



The Application of Think-Pair-Share Strategy in Improving Students' Speaking Ability

Ardhy Supraba

ardhysupraba@yahoo.com

Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo

Received : 8 Oktober 2018;

Accepted : 21 November 2018

URL : <http://ejournal.iainpalopo.ac.id/index.php/ideas>

Abstract

The aims of this research were to find out (1) the extent to which Think-Pair-Share strategy improves speaking ability of the fourth semester students of Cokroaminoto Palopo University; (2) the students' perceptions on the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy in speaking activities. This research was carried out in the fourth semester students of English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Cokroaminoto Palopo University. The method used was quasi-experimental research with pre-test, ten meetings of treatment, and post-test. The sample was selected through purposive sampling technique. The data were collected through speaking test, questionnaire, and recorder instruments, and were analyzed with nonparametric test and frequency test. The result of Mann-Whitney *U* test and the students' score on post-test was $p < 0.05$. It means that, there is a significant difference between the students taught with Think-Pair-Share strategy and without Think-Pair-Share strategy. The mean score of experimental group on pretest was 2.16, and increased to be 4.02 on posttest. The analysis of questionnaire indicated that the students' perceptions on the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy were very positive. Thus, it can be concluded that the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy could significantly improve the students' speaking ability.

Keywords: *Think-Pair-Share Strategy, Speaking Ability, Students' perceptions.*

Introduction

English as a language for communication is important in this globalization era where people from many countries use English as a language to communicate with each others in daily activities. In Indonesia, the

government realizes that English competency has an impact on global development not only for education purpose but also for career purpose. That is why; English course is presented since early ages.

One of the essential parts in learning English is speaking. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information (Brown, 1994). By speaking, students can share and exchange the ideas they got from book or other information media. They can easily express what they felt, what they learnt, and what they wanted to the others verbally.

Improving students' speaking ability is one goal in teaching English as a foreign language. So, the learning process in a classroom atmosphere should be interesting, enjoyable, comfortable, and fun. Thereby, one of the alternative ways is by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy. Think-Pair-Share is a multi-mode discussion cycle in which students listen to a question or presentation, have time to think individually, talk with each other in pairs, and finally share responses with the larger group (McTighe & Lyman, 1988).

Speaking is one of the four basic skills in learning language beside listening, reading, and writing. In this case, speaking and listening are related to language expressed through the aural medium. Meanwhile, reading and writing are related to language expressed through the visual medium. So, speaking and writing are productive skills, while listening and reading are receptive skills. (Widdowson, 1978:57). Dealing with the statement above, the researcher would like to explain about what actually speaking is. Based on Brown (1994), Burns and Heken (1997:63), speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. Then, Widdowson (1985:150) revealed that the act of communication through speaking is commonly performed in face-to-face interaction and occurs as part of dialogue or other forms of verbal exchange. Furthermore, another idea is coming from Heaton (1988) who asserted that speaking ability is the expressing of language directly from speakers' mouth. It is supported by Fultcher (2003:23) claimed that speaking is the verbal use of language to communicate with others. In addition, according to Ur (1996:120), contended that among the four skills in English, speaking is seemed perceptively the most important. As a conclusion, speaking is a way of expressing ideas, opinions, and feelings to others by using words or sounds of articulation in order to communicate, inform, persuade, and entertain in aspects of everyday life.

According to Heaton (1988:100), there are three components of speaking that are normally recognized as crucial aspect that should be mastered for those who are learning English and use them as the parameters in assessing the speaking. These three components should be understood well by the teachers and the students. They are namely as follows:

1) Accuracy

Based on Brown (2001:268), accuracy is defined as the correct use of language in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Accuracy in speaking means that when someone is able to produce correct sentences dealing with good pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.

In speaking, accuracy is very important. However, teachers should not too focus on accuracy because if teachers really expect their students to be able to produce correct language from the beginning, then the students will never gain fluency of speech. So it can be concluded that accuracy is the quality or condition of being accurate or correct related to pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. In other words, accuracy is the ability to speak accurately and correctly.

2) Fluency

According to Luoma (2004:88), fluency is defined as the ability to communicate the ideas without thinking too much. Then, Richard and Rodgers (2001:90), stated that fluency is the capability to produce written and spoken language easily. Meanwhile, another opinion comes from Hornby (1995:26), disclosed that fluency is the quality or condition of being fluent. In speaking, fluency means to speak clearly. In speaking, fluency refers to the ability to produce communicative language even though it is not in perfect utterances but in continuous speech and smoothly. As a matter of fact, speaking performance does not only lay totally on accuracy in mastering the language system, but it also lays on fluency in using the language system communicatively, and without too much hesitation. Thus, it can be inferred that fluency is the quality or condition of being fluent or smooth. In other words, fluency is the ability to speak clearly, easily, and smoothly.

3) Comprehensibility

Harmers (1998:107), said that if there are two people want to interact and communicate each other, they have to speak because they have different information. However, if there is a “gap” between them, it will not be a good communication because they are still confused with what they say. Therefore, comprehensibility refers to the process of understanding of the utterances sent by the speaker done by the listener. In speaking, comprehensibility means that people can understand what we say and we can understand what they say. Besides that, the skill to understand the written and interpret the spoken language is also called as comprehensibility. Thereby, it can be deduced that comprehensibility is the quality or condition of being understanding. In other words, comprehensibility is the ability to understand what other people say and vice versa.

Think-Pair-Share was first proposed and introduced by Professor Frank Lyman with his team of educators in Maryland University of USA in 1981, and then developed by many scientists in recent years. The basic foundation of this teaching strategy is to make the students more active in the teaching and learning process by discussing with their classmates. So, the teaching and

learning process will be more attractive and fun (Kagan, 2009) in Sugiarto and Sumarsono (2014:208). In addition, based on McTighe and Lyman (1988:243) in Cars, W.D (2007:27), Think-Pair-Share is a multi-mode discussion cycle in which students listen to a question or presentation, have time to think individually, talk with each other in pairs, and finally share responses with the larger group. As a conclusion, Think-Pair-Share is a cooperative learning strategy that can promote and support higher-level thinking by asking for students to think about a specific raised topic or question and then pair with another student to discuss their thinking, and after that share their ideas with the other pairs or the other groups or with the class.

Think-Pair-Share consists of some procedures or steps. Kagan (2009) in Sugiarto and Sumarsono (2014:209) states that there are five procedures of Think-Pair-Share, they are as follows:

1) Posing the topic or question

The topic or question is posed to students. The question should be in general and has many kinds of opinion and explanation to be explored and expressed. For example, "what do you know about speaking, and what are your special tips for speaking English fluently? Please explain them one by one." If they scrutinize this question in detail, it makes the students think deeper and deeper, and they can give their opinions and explanations in many aspects.

2) Giving time to students to think

The students are given several minutes to think the opinion and explanation of the topic or question given before. So, this is called as "thinking time."

3) Organizing students into pairs

The students are divided into pairs randomly (group two students). The purpose of choosing randomly is to avoid the gap between high students and low students. Consequently, they will have higher chance to know each other closely, and it will increase the respect of a student to others.

4) Asking for students to discuss with their partner and share their thinking

In this section, each student will share his or her own opinion and explanation to his or her partner in pairs. They will share their thinking and discuss each other about the best opinion and explanation to be expressed later. Thus, this activity helps the students develop not only their knowledge, but also their communicative skill and confidence.

5) Calling on the students to share their ideas with the class

The last step is calling the students to share their ideas with the class. In this case, some students give their opinion and explanation, and the others can give their opinion and explanation as well. So, it improves their confidence and also their speaking ability.

Think-Pair-Share is based on Professor Frank Lyman's theory designed to provide students with "food for thought" on a given topics enabling them to

formulate individual ideas and sharing their ideas with another student. It is developed to encourage student classroom participation, rather than using a basic recitation method in which a teacher poses a question and one student offers a response. Thereby, Think-Pair-Share encourages a high degree of pupil response.

Furthermore, in learning speaking, the students must be capable to speak English well and build an interactive communication each other to express meaning even formal or informal conversation in the context of daily life. Based on Heaton (1988), speaking ability is the expressing of language directly from speakers' mouth. Then Widdowson (1985), revealed that the act of communication through speaking is commonly performed in face-to-face interaction and occurs as part of dialogue or other forms of verbal exchange. In addition, according to Ur (1996), contended that among the four skills in English, speaking is seemed perceptively the most important.

In this case, based on the preliminary research included observation and interview with the lecturer and students, most of the students at Cokroaminoto University of Palopo are not able to speak English optimally. The result of the preliminary research showed that the speaking inability of the students comes from several factors namely the students' speaking skill is in low level or achievement, they lack of self-confidence, they lack of vocabulary, they are afraid of making mistake, they got difficulties in pronouncing English (it is related to pronunciation), the lack of ideas to speak, they always think about grammar, they do not have suitable partner to speak English, they always feel nervous (they do not have any courage to speak English), and they are not motivated in speaking.

Thus, based on the real condition above, the adequate of speaking tasks that enable to encourage students' speaking skill must be given. Therefore, this research tried to offer Think-Pair-Share strategy to be taught to the university students in order that their speaking ability can be improved. So the researcher was interested in conducting a research to improve the students' speaking ability by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy. Thereby, this research aimed to improve the students' speaking ability by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy.

Method

This research was categorized as quantitative research. the research design used was quasi-experimental design; the nonequivalent control group design (Gay *et al.*, 2006). There were two groups namely experimental and control group. The experimental group was treated by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy while the control group was taught by conventional way of teaching. The population of this research was the fourth semester students of English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Cokroaminoto Palopo University. The total number of population was

267 students. The sample of this research was 72 students in which 36 students of experimental group and also 36 students of control group. The sample was selected through purposive sampling technique. To collect the data, the researcher used three kinds of instruments namely speaking test, questionnaire and recorder. The speaking test was used to assess the students' learning achievement before and after receiving some treatments. The questionnaire was used to find out the students' perceptions toward the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy after being taught in several meetings. Meanwhile, the recorder was used to record the students' speaking. To analyze the data, this research used Heaton's rating score for speaking test. Then, to measure the students' perceptions by using Likert scale. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics by employing Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 20 IBM for Windows. The data from the questionnaire were calculated by using five point rating scale to find out the students' perceptions toward the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy after being taught in several meetings.

Results

After computing and analyzing the data by using Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 20 IBM for Windows, the result showed that the students who were taught and treated by applying Think-Pair-Share during ten meetings performed better than the students who were taught by conventional way of teaching in which the posttest score of experimental group was greater than control group by gaining mean score 4.02 while control group gained mean score 3.00.

The test of normality showed that the data were not normally distributed based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov test where ($p < 0.05$) in which both the experimental and control group gained .000. Thus, non-parametric test was used which covered Mann-Whitney U test (for two independent samples) and Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test (for two related samples)

The result of Mann-Whitney U test for pretest showed that the significance gained was 1.000. So it indicated that there was no significant difference between experimental and control group. It means that null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted because $p > 0.05$. Meanwhile, the result of Mann-Whitney U test for posttest showed that the significance gained was .000. So it indicated that there was a significant difference between experimental and control group. It means that alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted because $p < 0.05$.

Afterwards, the result of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test for experimental and control group showed the same result in which the significance gained was .000. So it indicated that there was a significant difference between pre-

and posttest for the experimental and control group. It means that alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted since $p < 0.05$.

Furthermore, the result of analyzing questionnaire revealed that the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy gave significant effect in improving students' speaking ability. Most of them gave very positive perception or response toward the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy speaking activities.

This research shows that there is a significant difference between the experimental and the control group in terms of posttest. In other words, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. This finding concludes that there is a significant difference between speaking ability of the students who are taught by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy and those with conventional way of teaching.

In teaching speaking to the students by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy, first of all, the researcher acted as their lecturer introducing and explaining to them about this strategy, and also the components of speaking that had to be understood well especially for the experimental group. Meanwhile, the control group only had conventional way of teaching. After introducing and explaining this strategy and also the components of speaking, the researcher taught the experimental group by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy in teaching them speaking.

Think-Pair-Share is part of cooperative learning by involving students to be more active in teaching and learning process. In this case, cooperative learning essentially involves students learning from each other in groups. In cooperative learning, the teachers help students learn how to learn more effectively and also teachers teach students collaborative or social skill so that they can work together more effectively (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Moreover, according to Zuheer (2008), there are five essential components of cooperative learning. They are positive interdependence, individual accountability, group processing, social skills, and face-to-face interaction.

From the research findings described in the beginning of this chapter, the students of experimental and control group were in "poor level" of speaking ability based on the pretest result. The result of Mann-Whitney U test for pretest showed that there was no significant difference between experimental and control group. However, the result of Mann-Whitney U test for posttest showed that there was a significant difference between experimental and control group.

Moreover, in experimental group in which Think-Pair-Share strategy was applied in teaching speaking, the students' mean score was increased ranging from 2.16 to 4.02. It indicated that there was a significant improvement since the level from "poor level" to "good level." Meanwhile, the control group also showed the same result by having the mean score from 2.16 to 3.00.

Nevertheless, the control group also improved from poor classification to average classification, but the experimental group improved significantly from

poor classification to good classification, it was supported by the result of mean score and Mann-Whitney *U* test. In other words, the findings claimed that the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Moreover, the positive result from the questionnaire indicated that the students were mostly supporting the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy in teaching them speaking. In other words, all students claimed that they prefer learning speaking using Think-Pair-Share strategy.

Besides, they found that this strategy was interesting, fun and also this strategy could help them improve their speaking ability optimally. It means that, Think-Pair-Share strategy gave a significant effect on students' speaking ability. It was proven by the result of their posttest improved significantly after being treated by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy.

Finally, as a conclusion, Think-Pair-Share strategy could improve the students' speaking ability significantly since the alternative hypothesis was accepted in which there was a significant difference between speaking ability of the students who were taught by applying Think-Pair-Share strategy and those with conventional way of teaching. It was also supported by the mean score and Mann-Whitney *U* test.

Conclusion

The researcher concludes that Think-Pair-Share as a teaching strategy can be an alternative and effective way in teaching speaking class since the result of this research showed that there was a significant difference between experimental and control group. So the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy contributed significantly to improve students' speaking ability. This research also indicated that the application of Think-Pair-Share strategy in teaching speaking gained very positive perceptions from the students. Moreover, the researcher suggests for the English teachers or lecturers to apply Think-Pair-Share strategy in teaching speaking, since the result of this research proved that Think-Pair-Share strategy contributed significantly to improve students' speaking ability. And then for the English teachers or lecturers who will apply Think-Pair-Share strategy in teaching speaking should be kind, patient and never make them under pressure. So teaching and learning atmosphere should be interesting, comfortable, enjoyable, interesting and fun. Finally for further research, it is suggested to conduct a research using Think-Pair-Share strategy but different kinds of skill. It aims to familiarize other kinds of skill to students.

References

- Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. 3rd Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles an Interactive Approach to*

- Language Pedagogy*. 2nd Edition. Addison Wesley New York: Longman Inc.
- Burns & Heken. (1997). *Focus on Speaking*. Sydney: Macquarie University.
- Cars, W. D. (2007). *The Effects of Using Think-Pair-Share during Guided Reading Lessons*. Thesis. (Online), (<http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10289/2233/thesis.pdf?sequence=1>)
- Fultcher. (2003). *Testing Second Language Speaking*. Hongkong: Pearson Education Limited.
- Gay, L. R., Mills G. E., & Airasian P. (2006). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application*. 8th Edition. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Harmers. (1998). *How to Teach English*. England: Pearson Education.
- Heaton, J. B. (1988). *Writing English Language Tests*. New York: Longman Inc.
- Hornby. (1995). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. 5th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Larsen-Freeman, Diane. (2000). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. 2nd Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Luoma. (2004). *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McTighe J. & Lyman F.T. (1988). Cueing thinking in the classroom: The promise of theory-embedded tools. In A.L. Costa (Ed.) *Developing minds: A resource book for teaching thinking*. Rev. Ed.,(Online), Vol.1 (pp. 243-250). Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_198804_mctighe.pdf)
- Richard & Rodgers. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sugiarto & Sumarsono. (2014). The Implementation of Think-Pair-Share Model to Improve Students' Ability in Reading Narrative Texts. *International Journal of English and Education*. (Online), Vol. 3, Issue 3. (http://ijee.org/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/21.184151514.pdf).
- Ur, Penny. (1996). *A Course in Language Teaching Practical and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Teaching Language as Communication*. Oxford: Oxford University.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1985). *Exploration in Applied Linguistic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zuheer, K.M.M. (2008). The Effect of Using a Program Based on Cooperative Learning Strategy on Developing some Oral Communication Skills of Students, at English Department, Faculty of Education, Sana'a University. *Thesis for publishing*. (Online), (<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED502845.pdf>)