



THE STUDENTS' LEARNING NEEDS IN ZOOM APPLICATION SPEAKING ACTIVITY

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Abstract

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the process of the learning system has been changed from face-to-face to online classroom interaction. As a result, the learning activities also changed, leading to the different students' learning needs. This article discusses an analysis of students' learning needs in their speaking activity on the Zoom application in an online learning system. The sample of the study was 38 students from the State Islamic University of North Sumatra chosen by using the purposive random sampling technique. The data were obtained by distributing the adapted questionnaire developed by Songhori (2008) and the interview developed by Hutchinson and Waters (1991). This study revealed that students' learning needs to include actively participating communicatively in speaking class. Besides, the students need the role of the teacher as a prompter, and they want the teacher to exemplify good speaking as the input of learning speaking. It also revealed that having a small group discussion, role-play, and the conversation was considered the students' learning needs in speaking activities. The significance of this study can be the reflection of further learning processes in online learning systems, especially in a speaking activity on the zoom application.

Keywords: *Learning Needs, Speaking Activity, Zoom Application*

1 Introduction

Speaking is one of the communicative skills that should be mastered in learning English. It involves both producing and receiving the information. This indicates that language still becomes the primary means of communication. According to Harmer (as stated in Menggo, Suastra, Budiarsa, & Padmadewi, 2019), speaking is an ability to deliver thought and speculation, argument, and idea properly to the interlocutor. Equivalently, Kayi (2006) defined speaking as a process of establishing and sharing a meaningful message through verbal and non-verbal communication in various contexts. However, recent studies defined speaking as a clear articulation built to engage communication that is carried out by someone with other persons to declare something as a sign of involvement in communication (Maulidar, Gani, & Samad, 2019). Recently, Ilham, Bafadal, & Muslimin (2020) expressed that speaking is an activity to produce the language to communicate among others in a group; understanding another society manifests one's language competence. Their definition implies that speaking in any language, such as the English language, is required to understand elements of English. It is in line with the study conducted by Sfar (as stated in Pakula, 2019) that being communicative in a foreign language teaching is not based solely on acquiring the language knowledge (lexis and rules). Still, it aims at using language for meaningful communication. It is a characteristic of the participation metaphor. To sum up, speaking is an interactive process between speaker and listener, a practical activity to share thoughts and arguments, and an activity to create nice-deep communication regarding how to deliver words.

In education, especially in English language teaching and learning classrooms, achieving the goal of speaking can be built by the interaction of students and teachers in the classroom. The interaction is, of course, built through activities that are known as speaking activities. Speaking activity encourages students to speak where teachers as the instructor in the learning process. Referring to Wan (2017) (as stated in Amalia, 2019), speaking activity in the learning language process may consist of games, exercises, practices, and projects. Those activities aimed to foster students to implement the target language. Some familiar speaking activities are discussion, speech, role play, conversation, and storytelling (Amalia, 2019).

However, during the Covid-19 the learning system has been changed from face-to-face to online learning interaction, and it significantly impacts the learning activities in the classroom. Those impacts are directly seen in the changes in the students' learning needs in classroom learning activities, including speaking activities. To know the changes in the students' learning needs, doing needs analysis is important to investigate. Needs analysis is an activity to gather detailed information about students' interests, which finally addresses the development of teaching instruction (syllabus and curriculum) (Li, 2014). Another agreement stated by Poedjiastutie & Oliver (2017) is that needs analysis is a fundamental part of the teaching and learning process to know students' intentions in specific fields of learning and as educational planning and evaluation address the future students' needs. This point of view forwarded to find a gap between students and educational institutions and implied what students can do and what they should assuredly do. For this reason, conducting a need analysis is such a very essential issue.

In an online learning system, the interaction between teachers and students does not occur naturally. At the same time, the goal of teaching speaking must be achieved, although the learning process is in transition condition. Responses and feedbacks are inadequate because of the computer screen. Distance and different environments often lead to inconsistent students' mood, focus, and psychology. In the end, those conditions create a discouraging desire to learn and diminish students' enthusiasm to engage in the oral activity as the goal of teaching speaking. This can be said that the ideal process of teaching speaking has not been achieved yet maximally. In their study, Raja & Nagasubramani (2018) found that one of the weaknesses of using technology in an online learning system is the lack of interaction and students' focus. They explained that students could easily play on their mobile phones and computers while muting the cameras and speakers. However, speaking activity needs full of interaction and attention from both students and teacher.

In fact, the cases above are in line with what the researcher found in the preliminary study. After having an interview, some issues are visible to be handled. Based on an interview in preliminary research at the Islamic University of North Sumatera, it is concluded that the lecturer only used a similar activity in teaching speaking on the zoom application. The activity only gives them a chance to talk related to the topic discussed voluntarily. Further, if no one is delighted to speak, the lecturer will forcefully select one student to speak and provide feedback based on the topic given. This happens because the teachers are technology illiterate or unfamiliar with the features of the application. Contradictorily, Ghavifekr & Rosdy (2015) reported that teachers take the role in successful technology-based learning. It is in line with the current education system, whereas online platforms such as Zoom application, Google Classroom, etc., are implemented.

Regarding those issues above, the researcher is interested in analyzing students' speaking activities on the zoom application in an online learning system. Generally, need analysis is used to evaluate the learning program to see whether the learning program is supposed to be continued or not. On the other hand, as Pushpanathan (2013) emphasized, need analysis plays a role in identifying and introducing the changes of students regarding the students' needs, wants, and lacks to be accepted by teachers. He also added that the second function of need analysis in general views is to accomplish learning programs and teaching instruction more relevant to the reality, accordingly, to the students' needs. It implies that what students can do and what they expect to be able to do are highlighted in the need analysis.

Therefore, investigating need analysis aims to identify both functions of need analysis generally, evaluate the learning process, and investigate target needs based on students' necessities, wants, lacks, and learning needs in teaching speaking through zoom application to provide the relevant activity of teaching instruction. In this article, the researcher investigates the State Islamic University of North Sumatra students' learning needs in their speaking activity on the zoom application in the online learning system. Zoom application is chosen because this application represents the virtual online platform used in this study, and it is the newest application since this pandemic. Yet, it has been the most familiar application to foster online learning systems and is commonly used in many institutions. Then, this application is also relevant to speaking subjects since eye contact, facial expression, and gestures can be seen even virtual. It also has time flexibility in organizing virtual meeting conferences. Thus, this investigation is expected to be useful and can be adjusted for further online learning systems. Not only as prevention for covid-19 but also can be implemented as a figure of technology development.

2 Literature Review

1. Speaking Activity

Speaking activity is the activity that encourages students to speak where teachers as the instructor in the learning process. Referring to Wan (2017) (in Amalia, 2019), speaking activity in the learning language process may consist of games, exercises, practices, and projects. Those activities are aimed to foster students to implement the target language.

The following table infers the English-speaking activity proposed by Harmer (2001).

Table 1. A Framework of English Speaking Activity

Activity	Detailed Activity
Acting from Script	Playing script and acting out the dialogue
Communication Games	Information-gap games, television and radio games.
Discussion	Buzz groups, instant comments, formal debates, unplanned discussions, etc.,
Prepared Talks	Speech, story-telling, etc.,
Questionnaires	Question and answer
Simulation and Role Play	Stimulating a real-life encounter, such as an interview, business meeting, conversation in the hotel, etc.,

Source: Harmer, J. (2001). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Longman Pearson, pg. 348-352.

2. Learning Needs

According to Hutchinson & Waters (1991), learning needs refer to the way of moving forward from the starting points (lacks) and then ending in the destination (necessities) even though there might be considering wants. In short, this implies the process of learning that encompasses the students' condition and situation of learning, motivation, and ability.

For instance, how many students love English caused of the teachers' way and style in delivering explanations, or might be they just have high motivation and willingness to learn because of fascinating material. On the contrary, they would never love English when they see the teachers are inexperienced or the materials are boring. Finally, students' willingness in the target situation may not have fully stayed in English activity. Therefore, learning needs in need analysis should be taken into account as crucial as target needs. In short, Target needs refer to what students should perform, do and achieve in the target situation while learning needs refer to what students should do to get the target needs.

3. Zoom Application

Because of this pandemic, plenty of activities and routines have changed. Normally, having such interaction, greeting people, and shaking their hands outside the house are natural things. The dilemma, those things are turned into a prohibition to reduce the spread of coronavirus. As a consequence, people's daily routines are changed. Works, meetings, and discussions are done through the internet, aided by certain applications, even in the teaching and learning process.

For the sake of pursuing education, online learning has also been implemented in various institutions. In this case, the Zoom application is used more frequently than other applications. As cited in *kumparantech.survey-populix*, zoom application is a familiar application and friendly user. It has been used for about 42% of people in a day per June 2020 during the pandemic, and then WhatsApp and Google Meet place the next position. In accordance with this present research, it will only discuss students' needs in teaching speaking activities by using the Zoom application.

According to Guzacheva (2020), the Zoom application is an application that provides virtual meetings, webinars, and other conferences. Moreover, it provides content sharing and video conferencing capability. This definition explains that zoom is an internet-based application representing offline interaction and providing audio and visual content. With this feature, the participants in zoom meetings or conferences can easily understand the points of discussion. There are some other features of the zoom application that will be explained gradually as follow:

1. Rise-hand feature

The rise-hand feature is used to give any instruction when the interlocutor attempts to give a question. The interlocutor who clicks this button will be informed to the host, so the host can welcome the interlocutor to deliver a point of view. This feature is located on the right bottom side.

2. Sharing screen feature

This feature is the main feature in virtual meetings. The host/speaker can display the screen to other participants. Thus, the participant can easily understand what the point of the meeting is. Besides, the audio and visual treatments are balanced.

3. Whiteboard feature

This feature is addressed to the host particularly. The host can easily explain the material by writing something in the whiteboard feature. This also aids the participant to be more focused on the screen since there is a collaborative strategy used by the host besides only sharing the screen feature.

4. Room chat feature

This feature is no less important than the other features. It is enabled for the discussion forum, giving instructions, listing the attendance, and sending data and files to foster the presentation. Moreover, it can be the proponent of visual treatment when the internet connection is unstable.

5. Video recording feature

This video recording feature aims to record the sequence of presentations or meetings. This is underlined as the evidence and documentation of the virtual conference. Besides, all virtual activities can be reviewed twice to know the deep of the discussion.

From all features mentioned above, in the speaking subject on Zoom Application, the teacher can apply all or part of the features simultaneously. The teacher can explain the material using the sharing screen feature; the activity can be held using video recording. Besides the room chat feature also can be a transition activity to collect the question and answers, sharing white-board feature also can be done in games activities. Therefore, all of the features are integrated when teaching speaking subjects, but the most dominant and relevant features used in speaking subjects are sharing screen feature, room chat feature, and video recording feature.

3 Methodology/Materials

This study aims to find out the students' learning needs in their speaking activity on the zoom application in an online learning system. This study is qualitative. Gay, Mills, and Araisian (2012) described that qualitative study collects, analyzes, and interprets comprehensive narrative and visual (i.e., non-numerical) data to gain insight into a particular phenomenon of interest. Specifically, this study was categorized as a case study. It is viewed from the definition expressed by Mukhaiyar (2017) that a case study is a study that investigates a phenomenon empirically, whether the phenomenon is contemporary or it has been done. However, it is still needed when the study is ongoing. The definition literally relates to this present study in which an online learning system has been implemented to prevent Covid-19 transmission. The data of this study were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The interview was addressed to the students and lecturer to support the result of the questionnaire. The following table illustrates the framework of the questionnaire.

Table 2. Questionnaire Framework

Theme	The Objective of the Question	Question Number	Reference
Learning Needs	To know about the lecturer and students' role in the learning process	15-20	Songhori (2008)

The table below presents the interview framework.

Table 3. Interview Framework

Theme	The Role of the Interviewer	English Teacher	Students	Reference
		Question Number		
Learning Needs	The researcher asks the informants about the teacher's and learners' roles in the learning process	6,7,8,9,10	6,7,8,9,10	Hutchinson and Waters (1991)

4 Results and Findings

a) Results

Learning needs imply the process of learning that encompasses the students' condition and situation of learning. Based on the results of data analysis, the finding concluded that students are eager to learn to speak if they participate communicatively in the discussion. To support this, students need the prompter as the role of the teacher. Besides, the teachers were demanded to exemplify the correct pronunciation, intonation, and stress of word or sentence to be imitated by the students. In addition, the students loved several activities that should be administered, even happening virtually.

Further, they enjoyed the activity in a small group that consisted of 3-4 students. On the Zoom application, this can be realized by opening a small forum. And, regarding the technique of learning speaking on Zoom application, they are interested in the activities such as role-play, discussion, and conversation techniques.

On the other hand, students have their own activities to improve their speaking. They love to watch movies and videos in English. This can be one consideration for teachers to imitate the activity in the learning speaking on the Zoom application. The findings of this study are displayed in Table 3 below.

Table 4. Students' Learning Needs with the Highest Percentage

No	Questions	Indicators	Percentages
1.	What role do you need in English speaking activity on the zoom application?	- Actively participate communicatively	67%
2.	English speaking activity will be effective even on zoom application if it is done with.....	- Small group (3-4 students)	61%
3.	Effective learning techniques in English speaking activity using Zoom application are.....(you can have more than one answer)	- Discussion - Role play - Conversation	61% 54% 49%
4.	What activities do you often do to improve your speaking ability?	- Watching movies, TV, or videos in the English language	54%
5.	What role of teacher do you need in English speaking activity on the zoom application?	- Prompter	52%
6.	I want speaking learning input like.....	- Exemplified by the teacher in practicing speaking	41%

Table 4 below is the summary of the findings of students' learning needs in their speaking activity on the Zoom application in an online learning system.

Table 5. Summary of Findings of Students' Learning Needs

Indicator	Findings
Learning Needs	- Prompter
	- Actively participate communicatively
	- Small group discussion
	- Role play
	- Discussion
	- Conversation
	- Exemplified by teacher
	- Watching movies, TV, or video in the English language

b) Discussion

Learning needs to investigate how students can gain ground from the beginning stage (lacks) to the goal (necessities). This means the process of how students learn, including their condition of learning situation, knowledge, skills, strategies, and motivation. As a result, the needs, potential, and learning situation must be considered to have a useful analysis of students' necessities.

Since the tendency of this research was speaking, the students were required to speak on this subject. With the different learning conditions, they still wanted to participate communicatively actively. The lack showed how tedious the learning process was. Thus, the students need the role of a teacher as a prompter. Harmer (2001) expressed that the role of a teacher as a prompter means teachers encourage students to speak by nudging them forward in a discreet and supportive way. This implied not merely helping the students but giving them time to think creatively rather than having them hang on every teacher's word.

In addition, Harmer (2001) proposed different teachers' performances in different activities. It was in line with the result of the interview between the researcher and the lecturer that the teachers' role depended on the course activities. Harmer compiled it in the following table.

Table 6. Teacher performance style

No	Activity	How a teacher should perform
1.	Team game	Energetically, encouragingly, clearly, fairly
2.	Role-play	Clearly, encouragingly, retiringly, supportively
3.	Teacher reading aloud	Commandingly, dramatically, interestingly
4.	Whole-class listening	Efficiently, clearly, supportively

From the table, it can be seen clearly that every activity should be performed in a different way. Thus, the effort between teachers and students was balanced. Students will actively participate communicatively because the teachers push them hard.

Additionally, as students' learning needs in the process of learning speaking on Zoom application, students wanted several activities to be implemented. The findings showed that the selected activities were considered an effective technique and way to learn to speak on the Zoom application. The activities chosen by students were small group discussion, role-play, and conversation.

In small group discussion activity, the teacher can use the break-out room feature on the Zoom Application. After having a small group discussion, the participant can move to the main room and reveal the result of the discussion from each group. In conversation activity, the features on the Zoom Application can be used, such as the rise-hand feature to give suggestions and an interruption in the middle of the conversation and the video recording feature to record the conversation. These activities can be used to correct the grammar and pronunciation by reviewing the conversation. Meanwhile, when it is a role-play activity, the participant can use different backgrounds based on the

representative situation to make it different between the speaker and participant. Further, the room chat feature can be used for the comment venue.

These findings are in line with the study conducted by Hussain (2017) that implementing many activities is essential. Such as having a role play and pair work, then supervising students to correct the active ones and activate the passive ones. In short, teachers should be well prepared in terms of lesson plans, activities, and tasks. Besides, individual weaknesses should be taken into account, and teachers should be sympathetic in their outlook for individual attention.

Besides, based on the further finding on students' learning needs, students revealed the favorite activities they often do to improve their speaking ability. Their preferred activity was watching the movie and audio in the English language. It can be said that students felt more enthusiastic about having audio-visual activity in learning speaking. The teachers can show a video related to the topic in the syllabus and have a small discussion related to the video that has been watched.

In the end, the researcher concluded that the speaking-learning process needs to vary the activities involved. The purpose is to avoid the tedious process of learning and could increase students' and teachers' creativity and critical thinking. It was mentioned by Afriani et al.; (2017) that speaking activity linked students' cognitive development and students character.

5 Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that the students highlighted some activities to be applied to the *Zoom* application. Teachers should consider these activities during the learning process. Students selected some activities as their learning needs, such as role-play, discussion in a small group, and conversation. Those activities led the students to participate communicatively in speaking subject actively. Besides, the teacher's role influenced the students' enthusiasm; they need the role of a teacher as a prompter.

However, different activities bring different teachers' teaching styles to the *Zoom* application (view table 6). Further, watching movies and videos in the English language is what students usually do to improve their speaking skills. This activity also can be the English-speaking activity recommendation for the teacher while teaching speaking on *Zoom* Application. It can facilitate teachers to increase students' enthusiasm for learning to speak and avoid tedious moments.

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