

# Enhancing EFL Learners' English Proficiency through the Think-Pair-Share Technique with the Synergy of Digital Media Integration

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**Abstract.** English as a foreign language poses unique challenges for the learners, often leading to passivity and disengagement in conventional teaching environments. Recognizing the pivotal role teachers play in addressing these issues, this study explores the integration of technology and the efficacy of the Think-Pair-Share technique in enhancing EFL students' English proficiency. Drawing upon a review of nine previous studies in Indonesian context, this research investigates the suitability of the Think-Pair-Share technique for improving various English skills among EFL learners. The results affirm the technique's potential to significantly elevate students' English scores while fostering active participation in both online and traditional classroom settings. As a result, this research serves as a practical guide for educators, providing best practices for implementing the Think-Pair-Share technique effectively in the digital era.

**Keywords:** *EFL learners, Think-Pair-Share technique, English proficiency, digital era*

## 1 Introduction

Learners in Indonesia perceive English as a foreign language. Some schools introduce English subjects in elementary school. However, most of the learners learn English for the first time in junior high school, as English is not compulsory in elementary school. Mastering English will be an essential key for learners as English has been accepted as one of the global languages [1]. There are four primary skills in English; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Additionally, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary are part of the English component. Each skill and component have a role in making learners master English well. Teachers still focus on teaching the materials conventionally, leading to learners' passive participation, they mostly control the class and cause students to be less engaged [2]. Teachers have to be innovative, especially in this digital era, in creating and delivering the materials either in online or offline classes so that learners' passive participation can be prevented.

Implementing one of the techniques in cooperative learning can be a useful strategy. Cooperative learning is a good way to enhance learners' critical thinking due to the problem solved by learners [3]. Cooperative learning is part of the constructivist approach. Teachers act as facilitators because this learning model is student-centered. The Think-Pair-Share technique is one of the techniques in cooperative learning. Found by Lyman in 1981, this technique forces learners to be active in the classroom which leads to the enhancement of social interaction skills

and participation involved in the classroom. Lately, this technique is frequently used in Indonesia. There are three stages in this technique. At first, learners have to think for several minutes after receiving a leading question related to the materials from the teacher. Then, learners work together in pairs to discuss and/or answer the questions given. Lastly, learners can present their results of the discussion or answer in front of the class. Learners will not feel intimidated because they mostly work with their friends. Think-Pair-Share aims to organize classroom activities for academic and social learning experiences [4].

Alongside the advantages of the Think-Pair-Share technique, teachers can integrate the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique with digitalization in this digital era. Combining digital media in the classroom can support the learning process because it helps both students and teachers at the same time [5]. They suggested that during the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique, YouTube can be used as digital media because it is easy to use and ease students to understand the materials due to visualization of the materials. E-mind mapping also can be applied as the digital media during the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique [6]. Furthermore, for online classes, teachers can utilize Google Workspace to conduct the teaching and learning process. Google Classroom is a digital learning tool that can help teachers in the online classroom [7]. Although it is online-based, students still can improve their reading comprehension with the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique in the teaching and learning process. Teachers utilize the comment section as a medium for students to share their ideas with the whole class.

Derived from numerous previous studies that have been discussed above, it can be deemed that the enhancement of EFL learners' English proficiency through the Think-Pair-Share technique both from online or offline classes, this article aims at analyzing the previous studies within the same field, to find out how they implemented the technique in the EFL classes whether online or offline classes, the improvement on EFL learners' English proficiency, the strengths, and weaknesses of the technique, and the best practice of using the Think-Pair-Share technique to improve EFL learners' English proficiency in the digital era and enhance the quality of the learning process in the classroom.

## **2 Literature Review**

This study applied library research, which encompasses the systematic utilization of library resources to extract pertinent data and insights from the existing body of literature [8]. Moreover, library research is research where the researchers analyze many various materials in the form of books, literature, notes, and any kind of report related to the problems that want to be solved to collect the data [9]. Our data collection techniques, taken from [10], included using research tools, thoroughly examining them, taking notes, and carefully analyzing the data.

In this research, the criteria of the research instrument are (1) Journal articles that were published between 2020 until 2023 so that the researchers' got the perspective of the implementation before and during the pandemic Covid-19. (2) The participants of the journal articles were EFL learners, particularly Junior and Senior or high school students. (3) The journal articles explored the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique either in online or offline classes. Each journal article represented one of the English skills or components. (4) The journal articles were from national journals indexed by SINTA and Garuda because the researchers would like to investigate the implementation of the technique in Indonesia. From those criteria, the researchers found nine previous studies that are suitable with the researchers' needs. There may

be other national references that can be included. However, due to the researchers' limitation in accessing the articles from the available sources, the researchers only chose nine previous studies. The chosen journal articles in Indonesia context are as follows

**Table 1.** Nine Chosen Journal Articles

<b>No.</b>	<b>Author (year)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Improvement</b>
1.	Suhrowardi (2020)	Improving writing skills; an implementation of think pair share for Islamic junior schools students	Junior high school students at MTsN Al Islahuddin Kediri	Positive
2.	Clevara et al. (2022)	The effectiveness of think pair share model toward the listening comprehension at SMAN 1 Anggana in the academic year of 2021/2022	Senior high school students at SMAN 1 Anggana	Positive
3.	Dewi (2023)	Improving students' speaking ability in expression opinion through think pair share method	Junior high school students at SMPN 1 Kotabumi	Positive
4.	Karim et al. (2022)	Enhancing the students' speaking skill through think pair share (TPS) at SMAN 4 Jember	Senior high school students at SMAN 4 Jember	Positive
5.	Putri et al. (2020)	The influence of think pair share in enhancing students' speaking ability	Junior high school students at MTs Khazanah Kebajikan	Positive
6.	Dwigustini & Widiya (2020)	Think pair share technique to promote students' reading comprehension	Junior high school students at Aqidah Islamic	Positive
7.	Hardiyanti et al. (2022)	The use of e-mind map in online Think-Pair-Share based reading learning on students' reading comprehension	Senior high school students at SMAN 1 Singaraja	Positive
8.	Wijaya et al. (2021)	An analysis of think pair share strategy on Google Classroom in reading at SMKN 1 Kuta Selatan	Vocational high school students at SMKN 1 Kuta Selatan	Positive
9.	Sari et al. (2022)	Combining think pair share model with digital media to enhance students' basic	Junior school students at UPT	Positive

The chosen journal articles in Table 1 were analyzed by identifying the data that answered the research questions. Subsequently, the data were organized, synthesized, and presented based on the focus questions of this research, which included: 1) How the Think-Pair-Share technique was implemented in EFL classe. 2) The impact on EFL learners' English proficiency. 3) The strengths and weaknesses of the Think-Pair-Share technique. 4) The best practices for teachers. The results were presented in the following section.

### 3 Results

This section is divided into four subsections that address the following themes: 1) The implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique in EFL classes. 2) The impact of the Think-Pair-Share technique on EFL learners' English proficiency. 3) The strengths and weaknesses of the Think-Pair-Share technique. 4) The best practices for teachers.

#### 3.1 The Implementation of the Think-Pair-Share Technique in the EFL Classes

There are three steps in the Think-Pair-Share technique. The first is the thinking step, students have several minutes to think about the questions given by the teacher. Next is the pairing step, in which the students discuss together with their partners about the answers. Lastly, in the sharing step, students share their answers in front of the class [11].

From the nine chosen journal articles, they elaborated on how they implement the technique in the EFL classes to improve EFL learners' English proficiency. Among nine journal articles, four of them integrated the technique with digitalization. YouTube Videos were integrated to improve EFL learners' grammar component in English using the Think-Pair-Share technique [5]. The previous researchers utilized YouTube Videos to explain the materials as it is believed that it can improve students' understanding due to the visualization that video served. Then, they continued to implement the Think-Pair-Share technique. E-Mind mapping is also digital media that can be used in the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique. Mind mapping is the main medium for students to think about their ideas or answers before they discuss the content of the mind map with their pairs [6].

Besides videos and mind mapping, Google Workspace can be utilized as well. Google Classroom can be combined with the Think-Pair-Share technique [7]. The previous study used Google Classroom to carry out the teaching and learning process. Students answered the questions given through Google Forms, then they followed the instructions to work and discuss with pairs then shared their opinions on the comment sessions. Lastly, they have to submit the result of the discussions to Google Classroom. The implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique can be integrated with Google Spacework as well [12]. The materials were carried out through Google Classroom, and the submission of students worked with pairs through Google Forms and/or Google Drive. Thus, the Think-Pair-Share technique is applicable in online classes.

Moreover, for offline classes, the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique is easy to implement for each skill in English skills. The Think-Pair-Share technique can be implemented in the Writing class [2]. Students were asked to discuss the descriptive text, then exchange their work with the pairs to give a suggestion and share it with the whole class. In speaking class,

students discussed their ideas in pairs and presented their answers in front of the class [13]. In reading class, the technique is also successfully implemented [14]. Students had time to read the passage comprehensively. Then they can discuss the text with their partner before sharing it with the whole class. Lastly, in listening class, the Think-Pair-Share technique was appropriate for listening class, teachers played the audio first, then students had time to think about the audio, and they also can discuss it with their friends [15].

With the implementation of the technique being elaborated, it can be concluded that the Think-Pair-Share technique has three steps and can be utilized in the EFL classes. The technique can be integrated with digitalization as well. It can be through digital media, such as YouTube or videos, E-Mind-mapping can also be considered as the media that can be used. Furthermore, Google Workspace helped the implementation of the technique, teachers can maximize Google Form, Google Classroom, or Google Drive to support the implementation of the technique.

### **3.2 The Impact of the Think-Pair-Share Technique on EFL Learners' English Proficiency**

The Think-Pair-Share technique utilized in classrooms either online or offline classes showed enhancement in EFL learners' English proficiency. For the passive skills; listening and reading skills. In listening offline class, a study by Karim et al. [12] compared two groups; an experimental group (with treatment), and a controlled group (without the treatment) in their study to see if the technique affected students' listening scores. The findings showed that the maximal score in the experimental score was 86,67 and the minimal score was 73,33. While the maximal score in the controlled group was 73,33 and the minimal score was 53,34. The experimental class got a bigger score than the controlled class. Moreover, students in the experimental class were very motivated because they could comprehend the listening audio in the best way. For the reading skills, previously in the reading offline class only 36% of students passed the Minimum Mastery Criteria (70). After the implementation of the technique within three cycles, 100% of students passed the Minimum Mastery Score. The Think-Pair-Share technique enhances learners' reading comprehension, motivation, and interest as well [14]. That finding is also in line with [6] who conducted the study through online, the mean of the students' pre-test score was 75.71, and it became 91.12 after the implementation of the technique. Further, students' perception of the use of the Think-Pair-Share technique also brought positive results. 70.6% of students agreed that TPS has good criteria. Students had time to understand the materials and discussed with pairs, which led to the enhancement of students' motivation in reading class [7].

Furthermore, for productive skills; writing and speaking skills. In the writing class, students in the offline class can write long paragraphs after the implementation of the technique [2]. 87% of students passed the score of 70 with a mean score of 71,77. The pairing step encouraged students to exchange perspectives and help each other. While for speaking online class, the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique enhanced eleventh-grader students' scores. Previously, only 45% of students were above 78. After the treatment, it became 80.78% of students above 78. The situation of the class was interactive, students shared ideas and trained their pronunciation and vocabularies with their pairs [12]. Moreover, in the speaking offline classes, [13] stated that from cycle 1 to 2, students' speaking scores showed enhancement, in cycle 1 the average score was only 66,47, then it increased to 75,83 in cycle 2. [16] added that junior high school students' speaking ability in the offline class improved through the technique. The average post-test score in the experimental class is 79.28, while the controlled class is only 66.56. All of the students in the experimental class passed the score of 70 (100%) in the second

cycle. Students were also active in the teaching and learning process, and they became fluent and confident in speaking English.

Besides the English skills, the grammar component was also enhanced. It was found that the average score of Junior high school students' grammar became 87.25 and was categorized as excellent and very good. Previously, it was categorized as very poor and poor because the average score on pre-test was only 18.75. Therefore, it can be stated that the technique successfully enhanced the English proficiency of students in junior or high school online or offline classes.

### **3.3 The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Think-Pair-Share Technique**

From the nine chosen articles, they mentioned the strengths and weaknesses of the Think-Pair-Share technique. The strengths of the Think-Pair-Share technique can be categorized into two types, students' English skills, and students' learning experiences.

In terms of students' English skills, the Think-Pair-Share technique helped students' creativity in writing a paragraph [2], [3]. The Think-Pair-Share technique encouraged students to promote and improve their listening comprehension [15]. The Think-Pair-Share technique supported students in expressing short monologues, opinions, and dialogues [13]. The Think-Pair-Share technique enhanced students' reading comprehension [14].

In terms of students' learning experiences, the Think-Pair-Share technique increased students' motivation in the learning process [14]. Students' critical thinking skills and ideas, and students' expression and knowledge [16]. The Think-Pair-Share technique brought a positive atmosphere that was full of encouragement in the classroom [12]. Thinking sessions allowed students to have time to discover their ideas, reducing the misunderstanding of the questions given [15]. Pairing sessions invited students to discuss freely with their pairs, force them to practice and be active in the learning process, exchange ideas or perspectives, respect each other's opinions, and become a safe place because students only talked with one person [12]. Sharing sessions forced students to become brave in voicing their opinions or answers [12].

Further, the strengths of the Think-Pair-Share technique in online classes are that the Think-Pair-Share technique is easy to apply, teachers can monitor students through comment sessions, and students' active participation also showed positive results during the learning process [7]. However, there is a weakness found in the online classroom, where some students do not submit the assignments on time.

Besides that, the weaknesses of the Think-Pair-Share technique are, pairing sessions can make students lazy to think individually because they just followed what their partner answers and students could not work cooperatively with their group [2].

### **3.4 Best Practices for Teachers**

This subsection focused on analyzing the findings of the previous studies, then found the best practices for teachers who want to implement the Think-Pair-Share technique in the classroom. This technique can be used to enhance each skill of English and grammar component as well. Further, integrating digitalization can maximize the implementation of the technique in both offline and online classes.

First, teachers must prepare a comprehensive lesson plan including digital media and the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique. The media can be videos, E-Mind Maps, or PowerPoint. Adding digital media leads classrooms to be more creative and innovative [5].

Teachers can also utilize the feature in Google Workspace when it comes to online classes. Google Classroom, which is part of Google Workspace, is an effective media for students to submit their work online [16]. Teachers have to reduce or disappear the use of conventional media, such as workbooks or textbooks because it makes students have less motivation when the teaching media do not engage them. Using only a textbook or exercise book creates less innovative and boring situations [2].

At the beginning of the class, teachers have to give clear information about the Think-Pair-Share technique, so that students can understand appropriately how the technique works. Explaining the Think-Pair-Share technique helps students understand the technique [2]. Then, teachers explain the materials with a clear objective; what skills that students have to improve? Then, ask questions related to the materials to students. Give students several minutes to think about the ideas or answers. Students' quality of response is enhanced if they have appropriate time to think [14]. Then, they can work together in pairs. In the pairing step, it is highly suggested to pair them with students' choices. It is shown that students who work together with pairs they have chosen were more active than pairing students at random [14]. Lastly, teachers ask students to come in front of the class to share their work or answers in front of the class.

During the learning process, teachers have to make sure when continuing to the next session, students are ready. Teachers have to be a facilitator to students, not dominate the teaching process, and let the students be creative and explorers. When teachers dominate the classroom, students will be passive and less interested in the learning process [2]. However, teachers still have to pay attention to the pairing step that aims to reduce students who might be passive and dependent on their partner. Teachers also have to be careful with the use of media to submit their work because they might submit the work late. In the sharing step, teachers have to make sure students are ready to come in front of the class so that students will not feel anxious because they are not ready yet. Giving motivation and appreciation to students' work is also necessary to make students become confident and comfortable in the class. Students' enjoyment and motivation were increased through the appreciation given [17].

#### **4 Conclusions**

In this research, nine journal articles were analyzed. The findings lead to the conclusion that the Think-Pair-Share technique effectively enhanced the speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills, as well as grammar proficiency, of EFL learners, particularly among junior and high school students. Previously passive learners transformed into active and motivated participants following the technique's implementation. Furthermore, integrating this method with digital media can enhance the overall quality of the learning process. It's worth noting that this technique is adaptable to the digital era, allowing teachers to collaborate using various tools such as video, Google Workspace, and YouTube, making it suitable for online classes. Hence, it is highly recommended that teachers implement this technique following the best practices outlined, as it significantly benefits EFL learners by boosting their skills and active engagement. For future researchers, exploring additional user-friendly digital media integrated with this technique is encouraged to further enhance teaching and learning experiences.

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