

THESIS ARTICLE

Improving the Seventh Year Students' Active Participation and Their Reading Comprehension Achievement by Using Numbered Heads Together (NHT) Technique at SMPN 4 Tanggul, Jember

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research was to improve the students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement by using Numbered Heads Together (NHT) technique at SMPN 4 Tanggul, Jember. The subjects of this research were the students of class VII C at SMPN 4 Tanggul in the 2013/2014 academic year. The research design was classroom action research. The data of this research were obtained from observation and a reading comprehension test. The collected data were analyzed statistically. Based on the results of observation in Cycles 1 and 2, there was an improvement as much as 5.09% on the students' active participation during the teaching and learning process of reading comprehension from 77.26% in Cycle 1 to 82.35% in Cycle 2. The result of reading comprehension test showed that the percentage of the students who got score ≥ 70 was 72.72% of 33 students in Cycle 1 and 85.29% of 34 students in Cycle 2. It means that there was improvement from the first cycle to the second cycle as much as 12.57%. Therefore, it could be concluded that the use of Numbered Heads Together (NHT) technique in teaching learning process especially reading comprehension could improve the students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement.

Keywords: *Classroom Action Research, Numbered Heads Together (NHT) Technique, Students' Active Participation, Reading Comprehension Achievement.*

Introduction

According to Barber (1993: 236), English has already become a world language, by virtue of the political and economic progress made by over four hundred million native speakers, and roughly the same number who speak it as a second language. It is also used as the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air-traffic controls, international business, medicine, sports, and many others. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that is a compulsory subject to be taught in all schools from lower secondary to upper secondary schools. (Lengkanawati: 2006).

In Indonesia, English is considered to be a foreign language. It means that Indonesian people do not use English for daily communication. As a result, learning English is very difficult for the learners because there are so many things that are different from their first language. Besides, based on the *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP)* or School- Based Curriculum for Junior High School students, the students should master all of the four language skills; reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Based on the Curriculum, reading is one of the language skills that must be learned by the students. Grellet (1996:4) says that there are two reasons why we read. The first is

reading for pleasure and the second is reading for information. By doing reading activity, the students can improve their knowledge. Reading is related with comprehension. Grellet (1996:3) states that reading comprehension is understanding a written text.

Reading is one of the four basic skills that must be taught to the Junior and Senior High School students. This skill is important as the other language skills. Grellet (1996:8) states that reading comprehension should not be separated from other skills. It means that a successful reader is the one who can understand the meaning of the text and see the purpose of the writer in the text. Then, the next activity that cannot be separated from reading is to comprehend the text itself. Reading relates to reading comprehension. When students are reading, they are doing thinking process by comprehending all the words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs in order to get the meaning of the text as a whole. Through reading activities, students are expected to be able to understand the meaning of the whole text. Consequently, the students must have a good reading ability.

Based on the result of the preliminary study in the form of an interview with the English teacher of SMPN 4 Tanggul, it was known that class VIIC still got difficulties in learning reading. The teacher stated that only 19 students (55.9% of students) achieved the standard

requirement score of English that was 70 and 15 students (44.1% of students) were below 70. It could be said that most of the students did not achieve the standard requirement score of English. It means that class VII C students of SMPN 4 Tanggul had difficulty in reading comprehension. In addition, teacher stated that this class belonged to naughty people.

And also, it was known that the English teacher of SMPN 4 Tanggul Jember as the center of learning usually taught the students by using lecturing method, pairing, and individual work. The English teacher never used NHT technique in teaching reading. He also explained that lecturing method actually was not very effective for the students. The students could not really understand about the reading text. Consequently, they could not answer the comprehension question correctly.

The fact also showed that the students class VIIC of SMPN 4 Tanggul had difficulty in reading comprehension based on the data obtained from the interview with the English teacher. The result showed that the students experienced difficulty in reading comprehension, they were lack of vocabulary. In addition, they are difficult to comprehend word meaning, sentence meaning, and paragraph meaning. These conditions made students feel uncomfortable and reluctant to join English reading comprehension.

Based on the preliminary study conducted by an interview with the English teacher of the seventh grade at SMPN 4 Tanggul Jember, it was known that the English teacher of SMPN 4 Tanggul Jember as the center of learning usually teaches the students by using lecturing method, pairing, and individual work. In other word, the English teacher never used NHT technique in teaching reading. He also explained that lecturing method actually is not very effective for the students. The students cannot really understand the meaning of the reading text. Consequently, they cannot answer the comprehension question correctly. For that reason, the teacher should choose the appropriate teaching technique to make the students master the reading materials. One of the teaching techniques that can be applied in teaching reading comprehension is cooperative learning.

Based on the background above, it was important to solve the problem of the reading class. In teaching learning process, the cooperative learning approach that the researcher chose to overcome the students' difficulties in reading was Numbered Heads Together (NHT) technique. It was suitable to be applied because of some reasons. They were: (1) NHT had not been applied by the English teacher before; (2) NHT provided the students' opportunities to work cooperatively, (3) the advantages of NHT could arouse the students' motivation to work in group. NHT is one of the techniques in cooperative learning developed by Kagan 1992 in which this technique drills students to work cooperatively in making reviews of the material and check their understanding about the content of the lesson.

Based on the background above, the researcher

conducted a classroom action research entitled "Improving the Seventh Year Students' Participation and Their Reading Comprehension Achievement by Numbered Heads Together (NHT) Technique at SMPN 4 Tanggul".

Research Methods

The design of the research was a classroom action research with cycle model. It was used to improve the seventh year students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement by using Number Heads Together (NHT) at SMPN 4 Tanggul. Elliot (1991:69) defines that classroom action research is the study of a social situation with a view to improve the quality of action within it. In addition, McMillan (1992:12) notes that classroom action research as the solution of a specific classroom problem. It means that the main purpose of the classroom action research was to solve education systems' problem, not to find new scientific knowledge.

This research was conducted in SMPN 4 Tanggul. In this classroom action research, the researcher collaborated with the English teacher. The collaboration focused on identifying and defining research problem, planning the action, the carrying out the action of the research, class observation, and doing reflection. This action research was conducted with cycle model in the two cycles. Each cycle consisted of four stages: planning the action, implementing the action, observation, and doing reflection (Elliot,1991:70). The area determination method of this research was done by using purposive method. This research was conducted at SMPN 4 Tanggul. This school was chosen because of some reasons. First, The VII-C year students at SMP Negeri 4 Tanggul still had difficulties in students' participation and their reading comprehension. Second, The English teacher had never applied NHT technique in teaching reading comprehension. Then, The Headmaster of SMP Negeri 4 Tanggul gave permission to the researcher to conduct this classroom action research collaboratively with the English teacher of grade VII-C.

In this research, the research subjects were the students of class VII C at SMPN 4 Tanggul in the 2013/2014 academic year. Based on the preliminary study, the total number of the students in that class was 34 students. This class was chosen because based on the preliminary study the students in this class still had difficulty on reading comprehension achievement and it need to be improved. The methods used in collecting the data were observation, reading test, interview, and documentation.

The evaluations conducted in this research were product and process evaluations. The process evaluation was conducted by observation which was done in each meeting to evaluate the students' active participation during the teaching learning process of reading comprehension by NHT technique. The students' participation in this research referred to the students' participation during teaching learning process. The indicators of observation were the students listened to teacher explanation attentively, the students participated in forming the group enthusiastically, the students discussed in Numbered Heads Together time

cooperatively, the students answered the teacher's questions after Numbered Heads Together time individually. The students who fulfilled at least three indicators were categorized as active students. The product evaluation was conducted at the end of each cycle by administering a reading comprehension test.

This classroom action research was considered successful if $\geq 75\%$ of the students of the VII-C class actively participated in the teaching learning of reading by using NHT technique. Moreover, This classroom action research was considered successful if the mean score of the students in VII-C class was ≥ 75 , and at least 75% of the students could reach the standard minimum score of 70.

A data analysis method is a way to analyze the obtained data. In this research, the data that were gained were primary data that covered the students' score of reading comprehension test and the result of the observation in the teaching learning process. The collected data from each cycle were analyzed statistically. Then, the results of the data were described statistically to answer the research problems and verify the hypotheses.

Research Findings

The action in Cycle 1 was conducted in three meetings, including the reading comprehension test. The first meeting was done on 12nd May 2014, the second meeting was done on 14th May 2014 and the third meeting that was the reading comprehension test was done on 14th May 2014. The implementation of the action was done by the researcher while the English teacher was the observer. The stages of activities done in the first cycle included planning of the action, implementation of the action, classroom observation and evaluation, and data analysis and reflection of the action. The implementation of the action based on the lesson plans constructed by the researcher and the English teacher and had been consulted to the research consultants. The first meeting was done based on the lesson plan 1 and the second meeting was done based on lesson plan 2. The text used in Cycle 1 was descriptive texts. The process of evaluation was done during the teaching and learning process by observing the students active participation based on the observation checklist.

The result of observation in Cycle 1 of the first meeting, there were 77.75% students who were active during the teaching learning process. Then, in the second meeting, there were 78.78% students who were actively involved in the teaching learning process. Thus, it could be concluded that the average result of the students' active participation during teaching learning process was 77.26% which means the result achieved the target.

The reading comprehension test was administered to measure the students' achievement in reading comprehension after the action of the first cycle was conducted. The result of reading comprehension test in Cycle 1 showed that there were 72.72% students who got scores ≥ 70 in reading comprehension test. Based on the list of students' scores in reading comprehension test, there were 24 students who got scores ≥ 70 which means that the target of this research had not been achieved.

According to the results of the students' reading test which did not achieve the criteria of the success yet, it was necessary to conduct the actions in the second cycle by revising some aspects in the first cycle. The revisions were intended to improve the students' reading achievement, both the process and the product of teaching reading by using NHT technique".

The action in cycle 2 was conducted because the action in cycle 1 had not fulfilled the criteria of the success of the action yet. The action in cycle 2 was conducted in three meetings including the reading test. The second cycle was done on 19th May 2014 and 21st May 2014 while the reading test was conducted on 26th May 2014. The stages of the activities in the second cycle were the same as those one in the first cycle. They were planning of the action, implementation of the action that included teaching and observing, and the evaluating of the action that included testing and reflecting.

The implementation of the action based on the lesson plans constructed by the researcher collaboratively with the English teacher. These lesson plans in this cycle already revised based on the problems found in cycle 1. It was expected that by revising some necessary aspects in the first cycle, the student could improve their reading comprehension achievement by using NHT technique. The first meeting was done based on the lesson plan 1 and the second meeting was done based on the lesson plan 2. The text used in Cycle 2 was descriptive text. As was done in Cycle 1, there were two kinds of data; the first was the result of observation during the teaching learning process and the second was the result of reading comprehension test.

From the result of observation during the teaching and learning process and reading comprehension test in Cycle 2, it was concluded that there was improvement in both product and process evaluations. Based on the result of observation in the first meeting showed that there were 27 of 34 students or (79.41%), and in the second meeting there were 29 of 34 the students or (85.29)% who were active during the teaching learning process of reading comprehension by using NHT technique. Thus, it could be concluded that the average result of the students' active participation during teaching learning process was 82.35% which means the result achieved the target. The result of reading comprehension test in Cycle 2, there were 29 of 34 students or (85.29%) who got ≥ 70 as the standard minimum score.

Based on the result of reading comprehension test and observation during the teaching learning process in Cycle 2, it showed improvement and successfully achieved the target of the research. Thus, it could be concluded that the results of Cycle 2 gave the consistent results as what had been done and found in Cycle 1, that the use of NHT technique could improve the students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement during the teaching learning process.

Discussion

After conducting both the first cycle and the second cycle in this classroom action research, based on the results

of the observation showed that the record of the students' active participation in joining the teaching learning improved. In addition, the evaluation revealed that the use NHT technique was able to improve the students' reading comprehension achievement.

The results of the students' scores in students' active participation and reading comprehension test by using NHT technique both in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 gave the consistent results. The average percentage of the students' participation in Cycle 1 was 77.26% and Cycle 2 was 82.35%. It means that the results of students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 had achieved the research success criteria. Moreover, the percentage of students who got the standard score of 70 or higher in cycle 1 was 72.72% and cycle 2 was 85.29%. It means that there was an improvement as much as 12.57% of the percentage of students who got the standard score of 70 or higher from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2.

Based on the result of implementation of the actions in two cycles, it could be concluded that teaching reading comprehension by using NHT technique could improve the students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement. It was proven by more than 75% students who were active in the teaching and learning process of reading comprehension and more than 75% students achieved the standard score required for the reading comprehension achievement test that was 70.

Those results proved the theories which state that using NHT technique in teaching reading comprehension can improve the students' active participation as well as their reading comprehension achievement in the reading teaching learning process. As Cooper (1999) states that this technique makes drills and quick reviews of facts engaging and productive for the whole class. Thus, the use of NHT helped to increase the students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement.

In relation to the relevant previous research findings that were conducted by Ulya Izzaty (2005) entitled "Improving the class VIII Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement by using Numbered Heads Together Strategy at SMPN 4 Jember". The research result indicated that NHT strategy improved students' reading comprehension ability. The improvement could be seen from the students' reading scores which fulfilled the minimum standard score requirement of learning success. It showed that the results of the students' reading score had improved from 90% in the first cycle to 95% in the second cycle by using NHT technique.

Based on the results of this research, it could be said that the use of NHT technique could improve the students' participation as well as their reading comprehension achievement in the teaching learning process. NHT technique could be used as an alternative technique in teaching reading by the English teacher; it is due to the fact that NHT technique could improve the students' reading comprehension achievement.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it could be concluded that teaching reading by using NHT technique could improve the seventh year students' participation and their reading comprehension achievement during the teaching learning process at SMPN 4 Tanggul in 2013/2014 academic year.

Since the use of NHT technique could improve students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement during the teaching learning process, NHT technique can be used as a technique to teach reading comprehension. The researcher suggests the English teacher to use NHT technique as an alternative technique in teaching reading comprehension. The students are also suggested to be more active during the teaching learning process in class by using NHT technique. The result of this research can be used by the future researchers as a reference or information in conducting the same study by using the different model of cooperative learning, with different level of the students or different research design.

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