

IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION BY USING NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER (NHT) TECHNIQUE

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Abstract: Reading is important subject that should be taught. NHT is one of the techniques that can be used to improve students' reading comprehension. The main purpose of this study was to find out whether or not there was any significant difference in students' reading achievement between students who were taught by using (NHT) technique and that of those who were not. The experimental method was used to conduct the study. The sample was taken by using purposive sampling method which consisted 32 in each group. To select the experimental and control groups, a flip coin was used. Therefore, class VIII 3 was the experimental group whereas VIII 4 as the control group. Multiple choice was used to collect the data. The data obtained were analyzed by the t-test. The value of t-obtained was 3.280, at the significant level $p < 0.05$ in two-tailed testing with $df = 62$, the critical value of t-table = 1.999. Since the value of t-obtained was higher than t-table, the null hypotheses (H_0) was rejected and alternative hypotheses (H_a) was accepted. It meant that there was a significant difference in students' reading achievement between the students who were taught by using (NHT) technique and than of those who were not. Thus, NHT could improve students' reading comprehension.

Keywords: reading, numbered heads together technique

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an important subject that should be taught. According to Healy (2002, p.3), reading is a purposeful and active process. A reader reads to understand, to remember what is understood and put the understanding to use. It means that a reader can read a text to learn, to find out information and to be entertained. In other words, reading is one of the language skills that contribute to the success of language learning together with the other skills.

To get information from the writer in reading students must comprehend the text. Comprehension is a complex process that has been

understood and explained in a number of ways (Pardo, 2004, p.272). It means that comprehension is a process in which readers construct meaning by interacting with them through the combining prior knowledge and previous experience, informing in the text. According to Woolley (2011, p.15), reading comprehension is the process of making meaning from text. Meanwhile, Healy (2002, p.3) says that reading comprehension is the understanding of the written word, the understanding of the content that is being read, and the construction of the meaning of the text. So that, when people read, they should be able to recall information afterward.

Unfortunately, students face some problems in reading most of the students. According to Schoenbach, et al (2005, p.38),

reading is as a complex process, interactive process, using basic skills and problem-solving. Moreover, Naruddin, Seken, and Artini (2013, p.2) say that students assume reading texts is difficult. Students could not understand the text well and they also got difficulties in finding out the main ideas and supporting ideas, inferring cause and effect relationship, and inferring referents of pronouns and adverbs. She adds that there are some reasons for reading's problem. First, the teacher has a monotonous teaching style. Second, students have low motivation in learning English. Third, Students have a low ability in reading. Fourth, reading materials are selected inappropriately. Fifth, the students were lack of vocabulary.

Based on the interview at SMPN 6 Kayuagung, students were

low motivation in teaching reading, poor to comprehend the text and they were not active and they also were lack of vocabulary.

There are so many techniques that can be used by the teachers to solve students' problems in reading. One of them is Numbered Heads Together technique. NHT is one of the cooperative learning structures used as a teaching technique specifically in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (Ariani, et al, 2013, p.4). According to Kagan (2009) in Baker (2013, p.6), NHT is relatively simple technique especially useful for checking students' understanding of lesson objectives. There are six steps in numbered head together method (Kagan, 2011): (a). Preparation. In this stage, teachers prepare lesson plans to create a scenario of learning

and student worksheet, (b). Formation of groups. The teacher divides students into groups of 3-5 students. The teacher gives a number to every student in the group. Group formed by a combination of different social background, race, ethnicity, gender and learning ability, (c). Students should have a book. Each group should have books or guidance in order to facilitate students in completing worksheets or solving problems given by the teacher, (d). Discussion of the problems. In group work, teachers distribute worksheets to each student as material to be studied. Within each group work together to describe the students' thinking and make sure that everyone knows the answer to that question is already in students' worksheet or questions that have been given by the teacher.

Furthermore, Bresnahan (2011, p.174) states that Numbered Heads Together is an efficient and effective instructional technique to increase student responses and improve achievement. In other words, Numbered Heads Together is one application of cooperative learning which has the cooperative structure by students' numbering and the students able to processing information, communication, developing thinking, review of the material, and checking prior knowledge. In short, learning by using numbered head together technique is begun with the numbering, questioning heads together and answering.

Based on Ariani, et al (2013, p.6), Numbered Heads Together is an effective technique to improve reading comprehension. Meanwhile,

according to Karen (2010) in Ariani, et al (2013, p.6), the benefits of Numbered Head Together are all students are actively thinking of answer, students gain knowledge from their peer's ideas, students work together cooperatively, students feel confident enough to offer an answer when called upon, and improve the dynamics of the class.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting the study, quasi-experimental design was used. The participant of this study was all the eighth-grade students at SMPN 6 Kayuagung. In this study, the sample was taken by using purposive sampling method. To select the experimental and control groups, a flip of a coin was used. Consequently, VIII3 was the experimental group, while VIII4 was

the control group. The data were collected using the written test in form of multiple-choices which consisted of 30 questions about the descriptive text. Content validity was used in this study. Table of test specification which was based on the English syllabus was used to check the content validity. KR-21 was used to find reliability in this study. The t-test was used to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of paired sample t-test showed that paired sample difference in mean of pre-test and the post-test experimental group was 20.312, the standard deviation of the post-test 8.964, standard error mean of the post-test was 1.585, and the value of t-obtained was 12.819. This value was higher than the critical value of t-table 2.039 at the

significant level $p < 0.05$ in two-tailed testing with $df = 31$ (See Appendix I). Since the value of t-obtained 12.819 was higher than the critical value of t-table 2.039, and p-value 0.000 was lower than 0.05, it meant that the students in the experimental group had a progress after giving treatment.

The result of paired sample t-test showed that paired sample difference in mean of pre-test and post-test control group was 1.812, with standard deviation was 2.117, standard error mean was 0.374, and the value of t-obtained was 4.844. Since t-obtained 4.844 was higher than t-table 2.0395, the p-value was 0.000 lower than 0.05. It could be concluded that the null hypotheses (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. It meant that the activity done in

control group had improved the students' reading achievement.

Based on the calculation in table 4, the t-obtained was 3.280. at the significant level of $p < 0.05$ and the degree of freedom (df) 62. The critical value of t-table was 1.9990. Since the value of t-obtained 3.280 was higher than the value of t-table 1.9990, and p-value 0.002 was lower than value 0.05, it meant that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. In other words, there was a significant difference in students' reading achievement between students who were taught reading by using Numbered Heads Together and that of those who were not.

Based on the calculation of the independent sample t-test between the post-test in the experimental and control groups, it was found that

there was a significant difference in students' reading achievement between the students who were taught by using (NHT) technique and than of those who were not. Numbered heads together technique helped students to improve their reading comprehension. By using NHT technique made students active to think the answer, students got knowledge from their peer's ideas, students work together cooperatively, students feel confident enough to offer an answer when called upon, and improve the dynamics of the class.

Not only NHT technique required the student as interaction with member or group to get answer the question but also positive interdependence, responsible each other that motivated them to increase their ability in the learning process.

According to Kagan (2009), NHT is relatively simple technique especially useful for checking students' understanding of lesson objectives.

In short, NHT technique made the students active and creative in the learning process. Then, NHT technique was more interesting for the students because students have done cooperatively with the groups.

CONCLUSION

Based on the calculation, the t -obtained was 12.819 at the significant level of $p < 0.05$, and the degree freedom (df) 31, since the value of t -obtained exceeded the value of t -table (2.039), the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. It means that there was a significant difference in reading

achievement between the students who were taught reading by using Numbered Heads Together strategy and that of those were not.

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