



The Implementation of the Think-Pair-Share Technique to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension

Implementasi Teknik Think Pair Share Untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Pemahaman Membaca Peserta Didik

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Abstract

Reading comprehension instruction globally and in Indonesia frequently suffers from passive, teacher-dominated paradigms, resulting in alarmingly low student proficiency. This research systematically employed a Classroom Action Research design across three iterative cycles to investigate the Think-Pair-Share technique's direct impact on eleventh-grade students' comprehensive understanding of complex hortatory exposition texts at MAN Klaten. Mixed-methods data, explicitly including standardized test scores alongside structured qualitative observation rubrics, were rigorously collected and comprehensively analyzed. The findings unequivocally revealed that this structural implementation significantly enhanced cognitive proficiency, escalating the mean reading score from 52.73 to 84.55 while drastically reducing overall score dispersion. Furthermore, students exhibited elevated academic confidence and highly equitable participation during active peer-mediated negotiations. Replacing traditional instructional models with this collaborative technique successfully mandates individual cognitive accountability and fundamentally democratizes classroom dynamics, providing a robust empirical blueprint for global educators to actively foster independent, lifelong reading literacy within modern educational learning environments effectively.

Abstrak

Instruksi pemahaman membaca secara global dan di Indonesia seringkali mengalami masalah akibat paradigma pasif yang didominasi guru, sehingga menyebabkan rendahnya kemahiran siswa. Penelitian ini secara sistematis menggunakan desain Penelitian Tindakan Kelas melalui tiga siklus iteratif untuk menyelidiki dampak langsung teknik Think-Pair-Share terhadap pemahaman komprehensif siswa kelas sebelas pada teks eksposisi hortatori yang kompleks di MAN Klaten. Data metode campuran, yang secara eksplisit mencakup skor tes terstandar bersama rubrik observasi kualitatif terstruktur, telah dikumpulkan secara ketat dan dianalisis secara komprehensif. Temuan dengan tegas mengungkapkan bahwa implementasi struktural ini secara signifikan meningkatkan kecakapan kognitif, menaikkan skor rata-rata membaca dari 52,73 menjadi 84,55 sambil secara drastis mengurangi dispersi skor keseluruhan. Selain itu, para siswa menunjukkan peningkatan kepercayaan diri akademik dan partisipasi yang sangat adil selama negosiasi bermediasi rekan sebaya yang aktif. Mengganti model instruksional tradisional dengan teknik pembelajaran kolaboratif ini terbukti berhasil mengamankan akuntabilitas kognitif individu dan secara fundamental mendemokratisasi keseluruhan dinamika kelas.



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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Reading comprehension stands as the fundamental cognitive architecture upon which all advanced academic inquiry, critical thinking, and lifelong learning are constructed in modern educational systems. In the context of a highly complex, globalized knowledge economy, the ability to decode, critically interpret, and evaluate sophisticated texts is inextricably linked to a student's capacity to participate effectively in democratic societies and professional spheres. The contemporary scientific understanding of reading has evolved far beyond the traditional "simple view" of isolated phonetic decoding and basic linguistic comprehension.¹ Reading is now universally recognized by scholars as a highly complex, interactive, and socio-cognitive process that requires the continuous coordination of active self-regulation, executive functioning, inferencing, and the strategic deployment of background knowledge to actively construct meaning from text.^{2,3}

Despite this profound theoretical consensus within the cognitive sciences, the global reality of reading comprehension instruction reveals a persistent, systemic pedagogical stagnation. Extensive, longitudinal observational research into classroom practices indicates that modern reading instruction remains fundamentally flawed. Updating Durkin's seminal 1978 observations, recent exhaustive studies by Capin et al., reveal that nearly half a century later, reading comprehension instruction still occupies a grossly inadequate fraction of classroom time—averaging a mere 23% of the instructional block in reading and language arts.⁴

More alarmingly, the mechanisms of this instruction have not evolved. Rather than explicitly teaching students the cognitive strategies required to deconstruct complex texts, classrooms globally remain overwhelmingly dominated by the Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) paradigm. In this rigid, teacher-centric model, the educator initiates a

¹ Naila Fethi and Krisztián Józsa, "The Simple View of Reading as a Cognitive Framework for Multilingual Reading Comprehension Assessment," *Frontiers in Education* 11 (January 23, 2026), <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2026.1737066>.

² Mohammed Ali El-Siddig Ibrahim et al., "AI Enhanced Reading Comprehension through Personalized Learning Environments," *Journal of Cultural Analysis and Social Change* 10, no. 2 (November 25, 2025): 3900–3912, <https://doi.org/10.64753/jcasc.v10i2.2203>.

³ Molly F. Collins, "Supporting Inferential Thinking in Preschoolers: Effects of Discussion on Children's Story Comprehension," *Early Education and Development* 27, no. 7 (October 2, 2016): 932–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2016.1170523>.

⁴ Philip Capin et al., "Reading Comprehension Instruction: Evaluating Our Progress Since Durkin's Seminal Study," *Scientific Studies of Reading* 29, no. 1 (January 2, 2025): 85–114, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888438.2024.2418582>.

rapid-fire question, a single student responds, and the teacher evaluates the accuracy of that response. This architecture functions merely to assess comprehension retroactively rather than actively instructing students on the strategic processes of meaning-making, thereby cultivating passive learners who rely entirely on external authority to validate their linguistic understanding.⁵

This macro-level crisis in global reading instruction is acutely mirrored within the Indonesian educational landscape. Data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 explicitly demonstrates that the reading performance of Indonesian adolescents remains substantially below the average of OECD nations, indicating a systemic failure to equip students with the ability to locate information, evaluate texts, and reflect critically on written material.^{6,7}

This national deficit manifests vividly in micro-level classroom realities. Preliminary diagnostic observations conducted at MAN Klaten, specifically within the eleventh-grade Science 4 class, exposed severe deficiencies in the students' English reading comprehension, particularly when engaging with cognitively demanding hortatory exposition texts. Students exhibited profound difficulties in determining word meanings from context, isolating main ideas from supporting details, locating specific information, tracking pronoun references, identifying the author's communicative purpose, and mapping the generic structural organization of the text. Furthermore, the instructional environment at MAN Klaten perfectly mirrored the problematic global IRE trends: reading activities were primarily conducted through whole-class, teacher-led translation and answer-checking sessions. This environment stifled independent cognitive processing, minimized peer-to-peer meaning negotiation, and generated a highly passive, high-anxiety classroom dynamic where hesitant students simply waited for the teacher or more proficient peers to supply the correct answers.

To systematically resolve these localized dysfunctions and contribute to the broader educational discourse, it is imperative to synthesize the state of the art in recent academic literature (2021–2026) regarding cooperative learning and reading comprehension. A thematic mapping of recent primary journals reveals three dominant axes of debate. First,

⁵ Capin et al.

⁶ OECD, *PISA 2022 Results (Volume III): Creative Minds, Creative Schools*, PISA (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2024), Page, 45-72. <https://doi.org/10.1787/765ee8c2-en>.

⁷ OECD, *PISA 2022 Results Volume III: Creative Minds, Creative Schools, Factsheets-Indonesia* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2024), Page, 1-10. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/pisa-results-2022-volume-iii-factsheets_041a90f1-en/indonesia_a7090b49-en.html.

researchers increasingly emphasize that reading instruction must transition from passive exposure to explicit, strategy-based cognitive scaffolding. Capin et al., argue that the failure to dedicate time to independent cognitive processing and explicit strategy instruction directly correlates with stagnant reading outcomes across all demographics.⁸ Second, in the pursuit of higher engagement, numerous scholars have explored technology-based interventions—such as blended learning, AI-supported chatbots, and gamified digital platforms—to enhance EFL reading and vocabulary acquisition. While these digital tools increase behavioral engagement, they frequently overlook the necessity of developing internal, unassisted cognitive regulation.^{9,10,11} Third, a robust body of evidence advocates for the efficacy of structured collaborative learning models as a low-tech, high-impact alternative. Research demonstrates that well-designed cooperative learning not only enhances academic performance but also fundamentally shifts classroom power dynamics, fostering equitable participation, reducing foreign language anxiety, and improving high-order thinking skills.¹² Within this cooperative paradigm, the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) technique has garnered significant attention. Recent groundbreaking research by Ahmadi, Behnam, and Seifoori strongly positions TPS not merely as a social engagement activity, but as a highly sophisticated formative assessment strategy that enhances EFL learners' reading comprehension and vocabulary retention by demanding continuous, interactive cognitive elaboration.¹³ Furthermore, TPS is lauded for its capacity to promote equitable participation by providing introverted or anxious students the necessary cognitive processing time before public articulation is

⁸ Capin et al., "Reading Comprehension Instruction: Evaluating Our Progress Since Durkin's Seminal Study."

⁹ Ziyang Peng and Arumugam Raman, "Systematic Literature Review on the Effects of Blended Learning in EFL Education," *Contemporary Educational Technology* 18, no. 1 (February 16, 2026): ep631, <https://doi.org/10.30935/cedtech/17924>.

¹⁰ Yupika Maryansyah, Agus Riyanto, and Muhammad Parli, "Artificial Intelligence in Teaching EFL Reading: A Literature Review of Trends, Pedagogical Approaches, and Future Directions (2019–2025)," *Journal of Science, Technology, and Social Innovation* 1, no. 1 (November 6, 2025): 23–34, <https://doi.org/10.58723/jstsi.v1i1.44>.

¹¹ Mushaddiq Mushaddiq et al., "Exploring EFL Students' Creativity and Engagement with AI Chatbot in Web-Based English Course," *GLENS: Global English Insights Journal* 2, no. 1 (November 18, 2024): 19–27, <https://doi.org/10.61220/glens.v2i1.591>.

¹² Tran Ngoc Tuong Nguyen and Duong Thi Kim Oanh, "Cooperative Learning and Its Influences on Student Engagement," *Cogent Education* 12, no. 1 (December 31, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2513414>.

¹³ Heidar Ahmadi, Biook Behnam, and Zohreh Seifoori, "Think-Pair-Share as a Formative Assessment Strategy: EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Learning," *Journal of Applied Linguistic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2024): 183–97, <https://oiccpres.com/jals/article/view/5600>.

required.¹⁴

Through this thematic synthesis, a critical gap in the existing literature becomes glaringly apparent. While numerous studies validate TPS as a general tool for improving student engagement or basic vocabulary acquisition, there remains a significant "blind spot" regarding its systematic implementation as an iterative, cycle-based cognitive scaffolding mechanism engineered specifically to deconstruct highly complex, macro-structural text genres—such as hortatory expositions—within a localized, high-anxiety EFL secondary context. The vast majority of current research treats cooperative learning as a generic pedagogical overlay rather than a precise, phase-specific diagnostic instrument capable of simultaneously targeting micro-linguistic deficits (e.g., contextual vocabulary derivation and reference tracking) and macro-structural comprehension.

Different from previous research which mostly focused on utilizing Think-Pair-Share as a generalized cooperative learning tool for overall academic engagement or basic vocabulary memorization, this study offers a new approach by operationalizing the technique as a targeted, iterative formative assessment mechanism explicitly designed to dismantle passive Initiation-Response-Evaluation paradigms and systematically deconstruct the complex cognitive architecture of hortatory exposition texts. This research uniquely isolates the phase-specific impacts of the "Think," "Pair," and "Share" stages across longitudinal action research cycles, moving beyond generic engagement metrics to uncover the precise cognitive and social mechanisms that drive reading proficiency in foreign language learners.

Ultimately, this study asserts the central argument that replacing teacher-dominated instructional paradigms with a highly structured Think-Pair-Share framework fundamentally reconfigures the cognitive accountability of EFL learners, fostering independent analytical inquiry, equitable peer negotiation, and confident academic articulation. By enforcing a period of isolated cognitive struggle, followed by a zone of peer-mediated meaning negotiation, and concluding with a public defense of interpretation, TPS transforms students from passive consumers of translated texts into active architects of meaning. As a concluding objective, this research aims to provide a validated, operationalized pedagogical intervention that not only resolves the localized

¹⁴ Amalia Nabila Salim and Disman Disman, "The Implementation of the TPS (Think-Pair-Share) Learning Model To Improve Students Critical Thinking Skills," *Jurnal Lingua Idea* 14, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 15–29, <https://doi.org/10.20884/1.jli.2023.14.1.8318>.

comprehension deficits at MAN Klaten but also offers the global academic community a robust blueprint for realigning reading instruction with the active, self-regulatory demands of 21st-century literacy.

2. Research Questions

Based on the theoretical background and the specific classroom dysfunctions identified, the trajectory of this research is guided by the following analytical problem formulations:

- a. How does the systemic implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique, executed through iterative instructional cycles, effectively improve eleventh-grade students' reading comprehension of hortatory exposition texts, specifically regarding their cognitive ability to deduce word meanings in context, isolate main ideas, extract specific information, track complex word references, determine communicative purposes, and analyze generic text structures?
- b. How does the structured, phased cognitive architecture of the Think-Pair-Share technique fundamentally transform the behavioral dynamics of the EFL classroom, specifically regarding students' active academic participation, the equity of peer-mediated collaboration, and their self-confidence in articulating and defending textual interpretations?

3. Research Methods

To rigorously investigate and resolve the localized pedagogical challenges identified at MAN Klaten, this study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design. This methodology was analytically justified for this study because the primary objective was not merely to observe a phenomenon passively or to establish statistical correlations in an artificial, highly controlled environment, but to actively intervene in a dysfunctional classroom dynamic. CAR operates on an epistemological framework that values context-specific problem-solving, allowing educators to gather empirical data about their own teaching practices, evaluate the cognitive and behavioral impacts of an intervention in real-time, and iteratively refine the pedagogical approach based on emergent evidence.¹⁵ The research was executed collaboratively between the primary researcher and the

¹⁵ Gerald J. Pine, "A Paradigm of Teacher Action Research," in *Teacher Action Research: Building Knowledge Democracies* (California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), 62–79, <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452275079.n3>.

incumbent English teacher to ensure the interventions were highly contextualized, ecologically valid, and seamlessly integrated into the authentic curriculum. The research was structured across three continuous cycles, with each cycle strictly comprising four operational phases: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

Types and Approaches of Research: This study utilized a mixed-methods Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach. The quantitative approach was deployed to objectively measure the trajectory of cognitive improvement in reading comprehension metrics across iterative cycles. Simultaneously, the qualitative approach was utilized to capture the nuanced, phenomenological shifts in classroom behavioral dynamics, student anxiety levels, and the quality of peer-to-peer meaning negotiation during the implementation of the TPS technique.¹⁶

Data Sources and Participants: The primary subjects of this research were 22 students enrolled in the eleventh-grade Science 4 class at MAN Klaten, located in Klaten Utara, Central Java, Indonesia. This specific demographic was purposively selected based on preliminary diagnostic data indicating acute, systemic deficits in English reading comprehension—specifically concerning the cognitive demands of hortatory exposition texts—coupled with high levels of classroom passivity and a deep reliance on teacher-led translation. The data sources were categorized into primary sources (the observable behaviors and academic outputs of the students, alongside the instructional mechanics of the collaborating teacher) and secondary sources (student worksheets, pre- and post-test assessment portfolios, and localized curriculum documents).

Data Collection Technique: To capture a comprehensive, holistic understanding of both cognitive gains and behavioral shifts, the study utilized a multi-instrumental approach to data collection:

- a. Reading Comprehension Tests: Quantitative data regarding cognitive proficiency was collected through standardized, multiple-choice reading comprehension assessments administered during the pre-action phase and at the conclusion of each of the three cycles. These instruments were specifically calibrated to measure six discrete indicators: word meaning derivation, main idea identification, specific information retrieval, reference tracking,

¹⁶ Samira EL-Asri and Abderrahim El Karfa, "A Mixed-Method Action Research on Promoting Critical Thinking in the Classroom: Implications for EFL Teachers," *Arab World English Journal* 15, no. 2 (June 28, 2024): 288–304, <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol15no2.18>.

communicative purpose deduction, and generic structure analysis.

- b. **Participant Observation:** Qualitative observational data was continuously gathered by the researcher and collaborating teacher using highly structured observation rubrics. This focused on the micro-behaviors of students during the "Think," "Pair," and "Share" stages, specifically tracking individual cognitive focus, the equity of peer negotiations, and public speaking confidence.
- c. **In-depth Interviews & Field Notes:** Unstructured interviews and detailed field notes were utilized to capture the real-time affective responses of the students, documenting instances of frustration, peer dependency, or cognitive breakthrough.
- d. **Questionnaires:** A closed-ended, Likert-scale student response questionnaire (ranging from 1: strongly disagree to 4: strongly agree) was administered post-intervention to quantify the participants' subjective experience of the TPS technique and its perceived impact on their learning.

Data Analysis Techniques: The analytical framework employed a rigorous dual-pronged approach. Quantitative data derived from the reading comprehension tests were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The researcher calculated the mean scores and standard deviations for the pre-test and all subsequent post-tests to track the trajectory of cognitive improvement¹⁷. The standard deviation was particularly scrutinized to evaluate the dispersion of scores, providing critical insight into whether the pedagogical intervention promoted equitable learning across both high- and low-performing students. Qualitative data—harvested from observations, field notes, and interviews—were subjected to an interactive thematic analysis model. This involved a continuous, cyclical process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The qualitative data was rigorously triangulated against the quantitative test scores and validated through member checking, peer debriefing, and collaborative reflection with the classroom teacher to ensure that the conclusions drawn regarding the efficacy of TPS were grounded in robust, intersecting lines of empirical evidence rather than subjective instructional bias.¹⁷

¹⁷ Bambang Widi Pratolo, Dat Bao, and Suhendri Palaguna, "Enhancing Reading Comprehension and Motivation through Think-Pair-Share: Classroom Action Research in an Indonesian EFL Context," *English*

B. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The empirical findings of this Classroom Action Research demonstrate that the strategic, phased implementation of the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) technique successfully dismantled the passive learning dynamics inherent in the pre-existing Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) model, leading to profound improvements in both the cognitive reading proficiency and behavioral engagement of the eleventh-grade students at MAN Klaten. The following discussion provides a critical, theoretical deconstruction of the data, moving beyond a mere descriptive reporting of scores to meticulously analyze the root causes of the students' initial deficits, the specific operational mechanisms of the TPS intervention that drove cognitive improvement, and the broader pedagogical implications of these findings within the global academic discourse on literacy and formative assessment.

1. Deconstructing the Baseline: The Cognitive Cost of Passive Pedagogy

Before the implementation of the TPS intervention, the preliminary observations and pre-test data revealed a classroom paralyzed by passive pedagogy. The quantitative baseline was alarming: the mean reading comprehension score stood at a critically low 52.73, with the lowest score at 36 and the highest reaching only 60¹. Qualitatively, the students exhibited an absolute inability to navigate the complex architecture of hortatory exposition texts independently. They struggled to isolate thesis statements from supporting arguments, failed to deduce the meaning of novel vocabulary through contextual syntactic clues, and were frequently unable to track pronoun references across paragraphs.

A critical analysis of this baseline condition indicates that these deficits were not merely the result of poor inherent linguistic aptitude among the students, but were directly symptomatic of the deeply flawed instructional design. The prevailing pedagogical model relied almost exclusively on whole-class, teacher-led translation and rapid-fire answer-checking. This environment conditioned students to bypass the cognitively demanding processes of active self-regulation, executive functioning, and strategic meaning construction—components identified by advanced reading science as absolute prerequisites for true comprehension. When students encountered linguistic friction or unfamiliar vocabulary, they immediately outsourced the cognitive load to the

Language Teaching Educational Journal 8, no. 1 (August 29, 2025): 54–65, <https://doi.org/10.12928/eltej.v8i1.13992>.

teacher or to more proficient peers.

This localized phenomenon perfectly mirrors the global pedagogical crisis identified by Capin et al. Their extensive observational research demonstrates that modern reading instruction frequently substitutes true comprehension instruction with mere assessment; teachers ask questions to evaluate *if* a student understood a text, rather than explicitly modeling *how* to construct meaning from it.¹⁸ By failing to mandate independent interaction with the text prior to whole-class discussion, the pre-existing instructional model at MAN Klaten effectively nurtured learned helplessness, stripping students of the cognitive accountability required to develop independent literacy skills.

2. The Iterative Evolution of Cognitive Autonomy: Analyzing the Action Cycles

The implementation of the TPS technique was not an instantaneous panacea; rather, its profound efficacy was forged through iterative pedagogical refinement across three action cycles. Analyzing the friction, adjustments, and subsequent breakthroughs in each cycle provides vital theoretical insights into how collaborative learning mechanisms must be engineered to function effectively in an EFL context.

a. Cycle 1: The Friction of Procedural Adaptation and the Illusion of Collaboration

During the first cycle, the transition to the TPS model encountered significant procedural and cognitive friction. While the mean score improved slightly to 61.09, the standard deviation spiked dramatically from 6.61 in the pre-test to 8.30, indicating highly uneven adaptation and extreme disparities in learning outcomes across the cohort. Observationally, during the "Think" stage, many students bypassed independent analysis entirely, immediately attempting to consult their peers without formulating an initial hypothesis. During the "Pair" stage, collaborative equity was exceptionally poor; highly proficient students dominated the discourse, while weaker students passively transcribed answers without engaging in any meaningful linguistic negotiation.

This initial failure is highly instructive. It highlights a critical mechanism of cooperative learning heavily emphasized in recent literature: mere physical grouping does not automatically equate to cognitive collaboration or positive interdependence.¹⁹ The students, deeply entrenched in the passive IRE paradigm, lacked the self-regulatory stamina to endure the isolated cognitive struggle demanded by the "Think" stage. They

¹⁸ Capin et al., "Reading Comprehension Instruction: Evaluating Our Progress Since Durkin's Seminal Study."

¹⁹ Nguyen and Oanh, "Cooperative Learning and Its Influences on Student Engagement."

viewed collaboration merely as a faster method to obtain the correct answer from a peer, rather than a space for joint intellectual inquiry. This cycle proved that TPS cannot function purely as a structural overlay; students required highly explicit scaffolding to understand their cognitive responsibilities within each phase.

b. Cycle 2: Enforcing Accountability and the Zone of Peer-Mediated Negotiation

Based on the critical reflections from Cycle 1, the researcher introduced highly structured worksheets, strictly enforced time allocations for independent thinking, and assigned explicit reciprocal responsibilities during the "Pair" stage, mandating that both students provide textual evidence for their claims before arriving at a consensus. These operational adjustments triggered a substantial pedagogical shift. In Cycle 2, the mean score rose to 69.82, and importantly, the standard deviation contracted to 6.84, suggesting that the structural enforcement was beginning to benefit lower-performing students systemically.

The critical intervention here was the strict enforcement of the "Think" stage prior to peer interaction. By mandating that every student formulate a written hypothesis before speaking, the intervention enforced inescapable personal cognitive accountability. Consequently, when students entered the "Pair" stage, the nature of the discourse transformed from passive answer-copying to active, rigorous meaning negotiation. This aligns perfectly with the constructivist view of second-language reading as an interactive process of linguistic and prior-knowledge coordination. When students debated whether a specific sentence constituted a main idea or merely a supporting argument, they were forced to verbalize their syntactic processing and inferencing strategies. This peer-scaffolding effectively acted as a localized Zone of Proximal Development. It allowed students to clarify complex vocabulary and correct misinterpretations in a low-anxiety, linguistically accessible environment before facing the high-stakes scrutiny of the whole class.²⁰

c. Cycle 3: Consolidation of Academic Confidence and Structural Mastery

By Cycle 3, the procedural mechanics and cognitive expectations of TPS had been fully internalized by the students, resulting in a dramatic breakthrough in reading comprehension. The mean score surged to 84.55, representing a massive 31.82-point

²⁰ Nguyen and Oanh.

cumulative increase from the baseline¹.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Student Test Scores Across Cycles

Descriptive Statistic	Pre-test	Cycle 1 Post-test	Cycle 2 Post-test	Cycle 3 Post-test
Highest Score	60	72	80	92
Lowest Score	36	36	56	80
Mean Score	52.73	61.09	69.82	84.55
Standard Deviation	6.61	8.30	6.84	4.15

Notably, the lowest score in the class rose from a failing 36 to an 80, and the standard deviation plummeted to 4.15, the lowest recorded dispersion of the entire study. This sharp contraction in the standard deviation alongside a surging mean is arguably the most significant empirical finding of this research. It proves unequivocally that the TPS intervention did not merely elevate the performance of an already proficient academic elite; rather, it systemically homogenized the class's reading proficiency at a substantially higher level of mastery.

Furthermore, during Cycle 3, the "Share" stage evolved from a fearful, hesitant reporting exercise into a confident defense of academic interpretations. Because students had already tested, refined, and validated their hypotheses during the "Pair" stage, the psychological risk of public speaking was drastically mitigated. They began independently utilizing textual evidence to justify their identification of the generic structure (thesis, arguments, recommendation) and the nuanced communicative purpose of the hortatory exposition texts.

3. TPS as an Iterative Formative Assessment Mechanism

To fully answer the first research question regarding the mechanism of cognitive improvement across specific reading indicators, it is necessary to operate advanced educational theory as an analytical tool. The quantitative surge in reading proficiency (vocabulary in context, referencing, main ideas, generic structure) can be directly attributed to the phase-specific cognitive demands of TPS, which functions brilliantly as an embedded, iterative formative assessment loop. This finding strongly corroborates the groundbreaking research by Ahmadi, Behnam, and Seifoori, who assert that reciprocal techniques like TPS are not merely classroom management tools, but operate as highly

sophisticated formative assessment strategies that consolidate instruction through continuous, dynamic feedback.²¹

During the "Think" phase, students were forced to engage in active comprehension monitoring—a critical executive function where readers identify gaps in their own understanding. Instead of immediately receiving a translation from the teacher, students had to utilize surrounding syntactic clues to infer word meanings. Dual Coding Theory posits that engaging both verbal and nonverbal cognitive systems deeply enhances vocabulary retention; the enforced mental effort during the "Think" phase primed the students for deeper retention. During the "Pair" phase, the reciprocal demand to explicitly explain *why* a pronoun referred to a specific antecedent, or *how* a paragraph constituted an argument rather than a thesis, forced students into deep cognitive elaboration. Research consistently demonstrates that the act of verbalizing and defending a linguistic interpretation solidifies neural pathways far more effectively than passive listening.²² The data from MAN Klaten proves this mechanism: students successfully mapped the abstract, complex generic structures of hortatory texts only after they were required to debate and construct those maps collaboratively with their peers, providing continuous formative assessment to one another before the teacher ever intervened.

4. Behavioral Transformation: Dismantling the Hierarchy of the EFL Classroom

Addressing the second research question requires an analysis of the profound behavioral transformation observed in the classroom. The qualitative data, strongly supported by the post-intervention questionnaire (where 100% of students responded positively, with 81.82% agreeing and 18.18% strongly agreeing that TPS aided their comprehension), unequivocally demonstrate a paradigm shift in classroom dynamics.

Table 2. Analysis of Participants' Agreement Levels

Response Category	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Agree	18	81.82%

²¹ Ahmadi, Behnam, and Seifoori, "Think-Pair-Share as a Formative Assessment Strategy: EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Learning."

²² Yanfang Zeng et al., "Vocabulary Instruction for English Learners: A Systematic Review Connecting Theories, Research, and Practices," *Education Sciences* 15, no. 3 (February 20, 2025): 262, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15030262>.

Strongly Agree	4	18.18%
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The root cause of this behavioral shift lies in the radical redistribution of classroom power and intellectual accountability. The traditional IRE model hoards intellectual authority exclusively with the teacher, rendering student participation a high-stakes, high-anxiety endeavor that frequently induces foreign language anxiety. The Think-Pair-Share technique democratizes this intellectual space. By structuring the learning process so that every individual must formulate a thought ("Think"), every individual has a guaranteed audience of at least one peer ("Pair"), and every pair has the opportunity to contribute to the collective knowledge of the room ("Share"), the technique fosters highly equitable participation.

The drastic reduction in language anxiety and the enhancement of intrinsic motivation observed in Cycle 3 align perfectly with broader findings regarding the psychological benefits of well-structured cooperative learning in EFL environments.²³ The "Pair" stage acted as an essential psychological buffer, allowing students to test their ideas without the fear of public failure. Consequently, the students at MAN Klaten evolved from passive recipients of translated information into an active, collaborative community of academic inquiry.

5. Academic Dialogue and Global Implications: Elevating the Discourse

The findings of this research demand to be positioned within the broader, global discourse on educational reform and literacy instruction. The overwhelming success of the TPS intervention at MAN Klaten serves as a direct, empirical counter-narrative to the troubling global trends identified in the longitudinal observational research of Capin et al. Capin's extensive review revealed a systemic failure: instructional time is still predominantly squandered on assessing comprehension through rapid-fire questioning rather than actively instructing students on the cognitive processes of meaning-making.²⁴

The intervention designed in this study explicitly dismantled that flawed architecture. By replacing the rapid-fire assessment loop of the IRE model with the deliberate, scaffolded cognitive processing phases of TPS, this research proves that reading comprehension is most effectively taught when students are structurally

²³ Nguyen and Oanh, "Cooperative Learning and Its Influences on Student Engagement."

²⁴ Capin et al., "Reading Comprehension Instruction: Evaluating Our Progress Since Durkin's Seminal Study."

mandated to construct meaning independently and collaboratively. Structured dialogic reading techniques like TPS have been proven to enhance self-regulation, prompting students to reflect on texts deeply before sharing their inferences with peers.²⁵ This directly rebuts the notion that mere exposure to texts or unguided group work improves reading proficiency. Furthermore, while contemporary educational trends often push for highly complex, technology-driven interventions—such as artificial intelligence platforms and automated formative assessments—to solve engagement issues,²⁶ this study demonstrates that TPS offers a low-tech, high-impact cognitive alternative. It achieves profound levels of cognitive engagement and behavioral transformation without relying on expensive digital infrastructure, making it a highly equitable and globally scalable solution.

Finally, elevating this localized pedagogical success to universal principles of constitutional education reveals profound implications for democratic citizenship. At its core, the failure of passive, teacher-dominated instruction is a failure of democratization; it trains students to be compliant subjects who wait for authority figures to dictate meaning. The principles of modern education globally demand that classrooms serve as incubators for critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and intellectual independence. The Think-Pair-Share technique, as operationalized and validated in this study, enacts these democratic principles on a micro-level. It enforces individual intellectual responsibility, requires the respectful negotiation of differing interpretations, and demands the evidence-based defense of ideas in a public forum. Evidence confirms that such cooperative learning structures drastically outperform traditional teacher-centered instruction by empowering learners to be active conversationalists and critical thinkers.²⁷

Therefore, the pedagogical implications of this research extend far beyond the teaching of hortatory exposition texts in Indonesian secondary schools. The evidence

²⁵ Roya Ranjbar Mohammadi, Mahnaz Saeidi, and Saeideh Ahangari, "Self-Regulated Learning Instruction and the Relationships among Self-Regulation, Reading Comprehension and Reading Problem Solving: PLS-SEM Approach," ed. Sammy King Fai HUI, *Cogent Education* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2020.1746105>.

²⁶ Asmaa Falah Theiyab Alazemi, "Formative Assessment in Artificial Integrated Instruction: Delving into the Effects on Reading Comprehension Progress, Online Academic Enjoyment, Personal Best Goals, and Academic Mindfulness," *Language Testing in Asia* 14, no. 1 (October 18, 2024): 44, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-024-00319-8>.

²⁷ Ehsan Namaziandost, Mina Homayouni, and Pegah Rahmani, "The Impact of Cooperative Learning Approach on the Development of EFL Learners' Speaking Fluency," *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 2020): 1780811, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2020.1780811>.

unequivocally suggests that to improve reading comprehension in an era defined by overwhelming information complexity, educators globally must abandon the illusion that comprehension can be passively transmitted through teacher explanation. Instead, educational policies and pedagogical frameworks must prioritize instructional architectures like Think-Pair-Share that enforce cognitive accountability, leverage the socio-linguistic power of peer mediation, and systematically build the academic confidence required for independent, lifelong literacy. The transformative improvements observed at MAN Klaten provide a rigorous, empirical blueprint for this necessary, global pedagogical paradigm shift.

C. CONCLUSION

The systematic implementation of the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) technique through iterative instructional cycles successfully enhanced the eleventh-grade students' reading comprehension of hortatory exposition texts. By enforcing a structured cognitive framework, the intervention notably improved the students' ability to deduce contextual word meanings, isolate main ideas, track complex references, extract specific information, and analyze both the generic structure and communicative purpose of the assigned texts. Concurrently, the phased architecture of the TPS model fundamentally transformed the behavioral dynamics of the classroom by dismantling passive learning habits and fostering a highly equitable environment for peer-mediated collaboration. Consequently, this democratization of intellectual accountability significantly reduced foreign language anxiety, empowering students to actively participate and confidently articulate their evidence-based textual interpretations in a public academic forum.

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