Students' Perspectives on Classroom Speaking Activity:

The existing speaking activity and recommended classroom speaking activity

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Abstract—As a foreign learners, Indonesian students tend to feel unwilling to produce the oral English language acquisition speaking because of plenty reasons. The common pop up reasons are English is hard to get, it is perplexing and they are incapable of being relax while doing speaking. Moreover, the speaking activity implemented in the classroom often do not adequate students' interest. This study aimed to verify the students' perception about classroom speaking activity (CSA) in which CSA would become the most interesting for them to be taught through CSA arranged by Harmer. Qualitative method was conducted as the research of the study. Participants of a Junior high school in Cilacap, of both sexes, grade 7, were asked to fill out a questionnaire about speaking activity. The main finding of the study were male students have more interest in learning speaking. Both male and females students have the same perceptions toward the most popular and disliked classroom speaking activity. In conclusion, the findings of this study can help teachers for designing future CSA.

Keywords—classroom speaking activities; English speaking; students' perception

I. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of compulsary skills in English language acquisition. It is a productive skills which only can be produce after receiving some exposures of English language from both listening and reading skills. According to Harmer "If students want to be able to speak fluently in English, they need to be able pronounce phonemes correctly, use appropriate stress and intonation patterns and speak in connected speech. But there is more to it than that. Speakers of English - especially where it is a second language - will have to be able to speak in a range of different genres and situations, and they will have to be able to speak in a range of conversational and conversational strategies" [1]. In addition, to develop this productive skill, students need intensive and constant practice [2]. As conclusion, in teaching speaking, teachers have to arrange a set of activities in order to run the lesson well, this activities called by classroom speaking activity.

Classroom speaking activity has purpose as the instruction for teachers to implement the speaking in the classroom. It provides the focus/ goal(s) of speaking, for what age and what level the activity should be held, and steps of how to implement it in the classroom. Also Moore in Huang and Hu [3] mentions that, "classroom activities can (1) engage students in learning activities, facilitate learning by doing, and practice communication skills; (2) provide many benefits, give immediate feedback to students, arouse a high degree of students' interest and enthusiasm, meanwhile allow teachers to work with a wide range of student capabilities, and allow experimentation with a model of the real environment."

In addition, classroom speaking activity also explains the teachers' role(s) in its activity. Teachers need to play a number of different roles during different speaking activities. However, according to Harmer "the main job of teachers in organizing the CSA is to make sure that the students understand exactly what they are supposed to do. This involves giving clear instructions and, where appropriate, demonstrating the activity with a student or students so that no one is in any doubt what they should be doing" [1].

Adopted from Harmer, here are several classroom speaking activities which can be conducted for the students [1]:

- Acting from the script
- Communication games
- Discussion
- Debate
- Prepared talks
- Simulation and role-play
- Making recording

According to the study from Dewi et al. communicative games as one of classroom speaking activities have an impact on significant improvement on teaching learning process [4]. It gives positive improvement on students' active participation, confidence and fluency in speaking skill. Based on the finding of Miccoli, portfolios confirm that language comes alive through drama in oral skills development class [5]. For example, the confrontation of fears, and the taking of risks, led an improvement in their oral skills, as a consequence of understanding the aspects that underlie oral communication.

Argawati points out the result of her study shows that there are some improvements on the students' speaking skill quantitatively and qualitatively in testing her hypothesis that group discussion can improve students speaking skill [6]. Razali and Ismail states that the result of their study about using simulation and role-play got many positive signs from the students because they enjoy it, and teachers can help the students for improving their speaking skills and bring the positive changes in the class [7]. And many more researches show that appropriate classroom speaking activity will improve students' speaking skills.

Thiagarajan in Huang and Hu thinks that sustaining interest can mean sustaining effort [3]. So, in order to get the best achievement in producing the oral language, the CSA has to meet the students' interest. But most of Indonesian students think that English is quite difficult to learn especially speaking. According to EPI (English proficiency Index), Indonesia is caracterized in the low level of English proficiency which gain the 51st position in the word [8]. This might be happened because of the CSA is not really adequate their interest.

This problem also can be caused by the reluctant students who are likely feeling shy to speak and do not enjoy the subject given by the teacher. Hanifa states "among several affective factors which affect foreign language learning especially speaking, anxiety appears to be crucial factor that has delibitating effect on the oral performance of students" [9]. In addition, Nazara finds out that students tended to avoid speaking due to their fear of lectures' 'scolding' and classmates' laughing [10]. As a result, students doesn't feel that they have motivation to produce language.

By asking to the students of a junior high school in Cilacap, the researcher found that the classroom speaking activity delivered by the teacher merely doing the conversation where the teacher read the script than followed by the students. Next, the students were asked to do the conversation in pair or in a group work by reading the textbook. In the researcher's opinion this activity is good to be implemented in order to make students be able to pronounce words well but they have not got any chance to produce language. As Harmer states before, "Speakers of English – especially where it is a second language – will have to be able to use a range of different genres and situations, and they will have to be able to use a range of conversational and conversational strategies" [1]. It means that as the second language learners or even a foreign language learners, students need to know, learn and produce language based on several situations, genres and knowing how to do a conversational repair strategies, not only mimicking what teachers pronounce before.

By this situation, the researcher intended to find out:

- Are the students keen on learning English speaking?

- Which CSA will become the most attractive activities for the students?"

- Do both male and female students have the same interest in CSA?

This question lead the researcher to do a study aimed to verify the students' perspectives on classroom speaking activities and then to identify which activities is most attractive for them and also to find out whether both male and female students have the same interest for CSA or not.

The study is limited to analysing the students' interest on CSA for 7 grade of junior high school in Cilacap, for both gender: male and female by using questionnaire.

By indicating students' interest, the teacher could design and develop the strategies and learning activities of speaking in the classroom. This would lead the students have more actively involve to the classroom activities because they have got the interest and motivation for learning speaking. Then, teachers can take the consideration for selecting one or all activities which has already chosen by the students and adopt them for the speaking activity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Relevant Theories

1) Speaking: Laver in Khan and Ali mentions that "speech is the prime means of communication and the structure of the society itself would be substantially different if we had failed to develop communication through speech" [11]. It means that speaking is very crucial to learn because it will be impact on one's society. Speaking, undoubtedly as the best way of communication, will help the students to boarden their world from job opportunities to relate to people around the world as the impacts of globalization.

2) Principle for designing speaking techniques: Brown points out some principles which need to be considered in order to teach speaking in the classroom [12].

a) Use technique that cover the spectrum of learner needs, from language based focus on accuracy to message-based focus on interaction, meaning, and fluency: In the current zeal for interactive language teaching, teachers can easily slip into a pattern of providing zesty content-based, interactive activities that don't capitalize on grammatical pointers or pronunciation tips. When teachers do a jigsaw group technique, play a game, or discuss solutions to the environmental crisis, make sure that the tasks include techniques designed to help students to perceive and use the building blocks of language. At the same time, teachers do not bore the students to death with lifeless, repetitious drills. As noted above, teachers have to make any drilling as meaningful as possible.

b) Provide instrinsically motivating techniques: Teachers need to try at all times to appeal to students' ultimate goals and interests, to their need for knowledge, for status, for achieving competence and autonomy, for being all they can be. Even in those techniques that don't send students into ecstasy, help them to see how the activity will benefit them. Often students don't know why we ask them to do certain things it usually pays to tell them.

c) Encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts: It takes energy and creativity to devise authentic contexts and meaningful interaction, but with the

help of a storehouse of teacher, resource material, it can be done. Even drills can be structures to provide a sense of authenticity.

d) Provide appropriate feedback and correction: In most EFL situations, students are totally dependent on the teacher for useful linguistic feedback. In ESL situations, they may get such feedback beyond the classroom, but even then teachers in a position to be great benefit, it is important that teachers take advantage of their knowledge on English to inject the kinds of corrective feedback that are appropriate for the moment.

e) Capitalize on the natural link between speaking and listening: Many interactive techniques that involve speaking will also of course include listening. Teachers have not to lose out opportunities to integrate these two skills. As teachers perhaps focusing on speaking goals, listening goals may naturally coincide, and the two skills can reinforce eache other. Skills in producing language are often initiated through comprehension.

f) Give students opportunities to initiate oral communication: A good deal of typical classroom interaction is characeried by teacher initiation of language. Teachers ask questions, give directions, and provide information, and students have been conditioned only to speak wjen spoken to. Part of oral communication competence is the ability to initiate conversations, to nominate topics, to ask questions, to control conversation, and to change the subject. As teachers design and use speaking techniques, teachers can ask themselves if they have allowed students to initiate language.

g) Encourage the development of speaking strategies: The concept of strategic competence is one that few beginning language students are aware of. They simply have not though about developing their own personal strategies for accomplishing oral communicative purpose. The classroom can be one in which students become aware of, and have a chance to practice, such strategies as:

- Asking for clarification (*what?*).

- Asking someone to repeat something (*huh? Excuse me?*).

- Using fillers (*uh, I mean, well*) in order to gain time to process.

- Using conversation maintained cues (uh huh, right, yeah, okay, hm).

- Getting someone's attention (*Hey, Say, So*).

- Using paraphrases for structures one can't produce.

- Appealing for assistance from the interlocutor (to get a word or phrase, for example).

- Using formulaic expressions (at the survival stage) (*how much does___ cost? How do you get the ___?*).

- Using mime and nonverbal expressions to convey meaning.

B. Classroom Speaking Actvity

According to Harmer, "There are a number of widely-used categories of speaking activity, and we will start by looking at them before going on to specific examples" [1]. The following activities are adopted from him.

1) Acting from script: Mullich states, "A script is the written text of a play, movie, or television broadcasting. It describes the story's actions and dialog, divided into scenes" [13]. Teachers can ask the students to act out scenes from plays and/or their coursebooks, sometimes filming the result. Students will often act out dialogues they have written themselves.

a) Playscripts: Playsripts is like practicing drama in the learning activities but the students are allowed to read the script in order to practice. In playscrips students need to do the real acting. It means that teachers need to help the students to go through the scripts as if the teachers were the theatre directors, drawing attention to appropriate stress, intonation and speed. By giving students practice in these things before they give their final performance, teachers ensure that acting out is both a learning and a language producing activity.

b) Acting out the dialogue: In delivering the final performance, teachers should be careful not to choose the shyest students first because the first performance can affects the right kind of supportive atmosphere in the class. One more important thing, give the students time to rehearse their dialogues before they are asked to perform them.

2) Communication games: Games were devised which facilitate student talk and collaboration (and which do not simply practise isolated elements of grammar or pronunciation, for example), and each one has clearly identifiable objectives [14]. The aim of the communication game is to get students talking as quickly and fluently as possible. Two particular caterories are worth mentioning here:

a) Information-gap games: Many games depend on an information gap: one student has to talk to a partner in order to solve a puzzle, draw a picture (describe and draw), put things in the right order (describe and arrange) or find similarities and differences between pictures.

b) Television and radio games: In the television and radio program, usually provide some beneficial games for speaking. Let say Eat Bulaga Quiz in Indonesia. In this game, participants of the game are divided into two groups. Each groups are choose one person to sit and wear a helmet which had a words on it. The rest of the group will say yes, no or possible only while the helmetperson trying to guess the word on his head.

3) Discussion: Discussion range from highly formal, whole-group staged events to informal small-group interactions.

a) Buzz groups: According to Boudreau, "A buzz group is a small group, consisting of three to six people who are given an assignment to complete in a short time period. Generally, each buzz group records their output then reports to the larger group" [15]. The buzz groups can be used for a whole range of

discussions. For example, we might want students to predict the content of a reading text, or we may want them to talk about their reactions to it after they have read it.

b) Instant comments: To train students to respond fluently and immediately is to insert 'instant comment' mini-activities into lessons. This involves showing them photographs or introducing topics at any stage of a lesson and nominating students to say the first thing that comes into their head.

c) Formal debates: In formal debates, students prepare arguments in favour or against various propositions. When the debate starts, those who are appointed as 'panel speakers' produce well-rehearsed 'writing-like' arguments, where as others, the audience, pitch in as the debate progressess with their own (less scripted) thoughts on the subject.

d) Unplanned discussion: Sometimes, the discussion just happen in the middle of lesson without any preparation or planning made by the teacher before class. But if encouraged, it can provide some of the most enjoyable and productive speaking in language classes. Tge success will depend upon our ability to prompt and encouage and, perhaps, to change attitude to errors and mistakes from one minute to the next.

e) Reaching a consensus: The best ways of encouraging discussion is to provide activities which force students to reach a decision or a consensus, often as the result of choosing between specific alternatives. An example of this kind of activity (with particular relevance to schools) is where students consider a scenario in which an invigilator during a public exam cattches a student copying from hidden notes. The class has to decide between a range of options such as; the invigilator should ignore it, she should give the student a sign to show that she's seen (so that the student will stop), she should call the family and tell them the student was cheating, she should inform the examining board so that the student will not be able to take the exam again. The fact of having to make such an awkward choice gives the discussion a clear purpose and an obvious outcome to aim for.

4) Prepared talks: In prepared talk, students makes a presentation on a topic of their own choice. The talk are not arranged for informal spontaneous conversation because they are prepared, they are more "writing-like" than this. However, if possible, students should speak from notes rather than from a script.

Teachers need to give extra time for the students in doing the presentation especially in the procedures and process they are involved in.

- In the first place, teacher give the students time to prepare their talks.

- Then, let the students rehearse their presentations (can be done by getting them to present to each other in pairs or small groups first).

- The teacher and the class can decide together on criteria for what makes a good presentation and the listener in

each pair can then give feedback on what the speaker has said.

Those all are expected for the speaker to make a better presentation. In addition, when a student delivers the presentation, it is important to give the rest of students some tasks to carry out as they listen. The point is that presentations have to involve active listening as well as active speaking.

5) Questionnaires: In this case, the questionnaires were shared by the students to another students orally. Students can design questionnaires on any topic that is appropriate to the contex of the lesson studied.

6) Simulation and role-play: Simulation and role–play derive great benefit for the students. In this activity, students simulate a real life encounter (such as bussines meeting, an interview or a conversation in an aeroplane cabin, etc) as if they were doing so in the real world. Role-play is defined as the character which need to be acted by the students. When we give students these roles, we might tell the student what they need to do or what the situation are. For example, you are the complained buyer and you are the seller in a fruit marked.

Simulation and role-play can be used to encourage general oral fluency or to train students for specific situations, especially where they are studying English for specific purposes (ESP). It also has three distinct advantages; they can be good fun and are thus motivating, they allow hesitant students to be more forthright in their opinions and behaviour without having to take responsibility for what they say in the way that they do when they are speaking for themselves, and also by broadening the world of the classroom to include the world outside, they allow students to use a much wider range of language than some more task-centred activities may do.

Simulation and role-play often work well when participants have to come to some kind of a decision. This activity lets the students elaborate the situation as creative as possible to make the situation looks like the reality.

C. Relevant Studies

There are a lot of CSA for sure, in their study, Huang and Hu were analyse the students and teachers perceptions towards a classroom activities commonly used in English Speaking Classes [3]. They investigated students' and teachers' perceptions of the use of classroom activities in English speaking classes. The results of the research showed that there were both similarities and differences between students' and teachers' perceptions about these activities and that the perceptions of freshmen and sophomores were not completely matched. When deciding which activity should be added to the classroom, the result shows that recreational activities gets the highest score (48.06%) of 80 participants. The recreational activities consist of English dubz, Song cloze, Role play, and short play. And from the table, shows that most students choose this classroom activities.

The next study comes from Hamzah and Lu [16]. They were identified the students' perspectives with regards to their involvement in oral group activities and determined the potential implications of group work activities on the students' individual performance in speaking assessment. The findings

show students' positive attitude towards group work activities in class. This contributes to a significant increase in students' participation in their groups. The general results obtained also indicate some improvements in students' speaking when they are assessed individually.

From those studies mention above it already known that by knowing the students' perspectives, the teacher could take a consideration for designing future activities for the speaking lesson.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

Since this study aims for knowing the students' perspectives on classroom speaking activity, the researcher implement the qualitative and quantitative approach.

B. Data Collection

1) Respondents: The respondents of the study consisted of thirty two in one of junior high schools in Cilacap, of both sexes: 12 Males and 20 Females, class 9, who have already learnt speaking in their school. The students' age are about 11 to 15 years old.

2) Insrument: The instrument used in this study is close-ended questionnaire consisted of eight questions of their perspectives towards the speaking activity in the classroom which is arranged by Harmer [1]. The questions of the close-ended questionnaire is merely in the form of yes or no answer regarding the respondents of the study were young learners.

3) Procedure: In administering the questionnaire, the researcher first consider the target sample were willing and able to fill the questionnaire. Next, the researcher spread the questionnaire directly through a teacher of that school on Monday, 29th October 2018.

C. Data Analysis

Firstly, the data were analysed quantitatively by tabulating the answer in the form of counting frequencies and then analysed through percentages. Next, the percentages are explained descriptively in getting a better understanding of percentages.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The general perceptions of students about their interesting in learning English speaking they were having in their school are listed in table 1. The table shows that in response to the question of whether the students like or interest in learning English speaking, 81.25% of the students found it interesting and only 18.75% of the students have no interest at the activity. It is surprising to know that male students tend to have more interest in learning speaking compared to females, because men. The interest can be proved by there were no male students answer no when they were asked about their interest in learning English speaking. In the other hand, the number of female students who answered no is six people.

TABLE I.   THE GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS' INTERESTING IN LEARNING ENGLISH SPEAKING

Question	Answer	Gender		F	%
		Male	*Female*		
Are you interested in learning English speaking?	**Yes**	12	14	26	81.25
	No	0	6	6	18.57

The next questions are asking about students' favourite activities. The classroom activities consists of seven questions adopted from Harmer, communication games (*playing games),* acting from script *(doing drama or acting in the story),* discussion *(sit in a group of discussion)* and also *(debate)*, prepared talk *(presentation),* simulation and role-play, and making recording *(making films)* [1]. The data then listed in table 2. From the table, we know that the most favourite activity falls for game activity and which get 71.875% of choices and followed by the simulation and role-play (62.5%), presentation (50%), making film (40.625%), group discussion (28.125%), drama or acting in a story (9.375%) and the last debate (3.125%).

On the other hand, the least interesting activity falls for debate which dramatically highest percentages of all choices, 96.872%, then followed by drama or acting in a story (90.25%), group discussion (75%), making film (59.375%), presentation (50%), simulation and role-play (37.5) and games (28.125%). Both male and female students are have the same highest and least interest for speaking activity also have same perception on presentation activity.

TABLE II.   FAVORITE ACTIVITY FOR CSA

No.	Questions	Answer	Gender		F	%
			Male	*Female*		
1.	Do you like playing games in English learning activitiy?	Yes	11	18	29	71.875
		No	1	2	3	28.125
2.	Do you like doing the drama or acting in a story for English learning activity?	Yes	1	2	3	9.375
		No	11	18	29	90.25
3.	Do you like siting in a group of discussion while studying English?	Yes	2	6	8	28.125
		No	10	14	24	75

Table 2. Cont.

No.	Questions	Answer	Gender		F	%
			Male	*Female*		
4.	Do you prefer to stay in a debate activity for speaking?	Yes	0	1	1	3.125
		No	12	19	31	96.875
5.	Do you like to do the presentation in front of you friend in the classroom?	Yes	6	10	16	50
		No	6	10	16	50
6.	Will you do the simulation and role-play when your teacher asks you? For example simulation of being in aeroplane and the aeroplane is about to collapse	Yes	6	14	20	62.5
		No	6	6	12	37.5
7.	Do you like making films in English?	Yes	7	6	13	40.25
		No	5	14	19	59.375

The data analysis of different perception of CSA between male and female are presented in the bar chart 1. A glance figure provided reveals how both male and female students have the same highest interest for games activity and least interest for debate activity. Both males and females have the same amount of interest in presentation from the seven activities, the female student percentages almost dominated all activities except for games, presentation and making films.
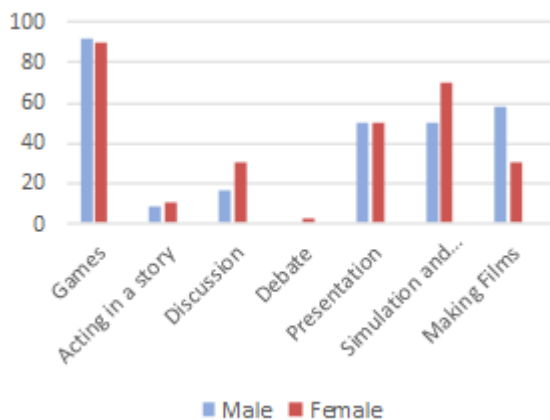

Fig. 1. Presentage of different interest between male and female students

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, from the questionnaire shared, the number of students who are more interested in learning English speaking goes to male students. Actually, each activity designed by Harmer is good for students in each level, but students can choose in which way they want to be taught [1]. In general, the most popular activity of the students is learning through games activity while the most indisposed activity is debate. This might be happened because they were young learners who need to be taught in a fun way, with a lot of explorations and physical movements. It seems like both male and female students are agreed for the most popular and disliked activity. This will make the teacher easier to design the activity for learning speaking based on students' perspective and desire which lead students enjoy the CSA and hopefully can produce oral language simultaneously.

From this study, there were some recommendations for English teacher in junior high school and for further research. For English teacher in junior high school, it is better for the English teacher to know in what way is students will perform best. This can be known from their age, their English level and also their preference in choosing activity for learning. After knowing all these aspects, teachers could design the lesson plan which accommodate the needs of students based on their interest and desire. Based on the perception of students, they prefer to do activities for speaking involving physical movements such as games and simulation and role plays.

This study is limited in the spread of questionnaires and only utilized CSA arranged by Harmer [1]. For the further research, the researcher who wants to do the same study, hopefully can conduct the data analysis in more places and add more CSA made by another scientist. The researcher also may analyse the both teachers and students perspectives towards the CSA in order to gain a better understanding and result for both teachers and students.

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