Effectiveness of the Utilized Interview Techniques to Enhance Speaking Skills of Students

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is regarded as one of the most difficult aspects of language learning because learners find it difficult to express themselves and are affected by factors that led them to be reluctant to speak. Hence, this study 1. determined the factors affecting the skills of the students in speaking English. 2.

Documented the utilization of the interview techniques to enhance the speaking skills of the students and discussed the challenges encountered and 3. Analyzed the perceived effectiveness of the utilized interview techniques to enhance the students' speaking confidence. The study used a mixed-methods approach using pre- and post-surveys, interviews, and group discussions. The respondents were the 22 Grade 10-Abad students of Tinago National High School. Results showed that students struggle to speak English because of the following factors: pronunciation, vocabulary, fear of public speaking, criticism, and shyness. Using criteria as an assessment tool, it revealed that there was an improvement of 20% in the students' English-speaking skills when the interview techniques of PREP and STAR methods were used as an activity, concluding that the usage of utilized interview techniques enhanced the English-speaking skills of students.
Keywords: Interview Techniques, PREP and STAR Method, Speaking Skills, Pre-survey, Post-survey

Introduction

Language acquisition begins when children acquire their first language naturally and subconsciously through interaction with the people around them. This refers to their acquisition of their native language. As they grow and interact with the larger community, they learn their second language. We tend to learn our second language by socializing with different groups of people. As we learn our first and second languages, we also develop and practice speaking. Speaking is one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced as a means of effective communication; however, it is also regarded as one of the most difficult aspects of language learning. Many language learners find it difficult to express themselves in spoken language. They are generally having problems using the foreign language to express their thoughts effectively. They stop talking because they face psychological obstacles or cannot find suitable words and expressions (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

Having difficulty speaking, especially in the English language, led to difficulty in expressing their thoughts, and these were caused by different factors that led them to be reluctant to speak, such as shyness, having nothing to say, low and uneven participation, and using their mother tongue (Al Hosni, 2014). A well-spoken English is an indicator of mastering the language. It means that people need some kind of teaching-speaking activity to be able to speak English well. The activities of teaching speaking can influence our speaking because, indirectly, they make us practice more often than before, according to Stevick (Wahyuni et al., 2020).

English, as the "Universal Language", is frequently used as a commercial or diplomatic language worldwide and is widely spoken and taught in more than 118 nations. Science, aviation, computing, diplomacy, and tourism all use it. Being unable to use the language daily limits the basic vocabulary and the naturalness of grammar coherence, which makes fluency in ESL challenging. Time also contributes to their difficulties because of the pressure during speaking that requires an immediate answer. Aside from fluency and time, ESL learners are also experiencing decreased confidence when they are interrupted while speaking

(Prastikawati, 2019), which requires them to correct their thoughts, which causes mental block. Moreover, when interacting with someone who has a different status, such as an administrator, ESL learners feel that they are being evaluated and graded based on their speaking ability. It makes it even harder for the learners to process their thoughts if the first language and code-switching are not allowed in their classroom. Furthermore, ESL students frequently feel inferior when they encounter native English speakers who seem to speak the language more easily than they do, which causes anxiety to interfere. ESL students developed the attitude that speaking in front of others would make them feel humiliated and judged for how they interact verbally (C. Separa et al., 2020).

Finally, the teacher's participation plays a big role in how the students improve their English-speaking skills by providing them with a good, suitable, and friendly environment to speak in by strengthening the students' confidence, not trying to correct them in front of the class, and not insisting on the student's errors while speaking (Alfaki. M, 2021; Prastikawati eet al., 2022). This study will benefit not only the students but also English teachers and people who are struggling with speaking the English language. Teachers can improve the speaking skills of the students, and they can adapt the intervention presented by the researchers. Future researchers can benefit as well from getting support from their study that is aligned with the researchers' study.

Cultivating this study will provide an opportunity for English teachers to find solutions when problems arise inside the classroom, specifically when students have difficulties expressing themselves using the English language. This will contribute to the teacher's understanding of some aspect of his or her teaching practice. The findings in this study will support the teacher's professional skills and knowledge, which will eventually enable them to teach English strategically and effectively, helping to reduce the students' reluctance to speak English. The interventions presented by the researchers can be conducted in the teacher's own professional context and can adjust their students' learning processes. The findings presented will help boost students' confidence and eventually enhance their speaking skills. With this study, future researchers will be less vulnerable and less reliant on external answers to future problems they will face. The unbiased findings in this study will serve as a guide and a stepping stone for future researchers' findings.

Statements of the Problem

This study used and applied interview techniques from the PREP and STAR methods to enhance the English-speaking skills of students. Specifically, it:
1. Determined the factors affecting the skills of the students in speaking English.
2. Documented the utilization of the interview techniques to enhance the speaking skills of the students and discussed the challenges encountered and
3. Analyzed the perceived effectiveness of the utilized interview techniques to enhance the students' speaking confidence.

Literature Review

Related Literature and Studies

Pratiwi et al., (2020) stated that the affective aspect is one of the main factors inhibiting students' speaking. This factor appears as students get negative results from the process of learning English in the classroom (Dong, 2012). They add that students, as individual learners themselves, will have an influence on the development of this factor. Florez, (1999) proposes four subfactors categorized as affective factors: lack of motivation, shyness, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

Prahaladaiah & Irudayaraj, (2019) once again states that the number of students who learn English as a foreign language has difficulties using words and expressions to speak. In addition, Lestari et al., (2018) also state that in real communication, nobody paid much attention to the correct grammar expression but emphasized the content and how to reply. Students clearly know what they are going to say in the source language, but when they have to switch the language itself into the target language, such as English, they often get confused about combining and using the proper vocabulary needed.

Brown., (2021), cited in Hardianti (n.d.), says that one of the solutions to solving the English-speaking problems is to use some techniques. The teacher should remember to use the necessary techniques that cover the spectrum of learners' needs. It means that the teacher must make sure that the necessary techniques are helping the learning process and are appropriate for the tasks.

Based on Ur (1996: 121)'s book "A Course in Language Teaching", at least there are five ways to solve the problems of speaking. The first is by using group work. The students are more active in speaking because they are in a smaller environment, so they can express everything more confidently. This was in line with the study by Brown., (2021). He states that one of the things that the teacher can do to help the students' problems with speaking is work on activities using big groups and small groups.

Theoretical Framework

This study was based on language acquisition theory, which covers behavioral theory, cognitive theory, nativist theory, and interactionist theory. Language acquisition is the process by which people learn to comprehend and use language. According to Newbong, (2012), who proposed the behavioral theory, children first pick up language by imitating someone who is typically their parents before changing their language use as a result of operant conditioning. According to behaviorism, we are a result of our surroundings. Children lack the internal processes or capacity to independently acquire language. It was also proposed that we acquire language because of cognitive theory, according to which, according to Safitri et al., (2020), children have very limited cognitive capacity at birth, but as they get older and interact with the outside world, their minds expand and form new schemas.

Nativist theory also exists as to how we acquire language, and it is based on White et al., (2008), who believes that the language acquisition device is an urge or desire that children have from birth, which is the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). He said that even if a child is not schooled in the language of their home nation, as long as they are raised in a typical setting, they will still develop a verbal communication system. As a result, learning a language must have an innate, biological component. Interactionist Theory, proposed by Prahaladaiah &

Irudayaraj, (2019), states that children have the capacity to learn and use language, but they need consistent interaction with their parents, caretakers, or teachers in order to do so fluently. The Language Acquisition Support System is a name for this concept (LASS).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework herks of this study used in processing-output input concise the profiles of files of the response, the tools us and the factors affecting the speaking skills of students the interviewing view techniques is the processes included: Request to conduct the ***study at the research site, the conduct of the pre-survey, the application of the interview*** techniques (PREP and STAR methods), and the post-survey. The output was the perceived effectiveness of the interview techniques utilized to enhance the speaking skills of the students.

Methodology

Research Design

This research is a mixed-methods study of quantitative and qualitative methods using a descriptive-experimental-evaluative design through pre- and post-surveys, interviews, and group discussions as instruments. It ascertained the factors affecting the speaking skills of students by means of a pre-survey. It utilized the interview techniques of the PREP and STAR methods to determine its effectiveness in enhancing the speaking skills of students and used the post-survey to analyze the perceived effectiveness of the applied intervention. Further, the study used a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative methods to determine the factors affecting the English-speaking skills of students, describe the utilization of interview techniques, and analyze the effectiveness of the utilized interview techniques to enhance the speaking confidence of the students using pre- and post-surveys, interviews, and group discussions.

Research participants

This study used convenience sampling in selecting the respondents. The respondents to this study were the Grade 10-Abad students of Tinago National High School. There were 18 male students and 4 female students, for a total of 22 students who participated in the study. Different schools were explored to conduct the research, and we were able to come up with Tinago National High School with the recommendation of the school principal. The English subject teacher also recommended the Grade 10-Abad section to train them and enhance their skills since she believed that priority should be given to the less privileged where English speaking is not practiced in the classroom.

Research Instruments

In gathering the data needed for the study, a pre-survey was used to determine the students' confidence in speaking English and identify the factors affecting their speaking skills.

It also used criteria to assess the performance of the students in executing the interview techniques of the PREP and STAR methods by pair and group assessment, as follows:

1. 30% Conciseness: The respondents should communicate completely as they answer by applying the PREP and STAR Methods to a topic or idea in a few words.
2. 20% Grammar: The respondents should observe proper sounds, words, sentences, and other elements, as well as their combination and interpretation.
3. 35% Content: The respondents should present a clear explanation applying the PREP and STAR Methods.
4. 15% Fulfillment of Requirements: The respondents should do what is required, necessary, or expected by the researchers.

A post-survey was also used after the intervention to measure the effectiveness of the PREP and STAR methods and determine the challenges in utilizing the interview techniques. The study also used interviews and group discussions.

Data Collection

The study was administered by identifying different schools to conduct the research. Different schools were explored to come up with Tinago National High School, and we consulted with the school principal. An approval letter was obtained from the DEP Division office to conduct the research at the chosen school. The research instrument was already prepared ahead of time. The English Coordinator offered the 10-Abad Section as the researchers' respondents. On the first day, there was an orientation to the class regarding the research study, and concerns were raised during that day, such as the time frame and schedule of the implementation. On the second day, the PREP Method was introduced to the class, and afterwards, the class was divided into 7 groups with 1 facilitator in each team. At the end of the session, the class had general feedback and shared experiences. The PREP Method continued on the third day, when the students had a conversation in pairs. Then, on the fourth day, the STAR Method was introduced to the class. Same groups for this method, and it was done as a group activity. At the end of the session, there was general feedback and the sharing of experiences. The STAR Method continued on the fifth day, when the students had a conversation in pairs. General feedback and the sharing of experiences were given at the end of the session. At the end of the intervention, the class answered the post-survey about their improvements and challenges encountered.

Data Analysis

Google Sheets were used in gathering the averaged results of the respondents. There was a total of 22 respondents who had been consistent since the start of this study. In order to get the results of each student from PREP and STAR Method Day One and Day Two, (1) the scores were gathered per level and divided into 4 (different levels mentioned in the criteria), also known as "beginning, developing, intermediate, and proficient." (2) To know the results in the first part, the value was divided by the given percentage of the criteria (ex., 30% conciseness). (3) To get the results of the students for PREP and STAR Method days one and two, the results were added from level one to level four. The number of respondents was divided by the total

number of students. This process is the same as when the results for the factors affecting the skills of the students were gathered.

Findings and Discussion

Based on the survey, it revealed that there were problems and concerns that needed to be addressed as to the students' skills in speaking the English language. A very important concern of this study was to ascertain the factors affecting the English-speaking skills of the students.
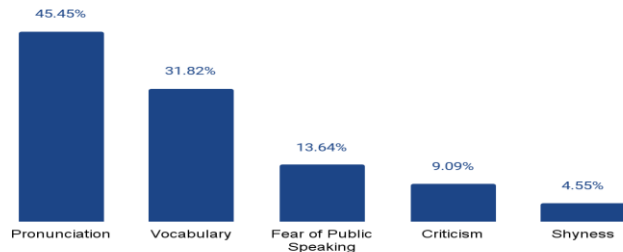

Figure 1. Factors affecting skills of the students in speaking English

Figure 1 shows that there were five factors identified by the respondents as affecting their skills in speaking English. There were 10 students, or 45.45%, who identified that pronunciation is the main factor that affected their skills in speaking the English language, while 7 students, or 31.82%, identified that vocabulary greatly affected their English-speaking skills, and 3 students, or 13.64%, said fear of public speaking affected their speaking skills. Lastly, 2 students, or 9.09%), selected criticism as the main factor affecting their English-speaking skills, and only 1 student, or 4.55%, indicated that shyness is the factor affecting his English-speaking skills. It was found out that among the factors, pronunciation is the leading factor because there are words that they find difficult to read and words that they find difficult to translate into English, followed by the vocabulary, which is connected to how the students speak the language.

Suryani I. et al. (2020) revealed that grammar errors, pronunciation problems, and vocabulary are the sub-factors inhibiting students' speaking, as found in the research findings. According to the study of Safitri et al., (2020), shy students see speaking in front of others as a difficult task for them. They have a negative picture of themselves that will affect their motivation to speak. The same situation happens when they want to speak a foreign language or are asked to answer a question in a foreign language.

There are different factors that affect the students' English. As the students continue to participate in the activity, the results show that the majority of them have a problem with their pronunciation, while only one-person selected shyness. The fact that the students had a fear of speaking in front of others and selected shyness as a factor as they improved and overcame

the factors that affected their speaking in English, but shyness is still the best factor for that one student that affected their skills in speaking the English language.

Encouragement is one of the powerful tools a teacher uses during a student's learning process. According to Mainwaring & Krasnow, (2010), "A Teacher's Encouragement Gives Students a Lasting Boost, a teacher's encouragement has a much greater impact on students. Students with average grades more often finish high school and pursue college degrees when they receive positive feedback from their teachers. After the students warmed up to the facilitators, they became less hesitant to share their thoughts, and with great encouragement, they were able to overcome shyness much earlier.

Documentation of the implementation of the intervention and discussion of the challenges encountered

There was an orientation on the interview techniques, which are the PREP method (point, result, example, and point) and STAR method (situation, task, action, and result), for the 22 respondents. These methods that Toastmasters International has recommended are known as the easiest to learn and use and will help answer questions with a proper structure of responses. The students were given random questions that could only be answered by applying the PREP Method. Start by telling the point, followed by a reason for the point, giving examples, and finally giving emphasis to the point again. The STAR method, which stands for "Situation, Task, Action, Result, is a structured manner of responding to a behavioral-based interview question. The students were given random questions that could only be answered using the STAR Method. Start by explaining the situation based on the given question, followed by a task that they can see as related to the question. After that, the students were expected to give their action based on the task that they were put into and, lastly, the result of the action they took. There were students who were hesitant to speak using the English language and asked the facilitators if they could speak vernacular first before explaining the words into English. There were also some students who were too shy to speak. The implementation happened for six consecutive days. Each intervention was divided into two parts: a group activity for day one and a pair-paired activity for day two.
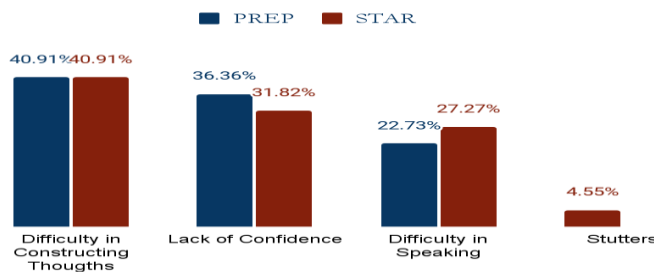

Figure 2. Challenges encountered in PREP and STAR Methods

Figure 2 shows the challenges encountered in the PREP and STAR methods. The biggest challenges encountered by the students as they used the PREP and STAR methods were the

difficulty in constructing thoughts with a 9 or 40.91%. There were 8 or 36.36% of students who selected lack of confidence, 5 or 22.73% of students who selected difficulty in speaking, and only 1 or 4.55% of students who selected stutters in the challenges they encountered during implementation of the PREP Method. In addition to this, based on the data gathered for the implementation of the STAR Method, there were 9 or 40.91% of students who selected difficulty in constructing thoughts for the biggest challenges they encountered; 7 or 31.82% of students selected lack of confidence; and only 6 or 27.27% selected difficulty in speaking upon the implementation of the STAR Method.

The researchers found that difficulty in constructing thoughts was the biggest challenge they encountered because students find it hard to share their thoughts in English. They tend to speak in vernacular to answer the questions, and when translated into English, they find it hard to construct sentences. And because of this challenge, it follows that 8 out of 22 students (36.36%) lack confidence because they find it difficult to speak the language.

Lestari H. et al. (n.d.) revealed that there was a decrease in speaking English, especially for the students of senior high school. Most of them encountered several problems in speaking, such as a lack of vocabulary that made it hard to say words and also made them not confident enough to speak English. Some of those students are not confident enough to speak English because of the fear of making mistakes. Some of them are afraid because their pronunciation is not as good as that of native speakers.

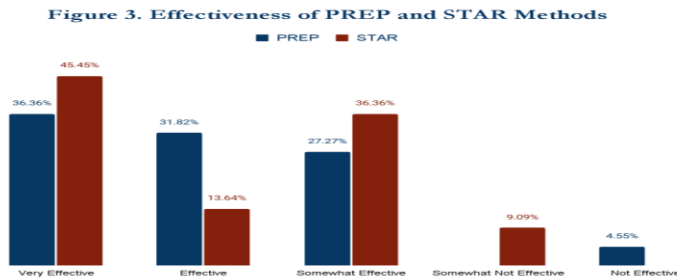*Analysis of the effectiveness of the utilized interview techniques*

Figure 3. Effectiveness of PREP and STAR Methods

Figure 3 shows that after the intervention applied by the utilization of the interview techniques of Prep and Star Methods, it was effective and was able to enhance the English-speaking skills of the students. For the STAR Method, there were 10 out of 22 students (45.45%) who said that the STAR Method was very effective, while there were only 8 out of 22 students (36.36%) who said that the PREP Method was very effective. For the PREP Method, there were 7 out of 22 students (31.82%) who said that the PREP Method was effective, while there were only 3 out of 22 students who said that the STAR Method was effective. For the STAR Method, there were 8 out of 22 students (36.36%) who said the STAR Method was somewhat effective, while under the PREP Method, only 6 out of 22 students (27.27%) said that the PREP Method was somewhat effective. There are also 2 out of 22 students (9.09%) who said that the STAR Method was somewhat ineffective, while only 1 out of 22 students said that the PREP Method

was not effective. It was found out that the STAR Method was more effective than the PREP Method, as perceived by the respondents. This also indicates that using the PREP and STAR methods really helps improve their skills in using the English language.

It was found out that the STAR Method is more effective than the PREP Method in a small group because of the different style of questioning. The STAR Method is based on a given situation, such as asking, when was the last time that you were in a situation where your trust in someone was put to the test? In this question, they found it easy because they just needed to think of the situation back then and because it was based on their experiences compared to the PREP Method, which is based on other matters such as asking them What is your favorite subject? wherein some students found it difficult to answer. The researchers concluded that having a small group and asking situational questions to the learners makes them speak more in English in a conversational manner where they are just sharing their experiences in the past compared to other questions.

Ur (1996), cited in Lestari H. (n.d.), revealed that the students are more active in speaking because they are in a smaller environment, so they can express everything more confidently. It was also in line with Brown (2002: 345). He stated that one of the things that the teacher can do to help the students' problems with speaking is engage them in activities in large groups and small groups. According to them, the researcher concluded that using group work is one solution to encourage the students to speak English.

PREP and STAR Method Students' Improvement

As shown in Table I PREP Method (Day 1 and Day 2 Results) and Table B-PREP Method (Day 1 and Day 2 Results), most of the students showed improvements from the first day of the intervention until the last day. For the PREP method, the results of the 22 respondents got a total average of 38% for the first day and 53% as the total average for the second day of implementation for the PREP method, while the STAR method had a total average score of 41% for the first day and 53.39% as the total average scores of students for the second day of implementation for the STAR method.

Table I PREP Method (Day 1 and Day 2 Results)

Learners	Day 1 Results (PREP Method)	Day 2 Results (PREP Method)
Total Average student 1 – student 22	38%	53%

Table I shows the data level of the students where there was a difference in their day 1 experience compared to their day 2 experience. This shows the consistent improvement of the students based on the results of the intervention used in the study. The total average of the PREP Method is 38% for day 1 (results) through group assessment. This represents the basis on which the researchers determine if the intervention will be effective for the students. While for day 2 (results), a total average of 53% was achieved through pair assessment. As you can

see from the data shown above, the improvement of the students was based on the interventions that were presented by the researchers and showed improvement in answering daily questions using the PREP Method.

Table II STAR Method (Day 1 and Day 2 Results)

Learners	Day 1 Results (STAR Method)	Day 2 Results (STAR Method)
Total Average student 1 – student 22	41%	53.39%

Table II shows the data level of the students where there was a difference in their day 1 experience compared to the day 2 experience that shows improvement in answering daily questions using the STAR Method. The total average of the STAR Method is 41% for day 1 (results) through group assessment, while for day 2 (results), the total average is 53% through pair assessment. As can be seen from the data shown above, the improvement of the students was based on the interventions that were presented by the researchers.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the utilized interview techniques of PREP and STAR Method enhanced the speaking skills of the students as well as their confidence in speaking the language. Based on the results, the following conclusions were drawn:

As to the factors affecting the skills of the students in speaking English, it was found out that pronunciation is the lead factor that affected the English-speaking skills of the students, followed by vocabulary, fear of public speaking, criticism, and shyness due to the struggles of students to speak a dialect and lack of confidence when speaking English.

According to Irudayaraj, A., in his study, Factors Affecting the Students Speaking English as a Second Language in Schools: Students must understand that speaking requires a specific set of fundamental requirements to be met and that language learners need to be knowledgeable in three different areas in order to speak effectively. These areas are "pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary", which place an emphasis on using the right words in the right order with proper pronunciation, and this affects the speaking skill mainly because the students were hesitant to speak English, considering that they mistakenly spoke the pronunciation of words, which caused the students to not continue speaking and hesitate to speak English in front of others. As it aims to improve their English-speaking skills by providing them with a good, suitable, and friendly environment to speak in by strengthening the students' confidence, not trying to correct them in front of the class, and not insisting on the errors of the student while speaking (Alfaki. M, 2021).

In addition, many students admitted that they feared being judged on how they spoke the English language. The researchers were able to see how the students reacted in front of others since there were students who had a fear of speaking in front of others. Hence, it was concluded that shyness is the lowest factor that affects the student's ability to speak the English language. In order to overcome this, encouragement from teachers and friends will help the

students get more active in participating since, due to a lack of motivation, they are not brave enough to speak, according to Humaera, cited in Suryani I. et al. (2020).

The researchers recommend that the teachers help the students improve their PGF skills (pronunciation, grammar, and fluency). Students can also participate in English-speaking activities or any contest that is related to speaking. And of course, always speak English because committing mistakes is part of daily practice. Safitri et al., (2020) stated that undergoing tasks through various activities in pairs and group work facilitates their ability to speak better English.

As to the challenges encountered by the respondents in the implementation of the interview techniques as interventions, it was revealed that the challenges encountered in the PREP and STAR methods were: Difficulty in speaking is the leading factor in challenges that affect the students speaking because of the hesitation in speaking the words formulated in their minds. They also find it difficult to construct their thoughts on how they will say it in English because of many difficulties in building up sentences and expressing their ideas for communication. They also lack confidence in using the English language, which results in speaking in a vernacular manner to express their thoughts because students are afraid to be judged by other people on how they speak the language. They struggle to speak English because of factors such as their pronunciation, appropriate grammar, vocabulary, criticism, and shyness. Students also consider speaking blunders in front of their classmates to be extremely embarrassing, which leads them to refrain from speaking in order to avoid such circumstances (Al Hosni, 2014). Thus, during the activity of the PREP and STAR methods, the students had to speak first based on their dialect, and then each one of the group members would help their schoolmates.

The researchers recommend that school heads and teachers implement an English-only policy inside the classroom to enhance their speaking skills and other programs inside the academy. Lestari H. et al. (n.d.) also suggested that the boarding school should plan a new English program as a solution to the students' problems, especially in speaking English, as a good alternative way to solve the students' speaking English problems.

In the analysis of the perceived effectiveness of the utilized interview techniques, the PREP and STAR methods enhanced the speaking skills of students because of how well they improved from the very first part of implementation until the last day of applying the intervention presented by the researchers. Thus, the students agreed that PREP and STAR had also increased their skills in speaking as well as their confidence. The researchers believed that the tool used in the study was effective in engaging the students in learning and utilizing the second language and was further improved by providing a support system of teachers for struggling students. Hence, the PREP and STAR methods are important to know and use.

The researchers recommend that school administrators and instructors adapt the STAR and PREP methods as day-to-day activities to allow students to practice speaking the English language. Lestari H. et al. (n.d.) suggested that the teacher can use some interesting strategies to make them try to speak English in English. For example, by using games, role play, and factual questions to recall the material that they have learned before in order to involve students' participation and their memory in their teaching and learning process.

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