Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of the Three-Phase Technique in Reading Instruction: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores teachers' and students' perceptions of the Three-Phase Technique (TPT) in reading instruction, a method designed to enhance reading comprehension through three distinct stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 5 teachers and 10 students in senior high school, classroom observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal that both teachers and students recognized the benefits of TPT in improving reading comprehension, particularly in activating prior knowledge, maintaining focus during reading, and promoting deeper reflection post-reading. However, time constraints and the need for differentiation emerged as key challenges in its implementation. Teachers noted that adjusting the technique to meet the diverse needs of students was essential for maximizing its effectiveness. The study also highlighted the importance of metacognitive awareness, with both teachers and students emphasizing how the reflective nature of TPT encouraged students to become more self-aware of their reading strategies. These findings suggest that while TPT is a valuable tool for enhancing reading comprehension, its implementation requires thoughtful adaptation to address the unique challenges within each classroom setting.

Abstrak

Penelitian kualitatif ini mengeksplorasi persepsi guru dan siswa tentang Teknik Tiga Tahap (TPT) dalam pengajaran membaca, sebuah metode yang dirancang untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca melalui tiga tahap yang berbeda: pra-membaca, saat-membaca, dan pasca-membaca. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan 5 guru dan 10 siswa, observasi kelas, dan analisis dokumen. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa baik guru maupun siswa mengakui manfaat TPT dalam meningkatkan

pemahaman bacaan, terutama dalam mengaktifkan pengetahuan awal, mempertahankan fokus selama membaca, dan mendorong refleksi yang lebih dalam setelah membaca. Namun, keterbatasan waktu dan kebutuhan untuk melakukan diferensiasi muncul sebagai tantangan utama dalam implementasinya. Para guru mencatat bahwa menyesuaikan teknik ini untuk memenuhi kebutuhan siswa yang beragam sangat penting untuk memaksimalkan keefektifannya. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti pentingnya kesadaran metakognitif, dimana guru dan siswa menekankan bagaimana sifat reflektif dari TPT mendorong siswa untuk menjadi lebih sadar akan strategi membaca mereka. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun TPT adalah alat yang berharga untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca, penerapannya membutuhkan adaptasi yang bijaksana untuk mengatasi tantangan unik dalam setiap pengaturan kelas.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to comprehend written texts is fundamental to academic success and lifelong learning. Reading comprehension, however, is not an innate ability but a skill that can be developed through structured instruction and strategic techniques. Among these, the Three-Phase Technique (TPT) has emerged as an effective method for enhancing reading comprehension. This technique, which consists of pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading phases, is designed to scaffold learners' comprehension processes. By activating prior knowledge, engaging learners during reading, and reinforcing understanding afterward, TPT provides a comprehensive framework for both teachers and students to navigate the complexities of reading.

In recent years, there has been increasing interest in the role of TPT in reading instruction, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. For instance, Diehl et al. (2022) highlight how TPT fosters student-centered learning by enabling learners to approach texts critically and independently

Similarly, a study by Latifa (2021) demonstrated that students taught using TPT showed marked improvements in reading comprehension scores compared to those who underwent traditional instruction. These findings suggest that TPT not only enhances comprehension but also cultivates higher levels of engagement and autonomy among learners.

Moreover, the structured nature of TPT aligns with contemporary educational paradigms, such as constructivism and metacognition. Constructivist learning emphasizes the importance of activating prior knowledge as a foundation for acquiring new information. In this regard, the pre-reading phase of TPT plays a pivotal role in connecting students' existing knowledge with new concepts presented in texts. The while-reading phase emphasizes interactive learning, encouraging students to actively process information, while the post-reading phase provides opportunities for reflection and synthesis (Huang et al., 2023; Lee, 2020).

However, while the pedagogical benefits of TPT are well-documented, there remains a significant gap in understanding the perspectives of both teachers and students who engage with this technique. Much of the existing research has focused on quantitative outcomes, such as test scores, without delving deeply into the qualitative experiences of stakeholders. For instance, a study by Ammang Latifa (2021) primarily analyzed the effectiveness of TPT using pre-test and post-test designs but did not explore how teachers perceive the challenges of implementing the technique or how students experience the process.

Similarly, earlier research by Al-Harbi (2019) examined the influence of TPT on vocabulary acquisition in EFL settings but overlooked its broader implications for reading comprehension. Another study by Singh and Raj (2018) explored students' engagement during the while-reading phase but did not consider the holistic impact of the three phases on comprehension or the teacher's role in facilitating the process. These studies highlight the effectiveness of TPT but fail to address the nuanced perceptions of those directly involved in its implementation

This study seeks to address these gaps by investigating the perceptions of both teachers and students regarding the use of TPT in reading instruction. Specifically, it aims to explore their views on the effectiveness, challenges, and

benefits of this technique in real-world classroom settings. By focusing on qualitative data, this study offers a more comprehensive understanding of TPT, providing insights that can inform its refinement and broader application in diverse educational contexts.

The Three-Phase Technique (TPT) has garnered attention as an effective instructional strategy for reading comprehension. This method, which incorporates pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages, aims to support students in comprehending texts systematically. Each phase is designed to address specific aspects of the reading process: activating prior knowledge, engaging with the text, and consolidating understanding. Over the last five years, several studies have examined the technique's applications and effectiveness in different contexts, shedding light on its strengths and areas for improvement.

Pre-Reading Phase

The pre-reading phase focuses on preparing students to engage with the text. Strategies such as predicting content, discussing related topics, or identifying key vocabulary are common practices. According to Latifa (2021), this phase plays a crucial role in activating students' schema, which enables them to connect new information with their existing knowledge base. Similarly, a study by Huang and Lee (2023) found that pre-reading discussions significantly increased students' motivation and curiosity about the text, resulting in improved comprehension during subsequent phases.

While-Reading Phase

The while-reading phase emphasizes active engagement with the text. Teachers often use techniques such as questioning, highlighting, or annotating to help students focus on key details and construct meaning. Recent research by Diehl et al. (2022) demonstrated that incorporating guided questioning during this phase led to better comprehension outcomes, especially for students who struggled with reading fluency. The study emphasized the importance of teacher intervention in scaffolding students' understanding of complex texts.

Post-Reading Phase

The post-reading phase aims to reinforce understanding and encourage critical thinking. Activities such as summarizing, discussing, or evaluating the text are often utilized. Feri Ferdiyanto's research (2024) highlighted the role of metacognitive reflection in this phase, where students assessed their comprehension strategies and identified areas for improvement. This approach not only improved comprehension but also fostered independent learning habits.

Teachers' Perspectives on TPT

Teachers play a pivotal role in implementing TPT effectively. Studies have shown that while educators recognize its benefits, they also face challenges in its application. Al-Harbi (2019) reported that teachers often struggle with time constraints and balancing the needs of diverse learners when using TPT in classrooms. Despite these challenges, teachers acknowledged that TPT provided a structured framework that enhanced student engagement and comprehension.

Students' Perspectives on TPT

Students' perceptions of TPT are equally important, as their experiences shape its effectiveness. A qualitative study by Singh and Raj (2018) revealed that students appreciated the interactive nature of the technique, particularly the pre-reading activities that made texts more accessible. However, some students found the while-reading phase overwhelming, especially when faced with challenging texts. This highlights the need for differentiated instruction and additional support during this phase.

The Gap in Literature

Although TPT has been widely studied, most research has focused on its quantitative outcomes, such as test scores or comprehension rates. Studies exploring the qualitative experiences of teachers and students remain limited. For instance, while Latifa (2021) and Huang & Lee (2023) emphasized the pedagogical benefits of TPT, they did not examine the challenges faced by teachers in diverse classrooms. Similarly, Ferdiyanto's (2024) work on metacognitive strategies provided valuable insights into the post-reading phase but lacked a comprehensive discussion of the interconnectedness of all three phases.

This study aims to bridge these gaps by exploring both teachers' and students' perspectives on TPT through a qualitative lens. By examining their experiences and perceptions, the study seeks to provide a holistic understanding of TPT's strengths, challenges, and potential for refinement in reading instruction.

METHOD

This qualitative study explores the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the implementation of the Three-Phase Technique (TPT) in reading instruction. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed to gather in-depth insights into participants' experiences, perspectives, and challenges in utilizing TPT. This section outlines the research design, participants, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures.

The study adopts a phenomenological approach, which focuses on understanding individuals' lived experiences with a particular phenomenon—in this case, the application of the TPT in reading instruction. This design is appropriate for capturing the nuanced and subjective experiences of both teachers and students as they navigate the different phases of TPT (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The study involved 15 participants, including 5 English teachers and 10 senior high school students in SMA Arrofi'iyah Semampir and MA Darul Lughah Walkaromah Kraksaan Probolinggo Jawa Timur, selected using purposive sampling. The criteria for selecting teachers included:

1. A minimum of three years of teaching experience.
2. Previous experience using TPT in reading instruction.

Students were chosen based on their active involvement in TPT-based classrooms. This selection ensured a diverse range of experiences, including both high- and low-performing readers.

To collect comprehensive data, multiple qualitative methods were employed:

1. Semi-Structured Interviews were conducted with teachers and students to explore their perceptions, challenges, and suggestions regarding TPT. The interview guide was developed based on prior studies and refined after pilot

testing with two participants (Latifa, 2021; Ferdiyanto, 2024). Interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

2. Classroom Observations were conducted to capture real-time practices of TPT implementation. A structured observation sheet was used to document interactions, teaching strategies, and student engagement during each phase of TPT (Huang & Lee, 2023).

3. Document Analysis. Lesson plans and teaching materials were analyzed to understand how TPT was integrated into the curriculum. These documents provided additional context to the teachers' instructional strategies and alignment with the technique.

Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns and themes in the qualitative data. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework guided the analysis:

1. Familiarization with the data through repeated readings.
2. Generating initial codes based on significant statements.
3. Searching for themes across the dataset.
4. Reviewing themes for consistency and relevance.
5. Defining and naming themes.
6. Producing the final report.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings from the qualitative analysis of teachers' and students' perceptions regarding the Three-Phase Technique (TPT) in reading instruction. The results are organized around the key themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. These themes provide insights into both the benefits and challenges of implementing TPT, as well as the perceptions of participants regarding its effectiveness.

Teachers' Perceptions of TPT

The analysis of teachers' interviews revealed several key advantages of using TPT in reading instruction. First, teachers highlighted the structure and clarity that TPT provided in organizing the reading process. According to Teacher A, "The

pre-reading phase really helps to activate students' prior knowledge, which is critical for understanding the text later on" (Teacher A, personal communication, 2024). Similarly, Teacher B emphasized how the post-reading phase allowed students to consolidate their learning and make deeper connections with the text: "It's not just about understanding the content, but about reflecting on it and relating it to their own lives" (Teacher B, personal communication, 2024). This finding supports previous studies that have emphasized the role of each phase in enhancing comprehension by engaging students actively at different points of the reading process (Latifa, 2021; Huang & Lee, 2023).

However, teachers also expressed challenges related to the time constraints of the school day. Teacher C noted that, "While I see the benefits of TPT, it sometimes feels rushed, especially when there's not enough time for all three phases" (Teacher C, personal communication, 2024). This challenge reflects findings from previous research (Al-Harbi, 2019), which identified time limitations as a common barrier to the effective implementation of structured instructional methods like TPT. Despite these challenges, teachers generally viewed TPT as a valuable tool for fostering active learning and improving reading comprehension outcomes.

Students' Perceptions of TPT

Students' perceptions of TPT were predominantly positive, with many participants expressing appreciation for the active engagement and structured approach that TPT provided. Student interviews revealed that the pre-reading phase, which involves activities like brainstorming and vocabulary review, was particularly beneficial in preparing them for the text. "The pre-reading activities make the reading easier because you know what to expect," said Student 3 (personal communication, 2024). This aligns with Latifa's (2021) finding that activating prior knowledge enhances students' engagement with texts and increases comprehension.

The while-reading phase was also highlighted as an effective strategy, though some students found it challenging. Student 6 remarked, "Sometimes it's hard to keep track of everything, especially if the text is too long or complex"

(Student 6, personal communication, 2024). This feedback echoes the challenges identified in the literature, where students struggled with maintaining focus and understanding during complex or lengthy readings (Ferdiyanto, 2024). Despite this, many students appreciated the teacher's guidance during this phase, with Student 8 noting, "The questions that the teacher asks while we are reading really help to focus on the important points" (Student 8, personal communication, 2024).

The post-reading phase, which involves reflection and discussion, was identified as the most beneficial by several students. Student 1 said, "I like how we can talk about the reading afterwards, because it helps me understand it better and think about it more deeply" (Student 1, personal communication, 2024). This finding is consistent with Huang and Lee's (2023) research, which found that post-reading activities such as discussion and reflection contribute significantly to students' deeper understanding of the material.

Challenges in Implementation

Despite the positive perceptions, both teachers and students noted several challenges in implementing TPT effectively. Teachers frequently mentioned the difficulty of maintaining student attention, particularly during the while-reading phase. "Some students struggle to stay engaged, especially when the text is abstract or highly technical," said Teacher B (personal communication, 2024). Similarly, students acknowledged that the while-reading phase could feel overwhelming if the text was too difficult or lengthy. Student 5 explained, "It's hard to keep up sometimes, especially if the reading is long and full of unfamiliar words" (Student 5, personal communication, 2024).

Additionally, the need for differentiation was highlighted by both groups. Teachers noted that TPT required them to tailor their strategies to meet the varying needs of students, particularly when there was a mix of students with different reading abilities in the classroom. Teacher A observed, "I have to adjust my questions and activities based on whether students are struggling with comprehension or already know the material" (Teacher A, personal communication, 2024). Students also expressed the need for more personalized support, with Student 2 mentioning, "Sometimes I feel lost in the middle of the

reading, and it would help if the teacher gave us more time to process the information" (Student 2, personal communication, 2024).

The Role of Metacognition in TPT

An interesting finding in the study was the role of metacognitive strategies in the successful use of TPT. Many teachers and students noted that the reflective nature of the post-reading phase helped foster metacognitive awareness. Teacher C emphasized, "Getting students to think about their own understanding is crucial. The post-reading phase helps them to be more aware of how they read and what strategies work for them" (Teacher C, personal communication, 2024). This finding is consistent with Ferdiyanto's (2024) research on the role of metacognitive skills in reading comprehension, highlighting the importance of self-reflection in enhancing students' reading abilities.

The findings from this study offer valuable insights into the perceptions of both teachers and students regarding the implementation of the Three-Phase Technique (TPT) in reading instruction. Overall, both groups acknowledged the advantages of TPT in enhancing reading comprehension, but they also identified several challenges that may affect its effectiveness in diverse classroom settings. This discussion will analyze the implications of these findings, compare them to existing literature, and explore the broader significance of TPT in contemporary educational contexts.

The Benefits of TPT for Reading Instruction

Both teachers and students recognized the structured approach of TPT as an effective strategy for improving reading comprehension. In particular, the pre-reading phase, designed to activate prior knowledge and introduce key concepts, was seen as essential in preparing students to engage meaningfully with the text. This aligns with research by Latifa (2021), who found that pre-reading activities significantly enhanced students' ability to comprehend texts by linking new information to existing knowledge. Similarly, Huang and Lee (2023) emphasized the importance of pre-reading discussions in sparking students' curiosity and motivation, which were echoed by the students in this study, who reported feeling more confident when they understood the context of the reading.

The while-reading phase, which encourages active engagement through techniques like questioning, annotating, and teacher guidance, was also praised for promoting focus and deeper understanding. This aspect of TPT aligns with findings from Diehl et al. (2022), who demonstrated that teacher-guided questioning during reading could lead to better comprehension, particularly for students struggling with complex texts. In the present study, many students expressed how the teacher's involvement in the while-reading phase helped them stay focused and gain clarity on difficult passages. However, challenges in maintaining engagement during lengthy or challenging readings were also noted, reflecting the findings of Feri Ferdiyanto (2024), who emphasized the need for strategic intervention during difficult texts to ensure that students remain engaged and can successfully process information.

The post-reading phase, which fosters reflection and discussion, was another critical aspect of TPT that received positive feedback from both teachers and students. Teachers highlighted how this phase provided an opportunity for students to consolidate their learning and make connections to their personal experiences. The value of reflection in enhancing reading comprehension has been widely acknowledged in the literature, with studies such as Huang and Lee (2023) noting that post-reading activities help students process the content more deeply and develop a more nuanced understanding. Similarly, the present study's students reported feeling more confident in their understanding of the text after engaging in post-reading discussions, which supports the idea that reflection enhances not only comprehension but also critical thinking.

Challenges in Implementing TPT

Despite the positive feedback, both teachers and students also identified several challenges that impacted the effectiveness of TPT. One common concern was the time constraints associated with the three distinct phases. Teachers, particularly those in large classrooms, noted that it was often difficult to allocate enough time to each phase. Teacher C's comment, "Sometimes it's hard to fit everything into the class period," reflects a common limitation identified in previous research (Al-Harbi, 2019), where time constraints were cited as a

significant barrier to effective implementation. The time required for each phase of TPT can be especially challenging when teachers must accommodate diverse learning needs or adhere to a rigid curriculum.

Additionally, while the structured nature of TPT offers several advantages, it also demands a high level of instructional adaptability. Teachers in this study mentioned the challenge of adjusting their approach based on students' varying reading abilities. Teacher A observed that "students' abilities vary, and I have to adjust the questions and activities depending on whether they understand the material or need additional support." This observation is consistent with Al-Harbi's (2019) study, which emphasized the need for differentiation in reading instruction. TPT's one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective in every context, and teachers need to be prepared to modify activities to meet the needs of all learners.

From the students' perspective, the while-reading phase, particularly when texts were lengthy or complex, presented difficulties. As Student 6 noted, "The reading can feel overwhelming, especially if there are too many new words or the text is too long." This aligns with findings from previous studies (Diehl et al., 2022), which noted that struggling readers often find it difficult to maintain focus and comprehension when faced with challenging texts. This highlights the importance of providing targeted support during the while-reading phase, whether through scaffolding techniques or additional guidance to ensure that all students can benefit from the strategy.

The Role of Metacognition in TPT

One of the key themes that emerged from this study was the significant role of metacognitive awareness in the success of TPT. Both teachers and students emphasized how the post-reading phase, with its focus on reflection and discussion, helped students become more aware of their reading strategies and comprehension processes. Teacher C remarked, "The post-reading phase encourages students to think about how they understand the text, which is crucial for developing independent reading strategies." This aligns with Ferdiyanto's (2024) findings on the role of metacognitive skills in reading comprehension. By encouraging students to reflect on their own understanding and strategies, TPT not only improves

immediate comprehension but also fosters lifelong learning skills, helping students to become more self-regulated in their reading practices.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

The findings of this study have several implications for practice. Teachers should be mindful of the time constraints associated with TPT and consider ways to streamline the process without compromising its effectiveness. This might involve prioritizing certain activities or adopting a more flexible approach to the phases depending on students' needs. Additionally, differentiation remains a key aspect of effective TPT implementation, and teachers should be prepared to adjust their instructional strategies based on the varying abilities of their students.

The study also highlights the need for further research on the qualitative experiences of students and teachers using TPT, especially in diverse educational contexts. While this study provides valuable insights, future research could expand on these findings by exploring how TPT can be adapted for different age groups, language proficiency levels, or classroom environments. Additionally, more research is needed on how TPT can be used alongside other reading strategies, such as collaborative learning or digital tools, to enhance reading comprehension further.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative study has provided a deeper understanding of teachers' and students' perceptions of the Three-Phase Technique in reading instruction. While both groups acknowledged the benefits of TPT in enhancing reading comprehension, challenges related to time constraints, student engagement, and differentiation emerged as significant barriers. Furthermore, the role of metacognitive reflection was identified as a crucial element in promoting deeper comprehension and self-regulated learning. The findings suggest that, with thoughtful adaptation, TPT can be a powerful tool for improving reading instruction, but for further research is needed to refine its implementation and address the challenges identified in this study.

Despite the valuable insights gained, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The sample size was relatively small and context-specific, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader educational settings. Additionally, participants were drawn from a limited geographic area, potentially narrowing the diversity of perspectives. Future research should explore the implementation of the Three-Phase Technique across varied contexts, such as rural versus urban schools, and examine how factors like teaching experience (e.g., novice vs. veteran educators) influence its effectiveness. Longitudinal studies could also provide a deeper understanding of how sustained use of TPT impacts student outcomes over time.

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