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THE COOPERATIVE SCRIPT METHOD IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING IN THE MUTĀLA'AH SUBJECT AT SMP GALIH AGUNG

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Abstract: This study aims to improve students' understanding of Mutāla'ah, with a specific focus on the topic of Al-Babgā', through the application of the Cooperative Script learning model. This study was conducted using a classroom action research design, which was carried out in two cycles, each consisting of four phases: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. This study involved 24 students from class II-A at Galih Agung Private Junior High School, Darularafah Raya Islamic Boarding School. Data collection was carried out using learning outcome tests to measure understanding and activity observation sheets to assess student engagement and participation during the learning process. The results showed a significant increase in students' understanding of the material. At the beginning of the study, the average student score was 51.4, and only 42% of students met the minimum mastery criteria. After the implementation of the first cycle, the average score increased to 59.5, with 67% of students achieving mastery. In the second cycle, the average score increased significantly to 75.2, while the proportion of students who achieved mastery increased to 92%. These results show that the Cooperative Script Model is very effective in improving students' understanding of Mutāla'ah material. In addition to improving learning outcomes, the use of the Cooperative Script approach also encourages active student participation and promotes collaboration.

Keywords: Student understanding, Cooperative Script method, comprehension enhancement.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman siswa terhadap Mutāla'ah, dengan fokus khusus pada topik Al-Babgā', melalui penerapan Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Skrip. Penelitian ini dilakukan menggunakan desain penelitian tindakan kelas, yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus, masing-masing terdiri dari empat fase: perencanaan, pelaksanaan, pengamatan, dan refleksi. Penelitian ini melibatkan 24 siswa dari kelas II-A di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Swasta Galih Agung, Sekolah Islam Asrama Darularafah Raya. Pengumpulan data dilakukan menggunakan tes hasil belajar untuk mengukur pemahaman dan lembar observasi aktivitas untuk menilai keterlibatan dan partisipasi siswa selama proses belajar. Hasil menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam pemahaman siswa terhadap materi. Pada awal penelitian, rata-rata skor siswa adalah 51,4, dan hanya 42% siswa yang memenuhi kriteria penguasaan minimal. Setelah implementasi siklus pertama, rata-rata skor meningkat menjadi 59,5, dengan 67% siswa mencapai penguasaan. Pada siklus kedua, rata-rata skor meningkat secara signifikan menjadi 75,2, sementara proporsi siswa yang mencapai penguasaan meningkat menjadi 92%. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa Model Skrip Kooperatif sangat efektif dalam meningkatkan pemahaman siswa terhadap materi Mutāla'ah. Selain meningkatkan hasil belajar, penggunaan pendekatan Skrip Kooperatif juga mendorong partisipasi aktif siswa dan mempromosikan kolaborasi.

Kata Kunci: Pemahaman siswa, Metode Skrip Kooperatif, peningkatan pemahaman

A. Introduction

Mutāla'ah, as one of the subjects in the Arabic language curriculum, plays an important role in developing students' reading and text comprehension skills, as well as fostering critical thinking skills. Mutāla'ah learning not only emphasizes reading skills, but also comprehension, meaning analysis, and mastery of relevant Arabic vocabulary.¹ However, in practice, Mutāla'ah learning in many schools, including Galih Agung Junior High School, still faces various obstacles in its implementation.¹ Learning activities often take place in a one-way manner (teacher-centered), where the teacher is the main source of information while students play a passive role as listeners.² As a result, student participation is low, interaction is minimal, and the ability to understand Arabic reading is still weak. This can be seen from the results of initial observations and students' daily test scores, which show that most students have difficulty understanding vocabulary,³ grasping the content of the text, and summarizing Mutāla'ah readings.

Islamic education is essentially a developmental process that not only aims to cultivate intellectual abilities but also to shape the character, morality, and religious understanding of learners. Within the tradition of Islamic education, the learning of the Arabic language holds a central role. Arabic is not merely a tool of communication; it is the key language used to understand the primary sources of Islamic teachings such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical scholarly works (*turath*) that serve as authoritative references in the development of Islamic sciences. Without adequate mastery of the Arabic language, comprehension of Islamic teachings becomes partial and limited. Therefore, Arabic is positioned as a core subject, particularly within pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) and Islamic-based educational institutions.⁴

In the pesantren environment, learning Arabic is conducted with higher intensity than in general formal schools. Arabic becomes the "academic language" that enables students to interact with texts and the intellectual traditions of Islam. One of the most important branches of Arabic language learning is Mutāla'ah, which refers to reading comprehension of Arabic texts. Mutāla'ah not only trains students to read properly but

¹ (Effendi) Methodology of Teaching Arabic (Malang: Misykat, 2015), 87.

² (sudjana) Fundamentals of the Teaching and Learning Process (Bandung: Sinar Baru Algensindo, 2016), 45.

³ (Hasibuan) Efforts to Improve Students' Understanding of Arabic Language Learning of Alwaanu Material through Outdoor Learning Methods in Class VIII-A of MTs Swasta Cendikia Bunayya Kabanjahe (Makrifat, 2023).

⁴ (Sharah & Hasibuan) Improving Foreign Language Skills at the Misbahul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Paloh Lhokseumawe (PESANTREN: Studies in Islamic School and Social Education).

also demands the ability to understand the context, content, structure, and moral messages contained in the text. However, field realities show that Mutāla'ah learning has not fully achieved these objectives.⁵

In many pesantren and Islamic schools, including SMP Swasta Galih Agung at Pesantren Darularafah Raya, Mutāla'ah learning is still dominated by traditional teaching methods. Approaches such as *bandongan*—where the teacher reads and students listen—and *sorogan*—where students read and the teacher corrects—have their traditional value, but they often make students passive.⁶ These methods provide limited space for students to build their own understanding of texts. This condition causes the internalization of meaning to be far from optimal. Rizkia and colleagues explain that learning models which position students merely as listeners tend to hinder deep comprehension and decrease learning motivation.⁷

This issue becomes even more apparent when students are confronted with Mutāla'ah texts containing moral values. For instance, the text “Al-Babgā” (The Parrot) includes themes of loyalty, kindness, and harmonious relations between humans and other creatures. However, based on observations and teacher reflections at SMP Swasta Galih Agung Pesantren Darularafah Raya, many students fail to grasp these core messages. They only read mechanically without understanding the implicit meanings or moral messages intended by the author.

This problem is visible in the learning evaluation results, where only 41.66% of students in class II-A achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM), while the school's classical mastery standard is 85%. This significant discrepancy shows that the majority of students cannot comprehend Mutāla'ah texts thoroughly. Students tend to focus solely on verbal reading without engaging in deeper meaning construction. This reinforces the assumption that the teaching methods used have not met the students' learning needs effectively.

Another major issue is the use of teacher-centered learning methods. that traditional methods heavily dominated by the teacher prevent students from constructing their own understanding.⁷ When students are not given the opportunity to participate actively,

⁵ Puspitasari, M., Prayogi, E., & Hasibuan, N. (2023). Efforts to Improve Educators' Competence: A Study at Dayah Darul Huda Lueng Angen, North Aceh Regency. ITQAN: Journal of Educational Sciences, 14(2), 175–186. <https://doi.org/10.47766/itqan.v14i2.1110>

⁶ Ar Rasyid, H., & Hasibuan, N. (2024). Analysis of the Implementation of the Hiwar Method in Arabic Language Learning at Pondok Pesantren Tahfizh Yayasan Wakaf Surro Man Roa. JUDIKIS: Journal of Islamic Education, 1(1), 21–29.

⁷ Rizkia et al., Implementation of Traditional Methods in Arabic Learning at Pesantren, 2021.

information processing becomes ineffective. Mutāla'ah learning—which ideally trains deep comprehension—thus transforms into mere mechanical reading.

Therefore, a more interactive and collaborative approach is needed, one that provides space for students to exchange understanding and clarify information. One promising method to address these issues is the Cooperative Script method. This method, as part of cooperative learning, emphasizes collaborative work among students in pairs, where they take turns explaining the material to one another.⁸ This concept enables students to be active, engage in dialogue, and deepen understanding through interaction.

The strength of Cooperative Script lies in its ability to push students to reformulate their understanding. When students explain the content to their peers, they reinforce their own comprehension. When functioning as listeners, they can offer feedback, corrections, or questions that stimulate discussion. This process creates a meaningful two-way learning experience.

Research conducted by Ruba (2020) shows that Cooperative Script enhances students' abilities to explain reading content and improves material retention.⁹ Puspitasari and colleagues found that cooperative learning models increase learning motivation and foster a more active learning environment.¹⁰ Rahmawati (2021) concludes that Cooperative Script improves students' reading comprehension—particularly their ability to summarize—due to the requirement to restate content in their own words.¹¹ Meanwhile, Wardani (2019) found that cooperative pair-discussion methods significantly improve Arabic vocabulary mastery.¹² These findings indicate that Cooperative Script has the potential not only to improve text comprehension but also to support vocabulary acquisition—an important foundation in Mutāla'ah learning.

However, these studies still present several limitations. First, most Cooperative Script research has been conducted in non-Arabic subjects or in Indonesian language learning—not Mutāla'ah. Second, studies related to Arabic learning generally focus on vocabulary improvement, not comprehensive reading comprehension. Third, research applying Cooperative Script within pesantren-based learning contexts remains limited.

No existing study specifically examines the use of Cooperative Script for Mutāla'ah texts containing moral messages such as “Al-Babgā’.” This constitutes the research gap. Mutāla'ah requires not only linguistic comprehension but also the ability to extract values, moral lessons, and implied meanings. Yet previous studies have not investigated whether

Cooperative Script can enhance moral and contextual comprehension within a pesantren environment.

Furthermore, every educational institution has distinct characteristics. SMP Swasta Galih Agung Pesantren Darularafah Raya is unique due to its pesantren culture, discipline system, and learning environment, all of which shape students' learning styles. No research has explored Cooperative Script in this specific educational setting, which further highlights the gap.

Thus, this research contains clear novelty. It does not merely examine the general effectiveness of Cooperative Script but applies it directly to Mutāla'ah learning—specifically to a narrative text rich in moral values. Additionally, this research is conducted in a modern pesantren context, offering new empirical contributions to Arabic language pedagogy within Islamic schools.

The application of Cooperative Script is expected to improve students' comprehension of Mutāla'ah texts, both linguistically and morally. This method also has the potential to enhance student interaction, boost learning motivation, and create a more enjoyable and participatory learning environment. Consequently, the quality of Mutāla'ah learning can be significantly improved.

B. Research Methode

This research was conducted using the Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach because it aimed to improve the quality of learning directly in the classroom⁸. The CAR method was deemed appropriate because it allowed researchers to systematically intervene in the learning process and then evaluate its impact on student learning outcomes⁹. The research was conducted in two cycles, each of which included four main steps: designing actions, implementing actions, conducting observations, and reflecting¹⁰. These four stages were carried out repeatedly and in a structured manner to ensure continuous improvement from one cycle to the next¹¹.

This research was conducted at Galih Agung Private Junior High School, Darularafah Raya Islamic Boarding School, located in Kutalimbaru District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra. The subjects in this study were 24 students in class II-A at Galih Agung

⁸ Arikunto, S. (2021). *Penelitian tindakan kelas: Edisi revisi*. Bumi Aksara. hlm. 16-18.

⁹ Geoffrey E. Mills, *Action Research: A Guide for the Teacher Researcher*, edisi ke-6 (New York: Pearson, 2018), hlm. 45-47.

¹⁰ McTaggart, R., & Nixon, R. (2014). *The action research planner: Doing critical participatory action research*. Springer), hlm. 20-25.

¹¹ Eileen Ferrance, *Action Research* (Providence, RI: LAB at Brown University, 2000), hlm. 9-12.

Private Junior High School, Darularafah Raya Islamic Boarding School, Lau Bakeri, Deli Serdang, North Sumatra, for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Data collection techniques in this study were designed to obtain accurate and relevant information to answer the research questions and support the analysis of the effectiveness of the Cooperative Script method. The selection of these techniques took into account the type of data needed, the context of implementation in the classroom, and the reliability of the data to be obtained¹². The techniques used in this study included tests, observations, documentation, and field notes. In this study was conducted qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data was obtained from observations, documentation, interviews, and field notes, which were analyzed in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Data reduction was carried out to filter important information according to the research focus, quantitative data was obtained from student test results and analyzed using the percentage of learning completeness, both individually and classically. Individual mastery is calculated based on the final score compared to the number of questions, while classical mastery is calculated based on the percentage of students who achieve a score of ≥ 50 .

C. Result Of Research and Discussion

Students' Understanding of the Mutāla'ah Subject on the Topic Al-Babgā' Through the Cooperative Script Method

The pre-action stage was carried out as an initial step to determine the initial condition of students before implementing the action through the Cooperative Script method. From the observations made, it was found that the learning process was still one-way. The researcher dominated the learning activities with lectures, while the students only received explanations passively. The classroom situation showed that many students were not paying attention, looked bored, and quite a few were even sleepy. The interaction that occurred was only between the researcher and a few students, while most of the other students remained silent. The students' ability to understand Arabic reading texts was very low. When given comprehension questions, most students had difficulty answering because they did not understand the meaning of the text.

This was confirmed by the results of the initial evaluation (pre-action test), which showed that out of 24 students, only 10 students or 42% obtained a score above the

¹² Sentance, S., Sinclair, J., Simmons, C., & Csizmadia, A. (2018). Classroom-based research projects for computing teachers: Facilitating professional learning. *ACM Transactions on Computing Education (TOCE)*, 18(3), 1-26.

minimum passing grade (≥ 50). The average class score at this stage was only 51.4, far below the classical mastery target of 85%.

This condition shows that Mutāla'ah learning has not been optimal. Students are not given space to discuss, express opinions, or actively convey their understanding. The lack of cognitive and social activities in learning causes students to not be fully involved in the process of understanding the text. With this background, the Cooperative Script method was chosen to be applied as an alternative learning approach that is more interactive and participatory. The hope is that students will not only be able to read the text, but also understand, retell, and summarize the content of the reading with their discussion partners¹³.

The implementation of the action in cycle I was carried out by applying the Cooperative Script method in Mutāla'ah learning with Al-Babgā' material. At this stage, students were introduced to a paired learning pattern where one student acted as the speaker and the other as the listener, then they took turns. Students were given time to read and understand the text, then discuss it with their respective partners. In its implementation, positive changes began to appear, although they were not yet significant across the board.

Students showed enthusiasm for this new learning pattern, mainly because they were no longer learning passively but were asked to convey their understanding in the form of verbal explanations to their friends. This provided a new learning experience that they had not previously experienced in the one-way lecture model.

A deeper analysis reveals two primary factors that prevented the discussions in Cycle I from reaching their optimal depth. First, the scaffolding or guidance provided by the teacher was insufficiently structured. The teacher predominantly acted as a supervisor of the Cooperative Script procedure rather than as an active facilitator who models high-quality discussion or poses probing questions. Second, there was a lack of clear assessment criteria for the discussions themselves. Students did not have a transparent rubric outlining what constituted effective interaction, leading them to perceive their main task as merely taking turns speaking rather than collaboratively building understanding. Consequently, the discussions remained at the level of sharing information and failed to ascend to the more intellectually rigorous stage of co-constructing knowledge¹⁴.

Therefore, strategic modifications focused on enhancing the quality of discursive interaction are essential for Cycle II. First, implementing scaffolding based on critical questioning is necessary to prompt elaboration and justification.¹¹ For instance, the teacher can provide guiding questions such as, "What evidence in the text supports your opinion?" or "How does your interpretation differ from your partner's?" Second, employing the "think-pair-square-share" technique as a variation could be beneficial. In this model, after the initial pair discussion, two pairs merge into a small group of four (a "square") to compare and synthesize their ideas before sharing with the whole class.¹²

¹³ Dinda, P. (2023). Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Berbasis Script untuk Meningkatkan Keaktifan Belajar Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Buletin Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 2(2), 190-199.

¹⁴ Sukmawati, P., Anwar, K., & Singgih, M. (2021). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Cooperative Script Dalam Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Arab Siswa Kelas VII. *Al Mitsali: Jurnal Penelitian dan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 1(2), 126-138.

This strategy is designed to introduce more complex cognitive conflict and foster deeper negotiation of meaning within a small group setting, thereby aligning the learning process more closely with the ideals of social constructivism.

The Cooperative Script Method in Improving Students' Understanding in the Mutāla'ah Subject at SMP Galih Agung

Based on the results of the formative evaluation given after learning, there was an increase in student scores compared to before the intervention. The average class score increased from 51.4 to 59.5. In addition, the number of students who achieved the minimum passing score increased from 10 students (42%) to 16 students (66.7%). Numerically, this is a sharp increase, although it has not reached the classical mastery level of 85% as targeted in this study.

Table 1.
Comparison of Learning Outcomes Before Intervention and Cycle I

No	Stage	Average Score	Number of Students Achieved Mastery	Classical Mastery
1	Before Intervention	51,4	10	42%
2	Cycle I	59,5	16	67%

Despite this improvement, the researcher noted several obstacles during the implementation of Cycle I. Some students did not seem to fully understand the role mechanism in the Cooperative Script method. Some were confused about when to speak and when to listen. Some were even passive when listening and only received information without responding.

In addition, not all pairs discussed actively. Some pairs only read together without explaining the text or responding. This was due to a lack of understanding of the purpose of the discussion itself and a lack of Arabic vocabulary skills. Many students still had difficulty understanding the meaning of words in the text, so they lacked the confidence to explain to their partners.

This condition shows that in the early stages of implementing a new method, adjustment and familiarization are very necessary. The researchers also realized that the implementation of this strategy could not be effective without strengthening understanding and direct simulation.

Tabel 2.
Constraints and Solutions in Cycle I

No	Constraints Encountered	Solutions Provided
1	Students did not understand the roles of speaker and listener	The researcher conducted a re-simulation and provided guidance on the roles

2	The discussion was not evenly distributed among all pairs	The researcher accompanied each pair individually during the discussion
3	Vocabulary was an obstacle	Researchers distributed vocabulary cards and explained their meanings

In general, the researchers' reflections on cycle I concluded that although learning outcomes had improved, the application of the method was not yet optimal, both technically and psychologically. Many students were still in the process of adapting to this interactive model. Therefore, planning for cycle II focused on:

- Reaffirming the roles of speaker and listener.
- Providing more exercises and discussion examples.
- Increasing student motivation through praise and appreciation.
- Providing visual aids such as story pictures to aid understanding.

With this strategy, it is hoped that in the next cycle, students will be more technically prepared and more confident in discussing, so that the improvement in learning outcomes is not only quantitative but also qualitative in terms of student engagement in learning.

The implementation of actions in cycle II was based on reflection and analysis of the shortcomings that occurred in cycle I. The researcher realized that the application of the Cooperative Script method in the first cycle was not optimal because students were still confused about their respective roles, were not accustomed to discussing, and had difficulty understanding the vocabulary in the text. Therefore, cycle II focused on strengthening understanding of the method, enriching vocabulary, and improving the quality of interaction between pairs.

The steps taken by the researcher in cycle II included: conducting a re-simulation of the roles of speaker and listener with real examples in front of the class, providing visual media in the form of pictures and excerpts from the story of Al-Babgā' to aid contextual understanding, providing mufradat cards containing key vocabulary from the text being discussed, and providing motivation and rewards to students who actively discussed or explained the text well, and closely monitoring and guiding each pair during the discussion process.

These changes brought about very significant results. The learning atmosphere became more lively, students appeared more confident, and almost all pairs performed their roles well. The discussion was two-way, and students actively helped each other understand the content of the text. They did not just repeat the content of the reading, but began to be able to relate the content of the story to their personal experiences or values that they were familiar with.

After making improvements to the learning process based on the reflections from cycle I, the implementation of the actions in cycle II showed more optimal results. The

changes in strategy made by the researcher proved to be successful in significantly improving student learning outcomes.

Based on the formative evaluation results at the end of cycle II, it was found that the average student score increased from 59.5 to 75.2. In addition, the number of students who achieved the minimum passing grade (≥ 50) also increased from 16 students (66.7%) to 22 students (92%). Only two students have not yet completed the course, which means that the classical completion rate has exceeded the minimum threshold of 85% in accordance with the previously determined success indicators.

Table 3.
Comparison of Cycle I and Cycle II Scores

No	Average Score	Number of Students Completion	Classical Completion Rate	Stage
1	59,5	16 students	66,7%	Cycle I
2	75,2	22 students	92%	Cycle II

This improvement in results did not happen by itself, but through a comprehensive improvement process, both in terms of the researcher's teaching techniques, the provision of teaching aids, and student motivation to learn. The researcher reemphasized the role of discussion, added a variety of media (picture stories, vocabulary cards), and provided direct guidance to discussion pairs. In addition, the researcher also gave appreciation to active students, which proved to be very helpful in fostering students' enthusiasm and confidence. From observations during the implementation of cycle II, students appeared to be more confident when explaining the content of the text to their partners, more active in asking questions if they did not understand the meaning of a word or sentence, supportive of each other in discussions, and students who understood more quickly helped their friends. This shows that the

Cooperative Script method not only improves students' academic results but also develops their social skills in paired learning. Discussions that were initially passive became interactive and productive, where students not only repeated information but also constructed understanding together.

The researcher also reflected that in cycle II, the classroom atmosphere became more conducive to learning. The researcher's role was no longer dominant but rather as a facilitator who only helped when needed. Students began to enjoy the learning process as a collaborative activity, not just listening and taking notes.

With these achievements, the success indicators in the learning outcomes aspect have been fully achieved. Cycle II was considered the final stage of the action because it brought significant and sustainable changes to the quality of student learning outcomes.

Despite the improvements, the researcher still found some minor obstacles. Some students still felt shy when explaining the text to their partners. There were also pairs who needed more time to understand the text. However, overall, these obstacles did not greatly affect the learning process because the researcher had anticipated them well.

Table 4.
Challenges and Solutions in Cycle II

No	Challenge Implemented	Solution Results Achieved	Challenge Implemented	Solution Results Achieved	Challenge Implemented	Solution Results Achieved
1	Some students were still shy	Researchers gave praise and direct guidance	Students became more confident	Researchers gave praise and direct guidance	Students became more confident	Students became more confident
2	Discussions were unbalanced in some	Rotation of pairs & closer monitoring	Discussions were more balanced	Rotation of pairs & closer monitoring	Discussions were more balanced	Discussions were more balanced
3	Students were slow to understand the text	Vocabulary cards and story pictures were reused	Students' understanding improved, discussions ran more smoothly	Vocabulary cards and story pictures were reused	Students' understanding improved, discussions ran more smoothly	Students' understanding improved, discussions ran more smoothly

Based on the table above, the solutions provided proved to be effective. Students became more confident and active in discussions. Discussions ran more evenly, and the obstacles that had previously arisen were successfully minimized. Thus, despite several obstacles, the researcher was able to overcome them with the right approach, so that the implementation of cycle II continued to run optimally and produced real changes in the students' learning process.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of the classroom action research conducted in class II-A of Galih Agung Private Junior High School, Darularafah Raya Islamic Boarding School, it can be concluded that the Cooperative Script method contributes very positively to improving students' understanding of Mutāla'ah lessons, especially Al-Babgā' material. This research was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages, all of which aimed to overcome students' low understanding of Arabic text content.

In the initial stage, students had difficulty understanding the content of the reading, showed passive attitudes, and were unable to explain the meaning of the text independently. However, after the Cooperative Script method was applied, students began to show changes in their learning behavior. Learning, which was previously teacher-centered, became more interactive and student-centered. They were involved in paired discussions, conveyed their understanding,

listened to their partners, and constructed meaning together. This process encouraged students to think actively, correct each other, and learn from their peers.

The application of this method also had a positive impact on the classroom atmosphere. Learning became more lively and dynamic. Students who were initially reluctant to speak began to dare to express their opinions. Students' social skills, such as cooperation, responsibility, empathy, and caring, increased significantly. The classroom atmosphere changed into a fun and collaborative learning space.

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