

**The Effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on Students' Achievement in Reading Descriptive Text**

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**Abstract**

This study deals with the effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on students' achievement in reading descriptive text. The population of the study was the 2015/2016 academic year on the first semester of grade X students of SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Indonesia Membangun Medan. The samples consist of two classes, namely X IPS 1 and X IPS 2, with the total was 60 students selected by applying random sampling. The sample was divided into two groups, i.e. Experimental group (X IPS 2) taught by applying Numbered Heads Together Technique and the control group (X IPS 1) taught without applying that technique. The data of this research were taken from the students' score of reading descriptive text test. The calculation showed that the coefficient of the test was 0.65. It shows that the test is reliable and the reliability is substantial. There were two data used in this research. They were pre-test and post-test. The data were analyzed by using t-test formula to show the effect of applying Numbered Heads Together Technique on students' achievement in reading descriptive text. After analyzing the data, the finding indicates that t-observed is higher than t-table ( $5.50 > 2.00$ ) at the level of significance 0.05 with the degree of freedom (df) 58. It means that applying Numbered Heads Together Technique has significantly affected the students' achievement in reading descriptive text. It implies that Numbered Heads Together Technique is a significant technique for teaching reading descriptive text.

*Keywords* : Numbered heads together technique, reading, descriptive text

**Introduction**

In daily lives, people almost do all of the language skills, namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking. These four kinds of language skills are divided into two categories; they productive skill and receptive skills. Reading and listening are called as receptive skills in that the language users are receiving written language and oral language, while speaking and writing are called as productive skill as they produce the language in an oral and written form.

Reading is one of the skills in language proficiency which is taught formally in Indonesia from elementary school up to the university level. Many researchers note that reading is the most important language skill for academic achievements beside speaking, listening, and writing. Brown (2004:185) stated that reading is arguably the most essential skill for success in all educational contexts. Moreover, in the era of globalization, students need to intensify their reading activities in order to get as much shared information as possible. By doing that, the students will be able to cover the news and knowledge all over the world to support their lives.

Reading comprehension has also been included in National Examination. It means that reading needs to be mastered by the students to pass the National Examination. In fact,

## THE EFFECT OF NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER TECHNIQUE ON

many students failed in the National Examination. They can not comprehend the text well because the text is very long and there are many unfamiliar words or difficult words. As a consequence, the students got bored and the result of the reading test was not good enough.

Based on the teachers' experience in teaching English as a foreign language interviewed by the writer while examining the students who did the teaching practice in some schools, specifically in SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Indonesia Membangun Medan, it is observed that the students still had insufficient skills in reading and got many difficulties in comprehending a text. Swan (1975:1-2) noted some reasons for failure in comprehension. He divides the reason into two types, namely : first, the reasons are connected with defective reading habits; second, the reasons arise directly from the text.

In addition, the lack of students' reading comprehension can be caused by some reasons. First, the learning process is conducted in teacher-centered, which means the teacher only explains the material without involving the students actively. The second reason is the teacher used only conventional technique in teaching. The teacher did not develop their teaching ability by using variety of strategies or techniques and oriented to the students' textbook only to teach reading in the class. The teacher only asked the students to read the textbook and to answer the provided questions related to the text. The activity does not provide the students to discuss and share ideas with their friends in group during the learning process.

This condition also happened while the students are reading descriptive texts. Knapp and Watkins (2005:97) state that descriptive text enables the categorisation or classification of an almost infinite range of experiences, observations and interactions into a system that orders them for immediate and future reference, and allows us to know them either objectively or subjectively, depending on the learning area or intent of the writer. By using the conventional technique in teaching descriptive text, the teacher did not develop the students' logical thinking about the generic structures of descriptive text, because during the learning process the teacher only asked the students to read, find the meaning of difficult words in their dictionaries and answer the questions of the text.

There are many strategies or techniques in teaching reading comprehension that can be used to overcome the problem. Numbered Heads Together Technique is one of the techniques that can be applied to overcome the problems.

### Objectives

The objective of the study is to find out the effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on students' achievement in reading descriptive text.

### Research Question

In relation to the background above, the problem of the study is formulated as follows: "Does Numbered Heads Together Technique affect the students' achievement in reading descriptive text?"

### Theory

Numbered Heads Together Technique is an excellent structure for combining learning partnerships into groups or teams of four. According to Kagan (2009), Numbered Heads Together Technique is a learning method when each student is given a number and they make a group of work and then the teacher will call the number of the students randomly. The purpose of this technique is the students are able to process the information. They also can develop their thinking, review material, and check their prior knowledge. Numbered Heads Together (NHT) can serve any activities in the classroom. It means that there are many other

## THE EFFECT OF NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER TECHNIQUE ON

ways for ensuring the teacher cues the students into collaborative activity. The students work together and they quiet literally 'put their heads together' in order to solve problem and also ensure that everyone in the group can answer the question.

The teacher, in this case, asks an answer by calling the number and the student with number called then takes their turns to answer. If there are not enough students ready to respond, the teacher may judge that a little more time. Answer can be taken in number of choices: 1) select one student, 2) select one but ask others to collaborate or comment, 3) ask different students to give a particular part of the answer.

There are some steps of Numbered Heads Together technique, they are:

- 1) The teacher divides the students into group work of four
- 2) The teacher has students number off within groups so that each student has a number : 1, 2, 3 and 4
- 3) The teacher gives a text for every groups with questions in it.
- 4) The teacher gives time to the students to read the text in their group and discuss it deeply.
- 5) The teacher tells the students to put their heads together to make sure that everyone on the team answer the question.
- 6) In presenting the result of students' work, the teacher calls a number 1,2,3 or 4 randomly.
- 7) For each teams, the students with that number can raise their hands to response and answer among their friends. They may not receive any help from their team at this point. If he or she did not pay attention during the discussion, the result must be bad.
- 8) When all teams have shown their work, the teacher can check each teams' answers for accuracy.
- 9) The teacher continues to the next questions.
- 10) If time allows, the teacher can give another text or questions.

Numbered Heads Together technique has some advantages, they are:

- 1) It is considered to help the students to give the solution to each question or problem.
- 2) All of the students can do the discussion intensively and give their idea, feelings, and thought without any authorities from others.
- 3) It gives the possibility to the students to know his progress based on his ability.
- 4) The students with better knowledge can teach and coach others to find the solution.
- 5) The students become more actively involved in the learning process.
- 6) This technique focused on the learner-centered in which between students work in group and teacher participate each other to solve the problem.
- 7) The teacher feels more free in the instructional process.

### Methodology

This study is conducted by applying experimental research. An experimental research uses two groups of sample, namely experimental group and control group. The experimental group was taught by using Numbered Heads Together Technique, while the control group was taught by using conventional technique.

#### Sample of Research Design

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
Experimental	√	Numbered Heads Together Technique	√
Control	√	Conventional Technique	√

## THE EFFECT OF NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER TECHNIQUE ON

The population of this research was the students of the grade X of SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Indonesia Membangun Medan. There are 3 classes of grade X namely XIPA<sub>1</sub>, XIPS<sub>1</sub> and XIPS<sub>2</sub>. The writer chose both of the social science classes as the sample of this research. After using lottery to decide the group, class XIPS<sub>2</sub> was chosen as Experimental Group and class XIPS<sub>1</sub> as Control Group. There are 30 students in each class. So, there are 60 students as the sample of this study.

There were two kinds of data which were found, namely process and product data. Rubric of attitude and skill scoring were used to collect the process data. For the product data, objective test by using multiple choice tests were used as the instrument to collect the data. The material of the test was taken from the subject matter which is being taught to the students, namely descriptive text. In collecting the data, pre test and post test were conducted for both experimental and control group. The students were asked to read three different descriptive texts. The objective tests were used to measure the students' reading comprehension. The procedures were divided into 3 steps, they were: pre-test, treatment, and post-test. Each of the procedure was described as follows:

### 1. Pre-Test

Pre-test was given to both experimental and control group to find out the homogeneity. It consists of 25 items of multiple choice. It was used to measure the students' ability in reading comprehension before the treatment.

### 2. Treatment

The treatment was conducted after administering the pre-test. The experimental group was taught by using Numbered Heads Together Technique while the control group with conventional method. Both experimental and control group were taught with the same materials.

#### Teaching Procedures in Experimental Group Applying Numbered Heads Together Technique

Teacher's activity	Students' Activity
1. Divide the student into groups. Each group consists of 4-6 students and to every member of the group is given a number from 1-6.	1. The students follow the teacher's instruction.
2. Ask the students to read the text	2. The students read the text.
3. The teachers explain about the text.	3. The students listen to the teacher's explanation.
4. Ask every groups to answer the question provided for the text.	4. Every students in their group answer the question provided for the text.
5. Ask each groups to decide the best answer and make sure that each member in that group understand their group's answer.	5. Discuss with their group members.
6. The teacher call a number. The students who belongs to the number give the answer based on the result of their group's work	6. The students who are called tell the answer to the teacher
7. Give the correct answer to the students	7. Discuss the correct answer with the teacher
8. Collect the students' work	8. Submit their work to the teacher

## THE EFFECT OF NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER TECHNIQUE ON

### Teaching Procedure in Control Group Using Conventional Technique

Teacher's activity	Students' Activity
1. Giving a text to the student.	1. The students receive the text.
2. Ask the student to read the text.	2. They read the text.
3. Read the text first and choose some students to read aloud or read in front of the class.	3. The students listen to the teacher and to the students pointed to read the text.
4. Ask the students to find out the meaning of the text by asking them to find out the meaning of difficult words.	4. Listing and finding the difficult words from the text.
5. Ask the students to translate the text.	5. Translate the text.
6. Ask the students to answer the question provided for the text.	6. Answer the question based on the text.

### Literature Review

The strength of Numbered Heads Together Technique was proven by Nuruddin et al. (2013) who conducted a research in reading comprehension by using this technique. The research found that this technique has positive effects to the students. The students who were taught by using Number Heads Together Technique got higher scores than students who were taught by using QAR and Conventional Technique. The same result of applying Numbered Heads Together Technique is also found by Satria et al. (2013) in their research who found that the use of Numbered Heads Together Technique improved the students' achievement in reading comprehension. Another research was conducted by Ramini (2013) who found that the students' achievement in writing improves after being taught by using Numbered Heads Together Technique.

### Findings

In order to find out the whether the application of Numbered Heads Together Technique had a significant effect on the students' reading comprehension, the result of the test was calculated by using t-test formula. The calculation is shown in the statistic data of both experimental and control group in pre-test and post-test. The result shows that t-observed is higher than t-table in which  $5,50 > 2,00$  with  $p = 0,05$  and the degree of freedom (df) = 58. It means that Numbered Heads Together Technique had significant effect on students' achievement in reading descriptive text.

### The Result of T-Test

t-observed > t-table	( p = 0,05 with df = 58 )
5,50 > 2,00	

The result of this research shows that there is difference of output between both classes. For the product data, based on the statistical calculation, it was obtained that t-observed (5,50) is higher than t-table (2,00) for the degree of freedom (df) 58 at level of significance ( $\alpha$ ) 0,05. It means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted. For the process data, it can be seen that the students which were taught by using Numbered Heads Together Technique got better observation scores than the students which were not taught by using Numbered Heads Together.

### Limitations

This research was done at the 2015/2016 academic year first semester grade X students of SMA Swasta Yayasan Perguruan Indonesia Membangun Medan North Sumatera Indonesia. Even if the result of this research shows that there is significant effect of the usage of Numbered Heads Together Technique on the students' reading descriptive text, it does not mean that there is no limitation of this study. The writer admits that it is not enough to have a treatment only for two months and the result will be better if it is done for the whole semester. Also the writer did not control all the sample for the whole aspects. The students live in different areas, even they come from a different background whether in social status or prior knowledge. It makes the result of this research not maximum enough. There is still possibility of higher effect of cooperative script if it was done longer and the teacher who did teaching in the class was being coached before implementing the media.

### Recommendation

Based on the conclusion drawn, the results of the findings contribute some valuable suggestions, they are:

1. The English teachers are suggested to use Numbered Heads Together Technique to improve students' achievement in reading descriptive text and also to improve their attitude to be more active and language skill in questioning and answering during the teaching and learning process.
2. The other researchers, who want to study more about Numbered Heads Together Technique, this research could be advisable reference.

### Conclusion

After finishing the research, the writer concludes that the students who were taught by using Numbered Heads Together Technique got better scores than the students who were taught by using explaining method. It means that Numbered Heads Together Technique is good to be used in teaching reading comprehension especially for descriptive text for young learners of English.

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