation. This can be viewed based on figure 4.12 below.

STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S4	"Ya, ya sometimes I get nervous and saya boleh blank." *[Translation: Ya, ya sometimes I get nervous and I become blank]*	(36)
S5	"kalau kita nervous, kalau kita mau bagi idea tu trus hilang idea tu.." *[Translation: if we are nervous, when we need to give*	(26)

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	idea, the idea will be lost]	
	"Erm.. firstly that I find yang oral presentation ni difficult because itulah, *nervous first, lepas tu tidak confident bila bercakap* and then pronounce tu.. pronunciation"	(50)
	[Translation: nervous and then, not feeling confident when speaking]	
S11	"Kadang-kadang kalau berkomunikasi dengan terlalu ramai, macam tidak yakin."	(54)
	[Translation: sometimes when communicating with a lot of people, I'm not confident.] "Nervous.."	(56)

Figure 4.13 New research findings – Affective Factors

Despite this factor not being mentioned or categorised in any of the 4 main categories that are mentioned in Dornyei and Scott's (1997) work, it has been mentioned in Meseret (2015), second language researchers are well aware and acknowledge the association between the second language learning process with **Affective Factors** as the predictor of success for second language performance.

Hui Ni (2012) explains affective factors being the important factor in Second Language Acquisition and in Language Teaching. Also, that this factors involves emotions, mood, manner as well as attitude. In a similar view, Ayedoun, Hayashi and Seta (2019) have mentioned the variables such as anxiety and self confidence that affect ones' psychological preparedness to communicate at a given time, which as a whole affects the willingness to converse using the English language. Khaleghi (2016) on the other hand, has indicated affective factors as the emotional factors influencing the learning process which could either result to positive or negative effects. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) that has been cited in Maleerat and Al Shaibani (2018) have mentioned anxiety as the feeling of tension,

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worry, apprehension and nervousness that prevents one from giving agood oral presentations.

Indrianty's (2016) research findings have concluded that anxiety in a speaking class are usually caused by the students' lack of vocabulary knowledge, the lack of practice and limitation in preparation, as well as the fear of making errors and being afraid of being teased by their peers. While Aghajani and Amanzadeh (2017) on the hand have mentioned that it could be due to the belief that people who are learning English or ESL learners are always judged through their speaking ability. Alamaria, Salam and Abdullah (2017) have conducted a study on students' perception on communication apprehension among the 1st year university students in Libya and have found that having to make an oral presentation and speaking in class during English lesson is the main concern and is perceived as a great challenge among the students; such a perception often leads to students experiencing oral communication apprehension. This is similar to Raja's (2017) illustration of a common anxiety provoking scenario when students find themselves as the focus of attention and knowing that they are expected to address an audiences, they will likely to experience a rush of emotions such as nervousness and fear, causing them to feel nauseated, and to sweat excessively. Adding to that, Al Harun's (2016) findings have pointed out that through his study, it is identified that freshies at the university level who lacks preparation and are low in confidence level are often found to finish their presentation within the shortest time possible due to their fear of having to face their audiences and shyness. Al Harun has further added that, sometimes some students tend to just stopped in the middle of their presentation. His study has also highlighted that the lack of experience posses a great effect on one's psychological state. Thornbury (2009) addresses that such feelings and scenario as

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not only happening among low proficiency students but also happen to students with advance level of language proficiency.

In the context of the research that has been conducted which involves Malaysian students as participants, James, Amini and Yaqubi (2020) in their case study on undergraduate ESL students have mentioned that the current scenarios that are observed in the process of teaching and learning of English are said to prioritise more on the students' academic achievement without concern for both their social and emotional needs. Their participants are reported to face problems that are related to their fear towards receiving negative evaluation, facing communication apprehension to speak in class, and their fear of assessments such as undertaking test, quizzes and even examinations. From their interview, students have mentioned three types of coping strategies that they usually apply. The first was internal help which means a self derived help from their own self- in the form of self motivation, doing revisions, as well as managing their anxiety level. The second coping strategy was external help through enquiring help from either their teacher and their peers to assist them with their learning and as for the third finding, some mentioned not having any special coping strategies portraying their inability to cope and overcome the anxiety that they have towards learning and speaking the target language.

Although most past studies in relation to the English language study affects the students' psychological and emotional state, which as a whole affects their acquisition of learning the language, but Heng, Abdullah and Yusof (2012) holds a contrasting outlook of the situation. In their study involving 700 final year undergraduates of University Putra Malaysia, he stated that although the students are found to have anxiety in areas such as feeling nervous, fearful of peer competition, examiners' incomprehensibility, failing a test or examinations, and the fear of forgetting the knowledge during a test, but a majority of

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the students are reported to show only moderate level of anxiety towards speaking in English. This according to them could be due to the students in Malaysia who are used to the culture of ESL situation especially in the context of the Malaysian academic system where speaking in English and having to undergo English oral test as a form of language assessment is considered as a norm as an undergraduate since they themselves are already in their final year of their tertiary level study.

Other than the findings on affective factors that was identified from the current findings which is not part of Dornyei and Scott's (1997) 4 categories of oral presentation difficulties, the current finding has also discovered Topical Knowledge as a type of difficulty affecting students' oral presentation based on the responses that are gathered from the interview transcripts. Huang et al. (2018) describes topical knowledge as an important component in second language speaking as it is said to be a reflection of the learners or speakers' knowledge of the language.

Topical knowledge affects the delivery of the presentation, because the presenter is expected to have sufficient if not total background information and understanding of the topic that they are presenting in order to be able to deliver the presentation well, and in order to get their message across. Without any background schemata of their topic, it will not only slow down the delivery of the presentation but causes it to be pointless and empty.

Apart from the factor involving the speakers' topical knowledge of the presentation, it is also mentioned that the delivery and success of a presentation is also determined by the audiences' understanding and familiarity towards the topic, which affect the comprehensibility of the presentation.

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STUDENT	EXTRACT	LINE No.
S2	"For me maybe I need to translate my bahasa melayu to English, so.. because *I need to understand the topic* in bahasa melayu so I need to translate when I need to speak. "	(36)
S9	"kalau tajuk yang saya dibagi tu saya tidak tau betul –betul sama dia punya latar belakang. " *[Translation: I also want to add that it is difficult if I don't know very well about the title or topic that I was given and the background of it.]*	(52)
S11	"when I know this topic, I can faster to present la.."	(28)

Figure 4.14 New research findings – Topical Knowledge

Thornbury (2009) has mentioned that the shared familiarity and understanding of the background knowledge of the presentation topic between both the presenter and the audience allow the presentation to be able to be delivered and be comprehended successfully. In relation to that, Hadjikoteva (2015) has described that a strong sense of confidence and purpose as one of the most important principles for speakers to display. Hadjikoteva (2015) further explains that the more informed and knowledgeable the speaker is about the topic of their presentation, the more confident they are in delivering their presentation. Adnan, Zainal Abidin and Hakim (2020) have indicated that a speaker's non-verbal cues such as the speaker's eye contact and facial expression can get affected and are easily recognised by the audience indicating that the speaker has no idea about what to talk about or is at a loss for words during the presentation. As has been mentioned by Hadjikoteva (2015), some students would choose and prefer to present about topics that

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they are familiar because they will feel more comfortable and less pressured when presenting about it, however, there are also a significant number of students who would prefer to present on topics they are interested in and are willing to put in the extra effort in researching more about the topic to help them with their presentation. Background knowledge of a topic is very crucial for the presenter as it could affect the delivery of their presentation, while on the positive side, it could also help to lessen communication apprehension in doing an oral presentation.

Both the additional findings of this current research involve topical knowledge and affective factors as the factors that are influencing the oral presentation difficulties among the students, which are related to the findings by Ohnishi and Ford (2015) who have studied on the effect of language background on the outcome among PHD students' academic presentation performance. They have stated that English proficiency alone does not provide advantages to students in doing an oral presentation. Providing an example of Australian students who are considered as a native speaker of English, having a lower score in their first presentation is compared to the international students who are not a native speaker. Correspondingly, proficiency according to Murray (2010) is described as the language user's control towards the formality and functionality of the language properties through their ability to express and understand meaning accurately, fluently and appropriately based on the context.

In terms of topical knowledge, Ohnishi and Ford (2015) have stated that students are required to learn specific language and terms that are used in their field of study as well as understanding the logical processes for their presentation. This is because unfamiliarity with the academic discipline-based language and terms that are used affects their presentation performance.

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4.3 Analysis For Research Question (2) :

Strategies used by low proficiency undergraduates in Malaysian Universities in coping with the difficulties in giving oral presentation.

The second section of this analysis chapter aims in answering the second research question using the simple frequency count method. The research instrument used in collecting data was a set of questionnaire that was adapted from Nakatani's (2006) Oral Communication Strategies Inventory (OCSI).

For the analysis of the questionnaire, it was calculated in the form of percentage counts to identify the rankings of each strategy in order to enable the researcher to identify the most preferred strategies out of all the 8 categories of speaking strategies in Nakatani's framework based on their ranks. In analysing the data, the researcher calculated each questionnaire items by only counting the number of students selecting 'agree' and 'strongly agree' as the choice of their preferred strategies. The calculation was presented in the percentage form (refer to Table 4.5 & Appendix M). Next, the researcher counted the total percentage of all items within the strategies to calculate the overall percentages for the purpose of ranking the strategies from the least to the most preferred strategies. Finally, the rankings data is presented in the form of a bar chart, as shown in Figure 4.15.

4.3.1 Rankings of strategies

In identifying the ranks of each strategy and to identify the most preferred strategies to the least preferred strategies, the researcher added the percentages of each items within the strategies and divided the total with the number of items that were found within the

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strategies. The Table below illustrates the counting of data to produce the rankings of strategies.

Table 4.5 Counting of data to identify Rankings of Communication Strategies

Type of strategies	Items No.	Number of students who chooses ***"agree & strongly agree"***	Percentage (%) for each item
■ **Social affective strategies**	23	(30) / 51	59(%)
	25	(45) / 51	88 (%)
	26	(31) / 51	61 (%)
	27	(48) / 51	94 (%)
	28	(38) / 51	75 (%)
	29	(42) / 51	82 (%)
TOTAL			*(459 ÷ 6)* **= 76.5 %**
■ **Fluency-oriented strategies**	9	(37) / 51	73 (%)
	10	(38) / 51	75 (%)
	11	(40) / 51	78 (%)
	12	(46) / 51	90 (%)
	13	(34) / 51	67 (%)
	14	(40) / 51	78 (%)
TOTAL			*(461÷ 6)* **= 76.8 %**

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This was done with all the 8 strategies to determine the ranking of strategies. Upon identifying the ranks of each strategy, the ranks were presented in a chart as shown in figure 4.15 below.

Figure 4.15 : Rankings for preferred communication strategies

Keynote

MAS	:	Message abandonment strategies
AOS	:	Accuracy-oriented strategies
ATTIES	:	Attempt to think in English strategies
NFMWSS	:	Negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies
MRAS	:	Message reduction and alteration strategies
NVS	:	Non-verbal strategies while speaking strategies
SAS	:	Social affective strategies
FOS	:	Fluency oriented strategies

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Table 4.6 Elaboration of Communication Strategies based on ranking

RANKING	**MOST PREFERRED**	**2ND MOST PREFERRED (SHARED RANKING)**		**LEAST PREFFERED**
Strategies	Fluency Oriented Strategies (FOS)	Social Affective Strategies (SAS)	Non- Verbal Strategies while speaking Strategies (NVS)	Message Abandonment Strategies (MAS)
Rank (%)	76.8%	76.5%.		57.7%
Item & Statement	Item 12 "I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard".	Item 27 "I try to enjoy the conversation"	Item 15 "I try to make eye contact when I'm speaking"	Item 32 "I give up when I can't make myself understood"
Item (%)	90%	94%	86%	41%
***Agree & Strongly Agree* Preferences (50 participants)**	46 / 51	48 /50	44 / 50	12/51

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As shown in Figure 4.15 above, the most preferred communication strategy is Fluency Oriented Strategies (FOS) with a total percentage of 76.8%. This strategy as described in Nakatani (2006)'s OCSI framework is a strategy that focuses on linguistic elements ranging from intonations, pronunciation, rhythm and the clarity of speech. It is also a strategy used and applied by interlocutors or speakers to improve their listener's comprehension of their speech or presentation. Hence, the application of this strategy often requires the speaker to spend time in perfecting their speech to avoid sending an inappropriate message to their audience, to ensure that their intended message is delivered as planned, and to avoid misunderstanding and confusion. There are six items within the Fluency Oriented Strategies where each item consists of statements of how these strategies are applied in a real context of a conversation. From all the six items in this strategy, item 12 is the most preferred with a total of 90% preferences counts indicating that 46 out of 51 participants chooses this option as 'agree' and 'strongly agree' *(Refer Table 4.6)*. The statement for item 12 is *"I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard"*. This statement shows that the speaker speaks by giving proper emphasis on their speech and points through the use of correct rhythm, suitable intonations and clear pronunciation to ensure clarity in their speech.

Based on rankings from Figure 4.15 above also, there are 2 strategies that share the same ranking of being the second most preferred and used strategies. The strategies are Social Affective Strategies (SAS) and the Non-verbal Strategies while Speaking Strategies (NVS). Both of these strategies- each have a similar percentage of 76.5%. Social Affective Strategies (SAS) according to Nakatani's 2006 OCSI framework is a strategy that concerns the affective factors of learners in a social context. This includes factors such as anxiety, behaviour, perception and interest on the conversation process as well as their willingness

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to take risk for possible errors and mistakes that are made during a conversation. There are 6 items within this strategy and the highest percentage count for all the items is Item 27, *"I try to enjoy the conversation"* with a total of 94% which shows that from the total number of 51 respondents, 48 of them have circled 'agree' and 'strongly agree' to this statements *(refer to Table 4.6)*. One possible reason for this item being one of the most preferred choices is because only when an individual has a high interest to engage in a conversation, will they be motivated to participate and be willing to correct any speech errors to ensure that the conversation flow runs smoothly.

As for the Non-verbal Strategies while speaking Strategies (NVS), it is described to be a strategy that incorporates the use of non-verbal strategies such as eye contact, gestures and also facial expression to achieve the communication goal. This particular strategy has two items in it. Item 15 shows the highest percentage count of 86% indicating that 44 out of the total 51 respondents have chosen 'agree' and 'strongly agree' to this statement *(refer to Table 4.6)* . The statement for Item 15, *"I try to make eye contact when I'm speaking"* shows the importance of the speaker to be aware of the reaction and feedback from their listener and audiences to their presentation or speech. This is to ensure whether modification is necessary to suit their target audience's level of understanding so that a successful information transfer could be achieved.

The lowest rank out of all the 8 speaking strategies is the Message Abandonment Strategies (MAS) with a percentage of 57.7% making it the least preferred strategies. This strategy is associated with the act of abandoning a message or points within a conversation. Nakatani (2006) further elaborated that when encountering a challenging and difficult phase in executing their intended messages, learners or the speaker tends to give up on the conversation without any attempt of fixing or continuing with the conversation and some

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might resort into asking for help from others to ensure that they are able to proceed and continue with the conversation. Nakatani's description of this strategy further adds that this type of strategies are commonly used and applied by the low proficiency foreign language speakers for learners of that level according to Nakatani are lacking in strategic competence leaving them no choice but to end their conversation.

This description contradicts with the findings of this study where based on the analysis and the findings from this current study, Message Abandonment strategies(MAS) is the least preferred strategies among the respondents who are also from the low proficiency group, in coping with their oral presentation difficulties. There are four items that are grouped within Message Abandonment Strategies (MAS). Item 31 *"I ask other people to help me when I can't communicate well"* is the highest among all the four strategies in this group with a percentage of 78%, where 40 out of 51 students agree and strongly agree on this statement while the lowest among the four items in this group is Item 32, *"I give up when I can't make myself understood"* with only 41%- that is only 12 out of 51 respondents have chosen this statement *(refer to Table 4.6)*. Based on the analysis of Message Abandonment Strategies (MAS), it can be viewed that despite the strategy being the least preferred among all the 8 other speaking strategies, this shows that despite the students' inability to get their message across like they intend to, they seek help from others instead of leaving or giving up on the conversation.

The analysis of frequency count for the questionnaire data on the other hand, was conducted to generate answers for research question (2) regarding the types of strategies that are used by low proficiency undergraduates. From the analysis it is discovered that the most used or preferred strategy among the 8 speaking strategies that are highlighted in Nakatani's Oral communication strategies questionnaire is, the **Fluency Oriented**

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Strategies- with a total of 76.8% selection. This is followed by the **Social Affective Strategies** and the **Non-Verbal Strategies While Speaking Strategies** both with 76.5 % selection. The next strategy with 70% selection is the message reduction and alteration strategy, followed by negotiation of meaning while speaking strategy with 68.6% of students selecting this strategy. Attempts to think in English strategy is 65.5% and accuracy oriented strategy is 64.2%. While the least preferred strategy is the message abandonment strategy with only 57.7% selection.

Fluency Oriented Strategies are strategies that are used by the speaker to improve the exchange of information and the learners' comprehension by focusing on the fluency of their speech. Gower, Philip and Walter (1995) who is cited in Derakhshan (2016) have mentioned that the main focus of this strategy is the ability to keep the conversation going without concerning too much on being grammatically correct. This according to them usually happens in spontaneous conversation and communication. According to the analysis, it is identified to be the most preferred strategy among all the 8 strategies in the questionnaire. Looking thoroughly on the analysis of items within the category of fluency oriented strategies, it is identified that item 12 which reads, *"I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard"* has gotten a total of 90% selection from the respondents. This indicates that this is a common alternative that is taken by learners to get their message across and in avoiding communication breakdown.

Based on the analysis, it is also found that there are 2 items that have a similar count, i.e., **Social Affective Strategies** and **Non-Verbal Strategies** which are only 3% less than the most preferred strategies, indicating that both of these strategies are also among the top picks among students who cope with difficulties during their oral presentations. Looking at the social affective factors, this is related to the students' affective factors or their

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emotional factors such as confidence and motivation. From the analysis of this category, item 25, "I give good impression to the listener" is 88% which is one of the highest while item 27, "I try to enjoy the conversation" is 94% which is the highest count of all the items in the questionnaire. This indicates that the affective factors play a vital role in oral presentation which is similar to the result from the interview analysis. In addition to the findings, it is supported by Galti (2016) who has highlighted that the emotional state and feelings of language learners determine their performance and could be affecting their performance either positively or negatively.

As for non-verbal strategies while speaking, it involved the use of non-verbal clues such as facial expression as well as body language. Within this strategies, the item is 15, "I try to make eye-contact when I am talking" and item 16 *"I used gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself.*" Both of these items have score counts of 86% and 57 %, respectively. Busa (2015) explains that the exchange of messages are more effective with the usage of non-verbal strategies to which they have further elaborated how effective communication is not necessarily restricted to exchanges of information using verbal messages. This is also supported by Wagner (2014) who has mentioned that strong link gestures and speech are a strong combination that is adaptive to different situations involving exchanges of information and information transfer. In other words, the usage of non-verbal strategies compliments the deficiency in the learners' speech to help them in conveying their message successfully. Busa (2010) in a separate study has highlighted that communication cannot take place when the learners are unable to comprehend the message hence, that is where the usage of non-verbal strategies supports the delivery of the message. Somsai and Intaraprasert (2011) in their study have added that non-verbal strategies are likely to be the strategy option that students would resort to when

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they encounter oral communication problem to help them provide hints about their points, and to help them in getting their message across.

The least preferred strategy is found to be the message abandonment strategy. From this category, item 24, *"I leave message unfinished because of some language difficulties"* has one of the lowest score of selection which is only 47% and item 32, *"I gave up when I can't make myself understood"* is the lowest count with only 41%- explaining as to why this type of strategy is the least preferred strategy. It has been mentioned in the previous chapter-chapter 4, that this finding contradicts the findings of Nakatani (2006) who has stated that this strategy is the type of communication strategy that is highly preferred by low proficiency students. Metcalife & Noom-Ura (2013) in their study have also mentioned that apart from Nakatani, there are other studies such as Wannaruk (2003), Chen (2009) and Kavasoglu (2011) who share similar findings, that low proficiency learners are prone towards using message abandonment strategies.

The difference in the findings of this current study as compared to older research indicates that the mentality of students, especially undergraduates, these days are more open to making mistakes as part of their learning process. This is a positive indication that instead of giving up on the conversation, they are willing to keep the conversation going by incorporating other communication strategies and techniques to help them cope with problems within their conversation. This is in line with Oxford (1990) that has been cited in Metcalife & Noom-Ura (2013) on how low proficiency learners are able to benefit more from other strategies such as the usage of social affective strategies as a way to minimise and lessen their usage of passive strategies such as message abandonment strategies.

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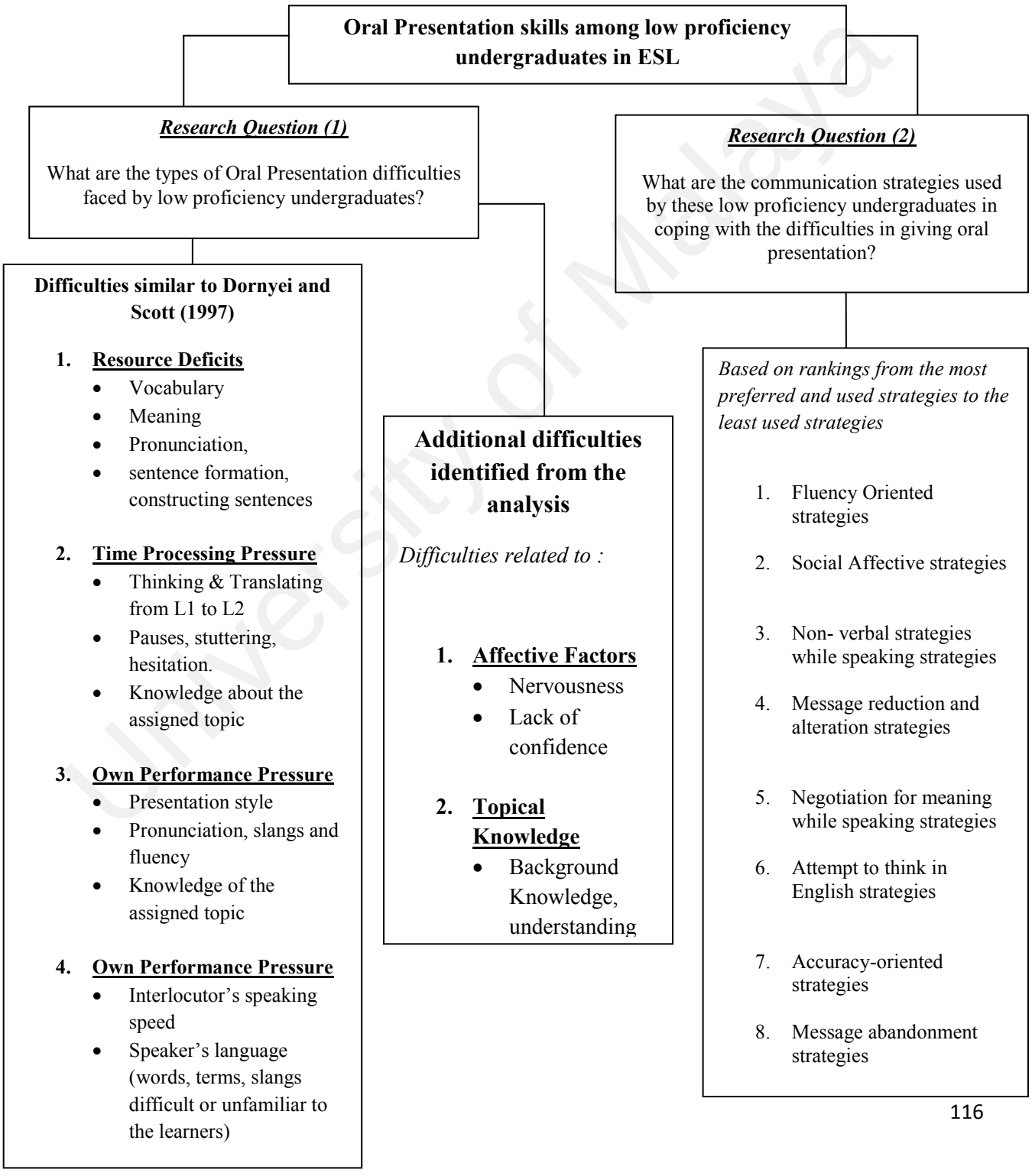
As the summary of the findings for this data analysis result and discussion chapter, below is the illustration of the overall findings for this study.

Figure 4.16 Summary of findings



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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 begins with the researcher providing a brief but detailed summary of the research. This is then, followed by a thorough discussion on the result of the data analysis to answer Research Question (1) and Research Question (2). Towards the end of the Chapter, a conclusion which includes suggestions and recommendations for future studies is clearly explained.

5.2 Research Summary

The current study aims to investigate and further understand the issue that has surfaced in the area of oral presentation skills among undergraduates, with the low proficiency level group in mind. The researcher is interested in studying this widely discussed concern in the field of education especially in the tertiary level because it is a crucial issue contributing to the worrying rate of unemployment among graduates especially in our country, Malaysia.

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Nevertheless, it is based on previous research and studies on the topic of unemployment among the graduates that have highlighted speaking skill especially oral presentation skill to be one of the main causes or factor contributing to the high rate of unemployment among graduates. Apart from that, claims and statements have been made by employers on the reason job seekers especially university graduates failed to secure a spot in a company or in the job sector to be due to their poor command of the English language, as well as their lack of communication skills specifically the oral presentation skill, which is a highly demanded skill for most job prospects in the job market.

Therefore, it is through this research study that the researcher aims and attempts to dig into the core of this concern by doing a thorough investigation, and to study on the issue of oral presentation skills among low proficiency undergraduates in the context of ESL. This is to allow the researcher to unveil the types of oral presentation difficulties that are commonly faced by low proficiency undergraduates (RQ1) and also to know further the types of communication strategies that are used by this group of undergraduates in coping with the difficulties that are faced by them when they are giving an oral presentation (RQ2).

The result from the current study would generate better understanding towards the problems as well as the alternatives to help overcome the existing problem. To which the researcher hope would be able to provide suggestions and recommendations for future research to further strengthen and add to any gap or weaknesses that have been found from the existing research study, in order to ensure that a solution could be generated to help with this concern especially in helping undergraduates to prepare their language skills to face a challenging and highly competitive working world in the future.

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5.3 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, it is important to understand the problems that are affecting the undergraduates' oral presentation skills especially the lower proficiency level students, to implement suitable teaching approaches in order to maximise their learning and oral presentation skills as preparation for their future in the working world.

With the information of the preferred and commonly used strategies among the students, it is also crucial for language instructors, teachers and lecturers to tackle the problems that the students encounter with the correct strategies. Getting the students to learn a variety of strategies helps them to try out each one as well as to monitor which strategies could help them with the problems they are facing. Quoting Al Harun (2016), "The charm of good food does not only depend on their ingredients nor the spices that are used in it, but also how it is served", whereby this has been used as a portrayal on the success of oral presentation that is greatly influenced and dependent on the effectiveness of the delivery by the presenter.

This present study would benefit language teachers and lecturers in terms of the suitability of teaching approach to overcome problems that their students are facing. As for suggestions on future research study that are related to oral presentation skills, it is recommended that future researchers could widen the prospect of getting a larger number of students to be used as participants, in order to enable the data of the study to generalise on the targeted group. Apart from that, another suggestion would be an observation of the real context of oral presentation from the students, not only to see the delivery of the presentation by the students but also to monitor the responses and feedback from the audience based on the presentation.

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