

THE USE OF NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER TO TEACH DESCRIPTIVE TEXT TO THE SEVENTH GRADERS OF SMP NEGERI 1 KOTA MOJOKERTO

Rohmania

English Departement, Languages and Arts Faculty, State University of Surabaya
rohmania20@gmail.com

Ririn Pusparini, S.Pd., M.Pd

English Departement, Languages and Arts Faculty, State University of Surabaya
rrn.puspa@gmail.com

Abstrak

Membaca adalah salah satu dari empat keterampilan penting yang harus dikuasai oleh siswa di semua kelas, daripada mendengarkan, berbicara, dan menulis. Dengan membaca, para siswa akan mendapatkan lebih banyak pengetahuan dan informasi. Keterampilan ini sama pentingnya dengan keterampilan lainnya. Kenyataannya, beberapa guru hanya mengajar membaca cara monoton. Hal ini membuat guru harus menemukan cara yang menarik untuk mengajarkannya. Berdasarkan permasalahan tersebut, guru dapat menggunakan teknik Numbered Heads Together sebagai teknik alternatif dalam pengajaran membaca. Peneliti melakukan penelitian di SMP Negeri 1 Kota Mojokerto.

Berdasarkan fakta di atas, peneliti melakukan penelitian pada Numbered Heads Together teknik untuk mengajarkan teks deskriptif untuk kelas tujuh SMP. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan pelaksanaan Numbered Heads Together dalam mengajar teks deskriptif untuk siswa kelas tujuh dan untuk menggambarkan pemahaman bacaan siswa saat pelaksanaan Numbered Heads Together dalam mengajar teks deskriptif untuk siswa kelas tujuh.

Rancangan penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Subyek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas tujuh SMP Negeri 1 Kota Mojokerto. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan dari hasil lembar observasi dan hasil tugas siswa. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan Heads Together Numbered mendorong siswa untuk berpartisipasi aktif dalam seluruh kegiatan.

Setelah menggunakan teknik ini, siswa saling membantu untuk memahami teks serta menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan dari teks. Selain itu, jumlah siswa yang mendapatkan prestasi yang baik meningkat dari satu pertemuan ke pertemuan lain. Artinya pemahaman membaca siswa lebih baik setelah pelaksanaan Numbered Heads Together.

Kesimpulannya, Numbered Heads Together adalah teknik yang bagus untuk digunakan dalam mengajar teks deskriptif, terutama untuk siswa kelas tujuh, karena membantu siswa untuk mengatasi kesulitan mereka dalam membaca, menciptakan suasana yang positif di kelas, dan bangunan interaksi yang baik bagi guru dan siswa.

Kata Kunci: *Numbered Heads Together*, teks deskriptif, membaca

Abstract

Reading is one of the four important skills that have to be mastered by students in all grades, instead of listening, speaking, and writing. By reading, students will get more knowledge and information. This skill is as important as other skills. In reality, some teachers only teach reading monotonous way. It makes the teacher must find an interesting way to teach it. Based on that problem, the teacher can use Numbered Heads Together technique as the alternative technique in teaching reading. The researcher conducts a research in SMP Negeri 1 Kota Mojokerto.

Based on the fact above, the researcher conducted a study of Numbered Heads Together technique to teach descriptive text to the seventh grade of junior high school. This study aimed to describe the implementation of Numbered Heads Together in teaching descriptive text to the seventh graders and to describe the students' reading comprehension when the implementation of Numbered Heads Together in teaching descriptive text to the seventh graders.

The design of this study is descriptive qualitative research. The subjects of this study are the seventh graders of SMP Negeri 1 Kota Mojokerto. The data of this study are collected from the result of observation

checklist and the result of students' task. The result of this study shows that the implementation of Numbered Heads Together encourages the students to participate actively in the whole activities.

After using this technique, the students help each other to comprehend the text as well as answer the questions of the text. In addition, the number of students who get good achievement increasing from one meets to another. It means that the students' reading comprehension is better after the implementation of Numbered Heads Together.

In conclusion, Numbered Heads Together is a good technique to be used in teaching descriptive text, especially for the seventh graders, since it helps the students to overcome their difficulties in reading, creates a positive atmosphere in the class, and buildings a good interaction for teacher and students.

Keywords: numbered heads together, descriptive text, reading

INTRODUCTION

English is an important means of communication, which is used by many countries in this world. It plays an important role as an international language. This is why the Indonesian government chooses English as the first foreign language to be taught in schools (Ramelan, 1992:3). English is taught from Junior High until the highest level of education.

As a matter of fact, it is important for the students to prepare their future in gaining information in English language. In order to prepare the students for the higher level education, government decides English as a compulsory subject. Therefore, English becomes one of language which should be mastered by students.

In order to master English, students must learn four language skills. They include listening, speaking, reading, and writing. From those skills, reading is considered to get a special focus. Reading is viewed as receptive or passive skills but students cannot neglect it. Reading is as important as other skills. Without reading, students cannot gain new knowledge. It means that reading is a language skill that should be taught because it has close connection to the whole part of language abilities including listening, speaking and writing.

Unfortunately, in reality some teachers only teach reading in a monotonous way (Abbot, et, al, 1981:84). There are some ways to motivate the students to read. The important step to do is to invite them to be interested in reading and enjoy learning reading. Therefore, the teachers are supposed to find the suitable technique and create some fun activities in reading class. Have shown that when the task involves complex learning and problem-solving skills, cooperation leads to higher achievement than competition, especially for low-ability students (Slavin in Woolfolk, 1993:326). Therefore, an alternative way that is suggested by the researcher is cooperative learning.

Cooperative learning is one of alternative ways to teach English. In Cooperative learning (CL), students make small group and work together. In addition, it has cooperative goal structure. Students can get their goal if other students also reach their goal, so they must cooperate each other in their groups. Johnson and Johnson have stressed that a cooperative goal structure works best for most school situations and learning tasks (Johnson and Johnson in Wolkfolk, 1993:326).

There are many types of cooperative learning. One of them is Numbered Head Together (NHT) technique. This technique eases the members of the group in deciding turn-taking so that there is no student who is too active or too passive. All students have a chance to participate in the class. The students cooperate with their group and give their contribution for the group at once. Therefore, it encourages them to be active during the learning process.

What makes Numbered Heads Together technique is appropriate to be used in reading class is it provides a chance for all members of the group to give responses, increase their motivation, improve their ability in reading and create a better classroom relationship: teacher-students and students-students relationship. By doing so, it will live up the atmosphere in the class and then bring the assumption that reading does not always contain passive activities. Therefore, teaching reading through Numbered Heads Together is expected to give the students a better achievement as it gives opportunities to all students to work both, cooperatively and individually.

Based on those problems, the researcher decides to conduct a research about the use of Numbered Heads Together. It is needed to describe the use of Numbered Heads Together in teaching reading descriptive text and to know the students' reading comprehension in reading descriptive text when the technique is implemented. By conducting this study, the researcher expects this technique can help the students to overcome their difficulties in reading descriptive text.

To deal with, the objectives of this study are describing the implementation and students' reading comprehension when the implementation of Numbered Heads Together in teaching descriptive text to the seventh graders of SMP Negeri 1 Kota Mojokerto.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the research problem and the objective mentioned in chapter one, the design of this study was descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive research evolves the description, recording, analysis and interpretation of the condition that is existed. In fact, the events that are observed and described would have happened every through there have been no observation or analysis (Arikunto, 1998: 248).

Qualitative research involves studies that do not attempt to quality their result through statistical summary

or analysis (Mackey and Gass (2005: 17). Qualitative studies typically involve interviews and observations without formal measurement. Thus, the data in this research were described in the form of words, sentences, or paragraph relating to the text, which the researcher found during the process of the study.

This study was conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Kota Mojokerto and the subject of the study was the seventh graders in VII A class. The researcher chose this subject because descriptive text had been taught in this class and the teacher had been implemented Numbered Heads Together to teach descriptive text in her class. That class consisted of 34 students.

The data of this study were collected from the result observation checklist and students' task. Observation checklist covered the details of the teaching learning process of descriptive text in the classroom. Students' task is investigating the ability of the students' reading comprehension when the implementation of the technique.

In conducting the research, the researcher used some instrument, which could help her to achieve the data. They were observation checklist and students' task. An observation checklist is the instrument used to acquire data of the teaching. The researcher focused on the implementation of Numbered Heads Together in teaching descriptive text. The researcher took some points dealing with the classroom activity, topics, the rule of the teacher, and the technique in teach to be indicators. Students' task was needed as the assessment tools which investigated the ability of the students ability when the implementation of Numbered Heads Together. The researcher provided several questions related to the text which would describe the comprehension degree of the students dealing on their answers. There were five questions. They were dealing with general information of the text (e.g. *Task 1*: “How are her eyes?”), general understanding of the text (e.g. *Task 2*: “How is his body?”), word meaning (e.g. *Task 1*: “..., she is very famous and popular in Indonesia. What is the synonym of the underline word?”), implicit information (e.g. *Task 3*: “What’s “Mr. Bean” real name?”), and explicit information (e.g. *Task 3*: “What he smart? How do you know?”). For further information see Appendix ... The result of the exercise would be analyzed and used as the instrument to collect the data.

The researcher collected the data through observation technique since this study was categorized as a qualitative one. The following was description of the data collection technique. The researcher came to the class being observed for three meetings. She sat in the back of the classroom. During the observation, the researcher used the passive participation when the teacher was teaching descriptive text through Numbered Heads Together in the classroom. The researcher used observation checklist to collect the data. The research used students' task to investigate the students' reading ability when the implementation of Numbered Heads Together in teaching descriptive text. The exercise was given at the end of each meeting. It contained some questions in form of short answer items and the students

had to do them individually. It was given to investigate whether the students comprehended the text or not.

The data were analyzed qualitative by using descriptive analysis. The data were obtained during the data collection phrases. There were the steps of the data analysis technique: 1.) The researcher investigated the process of teaching descriptive text using observation checklist. 2.) The data from the observation were analyzed descriptively. 3.) The students' tasks were presented to assess the reading comprehension ability of the students.

The researcher analyzed the result of the task using reading rubric that was adapted from marking guide for open-ended question by Heaton (1998). The data were categorized in four mastery levels of comprehension, those were “Excellent”, “Good”, “Fair”, and “Poor”. Finally, the researcher described all those data into words, phrase, and sentences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research was conducted in three meetings. The implementation of Numbered Heads Together began from the first meeting. Everything that was needed for the lesson was well-prepared. The class was clean, the white board was clean, and the chair arrangement was also tidy before the class began. In addition, the teacher always gave descriptive text on each meeting. It proved that selection of material was according to the objective of the lesson – teaching descriptive text.

Before asking the students to read the text, she introduced the topic that would be discussion. It helped the students so much because they could prepare themselves and reviewed what they know about the topic. In the first meeting, the teacher also introduced the technique that she applied. She explained the step clearly. Although the students were confused at the beginning, it was running well.

In the next meeting, the teacher did not need to explain as much as the first meeting. She just reviewed a little about procedure the technique. As the result, the students could perform better than the previous meeting. They were more enthusiastic, than the first meeting. In the third meeting, the students were no shy anymore to present their responses. They could live up the class as everybody had a chance to give responses. It means that there was no dominance in the group. It could balance those who were usually active and passive to give participation.

The teaching steps that teacher applied were in line with the step that Brown (2000) proposed. It consisted of pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. In pre-reading, the teacher activated background knowledge. She gave hints to the students and introduced the topic as well. Then she moved to give the text and let them know the purpose of their reading. And the last, in post-activity, she gave q quiz to be answered by the students individually.

Numbered Heads Together was placed in while-reading. However, the steps were modified from Kagan's structure. Kagan (1989) pointed out that after dividing the

group and giving numbers, the teacher can simply poses the question and then asks the students to answer. Then, students have to put their heads together to make sure that everyone in the group knows the answer. After that, the teacher calls a number and the students who has that number had to answer the question. In this study, each group had name. It was based on letter A to F. Then, she asked a question and made sure that all groups let each member knew the answer. Then she called a number and its alphabet. The pointed students had to answer the question. Giving name to each group could case her to observe the teaching and learning while scoring the students' participation. Thus modification did not change the original version so much. Even it helped the teacher to manage Numbered Heads Together technique to apply well within the limited time and great numbers of students.

The teacher's role was not dominant. She involved the students in the whole activities. She took role as an organizer, an observer, a feedback organizer, and a prompter as argued by Harmer (1998). Those roles were changed based on the activities. She was an organized at the beginning of the class. She gave a clear introduction of what they should do and should not do. She always let the students knew how long they had to finish the task. Moreover, she always reminded the students about the time. It was really helpful because the students could finish the task on time. As a feedback organized, she managed turn-taking in asking and answering section. Where the students gave false answer, she gave chance to another group to answer. Giving applause when the students could answer correctly was a good way to give feedback. She also gave compliment such as "good answer" and giving thumbs up.

By using Numbered Heads Together, the students were more active. Moreover, it created better classroom relationship. For instance, teacher-students relationship was better as the teacher gave chances for every student to participate. While students-students relationship was also good as they cooperated to solve the problem together. They could give their opinion in discussing section. It led to cooperative interaction among the students in a group. Therefore, the communication between teacher-students and students-students were good during the implementation of the technique.

At the end of the implementation of the technique, the teacher always gave a quiz. The points of each meeting were concluded. The student's level of reading comprehension was analyzed from the first meeting until the third meeting. There were more students who were categorized into Good on each meeting.

In the first meeting, the result of students' task showed that the students made errors to answer the question about synonym. It was showed by half of all students who failed to answer those kinds of questions. The error in vocabulary was misinterpretation of the question. In fact, all students could finish the task well. They did not have problem with the other questions dealing with general understanding, explicit information,

and also implicit information in the text. Most of them answer it well.

As the result, it could be concluded that dominantly the level of students reading comprehension were in Good level. It could be seen that just almost half of them who was considered into Excellent level. Even few students were still in Fair level. There were no students who got Poor level. Most of them failed to answer the question dealing with the word synonym. However, all of them could answer well the question dealing with general understanding of the text and explicit information.

In the second meeting, the result of students' task showed that all students success answering question dealing with antonym, implicit information and explicit information. From this meeting, it could be concluded that there was no dominance of reading comprehension level. Some of all students were belong to Excellent level while almost half of them were in Good level. However, there were few of them still in Fair level although it was no longer as many as the previous meeting.

In the third meeting, the result of student's task showed that all students could answer well the questions dealing with general understanding, explicit information, and implicit information. As the result, most of the students could get Excellent and some of them were in Good level. There were no students who were in Fair and Poor level. All students could answer well the questions dealing with general understanding of the text, explicit information and implicit information.

The result of the tasks showed that the numbers of the students who got Excellent increased from one meeting to the next meeting. This better result could be influenced by conducting Numbered Heads Together in the previous section. It showed that the technique did not only work for group discussion but also for individual accountability. When the students worked in groups, they shared ideas, gave opinions and helped each other that lead to positive attitudes toward each individual. They could learn the lesson through group discussion. As they got enough information in group working, they could finish the task well. Therefore, they also got better result from one meeting to another.

From the discussion above, it could be concluded that Numbered Heads Together was successfully implemented in teaching descriptive text. It worked for both, group and individual works. Group work encouraged them not to be dominant in the discussion section. Even it gave them chance to participate. For example, when they were trying to solve the problem, everybody cooperated to answer the questions. If there were low achievers in the group, the high achieve helped them. There was no dominance in a group. In addition, no one knew whose number would be called, that was why they had to cooperate well. It also taught them to be confident to present their answer. Then when asking and answering section, everyone also had chances to answer. From group discussion, they could learn the lesson. Although they had to do the task individually afterward, the group discussion in the

previous activity helped them much. It showed that they got better result from the task.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the result of the data analysis which is obtained through the observation, the researcher concludes that: 1.) Numbered Heads Together technique could be used to teach descriptive text to the seventh graders. By using this technique students could learn by working in groups. They help each other if there is any member has difficulty in a discussion process. Since every student in group has a number, there is no dominance in the group as whose number is called is the one who will answer. Moreover, it engages the students to be active in the whole activities, learn each other, and builds a good classroom relationship. 2.) When the implementation of Numbered Heads Together in teaching descriptive, the result of the quiz, it could be conclude that this technique was successfully implemented in the process of teaching descriptive text to the seventh graders. The student's level of reading comprehension was analyzed from the first meeting until the third meeting. There were better results from the first meeting to the third meeting. There were no students in Poor level since the first meeting. The use of Numbered Heads Together technique is good for teaching descriptive text.

Suggestions

Based on the result of the data analysis and the conclusion above, the researcher gives the following suggestions: 1.) Numbered Heads Together can be applied to teach descriptive text to the seventh graders of junior high school in order to build students' working in groups and to make students interest in reading. 2.) The material should not too easy or too difficult. It must be appropriate with the students' level and prior knowledge. 3.) The teacher must arrange easy groups' formation to avoid students' noise and encourage the students to speak English. 4.) The teacher should be creatively used certain technique in teaching, especially reading class, in order to engage the students to be active in learning process. Moreover, if there is different problem compared of this study, the teachers can modify the technique based on the needs and the problem that is faced in the class.

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