

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION BY USING
NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER FOR EIGHT B GRADE AT MTS AL-
MA'ARIF SINGOSARI MALANG**

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Abstract: Reading skill is really important and needed by students in developing their ability in comprehending English text. Besides, many students do not like and interest to reading activity in the class because reading is a boring activity for students. Therefore, This research used Numbered Heads Together (NHT) Technique that is appropriate to be used in the class in order that students were not bored anymore because NHT Technique can help students to enjoy and follow English subject well in the class. Additionally, NHT Technique is a group system in which students are divided into some groups and given number; the members had the same numbers group. It is able to make students discuss and solve problem together confidently. This research aimed to know the implementation of NHT as a teaching and learning technique to improve student's reading comprehension at VIII B class in MTs Al Ma'arif Singosari Malang. The researcher used classroom action research to conduct this study. The subject of this research was the students of MTs Al Ma'arif Singosari Malang. Then, the sample of this research was 35 students of VIII B class. the researcher used some instruments; those are: did preliminary test, applying NHT Technique, and final-test. This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR) as a method and average of criteria of success in this study was 75 above. Moreover, The result of this research showed that average score of preliminary test was 55.7 from 35

students. After the researcher conducted the research using NHT Technique, the students' average score was 76.4 from 35 students. It indicated that NHT Technique had successfully improved students' scores and reading comprehension in one cycle. Consequently, the researcher hopes that the future researcher can use NHT Technique to be implemented in other skill of language learning, such as writing, speaking and listening. Besides the researcher hopes the teacher is able to be more creative in teaching and learning English.

Key Word: Improving, Reading Comprehension, Numbered Heads Together

INTRODUCTION

English is as international language that has been known by all of countries in the world. English also appertains into one of the most important subjects in Indonesia schools. Unfortunately, most of the students do not like English subject in the class. But in fact, English can help students in adding their language knowledge. Most of them, the students feel difficulty in understanding and learning English. Moreover, English has four skills, those are reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The most important to be learned by students is reading.

Reading becomes main key to comprehend and get knowledge. Therefore, reading comprehension is really useful to students in improving their spelling, adding new vocabulary and finally comprehending the text.

Besides when students get to be used to read English text, that indirectly will make students be more comfortable to learn English deeply.

Moreover, teaching process in the class has to create enjoyable environment for students in order that they are able to follow all learning process well. When environment of class has been built in a conducive environment students, they will not feel bored while they join the class. And teachers have to have the right way in teaching process to make students be more interesting to English subject especially in reading. Therefore, the teacher has to have technique in teaching process in the class. One of technique to help students is to choose one of cooperative learning strategy.

According to Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1994) stated that cooperative learning is an instructional use of small groups through which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Cooperative learning is an alternative strategy or technique that assists students to solve problem in reading comprehension and cures boredom in the class. But most of teachers make bothersome environment in the class. Style of teaching process is mostly teacher-centered that is used almost all teachers in the school. Actually, style of teacher-centered in this era is not appropriate to be implemented by teachers in the class because it makes students more passive. Students do not have a chance to show up their ability especially in reading section in the class. Furthermore, mastery in reading has to be practiced and be trained because reading needs an action to comprehend text so that they have new information and knowledge. Without reading, the students will have difficulty in knowing and understanding a text.

Problems or difficulties in reading comprehension that are faced by students in the class is the students get limited in looking for sources to read certain text which contains about recount or narrative text as reading media to students. Besides the students get the great obstacle in terms of vocabulary mastery. New words for students make them be able to know the meaning from the new word and comprehend the text. Moreover the students get problems in

memorizing new word; it means that many of the students complain about memorizing new word because memorizing of new words is lack and weak for students.

As the result, the average of success criteria is 75 above, and the mean of the students' score in MTs Al Ma'arif Singosari Malang at class VIII B was only 57,9 from 35 students. The students that reach KKM in the class was 40%. Actually, this score was good enough, but it was not still said successful because activity in teaching did not motivate students to recognize new vocabulary but just gave questions without explanation and evaluation to students. The researcher also found that from the preliminary observation. According to Sholeh (2007) stated that the students were not interested in reading English text. As the results, they got low score in English subject. And Fauzi (2009) stated that found the students' problem in reading comprehension which the students were getting low motivation to read English text. Moreover, Students' comprehension of the text were low, they could not understand the text and some related question given by researcher easily. Therefore, it was not enough to train students to be independent readers and solve the problem easily.

Based on the facts above, teacher had to use appropriate technique to make the reading activities be more meaningful for students. Therefore, the researcher chose one of cooperative learning techniques in teaching in the class with using NHT as technique of learning process in the class. It is technique which makes the students as a center of the learning process rather than teacher centered (Kagan, 1994).

Based on the background above, the researcher conducted a classroom action research entitled "Improving Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Numbered Heads Together (NHT) Technique for VIII B at MTs Al – Ma'arif Singosari Malang".

In this study, the researcher interested in using NHT as an alternative technique since the English teacher in the school did not apply the technique during teaching process previously so that, this was the opportunity for the researcher to apply this technique. This technique introduced by Spencer Kagan

(1993) includes students how to discuss, find the right answer, deliver their opinion to other members, and how to appreciate to others' opinion. It is the simplest way, but it has many benefits toward students to be implemented because by using NHT Technique, the students will be able to be more active than before.

NHT is a learning model that puts more emphasis on student activities in finding, processing, and reporting information from various sources which are finally presented in front of the class (Kagan, 1993). In which heterogeneity group was built. Consisting of 4-5 members. For each member of group has one number. Teacher gives questions to be discussed together in group. Teacher points one number of members to represent his group without knowing him first to present what had been discussed by him and other members in his group. In that way, the researcher hopes to try solving the problem by implementing learning method. Furthermore, NHT has several advantages, those are every student becomes more ready to anticipate to be called by teacher and can help member that do not understand so that there are not domination in the class.

The previous study conducted by Sholeh (2007) stated that found that strategy successfully and helped the students in improving the reading comprehension and their score in English subject. Fauzi (2009) also stated that discovered that (NHT) technique was success in increasing the students' cognitive motivation and achievement in reading class. Therefore, the researcher implemented a new technique to help the previous English teacher in order to improve students' reading comprehension of recount text

Novelty between present study and previous studies were subject level class was different, material which was used also different. Present study used recount text whereas previous studies used narrative text. Place of study from present study and previous studies was also different. Present study conducted study in MTs Al-Ma'arif Singosari whereas previous studies conducted study in MTs Negeri 1 Bangsal Bojonegoro and MTs Muhammadiyah Malang.

METHOD

The researcher used Classroom Action Research (CAR) design in conducting the study. This design was selected because the researcher wanted to improve

learning issue happened in the practice of teaching reading which was, in this study, students' reading comprehension. The researcher adopted the design introduced by Cresswell theory (2013:577) which stated action research designs are systematic procedures done by teachers (or other individuals in educational setting) to gather information about, and subsequently improve, the ways their particular educational setting operates, their teaching, and their students learning. Furthermore, in implementing this research design, the researcher applied certain technique that was Numbered Heads Together. NHT Technique is a group system in which students are divided into some groups and given number; the members had the same numbers group. It is able to make students discuss and solve problem together confidently.

The researcher conducted the study at Mts Al Ma'arif Singosari, Malang. Especially, to the seventh grade consisting of 1 class. The subject of study was the students of VIII B at MTs Al Ma'arif Singosari academic year 2017/2018. The researcher took students in class VIII B where the students consisted of 30 students. This action research was conducted within four meetings. The data of this study were taken from students' preliminary and final test result and field notes during the process of teaching and learning. Then, the data were analyzed by the researcher to decide whether they were qualified with the criteria of success or not. The criteria of success in this study was the students' improvement in their reading comprehension showed by their scores.

The researcher applied one cycle in this classroom action research. The cycle consisted of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Planning was made by considering the analysis and the finding from preliminary study. The next step was implementing what had been planned. The researcher also gathered the data in this step. As the data were collected, the researcher analyzed and observed the data in the next step that was observation. In reflection, the researcher determined the result of data analysis whether it qualified the criteria of success or not. If the cycle did not give significant result, the researcher would continue to the next cycle with revised plan. In addition, for preliminary study.

Before starting the action, the researcher arranged organized planning focusing as follows: 1) design lesson plan, 2) prepare the instructional material, 3) prepare the instructional media, 4) prepare the instructional technique, and 5) determine criteria of success. The researcher designed a lesson plan in every meeting in order to make teaching activities well organized before the action was taken. The lesson plan was arranged based on specific topic of recount text material. The material was about simple past tense. The action was emphasized on the pattern, the meaning and the usage of simple past tense.

The technique applied in this study was Numbered Heads Together. The following steps of NHT Technique were: 1) formed groups of 3-5 students and gave a number to each student in each group, 2) gave an assignment to each group to work through the discussion process and made sure students already hold relevant sources that would later be used to complete the assignment that have been given. 3) conducted discussion activities between group members in answering questions given by the teacher. And emphasized to students so that each member of a group understood and knew the answers that have been agreed. 4) mentioned a number to the students. For students from each group whose numbers were the same as those mentioned by the teacher, they were required to raise their hands and gave explanation the results of the group discussion. While Students whose numbers were not mentioned were instructed to respond to answers from other groups. 5) The researcher and students together concluded the final result of the correct answer from the questions given by the researcher. Made sure students understand and they knew where the mistakes were for the answers they produced earlier. The criteria of success was determined to measure whether the implementation was successful or not. The study was categorized as successful when 50% of students could reach the target score of the minimal mastery level criterion that was 75 or above.

In the implementation, the researcher needed four meetings; three meetings were for research implementation in teaching learning English through Numbered Heads Together Technique and one meeting was for test. In the observation stage,

the researcher collected necessary data needed in this study. The researcher used the following instruments to collect the data that consisted of preliminary study and final test and field note.

In the reflection, the data were analyzed. First, the researcher tried to get the average of students' scores. Second, the researcher accumulated the scores to get the class percentage which passed the minimal mastery level criterion. Then, it could be decided whether the data met the criteria of success or not.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study are presented based on the data that were collected during the cycle. The data were gathered from preliminary study, final test, observation sheet and field note. The researcher conducted the cycle from March 14th to 25th, 2019. There were four meetings in the cycle. One meeting was for introduction and to do preliminary test, two meetings were for implementing teaching reading of recount text based on NHT Technique and one meeting was to conduct reading comprehension test.

The first meeting was conducted on Thursday 14th, 2019. The researcher taught the class for about 2x40 minutes. In this meeting, the researcher

administered preliminary test about recount text that the students already have learnt and introduced NHT technique to the students. Before the activity was started, the researcher informed the students that the researcher would conduct test in their class and then explained them what activities they were going to do in the class during the research period. Then, the researcher did and started preliminary test for about 40 minutes.

After administering preliminary test, the researcher explained to students about NHT Technique and its procedure when applied in teaching and learning process. At the end of the class, the researcher checked the students' understanding.

Based on the field note in this meeting, the researcher found that almost every student paid more attention to the technique due to its new atmosphere in their learning process. Although, the students were still little bit confused when the researcher explained and applied the technique in the class.

The second meeting was held on Monday, March 18th, 2019. This meeting was used by the researcher to explain what recount text is and to train the students to read recount text. As at the first meeting, the researcher began the class by greeting and checking students' attendance list. Next the researcher explained the material about recount text.

After giving explanation about recount text, the researcher gave handout about recount text for each student. After the students got handout, the researcher asked the students to read it for 30 minutes. While the students read the text, the researcher allowed the students to ask some questions if they found some difficulties in the text.

At the end of the class, the researcher asked the students' learning difficulties in understanding the text. The researcher also asked the students' opinion about learning outcome that they reached.

Based on the field note in the second meeting, the researcher found that there was an improvement from the first meeting. The students participated well in the discussion, and paid attention to the researcher's explanation. The class atmosphere also showed good attitude and interaction during the lesson.

The third meeting was conducted on Thursday, March 21st, 2019. The researcher did as the previous meeting by greeting and checking the students' attendance list in the opening. Then, the researcher delivered some questions related to the previous topic as brainstorming activity, so the students were given time to read the whole previous topics and ask to the researcher what they did not understand about the material.

After such activity, the researcher made groups of 5 students. When the researcher completed the group sharing process, the researcher immediately gave a number to each student in each group. The researcher explained the procedure what they would do during the implementation of NHT Technique. Then the researcher gave an assignment to each group to work through the discussion process and made sure students got it. After that, they already hold relevant sources that would later be used to complete the assignment that have been given. Moreover, students conducted discussion activities between group members in answering all of questions given by the researcher. And emphasized to students so that each member of a group understood and knew the answers that have been agreed. Then, the researcher mentioned a number to the students. For students from each group whose numbers were the same as those mentioned by the researcher, they are required to raise their hands and gave explanation the results of the group discussion. Furthermore, Students whose numbers was not mentioned that was instructed to respond to answers from other groups. And the last, the researcher and students together concluded the final result of the correct answer from the questions given by the researcher. Made sure students understood and they knew where the mistakes are for the answers they produced earlier

According to the field notes, the class condition in the third meeting was better than the previous meeting. The students were more attractive and enthusiastic in joining this technique.

The last meeting held on Monday, March 25th, 2019. In this meeting, the researcher administered final test to find out the students' progress after implementing Numbered Heads Together technique. The test consisted of 20 questions related to recount text. The time allocation was 40 minutes. The minimal mastery level criterion in this test was 75

As it was noticed on the research implementation, the researcher reflected the implementation of reading using NHT Technique that the students participated enthusiastically in every meeting held during research period. It was proven from the field note taken by the researcher. Also, teaching recount text through NHT Technique was motivating due to students' enhancement in their involvement in the teaching learning process. Furthermore, they were able to master the topic in joyful and attractive way of learning process. Moreover, they were able to master the topic in joyful and attractive way of learning. It was proven by the result of students' score of reading test.

Based on the result of the preliminary test, the data showed the mean (55,7). There were only eight students or (23%) of students got the score above the minimal mastery level criterion. Meanwhile, twenty seven students were getting below score criterion. It could be seen that the students' reading mastery was still low. Besides, after the action was held, the data showed that the mean score students' final test was (76.43). There were (77%) of students got the score above the minimal mastery level criterion. It has implied that the student's mastery improved.

In this study, according to the preliminary study, the students' reading comprehension at class VIII B students of MTs Al Ma'arif Singosari Malang was not pretty good. Only (23%) of students passed the preliminary test with an average score was 55.7. They found difficulties in understanding the topic of recount text. The factors came from students' assumption that it was difficult to differentiate sentences pattern and tenses, difficult to understand the text to involve well in their learning activities due to the media and technique used during teaching and learning process.

This study applied certain technique to solve the students' problem faced in their learning reading comprehension and improve their reading comprehension by using numbered heads together technique. The researcher divided the students into some groups with the purpose that the students could be more active and cooperative to work. Then each student was given handout and they discussed together with their group about the assignment that had been given by the researcher based on the text to be answered by them.

This numbered heads together technique was suitable to be applied in teaching reading for Class VIII B students of MTs Al Ma'arif Singosari Malang. The type of NHT technique was discussing as a group. NHT Technique was introduced by Spencer Kagan, (1993). This technique includes students how to discuss, find the right answer, deliver their opinion to another member, and how to appreciate to others' opinion. It is the simplest way, but it has much beneficial toward students to be implemented because by using NHT Technique, the students will be able to be more active than before. The result of this study showed that this technique effectively improve their reading comprehension. This technique was designed to give the students opportunity to overcome the problems faced in learning reading in order that they were motivated to learn.

The finding of this research showed that NHT Technique contributed to the students' reading ability and reading comprehension. Firstly, this technique help students to improve their scores. The improvement could be achieved because the researcher asked the student to discuss and present the result of their answer. Students individually developed questions about a reading assignment and then work with grouping system, discussing and answering each other's questions

It can be concluded that the implementation of the NHT Technique improved the competence in reading comprehension in the aspects: (1) find the main problems, (2) distinguish between fact and opinion; (3) identifying information, (4) find key information, and (5) formulate the problem from the main problems. Besides, the improvement of learning activities with good and very good category in all aspects observed, namely: (1) participation, (2) cooperation, (3) creativity, (4) responsibility, and (5) the students' attitude in learning English. Based on these findings, it is suggested that language teachers use NHT Technique to improve students' competence in reading comprehension in learning English.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the result of data analysis in the reflection, it was concluded that the use of NHT Technique in teaching and learning process can improve students' reading comprehension in the class

In this study, the researcher used NHT to improve the students' reading comprehension. The steps of this technique were: 1) formed groups of 3-5 students and gave a number to each student in each group, 2) gave an assignment to each group to work through the discussion process and made sure students already hold relevant sources that would later be used to complete the assignment that have been given. 3) conducted discussion activities between group members in answering questions given by the teacher. And emphasized to students so that each member of a group understood and knew the answers that have been agreed. 4) mentioned a number to the students. For students from each group whose numbers were the same as those mentioned by the teacher, they were required to raise their hands and gave explanation the results of the group discussion. While Students whose numbers were not mentioned were instructed to respond to answers from other groups. 5) The researcher and students together concluded the final result of the correct answer from the questions given by the researcher. Made sure

students understand and they knew where the mistakes were for the answers they produced earlier.

In conclusion, this study was considered as successful due to the fact that the implementation of NHT Technique was able to improve reading comprehension at VIII B students at MTs Al-Ma'arif Singosari Malang. Therefore, NHT Technique could be alternative technique in teaching reading to improve reading comprehension in the class.

Based on the findings and discussions of this study, the researcher would like to deliver some suggestions concerning with numbered heads together technique as follows: The suggestion for English teachers, the researcher recommends English teachers to consider this technique as one of their teaching techniques to be applied in teaching reading. For future researchers, it is suggested to conduct similar study to apply the technique on different grammatical topic and also to deliver questionnaire for students to know their opinions toward the technique. Moreover, the researcher hopes that the finding of this study can be used as valuable source to conduct further researches related to the use of NHT to improve reading comprehension.

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