



## IMPROVING STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN READING CLASS BY USING STUDENT TEAMS-ACHIEVEMENT DIVISION (STAD)

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### Abstract

This research is a classroom action research. It is aimed to describe how Student Teams-Achievement Division (STAD) improves the students' engagement in reading comprehension activities. The problems found in this research were the ninth grade students of MTs Negeri 4 Sambas were low engaged in reading comprehension activities. This research was conducted in class B. The procedure of the research consisted of planning, enacting, observing, and reflecting. In this study, the researcher was the teacher of the research subject who implemented STAD in teaching reading comprehension. The data were in form of quantitative and qualitative data. The tools of data collection were observation checklist, field note, and questionnaire. The quantitative data were collected from the observation checklist, and questionnaire. The quantitative data were analyzed by statistic formula. The qualitative data were analyzed by using a method stated by Best and Kahn (2006). From the result of the research, the researcher found that STAD can improve the students' engagement in reading class. They were enthusiastic to participate in class presentation and discussion. During the learning process, they were active to learn better such as trying to understand the reading texts by asking questions and sharing their knowledge and ideas to other students.

Keywords: *Engagement, Reading Class, STAD*

### INTRODUCTION

Reading has an important role in an academic setting. Readers will obtain knowledge through written text. Therefore, it supports learning goals. Sen (2009) claims reading is a fundamental thing for learning. The role of reading is important in education, especially in language learning. Reading will be more beneficial if the readers find messages and information from the text. This means comprehension is the next step in reading activities. In the reading activity, a reader has a transaction with written text by interpreting the text influenced by the reader's experiences, background, knowledge, or the intention of reading (Celce & Murcia,

2001, p. 154). Snow (2002, p. 11) also defines reading comprehension as the process of getting transaction and constructing meaning in written language.

Learning English in the syllabus of secondary school especially for a ninth-grade (revised Curriculum 2013 in 2017) expects students to have communicative and cognitive competencies. They should be able to communicate and apply the language written and spoken. Furthermore, they are expected to be able to understand meaning through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, teaching reading for the teacher is a challenge. The teacher should find a kind of teaching method to achieve teaching and learning goals.

To achieve the target of language learning as mentioned above, coordination between a teacher and students is needed. A teacher is a doer of teaching should find an effective teaching and learning method for students which supports the students' learning. Besides, the students' behavior toward teaching and learning process is also a crucial aspect as stated by Goss & Sonnemann (2017) that students' behavior or participation is a critical part of an effective teaching and learning with the opportunity to speak, solve problem, and work with others students may engaged in learning. Guthrie, et al. (2004, p. 404) mention that students' learning outcomes associated with students' engagement in the classroom. It means the students' engagement in learning activities has a big role.

STAD is one of cooperative learning. Cooperative learning offers opportunities in kinds of aspects, such as knowledge, skill, attitude, and achievement (Wichadee & Orawiwatnakul, 2012, p. 98). The advantages of STAD as an effective teaching technique bridge gaps in an educational setting in terms of academics, race, and background (Slavin, 1991, p. 9). Furthermore, he claims that STAD can improve learners' achievement, integration among students regarding race or ethnic background, mainstream students; students who are poor academically, mentally or physically can be overcome, self-esteem as the important aspect of feeling in learning.

Some similar studies have found that the implementation of STAD as a teaching technique that increase language learning in some aspects. A study conducted by Herjayanto (2018). He studied the use of STAD to improve students' behavioral engagement. The result indicates STAD could improve students' behavioral engagement through the teaching instruction of collaborative learning. The instruction provides a caring atmosphere and

supportive interaction between teacher and students and also provides learning autonomy of students in a group activity.

Another research conducted by Astuti (2014) on the use of STAD to improve reading comprehension practice. The result showed that this teaching technique can increase students' reading comprehension through building students' positive behavior, learning environment, and continued positive interdependence.

## **METHOD**

The research design of this research is a classroom action research. Action research is a research conducted by one or more individuals aims to overcome problems or issues or gaining information in order to inform local practice (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012, p. 589). This action research is conducted in classroom.

The intention of this research design is to solve the educational problems that the researcher confronted in her classroom. The subject of this study was IXB students of MTs Negeri 4 Sambas in the academic year 2018/2019. There were 32 students consisting of 22 girls and 10 boys. The reasons for choosing class IXB as the subject of this research was the students in the class were low engaged in learning and their reading achievements were need to be improved.

To collect data in this study, the researcher used four instruments. They were observation checklist, field note, questionnaire, and reading comprehension test. The observation checklist measured the students' engagement in learning activities. There were seven items of students' engagements in classroom was assessed during learning in reading class. The students' engagement was adopted in Cassar & Jang (2010, p. 203) that focus on students' affective and cognitive behaviors, and social interaction with others. The indicators are paying attention in class, work well with other children, attempting to do his/her work thoroughly and well rather than just to get by, participating actively in discussion, complete assign seatwork, asking questions to get more information, and trying to finish assignment even when they are difficult. Students' behaviors and responses in teaching and learning were observed and analyzed observation checklist and field note. The questionnaire was adopted

from Student Engagement in the Schools Questionnaire-Engagement Composite (SESQ-ENG) cited in Hart, Stewart, & Jimerson (2011, p. 73).

The data in this study were in form of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was taken from the analysis of the students' checklist and questionnaire descriptive statistic formula. The collected data in this study was the students' engagement in reading class. To analyze the data, the researcher uses a method by Best & Kahn (2006). There are three steps; data organization, description, and interpretation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the result of the research in cycle 1, cycle 2, cycle 3 including the students' engagement from checklist, questionnaire, test, and field note. The first cycle consisted of two meetings. The procedure of teaching and learning during the first cycle includes the teacher's procedure of teaching and the students' learning activities. The researcher began the research by introducing the teaching and learning material about report text including the definition, the generic structure of the text, and its example. Then, the students and the teacher began to discuss an example of report text. The discussion would be ended if all group members already understood the text. In meeting two, the class was begun by reviewing the last material and started to have quiz individually, and after that scoring their test.

Based on the observing data, the finding of cycle one is most of the students paid attention to the teacher's presentation in pre-activity, but three students tried to disturb other students' focus. Some of them responded to the teacher's questions about the material. The students paid attention when the teacher explained about what they need to do in the worksheet. In discussion, they were confused with the text and did not understand to complete the worksheet. In the last stage of STAD, the students had a quiz and some of them asked other students to help them. From those findings, the researcher would revise several teaching procedure and media.

In meeting one of cycle 2, the researcher started to introduce another example of report text and analyzed the text together with students. After that, the students started the discussion in a group and began to identify and analyze the text. In meeting two of this cycle, the students had quizzes individually to know students' comprehension about text learning. The findings of this cycle indicate that the teaching and learning in cycle 2 were successful

because the problems in cycle 1 could be settled. The students followed the teacher's presentation attentively and answered the teacher's questions. The students tried hard to understand the material in discussion by asking the teacher's and other students' help. Some of the students raised their hand to ask questions about the learning material.

Due to the students showed better engagement in learning through responding to the class presentation, discussing actively in the group, and improving their understanding, the procedure of teaching and learning in cycle 3 was not different from cycle 2. The difference was the teacher asked some of the students per group to explain the information in the text before the discussion over. The activity purposed to improve the students' engagement in learning the text and discussion. So, they could improve their understanding. The findings describe The students listened to the teacher' explanation about the procedure of learning attentively. Some students including chief and member of a group asked the teacher's questions and help. Some of the students tried to make noise but other group members reminded them. The students' enthusiastic in discussion is better than the previous meetings.

### The Result of Students' Engagement in Reading Class

The items of the students' engagement consisted of seven items; those are paying attention in class, working well with other children, attempting to do his/her work thoroughly and well rather than just to get by, participating actively in discussion, completing assign seatwork, asking questions to get more information, and trying to finish assignment even when they are difficult

Table 1. The Students' Engagement Data

Cycle		Items of students' engagement							Total %
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1	n	23	21	28	22	19	19	28	71, 87%
	%	71,87	65,62	87,5	68,75	59,37	59,37	87,5	
2	n	24	22	28	23	20	22	27	74, 1%
	%	75	68,75	87,5	71,87	62,5	68,75	84,37	
3	n	26	25	30	24	22	24	29	80, 35%
	%	81,25	78,12	93,75	75	68,75	75%	90,62	

The data of the students' engagement indicates that the students were engaged in learning. The data showed that the students' engagement reached 71, 87% in cycle 1. It means the students were engaged enough in learning. Then, in cycle 2 the students' engagement increased better than cycle 1. Their classical engagement reached 74, 1%. Then, the students' engagement increased significantly in cycle 3. It was 80, 35%. The data from cycle 1 to cycle 3 indicates that the students were engaged in teaching and learning activities.

In learning, the students are not only expected to complete task but also how they can be responsible in their learning, get engaged in learning at school that one of important aspects in learning (Hart, Stewart, & Jimerson, 2011, p. 67). The students' engagement in school support their active participation in teaching and learning activities that can contribute to the students' achievement such as in reading comprehension (Guthrie, et al., 2004, p. 403).

The findings of this research indicate that STAD can help to boost the students' effort when learning. It can be seen from the students' observation checklist and field note that the students tried to learn as the teacher's instruction. They followed the learning procedures. In team, they were asked to discuss a reading text. There was an interesting atmosphere in this activity. The researcher found that the students discuss actively, silent students tried to speak up. They uttered questions to teammates and the teacher. Meanwhile, other students who usually ignore the learning tried to share their ideas based on their knowledge and experiences. The classroom condition looked exciting.

Based on what the students did in reading class indicates that the students realized their learning. They contributed in learning activities. They involved in discussion, built their confidence to ask questions, responded to others' questions, shared their ideas and knowledge, and tried to comprehend the reading text as good as possible. Moreover, based on the students' questionnaire indicates that most of them interested in learning activities. They had positive feeling and behavior in learning.

The result of students' engagement in the observation sheet, students' checklist, and test from cycle 1 to cycle 3 indicates STAD can improve the students' engagement in learning including reading comprehension. By using this teaching method, the students were instructed and motivated to follow the learning interestingly, joyfully, and meaningful. It started from the class presentation stage. The students paid attention well. In the team stage, the students

found information from the text through discussion students to student and student to teacher. The discussion was ended if all group members comprehended the text. When the students were quizzed, they tried to show their best results for their teams.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the result of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of STAD is very effective and can improve the students' engagement in the classroom especially in reading comprehension activity. The students can learn together and help each other through learning cooperatively. They have the same purpose to be the best team. Therefore, they should show their best performance in quizzes. In the activity, the high-proficient students should assist other students to comprehend the learning materials.

From the first step of STAD, the students are directed to learn well. It is started by paying attention to the class presentation to build their first knowledge. Afterward, the students are asked to discuss the reading materials. In this stage, the students identify and find information in the text. They use their way to understand the text. They may translate the text into Indonesian or in other ways.

In the discussion stage, the students work and learn together. In this stage, they motivate and assist each other. Therefore, students' reading comprehension can be improved. The students are also taught to be responsible for their learning. They learn to be a leader for themselves and the team members. The use of STAD as a teaching technique in teaching and learning foreign language especially reading comprehension activity is effective and can improve the students' engagement in the classroom.

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