

**IMPLEMENTATION OF SNOWBALL THROWING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE
READING COMPREHENSION OF GRADE 8 STUDENTS**

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Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan membaca pemahaman siswa dan partisipasi mereka dalam kegiatan pembelajaran, penulis menerapkan STT yang memungkinkan siswa untuk bekerja dalam kelompok dengan berdiskusi, bertanya, menjawab pertanyaan, dan memiliki cara belajar yang menarik dalam memahami teks bacaan. Penelitian ini mengambil 32 siswa dari kelas 8.2 sebagai subjek penelitian. Desain penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK). PTK dipilih karena membantu guru dalam mencari solusi permasalahan peningkatan pemahaman membaca siswa dan partisipasinya dalam proses pembelajaran melalui penerapan STT. Data dikumpulkan dari dua aspek yaitu nilai siswa yang diambil dari tes pemahaman membaca dan tingkat partisipasi siswa sebagai indikator motivasi belajar mereka diperoleh dari pengamatan selama proses belajar mengajar. Kriteria keberhasilan dalam penelitian ini adalah: (1) 75% siswa menunjukkan peningkatan 10 poin dalam nilai tes pemahaman membaca dibandingkan dengan nilai mereka dalam studi pendahuluan, dan (2) 75% siswa berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan STT. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa 25 dari 32 siswa atau 78,13% siswa mengalami peningkatan skor pada tes pemahaman bacaan. Hal ini terlihat dari peningkatan nilai rata-rata siswa dari 73,23 menjadi 88,12. Selain itu, hasil akhir respon siswa terhadap penerapan STT menunjukkan respon positif. Secara keseluruhan, penerapan STT dapat meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa karena partisipasi belajarnya meningkat.

Kata Kunci: implementasi, teknik snowball throwing, pemahaman membaca

Abstract. *This study aims to improve students' reading comprehension skills and their participation in learning activities, the authors apply STT which allows students to work in groups by discussing, asking, answering questions, and having an interesting way of learning in understanding reading texts. This study took 32 students from grade 8.2 as research subjects. The research design used in this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). CAR was chosen because it helps teachers find solutions to problems in improving students' reading comprehension and their participation in the learning process through the application of STT. Data were collected from two aspects, namely student scores taken from reading comprehension tests and student participation levels as an indicator of their learning motivation obtained from observations during the teaching and learning process. The success criteria in this study were: (1) 75% of students showed a 10-point improvement in reading comprehension test scores compared to their scores in the preliminary study, and (2) 75% of students participated in STT activities. The results of this study indicate that 25 of 32 students or 78.13% of students experienced an increase in scores on the reading comprehension test. This can be seen from the increase in the average score of students from 73.23 to 88.12. In addition, the final results of student responses to the application of STT showed a positive response. Overall, the application of STT can improve students' reading comprehension because their learning participation increases.*

Keywords: implementation, snowball throwing technique, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

According to 2016 Ministerial Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture, Indonesian's government has a wajib belajar program (12-year Compulsory learning). This regulation requires children and teenagers in Indonesia to study for 12 years, starting from the primary level (Sekolah Dasar/SD), to secondary level (Sekolah Menengah Pertama/SMP, Sekolah Menengah Atas/SMA). The regulation makes the students have different learning characteristics. Some students are active and other are passive. Thus, the teachers need to have various learning strategies in

order to get students attention and interest on studying, especially in reading comprehension.

According to Pang, Muaka, Benhardt, and Kamil (2003), learning to read is an important education goal. For all students in each level of education, the ability to read opens up new worlds. By reading, students can get a lot of information and gain new knowledge. They also state that reading is about understanding the written text. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. It is in line with what Nunan (2003:68) states that, reading is a fluent process of readers combining

information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Thus, reading can help students to expand their knowledge and can be considered as one of the tools in learning.

According to 2016 Ministerial Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture, Indonesian's government has a wajib belajar program (12-year compulsory learning). This regulation requires children and teenagers in Indonesia to study for 12 years, starting from the primary level (Sekolah Dasar/SD), to secondary level (Sekolah Menengah Pertama/SMP, Sekolah Menengah Atas/SMA). The regulation makes the students have different learning characteristics. Some students are active and other are passive. Thus, the teachers need to have various learning strategies in order to get students' attention and interest on studying, especially in reading comprehension.

The 2013 Curriculum states that the teaching of reading is aimed at improving students social function in their real life situation. The texts that are spoken, listened to, read, and written by students are directed to carry out social functions in an authentic or semi authentic manner in terms of source and use. The authentic source and use are found among native speakers while the semi authentic source and use are found among native/non-native speakers. Through this activity, students will encounter authentic problems or difficulties. Based on Junior High School Syllabus (2017), there are some texts that are compulsory to learn by eight graders, namely interpersonal text, transactional text, and functional text.

In this study, I used the functional text because the basic competence (Kompetensi Dasar/KD) of Junior High Syllabus which I taught about was KD 3.11 and 4.11 in which the recount text is taught. Those materials are important for their daily social interactions. Therefore, they have to be able to find; the main idea of the text, the implicit and explicit information, new vocabularies, and the meaning of words, phrase, and sentences. It means, students have to be able to gain their reading skills in order to be a good reader who is able to comprehend a text effectively and efficiently. By looking at the problem that was faced by the class, one of the ways to make students active

on the learning process, which has impact on their motivation on reading, is by making the learning process more focus on the students. The students have to get involved into it in order to make them more active, creative, and happy so that it will influence their motivation on reading.

One of techniques that can make students more active, creative, and happy is Snowball Throwing Technique. Snowball Throwing Technique (hereafter, STT) is a learning technique which trains students to be more active on receiving message from others and telling the message to others in one group. In its implementation, Snowball Throwing uses papers which are kneaded into a snowball containing questions. Then, the students throw the snowballed papers to other students and they should answer the questions in the paper in groups.

Before making a question, the students must read the whole text and should understand about what it means in the reading activity, so that later they could easily make a question. The question could be about the main idea, supporting details, and inferences. After the reading activity, the students were asked to have discussion activity to make a question within the answer together. The students could share their thought and their understanding about the text one by one, and then they could make agreement of making the question. In the step number 7, the students have to answer the question made by them and also answer the other groups' question. In these steps, the process of making and answering question need an understanding about the text. The thing that makes the steps number 6 and 7 important in STT which support the students reading comprehension is the activities they done. The students are being actively thorough in reading activity, and also the activity of learning among peers cooperatively gains the students motivation in doing STT.

According to Marlina (2016), STT is advantageous in bringing students to the situation where they can understand not only the text for preparing to ask and be asked in the teaching and learning process. Since it is interesting, students become attentive in reading the text and try to prepare themselves in making and answering the questions as best as they can. Lie (2008) in Gani (2017) also finds

that STT focuses on involving the students to work in groups and gives chances to them to construct some questions based on the task or reading text given by the teacher. As a consequence, students not only think, write, ask questions and talk but they also do physical activities, that is, kneading papers and throw them to other students. The snowball throwing technique can improve students reading comprehension significantly. Not only does the students' reading comprehension increase, this technique also increase students' social interactions among peers (Gani, 2017). Based on those previous studies, the snowball throwing technique asks students to make their own question in piece of paper and then knead it into form of snowball.

DISCUSSION

Classroom Action Research (CAR) design by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) is used in this study. It is aimed to solve classroom problems. In conducting this research, I used CAR which has four steps: 1) planning, 2) acting, 3) observing, and 4) reflecting. This research is aimed at implementing the snowball throwing technique in order to improve students' reading comprehension. The result of the reflection determines whether the study can be stopped and reported or not.

A. The Implementation of the Snowball Throwing Technique

Snowball Throwing Techniques is one kind of cooperative learning strategies. It is seen as an active learning process, because students will learn more active in the learning activity through working in pair or in a group. When they work together with their friends, they can share their knowledge together. This learning strategy gives students an opportunity to be engaged in learning process together with their group. As Gillies (2016) says that cooperative learning is commonly known as a pedagogical practice which promotes the social interaction and learning among students. It makes students work together with their friends and complete the task or even reach the goals that they would be unable to do by self. That statement is proven by the result of this study which was used to improve students' reading comprehension ability. The result showed that the students were helped to improve their reading comprehension ability by

using Snowball Throwing Technique. The findings of this study showed that 87.5% of the students were actively participating in the learning activity.

B. The Improvement of the Students' Reading Comprehension Skill

The main impact of the implementation of the technique was the students improvement in comprehending the text which was recount text. According to Harmer (1998:70), he stated that students need to be engaged with what they are reading. The recount text especially personal experience was chosen for this study because it was based on Junior High School Syllabus. The recount text as the functional text has important rules for students' daily social interaction. Thus, they have to be able to comprehend the purpose to find the main idea of the text, implicit and explicit in formation, master new vocabularies, and get the meaning of words, phrase, and sentences. Like other subjects in lessons, students who are not actively interested in what they are doing would have difficulty on understanding it. When the student really impassioned by the topic of the task, they will get much more from what is in from of them.

C. The Students' Response through Participation in the STT Activities

The students gave positive response toward the implementation of Snowball Throwing Technique. It means that the students enjoy the teaching and learning activities which make them actively participate in it. As Willis (2007) states that cooperative learning is a strategy which engages students' enjoyment and joyfulness in learning process within group discussion. It is in line with what Lie (2008) states that STT gives students the chance to share their ideas arguments, and information in groups. As we know that in the first implementation they were some students not really engaged to the learning activity but in the second implementation there was improvement on their participation in each aspect such as being cooperative, being active, making question, and answering question.

CONCLUSION

The result of this study showed that the implementation of Snowball

Throwing Technique (STT) in the year eight (class 8.2) of SMPN 2 Jatirejo Mojokerto could increase students reading comprehension skill. It can be shown by the improvement of the students reading comprehension test score which increased and met the criteria of success. There were some main activities of STT which contributed to the students reading comprehension skill improvement. They were reading, discussing, making question, answering question, and also reflecting activities that students had done. The students also showed positive response toward the implementation of STT in the teaching and learning process. The learning participation also increased. This is indicated by percentage of students who were cooperative (90.63%), active (87.5%), correct in making question (90.63%) and correct to answer question (96.88%). They were engaged in the learning activities well.

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