

**IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER****Oleh****Ida BagusNyoman Mantra**

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**Abstract:** This study was aimed at improving the students' reading in English classes. The present study made use of a classroom action research design which dealt with teaching reading comprehension through numbered heads together. The data required for this study were collected by administering a pre-test as an initial reflection and post tests as reflections by the end of each cycle. Questionnaire was administered by the end of cycle II to figure out the students' changes in behavior after treatments were carried out. The mean score of cycle I and II were much higher than mean score of the initial reflection (IR). The data indicated that the students' reading comprehension could be improved through numbered heads together technique.

**Key Words:** Teaching, Reading Comprehension, Numbered Heads Together

**INTRODUCTION**

In language learning, there are four language skills to be mastered by the students namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Those skills are important for the students to be able to communicate competently in their daily life. The four language skills become the main requirements in which each supports the others. Reading is important skill because it is assumed to be the central means to get new information (Grabe and Stoller, 2001:279). Moreover, Pollard (2008:44) states that reading is a great source of language learning. There are many beneficial advantages of having a good reading skill. Students can obtain various knowledge and information through reading. Therefore, the students need to learn to read. They should be able to comprehend the text during the process of reading.

Pang et al. (2003:3) state that reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Moreover, Johnson (2008:3) states that reading is the practice of using text to create meaning, therefore; if there is no meaning being created, there is no the role of reading. Reading is constantly developing skill; it means that reading skill will be improved if the students do more practice.

Based on the observation, it was found that the students in this study faced difficulties in achieving higher level of the reading

comprehension. The students' problem in reading comprehension was influenced by several factors. First, students had difficulty in finding the specific information, word meaning, and classify the generic structure of the text. Second, the students had difficulty in finding the main idea of the text that they read. As we know that main idea is one of important aspect of a text. Third, the students also had difficulty in answering the comprehension question about the content of the text.

The problems above should be addressed seriously in order the students' reading comprehension ability are getting higher and if possible to the excellent level. As a result, a good and appropriate teaching strategy should be implemented. One of the best teaching strategies is number heads together. This teaching strategy allows the students to work collaboratively with other students and develop active learning atmosphere.

Numbered heads together is a part of cooperative learning strategy that can build students motivation and at the same time it was helped the students to be creative and active in learning.

In this study, the researcher used numbered heads together to improve reading comprehension. In this technique, students are placed in some groups and each person is given a number. Questions are posed and the students are called upon their specific number to respond as a spokesperson of their group. This technique ensures that each member knows the answer to the questions. It allows the students to learn from each other. Therefore, based on the fact above, the

researcher was interested to apply numbered heads together to improve the students' reading comprehension.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The subject of the study was the fourth semester students of English Education Study program of FKIP Unmas Denpasar and 30 students are as the participants of this study. They were chosen as the subject of the study because they still had low ability in reading comprehension. This study made use of a classroom action research design. The teaching and learning process were divided into two cycles. Each cycle consisted of interconnected activities, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. The results of reflection and observation from cycle I were used to revise the planning for cycle 2.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### a. Findings

All of data needed for this study were collected in the classroom of the students in this study. The researcher collected the data by using three instruments administered to the subjects of this study, namely: pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire. The pre-test was administered to the subject to obtain their pre-existing ability in reading comprehension. The test was in the form of multiple choice and short answer task where the subjects asked to identify the text especially in finding specific information, general information, textual reference, and textual meaning of the text. The result of pre-test was used as the basic consideration of giving treatment which consisted of two cycles. Post-test was administered once in each cycle in order to measure the subjects' progress in reading comprehension through numbered heads together. As a result, there were two sets of raw scores obtained for the present study, those were pre-test scores and post-test scores.

After carrying out the cyclical process into practice, the findings of the present classroom action research can be elaborated as follows. Pre-cycle was the first step in collecting the data. Pre-test was done by the subjects in 30 minutes. The mean score of the pre-test which was followed by 30 subjects was 40.20. Most of the subjects had difficulties in specific information, general information, textual reference, and textual meaning of the reading passage. These result indicated that their reading comprehension urgently needed further improvement. Therefore, cycle 1 was conducted.

Cycle 1 was carried out based on the result of preliminary reflection. In relation with research procedure, cycle 1 was divided into two sessions namely session 1 and session 2. Each session consisted of four interconnected activities including planning, action, observation, and reflection. Cycle 1 was started with a planning which was an important step to be concerned in order to make the action, the teaching learning process run as smooth as possible. Planning was aimed to prepare all the things needed to solve the problem in the next activity. In this planning, the subjects' group was prepared. They were grouped based on the result of the pre-test.

The mean score of post-test 1 was 70.20. From the result, it is could be seen that there was an improvement from the result of pre-test. The data also showed that in post-test 1, there were still students could achieve the minimum standard in reading comprehension. Consequently, cycle II was conducted to get better improvement.

Cycle II was conducted in order to achieve the success indicator of the present study, Similarly as cycle I, cycle II was started with planning. After the preparation was complete, the action was conducted. Cycle II was carried out as it was planned on the lesson plan. In general the teaching learning process in cycle II was also same as cycle I. The main duty of the researcher was to do all the planning that had been made previously and treated the subjects by using numbered heads together. To explore the subjects' knowledge about the topic, the researcher showed some pictures related to the topic. The mean score of post-test 2 was figure of 80.20. This result showed that better improvement was achieved in this cycle.

### b. Discussion

The present study was intended to improve reading comprehension through numbered heads together. Based on the result of the post-test in the two cycles, the research question, can reading comprehension of the can be improved through numbered heads together. It can be confidently stated that numbered heads together could significantly improve the students' reading comprehension.

In pre-cycle, the researcher administered pre-test. The subjects were asked to answer 10 multiple choice test and 5 short answer task in order to know the subjects' ability in reading comprehension. The mean score obtained by the subjects under study in reading comprehension pointed out the mean figure of 45.22 in which there were students could obtain their reading comprehension standard. Most of the subjects

failed in understanding the reading passage given due to their low ability in vocabulary and grammar. This mean figure clearly showed that the ability of the subjects in this study was relatively low. The low score obtained on pre-test was also based on the students' problem in comprehending the reading texts, particularly in finding the specific information, word meaning, and classify the generic structure of the texts. Moreover, the method or technique used in teaching is not appropriate to be used for the purpose of teaching intensive reading.

In cycle I, the researcher taught the subjects through numbered heads together. In session 1, some subjects made noisy during the teaching learning process due to they were not familiar with the technique being applied. In session 2, the subjects were more active than the previous session. At the end of cycle, after treating the subjects by using numbered heads together, the post-test was conducted. The result of the post-test showed the increasing figure of 70.20. The mean figure of the post-test scores obtained by the subjects under study was higher than the mean figure of the pre-test. This mean figure convincingly revealed the obvious improvement of the subjects' ability in reading comprehension through numbered heads together.

In cycle II, the subjects were treated by using the same technique as cycle I. In this cycle the researcher reinforced the students in comprehending reading passages by giving the students more exercises. In cycle II, it turns out to show the progressing mean figure of 80.20. The comparison between the mean score of cycle I and cycle II showed the increased progress by 6.96. This significant difference in mean figure suggested that the teaching of reading comprehension in cycle II through numbered heads together could be remarked to be more effective than cycle I, in the teaching scenarios in cycle II were accordingly revised by taking into account the weaknesses found out in cycle I.

In this cycle most of the students were able to find the generic structure, textual meaning, textual reference, and general information of the text. It can be summed up that the reading comprehension of the students can be improved through numbered heads together. This is due to the fact that both scores of post-tests in cycle I and cycle II proved that the teaching processes of reading comprehension through numbered heads together were highly effective and conducive.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of this study, it could be concluded that numbered heads together could be used to improve the students' reading comprehension. It could be clearly seen based on the result of pre-cycle, cycle I, cycle II in the present study. It confirms that numbered heads together could improve reading comprehension of the students. Therefore, it is suggested to consider this technique to be used in teaching reading comprehension to continually develop the students' reading skill.

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