The Students Perception towards the Flow Theory in Speaking Class Activity of English Language Education Study Program Batch 2019

by Nanik Mariani

The Students' Perception towards the Flow Theory in Speaking Class Activity of English Language Education Study Program Batch 2019

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Abstract

This study was aimed to investigate students' perceptions of the flow theory in performing Basic Speaking course activities which were Storytelling, Role-Play, and Group Discussion. The study used a descriptive design with a qualitative approach with 62 students from batch 2019 at the English Language Education Study Program in Lambung Mangkurat University. The data was collected by distributing an online form questionnaire, then eight students were chosen to be interviewed to gain more in-depth information of their perceptions of flow while performing speaking activities. The data was then presented in percentages to divide the perceptions into positive, neutral, and negative categories and described in descriptive form. The findings discovered students' perception of the four dimensions of flow: interest, control, focus, and challenge in performing the three Basic Speaking classroom activities. The results revealed that students had a positive perception towards the flow of interest, particularly in Role-Play activity. Results also showed that students had a neutral perception towards the flow of control and focus since they perceived both of these dimensions broadly in every speaking activity. Lastly, the findings showed that students had positive perception towards flow of challenge, particularly in Storytelling activity. As suggested, both students and lecturers require to recognize what makes them engaged in performing the activity while concerning their emotional state since it would be very significant for students' improvement to be more meaningful in their learning process.

Keywords: flow theory; perception; speaking activities

INTRODUCTION

There have been several statements by the language learning experts where they stated that classroom activities aim to provide an experience to improve students' communication skills. In terms of communication skills and particularly in English, speaking has been one of the activities which determines fluency and converse with others much more than other skills (Fitrawati, 2015). Furthermore, speaking activities also allow

students to draw on their experience while using their imagination and emotions (Wen & Clément, 2015). In related to emotional state of someone when they're doing certain activity, there has been a theory proposed by Csikszentmihalyi (1988) which defines as emotional state of someone with the indications of having interest, happiness, satisfaction while doing certain activity which is called as Flow Theory.

According to Csikszentmihalyi in his book of Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (2008) about intrinsic motivation and effective teaching, flow experience can become rewarding if it meets these four indicators, which are (1) the recognition and interest from those who are involved in the activity; (2) the balance of having a sense of control; (3) the strong attention and focus; and (4) the acknowledgement of challenge and advantages of the activity.

Although theoretical and empirical research has been carried out by scholars on the nature of flow experiences in educational practices such as reading or using computers, the flow has not been the subject of much research involving language acquisition. Historically, the Krashen Forgotten Theory (1982) described interactions most comparable to flow in language acquisition literature. He states that speaking is the best input as it is exciting and relevant that the speaker may speak "unconsciously" that the message is coded in a foreign language.

When it comes to language acquisition, the critical core of this area is speaking ability. Speaking is a multi-sensory practice, and it influences the speaker's mental state, which relates to flow experience. As stated before, flow is psychologically experienced during a particular activity by an individual; however, it does not happen separately. This relies on the features and circumstances of other individuals in the setting (Egbert, 2003). In line with this, speaking is also influenced by the speaker's emotional state, such as why they might feel engaged in some activities, which also affects the speaker's performance on the activity itself. According to this case, it can be assumed that students might experience flow when doing speaking activities in the classroom. Mainly, when students are immersed in the activity, they will find it enjoyable, interesting, or even challenging, promoting their flow and internalization of the activities.

In line with the reports above, the researcher conducts a preliminary study to determine students' perception of speaking activities in the classroom. The researcher distributes an open- ended questionnaire to the English Language Education Study Program students from batch 2018. According to the results, students primarily respond to their perceptions of why their chosen activities are engaging. The most frequent answer is that the activity was exciting and enjoyable for them. Another finding is that students found some activities challenging since they had to perform in front of the classroom.

The results of the preliminary study above indirectly become the substance of the flow theory dimensions, which are about their emotional state while doing the activity. However, since the results are considered to be less specifically examined, the researcher then would like to conduct this study to investigate the degree to which flow occurs in various types of activities in a Basic Speaking course. In considering which type of speaking activities to be examined, the researcher also asks a confirmation with one of Basic Speaking lecturers in regards to the main activities which implemented in the classroom. It has found that there have been three types of Basic Speaking activities which are Storytelling, Role-Play, and Group Discussion performed by the students. Therefore,

the researcher then decides to conduct this study by exploring students' perceptions about which activities promote flow in a more in-depth and detailed investigation under the title "The Students' Perception Towards the Flow Theory in Speaking Class Activity of English Language Education Study Program Batch 2019." The researcher conducts this study by distributing questionnaires and interviewing the students who had taken the Basic Speaking course, and doing the triangulation subject with the lecturer at the English Language Education Study Program at Lambung Mangkurat University.

METHOD

The present study employs a qualitative design to reveal the students' perceptions on the flow theory in performing Basic Speaking activities during a semester. The subjects of the research are the undergraduate students who had taken Basic Speaking course of the English Language Education Study Program batch 2019 of Lambung Mangkurat University in South Kalimantan province, Indonesia.

The instruments of the study are five-scale questionnaire adapted from Egbert's study (2003) and self-made assessment interview for the students' perception towards the flow theory in performing Basic Speaking activities which has been developed through expert validation and try-out. There were 14 items of questionnaire which associated with each of four flow dimensions of interest, control, focus and challenge while classifying it with the three types of basic speaking activities: role-play, storytelling, and group discussion. Furthermore, the interview is used to verify the result of the questionnaire since more detailed data are needed in this research. The interview is also conducted to triangulate subjects with the speaking lecturer to clarify the students' perceptions.

In order to measure the questionnaire results accordingly, Three-Box Method was used to achieve the tendency of respondents to answer in each variable, and the average score (index) was calculated to class the score range (Ferdinand, 2006). The questionnaire results were then presented in percentages within the Three-Box Method to divide the perception into positive, neutral, and negative categories.

In addition, there were certain factors in determining the number of accurate and genuinely required samples for the interview to be collected. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) then suggested that about 12 participants had a minimum sample size that could achieve saturation. In line with this, this research has chosen 12 students to be interviewed; however, it has achieved the saturation on the eighth interview.

To obtain the trustworthiness of the data, expert's validation was carried out by involving a lecturer of the course. The validation was focused on the face validity, construct- related evidence, and content-related evidence of the items. Meanwhile, to obtain the reliability of the instruments, the draft was tried-out to the subjects who had similar characteristics with the subject of the study and the result was calculated by employing Cronbach's Alpha. As a result, the questionnaire was reliable due to Cronbach's alpha was higher than the standardized alpha (0.60). Therefore, Cronbach's alpha was 0.853>0.60 for the students' questionnaire.

Furthermore, the researcher also conducted a triangulation in this study. According to Cohen and Manion (1986), Triangulation is an effort to map out or describe more thoroughly the richness and ambiguity of human behavior by analyzing it from

several perspectives. Therefore, the researcher carried out data triangulation by investigating the lecturer's perception to validate and explain the observations from various perspectives of a different data source.

FINDINGS

1. The Description of the Data

The data of this research were collected from questionnaires and interviews. The items were presented on Google Form and distributed asynchronously through students' group chat from the questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire were calculated as the following:

Based on the data from the questionnaire, the students' perception would be explained in four different indicators: interest, focus, control, and challenge in each Basic Speaking activity chosen: Storytelling, Role-Play, and Group Discussion. As this study requires finding students' mean responses and dividing the perception into three: Positive, Neutral, and Negative, the researcher used the Three Box Method by analyzing it using index analysis. In order to achieve the tendency of respondents to answer each variable, the average score (index) is based on the calculation of the three-box method and classed as a score range (Ferdinand, 2006). The calculation of the three-box method is classified into two; upper range and lower range. Therefore, the formula would be presented below:

Table 1. Upper and Lower Range Formula

| Upper Range | (%F*5) / 5 |
| Lower Range | (%F*1) / 5 |

This research had 62 samples, so the upper and lower range to determine the average score (index) of total achievement of respondents shown below:

Table 2. Upper and Lower Range Value

| Upper Range | 62 |
| Lower Range | 12.4 |

The index shows a score of 12.4 – 62, with a range between those being 49.6. Hence, the range will be divided into three parts by using the Three Box Method. The result shows that the range for each category is 16.5. Thus, it will be used to determine the category interpretation as follows:

Table 3. Range of Score and Category

Range of Score	Category
62 - 45.6	Positive
45.5 - 29	Neutral
28.9 – 12.4	Negative

2. Results of Students' Perception
2.1 Flow of Interest in Speaking Activities

The first indicator discussed in regards to the interest of students while doing basic speaking activities. This indicator is one of the flow dimensions representing students' acknowledgment of having a continuous sense of enjoyment while doing the activities.

Table 4. Students' Perception Category of Interest Dimension

Activities	Total Score	Index Score	Category
Storytelling	931	46.55	Positive
Role-Play	940	47	Positive
Group Discussion	912	45.6	Positive

Note:
Score: The total of responses' frequency multiplied into each option's score
Index: The total score divided by 5 (five-points Likert Scale)

From the index score, the three activities showed similar numbers. Storytelling activity had 46.55, Role-Play had 47, and Group Discussion had 45.6. According to the range score, the index score between 45.6 to 62 is considered as having a positive perception. Hence, it can be concluded that students had positive responses toward the flow of interest in the three Basic Speaking activities. They mostly agree with the statements of the activity provided them to have an excitement and enjoyment while doing the activities.

In this regard, students may clarify their perception about the three Basic Speaking activities based on their interest and enjoyment when partaking in them. Students explained certain activities that interested them when performing them in the classroom after discovering that they had a positive perception of all speaking activities in the questionnaire. According to the interview results, six out of eight students considered the Role-Play activity the most exciting. One of the students stated the following:

> *"Role-Play would be the most interesting one because we need to represent the role and topic to perform it. There were a variety of topics and scripts which were chosen by the lecturer or by ourselves. We also have the conversation with our friends so that it would be more fun."*

Based on the findings from this dimension of interest, it can be inferred that most students were more interested in and enjoyed communicative activities, such as Role-Play and Group Discussion, than monologue activities, such as Storytelling. Students stated that the activity would expose them to a wide range of topics and expressions. Another factor was that they would be accompanied by their peers while performing. Hence, they could lessen the pressure to perform the activity alone.

2.2 Flow of Control in Speaking Activities

The second indicator shows a sense of control. In the flow theory, the dimension of control is described as students' ability to control and be controlled while performing an activity in the classroom. The lecturers play an essential role in controlling the learning process, as they have more power and control over the students. Control is also linked to students' ability to choose what they study, how they learn, and with whom they study and perform the activity. Below is the calculation of index score from the three statements of students' perception towards the flow of control in each activity:

Table 5. Students' Perception Category of Interest Dimension

Activities	Total Score	Index Score	Category
Storytelling	639	42.6	Neutral
Role-Play	663	44.2	Neutral
Group Discussion	651	43.4	Neutral

Based on the results of the index score, the flow of control showed a different perception from the previous dimension. According to the results, Storytelling had 42.6, Role-Play had 44.2, and Group Discussion had 43.4. Since the range score for these results was placed in the neutral range between 29 to 45.5, those students had a neutral perception of the flow of control in every Basic Speaking activity. By any means, this neutral perception is considered as having a lack of perception. The students still have confused whether they should have agreed or disagreed with having a sense of control during the activities.

Furthermore, in order to get more information on this aspect, the researcher asked students to clarify a couple of statements from the questionnaire. As a result of the interview, the number of students stated,

> "*The lecturer was flexible (not too strict) and let us speak anything-although we were not that fluent at that time. The lecturer also provided the learning material from different sources, such as the syllabus, the internet, or even our own experiences.*"

This statement from students was also confirmed by the lecturer which stated,

> "*Control in speaking class is usually called as "Control Activity" where we (as the lecturer) will focus on how we deliver the teaching material, which also means that the expression (used by the students) must be according to what has been taught. The control quality here depends on how well the students absorb the material to express and speak in English.*"

Besides controlling teaching and learning material, students also stated a specific rule only to speak English in the classroom. One of the students stated,

"There was a rule that we could not speak Indonesian in the classroom, but sometimes we were not able to control and still speak Indonesian when we discussed with friends. When we spoke Indonesian, the lecturer was only watching us (silently), but not directly warning us (to speak English)."

The lecturer also clarified this statement from students in the interview, which stated,

"The use of English in the classroom is a choice, not a must. However, ideally, we have to speak English in the speaking classroom because if students do not have enough exposure to speaking English, we worry that they tend to use the expression not appropriately. Hence, the use of English is one of the important factors to be controlled in students' (speaking) activities."

Based on this information from both students and lecturers in the dimension of control, their perceptions tended to focus more on the lesson material and the practicality of speaking English in general rather than performing the activity specifically. It could be seen from the students' explanation regarding the learning material and the instruction to not speak Indonesian in the classroom. The lecturer's statement also confirmed that they needed to pay attention to the material in order to provide the correct input in the students' learning process, as well as to encourage students to only speak English in speaking class; however, the lecturer tried to strike a balance between control and allowing students to make their own decisions.

2.3 Flow of Focus in Speaking Activities

The flow dimension of focus describes how students pay attention to the lecturer and the lesson as a whole, especially to the activity they are doing. In the flow theory, the indication of focus is related to how students handle distractions around them to be more concerned while performing the activity. When overly focused on the activity itself, they tend to perceive the experience as if time is passing more quickly. here is the calculation of the index score from the three statements of students' perception towards the flow of focus in each activity:

Table 5. Students' Perception Category of Interest Dimension

Activities	Total Score	Index Score	Category
Storytelling	614	3.30	40.9
Role-Play	636	3.42	42.4
Group Discussion	626	3.37	41.7

Referring to the table above, the researcher found that the focus flow had the same category results as the flow of control. Started from Storytelling which had an index score of 40.9, Role-Play with 42.4, and Group Discussion had 41.7. According to the range index score, students had all neutral perceptions towards the flow of focus in every Basic Speaking activity. Related to this result, it is assumed that students still had both

the tendency to agree and disagree with the statements relating to how they pay attention or focus while doing the activities.

During the interview, most of the students stated that they were always aware of the distractions primarily caused by themselves. Most of the things that become a distraction when performing the activity include fear of making mistakes, self-doubt, and worry about not speaking fluently. According to one of the students,

> *"The distraction is coming from myself; I sometimes lack focus because I am afraid of making a mistake."*

Regarding this matter, the researcher also asked the lecturer how they would deal with students who had a lack of focus when they were doing the activity, then the lecturer stated,

> *"What I usually do is by listening to their pressure, asking them questions very frequently to reduce their high anxiety. By having much exposure, listening to them, and making it engaging by communicating with them, they will automatically lessen their anxiety, and finally, they can talk."*

However, there was a different statement from students regarding the thing that also influences how they focus on the lesson, which was the material or topic given by the lecturer. The student stated,

> *"It depends on the given material- if I like it, I would be less worried and can be more focused."*

In associating with the material is given, which can make them more focused on the lesson, the researcher also asked which speaking activity they could feel less bored and having the experience of feeling as if the time would pass quickly. Most of the students answered that Role-Play is the activity that made them more manageable and comfortable to be more focused. One of the students stated,

> *"I felt like doing Role-Play would be less boring- it feels as if we were playing around, and sometimes we were too absorbed and too enjoyed with the performance- even the lecturer had to stop us talking because we forgot that the class had already finished."*

This statement from the students regarding the Role-Play activity relates to the first dimension of flow which is interest. In terms of their interest, students also tend to enjoy performing Role-Play more than Storytelling and Group Discussion. Furthermore, the focus dimension also has a similar perception to the control dimension. The students tended to state their perception based on their experiences in speaking class generally, not in the particular speaking activity. In conclusion, students' perception towards the flow of focus was divided into what causes the students' lack of focus, which are their

self-inhibitions, and what activity made them too absorbed, which is to be Role-Play activity.

2.4 Flow of Challenge in Speaking Activities

The last dimension of flow is discussing challenges. In the flow theory, the challenge must be balanced with the awareness of how strenuous the activity is. When students acknowledge their speaking skills, they will know how challenging the activity is to perform. Here is the total index score from the four statements of students' perception towards the flow of challenge in every activity presented in this table:

Table 6. Students' Perception Category of Challenge Dimension

Activities	Total Score	Index Score	Category
Storytelling	915	45.8	Positive
Role-Play	921	46.1	Positive
Group Discussion	852	42.6	Neutral

From the table above, it showed that Storytelling and Role-Play had the same category from Group Discussion. Storytelling had an index score of 45.8, and Role- Play had 46.1, categorized as having positive perception. In contrast, Group Discussion had an index score of 42.6 which means it had neutral perception. This result found that students had positive responses towards the flow of challenge in Storytelling and Role- Play. They mostly agreed that these two activities had specific difficulties and challenges. However, those were helpful for their speaking ability since they could arouse their imagination and curiosity. Meanwhile, students still lacked perception towards Group Discussion in terms of how challenging it is for them.

According to these results from the questionnaire, the researcher interviewed students to know which activity they consider the most challenging one for them. It was found that seven out of eight students chose the Storytelling activity to be the most challenging for them. One of the students stated,

> "*Storytelling is an individual activity. Also, we have to understand the meaning of the story completely, and the way we deliver (the story) would be impactful for the listener.*"

Most of the students stated that Storytelling is the most challenging because it is an individual activity. This statement was also confirmed by the lecturer which stated,

> "*Why (storytelling) is placed in the high-risk activity is because monologue activity has more speaking production than dialogue activity. When students have two minutes, they will have many language resources they need to speak out, rather than communicate with others which would be only several sentences they produce. So, I also realized that monologue activity is harder than the communicative activity.*"

However, despite the difficulty of this particular speaking activity, students were also asked if they would agree that challenging activity could be helpful for them to improve their speaking skills. One of the students stated,

> "*It is beneficial, especially for Storytelling. Although I consider it the most difficult one, I agree that it is helpful for me. We will not always have to speak with friends, but we also will speak by ourselves, for example, in job interviews, presentations, etc. So, the most challenging one is the most helpful.*"

Another reason for the students why this activity could be helpful for them is because this kind of activity can enhance their confidence in speaking English in front of people. One of the students explained,

> "*Storytelling is the most challenging one, but it is also helpful because it helps me to improve my confidence to speak in front of people.*"

According to this perception from both the students and lecturer regarding the challenge for Basic Speaking activity, it was found that monologue activity, Storytelling, happened to be the most challenging one due to its difficulty for being an individual activity and its quantity of speaking production compared to the communicative ones. This result is also related to the first dimension of interest, where Storytelling became a minor exciting activity for the students.

According to these results in the interview, students firstly tended to have more specific perceptions regarding the dimensions of interest and challenge. They could state how they would perceive the three basic speaking activities according to their interests and how challenging the activities were. Meanwhile, in the dimensions of control and focus, students generally stated their opinions in every essential speaking activity. This was assumed that these dimensions could be applied in all activities. It would depend on some other factors that influenced their control and focus, such as the instruction from the lecturer in controlling their learning process, which was generally applied in all activities, as well as the material or activity preferred by the students to perform in order to make them more focused on the lesson.

DISCUSSION

This part was intended to discuss the responses to the research questions based on the research findings that had been presented. The research question was about how the students' perception towards the Flow Theory in performing Basic Speaking classroom activities, in which their perception revealed that students had different perceptions according to each dimension of flow theory since the three basic speaking activities also had different focus and purposes to be learned and performed.

Furthermore, in order to prove whether the findings could accurately answer the research question or not, the discussion will be explained below. The discussion would be divided into four dimensions or indicators of flow theory: interest, control, focus, and

challenge, and associated with the three Basic Speaking activities of storytelling, role-play, and group discussion.

The first indicator discussed how students perceive the three basic Speaking activities regarding their interest and enjoyment. In the questionnaire results, students had a positive perception of all speaking activities. According to this, students tended to agree that they had experienced having fun and enjoyment while doing the activities in the classroom. It was also proven more specifically from the interview that one of the speaking activities they were interested in and enjoyed the most would be the Role-Play activity since it had a variety of topics, and they would perform it along with their classmates. Furthermore, the lecturer also agreed that Role-Play was the most engaging one for the students to perform.

This perception was compatible with the theory of flow for interest dimension by Csikszentmihalyi (2008), which explained that to enjoy the learning process, students must have a constant sense and emotional engagement that was affected by the activity implemented in the learning process itself. In this case, students fully acknowledged that Role-Play was one activity that engaged them by having an imaginary situation in various scenarios where they could become anyone, they wanted in whatever situation they would like to have. Moreover, as Role-Play usually used materials from real-world situations, students would immerse their emotional state based on the scenario they had in the performance as it is also associated with the statement by Mu'in, Arini, and Amrina (2018) that using real-world examples as teaching strategies in the classroom can help students identify significant concerns and encourage interest in learning.

The second indicator of flow theory discussed how the students could control themselves or be controlled while doing the tasks or activities in the classroom. In this dimension, students explained their perception generally in all speaking activities rather than specifically in each activity. This indicator also had an essential relation with the person who taught the lesson. In this case, the lecturer would have more power to control both the lesson and the students in the learning process. Regarding the findings in the questionnaire, students had a neutral perception in the control dimension towards the speaking activities. This assumed that students still had a lack of perception whether they could sense the control in the classroom or not.

Furthermore, from the interview, students then stated that the control in the classroom would depend on how the lecturer provided them the instruction to control their learning process. In regards to this, students stated that the lecturer was quite flexible in terms of controlling their activity; for instance, the lecturer would provide the material of the lesson, but students were also allowed to choose their references or learning sources by themselves as long as it was aligned with the material given. Another example of control in the classroom was the rule of not speaking Indonesian in the classroom. In this case, although students could not fully control themselves by only speaking English in the classroom, they also clarified that the lecturer was not too strict and still allowed them to speak Indonesian when they had a small discussion with their classmates.

The lecturer also confirmed students' perception that controlling activity in the speaking classroom would depend on how well the students perceived the material given for their exposure of expression and communication skills in English. In other words,

the essence of control was not based on how they got the learning sources or with whom they studied; however, as long as the students could absorb the material and apply it to their practice correctly, then the control activity could be achieved. This also applied with the rule given by the lecturer as he said that it was not a must but a choice for students to speak English or Indonesian in the classroom.

This perception of both the students and lecturer that showed a balance in the sense of control in the classroom was compatible with the definition of control in flow theory. According to Csikszentmihalyi (2008), the balance of having a sense of control is essential to experience the flow. The absence of a sense of choice makes it impossible for students to act freely to express their ideas. On the other hand, without a sense of control, it is also difficult for students to enjoy what they do in the classroom.

The third indicator of flow theory discussed how students pay their attention to the lecturer, the lesson, and their surroundings in the classroom and how the lecturer had to deal with students who had a lack of focus on their learning process. The same applied to the control dimension. Students also tended to explain this indicator more generally in all speaking activities than in each activity specifically. This was proven from the questionnaire results those students had a neutral perception of how they had a focused aspect in every speaking activity. In other words, students still had a lack of perception of whether they could be appropriately focused on the lesson or not. Furthermore, students also explained what causes them to lack perception regarding their focus in speaking activity from the interview.

Most students stated that their internal factors would influence their focus on the lesson due to their self-inhibitions. The anxiety and fear of making a mistake were the most common reasons the students lacked focus when performing a particular activity. The lecturer also confirmed that the factors that influenced the way students pay their attention to the lesson would be from many aspects, not only from their self-inhibitions but also from their lack of competency.

Furthermore, the lecturer also stated that engaging students to be more focused and lessen their anxiety was by asking them questions frequently, listening to what makes them distracted, and building the conversation more actively with the students. This statement was compatible with the description of how the focus dimension works on students' learning process. Csikszentmihalyi (2008) stated that teachers have to attract students' attention by connecting with students and transferring the attention from students' interests to the subject matter. As it could be seen that the lecturer was also trying to build the connection with the students to make them more engaged and focused, this situation proved that flow experience in the focus dimension was indeed experienced by both the students and lecturer.

Another aspect discussed in this indicator was how the students perceived the speaking activity to engage their focus on the lesson. Students were asked which activity felt less boring for the students to perform in the classroom. Most students stated that Role-Play was a fun activity to perform and often made them feel that the time has passed quickly. The experience of feeling as if the time had passed quickly was due to students' loss of self-consciousness when they were too immersed in the activity. This phenomenon was also implicated with one of the aspects in focus dimension stated by

Egbert (2003). The person tended to feel that the time had passed quickly when they were too focused on a particular activity they did.

The last indicator from flow theory discussed how challenging the activity was for the students. Here, the students explained how strenuous the activities were; however, students were also required to acknowledge the benefit of performing the activities despite their difficulty. In the results from the questionnaire, students mostly had a positive perception of this aspect. By any means, they agreed that the activities had their difficulty, yet they still thought that those were beneficial for the improvement of their speaking skill.

Furthermore, they also stated which activity they perceived as the most challenging one for them to perform in the interview. The students stated that Storytelling was highly challenging due to its requirement for having students perform individually. The lecturer also confirmed that Storytelling made the students have more speaking production than communicative activities, such as Role-Play or Group Discussion. However, students also realized that Storytelling was also helpful for preparing themselves to have more difficult individual activities in the future.

This acknowledgment from the students regarding how challenging yet how the activity was helpful for them was compatible with the flow theory, which associates with the balance between challenges and the individuals' skills that lead to circumstances where inherent motivation peaks (Moneta, 2004). In other words, students recognized how and why Storytelling became a challenging activity for them to perform. Nevertheless, they also acknowledged that this activity was helpful for their speaking skill improvement when they have a more advanced speaking activity in the future.

Based on this discussion, it could be seen that students had their flow experience in every dimension of the three basic speaking activities that they had performed in the classroom. They have expressed their perspectives on why the activities were exciting and challenging and how they experienced a sense of control and focused when performing the speaking activities in their learning process. Furthermore, the lecturer who undertook the basic speaking course comprehensively confirmed and clarified students' perceptions and made statements that could precisely align with the theory implied in this study.

CONCLUSION

This research was aimed to investigate the students' perception of the flow theory in basic speaking activities. There were four main dimensions of Flow Theory which are Interest, Control, Focus, and Challenge. Furthermore, according to the material taught in the Basic Speaking course, three main activities were implemented: Storytelling, Role-Play, and Group Discussion.

According to the research findings, the majority of students had a positive perception towards the flow of interest and challenge as they could clarify specifically activity that they found to be the most interesting, which was Role-Play due to its variety of roles and topics that could enhance both their emotion and imagination better than the other activities, as they also could perform it along with their classmates. Meanwhile, students also stated that the highly challenging activity for them would be Storytelling since they would perform it by themselves. It tended to make them feel pressured more

than excited. The lecturer also confirmed that students would have more speaking production in an individual activity, such as Storytelling, rather than communicative activities, such as Role-Play or Group Discussion, which influenced their confidence and excitement while performing the activity.

Furthermore, students' perception of the flow of control and focus has shown that students tended to state their opinions broadly in all speaking activities. It was assumed that these two dimensions could be applied to all activities. Their control and focus would be influenced by other factors, such as the lecturer's instruction in controlling their learning process, which was generally implied to all activities, and the material or activity preferred. Students also stated that the Role-Play activity is the one that made them more focused and often caused them to lose their self-consciousness. Hence, this also aligned with the previous dimensions, which clarified how students would experience their flow better on the communicative activity, such as Role-Play, than an individual activity in their speaking learning process.

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FINAL GRADE

/0

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor