



EFL Learners' Perceptions of the Use of Think-Pair-Share in their Viewing Activities during Transactional Conversation Course at an Undergraduate English Education Program

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-05-28 Revised: 2026-06-16 Accepted: 2026-06-16 Keywords: Cooperative learning; EFL; Think-Pair-Share; Viewing Activities DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.10883 Corresponding Author: Ayuri Rafikatul Husna fikaathereal@students.unnes.ac.id Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Negeri Semarang	<i>This study explores how EFL learners perceive the use of Think-Pair-Share (TPS) in viewing activities within a Transactional Conversation course. Although TPS is commonly used in EFL settings, its role in viewingbased learning from learners' perspectives remains limited. This study employed a qualitative case study, involving 20 learners who completed open-ended questionnaires and six of them were interviewed for deeper insights. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings highlight four key themes: perceived effectiveness, learning process, engagement and interaction, and implementation challenges. TPS was found to increase engagement, support understanding through peer discussion, and encourage active participation during viewing tasks. However, challenges such as limited time, unequal participation, and language difficulties were also reported. These findings suggest that TPS can make viewing activities more interactive and meaningful, but its success depends on thoughtful implementation, including appropriate time allocation, balanced group interaction, and support for learners' language development.</i>

1. Introduction

In recent years, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom have increasingly moved toward more student-centered approaches that emphasize active participation and meaningful interaction. This shift reflects the understanding that learning becomes more effective when students are actively involved, rather than simply receiving information from the teacher (Pratolo et al., 2025).

However, this shift is not always reflected in classroom practice. In particular, viewing activities are often conducted in a passive way, where students are asked to watch videos and answer questions without much opportunity to interpret, discuss, or reflect on what they have seen. As a result, the potential of audiovisual materials to support deeper learning is not always fully realized.

When viewing activities are examined within the context of cooperative learning, this issue becomes more apparent. One strategy that can be used to address this is Think–Pair–Share (TPS), which organizes student interaction into three interconnected stages: thinking, pairing, and sharing. In the first stage, students are given time to reflect individually, allowing them to process information and form an initial understanding of the material.

Providing this kind of thinking time has been shown to support comprehension and help learners prepare more meaningful responses before entering discussion (Gillies, 2016). The process then continues with the pairing stage, where students work with a partner to exchange ideas, compare interpretations, and clarify their understanding through discussion. Research in cooperative learning highlights that this type of peer interaction is essential, as it enables learners to negotiate meaning and build knowledge together (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Finally, in the sharing stage, students bring their ideas into a whole-class discussion, creating opportunities to present their thoughts and receive feedback from others. This stage helps broaden perspectives while also encouraging greater participation and confidence, as students are supported through social interaction (Gillies et al. 2023). In this way, TPS provides a structured learning process that transforms students from passive viewers into active participants, making it particularly relevant for enhancing engagement in viewing-based activities.

Previous research has explored the role of cooperative learning in EFL settings and consistently points to its positive contribution to students' learning experiences. Tamimy et al. (2023) argue that cooperative approaches contribute not only to academic achievement but also to learners' social interaction and emotional development. Similarly, Ahmed & AbdAlgane (2024) found that students taught through cooperative strategies performed better in comprehension tasks than those in traditional classrooms. In addition, Chan et al. (2021) report that cooperative learning can enhance students' motivation, engagement, and attitudes toward learning English.

Research also indicates that the effectiveness of cooperative learning is shaped by how it is implemented. Szczesniak (2025) highlights that cooperative learning is sometimes applied without fully incorporating its key principles, such as individual accountability and structured interaction. When this happens, it may turn into simple group work that does not significantly support learning. This suggests that the success of cooperative learning is closely tied to how carefully it is designed and implemented in the classroom.

Within this broader framework, TPS has been widely studied as a specific cooperative learning strategy. Sumekto (2018) shows that TPS can improve students' reading comprehension, while Hidayati (2017) found that it supports vocabulary development. In addition to improving learning outcomes, TPS has also been shown to encourage participation and interaction. For instance, Azizah et al. (2024) report that students become more active when they are given opportunities to discuss ideas with peers. Furthermore, TPS has been applied in different instructional contexts. Li & Tu (2024) demonstrate that integrating TPS with project-based learning can support creative thinking and collaborative reflection among students.

From another perspective, research on viewing activities highlights the importance of audiovisual materials in supporting language learning. Avello & Muñoz (2023) argue that multimodal input helps learners understand language more effectively by providing contextual support. Similarly, Ismaili (2013) found that the use of films improves students' comprehension of both spoken language and visual cues. More recent work by Aditya & Rahman (2025) also shows that video-based learning can enhance students' understanding when it is supported by structured instructional stages.

Some studies have attempted to combine cooperative learning with audiovisual materials. For example, Sunarya & Atmazaki (2024) found that TPS supported by audiovisual media improved students' speaking performance and confidence. Similarly, Fathiyah et al. (2025) show that visual media can help students organize their ideas during TPS activities. However, these studies mainly focus on learning outcomes or classroom performance, rather than on how students experience the use of TPS in viewing activities.

This study is conceptually grounded in social constructivism, which views learning as a process that develops through interaction and collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). From this perspective, understanding is built through shared meaning-making rather than transmitted directly. This view is closely related to cooperative learning theory (Johnson & Johnson, 1999), which emphasizes positive interdependence and individual accountability in group work. The TPS strategy Kagan (1994) reflects these principles by structuring interaction in a way that supports both individual reflection and peer discussion.

In addition, cognitive load theory Sweller (1988) provides a useful lens for understanding how students process audiovisual input during viewing activities. Since such activities often require learners to handle both visual and auditory

information at the same time, the staged structure of TPS may help them process information more gradually and reduce cognitive overload.

Despite the growing interest in both cooperative learning and viewing activities, there is still limited research that brings these two areas together from the perspective of students' experiences. Most studies focus either on the effectiveness of TPS in improving language skills, such as reading comprehension and vocabulary development (Hidayati, 2017; Li & Tu, 2024; Sumekto, 2018) or on the benefits of viewing activities in supporting language learning through audiovisual input (Aditya & Rahman, 2025; Avello & Muñoz, 2023; Ismaili, 2013). Some studies have attempted to combine TPS with audiovisual media; however, they mainly examine learning outcomes such as speaking performance and classroom participation rather than students' experiences (Fathiyah et al., 2025; Sunarya & Atmazaki, 2024).

Only a limited number of studies have explored students' perspectives on the use of TPS, and these are not specifically situated in viewing contexts (Azizah et al., 2024). This indicates a gap in understanding how TPS is experienced by learners when applied in viewing based activities, particularly in EFL classrooms.

To address this gap, this study explores how EFL students experience the use of Think-Pair-Share in viewing activities, focusing on how they perceive the strategy, the benefits they gain, and the challenges they encounter during its implementation. By examining these aspects, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how cooperative learning can be applied in multimedia-based language learning contexts.

The findings indicate that Think-Pair-Share can make viewing activities more engaging and collaborative. The strategy supports students in understanding audiovisual content, encourages active participation and greater confidence, and creates meaningful opportunities for peer interaction. Although several implementation challenges were identified, TPS was generally perceived as a valuable approach for enhancing learning during viewing activities.

2. Method

This study employed a qualitative case study to explore EFL learners' perceptions of the use of Think-Pair-Share (TPS) in viewing activities implemented in a Transactional Conversation course at an undergraduate English Education program. This design was selected because it allowed for an in-depth study of learners' perceptions of a specific case, namely the implementation of TPS in a Transactional Conversation course, including the benefits and challenges they experienced (Creswell et al., 2007).

The study was conducted at the English Education Program of a state university in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia, specifically in a Transactional Conversation course where TPS was applied during viewing activities. The

participants were EFL students who had prior experience with TPS. Using purposive sampling, 20 students were selected to complete an open-ended questionnaire to provide an overview of their perceptions. From these participants, six students were further selected for semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights into their experiences, including the perceived benefits and challenges of TPS.

This sampling technique was chosen because it allows the researcher to select participants who are most likely to provide relevant and meaningful information about the phenomenon being studied (Campbell et al., 2020). Data collection was conducted in February 2026, after the students had completed the course, so that they could reflect on their experiences more comprehensively.

Data were collected after students had experienced the implementation of TPS in viewing activities. The open-ended questionnaire was first distributed to all selected participants, and the researcher ensured that all responses were completed before proceeding to the next stage. Based on the questionnaire responses, several students were then selected for semi-structured interviews to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences.

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided their consent before participating. The use of open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to explore participants' perspectives in depth, which is essential for understanding complex experiences in qualitative research (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

Two instruments were used in this study: an open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire consisted of six items designed to capture students' general perceptions of TPS in viewing activities. Meanwhile, the interview protocol included six guiding questions that explored students' experiences in more detail, particularly in relation to the perceived benefits and challenges of TPS. These instruments complemented each other, as the questionnaire provided a broad overview of students' responses, while the interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of their experiences.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method was chosen because it allows patterns to be identified and interpreted in a systematic yet flexible way. The analysis followed six stages: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, identifying potential themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. This process enabled us to organize the data into meaningful themes related to students' perceptions, benefits, and challenges of using TPS in viewing activities.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were applied. Credibility was established through member checking, where participants reviewed and confirmed the identified themes. Transferability was supported by providing a clear description of the research context and participants.

Dependability was maintained through systematic documentation of the research process. All participants provided informed consent, and their identities were anonymized throughout the study.

3. Result

The data were examined using thematic analysis, which led to the identification of four key themes related to students' experiences with TPS in viewing activities. These themes include the perceived effectiveness of TPS, the learning process it facilitates, patterns of student engagement and interaction, and the challenges encountered during its implementation. A summary of these findings is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Coding Process Based on Questionnaire and Interview Data

Theme	Initial Codes (Student Responses)	Categories	Description
Perceived Effectiveness of TPS	enjoyable, interactive, helpful; clarifying doubts; correcting misunderstanding; teacher feedback; critical thinking; better understanding	Affective benefits; Instructional support; Cognitive benefits	TPS is perceived as engaging and supportive of learning by enhancing students' understanding, encouraging interaction, and promoting critical thinking through discussion and feedback.
Learning Process in TPS	self-thinking; understanding; exchanging ideas; correcting answers; presenting ideas; class discussion	Individual thinking; Peer discussion; Knowledge sharing	TPS facilitates a structured learning process in which students move from individual reflection to collaborative discussion and class level sharing, allowing deeper processing of video content.
Student Engagement and Interaction Dynamics	active participation; focused; mutual support; teamwork; passive partner; one-sided work	Active engagement; Collaborative interaction; Participation imbalance	TPS increases student engagement and interaction, although the effectiveness of collaboration may be influenced by unequal

participation among peers.

Challenges in limited time; rushed	Temporal	The implementation of
TPS discussion; passive partner; constraints;		TPS is influenced by
Implementation dependency; lack of	Interpersonal	practical constraints
vocabulary; difficulty	challenges;	such as limited time,
expressing ideas	Linguistic	unequal participation,
	challenges	and language-related
		difficulties that affect
		students' ability to
		engage fully.

Meaningful and Engaging Experience: Perceived Effectiveness of Think-Pair-Share

TPS was generally perceived as a helpful strategy for making viewing activities more meaningful. Instead of simply watching videos, students were encouraged to think about what they saw and discuss it with others. This process made the activity feel more active and less routine. For many students, TPS changed how they approached the task, as they were no longer just receiving information but also actively engaging with it.

The questionnaire responses also reflect this pattern, with many students indicating that TPS helped them understand the video more clearly. Some mentioned that they understood the content better because they had time to think and discuss it. One student explained, *"When I discuss with my partner, I realize things I didn't notice before"* (S1). Another said, *"It helps me understand because we explain to each other"* (S3). These responses show that discussion played an important role in helping students process the video more clearly.

This was consistently supported by interview data. One participant described TPS as *"has a very positive impact... better understanding, more active, more enjoyable"* (S3), highlighting how the strategy improved both understanding and engagement. Another participant similarly noted that TPS was *"more helpful... and more fun"* (S2), while another emphasized that sharing ideas with a partner made the activity more meaningful. These responses suggest that discussion helped students understand and process the video content more clearly.

Guided Learning Through Structured Interaction: Learning Process in TPS

Students described the learning process in TPS as clear and structured. The sequence of thinking, pairing, and sharing helped them follow the activity step by step. Each stage seemed to serve a different purpose, and together they created a learning flow that felt manageable. This structure also gave students time to prepare before speaking, which made them feel more confident.

From the questionnaire data, many students noted that this structure made the activity easier to follow. During the thinking stage, students focused on understanding the video on their own. One student said, *"I like thinking first because I can understand the video before talking"* (S5). In the pairing stage, they exchanged ideas and compared answers. Another student explained, *"Sometimes my partner helps me understand better"* (S2). In the sharing stage, they listened to other perspectives and received feedback, which helped them see the content in different ways.

The interview data show how each stage works in practice. During the thinking stage, students focused on understanding the video individually before discussing it. In the pairing stage, they compared their ideas and checked their understanding. As one student explained, *"we compare our answers and think again about which one is more accurate"* (S6). Students also noted that discussion helped them fill in missing information and see different perspectives, as they could combine viewpoints and notice details that they had initially missed.

Active Participation and Collaborative Interaction: Student Engagement and Interaction Dynamics

TPS appeared to make students more active during the lesson. Many students mentioned that they paid closer attention because they knew they would need to discuss the content afterward. This expectation seemed to increase their focus and involvement. Instead of just watching, they became part of the learning process.

The questionnaire responses also show that students felt more comfortable interacting with a partner than speaking in front of the whole class. One student said, *"I feel more confident talking with one person"* (S4). Another explained, *"We can share ideas without feeling nervous"* (S5). However, some students also mentioned that discussions were less effective when their partners were passive, which shows that interaction quality can vary.

Interview data also show how TPS supports participation and confidence. One student explained that discussion helped them feel more certain before speaking in front of the class *"That discussion made me feel more confident in my answer, so when I spoke up, I felt more self-assured"* (S3). Another participant similarly noted that TPS helps build confidence, stating that *"increase the confidence level"* (S5). In addition, one student described TPS as something that pushes them to participate, explaining that *"This serves as one of the motivators to keep us participating in class"* (S1).

Practical and Linguistic Constraints: Challenges in TPS Implementation

Although TPS was generally viewed positively, students also identified several challenges. One of the main issues was limited time. Some students felt that they needed more time to fully discuss the video content, especially when the material was difficult.

Students also mentioned that discussion did not always run smoothly. When one partner was less active, the interaction became less effective. This is reflected in questionnaire responses such as *"If my partner doesn't talk much, it's hard to discuss" (S6)*. In addition, language difficulties made it harder for some students to express their ideas clearly.

Another challenge relates to understanding the video content. Based on the interview data, some students found it difficult to fully comprehend the main ideas, which affected their participation in discussion. As one student explained, *"I feel like I didn't totally get the points made in the video, so I don't have anything to discuss with my friends" (S4)*.

Students also emphasized that their partner played an important role in the success of the discussion. One participant noted that if both students struggled, the discussion could not run effectively *"If both of us don't understand, how are we to discuss it?" (S1)*. Similarly, another student pointed out that passive partners made the activity less effective, stating that *"If our partner is passive, the discussion won't work" (S2)*. This is also supported by another participant who said that when their partner was passive, *"It's just like watching a normal video" (S3)*.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study support previous research on collaborative learning and student engagement in viewing activities. Gillies et al. (2023) highlight that structured peer interaction can support deeper understanding because learners actively explain and refine their ideas during discussion. Rather than relying only on individual thinking, students benefit from sharing perspectives and building meaning together. Similarly, Bond & Bergdahl (2022) argue that engagement increases when students are involved in interactive tasks that require them to respond and reflect, rather than passively receive information.

In this study, TPS seems to create that kind of active involvement. In EFL contexts, Sriyanda & Priyana (2024) also report that discussion-based strategies can improve comprehension because learners are given time to process input and negotiate meaning. This aligns with the students' experiences in this study, where understanding often improved after discussion.

The structured stages in TPS also reflect findings from multimedia and collaborative learning research. Mayer (2020) explain that learners understand audiovisual material more effectively when they actively process information rather than simply watching. The TPS structure encourages this kind of active processing by combining individual thinking with discussion. Gillies et al. (2023) also suggest that when learning activities are organized into clear stages, students are more likely to stay engaged and build understanding gradually. This reflects how students in this study described their experience.

Previous research on student engagement and cooperative learning also supports the findings related to participation and interaction. Bond & Bergdahl (2022) explain that engagement in multimedia learning includes attention,

interaction, and emotional involvement. Activities that encourage communication and peer discussion tend to increase these aspects of engagement. In language learning contexts, Dewaele & Li (2020) highlight that peer interaction can reduce anxiety and help students feel more comfortable expressing their ideas.

This may explain why students in this study preferred working in pairs rather than speaking in larger groups. Furthermore, Gillies et al. (2023) emphasize that meaningful interaction in cooperative learning requires active involvement from every group member. In this study, discussions became more productive when both students were actively involved.

The challenges identified in this study reflect findings reported in previous research on cooperative learning. Dewaele & Li (2020) show that language anxiety and limited vocabulary can affect students' willingness to participate in interaction. Gillies et al. (2023) also explain that unequal participation can limit the effectiveness of group work, especially when tasks rely on mutual contribution. In addition, Bond & Bergdahl (2022) suggest that time management is a key factor in interactive activities. Without sufficient time, students may not be able to fully engage in discussion.

5. Conclusion

This study explored how EFL students experience the use of TPS in viewing activities, focusing on their perceptions, the benefits they gain, and the challenges they encounter. The findings show that TPS helps make viewing activities more engaging and meaningful. Instead of passively watching videos, students become more involved in the learning process through thinking, discussing, and sharing ideas. This not only supports their understanding of the content but also encourages them to reflect more deeply on what they have learned.

The structured stages of TPS also play an important role in shaping the learning experience. Students benefit from having time to think individually, confirm their understanding through discussion, and hear different perspectives during the sharing stage. This process helps them feel more confident and supports clearer understanding of the material. In addition, TPS creates a more interactive classroom environment, where students are more willing to participate and communicate with their peers.

However, the findings also show that the effectiveness of TPS is influenced by several practical challenges. Limited time, unequal participation, and language difficulties can affect how well students engage in the activity. When discussions are rushed or when partners are less active, the learning experience becomes less effective. Similarly, difficulties in vocabulary and expression can limit students' ability to fully participate in discussions.

study suggests that TPS can be a useful strategy for supporting viewing activities in EFL classrooms, particularly in promoting active engagement and collaborative learning. At the same time, its effectiveness depends on how it is implemented. Providing sufficient time, ensuring balanced participation, and offering language support may help maximize the benefits of TPS. Future research could explore how TPS can be adapted or combined with other strategies to better support students in different learning contexts.

While this study provides useful insights, it is important to recognize several limitations. The number of participants was relatively small and drawn from a single academic context, which may affect the broader applicability of the findings. The data were also based on students' self-reported experiences, which may not fully capture their actual classroom behavior. Moreover, the study focused on one course, so the results may differ in other instructional settings. Future studies could involve more diverse participants and combine different data sources, such as classroom observation, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the use of TPS in viewing activities.

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Declaration of Gen AI Use

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT, Grammarly, and DeepL Translator. ChatGPT was used to help organize ideas, rephrase sentences, and improve the clarity of the writing. Grammarly was used to review grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure. DeepL Translator was used to translate selected words, phrases, and sentences from Indonesian into English. All outputs generated by these tools were carefully reviewed, revised, and verified by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the final content of this manuscript.

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