



IMPROVING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN READING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT THROUGH THE BRAIN GYM

(A Classroom Action Research at the Eighth Grade Students of MTs.
Gondang Wonopringgo in the Academic Year of 2016/2017)

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Abstract

The objectives of the study were that: 1) The describe the implementation of Brain Gym at the eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo, 2) To describe the students' motivation in reading descriptive text. This study was classroom action research. The subject was the students of VIII A3 class consist of 31 students. The researcher and the students of VIII A3 class were the team members of the research. The data were obtained through observations and the test. The qualitative data were in the forms of questionnaires. To support the qualitative data, quantitative data were obtained from the pre-test, cycle 1, cycle 2 and the post-test scores. The actions implemented in this research were applying Brain Gym in reading activity to improve students' motivation in reading skill. The texts used in the teaching and learning process of reading were about descriptive texts. The research was conducted in two cycles. Every cycle consisted of some steps, they are, planning, acting and observing, and reflection. The result shows that the implementation of the Brain Gym in this study was successful to improve the students' motivation in reading skill. The indicators of the success of the implementation were that: 1) by answering questions given correctly, the students showed good comprehension about the text of the given topic, 2) by conducting every stage enthusiastically, the students showed good motivation in reading activity, 3) the students were able to practice reading through various given topics. There was a significant improvement, from the mean of the pre-test (57,09), Cycle I (64,51) and the cycle II post-test (69,35). By looking at the scores, it was found that the students' motivation in reading skill improved significantly.

Key Words : students' motivation, descriptive text, brain gym

1. Introduction

English is very important for all of us. As an International Language, most of people in the world use English to communicate among people, to make relationship, and to get social culture, science, economy, and technology goals. It is to increase their knowledge and to face global competition.

In this world every student has skill and skill is important to support their study and the skill is divided into four types. Those are listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. It should be owned by all students including to the reading skill,

because having a reading skill the students can enrich their vocabularies and they will be able to get the information about content of text.

1.1 Reading

Reading is not only to read word by word, sentence by sentence, or paragraph by paragraph but also the reader should recognize the information beyond the text; in order they can express the information from the text that have been read in their writing or speaking interaction.

English text is necessary for the students to have a skills of reading. Therefore, to make the students having a good comprehension in reading English text effectively, they needs some supports. One of them is motivation. According to Iskandarwassid & Sunendar (2008:246) "Reading is determined by motivation" In this case, the students can be successful to comprehend in reading English text if their teacher gives an appropriate motivation based on students' characteristics. This argument is similar with the opinion of Guthrie, Laurel, Stephen & Nichole (2007:310) study (as cited in Saddono & Slamet, 2012:91) they state that reading comprehension would be more effectively if it is being supported by motivation. In this case, from these views, it can be concluded that reading comprehension and motivation have strong relationship because reading comprehension will be supported by motivation.

1.2 Students' Motivation

Talking about motivation, that motivation consists of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Sardiman (2010:89) states the intrinsic motivation comes from inside factor while the extrinsic motivation comes from outside factor. For example, students want to achieve the goals caused by self-driven themselves. It is called intrinsic motivation. If the students want to achieve the goals because of other person called extrinsic motivation. In addition, McClelland (1960) (as cited Siagian (2004:167-3171) classifies intrinsic and extrinsic motivation into three indicators, they are: achievement, affiliation, and power. The both of motivations are very important to give encouragement to the students in doing activity especially to make student successful to comprehend the content of text.

In fact, many students argued that reading is something that make their bored and waste their time to read especially for long text, by having poor comprehension they feels dislike with long text. This problem was found by the researcher when she conducted teaching practice at eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo; the researcher has found some students getting difficulty to understand the content of text. The other problems are found of many students do not understand reading text because less vocabularies in reading English text. Therefore, teacher as a guide, should promote the students to be successful in reading activities by doing this, the students will get a strong motivation improving their ability in reading.

The researcher giving brain gym it is about 5 until 10 minutes after reviewing material last meeting. Furthermore, the researcher started giving the material about descriptive text in reading skill.

Based on Competency Standard (Standar Kompetensi) and Basic Competency (Kompetensi Dasar), the eighth grade students are expected to be able to understand and respond meaningful written texts in term of functional written text and simple short essay in the form of *descriptive* and *recount* text interact with people in the nearest environment.

There are many texts types' in reading, which are closely related to the purpose of each type. Descriptive text is one of the text types taught at the eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo.

1.3 Descriptive Text

According to Gerot and Wignell (1994:192) descriptive is a text which describes a particular, place or thing. Its purpose to tell about the subject by describing its features without including personal opinions.

On the other hand, descriptive text has told description and identification of something, someplace or someone. It persuades the reader to imagine the text content. Based on the writer's observation through conducting preliminary study during teaching learning reading activity in the eighth grade of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo, the writer found that many students had difficulty in reading descriptive text. It was proved by the result of the students' reading in preliminary study. The mean score of the students reading was 60.55, while the Minimum Mastery Criterion- *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM)* was 70. The result indicates that the students' reading achievement was still low. Therefore, the students' difficulties came from the weaknesses of student understanding in comprehend the text; therefore they did not answer the question correctly. Also, the students had difficulty in analyzing the linguistic and schematic structures of descriptive. Furthermore, the students tend to be bored and low participation in reading class because the process of teaching and learning activities was monotonous. So, to make the students can improve of students' motivation in reading descriptive text until the students can understand about the content of descriptive text that have been read, there should be an effort to make reading class more interesting through by the brain gym activity.

1.4 Brain Gym

Hyatt (2007) acknowledged claims that the use of Brain Gym exercises may be beneficial for learners, concluding that in some research-based, peer-reviewed studies, the methodology was faulty. For example, when Winebrenner (2002) observes an individual having difficulty with speech fluency, she had him do a Brain Gym movement where he extended one arm in front of him and traced an infinity symbol with his thumb as he followed it with his eyes for several minutes.

When he resumed his conversation with her, his speech fluency was greatly improved. Wolfson (2002) notes that after participants in his study used Brain Gym exercises, they appeared more relaxed, energized, and confident.

Based on statement above the writer will conduct that the brain gym may be can improve the students' motivation in reading descriptive text at eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo. The writer found that many students had bored and sleep in their class. So, the writer use brain gym movements to improve students' motivation, participation and attitude toward learning.

2. Method

Method used to case in mobilizing data. The empirical data are required in order to sharp data analysis. Here are two ways to collect data.

2.1 Observation Checklist

Observation is an activity for observing something accurately, make a note phenomenon and consider the relation between the aspects of phenomenon. The purpose of observation is to get the data about the problem, so it can get comprehension or as instrument to proof. The research makes a checklist in order to get information about the situation of classroom activities, student participation, student behavior, student interest, improvement and difficulties. The research gets qualitative information from pretest, first cycle, second cycle and post test.

2.2 Test

Test is a series of question of exercises or other device used to measure skill, measurement, intelligent, ability or talent possessed by individual or groups. In this process the research will give pretest to measure the ability of the students before and after getting the treatment. Test instrument is used by composing reading. It is used to check the reading skill of the students whether they are good or not.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 Findings

The findings were supported by the results of stages in three cycles conducted. The data were the students' questionnaires answers and students' test scores. Based on the data analysis of the whole instruments used in this research, the writer found out the students' difficulties in reading descriptive text, from the students' questionnaires.

The writer also found out the brain gym could be implemented to teach reading descriptive text from the students' questionnaire for each cycle, found out the brain gym could improve students' motivation in reading Descriptive text from the students' test score. The detailed would be described in the following discussions.

3.2 Discussions

One of the focuses of the research was to improve the students' motivation in reading descriptive text by using the brain gym. The writer conducted three writing tests in the form of multiple choice of Descriptive text. The tests were pre-test, in writing test cycle 1 and writing test cycle 2. Test cycles were given to the students after being taught by using brain gym.

3.2.1 The Analysis of the Students' Questionnaires

Student motivation is an essential element that is necessary for quality education. How do we know when students are motivated? They pay attention, they begin working on tasks immediately, they ask questions and volunteer answers, and they appear to be happy and eager (Palmer, 2007:38-42).

Questionnaire number 1 "Do you like learning English?"

In Pre-test there were 15 students like to learn English. And there were 16 students who didn't like to learn English. In cycle 1 there were 20 students like to learn English. And there were 11 students who didn't like to learn English. In cycle 2 there were 23 students like to learn English. And there were 8 students who didn't like to learn English.

From the result above, it could be seen from the students' questionnaire increased. When the teacher used brain gym yet, many students argue that they do not like learning English. But, after the teacher used brain gym, many students argue that they feel enjoy in English class.

Questionnaire number 2 "Do you like reading?"

In Pre-test there were 21 students who didn't like reading. And there were 10 students who like reading. In Cycle 1 there were 15 students who didn't like reading. And there were 16 students who like reading. In Cycle 2 there were 11 students who didn't like reading. And there were 20 students who like reading.

From the result above, it could be seen from the students' questionnaire increased. When the teacher used brain gym yet, many students argue that they do not like reading activity. But, after the teacher used brain gym, many students argue that they like reading.

Questionnaire number 3 "Did your teacher give explanation about the material clearly?"

In Pre-test there were 17 students give the answer that the explanation from the teacher clearly. And there were 14 students give the answer that the explanation from the teacher unclearly. In cycle 1 there were 22 students give the answer that the explanation from the teacher clearly. And there were 9 students give the answer that the explanation from the teacher unclearly. In cycle 2 there were 25 students

give the answer that the explanation from the teacher clearly. And there were 6 students give the answer that the explanation from the teacher unclearly.

From the result above, it could be seen from the students' questionnaire increased. Many students argue that the explanation from the teacher unclearly. But, after the teacher give the brain gym movement. The students like the teaching strategy used by the teacher. Therefore, the students could be easier to understand from the teacher explanation.

Questionnaire number 4 "Do you know about descriptive text?"

In Pre-test there were 20 students knowing about the descriptive text. And there were 11 students unknowing about the descriptive text. In cycle 1 there were 26 students knowing about the descriptive text. And there were 5 students unknowing about the descriptive text. In cycle 2 there were 28 students knowing about the descriptive text. And there were 3 students unknowing about the descriptive text.

From the result above, it could be seen from the students' questionnaire increased. Many students argue that they know about descriptive text yet. But, after the teacher give the brain gym movement. The students argue that they know about the descriptive text well.

Questionnaire number 5 "Do you often use dictionary in learning English?"

In Pre-test there were 5 students often use dictionary in learning English. And there were 26 rarely use dictionary. In cycle 1 there were 10 students often use dictionary in learning English. And there were 21 rarely use dictionary. In cycle 2 there were 16 students often use dictionary in learning English. And there were 15 rarely use dictionary.

From the result above, it could be seen from the students' questionnaire increased. Many students do not bring the dictionary when teaching learning English. But, after the teacher give the brain gym movement. The students was more interested with the teaching learning English. So, the students bring the dictionary in every teaching learning English.

Questionnaire number 6 "Do you understand about the text that have you read?"

In Pre-test there were 6 students understand about the text that they read. And there were 25 students don't understand about it. In cycle 1 there were 10 students understand about the text that they read. And there were 21 students don't understand about it. In cycle 2 there were 15 students understand about the text that they read. And there were 16 students don't understand about it.

From the result above, it could be seen from the students' questionnaire increased. Many students do not understand about the text that they read. But, after the teacher give the brain gym movement. The students was more interested in

reading text. So, the students could be better to understand about the text that they read. Because, the students also bring the dictionary in every learning.

Questionnaire number 7 "Did you do the assignment by yourself?"

In Pre-test there were 3 students answer "YES" that they do the assignment by themselves. And there were 28 students answer "NO" do not the assignment by themselves yet. In cycle 1 there were 8 students answer "YES" that they do the assignment by themselves. And there were 23 students answer "NO" do not the assignment by themselves yet. In cycle 2 there were 15 students answer "YES" that they do the assignment by themselves. And there were 16 students answer "NO" do not the assignment by themselves yet.

From the result above, it could be seen from the students' questionnaire increased. Many students do the assignment citing from their friends. But, after the teacher give the brain gym movement. The students do the assignment by themselves. Because, they like learning English.

The writer concluded that the students' questionnaires showed better progress in each cycle. Therefore, brain gym as media to improve the students' motivation in reading Descriptive text was successful.

3.2.2 The Analysis of the Students' Test Score

Pre-Test

Administering pre-test also was done by the researcher to make sure the problems occur in the study. In the pre-test, the subjects were asked to answer 10 questions which identifying main idea, specific information, and word meaning in the text in the form of multiple choices test. The data of pre – test showed that the students reading descriptive text were low and needed to be improved. It showed that only 2 students could reach the minimum standard passing score of eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo that was 70. In addition, for the mean score of the pre- test can be analyzed:

$$M = \frac{\sum X_0}{N} = \frac{1770}{31} = 57,09$$

The results of the students' answer were scored by the answer key provided. The mean score of the pre-test which was followed by 31 subjects was 57,09. This result also clarified that their weaknesses in identifying main idea, specific information, and word meaning of the text. These results indicated that their reading descriptive text urgently needs further improvement. Therefore, the researcher tried to improve their reading descriptive text by implementing brain gym in the cyclical process.

Cycle 1

Cycle I was conducted based on the result of the pre-test. In cycle I, there were four steps which were done namely planning, action, observation and

reflection. In planning, the researcher prepared the topic for the subject of the study, designed the lesson plans and constructing questionnaire. In action, brain gym was used in the classroom before the researcher explained the material. In addition, the researcher did it based on the lesson plan which had been made. In observation, the researcher gave the assessment of cycle 1 that had been made in the form of multiple choice consisted of 10 questions. Finally, in reflection, the researcher asked the students to give the questions about the material.

From the data which was presented in table above, the data of cycle 1 showed that only 5 students could reach the minimum standard of passing grade for eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo that was 70. However, there was improvement in student' reading Descriptive text. The improvement could be seen by calculating the mean score of cycle 1 as following:

$$M = \frac{\sum X_0}{N} = \frac{2000}{31} = 64,51$$

It showed that the mean score of cycle 1 was 64,51. This result showed the improvement from the result of the pre-test, even though it was still low, therefore the research was continued in the next cycle.

Cycle 2

Cycle 2 was started with planning which had already been revised from the previous version. This revision was made based on the results of the cycle I. The researcher revised the lesson plan which was made in the first planning and the additional material presentation was prepared. After the preparation was complete, cycle 2 was carried out as it was planned on the course plan. In action, the researcher used brain gym before teaching learning process in different variation with cycle I. During the teaching learning process, the students were asked to be more active in the classroom.

After the teaching learning process which was followed by 31 subjects, assessment of cycle 2 was administered. The form of cycle 2 test was same in the cycle 1 that was multiple choice tests; however, the degree of difficulties both the cycle 1 and cycle 2 were different. The test administered in the cycle 2 was more difficult.

From the data which were presented in table above, the data of cycle 2 showed that 11 of the students could reach the minimum standard of passing grade for eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo that was 70. However, there was improvement in their reading descriptive text especially in identifying specific information, main idea, and word meaning of the text. The improvement can be seen by calculating the mean score of cycle 2 as following:

$$M = \frac{\sum X_0}{N} = \frac{2150}{31} = 69,35$$

It showed that the mean score of cycle 2 was 69,35. This result showed the improvement from the result of the cycle 1. Based on the result cycle 2 above, the

writer concluded that students' test score showed better progress in each cycle. Therefore, brain gym as media to improve the students' score in reading Descriptive text was successful.

Students' Mean Score

The result of the pretest, cycle 1 and cycle 2 above showed the difference between the result of the pretest, cycle 1 and cycle 2. The mean of the pretest was 57,09. Meanwhile, the mean of the cycle 2 was 69,35. It means that the mean of the pretest improved from 57,09 to 69,35 in cycle 2. The mean was obtained from the 31 students. From the result above, it could be concluded that Brain Gym could improve the students' motivation in reading Descriptive text in VIII A3 class of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo.

4. Conclusion

To improve students' reading skill, the writer used brain gym in this research. It was done in pre-test, cycle 1, cycle 2 and post-test consisting of three meetings on each cycle. In both cycles, the writer implemented the brain gym. The research began in May 8th and ended in May 15th, 2017.

- a. From the first cycle, the writer found that brain gym could improve the students' reading skill. The use of brain gym could also improve the students' motivation. Furthermore, it could improve the students' interaction between the teacher and the students. However, brain gym could not really improve the students' confidence. That was why the writer felt that he had to add some accompanying actions in Cycle 2. Shortly, the use of brain gym is believed to improve the students' reading skill.
- b. From the second cycle, the writer found that the accompanying action by giving credit points could improve the students' confidence in the teaching and learning process of reading. The writer also found that brain gym was still effective in improving the students' reading skill.
- c. In terms of quantitative data, there was an improvement on the students' reading skill. It could be seen from the result of pretest and post test. The mean of the students' scores improved from 65 on pretest to 80 on posttest. It showed that brain gym was successful in improving the students' reading skill.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion above, the writer would like to give some recommendations to be considered in reading descriptive text through the brain gym as follows:

- a. To the students should increase their reading skill through practicing very often using various kinds of texts. If they find the difficulty in learning English especially in reading skill, they can ask their friend and work collaboratively

with them. Brain gym can be used for attracting students' interest to get involved in the learning process. Before using the technique, they have to understand what they should do in every step.

- b. To the English teacher, it is important for them to be more creative in choosing the techniques that will be conducted in the teaching and learning process of reading. When they use brain gym, they have to consider the situation of the class by creating a good atmosphere in the class during the teaching and learning process of reading so that the students feel comfortable and enthusiastic during the teaching learning process. They also have to consider the time. The English teachers have to be creative in choosing the topics of the texts for the students.
- c. To other researchers. This research was focused on improving students' motivation in reading descriptive text through the brain gym at the eighth grade students of MTs. Gondang Wonopringgo. For other researchers who want to conduct research using the same technique, they have to prepare the texts well. They have to know exactly how the brain gym is conducted to teach reading and allocate sufficient time for the students to do every step in brain gym movements. They also have to explain every step clearly to avoid students' misunderstanding of the use of the brain gym.

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