



Increasing Students' Activeness by Using Hot Potatoes Strategy

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Abstract

This research aims to determine and analyze the increase in the activeness of class IXB students at SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya using the Hot Potatoes strategy. The subjects of this research were all 30 students in class IX B of SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya. The research method used is a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. Data collection in this study used observation techniques, interviews and questionnaires. The research results show that the use of the hot potato learning strategy can increase student learning activeness. From the results of the researcher observations in cycle I, there were 2 aspects that were still low, namely oral activities and mental activities. It was found that there were still many students who lacked confidence in presenting discussion results and asked questions about things they did not understand. So in cycle II the teacher focuses more on approaching students and continues to motivate students to be active during the learning process so that low results can be improved in Cycle II. Approaching each student and asking students to ask each group, this can increase students activeness. Future researchers are advised to further deepen the Hot Potatoes learning strategy so that later when faced with a teaching situation they can apply it well. This is done because the Hot Potatoes strategy is not easy to implement but requires in-depth understanding so that this learning strategy can be implemented and provide maximum benefits.

Keywords: *Hot Potatoes, Qualitative, Quantitative, CAR, Students Activeness.*

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INTRODUCTION

Active learning is a pivotal element for the success of the learning process. Dimiyati and Mudjiono (2006) emphasize that active participation of students in the learning process is crucial. This participation includes asking questions, expressing opinions, and paying close attention during lessons. The principle of activeness is fundamental and must be nurtured and developed by educators to ensure the success of the educational process. When students are actively engaged in learning, they dominate the learning activities, making the process more effective. However, students exhibit different levels of activity in the classroom, ranging from very active to passive. Observations at SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya reveal that many students are far from active learners. These students often remain uninvolved in the learning process, showing little interest and preferring to remain silent, ultimately becoming passive participants.

One effective strategy to foster active learning is the hot potato strategy. According to Davis (2012), this strategy involves students demonstrating their ability to be confident through discussion. In practice, this means that students engage in a dynamic exchange of ideas, responding quickly to questions posed by the teacher or their peers. This method encourages critical thinking and helps students better understand and master the material in a short time. The hot potato strategy is particularly effective because it is oriented towards student activity. By involving

students directly in discussions, it helps them become more confident and engaged learners. The rapid exchange of ideas in a hot potato session requires students to think on their feet and articulate their thoughts clearly, promoting a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Implementing the hot potato strategy in the classroom can transform the learning environment from one of passive reception to active engagement. Teachers can start by posing open-ended questions related to the lesson, prompting students to respond quickly. This not only keeps students on their toes but also fosters a sense of urgency and excitement around the learning process. Moreover, this strategy can be adapted to various subjects and learning contexts. For instance, in a science class, the teacher might ask students to quickly explain a concept or solve a problem related to the topic at hand. In a language class, students could be asked to come up with synonyms or antonyms for a given word or to construct sentences using new vocabulary.

The benefits of the hot potato strategy are manifold. It not only increases student engagement but also enhances their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. By actively participating in discussions, students are more likely to retain information and develop a deeper understanding of the material. Additionally, this strategy helps build a collaborative learning environment where students learn from each other's perspectives and ideas. However, it is essential for teachers to create a supportive and non-threatening environment for the hot potato strategy to be effective. Students should feel comfortable expressing their thoughts without fear of ridicule or embarrassment. Teachers can achieve this by establishing clear guidelines for respectful communication and encouraging a positive, inclusive classroom culture.

The purpose of this manuscript is to explore and highlight the significance of active learning in the educational process, with a specific focus on the implementation of the hot potato strategy to enhance student engagement and participation. By examining the current state of student activeness at SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya and identifying the challenges faced in fostering an active learning environment, this manuscript aims to provide educators with practical insights and strategies to transform passive learners into active participants. The manuscript seeks to demonstrate how the hot potato strategy can effectively encourage critical thinking, confidence, and collaboration among students, ultimately contributing to the overall success of the educational process. Through a detailed review of existing literature and observational data, this work aspires to serve as a valuable resource for teachers and educational practitioners aiming to cultivate a more dynamic and interactive classroom experience.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR). Understanding Classroom Action Research consists of elements namely research, action, and class. In Classroom Action Research (CAR) consists of four steps, namely: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The picture is below:

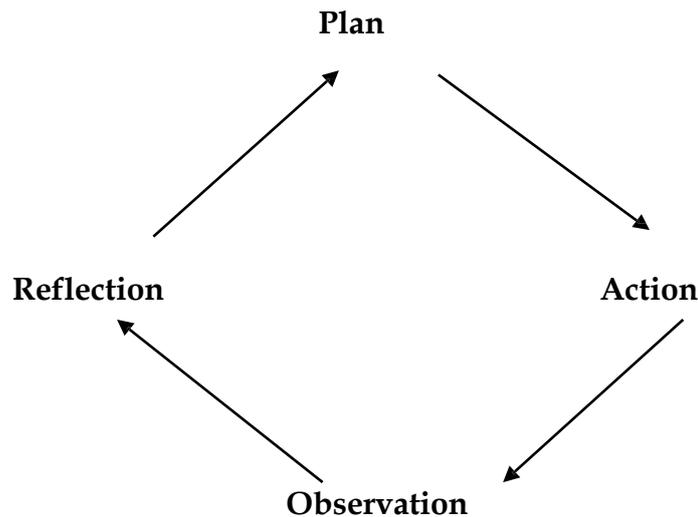


Figure 1. The action research cycle model Kurt Lewin

His research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR), which incorporates the core elements of research, action, and class. CAR is a methodical and iterative approach aimed at improving educational practices through a structured cycle of activities. The process involves four critical steps:

1. **Planning:** In this initial phase, the researcher identifies a specific issue or area for improvement within the classroom setting. Detailed objectives are set, and strategies are devised to address the identified issue. Planning involves selecting appropriate interventions and designing an action plan that outlines the steps to be taken.
2. **Action:** The planned interventions are implemented in the classroom. This phase is characterized by active experimentation with new teaching methods, activities, or strategies aimed at enhancing student learning and engagement. The actions taken are documented systematically to ensure accurate tracking of the process.
3. **Observation:** During this phase, the researcher closely monitors and records the outcomes of the implemented actions. This involves gathering data through various means such as student feedback, assessments, classroom observations, and other relevant metrics. The observation step is crucial for collecting evidence on the effectiveness of the interventions.
4. **Reflection:** In the reflection phase, the researcher analyzes the collected data to evaluate the impact of the actions taken. This involves reflecting on what worked well, what didn't, and why. Based on this analysis, the researcher makes informed decisions on necessary adjustments or modifications to the teaching practices. This reflective process is essential for continuous improvement and for planning the next cycle of action research.

By systematically integrating these steps, CAR enables educators to address specific challenges in their teaching practices, adapt to student needs, and enhance overall classroom effectiveness. This iterative process fosters a culture of continuous improvement and professional development among educators, ultimately leading to better educational outcomes for students.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The hot potatoes strategy implemented in class The Hot Potatoes strategy implemented in class IXB of SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya uses two cycles to achieve the level of student activity. In the first cycle of the first meeting, the results shown had not reached Very Active and of course the percentage of student activity had not reached 70%. This happens due to several factors. The factor that caused the most failure in the first cycle of the first meeting was that students lacked confidence in asking questions about things they did not understand and were embarrassed in presenting the results of the discussion and of course also because students were not used to studying with the Hot Potatoes strategy. Students who are usually not active in class are immediately required to be active, this is certainly quite difficult.

Therefore, in cycle I, the first meeting is a transition for students to get to know strategies that make them more active in class. Davis, Gordon B. 2012 argued that the hot potato strategy is one that gets students to demonstrate their ability to be confident through discussion. In the classroom, students will easily understand the questions asked by the teacher so that they can master them in a short time. Based on the observation sheet carried out by researchers with 14 indicators, in the first cycle of the first meeting there were still many students who were embarrassed to express their opinions. Thus, the average student score in the first cycle of meeting I based on observation results was 58.8%. The percentage of students who obtained the Very Active Category was 16%.

Likewise, the average score obtained from the questionnaire to determine student responses at the first meeting of cycle I was 56%, of which only 10% received a Very Active score and the second meeting, students are expected to be able to adapt to the Hot Potatoes strategy. At the second meeting, it was seen that students experienced increased activeness. the second meeting the students' learning activeness had not yet reached 70%, because there were still some students who were embarrassed to express their opinions when discussing or answering the teacher's questions. At the second meeting, the homeroom teacher shortened the explanation of the material so that students had more time to discuss. The results at the second observation meeting showed that the average student activity score reached 60.3% and student responses obtained from the questionnaire were 62%.

In cycle II, meeting I, the average students activeness score through observation reached 72.5% and students responses from questionnaire 74.58% but this score did not exceed the Very Active Category. Meanwhile, the percentage of students who received a Very Active score in observation was 56.6%, while in the questionnaire it was 43.3%, which means they have not reached the standard average percentage score of 70%. At the second meeting there was an increase and achievement of research success indicators. Through observation, the average score obtained at the second meeting was 76.25% and in the students responses from questionnaire the average score was 83%. The percentage of students who scored Very Active in observation was 76% and in the questionnaire was 86.6%, which means it has exceeded the percentage of 70%.

Learning through the two cycles that have been implemented is a stage in increasing student activity. Training carried out in several stages has increased. Students are given practice to discuss with their friends. According to Lippie

(2003:9), the Hot Potato Strategy is a strategy that students carry out with a friend in several exercises. The goal is to foster an open environment. This means that the Hot Potato Strategy is a strategy to help students exchange ideas to solve problems with their interlocutors in a short time. Therefore, based on Lippie's opinion, the Hot Potatoes Strategy implemented in class IXB of SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya has gone through several exercises so that the class is active in discussions. The exercises carried out cannot be successful in one practice but in several stages of training. After going through several stages starting from cycle I, session I, they still have not reached the average figure. Then in cycle I, session II there was an increase which made the class even more noisy in discussions with their friends even though at this stage the average value of activeness had not been reached. This shows that basically to create an active class using the Hot Potatoes learning strategy requires several short stages of practice.

The Hot Potatoes learning strategy carried out in class IXB Negeri 5 Pringgabaya succeeded in achieving an average value of activeness in cycle II session II. At this stage the class began to be very active in holding discussions discussing the contents of the paper given. Frangenheim (2004:84) states that the hot potato strategy is a noisy strategy because each group discusses a piece of paper to write down ideas. As a result, students will be active in learning and teaching through discussions with other groups. Based on what Frangenheim said, the situation in class IXB of SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya in cycle II session I had successfully implemented the Hot Potatoes learning strategy. Students seemed to be starting to be active in discussions to exchange ideas in presenting the results of their discussions.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Hot Potatoes strategy in class IX B of SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya uses two cycles and each cycle has two sessions. The success of learning with the hot potatoes was successful in cycle II, Session II, where 70% of students fell into the very active category. The very active category is the standard for success because basically the hot potatoes strategy is to make the class atmosphere very active, not just active.

In each cycle and session of implementing the Hot Potatoes strategy, the average score and percentage obtained by class IX B students at SMP Negeri 5 Pringgabaya increased. Both through observation and from questionnaires and interviews to find out student responses, both show that each cycle and session always experiences an increase in activeness through the implementation of the Hot Potatoes strategy.

SUGGESTION

Provide more discussion space for students so that they always remain active in learning and expressing their opinions. This is good for students because the large number of discussions carried out in class. will make students' minds more critical and active. Students must continue to be trained to solve problems through small group discussions to learn to express opinions. Teachers who teach in class are advised not to always focus on giving explanations to students for too long. Apart

from that, teachers should not only focus on giving questions that must be answered individually by students, but rather use more group discussions so as to train thinking and cooperation between students. It is recommended that schools apply the Hot Potatoes strategy from the start to all students equally so that students get used to discussing and being active in class. So that in every generation and every subject the whole class becomes active and students enjoy learning in class. Researchers are advised to further deepen the Hot Potatoes learning strategy so that later when faced with a situation teach they can apply it well. This is done because the Hot Potatoes strategy is not easy to implement but requires in-depth understanding so that this learning strategy can be implemented and provide maximum benefits.

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