



Think-Pair –Share Technique for Enhancing Students' Classroom Interaction

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ABSTRACT:

This paper sets out to explore the teaching strategy of Think-Pair-Share (TPS) which is a collaborative learning strategy in which students work together to solve a problem or answer a question about an assigned reading. This technique requires students to think individually about a topic or an answer to a question; and share ideas with classmates. Discussing an answer with a partner serves to maximize participation, focus attention and engage students in comprehending the reading material. In this research the effectiveness of think-pair-share is tested to find out whether the said technique will help undergraduate students improve their oral delivery and whether the students are willing to learn speaking through this technique. As many as fifty students at Ribat University students were chosen as population for this study. The sample of the present study was divided into two major groups 25 students as the experimental group and 25 ones as control. Speaking test and questionnaire have been the tools applied to collect data to inform the study. Speaking test was used to obtain data of the students' speaking ability and a questionnaire was used to know the students' interest in learning speaking English through Think-Pair-Share technique. The researcher found that there was a noteworthy difference between achievement of the students who applied Think-Pair-Share technique and who did not opt for Think-Pair-Share technique in speaking.

Keywords: *Think-pair-share technique; Students' speaking ability; Interest*

المستخلص:

تعرض هذه الورقة لاستكشاف استراتيجية تعليم فكر - اعمل في ثنائيات - شارك (TPS) التي هي استراتيجية التعلم التعاوني الذي يعمل الطلاب معا من أجل حل مشكلة أو الإجابة على سؤال حول قراءات معينة. تتطلب هذه التقنية قيام الطلاب على التفكير بشكل فردي حول موضوع أو الإجابة على سؤال؛ وتبادل الأفكار مع الزملاء أو مناقشة الاجابات مع شريك يعمل على تحقيق أقصى قدر من المشاركة وتركيز الاهتمام وإشراك الطلاب على فهم مواد للقراءة. في هذا البحث تم اختبار فعالية فكر - اعمل في ثنائيات - شارك لمعرفة ما إذا كان الأسلوب سيساعد الطلاب الجامعيين على تحسين إيصالها عن طريق الكلام وإذا كان الطلاب على استعداد للتعلم من خلال هذه التقنية. وقد تم اختيار ما لا يقل عن خمسين طالبا من طلاب جامعة الرباط الوطني لهذه الدراسة. تم تقسيم عينة الدراسة الحالية إلى مجموعتين رئيسيتين 25 طالبا باسم المجموعة التجريبية و 25 المجموعة الضابطة. وكان اختبار المخاطبة والواستبيان عبارة عن الأدوات المطبقة لجمع البيانات من خلال القدرة على المخاطبة والاسئبيان لمعرفة ميول الطلاب في تعلم المخاطبة الانجليزية باستخدام تقنية فكر - اعمل في ثنائيات - شارك. ووجد الباحث أن هناك فرقا واضح بين تحصيل الطلبة الذين طبقوا تقنية فكر - اعمل في ثنائيات - شارك والذين لم يميلو الى التعامل بهذة التقنية اسوة بزملائهم.



INTRODUCTION :

It goes without saying that English today has become more and more important. It derives its importance from the firmly established fact that it has become a tool for international communication in transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, process of technology and scientific research. Moreover, English has achieved an indisputably global standing since it developed a special role that recognized in every country. Consequently English is considered as a global language which is spoken by many people all over the world either as the first or the second language.

The government of Sudan determines the status of English as a foreign language and should become a compulsory subject at school. It is taught from basic schools to college or university and it becomes one of the subjects in National Test (Sudan Certificate). Hence, students need to understand spoken and written English to communicate their ideas effectively.

There are four language skills of English. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking is one of the four skills which is considered as an important skill and that students should master perfectly well for communicative purposes.

Think-Pair-Share is a short activity which is intended to get the students thoughtfully involved in dealing with a topic, and may serve effectively as a warm-up to instruction and class discussion on new course material.

The initial step is to get students individually *think* for a few minutes about a question posed by the instructor, then assemble in pairs to further ponder over the question bringing their own ideas get together for a short period in groups of two (*pair*) to four students to discuss their thoughts, and one or more groups *share* the results of their discussion with the class. In addition to engaging with course content, students can reflect before speaking, and share

their ideas in a low-risk situation before participating in full class discussion. Thus, both the quality of class discussion and students' comfort in contributing to class discussion may improve.

Think-Pair-Share also allows instructors to assess students' initial knowledge and to modify instruction to boost understanding and clear up misconceptions. Developed for use in class, this technique is just beginning to be adapted and experimented with in the online environment.

Think-Pair-Share activities pose a question to students that they must consider alone and then discuss with a neighbor before settling on a final answer. This is a great way to motivate students and promote higher-level thinking. Even though the activity is called think-"PAIR"-share, this is the term many instructors use for pairs and small groups (three or four students) alike. Groups may be formed formally or informally. Often this group discussion "sharing" is followed up with a larger classroom discussion. Some think-pair-share activities are short, "**quick-response think-pair-share**" and sometimes the activities may be longer and more involved, "**extended think-pair-share.**" The instructor can use the student responses as a basis for discussion, to motivate a lecture segment, and to obtain feedback about what students know or are thinking and it is easy to incorporate more than one think-pair-share activity in a given class period.

This strategy is particularly useful with our Sudanese students who are characterized as highly shy and inhibited individuals. It allows them first to sit all alone thinking over the topic and then in pairs.

Some of the advantages which can further be linked with this sort of activity are the following:

- Instructors find they can have a format change during lecture that only takes a small



amount of class time. Preparation is generally easy and takes a short amount of time.

- The personal interaction motivates students who might not generally be interested in the discipline.
- You can ask different kinds and levels of questions.
- It engages the entire class and allows quiet students to answer questions without having to stand out from their classmates.
- You can assess student understanding by listening in on several groups during the activity, and by collecting responses at the end.
- The fluid nature of group formation makes this technique very effective and popular for use by instructors of large classes.
- Full class discussion is generally more fruitful after a think-pair-share and throughout the semester as the frequent use of such activities generally improves student comfort levels and willingness to participate throughout a class period.

The following are the steps for the actual use or application of think-pair-share technique:

- Ask a question. Be aware that open-ended questions are more likely to generate more discussion and higher order thinking. A think-pair-share can take as little as three minutes or can be longer, depending on the question or task and the class size.
- Give students a minute to two (longer for more complicated questions) to discuss the question and work out an answer.
- Ask students to get together in pairs or at most, groups with three or four students. If need be, have some of the students move. If the instructor definitely wants to stick with pairs of students, but have an odd number of students, then allow one group of three. It's important to have small groups so that each student can talk.
- Ask for responses from some or all of the pairs or small groups. Include time to discuss as

a class as well as time for student pairs to address the question.

However, there are a number of challenges posed by this technique particularly in a Sudanese context: One of the biggest challenges of the think-pair-share is to get all students to truly be engaged. Obviously, instructors hope that they have selected questions that are sufficiently interesting to capture student attention. However, the instructor might also want to consider other ways to increase the likelihood of student participation. The instructor might offer a participation grade somehow tied to a short product students produce from their discussion. Or the instructor can find ways to increase student awareness of the likelihood their group might be called upon to share their answer with the entire class. The instructor might also consider using some of the think-pair-questions on exams and making it clear to students that that is the case.

One extension of think-pair-share is write-pair-share, in which students are given a chance to write down their answer before discussing it with their neighbor. You may wish to collect written responses from each student or each pair before or after discussing the answer. This can be particularly useful for questions where students would benefit from drawing graphs or using specific formulas in order to synthesize information.

Generally speaking The Think-Pair-Share strategy is a versatile and simple technique for improving students' reading comprehension. It gives students time to think about an answer and activates prior knowledge. TPS enhances students' oral communication skills as they discuss their ideas with one another. This strategy helps students become active participants in learning and can include writing as a way of organizing thoughts generated from discussions.



Methodology

To apply think-pair-share quite properly there factors that tutors or researcher have to observe. These include:

The teacher decides upon the text to be read and develops the set of questions or prompts that target key content concepts. The teacher then describes the purpose of the strategy and provides guidelines for discussions. As with all strategy instruction, teachers should model the procedure to ensure that students understand how to use the strategy. Teachers should monitor and support students as they work.

1.**T:** (Think) Teachers begin by asking a specific question about the text. Students "think" about what they know or have learned about the topic.

2.**P:** (Pair) Each student should be paired with another student or a small group.

3.**S:** (Share) Students share their thinking with their partner. Teachers expand the "share" into a whole-class discussion.

Teachers can modify this strategy and include various writing components within the Think-Pair-Share strategy. This provides teachers with the opportunity to see whether there are problems in comprehension. Teachers can create a Read-Write-Pair-Share strategy in which students:

1.**R:** Read the assigned material;

2.**W:** Write down their thoughts about the topic prior to the discussions;

3.**P:** Pair up with a partner

4.**S:** Share their ideas with a partner and/or the whole class.

The type of the methodology adopted here in this study was a quasi-experimental design. It used one experimental group and one control group. The experimental group was treated by using Think-Pair-Share technique and the control group was treated by conventional way. In this case, the researcher analyzed students' speaking ability before and after giving treatment by using Think-Pair-Share technique.

The research design in this study as shown in figure below:

1. Population

The population of this research was two classes of undergraduate students 2nd year at The National Ribat University. They are males and females. They were studying English as a major subject of specialization. The samples were taken by cluster sampling technique. The sampling technique was conducted twice. The students were divided equally and randomly into two equal groups. Each group constitutes 25 students. So the total sample of the study is fifty.

2. Instruments

Two instruments were used in the present research to collect data, namely speaking test and questionnaire. They were as follows:

2.1. Speaking Test

This test (both the pre-test and post-test) was administered for groups, experimental group and control group. The pre-test was given before starting using think-pair share technique to improve the standards of the students in the oral language in order to allow for sound assessment. Post-test was given to the students after the treatment was given (applying Think-Pair-Share Technique and without applying Think-Pair-Share Technique) to measure their achievement in speaking and the effectiveness of the program. The students were asked to describe thing, person, or place orally. The researcher allocated 2 x 40 minutes for the speaking test. The test covered three aspects in speaking namely accuracy, fluency and clarity.

2.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire in this study was chiefly intended to be distributed to the students in the experiment group to enlist their opinions about the use of think-pair-share technique, and to what extent they have benefited from the technique to improve their speaking abilities.



3.Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis was quantitative. To get the score, the researcher used scoring scale which included of accuracy, fluency and clarity. The data was analyzed by employing the following procedures:

3.1.Speaking Test

The speaking scoring by using the scoring criteria level is introduced by Heaton (1991) as follows:

Table 3.1. The Scoring Classification for Accuracy

Classification	Score	Criteria
Excellent	6	Pronunciation is only influence by the mother tongue. Two or three minor grammatical and lexical errors.
Very good	5	Pronunciation is slightly influenced by mother tongue. A view minor grammatical and lexical error.
Good	4	Pronunciation is still moderately influence by mother tongue but not serious phonological errors. A few minor grammatical and lexical error.
Average	3	Pronunciation is influence by the mother tongue, only a few phonological errors. Several grammatical and lexical errors, some of which cause confusion.
Poor	2	Pronunciation is seriously influence by the mother tongue with the mother tongue with errors causing a breakdown in communication. Many grammatical and lexical errors.
Very poor	1	Serious pronunciation errors as many basic grammatical and lexical errors. No evidence of having mastered any of language skills and areas practice in course.

Table 3.2. The Scoring Classification for Fluency

Classification	Score	Criteria
Excellent	6	Speaks without too great an effort with fairly wide range of expression. Search for words occasionally by only one or two unnatural pauses.
Very good	5	Has to make an effort at time to search for words. Nevertheless, smooth delivery on the whole and only a few unnatural pauses.
Good	4	Although he has to make an effort and search for words, there are not too many unnatural pauses. Fairly smooth delivery.
Average	3	Occasionally fragmentary but succeed in conveying the general meaning. Frequently fragmentary and halting delivery. Limited range of expression.
Poor	2	Long pauses while he searches for the desired meaning. Frequently fragmentary and halting delivery. Almost give up making the effort at times limited range of expression.
Very poor	1	Full of long unnatural pauses. Very halting and fragmentary delivery. At times gives up making the effort, very limited range of expression.

Table 3.3. Scoring classification for clarity

Classification	Scoring	Criteria
Excellent	6	Easy for the listener to understand the speaker's intention and general meaning. Very few interruptions on clarifications.
Very good	5	The speaker's intention and general meaning are fairly clear. A few interruptions by the listener for the sake of clarification are necessary.
Good	4	Most of what the speaker says is easy to follow. His intention is always clear but several interruptions are necessary to help him to convey the message or to seek clarification.



Average	3	The listener can understand a lot of what is said, but he must of the speaker's more complex or longer sentences.
Poor	2	Only small bits (usually short sentences and phrases) can be understood and then with considerable effort by someone who is listening to the speaker.
Very poor	1	Even when the listener makes great effort or interrupts, the speaker is unable to clarify anything to say.

a) Scoring the Result of the Students' Speaking Test

Converting the students' score into the following formula:

Students' Final Score = $x \times 100$

Where: X : Score of the students

N : Score Maximum

100 : Standard Score

b) Classifying the Score of the Students

The classifying of students' score is shown on the table below.

Score	Classification
87-100	Excellent
73-86	Very good
59-72	Good
45-58	Average
30-44	Poor
≤ 30	Very poor

c) Calculating

Calculating the mean score, standard deviation, frequency table, and the value of t-test in identifying the difference between pre-test and post-test by using inferential analysis in SPSS 21.0 program for windows evaluation version.

d) Criteria of Testing Hypothesis

To test the hypothesis, the researcher obtained t-test at level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$ or non-independent sample. The degrees of freedom (df) in $(N1 + N2 - 2)$. So, $(25 + 25 - 2 = 4)$. For $\alpha = 0.05$ and $df = (48)$ the t-table was (2,021).

The criteria of testing hypothesis were: If $t\text{-table} < t\text{-test}$, H_0 was rejected, H_1 was accepted. It means that there was a significant difference

between achievement of the students who applied Think-Pair-Share technique and whom did not apply Think-Pair-Share technique (conventional way) in speaking. If $t\text{-table} > t\text{-test}$, H_0 was accepted, H_1 was rejected. It means that there was no significant differences between achievement of the students who applied Think-Pair-Share technique and whom did not apply Think-Pair-Share technique (conventional way) in speaking.

3.2. Questionnaire

After collecting the required data through the tool of the questionnaire, the following procedure was applied to analyze the data:

a) Scoring the Students' Responses by Using Likert Scale

Positive statement		Negative Statement	
Category	Score	Category	Score
Strongly agree	5	Strongly agree	1
Agree	4	Agree	2

Undecided	3	Undecided	3
Disagree	2	Disagree	4
Strongly disagree	1	Strongly Disagree	5

b) Categorizing the Students' Interest

Interval Score	Category
85-100	Strongly interested
69-84	interested
52-68	moderate
36-51	Uninterested
20-35	Strongly uninterested

c) Calculating

Calculating the mean score, standard deviation, and frequency table to know the students' interest by using descriptive statistic analysis in SPSS 21.0 program for window evaluation version.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Students' Speaking Score

a) Students' Score of Pre-Test

Table 4.1. The Rate Percentage and Frequency of Students' Scores of Pre-test in Experimental and Control Group

Classification	Score	Experiment Group		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	87-100	0	0	0	0
Very good	73-86	2	8	0	0
Good	59-72	2	8	1	4
Average	45-58	6	24	2	8
Poor	30-44	11	44	13	52
Very poor	≤30	4	16	9	36
	TOTAL	25	100	25	100

b) Students' Score of Post Test

Table 4.2. The Rate Percentage and Frequency of Students' Scores of Post-test in Experimental and Control Group

Classification	Score	Experiment Group		Control Group	
		F	%	F	%
Excellent	87-100	1	4	1	4
Very good	73-86	7	28	5	20
Good	59-72	15	60	6	24
Average	45-58	2	8	5	20
Poor	30-44	0	0	2	8
Very poor	≤30	0	0	6	24
	TOTAL	25	100	25	100

c) Mean Score and Standard Deviation in Pre-Test

Table 4.3. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Students' Pre-Test Score

Group	Sample	Mean	Score
Experimental	25	41.52	11.80
Control	25	35.09	12.53

d) Mean Score and Standard Deviation in Post-Test

Table 4.4. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Students' Post-Test Score

Group	Sample	Mean	Score
Experimental	25	70.57	10.47
Control	25	58.45	24.41

e) Test of Significant (t-test value)

Table 4.5. The t-test value of students' speaking ability of experimental and control group

Variable	t-test value Mean	t-table value
Pre-test	1.792	2.021
Post-test	2.206	2.021

4.1.2. Students' Interest

a) Students' Score of Questionnaire

Table 4.6. The Rate Percentage and Frequency of Students' Scores of Questionnaire in Experimental Group

Category	Interval Score	Experimental Group	
		F	%
Strongly interested	85 – 100	8	32
Interested	69 – 84	14	56
Moderate	52 – 68	3	12
Uninterested	36 – 51	0	0
Strongly Uninterested	20-35	0	0
	TOTAL	25	100

b) Mean Score and Standard Deviation in Questionnaire

Table 4.7. The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of Students' Questionnaire Score

Group	Sample	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Experimental	25	83.22	8.84

4.2. Discussion

Judging by the findings of the present study, it is clear that introducing think-pair-share technique to boost the students' oral or speaking delivery has worked quite properly as shown by the different statistical analysis. As part of this technique is that students were given a chance to read the topic they were presented with and to

form ideas before they come to discussion. This has the effect of enhancing their scope of knowledge and reduces their level of inhibition, and hence they set about their task quite normally.

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