

## The Effectiveness of Think-Pair-Share Strategy on Improving Visually Impaired Students' Speaking Skill at SLB-A Yapti Makassar

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aimed to determine whether or not using the Think pair-share strategy could enhance students' speaking performance with visual impairments Grade XI of SLB-A Yapti Makassar in the academic year of 2020/ 2021. This study was pre-experimental research in which the TPS strategy treated only one class. The data were qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data were obtained by observing the teaching and learning process during the implementation of the TPS strategy and interviewing the students about this strategy. Meanwhile, the quantitative data were gained by assessing the students' speaking skills through the pre-test and post-test. The instruments for collecting the data were the speaking rubric, observation guidelines, and interview guidelines. The results showed that the TPS strategy effectively improved the students' speaking skills of visually impaired students. There are different significant scores on the speaking performance of students on pretest and posttest. The frequency and percentage of student scores in specific categories indicating post-test results are higher than pre-test results. Nonetheless, the TPS strategy also has the drawbacks where it was very time consuming during the implementation since students need to be dealt with the given lesson and the screen reader.*

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## 1. Introduction

The curriculum of Indonesian has four foremost skills that must be taught in the teaching and learning process of English. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Specifically, speaking skill is a cognitive process that is integrated with other skills: listening, reading, and writing. Lately, speaking plays an increasingly essential role in second language settings in which each profession requires communicative competencies in this global world. Besides, this skill can be performed in many forms such as discussion, presentation, and negotiation.

As English is widely used worldwide, there is a need for learners, in particular, to acquire the communication skills to get success in their respective fields. English speaking skill is one of the communication skills highly considered to be the most profound language performance. Parupalli Srinivas Rao (2019) said that "communication skills play a crucial role in this modern world, and one needs to learn these skills to excel in their respective fields." This skill is essential as it accounts for an international language and generates employability for people or students who possess the skill to communicate with it. Moreover, this communication might lead them to compete in many aspects such as finding a job and continuing their study abroad, etcetera. Therefore, speaking skill should be taught longer than other language skills.

Many students face difficulties in learning speaking skills due to some factors such as inappropriate strategy, unsupported environments, or less competency of English teachers themselves (Rahman, 2018). According to the 2006 English Curriculum, the curriculum's emphasis is that students can communicate in English by mastering all skills. However, it is not easy to master all skills. As English teachers, they should find the right teaching strategy to make students feel at home in learning English. Not to mention, students must be diligent in learning to master it.

Teachers of English need to take into account the understanding of how to teach the skill more effectively. Once teachers appropriately teach English, learners will get bored. Many cases have been occurring where students have taken an English course but they still lack the confidence to speak because their speaking skill does not improve well. Therefore,

English teachers have an important role in finding an appropriate strategy that can significantly improve learners' speaking skills and think of making the student feel more comfortable with that strategy. It is believed that cooperative learning is a highly recommended strategy that could improve speaking skills (Junaidi, et al., 2020)

One of the most familiar methods of teaching proficiency skills is through cooperative learning also known as collaborative learning. This approach involves learning from each other in-group ("In Reply: Behaviour Therapy," 1965). In cooperative learning, learners must work together and complete tasks collectively toward academic goals. According to Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, (2014) cooperative learning is a type of group work which is formally termed cooperative learning, and is defined as the instructional use of small groups to promote students working together to maximize their own and each other's learning. In this paper, the researcher will address the principle aspect of cooperative learning before describing three benefits and disadvantages of this strategy.

The main principle of the method is that teachers help students learn how to study more effectively and teach students collaborative or social skills (Aswad, et al., 2019). Awofala, (2012) found the results that the effect on the social skills of first-grade elementary school girl students in cooperative learning is much higher than the conventional method. In this method, learners will more attractively communicate between one individual to others to provide an opportunity for discussion, exchange views, and questions and answers. The teacher is a facilitator who has a big role in organizing a cooperative learning group. So, the purpose of cooperative learning like building social skill can be achieved.

This method promotes active learning, which develops critical thinking and logical reasoning skills (ibid). Studies have revealed that students improve both academically and socially when allowed to interact with each other. Altun, (2015) and Bratt (2008) argue that CL enhances students' social competence and, in particular, their ability to collaborate with peers. In two separate studies, Slavin (1980a) and (1980b) have indicated that CL methods significantly increased students' performance, achievement, and self-esteem. Slavin (1983) has added that the use of group rewards and individual accountability is necessary to CL methods' effectiveness. In his most recent study, Slavin (2014) has noticed that CL as a pedagogical practice has had a deep effect on student learning and socialization.

Think Pair Share is one of the varieties of cooperative learning strategy, which promotes learning comprehension to understand the material given comprehensively. Think Pair Share is a cooperative learning strategy that was first proposed by Lyman (1981). Think pair share is a cooperative learning model which shortened as TPS. According to Lie (2002, 57), this learning strategy gives the students some opportunity to work independently and collaborate with others. Kagan (1994) as cited in Sanjani (2015, p. 29) mentioned that think TPS strategy can promote and support the students' thinking ability to the higher level

However, the use of the TPS strategy seems merely to be used for learners having a normal vision so far without considering learners with visual impairment. Many researchers have conducted research by implementing the TPS strategy where the result shows the significant effectiveness in improving learners' speaking skills. Yet, the implementation of this strategy might be never researched towards visually impaired learners. Visually-impaired learners nowadays highly need English skill especially, speaking skill. Based on my preliminary study, many of them are trying to continue their study abroad or get a job where English is one of the main requirements.

In this case, teachers are challenged to think about how to implement TPS strategy for visually impaired learners despite their lost vision. According to Mangal (2007) stated: "educational definition of visual-impairment emphasizes the relationship between vision and learning and shows difficulties, and deficiencies exhibited in the children, which make them different from children with normal vision to the extent of attention, requiring special education provision."

Therefore, the researcher considers that the TPS strategy is necessary to be implemented in SLB-A Yapti Makassar to gain an appropriate strategy both for English teachers and for students with visual impairments themselves.

## **2. Literature Review**

A number of studies have already been conducted related to the Think-Pair-Share strategy on improving students' speaking skills. The studies showed a range of findings that contribute to both theory and pedagogy and are highly considered to help teachers as references of strategy to teach speaking skills in the learning process.

Think-pair-share strategy is cooperative learning strategy proposed by Professor Frank Lyman at the University of Maryland in 1981. This strategy can encourage the students to promote their speaking skill because students are given the opportunity to elaborate their ideas. Here are some previous studies that have been undertaken within EFL classroom context;

The first study performed by Feni Cahyani (2018) entitled **The Use of Think-Pair-Share strategy to Improve Speaking Performance**. The researcher employed a quantitative method with experimental study of pretest and post-test control group design to investigate whether the use of TPS strategy can boost students' speaking skill performance or not (Weda, et al., 2021). This research conducted in the third grade students of MTsN 2 Banda Aceh in which the number of the sample were 25 students from class IX-2 and IX-3. The study found that the score of students' speaking performance increase after they learning trough TPS strategy. This finding can highly be recommended for teachers in teaching EFL class.

The second study conducted by Ahmad Hanan and Hera Aulia Budiarti entitled **Improving Speaking Confidence by Using Think Pair Share (TPS) Teaching Strategy to High School Students**. Besides studying the development of students' speaking skills, the researchers also added additional points, which are motivation to find out the effective correlation between those two points. The researcher conduct research at first grade in SMP AL- Ashiriah Gunung Sari in academic year 2018/2019. The researchers applied action research to describe whether or not TPS strategy could improve motivation and speaking competence of students. Based on the scores that researchers had already made. They conclude that TPS strategy could improve students' speaking skill and motivation (Ritonga, et al., 2020).

Chen-Hong Li did another study with regard to TPS strategy, Min-Hua Wu and Wen-Ling Lin (2017) entitled **The Use of a Think-Pair-Share" Brainstorming Advance Organizer to Prepare Learners to listen in the L2 Classroom**. The researchers used quasi experimental design to examine the effects of pre-listening activities, especially interactive brainstorming advance organizers which utilized a structure of "Think-Pair-Share", on the listening comprehension performance of L2 junior high school students. In this study, the sample was L2 9th graders enrolled in three classes at the Makung Junior High School in Taiwan and had studied English for seven years for average. The researcher use picture brainstorming and vocabulary brainstorming to find out which one is effective to boost listening skill. After analysis of the data, the result revealed that the participants having the advance organizer of picture brainstorming scored significantly higher than those in the vocabulary brainstorming group or the control group. Nonetheless, the differences between the vocabulary brainstorming and control groups failed to achieve a significant level.

Annisaa Eka Warliati developed the following study on TPS strategy, Zainal Rafli and Darmahusni entitled **Discussion and Think Pair Share Strategies on Enhancement of EFL Students' Speaking Skill: Does Critical Thinking Matter?** This study aims to investigate the strategies of learning such as Discussion Strategy and Think-Pair-Share Strategy/TPS, which are mediated by critical thinking on the speaking skill. The sample of this research were 60 students of the Department of English Education at a private university in Cirebon. This study implemented an experimental research design with a 2X2 factorial design. The study showed four major findings. First, the scores of discussion strategy was higher than those of think pair share on improving students' English speaking skill. Second, the scores of high critical thinking level was higher than those of low critical thinking. Third, learning strategy and critical thinking toward English speaking skill related each other. Fourth, there was no improvement in students' speaking skills using strategy and Think-Pair-Share strategies in the low critical thinking level group.

Rosnani Sahardin developed further study of Think Pair Share, Cut Salwa Hanum and Sofyan A. Gani entitled **Using Think-Pair-Share for Writing Descriptive Texts**. In this study, the researcher used an experimental study to find out whether or not this TPS strategy could facilitate and boost the students' writing of descriptive texts in English. The researchers took sample tenth grade students at a senior high school in Banda Aceh. Based on the scores that had been analyzed, they found that the TPS strategy successfully improved the ability of students' in writing, reflected by the post-test scores covering five aspects of writing.

Also, Fitria Nurulaeni and Ch Ismaniat (2019) did research entitled **Think-Pair-Share Model: Improving Activeness and Communication Skills of Prospective Elementary School Teachers**. The researchers implemented think-pair strategy with action plan used a qualitative approach to find out the improvement communication skill of students. The sample of this study were 43 students of elementary teacher education (ETE) program at one university in Yogyakarta. As it enhanced student behavior and communication skills, implementing the think-pair-share model in the basic science concept subject was successful. The findings indicate that an increased percentage of each sign was present.

Based on the researcher's review, two points of those previous studies can be taken as a gap for this researcher. Firstly, the instruments of assistive technologies in these previous studies were almost the same, such as tape recorder, mobile phone, camera, spss, etcetera. Secondly, the sample of those previous studies were sighted people while the sample in this study are visually-impaired students. Therefore, those two points are the gaps of this research.

### 3. Research Method

This study employed quantitative and qualitative method. The quantitative method used pre-experimental design, which implemented pretest and posttest to compare data before and after treatment. The data of quantitative was gained from speaking test (pretest and posttest) and questionnaire.

In this study, the 11th grade students in SLB Yapti Makassar, which is the biggest special school for students with visual impairments in South Sulawesi. The level of education is from elementary school to senior high school. The researcher chose this school because being a volunteer and teaching English since 2012 until now means the researcher has strong emotional bond between the researcher and the students.

There were only 6 students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade class which the most students among other level of grades. The range of age is quite different from 17 to 20 years at the time of conducting this research where there are 4 females and 2 males. This significant different age is related to their blindness, making them lack confidence to continue studying early.

The instruments used by the researcher to collect data are speaking test, mobile phone, tape recorder, guideline observation form and questionnaire. Speaking test will be used to measure the skill of an individual or group. Mobile phone will be used as visually impaired students' assistive technology to deal with instruction and questionnaire by using screen reader. Tape recorder will be used to record the students' performance the teaching and learning process. The researcher observes the situation and the behavior between teacher and student activities that happened in the classroom (Class Situation).

To collect the data using the mentioned instruments, the researcher followed the following procedure:

1. The researcher switched on recorder in the beginning of each meeting.
2. The researcher gave speaking test before and after implementing Think Pair Share through WA group application.
3. The researcher observed the activity during the learning process, noting the weakness, interest, and ability of the student and whether this strategy meets the supporting teaching material.

Data analysis aims to discover patterns, ideas, explanations, and understanding of data found and collected during research (McMillan, 2001: 221). The analysis will be carried out as the research progresses to be continually refined and rearranged in light of the emerging results (Dawson, 2009: 115). The analysis covers the data from the instruments, such as speaking test (pretest and posttest), questionnaires, interview, and classroom observation.

The first data to analyze in this study were speaking test for both pretest and posttest. The result of the students' speaking performance (in pre-test and posttest) was scored based on the scoring rubrics and analyzed quantitatively.

#### 4. Findings

These findings included the data results of the analysis of students' speaking performance after conducting pretest and posttest from 6 students with visual impairments. In addition, field notes were added to classroom observation to provide descriptive characteristics of what was happening during the study or learning process.

##### 1. Statistical Results on Students' Speaking Performance

The raw data gathered from study were analyzed by using SPSS version 25 in which the data consisted of descriptive statistical analysis of the pretest and posttest from the experimental class students.

Descriptive analysis of the students' pretest

The pretest was conducted before the treatment stage. After pretest, the students' score was then evaluated and categorized into three classification levels as follows;

**Table 1.** Classification of speaking performance

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Very Good	0	0%
2	Good	0	0%
3	Satisfactory	1	17%
4	Weak	3	50%
5	Very Weak	2	33%
	<b>Total</b>	6	100%

The data shows that the pretest scores where weak category (3 students) are more dominant, accounting for 50%. It follows a very weak category (30%) out of 2 students, which indicate the poorest skill of English speaking. However, there is merely 1 student (17%) in satisfactory category. The data indicates that most students lack English speaking skills, which means there are 5 (80 %) out of 6 students who need to be treated well to boost their speaking performance.

After the treatment process, posttest was carried out. The score of the students in the posttest was then analyzed and categorized into 3 classification levels as follows:

**Table 2.** Students score and classification on posttest

No	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Very Good	0	0%
2	Good	2	33%
3	Satisfactory	3	50%
4	Weak	1	17%
5	Very Weak	0	0%
<b>Total</b>		6	100%

The table indicates the results of the posttest after the classroom treatment of the TPS strategy. From the results, it can be seen that performance-speaking students experienced improvement. Of the total of 6 students, 2 students (33%) are included in good category and 3 (50%) students belonged to satisfactory category. Although 1 student (17%) is still in the weak category, it improves from a very weak category in the pretest.

**Table 3.** Students score on pretest and posttest

No.	Classification	Range	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very Good	9-10	0	0%	0	0%
2	Good	7-8	0	0%	2	33%
3	Satisfactory	4-6	1	17%	3	50%
4	Weak	2-3	3	50%	1	17%
5	Very Weak	0-1	2	53%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>			6	100%	6	100%

The table shows the result of students' speaking performance on both pretest and posttest. It can be concluded that their speaking skill shows a significant improvement although none of them achieve very good category. This result represents that students with visual impairments still need much more effort to get that highest range of scores.

In other words, the introduction of the TPS strategy seemed to have a positive influence on students' speaking performance. Several common variables had contributed to this important outcome, based on the observation. The first aspect was more enjoyable and comfort to learn from the students themselves who were more engaging and interactive, without getting a lot of obstacles while learning prose. Next, the learning environment was set up to make it more convenient for students to study. Not only did the teacher learn English in the class, but even outside the class. Due to the limited number of students, teacher could handle them easily to lead them outside class, such as in windy weather conditions in the school yard. In addition it was coming from the teacher itself which was highly considered the most contributed to this significant result. Though teacher implemented TPS strategy, the students would not respond well when the teachers did not have any skill to teach and interact well with the students. The teacher should think creatively on how to teach them, encourage them when the students lack confidence, show good examples of behavior, and make a friendly environment. The last aspect was this strategy itself, which divided the students into three small groups, allowing them to have more opportunities to communicate and ask questions simultaneously as issues arose.

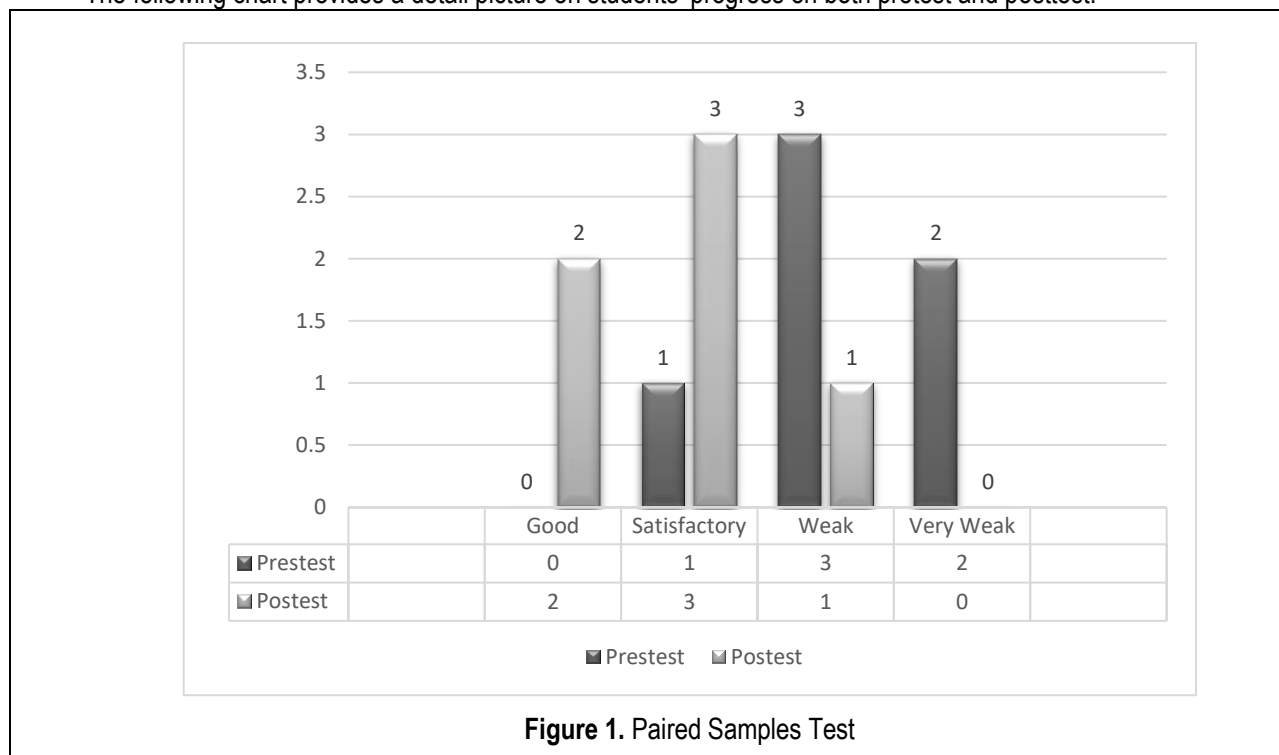
It was found that during the study the implementation of the TPS strategy was effective in promoting the English learning process in the classroom and had a positive impact on visually impaired students.

**Table 4.** The Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Pre-Test and Post-Test

Score	Group	N	Mean score	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	Pre test	6	2.17	1.169	.435
	Post test	6	5.33	1.862	.384

The table depicted the difference of mean score and standard deviation between pretest and posttest. From the mean scores above, it was found that the mean score of the students' pretest is 2.17 and the standard deviation is 1.169. While in the post-test, the mean score raises to 5.33 and the standard deviation is 1.862.

The following chart provides a detail picture on students' progress on both pretest and posttest.



**Table 5. Test of Significance**

	Paired Differences	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)		
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Pair 1	PRE-TEST - POST-TEST	-3.957	-2.377	10.304	5	.000

Table 5 shows the result of the computation of the T-test of the students' score of the pretest and posttest. The probability value (0.00) is smaller than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, it can be interpreted that there is a significant difference between the students' scores of the pretest and posttest. Thus, it indicates that students' speaking performance improves significantly.

### 5. Conclusion

From the result of the analysis, it is becoming evident that implementing the TPS strategy bears some important pedagogical implication in the improvement of productive skills. The integration of other relevant activities could generate the student's prior knowledge that eventually help the students to make sense of the meaning before commencement of the class.

After the pilot study has been performed, it may be confirmed that the speaking performance of visually-impaired students was very poor. The lack of vocabulary of students was so evident to compensate for teachers' pedagogical skills that hindered their language performance in the EFL context. The current research seems to support the idea that the TPS

strategy plays a strategic role in enhancing the efficiency of speaking. Therefore, those are some premises that motivated the researcher to pursue this analysis in an attempt to help students with visual impairments boost their oral competence by implementing TPS strategy.

It is worth taking into consideration that improving speaking performance needs an effective and efficient method that encourages and motivates students to speak. The use of the TPS strategy method in this study has been proven to be an effective way to improve students' speaking performance. This is partly because the TPS stimulates the students' background knowledge, which is essential in the process of meaning transformation. Moreover, the students' speaking performance improved significantly in their post-test, implying that the strategy was an effective teaching tool. They committed minor errors in answering questions addressed by the teachers. Also, the students became more active and engaged in the class during the teaching and learning process by implementing the TPS strategy.

Finally, several recommendations may be offered further to implement the strategy and future research of this kind. The first recommendation is that further research should implement the TPS strategy by adding or finding some additional tools to avoid wasting time. In the previous study, the visually impaired students used screen readers to deal with the lesson given, but it took time during the learning process to complete each lesson. The second, the visually-impaired students can only deal with oral skill (speaking) without considering its spelling because they merely focused on sound produced by their screen reader on their mobile phone.

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