

## **EFFECT OF USING NUMBERED HEADS TOGETHER TECHNIQUE ON ACHIEVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION OF GRADE IX STUDENTS'**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article seeks to explore the effect of the Numbered Head Together (NHT) technique on the reading comprehension abilities of ninth-grade students. Reading is an essential skill taught to students in both junior and senior high schools, closely associated with reading comprehension. This indicates that readers need to engage in critical analysis to understand the text thoroughly. Through reading activities, students are required to comprehend words, phrases, paragraphs, and the overall message of the text. As a result, strong reading abilities are crucial for students to attain proficiency in reading. The use of the Numbered Head Together technique in reading comprehension has been shown to be beneficial, as it motivates students to collaborate in their groups to tackle difficulties together. This investigation employed a quasi-experimental framework featuring a post-test-only control group. The study was carried out with ninth-grade students at a Kerala Public School as the targeted demographic. According to the findings from the homogeneity assessment, the population was identified as homogeneous, which led to the selection of the research sample using a lottery approach. Class IX-A, consisting of 40 students, acted as the experimental group, while Class IX-B, also with 40 students, served as the control group. The results of the students' reading comprehension tests were evaluated using an independent sample t-test via the SPSS software. The analysis indicated that the implementation of the Numbered Head Together technique had a significant impact on the reading comprehension performance of ninth-grade students at Kerala Public School.

**Keywords:** Reading Comprehension, Achievement, Numbered Heads Together, Homogeneous and Performance

### **INTRODUCTION**

Language plays an essential role as a method of communication in human existence. It allows people to transmit information from the speaker to the listener. In Kerala, English is regarded as a foreign language, meaning it is not frequently used for daily communication by the local population. This circumstance creates difficulties for learners, as they face various disparities from their native language. Additionally, the Institutional Level Curriculum for junior high school students underscores the importance of being proficient in all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

### **NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Without language, articulating thoughts, ideas, and feelings would be unfeasible. There are many languages spoken around the world, with English being one of the most notable international languages. According to Crystal (2003: 6), roughly a quarter of the global population communicates in English. A considerable amount of information resources, such as literature, scientific studies, and technological progress, is available in English, which establishes it as the most utilized means of communication. The vast number of non-native speakers using English for global engagement highlights its increasing importance in our daily lives. As a result, achieving proficiency in English, both orally and in writing, is crucial. Government has required that English be taught as a mandatory subject in both junior and senior high educational institutions.

Reading is one of the four essential skills instructed to junior and senior high school students and holds equal significance as the other language skills. Grellet (1996:8) claims that reading comprehension should not be considered separately from the other skills, since all spoken or written communication is based on what people have read. Reading is fundamentally connected to comprehension; when students engage in reading, they are actively involved in a cognitive process to comprehend the content. Thus, the researcher intends to study the effect of a Cooperative Technique Numbered Heads Together Technique on Achievement in Reading Comprehension of Grade IX Students'

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Numbered Heads Together is a cooperative learning technique where students in small groups are allocated with numbers, posed a question, cooperate to get an answer, and then a casually selected student from each group reveals the answer. This fosters active involvement, individual responsibility, and encourages positive interdependence. Thus, the problem of the study is stated as Effect of Using Numbered Heads Together Technique on Achievement in Reading Comprehension of Grade IX Students'.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of the study is to find the effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on Achievement in Reading Comprehension of Grade IX Students’.

## METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a quasi-experimental design implementing a post-test-only control group method (Cohen et al., 2007:278). The sample of the research was ninth-grade students at Kerala Public School. The cohort comprised students from five different classes: 9A, 9B, 9C, 9D, and 9E during the academic year 2022-2023. To assess the homogeneity of the sample, a lottery method was applied. Simple Random Sampling Technique was the sampling technique used for the study. Class 9A acted as the experimental group with 40 students, while class 9B was designated as the control group, also consisting of 40 students. The main data, which was quantitative, was gathered through a tool called reading comprehension test.

## PROCEDURE OF TREATMENT

The research process proceeded as follows: First, the researcher executed a homogeneity test on the entire population and evaluated the results using the ANOVA formula. Since the equivalency of the two groups were established by homogeneity test as it produced homogeneous outcomes, participants were allocated to the experimental and control groups through a lottery system. Afterward, the experimental group (9A) participated in two sessions of the NHT treatment, whereas the control group (9B) was instructed using a lecturing technique for the same period. Subsequently, a try-out test was given to a different class that was not part of the research sample. Lastly, a post-test was administered for both groups, and the results from the post-test were analysed using an Independent Sample t-test through the SPSS software.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Group Statistics					
	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Score	Experimental	35	75.29	11.403	1.927
	Control	36	69.22	7.108	1.185

**Table 2. The Output of the Independent Sample T-Test of Post-test**

Independent Sample t - Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig	t	df	sig (2) tailed	Mean Difference	Std.Err or Difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Score	Equal variances assumed	6.712	0.012	2.697	69	0.009	6.063	2.248	1.578	10.549
	Equal Variances not assumed			2.68	56.86	0.01	6.063	2.262	1.532	10.594

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study shows that there is a positive effect of Numbered Heads Together Technique on Achievement in Reading Comprehension of Grade IX Students’. Before the post-test, the researcher performed a trial test. This trial was given to a class that wasn’t part of the chosen research sample. It was found that the ninth-grade students at the Kerala Public School of showed homogeneity. As a result, both the research sample and the class for the trial were randomly selected through a lottery system. Class VIII A was chosen for the execution of the trial test.

The results of the trial were used to calculate the reliability coefficient and the difficulty index. The Split-Half Odd-Even method was used to evaluate the reliability coefficient. The trial data were split into two parts: the first half included odd-numbered items, while the second half consisted of even-numbered items. The correlation between these two sets of scores was calculated using the product moment formula (Sudijono, 1996: 219) to assess the reliability of the half-test, which produced a reliability coefficient of 0. 78. To compute the reliability index for the complete test, the reliability coefficient was incorporated into the Spearman-Brown formula. This computation led to an overall test reliability of 0. 73, which is deemed reliable, according to Sudijono (1998: 209), who indicates that a reliability coefficient for teacher-made tests should be  $\geq 0. 70$ . Hence, the researcher determined that there was no need for any changes to the test items, permitting the administration of the post-test items.

After the reliability analysis, the subsequent step involved assessing the difficulty index. The difficulty index for each item was determined by dividing the number of students who answered correctly by the total number of students. The findings revealed that two items were classified as easy (15%), three items were considered difficult (15%), and the other fourteen items (70%) were categorized as fair (Djiwandono, 1996: 141). The objective of the trial test also included evaluating whether the given time was sufficient.

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the research outcomes and their educational significance, it can be deduced that the Numbered Head Together (NHT) Technique greatly improves the reading comprehension abilities of ninth-grade students at Kerala Public School. As a result, it is suggested that the English teachers shall adopt the NHT Technique to enhance students' reading comprehension achievements. In addition, the English teacher is motivated to employ the Numbered Head Together Technique, particularly for the instruction of reading comprehension in English.

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