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Using Think-Pair-Share Strategy to Support Students in Speaking Lessons

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT

Improving speaking skills plays an important role for anyone who pursues language proficiency, especially in the English language. While no one can contradict the fundamental value of this productive skill, speaking, as mentioned by Castillo (2007), poses challenges to students since it concerns complex constituents such as pronunciation, stress patterns, vocabulary or grammatical structures. Among countless cooperative strategies, Think-Pair-Share, proposed by Azlina (2010) can be regarded as a stimulating option to support students in improving their speaking capabilities. This study was set out to evaluate applying Think-Pair-Share strategy in the classroom to foster students' speaking skills and engagement in speaking activities. 35 students in the AP (Advanced Program) at Thai Nguyen University of Economics and Business Administration (TUEBA) were chosen as target participants of the study. This research was anchored on a qualitative basis, and data were collected from three methods, including observation sheets, focus group and individual interviews, to ensure the principle of triangulation. Based on the findings, the researcher attempted to provide some modifications in applying the Think-Pair-Share technique so that it can be effectively exploited to give support to language learners in their speaking skills.

1. Introduction

As it is widely known, improving speaking skills plays an essential role for anyone who pursues language proficiency in general and the English language in particular. While no one can contradict the fundamental value of this productive skill, speaking, as mentioned by Castillo (2007), poses a great challenge to students since it concerns complex constituents such as pronunciation, stress patterns, range of vocabulary or grammatical structures. For teachers who are assumedly acted as orientating role of the learning process, their actual class lessons have been still mostly overwhelmed with a large number of traditional teaching methods. This study considered the application of an innovative cooperative learning strategy, Think-Pair-Share, as an engaging alternative to foster language learners' oral competence to be more active participants when communicating in English.

The university selected for this research, Thai Nguyen University of Economics and Business Administration (commonly referred to as TUEBA), is one of recognized state institutions in the North of Viet Nam. Its major mission is to train graduates in various business fields to satisfy the high demand for qualified labours for the whole country. Though it is a newly - born university, it constantly initiates innovative projects in an effort to direct its assurance to a better educational enhancement for graduate students. In terms of language learning and teaching, TUEBA strictly follows policies and plans initiated by National Project 2020, which specifies the necessity of English proficiency of all levels. Under this project, students, once finishing their four-year training, are all expected to manifest a minimum of B1 level in English competence according to Common European Framework Reference (CEFR). Based on this framework, English courses at TUEBA are designed as skill-based training program in which speaking accounts for one-fourth of the overall syllabus. In order to follow the learning route proposed by the 2020 project, first-year students are requested for placement so that they can be arranged into different groups of the same levels. Two types of classes are then assigned for these classified learners - regular classes (A1 equivalents) and gifted classes (A2 equivalents or above). The target participants of this research (approximately 20 students) were taken from the gifted class that I am in charge

of. These students possess a good command of English in terms of reading, listening and writing due to long-time exposure to these skills in their previous training. However, when it came to speaking lessons, most of them indicated reluctance to produce oral utterances because of inadequate skills, low engagement originated from anxiety. Lecturers found it challenging to apply innovative and interactive methods when delivering their class lessons regarding teaching practice. Even though some of them have made great effort to try several warm-up games or class discussions, lessons were mainly laid on traditional teaching approaches. Thus, this situation set the researcher's foundation to choose Think-Pair-Share strategy as a suitable learning solution to bring in a new learning environment in speaking lessons at TUEBA.

However, this technique has not been easily accepted in our teaching reality at school because there has remained approximately fifty per cent of our teaching staff insisting on their traditional approach, in which teacher-focused methodology has been still very popular with a great number of tedious activities such as games or class discussions while delivering their speaking lectures. These discussions have led me to research to investigate how Think-Pair-Share learning strategy should be applied since the beginning of a course to help my students who are still poor at speaking skills with more engagement in speaking activities.

The research questions, therefore, are as follows:
      (1). How does Think-Pair-Share strategy support my students in their speaking lessons?
      (2). How do their attitudes influence their engagement in speaking lessons?

2. Literature Review
2.1. Speaking Skill in English Language Teaching (ELT)
It cannot be denied that the primary goal of learning any foreign language is to speak and communicate in that language. Speaking is termed as "productive" skill by Chastain (1998) and it involves various elements, including pronunciation of sounds, word choices, reasonable constructions or correct usage of grammar (as cited in Castillo, 2007). According to Nunan (1991), speaking denotes their ability to perform a conversation by which their communicative competence is judged for any language learners. In other words, language learners' speaking ability depends on whether they can maintain and develop effective communication. Sharing the same idea, Luoma (2004) also defined speaking as a 'strategic process' involving language users with the aim to achieve a particular goal in a certain speaking task. From another perspective, Brown and Yule (1983) attempted to mark the difference between speaking – interactional and transaction functions. He denoted that while interactional functions initiate and retain social interactions, transactional functions emphasize the "exchange of information". In short, as viewed from the communicative approach, speaking can be considered a priority to any second language learners.

There may be some principles or approaches that should be taken into account regarding teaching speaking skill. In fact, the success of the teaching and learning process partly depends on teachers' approach for their target learners. According to Sumarsih & Sanjaya (2013), a collaborative system of teaching and learning approaches, including communicative language teaching, student-centered or active learning, is the most widely-employed in modern classroom settings. These approaches take the needs of the students as a base rather than teachers and administrators who merely work as facilitators in that process.

As has been stated previously, most EFL learners share the idea that speaking is a challenging task for them to acquire. The failure of a speaking lesson can be traced according to two factors: external or internal factors (Wendi, 2008 cited in Utama et al., 2013). While internal factors seek to discover students' speaking difficulties in terms of their psychological problems, external factors look at teacher-related causes. Students may find less confidence, lack motivation, or bear great speaking anxiety, leading to passive class participation. Therefore, there is a need to adopt particular teaching strategies to bring out boredom, passive class involvement to a more student-centred, relaxed learning atmosphere. In the next part, various teaching techniques which can help EFL learners to improve their speaking ability will be further discussed.

2.2. Cooperative Learning Strategies
The introduction of the communicative language approach to teaching the English language emphasised the crucial role of classroom interactions and fostered the popularity of some cooperative learning methods (Feigenbaum, 2007 cited in Talebi, 2012). Cooperative learning refers to certain teaching techniques in which learners from groups, support each other to be involved more actively and productively in the learning process. To cooperate, as defined by Osman et al. (2010) and Johnson (2001) is the agreement to work together made by those who have something in common in the process of problem-solving (as cited in Castillo, 2007). This is accordingly supported by Azlina (2010) and Artz and Newman (1990), who shared the same idea that cooperative learning, with its nature, stated above, can stimulate learners' collaboration and communication in response to the assigned mission (cited in Castillo, 2007). To benefit from interactions, group members must work together actively instead of just sitting 'side by side' in the same group and following. Rather, it is ideal when all cooperators can equally gain the benefits from the cooperation as the group intellectual power is developed and individuals' knowledge can be shared and broadened from each other (Slavin, 1995 cited in Sumarsih & Sanjaya, 2013). In other words, learning strategies are those that teachers can employ to encourage students to gain knowledge as well as other interpersonal skills.

Regardless of the approach is, the benefits that cooperative learning brings into the language classroom far outweigh what can be blamed as its disadvantages. On the one hand, as Ames and Murray (1982) exerted, cooperative students have a chance to expose to the "process gain", that is, new and shared ideas will be generated from collaborative work among group members (cited in Statkevičienė & Klimovienė , 2006). To put it differently, cooperators cannot obtain this type of gain when they work with their own efforts. Furthermore, as the shared information transfer from the group to each member, one can take advantage of this shared knowledge gained from discussions to promote his critical thinking and demonstrate his mastery about a particular task (Johnson, 1989 cited in Statkevičienė & Klimovienė , 2006). Realizing the significant contribution of CL to EFL, a large number of empirical studies have been conducted to provide more insights into the practical contribution of cooperative learning to various aspects, including language teaching and learning (Suwantarathip and Wichadee, 2010; Aziz and Hossain, 2010; Artut, 2009; Gillies, 2004; Johnson and Johnson, 1981 cited in Talebi, 2012). Notably, there is a consensus among the researchers that cooperative learning can effectively be applied to improve students' achievement and foster the learning environment.

To further enhance a supportive learning environment, there are many types of strategies that can be practically implemented in EFL classrooms, such as Jigsaw, Think-Pair-Share, Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), Three-Step Interview, Round Robin, Numbered Heads, Talking Chips or Praise-Question-Polish. Those techniques share the same principles and features under cooperative or collaborative learning strategies, but they apparently differ in the application process. As suggested by Desi et al. (2013), some techniques, including STAD and Jigsaw hold higher degrees of complexity in how they can be applied in the classroom than the others. However, the choice of learning strategy depends on the target learners and the teaching context in which the strategy is feasible.

2.3. Think-Pair-Share Strategy (TPS)

"Think-Pair-Share" strategy, adopted by Frank Lyman and his co-colleague, is a widely-used cooperative learning technique that can be performed to encourage learners' classroom involvement. As discussed by Azlina (2010), this strategy is said as a "multi-mode discussion cycle" in which students receive the assigned question or issue, formulate their own thinking, and then share the ideas with each other. In order to be appropriately applied in a language setting, this strategy, as suggested by Macpherson (2009), should be built upon the following principles:

- *Group tasks are designed to be suitable for group work.*
- *Positive interdependence is built in – cooperation is necessary for students to succeed.*
- *Attention and class time are given to interpersonal/cooperative skill building.*
- *Participants learn together in small (2-5 members) groups.*
- *Students are individually accountable for learning and participation.*
- *The instructor's role changes from being the 'sage on the stage' to the 'guide on the side' (cited in Wichadee & Orawiwatnakul, 2012).*

In the implementation process, this learning technique recalls three steps in which the term 'think', 'pair' and 'share' are employed accordingly. More specifically, in the first step, called 'think' step, students come up with one assigned question or issue from the teacher and are given 'think time' to produce ideas about a particular topic. Then, they are paired up in the second step, discuss and argue their generated ideas with each other. In the 'share' step, students are required to share their exchanged information with others or with the whole class.
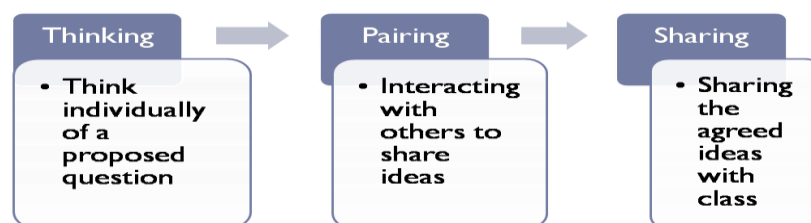
There are some potential reasons for this technique's choice in ESL settings. Firstly, according to Yerigan (2008), Think-Pair-Share is a learning strategy that provides "food for thought" in a given topic or "builds in wait-time which enhances the depth and breadth of thinking". It is crucial that students can benefit from this wait- time period, through which they have the opportunity to think individually and generate ideas before sharing their thoughts with another collaborator. More importantly, when sitting within groups, students can build in confidence and avoid reluctance so that they can comfortably discuss with the support from their partners. Hence, ideas are produced and formed naturally and creatively and will be more refined through three-step process (Azlina, 2010).

Bearing the same beneficial features as other cooperative strategies, Think-Pair-Share can be considered among the most appropriately applicable techniques since it fosters classroom learning and improves target students' language capabilities. This idea has been reinforced by a number of previous researches that showed positive results in terms of the students' improvement when experienced Think-Pair-Share strategy. In a recent study conducted by Azlina (2010), the TPS technique was found to be a powerful strategy to stimulate students' achievement in their descriptive writing texts. Regarding Speaking, Utama et al. (2013) and Isnaini (2012) both agreed that the implementation of this technique to the second-grade students of SMPN 6 Singaraja generated significant improvement in students' self-confidence and simultaneously enhanced their speaking competency.

Adopted from Sumarsih & Sanjaya (2013), the application of "Think-Pair-Share" technique can be stepped as follows:

- *Teachers group students in teams of 4 and number them from 1 to 4.*
- *A discussion topic or problem is informed (For instance: What are qualities of a good manager? What product qualities can you introduce to a niche market?)*
- *Students are given 'Think' time to think independently about the posed question and generate their own ideas. In fact, the quality of student responses will be enhanced if the 'think' time is reasonably distributed.*
- *Teachers use student assigned numbers to inform discussion partners.*
- *Teachers require students to pair with their partner to discuss the topic or solution to the problem.*
- *Some students are called randomly to share their ideas with the class.*

3. Methodology

This research was anchored on a qualitative basis since it tried to find out attitudes or experiences that students had towards Think-Pair-Share technique and determined whether this strategy could enhance my students' engagement and speaking skills. According to Dahlberg & McCaig (2010), every phenomenon would be interpreted in-depth to see how and why it happened under the approach of qualitative research. Therefore, it appeared to be of appropriate choice for this research. In order to find out the answers for the two research questions, data were collected from three methods, including observation sheets, focus group and individual interviews to ensure the principle of triangulation. In the following part, justification for their suitability and validity to this research would be discussed in details.

3.1. Participant Observation

Participant observation was chosen as the first data collection method to understand students' attitudes and experiences towards Think-Pair-Share technique fully. This instrument can be used to gather firsthand information by observing overall ongoing conditions in a particular research setting Creswell (2005). By employing this method, the researcher can obtain participants' behaviour and record information whenever it happens in that context. More importantly, observation can act as a useful method to validate data gained from other sources of instruments because researchers can put their eyes on the setting in the most natural ways.

In this research, an observation sheet was utilized to record relevant information regarding whatever happened during the innovation. For the first three lessons of the speaking course, students were provided necessary information related to Think-Pair-Share technique to make sure that they could grasp what they were supposed to do with this technique. The observation was an application from the fourth week and lasted over six lessons. Observation sheets detailed students' ongoing behaviours and actions following three Think-Pair-Share technique sequences in which students are involved.

3.2. Focus Group Interview

Another chosen instrument for this research, the focus group, is useful for achieving insights into the group's shared understanding. According to Manion & Morrison (2000), group members' interactions can facilitate interesting emerged data. (cited in Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010)). Instead of asking questions to each person, in turn, respondents are encouraged to ask questions, exchange ideas and give feedback on other experiences and opinions.

For the purpose of this research, 10 students were invited to take part in two group discussions, each of which supposedly 30-40 minutes long. The participants followed the similar guideline of the researcher's individual interview questions and joined the discussion whenever they were required. To ensure participation among members, the discussion was moderated by the researcher, who took responsibility to limit potential dominated participants and encourage the hesitant participants to make their own contributions. (Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010).

3.3. Individual Interview

Individual interview, which takes the form of semi-structured, was exploited with the aim to elicit data of greater depth for further discussion. With this instrument, set questions or topic guides are formulated to explore one's attitudes or beliefs (Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010). Therefore, it is obvious that the interviewer can probe for ideas from the interviewee while focusing on the list of key issues that need to be covered (Kajornboon, 2005 cited in Jafari & Shokrpour, 2012). In addition, by observing their non-verbal indicators, this method of data collection ensures that the respondent is unable to receive any help from others

while answering the questions. Hence, Gordon (1975) pointed out truthful and reliable responses can be produced. (cited in Barriball & While, 1994).

In this research, semi-structured interview was utilised at the end of the innovation to foster triangulation of collected data. Six randomly chosen students were invited to sit for the teacher's individual interview. The interview lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. Question items for a personal interview will be generated with several follow-up questions compared to the similar version used in the focus group. Follow-up questions aimed to look into students' feelings and attitudes, which seemed to be more difficult to reach in focus groups. (see the Appendix for individual interview questions). All responses were then transcribed, translated and analysed basing on the grounded theory.

4. Results and Discussion
This research's data was analysed and interpreted following the Grounded Theory data analysis technique. This qualitative research method uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductive theory about an issue without starting a hypothesis (Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010). Based on this theory, the emerging themes from the data with the enhancement of triangulation criteria can come up with the following findings:

4.1. Influences of TPS to students' speaking skills
The first emerging pattern from the interview data involves critical thinking that was achieved from the first 'think' step. Given the time to think individually, students could discover and formulate countless ideas about each lesson's required topic. Though for the first experience in this innovation, it was observed that most of the students found it challenging to think of the ideas in a short time, they were then able to make effective use of this 'food for thought' moments for the last three sessions. Student 1 emphasized how important it was to be provided with individual mind mapping:

> *It was very useful to me. We had time to think and write down our ideas. It is important in speaking. We can't present our ideas without thinking first about issues related to the topic.*

In his words, participant B (focus group1) restated the importance of thinking time and added some more benefits he could take from this step such as brainstorming, mind mapping and quick responses. *'I need this time. It's important that I have my own ideas. I can improve some skills such as mind-mapping, brainstorming and I can respond quickly'*. From the observation, this step proved to work for students of different language levels – A2 or above. It was noticeably found that for lower-level students they could at least write down two or three ideas relevant to the posed issue by the teacher.

Another support of this innovation to students' speaking skills laid on the engagement and self-confidence that was gained through interactions among the target peers. After formulating ideas, students share their own thoughts and refine them to reach consensus among group members. Through this participation, students found themselves more confident giving their responses and producing more oral productions. As a result, some students seemed to be of no worries to present their agreed ideas in front of the whole class when it came to' sharing' session. 6 individual interviewees and most members of the two-focus group reported that they liked the 'pairing' step most because they had the chance to exchange and refine ideas but enjoy relaxing time with their friends. They could speak English without hesitation and inclined to propose more ideas that are interesting. Here is what respondents reflected on this second step in Think-Pair-Share:

> *Student 1: 'working in pairs or group made me feel more confident. I was really engaged more and so were my friends. I could talk about my ideas without fear. It seemed that I love English more. It was fun to have someone to listen to me and ask me something.'*

> *Participant D: 'I can make more than six sentences in English confidently. I can't imagine that when I first worked with this strategy. Sometimes it's difficult to come to an agreement but most of the time there is more mutual understanding among people.'*

From the observation data, it is noted that students engaged and participated more in the discussion session. Sometimes, the discussion was so hot that the teacher had to keep them down. In lesson 5, for example, when students dealt with the topic of 'qualities of a good entrepreneur', members of group 6 hardly reached a consensus about one idea in roughly 10 minutes. However, most of them were eager and contributed to the discussion in their own ways.

It is apparent that when students are built in their critical thinking, engagement, and speaking confidence, their speaking skills will be reinforced. Some students reflected that their speaking skills in front of the class in 'sharing' session were increasingly improved lesson by lesson if this skill was supportably attained from group ideas and students' confidence when they interact with their partners. One student noted:

> *In my previous presentation, I had to think of ideas on my own. No one told me and gave me comments. I always feel nervous and sceptical about whether what I think is right or wrong.*

4.2. Problems encountered during the implementation of the innovation

The individual and group interview results suggested that students had to deal with some problems that emerged from disagreement among group ideas and insufficient thinking time in dealing with Think-Pair-Share technique.

The first concern highlighted the difficulties to reach a consensus when students discussed and argued with each other. This problem was more obviously seen in the two first lessons in which the innovation was applied (Observation sheet 1, lesson 5). In the second step (Pairing), some students could not decide on their peer ideas and consequently they had to add all ideas to their final group work. Student 1 reported this problem as follows:

> *Sometimes we couldn't agree with one another about one or two ideas about a particular topic. My friend tried to defend her ideas so aggressively that I had no choice instead of writing all ideas down to our group's paper (laugh). I didn't want to waste so much time on that.*

Student 4 shared the same idea on this matter and added that it was not good of this group-originated conflict because it could contribute to incomplete group work when presented to the whole class. As such, he came up with the idea that it would be better if they have a good leader who has enough leading skills to balance the viewpoints among members. Several interviewees also commented on the organization problems, which happened for the first or second group work, but these things quickly disappeared when they got used to working together.

In addition, teachers' insufficient amount of time in the first step (Think step) in Think-Pair-Share sequence was blamed for the failure of idea generation. For most of the participants, thinking time was claimed to be the most important factor that facilitated their own opinions of the topic. However, this allotted time was quite limited, leading to few ideas. In the words of student 3, it was described as follows:

> *We often have between 3-4 minutes to think on our own about the topic that the teacher gave us. It was so short, sometimes when I had to deal with difficult topic, I hardly thought of any ideas.*

When being questioned about how much they think was enough for the 'think' step, students who took individual interviews stressed the dependence of the given topics. The majority of them reported that it should be around 10 and 12 minutes or else they need to be given some relevant texts for preparation before each lesson. Student 3 further stated:

> *I need at least 10 minutes to think of the ideas, especially for challenging topics such as environments or economics which we need a wide variety of academic vocabulary.*

The notes further supported this finding from observation sheet that I made through lesson 4. When students came up with the topic of Products, it was witnessed that many of them couldn't note down more than three ideas relevant to the topic with the allowed time of roughly 5 minutes.

Finally, it was the problem related to the responsibility to take over as speakers of the groups. Though only few students pointed out in their focus group interview, some of them experienced psychological pressure because they couldn't finish what other members expected from them to make the best of the group presentation. '*My friends encouraged me but I was still worried. If I couldn't present well, I would make my friends disappointed.*'

4.3. Students' attitude towards Think-Pair-Share technique

It can be concluded from the findings that most students generally liked studying in cooperative groups where Think-Pair-Share technique was facilitated. Common words were emerged from the interview data such as 'interesting', 'relaxing', 'exciting' or 'fun' when students mentioned their feelings towards this strategy. The data also revealed that most of the participants highly appreciate Think-Pair-Share's strategy for its usefulness and simplicity in the implementation process. One respondent stated that:

> *It is easy for me because I had time to work in my previous group. There are just three simple steps and it is very clear.*

Several respondents showed their agreement on this idea and also emphasized that they seemed to be more intelligent and creative with the support from their co-partners. Among the three steps that they followed, many of them most favoured discussion or pairing step where they had time to argue with one another.

> *Participant B: I like discussion minutes so much. My friends and I discussed a lot of things. We argue with each other and common ideas could be reach. How interesting!*

> *Student 3: I could make it best when I argued with my partner. Sometimes, I can't understand some ideas and she helped me to get its meaning. Great!*

While most participants enjoyed the 'think' and 'pair' step, some respondents indicated minor interest in sharing session for the reason that it shares the same features as individual presentations. To some extent, it appeared to catch the interest of just higher-level students whose speaking skills are better than their partners.

> *Participant A (of lower level): I don't like 'sharing'. It isn't different from making presentation in front of the whole class. I'm not the best in my group, so I think I can't make it best of our work.*

> *Student 1 (of higher level): I like speaking and I'm confident that I can express all our ideas to the class. Why can't I do that well when our ideas come from various intelligent minds?*

Even though, students hold different attitudes towards Think-Pair-Share, most of them thought of it as a useful strategy to foster their speaking lessons. The results from observation validate the active participation and engagement that students showed in the second step of pairing. This involvement has been increasingly reinforced from the first group work to their final discussion.

4.4. Discussion

This research was set out to evaluate the effectiveness of applying Think-Pair Share cooperative strategy in the classroom to foster students' speaking skills and engagement in speaking activities. The results of this research revealed that Think-Pair-Share helped students in their formation of critical thinking about a particular topic, which is crucially important to generate a good speech. Most of the participants in this innovation found this 'think-time' effective and could make several practical ideas about the teacher's topic. Relevant vocabulary and language patterns could be recalled in a required time facilitating their critical minds. This finding was supported in recent research carried out by Kaddoura (2013), who looked into the change in students' critical thinking with the application of Think-Pair-Share technique. By employing a quasi-experimental design with 91 participants, the study indicated a significant increase in critical thinking throughout the 17-week course. It was concluded from this study that Think-Pair-Share is an effective strategy to foster critical thinking of nursing students and could be used by educators to foster learners' critical thinking in their courses. Concerning my own research, students could take advantage of thinking phase to formulate their critical thinking through several skills of brainstorming or mind mapping.

In addition, Think-Pair-Share proved to facilitate students to build in their engagement to speaking activities and their confidence in oral productions. While in traditional speaking lessons students were inherently considered as passive learners through one-way discussion, they appeared to be more engaged and active participants in the lesson with Think-Pair-Share technique. Students in this research showed a positive attitude towards this strategy in terms of engagement and confidence it brought to them. They could contribute their ideas to the peer discussion without hesitation and anxiety, which led to a more relaxing experience in groups and consequently, more responses were created. Moreover, higher involvement of pairing means agreed on ideas among group members could be easily obtained. Sampsel (2013) came up with similar findings to this research. The results of pre-survey and post-survey questionnaires showed that positive impacts could be found in students' views about participating in the discussion. Using Think-Pair-Share's technique, the number of long explanations also increased together with their comfort and confidence. Focusing on passive students, Hong (2005) concluded that this technique worked well for students who are not confident in expressing their opinions in class due to their anxiety.

This research also pinpointed Think-Pair-Share's influence on enhancing students' speaking skills when they possessed critical thinking and confidence to oral contributions gained from the first two steps. The evidence of Think-Pair-Share contribution to learners' speaking enhancement can be found in several previous studies such as Isnaini (2012) and Castillo (2007). They both concluded that Think-Pair-Share as a cooperative strategy helped students in their oral improvement. However, they also added that it was a gradual process by which more factors needed to be further considered.

Noticeably, this innovation pointed out that most of the participants gave positive attitudes and responses towards Think-Pair-Share technique because of its simplicity and effectiveness in its nature. Working in groups brought about mutual exchanges and support with comfort among members to generate shared ideas. In order to benefit from group exchanges, it is suggestive that learners join actively into common tasks rather than just trying to take passive involvement. This idea was confirmed by Slavin (1995), stating that it is ideal when all group members can take advantages of cooperation at the same time for the reason that the intellectual power is further enhanced and individuals' knowledge can be shared and expanded to each other (cited in Sumarsih & Sanjaya, 2013). In all, most of the respondents thought of Think-Pair-Share as a helpful strategy to foster their involvement in speaking lessons, thus apparently leads to improved speaking skills.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that this innovation partly achieved its purposes because students generally became more engaged and took part in speaking lessons actively and confidently. They had the chance to take individual thinking about a particular issue and know how to foster their own critical thoughts. They formed group dynamics and learned how to refine their own ideas to build on shared knowledge through discussion. More importantly, a variety of responses and oral productions were gradually enhanced by these students with Think-Pair-Share technique support. Though sharing session seemed a little challenging, some students under this research could make it best when their critical thinking and shared ideas were reinforced.

However, several shortcomings in this research could be traced due to the problems students had to face during Think-Pair-Share implementation. Firstly, they found it difficult to get consensus among their friends on several topics. Secondly, inappropriate time for thinking step could be problematic since it affected students' individual findings. Some students did not have enough time to think of their ideas, making them passive contributors in the discussion period. The reason for students' disagreement laid on the fact that they lacked group work experience. As stated by some students, they needed a skilful group leader who could calm down hot debate and control dominated members. I, as the researcher, did not take full responsibility for giving support to my students during the time of group work. This explains the failure of the two lessons in which the objectives could not be covered. On the other hand, students notified that their limited critical thinking was originated from an insufficient amount of time given by teachers. If they are provided with enough input in terms of supportive texts to pre-read or a longer time to think, they will surely generate more practical ideas about the assigned topic.

5. Conclusion

This research was facilitated to evaluate Think-Pair-Share cooperative strategy's effectiveness in response to address students' passiveness in oral interactions and enhance their speaking skills. By employing three data collection methods for triangulation, the findings revealed that students held positive attitudes towards this technique. Specifically, this strategy encouraged them to generate critical thinking and build interactive engagement and confidence, which are crucially essential to formulate a good oral presentation.

In order to strengthen the effective implementation of this innovation, several modifications should be made with specific regards to each phase in Think-Pair-Share. Firstly, brainstorming should be done to help students focus on the given topic. This technique's procedure should be clearly explained to ensure a deep understanding of what to do among participants. The time allocation of approximately 10-15 minutes will be given to students to generate their individual thinking. Students then pair themselves to exchange ideas in a set worry-free environment. When it comes to sharing, there should have questions and suggestions to presenters from teachers and the rest of the class so that they will have more chance to revise and refine their shared understanding.

This research's findings prove helpful for future stakeholders who intend to build in more cooperative classes. As a novice researcher, this research possessed some limitations in its nature. However, it is expected to contribute to innovative research to facilitate changes in the English language teaching contexts.

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