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## Exploring English-Majored Students' Attitudes Toward the Teach-Back Method for Developing Speaking Skills

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### Abstract

Developing proficiency in speaking remains an important challenge for many EFL (English as a Second Language) learners. The aim of this study is to investigate how English majors view the teach-back method as a means of developing their speaking skills in the context of EFL learning. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study administered a survey to 96 second-year English majors and conducted semi-structured interviews with 9 students from Van Hien University in Vietnam. The survey measured students' affective, behavioral, and cognitive attitudes toward the Teach Back method, as well as their perceptions of its usability and application. The results showed that the majority of students had a positive attitude toward using the Teach Back method to develop their speaking skills, especially in improving fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence. The overall results suggest that the Teach Back method can be an effective teaching methodology for developing speaking skills in tertiary EFL settings.

### Keywords

Attitudes, EFL, speaking skills, teach-back method, Vietnamese education

### Introduction

The ability to speak is generally considered the most important skill students develop when studying English as a foreign language (EFL), as it enables them to express their thoughts and communicate effectively in day-to-day life. In higher education, an individual's ability to communicate through speech is linked to their level of engagement in class, their professional

communication, and their overall potential for global employment (Dauber & Spencer-Oatey, 2023; Uztosun, 2024). While developing the ability to speak fluently remains an obstacle for many EFL students, they need to integrate their existing linguistic knowledge into cognitive processes in real time (Wang et al., 2018). Therefore, enhancing the efficacy of speaking instruction in contemporary EFL education has been recognized as a priority.

Although speaking is a very important skill, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners continue to struggle with speaking. Research has indicated that learners may struggle with limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, grammatical errors, and low speaking fluency (Ellis, 2009). Furthermore, affective factors, such as speaking anxiety and fear of making mistakes, can negatively impact student participation in classroom speaking activities (French et al., 2020). These struggles are exacerbated in Vietnam due to traditional teacher-centered teaching methods and limited opportunities for communication in EFL university classrooms (Nguyen, 2025; Le, 2022).

As an alternative to traditional speaking instruction methods, researchers have recommended several instructional techniques to support students in developing their speaking skills, including reteaching and task repetition. Reteaching is generally defined as the use of mastery learning and formative assessment to revisit previously learned material to fill knowledge gaps and reinforce understanding (Bloom, 1976; Yates & Marek, 2014). In language learning, repeated speaking opportunities and targeted feedback have also been shown to support students in achieving fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence (Ellis, 2009; Sato & Loewen, 2019). Task repetition in speaking activities allows students to develop and refine their language use and improve their performance when repeatedly engaged with the same communicative task (Dawadi, 2019; Samuda & Bygate, 2008).

While numerous studies have reported the potential benefits of reteaching-based instructional techniques in language learning, most have relied on measures of instructional effectiveness and learning outcomes, with relatively little attention to students' perceptions of the instructional approaches. Additionally, most studies were conducted in secondary or multi-level learning environments, with relatively few on tertiary English majors. As a result, there is a significant need for additional research on English majors at the tertiary level regarding their perceptions of using the teach-back method to develop speaking skills.

The current study aims to explore English majors' views on the utility of the teach-back method for enhancing speaking instruction at Van Hien University, Vietnam. The study will examine students' affective, behavioral, and cognitive views of the method, as well as their opinions about its utility and feasibility for use in speaking classes. By investigating students' views on this instructional approach, the study will seek to provide empirically based evidence of the teach-back method's pedagogical potential in tertiary EFL contexts. The study's findings will be used to enhance speaking instruction and provide recommendations to English as a Foreign Language teachers, curriculum developers, and educational administrators at Vietnamese higher education institutions.

This study is based upon the following research question:

RQ 1: What are the attitudes of English-majored students toward the teach-back method for developing skills?

RQ 2: How do English-majored students perceive the usefulness and applicability of the teach-back method in enhancing various aspects of their speaking skills?

## Literature Review

### Speaking skills in EFL contexts

Speaking is considered one of the most important yet difficult aspects of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), because it is how students demonstrate their communicative competence in real-life situations in which they interact in English. Unlike listening or reading, speaking requires the student to process information in terms of what he/she wants to say, generate that information into speech, and produce it at the same time he/she uses it to create his/her own speech. (Wang et al., 2018) In higher education, there is an increasing association among successful academic performance, professional preparedness, and global employability, especially for students majoring in English, who will be expected to use English for both academic and vocational/occupational purposes. (Cavanagh et al., 2019; Richards, 2017) Therefore, developing proficiency in English is now viewed as a major objective in contemporary EFL teaching and learning.

Although the ability to communicate effectively orally is a vital skill for EFL students, previous studies have documented numerous obstacles to the development of their speaking skills. Studies have indicated that these include limited vocabulary resources, incorrect pronunciation, grammatical errors, and a lack of fluency in the production of spoken discourse (Ellis, 2009). Factors beyond language itself also impede students' engagement in speaking activities. Affective factors, such as speaking anxiety, fear of error, and low self-efficacy in participating in speaking activities, contribute to students' reluctance to engage in speaking activities (French et al., 2020). The above-mentioned obstacles to the development of EFL learners' speaking skills are further compounded by the fact that students frequently lack adequate opportunities for meaningful interaction and constructive feedback during speaking activities in instructional settings (Fang et al., 2018).

The teaching and learning of speaking skills in the Vietnamese EFL setting have several unique contextual challenges. Traditionally, English instruction has emphasized grammar, reading, and test preparation over communicative English instruction. The latter approach to teaching English has led to a reduction in the time devoted to communicative speaking activities in the classroom (Nguyen, 2025). Although the curriculum is currently trending toward promoting communicative language teaching, many university classes continue to use teacher-centered instructional methods. Consequently, students do not receive sufficient opportunities to develop their English-speaking abilities through spontaneous conversation (Le, 2022). Specifically, this discrepancy between the stated goals of the curriculum and the instructional methods employed in many university classes highlights the need for instructors to design instructional approaches that allow students to continually practice English speaking, receive feedback on their English speaking, and continuously revisit and reattempt speaking tasks in order to promote effective English speaking development (Phuong & Le, 2024).

### The teach-back method in language learning

Teach back, as an instructional methodology, uses prior instruction to help learners address misunderstandings, learning gaps, and/or partial mastery of previously learned content. The teach-back methodology is closely associated with Mastery Learning and Formative Assessment, both of which require a learner to demonstrate prior knowledge before proceeding to new material (Bloom, 1976). Conceptually, the teach-back method aligns with the Constructivist Theory of Learning, which views knowledge acquisition as an iterative process in which knowledge is gradually constructed and refined through multiple exposures and reflections (Greenfield & Bruner, 1966; Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). Re-teaching in language

learning enables learners to reinforce language knowledge and communication skills that were not adequately acquired initially.

In practice, the teach-back method can be implemented through a variety of instructional methodologies, depending on learners' needs and classroom environments. Some examples of these methodologies include re-teaching key concepts, providing alternative explanations, modifying speaking tasks, providing additional supported practice, and utilizing targeted feedback based on learner performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Ellis, 2009). For speaking instruction, re-teaching typically involves repeating speaking tasks, modifying speaking activities, or scaffolding practice so that learners can experience oral tasks with greater awareness and improve performance (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). As such, these instructional methodologies provide teachers with the flexibility to modify instruction and respond to learners' difficulties in a timely manner.

There are many educational benefits to re-teaching in language learning, as documented in numerous previous studies. Prior studies suggest that re-teaching provides learners with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the material by helping them solidify knowledge, correct errors, and increase confidence in using the target language (Vaughn et al., 2016). Additionally, re-teaching has been shown to enhance fluency, accuracy, and overall communicative ability by providing repeated opportunities to practice and receive feedback (Ellis, 2009; Sato & Loewen, 2019). Finally, re-teaching has also been found to reduce learners' anxiety and fear of making errors, and promote a more supportive learning environment where learners feel comfortable taking risks while participating in speaking activities.

### **Learners' attitudes toward the teach-back method**

Attitudes towards learning, one of the most influential affective variables affecting learners' motivation and participation in language learning, have received significant attention from researchers in recent years. Applied Linguists have recently highlighted the importance of students' perceptions of instructional methodologies as a mediating factor in their willingness to take risks, persist in their efforts, and actively engage in communicative activities, especially those involving public performance and evaluation (Dornyei & Ryan, 2015; Huang, 2024). Additionally, research has shown that in Tertiary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, learners tend to exhibit higher levels of classroom engagement and persistence when they perceive instructional methodologies favorably, indicating that exploring learners' attitudes towards instructional methodologies is essential for understanding how pedagogical practices operate within actual classroom environments.

The majority of research on reteaching practices suggests that students generally find iterative instruction, task repetition, and adaptive teaching helpful in developing their language skills. Many students like to be able to go back and look at the material they learned again, get extra help explaining things to them, and practice speaking repeatedly because those activities can give students more confidence in their ability to speak, decrease their anxiety about speaking, and provide students with a gradual means to improve their ability to communicate orally (Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2020; Sato & Loewen, 2019). The research also shows that when students' positive attitudes toward reteaching practices are observed in speaking courses, it is commonly due to their perception that they have developed greater clarity, greater accuracy, and are better prepared to communicate orally than before reteaching.

However, not all students will have a positive attitude toward reteaching practices. For example, some researchers have documented negative attitudes toward reteaching, particularly when

reteaching is viewed as a waste of time, monotonous, or inefficient (Wieman & Welsh, 2016). Many students may believe that reteaching is merely repetitive instruction that delays course progress or does nothing to address each student's unique needs, particularly among high-achieving students. Additionally, reteaching may lead to a lack of motivation or disengagement if students believe the instructor is not using instructional time effectively (Vaughn et al., 2016; Opdenakker, 2023). Differing opinions among students regarding reteaching demonstrate that students' perspectives on reteaching are complex and context-dependent, highlighting the need for empirical research to explore how students perceive reteaching across various EFL learning environments.

### **Research gap**

While prior research has demonstrated the pedagogical value of the teach-back method in EFL speaking instruction, most studies have focused on its impact on students' learning outcomes rather than on students' attitudes toward the methodology itself. Further, the majority of empirical research on reteaching-related methods has been conducted in either secondary or mixed-ability learning contexts, while the large population of English majors at the tertiary level remains significantly unexamined. The scarcity of research on students' perceptions of reteaching to improve their speaking skills in the higher education context of Vietnam, particularly at private universities where conventional instructional approaches remain predominant, creates a significant research gap that demands a systematic examination.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research design**

A mixed-methods research design was employed to gain a comprehensive understanding of English majors' attitudes toward the teach-back method in speaking instruction. Firstly, a quantitative approach was used to identify general trends and patterns in students' attitudes toward reteaching by analyzing data from a structured questionnaire. Statistical descriptions and comparisons were made possible by a quantitative approach. Afterward, a qualitative approach was used to supplement the quantitative findings by gathering more detailed information on students' perceptions, explanations, and experiences regarding reteaching in speaking courses. Data triangulation and the interpretation and validation of research findings were enhanced by the use of both methodologies.

#### **Research methods**

Based upon a mixed-methods research design, this study utilized two complementary research approaches. The quantitative element of the study was a survey to gather data on English majors' attitudes toward the teach-back method in their speaking classes; as such, it enabled the researcher to obtain measurable, generalizable data from a relatively large population. The qualitative element of the study consisted of a series of semi-structured interviews to further probe students' perceptions; through these interviews, students elaborated on their experiences, opinions, and rationales for the use of reteaching in their EFL speaking classes. Combining survey and interview data enabled a richer understanding of students' attitudes toward reteaching in EFL speaking instruction.

#### **Participants**

This study collected data from 96 second-year English majors enrolled in three *Listening-Speaking 2* classes at Van Hien University, Vietnam. Students were selected using convenience sampling because they were readily available to the researcher during data collection. Each of the three classes was taught by instructors who consistently applied the teach-back method throughout the course. Therefore, all three classes of students were exposed to the same

instructional methodology, thereby providing a common basis of comparison to assess students' attitudes toward the application of reteaching in developing speaking skills.

### Research instruments

Two research instruments were used in this study. They used a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on students' attitudes toward the teach-back method in speaking instruction.

The questionnaire contained 17 items that used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “*strongly disagree*” to “*strongly agree*”. Section one contained 9 items that assessed students' general attitudes toward the application of reteaching. The items were developed from three commonly recognized components of attitudes: affective, behavioral, and cognitive, with 3 items representing each component. The second part of the questionnaire contained 8 items assessing students' views on the usefulness and applicability of the teach-back method in enhancing various areas of speaking skills. Four items focused on students' views of the method's usefulness, and the remaining 4 items examined the perceived applicability of the method in speaking classes. Items on the questionnaire were developed based on the current literature on speaking instruction, reteaching methods, and learners' attitudes toward language acquisition.

To validate the questionnaire, it was reviewed by two experts in English language teaching to assess content validity, and some minor revisions were made based on their feedback. A pilot study was then conducted with a small group of English major students to test the clarity and reliability of the items prior to the main data collection.

Along with the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were also completed with selected students to gain additional insight into their experiences and perceptions of the reteaching method in their speaking classes. The interview protocol was comprised of five guiding questions (see Table 1), and the questions pertained to the students' overall feelings toward reteaching, how reteaching affected their speaking skill development, the areas of speaking most impacted by the reteaching method, potential obstacles experienced when engaging in reteaching activities, and finally what recommendations students would offer for applying the reteaching method in speaking instruction.

Table 1

#### *Interview Questions*

No.	Interview questions
1	How do you feel about the use of the reteaching method in your speaking classes?
2	In your opinion, how does reteaching help improve your speaking skills?
3	Which aspects of speaking do you think benefit the most from reteaching activities?
4	What difficulties or limitations do you experience when the teacher uses reteaching in speaking lessons?
5	Do you think the reteaching method should be used more often in speaking classes? Why or why not?

### Data collection procedure

Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained approval from the course lecturers and informed the students of the study's purpose, advising them that their responses would remain

anonymous and be used solely for research. A paper-based questionnaire was completed by 96 second-year English major students in three *Listening-Speaking 2* classes. To ensure that students participating in the questionnaire had sufficient experience with the instructional strategy, the questionnaires were distributed after at least 4 class meetings in which teach-back activities were implemented. The questionnaires were distributed and collected directly in the classrooms by the instructors responsible for those specific courses.

Following the completion of questionnaire data collection, nine students from the three classes were randomly selected to participate in semi-structured interviews to gain further insight into their perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of the teach-back methodology in speaking instruction. The interviews were primarily conducted in English, but Vietnamese was used when possible to ensure participants could fully articulate their thoughts and avoid misinterpretation. The participants provided written consent prior to each interview being taped and the subsequent transcription of the interview data for qualitative analysis.

### Data analysis procedure

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were entered into SPSS version 26 and Microsoft Excel for analysis. Descriptive statistics, including mean score (M) and standard deviation (SD), were used to assess general trends in students' perspectives on the teach-back methodology and its effectiveness and relevance for enhancing their speaking abilities. Results were then interpreted to answer the two research questions posed in this study. Qualitative data, such as the interview recordings, were transcribed and examined thoroughly. Student responses were subsequently arranged and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and categorize patterns and themes relevant to student perspectives and experiences regarding the teach-back methodology. The qualitative data provided an opportunity to support and clarify the quantitative results.

## Results

### Reliability analysis

Table 2 presents the results of a reliability analysis of the questionnaire developed for this research using Cronbach's Alpha. All scales, as shown by the internal consistency measures, had acceptable to good reliability. Specifically, for Research Question 1, the internal consistency measures for the three attitudinal dimensions ranged from 0.76 to 0.81. The scales for affective attitudes, behavioral attitudes, and cognitive attitudes were 0.78, 0.76, and 0.81, respectively. For Research Question 2, both scales for perceived usefulness (0.84) and perceived applicability (0.79) were also reliable.

Table 2  
*Reliability Analysis of the Questionnaire*

Research question	Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
1	Affective attitudes	3	0.78	Acceptable reliability
	Behavioral attitudes	3	0.76	Acceptable reliability
	Cognitive attitudes	3	0.81	Good reliability
2	Perceived usefulness	4	0.84	Good reliability
	Perceived applicability	4	0.79	Acceptable reliability
<b>Overall questionnaire</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>Good reliability</b>

Additionally, the overall questionnaire had an internal consistency of 0.83, indicating good reliability. Therefore, these results demonstrate that the questionnaire items were adequate for assessing students' perceptions and attitudes towards the teach-back method in speaking instruction.

### Students' attitudes toward using the teach-back method for developing speaking skills

In general, as illustrated in Table 3, the data indicate that students hold favorable views of the teach-back method in speaking classrooms. On average, responses to the 9 items indicated agreement with all items addressing the benefits of reteaching in speaking instruction.

Table 3

*Students' Attitudes toward the Teach-Back Method in Speaking Classes*

Items	N=96		
	M	S.D.	
<b>Affective attitudes</b>			
1	I enjoy speaking activities that involve the teach-back method.	3.70	0.80
2	I feel more confident when I have the opportunity to revisit speaking tasks through reteaching activities.	3.68	0.77
3	The teach-back method makes my speaking lessons more interesting.	3.79	0.76
<b>Behavioral attitudes</b>			
4	I actively participate in speaking activities when the teacher uses the teach-back method.	3.61	0.83
5	I am willing to practice speaking again when the teacher asks us to repeat speaking tasks.	3.69	0.78
6	I try to improve my speaking performance after receiving feedback during reteaching activities.	3.65	0.82
<b>Cognitive attitudes</b>			
7	I believe that the teach-back method is an effective way to support speaking development.	3.92	0.72
8	I think reteaching activities help students better understand how to perform speaking tasks.	3.85	0.74
9	I believe that revisiting speaking tasks helps learners improve their speaking ability.	3.87	0.75

*Note: M=Mean; SD=Standard deviation*

As illustrated in Table 3, students generally viewed the teach-back method favorably, with positive affective attitudes toward its application in speaking classrooms. Students' mean responses to the 3 affective domain items ranged from 3.68 to 3.79. Item 3 received the highest mean score ( $M = 3.79$ ;  $SD = 0.76$ ), indicating that students generally preferred speaking lessons that included reteaching activities. Additionally, the mean scores for students' confidence (Item 2,  $M = 3.68$ ) and enjoyment of applying the teach-back method in speaking lessons (Item 1,  $M = 3.70$ ) were also relatively high. One student, when asked about his/her experience with the teach-back method, stated:

*"I feel less nervous when we repeat the speaking activity after the teacher has explained it to us again. I get to look at the mistake I made before and work on improving it. That way, speaking is less stressful and much more enjoyable."*  
(Student 2)

This response illustrates how reteaching can help reduce learners' anxiety when speaking and increase their comfort. These same feelings of lower stress and higher enjoyment are consistent with the higher mean responses on Items 1-3, which demonstrate how the teach-back method enhances students' emotional involvement in speaking lessons.

Regarding behavioral attitudes, the study's outcomes showed moderate positive responses among students toward re-teaching. The means for these items ranged from 3.61 to 3.69. Students were willing to re-attempt the speaking activity when asked by the teacher (Item 5,  $M = 3.69$ ,  $SD = 0.78$ ); however, their willingness to participate actively during the teach-back activities was slightly lower (Item 4,  $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.83$ ). One interview participant provided insight into this type of behavior as follows:

*"When the teacher tells us to repeat the speaking activity, I usually try to give better answers based on the feedback from the previous time. I think it is easier to do the speaking activity again now that I have an idea of what to say. It also makes me want to participate more actively." (Student 1)*

The above quote indicates that re-teaching affords learners the opportunity to refine their performance after receiving teacher feedback. The fact that the student indicated she would attempt the activity again supports the relatively positive behavioral responses observed in Items 4-6, suggesting that the teach-back method encourages students to participate more actively in speaking activities.

In terms of cognitive attitudes, the results show the highest positive ratings among the three types measured, with means ranging from 3.85 to 3.92. Specifically, the item with the highest rating ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ) was item 7, indicating that participants perceived this method as effective for their speaking development. Additionally, students rated highly those items related to how the teach-back method enhances their understanding of how to complete a speaking task (Item 8,  $M = 3.85$ ) and how repeated attempts at a speaking task will improve their overall speaking skills (Item 9,  $M = 3.87$ ). These findings suggest that students view the teach-back method as a valuable tool for enhancing their speaking development. The cognitive attitude of students toward the teach-back method is further exemplified in the following quote from an interview:

*"Sometimes I am unsure of how to organize my thoughts when I speak for the first time. However, when the teacher gives additional explanations, and we then do the activity once more, I understand the activity much better, and I am able to communicate more clearly and logically." (Student 5)*

The above quote illustrates that re-teaching enables students to clarify the expectations of a speaking activity and ultimately helps them develop greater proficiency in completing such activities. These perceptions are consistent with the relatively high mean ratings for Items 7-9, indicating that students perceive the teach-back method as an effective way to promote their speaking development.

### **Students' perceptions of the usefulness and applicability of the teach-back method**

Overall, the results in Table 4 demonstrate that students had very favorable opinions of the usefulness and applicability of the teach-back method in speaking. As indicated by the mean values across all eight statements (ranging from 3.68 to 3.98), students' responses showed strong agreement that the method would improve most aspects of their speaking skills and could be successfully implemented in university speaking instruction.

Regarding perceived usefulness, the results showed mean values ranging from 3.91 to 3.98, which were relatively high, indicating that students found the teach-back method beneficial for improving many aspects of speaking performance. The item "the teach-back method helps me feel more confident when speaking English" was rated the highest ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ), followed by improvements in speaking fluency (Item 10,  $M = 3.96$ ) and vocabulary use (Item 12,  $M = 3.93$ ). Additionally, students perceived that the method improved pronunciation (Item 11,  $M = 3.91$ ). These results suggest that teaching and re-teaching activities may support learners' speaking development by providing opportunities to revisit previously completed speaking tasks, allowing learners to reflect on their performance, and enabling continued practice and refinement of their oral production. One interview participant provided evidence of this benefit in the following manner:

*"When we repeat the speaking activity, I am able to correct my errors from the first attempt. I also have more time to think about the words and how they are pronounced; therefore, my speaking has improved, and I am now more confident." (Student 3)*

This student's response demonstrates that revisiting speaking tasks enables learners to refine their language use and reduce hesitation when speaking. Similar views were reported in the moderate-to-high mean ratings for Items 10-13, which indicate that students are aware of the benefits of using the teach-back method in improving multiple components of speaking performance.

Table 4

*Students' Perceptions of the Usefulness and Applicability of the Teach-Back Method*

Items		N=96	
		M	S.D.
<b>Perceived usefulness</b>			
10	The teach-back method helps improve my fluency in speaking.	3.96	0.70
11	The teach-back method helps improve my pronunciation.	3.91	0.72
12	The teach-back method helps me use vocabulary more effectively when speaking.	3.93	0.71
13	The teach-back method helps me feel more confident when speaking English.	3.98	0.69
<b>Perceived applicability</b>			
14	The teach-back method is suitable for university speaking classes.	3.68	0.77
15	The teach-back method is easy to apply in speaking lessons.	3.71	0.74
16	The teach-back method offers students opportunities to practice speaking.	3.69	0.76
17	The teach-back method should be used more frequently in speaking classes.	3.73	0.75

*Note: M=Mean; SD=Standard deviation*

Concerning perceived applicability, the results indicate that students evaluated the teach-back method positively, with mean values ranging from 3.68 to 3.73. While students generally thought that the teach-back method was relatively easy to implement in speaking lessons (Item 15,  $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ) and provided good opportunities to engage in speaking practice (Item 16,  $M = 3.69$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ); they also felt that the method would be suitable for use in university speaking classes (Item 14,  $M = 3.68$ ) and that it should be utilized more often in speaking instruction (Item 17,  $M = 3.73$ ). These results advocate that students viewed the teach-back

method as a practical, easily incorporated instructional approach for speaking courses. Another student provided a similar perspective when he stated:

*"I believe that this method will be effective for speaking classes because the students will be able to practice more than once. If the students do not understand something, the teacher can explain it again. I also think that this method will create a more interactive and educational environment for the students." (Student 6)*

This participant's comments suggest that students believe re-teaching is a viable classroom practice that supports student learning. These same perspectives were reflected in the positive mean values for Items 14-17, indicating that students generally agree that the teach-back method is both applicable and beneficial in university-level speaking instruction.

### **Discussions**

This study's findings show that English major students overwhelmingly felt positive about using the teach-back method to teach speaking skills. Since all three sub-scales (affective, behavioral, and cognitive) have high mean values, we see that students reacted positively to the practice of re-teaching speaking skills. The fact that the cognitive dimension received the highest evaluation indicates that students clearly understood the educational benefit of having speaking skills tasks re-taught and of further explanation provided. This pattern suggests that the teach-back method may help students understand what is expected of them in terms of a speaking task's requirements and improve their performance by repeatedly practicing and reflecting on their own speaking.

These findings are consistent with prior research on the teach-back method in language learning. Vaughn et al. (2016) stressed that re-teaching is an important aspect of mastery-oriented instruction because teach-back provides learners with the opportunity to identify areas they do not understand, correct errors, and solidify their knowledge before continuing on to new material. Ellis (2009) made a similar argument, stating that repeated opportunities to practice and receive feedback are critical to the development of productive language skills. Regarding speaking instruction, Samuda and Bygate (2008) noted that task repetition can increase learners' awareness of language forms and communication strategies, thereby leading to better-quality spoken language. Therefore, the relatively strong cognitive evaluations from this study support the idea that revisiting speaking tasks will be beneficial for language learners.

In addition to the cognitive aspects of the teach-back method, the study's results highlighted its affective value in speaking classes. The positive emotional responses students had toward re-teaching activities indicated that the opportunity to revisit speaking tasks decreased their anxiety and made the speaking class more enjoyable. This result supports the positions of Dornyei and Ryan (2015) and Huang (2024), who emphasize that learners' attitudes and perceptions of instructional methods can significantly affect their motivation and willingness to participate in the classroom. In speaking classes where anxiety and fear of making mistakes can severely restrict student participation, re-teaching activities may create a more supportive learning environment in which students can experiment with language.

Additionally, the results showed that students felt the teach-back method was useful for enhancing speaking abilities and could be applied in various ways in university-level speaking courses. Participants reported that re-teaching activities improved their fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and speaking confidence, and provided additional opportunities for meaningful speaking experiences. These perceptions support the conclusions of Sato and Loewen (2019),

who suggested that repeated speaking practice, along with feedback, allows learners to develop greater fluency and accuracy over time. Given that speaking instruction in Vietnamese higher education institutions has historically been constrained by limited opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful communicative practice, the teach-back method may be a practical instructional strategy for enhancing students' speaking development.

### **Limitations of the study**

While the current study offers important insights into EFL students' perspectives on the effectiveness of the teach-back method in speaking instruction, it has some limitations worth noting. First, the sample included only 96 English major students from three classes at one private university, thereby limiting the generalizability of these results to other EFL contexts or institutions. Second, the questionnaires used to collect quantitative data reflect students' opinions on improvements in their speaking ability, but do not measure how effectively they improved it. Third, while the study investigated students' attitudes and perceptions of the teach-back method, it did not examine whether there was actually any improvement in their speaking over time. Therefore, future studies could investigate a wider, more representative group of students, examine changes in students' speaking abilities using longitudinal designs, or assess students' speaking abilities objectively (e.g., using ratings by independent raters) to evaluate the effects of the teach-back method in comprehensive speaking instruction.

### **Pedagogical implications**

#### *Implications for EFL teachers*

These results suggest that EFL instructors can use the teach-back method as a supporting instructional strategy to help students develop their speaking skills. The teach-back method provides students with the opportunity to revisit a speaking activity after receiving feedback or additional explanation from their instructor. This allows students to identify what they did incorrectly during the previous attempt and enables them to improve on those errors when attempting the activity again. In addition, the teach-back method may help alleviate students' speaking anxiety and motivate students to participate more actively in speaking activities. Therefore, instructors should plan speaking lesson plans that provide opportunities for students to repeat speaking activities, receive guidance and feedback on their speaking performances, and engage in reflective thinking about their speaking.

#### *Implications for curriculum design*

The results indicate that curriculum developers may wish to create courses that include structured opportunities for students to re-teach aspects of speaking, especially in tertiary EFL contexts. Since students appear to view the teach-back method as both helpful and applicable to speaking classes, curriculum developers may want to develop courses with structured levels that allow students to revisit and refine their speaking abilities. For example, speaking activities can be developed as part of a series of "cycles" in which students perform an activity once, receive feedback and/or guidance, and then revisit and improve their performance in subsequent cycles. In this way, curriculum developers can ensure that students will have adequate time to develop their speaking skills before moving on to new activities.

#### *Implications for speaking instruction*

The results of the present study offer several implications for instructors on implementing the teach-back method in their classrooms. There are many ways that instructors can implement the teach-back method to support students' repeated speaking practice and reflective learning. Instructors can use a variety of teaching methods, such as repeated speaking practice, peer feedback, guided corrections, and modifications to speaking activities, to allow students to

revisit and improve their oral performance. These methods can provide students with additional opportunities to develop their pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and overall communication skills. Therefore, the teach-back method can help create an interactive, learner-centered speaking class in which students continually work to improve their speaking abilities.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to examine how English major students evaluate the teach-back method as a means of developing their speaking skills in a Vietnamese tertiary EFL setting. The study found that most students have positive attitudes toward the method across affective, behavioral, and cognitive measures; additionally, they perceive it as useful for improving several aspects of their speaking performance. Specifically, the opportunity for students to reflect on previously completed speaking activities and receive additional feedback supports their ability to improve fluency, pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary selection, and speaking confidence. The findings of this study illustrate the educational value of the Teach Back method in creating more participatory and supportive environments for students to engage in speaking activities. As such, the study contributes to the literature examining student-centered approaches to instruction and provides practical recommendations for enhancing speaking instruction in the context of EFL tertiary-level education.

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### Ethics Approval Statement

The Institutional and/or National Research Committee's ethical standards, as well as the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its subsequent amendments or comparable ethical standards, were adhered to in all study procedures.

### Declaration of AI Use

To facilitate proofreading and language refinement of this manuscript, the authors used generative AI technology (ChatGPT and Grammarly). The final manuscript was meticulously reviewed and edited to ensure accuracy and integrity, and AI use was conducted under human oversight. The content and conclusions presented in this work are the sole responsibility and accountability of the author.

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