

IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION USING NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER (NHT) AT THE FIFTH GRADE OF MA'HAD ASSAQAFATUL AL ISLAMIAH THAILAND IN THE 2016/2017 ACADEMIC YEAR

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ABSTRACT

This study was a Research and Development study used Kagan model which aimed at identifying problem in Ma'had assaqafatul al islamiah Thailand, and which involved: need analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The data were gathered through observation, interview, validation technique and test. . In order to analyze the data students' reading score, percentage formula is used. The result of second cycle achieved the criteria of success. NHT Technique improved the students' reading comprehension in this cycle with the percentage of students 78% got scored ≥ 80 . Based on the research result, it can be concluded that NHT Technique is able to improve the students' reading comprehension at Ma'had assaqafatul al islamiah Thailand in the 2016/2017 academic year by using small group discussion as thinking together.

Key words: Reading Comprehension, Numbered Heads Together Technique.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English has become the famous language which people over the world use to communicate each other in modern and globalization era. Thus, English is very important to study. In Thailand, English is the most important subjects that has been taught in every school. Moreover, Thailand students must learnt English from age 6 year until age 18 year it means that 12 years Thailand students learned English. However, Thailand students cannot speak English fluently and read English clearly. According to the speech given by the Minister of the Ministry of University Affairs on

March 6, 2000, the average TOEFL scores of Thais are the same as Mongolians but higher than North Koreans and Japanese. Especially in Patani south of Thailand, the students do not only learn English as international language but also learn Malay and Arabic. So, Thailand students especially in Patani, difficult to master English.

Reading is one of the essential skills for English students. As stated by Mikulecky and Jeffries (1996:1), reading is the important way which can improve students' general language skills in English. It means that reading can enlarge vocabulary, writing and speaking skills. In other words, by reading learner will get

something to improve their knowledge, information and pleasure, instructing to do something and also know what is happen.

Besides, reading is an essential skill as explained in the previous paragraph, reading is a process understanding the text. Harmer (2002:68) states that reading is a process of decoding message of readers' own experience and knowledge. Reading is useful for other purposes too: any exposure to English (provided students understand it more or less) is a good thing for language students. At the very least, some of the language as part of the process of language acquisition, and, if the reading text is especially interesting and engaging, acquisition is likely to be even more successful.

Additionally, in Thailand, reading skill has important role because it is used in the final examination. So, the students must be good in reading if they want to pass the examination and graduate from the school. But, it contrasts to the fact that most of senior high school students still had low score achievement in reading English. In the classroom, the teacher was still the center of the learning. The students seldom discuss and share the materials to each other because the reading activity is still depended on the teacher's explanation, e.g. the teacher always stands in front of them to explain the materials whereas the students listening the explanation.

According to Nuttal (2000:2), reading means interaction between the writer's mind and the reader's mind. It is the way how the reader tries to get the message or the intended meaning from the writer. In

this process, the reader tries to create the meanings intended by the writer. As states by Pang (2003:6), reading is defined as understanding written texts. He says that reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition is defined as the process of getting how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language while comprehension is the process of making the meaning of words, sentences and connected text. To understand written texts, the reader has to know more vocabularies, grammatical knowledge and experience with texts.

F. Grellet (1999:3), reading comprehension understanding a written text means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible. For example, we apply different reading strategies when looking at a notice board to see if there is an advertisement for particular type of flat and when carefully reading an article of special interest in a scientific journal. Yet locating the relevant advertisement on the board and understanding the new information contained in the article demonstrates that the reading purpose in each case has been successfully fulfilled. In the first case, a competent reader will quickly reject the irrelevant information and find what he is looking for. In the second case, it is not enough to understand the gist for the text; more detailed comprehension is necessary.

Comprehension is the essence of reading and the active process of constructing meaning. Lipka and Siegel (2011), states that reading comprehension is a multi-dimensional process that includes the reader, the text, and factors

associated with the activity of reading. Comprehension depends not only on characteristics of the reader, such as prior knowledge and working memory, but also on language processes, such as basic reading skills, decoding, vocabulary, sensitivity to text structure, inference, and motivation. Comprehension also requires effective use of strategic processes, such as metacognition and comprehension monitoring. As readers mature in their comprehension skills, they are able to progress efficiently from the stage of learning to read to the ultimate goal of reading to learn (Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo, & Tindal, 2005).

RESEARCH METHOD

Kind of the Research

In this research, the researcher uses a Classroom Action Research. Action research has the purpose of developing new skill or new approach to solve a problem in the field or the actual problem by using direct implementation. In addition, Arikunto (2006:95-96) states that the purposes of the CAR are to improve the quality of teaching learning process and to solve the students' problem. In conclusion, the classroom action research is intended to improve the quality of the teaching learning process.

Classroom action research is used in order to improve the students' recount text in reading comprehension during the teaching learning process. Arikunto (2006:93) states that a classroom action research is an approach to improve the quality of teaching learning process. In addition, Goodnough (2011) adds that classroom action

research is systematic, intentional research that is carried out by practitioners themselves and is not imposed by others. It is insider research in the sense that those directly involved in the situation take action to improve their own practice and their understanding of that practice, while resolving problems.

Design of the Research

This research is a classroom action research. So, the design is that of classroom action research. In order to get require data about improving students' reading comprehension of recount text by using NHT. CAR is a kind of research involving cycle. Each cycle consists of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The design of classroom action research is based on the action research model designed by Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. (1992)

Subject of the Research

The subjects of this research are the students of class fifth grade of Ma'had assaqafatul al islamiah Thailand in the 2016/2017 academic year. This class consists of 37 students. Based on the information of the fifth grade English teacher in the preliminary study, class fifth was chosen because the students in this class still had enough problems in reading the English text but they also still had big motivation in studying English. This research has been enough to fulfill the need to present and to achieve the valid data.

Procedures of the Research

As stated before, this classroom action research is intended to improve fifth grade students' reading comprehension in recount text by using NHT Technique. The

action is implemented in the form of cycles in which each cycle covered four stages of activities, namely: 1) planning, 2) acting 3) classroom observing and 4) reflecting.

McKernan (1991), starts with a general idea or difficult problem requiring resolution. This is followed by further fact-finding resulting in an overall plan of how to solve the problem. This planned action is implemented, and monitored in an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the first action step, to plan the next step and to modify the 'overall plan'. The researcher then spirals into developing a second and possibly further action steps.

The Criteria of Success

The criterion of success is used to know if the implementing of the action achieves the target or not. Based on the minimum standard score requirement, the score target of reading comprehension skill is 85, because the average score of the student is 61 and it is based on the recount reading test that held by the researcher for fifth grade of Ma'had assaqafatul al islamiah Thailand. The actions are considered successful if students achieved the target score ≥ 80 . It means that students have achieved based on Thailand standard already. Meanwhile, the quantitative technique is use to know the students who get score at least 80.

The Research Instrument

Research instrument are some tools used when a research is conducted in a particular method (Arikunto, 2010: 192). They are needed, in order to get the data for the research . The instruments in this research are the researcher uses

field notes, and test. The explanation of it as follows:

1) Field Notes

In this research, the researcher is used twice observations as field notes sheet to record the activities of the students and teacher during the teaching and learning of reading comprehension skill in the classroom.

2) Test

A test is a set of questions, exercises or other instruments which are used to measure skill, knowledge, intelligence owned by the individual person or groups (Arikunto, 2006: 150). The test was used an exercise that consist of 15 questions of multiple choice. The test is used to measure students' reading comprehension and to know the effectiveness of NHT technique to improve students' reading comprehension.

Developing Instrument Validity

According to Ary (2010:224) validity is defined as the extent to which scores on a test enable one to make meaningful and appropriate Interpretations. Historically, validity was defined as the extent to which an instrument measured what it claimed to measure. In this case the researcher used content validity, because the test item based on the curriculum. Besides, said by Arikunto(2010:211) explains that validity is a measurement which shows the validity levels of an instrument.

Reliability of the Test

Reliability is if an instrument is reliable enough to be used as a data gathering tool because the

instrument is good. The test important of reliability is carefulness with how far the test of instrument can believe correctly. To know whether the test item valid or not. Arikuto (2010:239) states that alpha formula is used to know the reliability of the instrument, of which score is not 1 and 0. The researcher use two formulas those are Product Moment and Brown formula as follow:

a. Product Moment formula:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{(N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2)(N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2)}}$$

b. Brown's formula

$$r_{11} = \frac{2xr_{\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}}}{(1 + r_{\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{2}})}$$

RESULT OF THE RESEARCH

Description of the Action Cycle 1

There are four steps in the first cycle. The steps are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

1. Planning

In this phase, the researcher and the teacher made a planning for the action based upon the problems faced by students toward reading comprehension. Those are:

- Analyzing the curriculum used in the school to find out basic competence that was suitable with NHT technique.
- Arranging lesson plan for the implementation of using NHT technique to improve students' reading comprehension.

- Composing the NHT technique and preparing the material. Here, the researcher used recount text as material.
- Composing instrument of learning evaluation, such as: test, and field note.
- Preparing the field note to note the classroom activities. This field notes was written by the English teacher.

2. Acting

Action of the first cycle was done on February 8th, 9th and 12th, 2017. It was implemented the teaching learning process through NHT technique in the second meeting based on the lesson plan.

The teacher gave the explanation about the role of NHT technique and the material about recount text at the beginning of the lesson. It made the students enthusiastic in joining the class because the teacher began the explanation by giving some questions to the students. The teacher asked the students to make a group since every group had five students, so the numbers 1,2,3,4,5. In this meeting, the teacher gave a recount text to each groups, the title of recount text is The terrible day. After that the students in each group to discuss with members of the group but some students were still passive while discuss process. Then, the teacher calls one number in one group randomly and the students must answer the question, the students in other groups who got the same number should give a feedback or an opinion however many students got difficulty in answering the question. End of the meeting, the

teacher asked the difficulties and made a conclusion.

3. Observing

Observation result of the first cycle, the students' activity in teaching learning process can be seen on the field notes that written by the English teacher. For the first time, most of students still confused, they did not understand yet about rule of NHT technique well because they did not seriously and did not pay attention while teacher taught. Moreover, the student was difficult in answering the question because they were still weak in vocabulary. After that, some students were so hurried in answering the question. They did not read the text well. And some students made the condition in the class run unwell, so the teacher could not organize the class well.

4. Reflecting

The implementing of NHT was done, the researcher calculate the students' score. After analyzing the result of the students' score then the cause of why in the cycle was not successful were found. In this stage, some activities in the second cycle in order to get success were planned.

The criteria of success could not be achieved because the mean score of students' is 80 and only 8 students who achieved the minimum standard of score. The action is regarded successful if more than 75% of students achieve the minimum standard of the score and each student at least gets score 80. The identification of some problems

Description of the Action Cycle 2

1. Planning

To solve some problems in the first cycle above, so in the second cycle the researcher should make the following planning such as:

- a. Giving motivation to the students in order that more active in learning process. The motivation from the teacher can makes student more motivation.
- b. More intensive to guide the students whose difficulty and staying focus on the vocabulary. Then, asking the students to remember the vocabulary.
- c. Remembering the students to stay focus in their duty of reading recount text.
- d. The teacher has to makes all students understand the rule of NHT before teaching NHT method.
- e. Before the students understand the meaning of word. There are a discussion between teacher and students about the meaning of word. So it was easier for students to understand and comprehend a text well, it will go smoothly.

Those plans hope and help students to achieve the minimum standard because the result of the first cycle could not reach target.

2. Acting

The action of the second cycle was done on February 15th, 16th and 19th 2017. On the second cycle the researcher tried to implementation in meeting two, in order to improve students' reading comprehension through NHT technique, the acting are:

Generally, in the opening session the teacher always greeted the students and checked the students' attendance by calling one by one. After that the teacher gives some motivation to the students, in order to make students feel enjoy in the class. Then, the teacher gives brainstorming about NHT technique and explains the material about recount text clearly. In this stage, the teacher also gives a game about vocabulary, to make students easy to memorize the vocabulary. The teacher asks the students to make a group and then gives the number to the students in each group, every group had five students, so the numbers 1,2,3,4,5. In the same time the teacher gives a recount text to each group, the title is The terrible day, the students in each group to discuss with members of the group. They also work together to ensure there is one product to their learning. The teacher calls student randomly and the students must answer the question, then the students in other groups who got the same number should give a feedback or an opinion. Here, more students look enthusiastic and they also had chance to ask some questions as many as possible freely. End of the meeting, the teacher asked the difficulties and made a conclusion.

3.Observing

Observation result of the second. In second cycle, the activity of the students in teaching learning process was better than in first cycle. It was because more students pay attention and they were getting used in studying group. So, the students had more easily in answering the question of recount text by using NHT technique. They were doing every duty that teacher given

enjoyably. Then, more students looked enthusiastic when teacher gave an exercise and ask them to do it in group. Students also had chance to ask some questions as many as possible freely. After that the students were cooperative to support the teacher's teaching goal.

Observation result of teacher activity in teaching learning process on the second cycle was high, because this result was better than the first cycle. It was happen because the teacher was more intensive to guide the students who have difficulty. Then, the teacher also gave reward and acknowledgment to the students, so the students looked more enthusiastic and enjoyable the learning process.

4. Reflecting

The reflection of Classroom Action Research (CAR) was carried out after getting the result of field notes and post test 2. The teacher felt satisfied in as much their efforts to improve the students' reading comprehension had been realized.

Research Result

The Result of Cycle 1

The result of students' reading comprehension in recount text was still low. The average of it 68.51, and it was under minimum mastery criteria. It could be seen from the students' score in the following table. (*See in appendix*)

Based on the table, from the ideal score 80, the average score of the students was only 68, 51. There were 29 students who got score <80 and 8 students got score ≥ 80 . The achievement class percentage was only 24% from ideal score 100%. So, it was still very low and the students' average score in reading

comprehension of recount text was 68.51.

The Result of Cycle 2

The result of students' reading comprehension in recount text on the second cycle was high. The average of it was 80.27. It can be seen on the following table in the second cycle.

Average score increased become 80.27. It was very significant from the first cycle. The percentage in the second cycle was 78%. The ideal score was 100%. So, in the second cycle the evaluation result of students' reading comprehension in recount text was high. It was better than in the first cycle which only reached 24%.

DISCUSSION

After implementing the action in cycle one and cycle two, that was teaching reading comprehension by using numbered heads together technique. It was found that there was gradual improvement on the students' reading comprehension.

In first cycle, most of the students were still passive in teaching learning process and some students got difficulty in answering the question of recount text, because of the lack of vocabulary. The students' average score in reading comprehension of recount text was 68.51 of 29 students who got score <80. There were some students who could not finish their duty on time, it means that some students they did not read a recount text yet so they quickly answered the question as possible, it happened because they were not serious in learning process. So to solve some problems in the

first cycle, the researcher made the following planning of Second cycle such as: giving motivation to the students in order that more active in learning process, more intensive to guide the students which had difficulty and staying focus on the vocabulary. Then, asking the students to remember the vocabulary in every meeting of English lesson. Besides that, remembering the students to stay focus in their reading recount text.

In second cycle, in order to student achievement notes by Kagan (1994) teaching arrangement that refers to small, heterogeneous groups of students working together to achieve a common goal. The activity of the student in teaching learning process was better than in first cycle. It was 80.27 of 29 students who got score <80, because more students pay attention on a same topic and they were getting used in studying group. They were doing every duty given by the teacher enjoyably. Then, more students looked enthusiastic when the teacher gave an exercise and ask them to do it in group. The students also had chance to ask some questions as many as possible freely. After that the students were cooperative to support the teacher's teaching goal. Teacher guided the students intensively when they have difficulty of vocabulary in teaching learning process.

NHT was chosen by the researcher in improving students' recount text in reading comprehension because according to Kagan (1992), Numbered Heads Together is one of components in cooperative learning that is use number as media to apply this method when discussion process. Number Head Together method is

one of those nine methods. Numbered Heads Together is a method of learning where each student was given a number and then made a random group of teachers and then calls the number of students.

Based on the explanation above, it can be summarized that the objectives had been already fulfilled. The implementation of numbered heads together method is able to improve the students' reading comprehension at fifth grade of Ma'had assaqafatul al islamiah Thailand.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of classroom action research (CAR) that was done by the researcher. The implementation of students test result in second cycle could reach criteria of success was 80.27 requirement students'. It means that the result in this cycle was successful. By using Numbered Heads Together (NHT) Technique the students' can improve in reading comprehension especially in reading recount text.

Based on the observation as field notes, it showed that the class condition during teaching learning process creates the positive atmosphere in the classroom, and also makes students easy in reading recount text.

It can be concluded that numbered heads together technique could improve students' reading comprehension of the fifth grade of Ma'had assaqafatul al islamiah Thailand in the 2016/2017 academic year. By implementing this method the reading comprehension achievement, the students could be increase. Besides, having known to use NHT method will helped the

student active and will motivate each other to achieve the target material. They can share their ideas and opinions to their friend because they felt comfortable in joining the reading comprehension class with activities such as numbering, giving question, thinking together, and answering in teaching learning process.

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