

**Implementing Reciprocal Teaching Strategy to Improve Students' Reading
Comprehension of Narrative Text at Grade XI Science One
of SMA Handayani Pekanbaru**

Ardiya

Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau
e-mail: ardiya@umri.ac.id

Abstract

The purposes of this research are to find out whether *Reciprocal* teaching strategy can improve students' comprehension of narrative text and to find out what factors that influence the improvement of students' reading comprehension of *narrative* text by implementing *Reciprocal* teaching strategy. The research was a classroom action research which was conducted in two cycles consisting of eight meetings. The research was done from March 17th to April 11th, 2012. There were thirty eight students of Grade XI Science One of SMA Handayani Pekanbaru, and one collaborator treated as participants of this research. The data of the research were taken from reading tests, observation, field notes and interviews. The data were analyzed by quantitative and qualitative technique. The study revealed that the implementing of four steps of *Reciprocal* teaching (predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarizing) can help the students in comprehending the *narrative* text. Students' score increased after they applied four ways and they were able to master all indicators of reading comprehension of *narrative* text consisting of theme, orientation, complication, and resolution as well as draw conclusion. The factors that influenced the change of students' reading comprehension of narrative text were the participation of students, classroom setting and reading materials used in the process of this research. The researcher concludes that *Reciprocal* teaching can better improve students' reading comprehension of *narrative* text at the Grade XI Science one of SMA Handayani Pekanbaru.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, Reciprocal teaching strategy, Narrative text

**Penerapan Strategi *Reciprocal Teaching* untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Membaca
Teks Naratif Siswa Kelas XI IPA 1 SMA Handayani Pekanbaru**

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah strategi pengajaran *Reciprocal* dapat meningkatkan kemampuan memahami teks *narrative* dan untuk menentukan faktor- faktor yang mempengaruhi peningkatan siswa dalam memahami bacaan teks-teks *narrative* dengan menggunakan strategi pengajaran *Reciprocal*. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas yang dilakukan dalam dua siklus dan enam pertemuan. Penelitian dilakukan dari tanggal 17 Maret sampai 11 April 2012. Ada tiga puluh delapan siswa Kelas XI IPA 1 SMA Handayani Pekanbaru dan seorang kolaborator sebagai peserta penelitian ini. Data penelitian diambil dari tes membaca, lembar pengamatan, catatan lapangan, dan wawancara. Data dianalisa dengan

teknik kuantitatif dan teknik kualitatif. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa penerapan pengajaran *Reciprocal* dapat meningkatkan nilai siswa dalam membaca teks *narrative*. Nilai dasar teks *narrative* membaca adalah 71,8. Pada akhir siklus 1 skor menjadi 73,7 dan pada siklus 2 menjadi 77,6. Penggunaan empat langkah *Reciprocal* (memprediksi, mempertanyakan, mengklarifikasi dan meringkas) dapat membantu siswa dalam memahami teks *narrative*. Skor siswa meningkat setelah mereka menggunakan empat langkah tersebut dan mereka dapat memahami semua indikator membaca teks *narrative* yang terdiri dari tema, orientasi, komplikasi, resolusi dan kesimpulan. Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi perubahan pemahaman membaca teks *narrative* adalah partisipasi siswa, pengaturan ruang kelas dan bahan bacaan yang digunakan dalam proses penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa strategi pengajaran *Reciprocal* dapat meningkatkan pemahaman siswa dalam membaca teks *narrative* pada kelas XIIPA1, SMA Handayani Pekanbaru.

Kata Kunci: Membaca Pemahaman, Strategi *Reciprocal Teaching*, Teks Naratif

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading as an English skill taught in schools, is definitely one of the most important skills for many ESL/EFL learners. In the EFL setting, reading is a medium to understand information written in English. It also helps readers understand sentences and the structure of writing. Through reading, readers are required to be able to comprehend ideas, follow arguments, and detect implications.

Considering the significance of reading, some educational researchers argued that there is a strong correlation between reading and academic success. Guthrie (1996:165-190) found that students who had high self-efficacy for the strategies of summarizing, outlining, and taking notes were likely to set higher academic goals than students with lower self-efficacy for these strategies.

In Indonesian national curriculum, called School Based Curriculum 2006, the government has put forward appropriate portion of reading in teaching and learning process. In the national curriculum of English, reading is an integrated skill taught using genre based approach. This approach

requires students to understand reading material based on its text types.

SMA Handayani is a private senior high school in Pekanbaru applying national curriculum 2006. The school employs genre based approach to teach English skills. Students of grade eleven (science one), where the researcher conducted this research, study English twice a week. They have studied English, with genre based approach, since they were in junior high school. In fact, their performance, especially in comprehending narrative texts, as shown in the score, was low. The failure was mainly caused by students' unwillingness to participate actively in reading activities, such as accomplishing classroom reading tasks. The failure was also caused by lack of vocabularies. To those students, reading became a frustrated job when they did not understand what they were reading and as a result, they became less-motivated. The phenomena were strongly influenced by teaching method and or technique applied in the class.

The above facts need some kind of reflection and evaluation of teaching method used. They are not only a failure, but they are also crucial problems to cope. As the teacher who teaches English in the school, the researcher needs to find solution to answer them. The failure of instructional task and reading assignment, as the strategy used in teaching reading, should be evaluated. The ultimate challenge for the teacher is to know exactly which method is useful and most beneficial to teach, since each student needs different strategies. The proven method in teaching reading comprehension, like reciprocal teaching, is a choice to solve the problems, so then it can improve students' reading comprehension. Specifically, reciprocal teaching strategy is very effective to motivate the students to participate actively in the process of teaching reading comprehension, because in this strategy students are really stimulated to express their opinion or ideas through the dialogue among the students in small group. The dialogue is specifically designed to improve students' confidence in using English.

Reciprocal teaching is an instructional strategy based on modeling and guided practice, in which the teacher first models a set of reading comprehension strategies and then gradually give responsibility for these strategies to the students (Brown & Palincsar, 1989:393-451; Palincsar, 1986:118-124; Palincsar & Brown, 1984:771-777). Specifically, reciprocal teaching aims to construct three main components, (a) the teaching and learning of specific reading comprehension strategies, (b) the dialogue between an instructor and students in which the instructor models why, when, and where to use these reading comprehension strategies, and (c) the appropriateness of the role of the instructor by the students, that is, students begin to model the reading comprehension strategies for other students.

Reciprocal teaching is characterized as a dialogue that takes place between the

teacher and students (or student leader and members of the group). It involves four techniques in improving reading comprehension: (1) predicting (2) generating questions, (3) clarifying, and (4) summarizing. It has been heralded as an effective method in helping students improve their reading ability. The techniques describe the process of reading as an interactive one, in which readers interact with the texts as their prior experience. Omari and Weshah (2010: 26-27) concluded that reciprocal teaching is based on the dialogues and discussions between the learners themselves or the learners and the teacher.

The advantages of using reciprocal teaching are: (i) students' participation are increasing in reading class, (ii) students are more active in learning process, (iii) they enjoy working together, and (iv) they learn to take responsibility for their own and each other's learning. This strategy also allows students to develop their skills with various styles. Tomlinson (2001: 23) stated that in reciprocal teaching students work in an atmosphere of respect and appreciation for their peers and their differences when teachers differentiate the instruction.

To examine the benefit of reciprocal teaching in teaching reading, this research is designed to apply the strategy in classroom setting. The narrative text was chosen in this research. The text was chosen for the sake of its suitability with the curriculum. This research especially designed: (1) to find out whether reciprocal teaching strategy improve student's comprehension of narrative text at the grade XI Science one of SMA Handayani Pekanbaru and (2) to find out what factors influence the improvement of students' reading comprehension of narrative text by using reciprocal teaching strategy.

2. METHOD

The research method used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Mills (2000:6) defines classroom action

research as a systematic study, conducted by teachers, researchers, principals, and school counselors, to gather specific information about schools' program, particularly on how teachers' teach and how their students' learn in the classroom. It aims at gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effective positive changes in the educational practices in general and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved.

Further, Burns (2010: 2) states that "classroom action research is related to the ideas of 'reflective practice' and 'the teacher as researcher'. It involves taking a self-reflective, critical, and systematic approach to exploring teacher's own teaching context."

In conducting this study, the researcher collaborated with an English teacher as a team work. There were two reasons for doing collaborative research. The first was to find out a clear description about the students' reading skill using reciprocal teaching at Grade XI Science One of Handayani High School Pekanbaru. The second one was, because the researcher wanted to involve Handayani High School teachers in the research process since the beginning until the end of the actions, so that the researcher and the English teacher shared experiences and ideas one another and worked together to solve the problems.

The participants of this study were the second year students, Grade XI Science One of SMA Handayani Pekanbaru in 2011/2012 academic year, there were thirty eight students and one collaborator, who helped the researcher in teaching and learning process.

In this research, the key instrument of this action research was the researcher herself. The researcher got involved in every step of the cycles planned in collecting data. The researcher, together with the collaborator observed students' activities in conducting reciprocal teaching strategy. Other instruments were test, observation, filed note and interview.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research is about to meet reading indicators addressed in the lesson plan, so then the researcher designed the lesson plan of teaching reading by using reciprocal teaching activities for three meetings. Generally, the lesson plan of this cycle contains five kinds of activities that had different aims.

1. The Process and the Result of Reading Comprehension of Narrative Texts through Reciprocal Teaching

a. Cycle 1

The first meeting of cycle 1 was on March 19, 2012. Here the researcher gave students a narrative text "Damon and Phintias". They, firstly, were asked to run the strategy of reciprocal teaching strategy. As the time allocation was about 90 minutes for meeting, the first 10 minutes of the meeting was used for opening, brainstorming and checking students' attendance. The first 10 minutes was also used to ask students to sit in their group. At the end of class, 10 minutes before the class dismissed, the researcher checked their progress in accomplishing the assignment given. So, the total of time allocation for students in first meeting was 70 minutes.

The second meeting was done on March 21, 2012. It was begun by some activities in opening, modeling and guideline session. Here, the researcher guided students to effectively participate in their group, so then the reciprocal teaching strategy supported them in better understanding narrative texts. After that, the students were grouped to analyze "A Story of friendship". They were asked to use the four steps in the strategy to answer indicators of narrative text. Firstly, they did prediction and generated questions to identify orientation of the story in term of inferences use in the narrative texts. Secondly, they did prediction and generated questions to identify complication of the story by locating the specific details in the narrative texts. Thirdly, they clarified

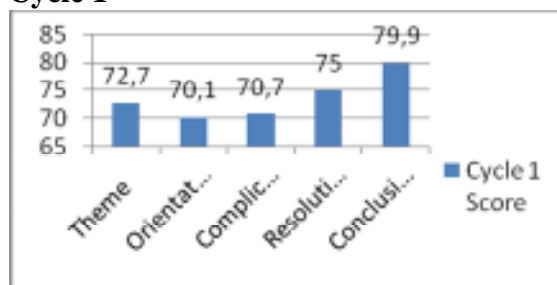
unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult concept to identify resolution of the story in the narrative texts. Fourthly, they tried to find unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult concept and did summarizing to identify the theme of the story in the narrative texts, and to draw conclusions and moral values implied in the narrative texts.

The third meeting was done on March 26, 2012. It was begun by some activities in opening, modeling and guideline session. Here, the researcher guided students to effectively participate in their group, so then the reciprocal teaching strategy supported them in better understanding narrative texts. After that, the students were grouped to analyze "A Miracle". They were asked to use the four steps in the strategy to answer indicators of narrative text.

During the activities, the collaborator observed researcher's and students' activities. She ticked the observation checklist as already given before. She also wrote field notes to record students' performance in the class.

Since the action and observation in the cycle 1 were already done, the researcher conducted a test to evaluate students' performance in understanding narrative texts by using reciprocal teaching strategy. The test was conducted on March 28, 2012. The test was followed by 38 students. The result of the test can be seen in the following chart.

Graph 1. The Mean Scores of Students' Reading Comprehension per Indicator in Cycle 1

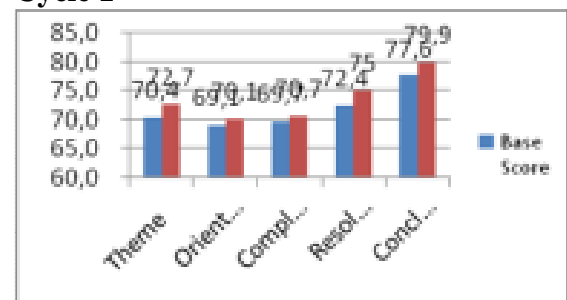


Graph 1 shows the mean scores of students' reading comprehension of narrative texts per indicator in cycle 1. The

students' mean scores in identifying theme was 72.7. The students' mean scores in identifying orientation was 70.1. The students' mean scores in identifying complication was 70.7. The students' mean scores in identifying resolution was 75. The students' mean scores in drawing conclusion was 79.9

In the reflection, the collaborator also suggested that the researcher should remind the group leaders to give equal chance to every member to share their ideas. By doing so, every student took benefits of using the strategy. To know the improvement of students' reading comprehension on narrative text, the researcher compared the mean score of each indicator in cycle 1 with the mean score of each indicator in based score.

Graph 2. The Improvement of Students' Reading Comprehension per Indicator in Cycle 1



Graph 2 shows the improvement of students' reading comprehension on narrative text per indicator in cycle 1. It can be inferred from the graph that students' mean score in identifying theme improved as much as 2.3. The students' mean score in identifying orientation improved 1. The students' mean score in identifying complication improved as much as 1. The students' mean score in identifying resolution improved 2.6. The students' mean score in drawing conclusion improved 2.3. It can be concluded that there were two indicators of narrative text that still needed to have improvement, namely orientation and complication. As the result, the researcher and collaborator concluded that activities in cycle 1 needed improvement.

b. Cycle 2

In the beginning of this cycle, the researcher re-planned some actions. The actions were intended to solve the weaknesses in the previous cycle, that is difficulties in addressing questions and clarifying expression. To improve these, the researcher did the following strategies in cycle 2:

The next steps of this cycle were action and observation. The researcher acted the designed plan and asked the same collaborator, Dra. Desmayerni, who observed the process of researcher's actions.

In the previous cycle, some students were still weak to have good comprehension on orientation (70.1) and complication (70.7). It is therefore in the first meeting of second cycle held on April 2, 2012 the researcher reviewed the four steps of the strategy for 15 minutes. The researcher modeled the way how to predict the text, generate some questions, clarify difficult expressions, and summarize to improve students' understanding toward the narrative texts.

Similar to the previous cycle, here, students used their prior knowledge to identify orientation in the "The Lady in Red". To do so, they tried to recognize elements of orientation containing sets of the scene (place where and time when an action takes place) and participants involved the story. Group leader guided these activities as he/she modeled on how to identify orientation and every student in each group wrote name of place, time when the action happened, and name of participants addressed in the story. After that, led by the group leader, they discussed the story by addressing questions to identify complication of story. Students should clarify unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult concept to identify resolution of the story in the narrative text. Then, they clarified unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult concept and did summarizing to identify theme of the story in the narrative texts, and to draw

conclusions and moral values implied in the narrative texts.

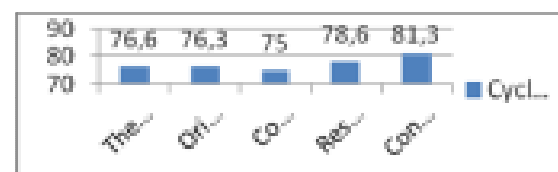
The second meeting was done on April 4, 2012. It was begun by some activities in opening, modeling and guideline session. Here, the researcher guided students to effectively participate in their group, so then the reciprocal teaching strategy supported them in better understanding narrative texts. After that, the students were grouped to analyze "Sleeping Beauty". They were asked to use the four steps in the strategy to answer indicators of narrative text.

The third meeting was done on April 9, 2012. In the beginning of the meeting was covered by some activities like brainstorming, checking attendance list, and encouraging students to actively participate in the day activities. After that, the students were grouped to analyze "King Midas and the Golden Touch". They were asked to use the four steps in the strategy to answer indicators of narrative text.

During the activities, the collaborator observed researcher's and students' activities. She ticked the observation checklist as already given before. She also took field notes to record students' performance in the class.

Since the action was scheduled for three meetings, the researcher conducted test to evaluate students' performance in understanding narrative texts by using Reciprocal Teaching Strategy. The test was conducted on April 11, 2012. The test was followed by 38 students. The result of the test can be seen in the following chart.

Graph 3. The Mean Scores of Students' Reading Comprehension per Indicator in Cycle 2



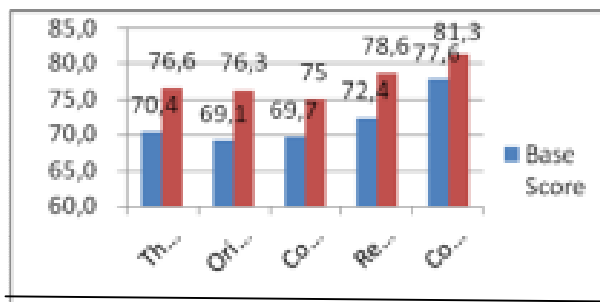
Graph 3 shows the mean scores of students' reading comprehension of narrative texts per indicator in cycle 2. The

students' mean scores in identifying theme was 76.6. While, the students' mean scores in identifying orientation was 76.3. The students' mean scores in identifying complication was 75.0. The students' mean scores in identifying resolution was 78.6. The students' mean scores in drawing conclusion was 81.3.

After doing action and observation, the researcher did reflection. In reflection, the researcher discussed the results of all instruments with collaborator.

To know the improvement of students' reading comprehension on narrative text by using reciprocal teaching strategy, the researcher compared the mean score of each indicator in the cycle 2 with mean score of each indicator in base score. The result could be seen in the graph below.

Graph 4. The Improvement of Students' Reading Comprehension per Indicator in the Base Score and Cycle 2)

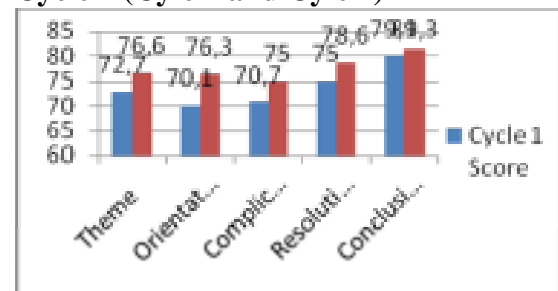


Graph 4 shows the improvement of students' reading comprehension on narrative text per indicator in cycle 2. It can be inferred from the graph that students' mean score in identifying theme improved as much as 6.2. While, the students' mean score in identifying orientation improved 7.2. The students' mean score in identifying complication improved as much as 5.3. The students' mean score in identifying resolution improved 6.2. The students mean score in drawing conclusion improved 3.7. It can be concluded that five indicators of narrative text had improved by using reciprocal teaching strategy.

Next, the researcher discussed the result of students' comprehension on narrative text

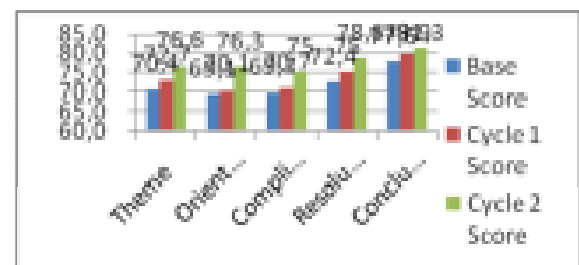
test. To know the improvement of students reading comprehension on narrative text, the researcher compared the mean score of each indicator in cycle 2 with the mean score of each indicator in cycle 1.

Graph 5. The Improvement of Students' Reading Comprehension per Indicator in Cycle 2 (Cycle 1 and Cycle 2)



Graph 5 shows the improvement of students' reading comprehension on narrative text per indicator in cycle 2. It can be inferred from the graph that students' mean score in identifying theme improved as much as 3.9. The students' mean score in identifying orientation improved 6.2. While, the students' mean score in identifying complication improved as much as 4.3. The students' mean score in identifying resolution improved 3.6. The students mean score in drawing conclusion improved 1.4. The researcher and collaborator concluded that five indicators of narrative text had improved by using reciprocal teaching strategy.

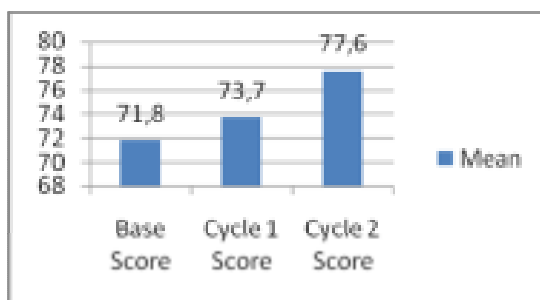
Graph 6. The Improvement of Students' Reading Comprehension per Indicator in Cycle 2 (Base Score, Cycle 1 and Cycle 2)



To know the improvement of students' reading comprehension on narrative text by using reciprocal teaching strategy, the

researcher also compared the mean of students' reading comprehension in cycle 2 with mean of students' reading comprehension in cycle 1. Then, the researcher compared the mean of students' reading comprehension in cycle 1 with mean of students' reading comprehension in base score. The result could be seen in the graph below.

Graph 7. The Improvement of Students' Reading Comprehension Mean in Cycle 2 (Base Score, Cycle 1 and Cycle 2)



Graph 7 shows the improvement of students' reading comprehension on narrative text. It can be inferred from the graph that students' mean score was improved (the base score: 71.8), (cycle 1 score: 73.7), and (the cycle 2 score: 77.8). The base score to cycle 1 score improved as much as 1.9 and the cycle 1 score to the cycle 2 score improved as much as 4.1.

2. The Factors that Influence the Changes of Students' Reading Comprehension of Narrative Texts by Using Reciprocal Teaching

To identify the factors that influenced students' improvement on narrative texts by using reciprocal teaching strategy at the grade XI Science One of SMA Handayani Pekanbaru, the researcher analyzed the qualitative data collected from observation sheets, field notes, and interview. Then, the researcher drew some conclusions based on the researcher's experience during the application of reciprocal teaching strategy. Here are some factors that influenced the

improvement the students' reading comprehension of narrative texts:

a. Participative students

Based on the result of field notes, the researcher found that students enjoyed activities in every meeting. They actively participated in predicting, generating questions, clarifying and summarizing done together in their group. These are the examples of the field notes:

"The students summarized the narrative text by discussing in group. The students report the text and the others participated in asking the questions".

Based on the data of interview, it inferred that most of the students agreed that their reading comprehension of narrative texts improved because they practiced the reading strategies that they have learned intensively.

TEACHER:

"Is there significant improvement in comprehending narrative text by using Reciprocal Teaching strategy? If yes, what are factors that improve your comprehension?"

STUDENTS 7:

"Yes sure. The activities make me learn more about narrative text so well, I am easier to answer about questions."

b. Classroom setting

From field notes, the researcher found that the setting of students' group was another factor in the improvement of reading comprehension of narrative texts: *The students practiced the questioning strategies among their friends in the group.*

1. *Classroom setting is very helpful to improve students' participation.*
2. *The students clarified unfamiliar vocabularies and difficult concepts by sharing to each other in the group.*

In this setting, some students, categorized as fast learners (smart students), were divided into some groups of students who categorized as average and slow learners. The fast learners were chosen as the group leaders. This setting is very

suitable to the reciprocal teaching strategy because in the group the students have more time to express their own opinion. The fast learners also functioned significantly to guide or to motivate the slow learners in delivering opinions based on the narrative text. The classroom setting such as “group setting” is classified as desk cluster. Desk clusters were often seen when students were doing a lot of group work. The desks were arranged in small groups, quite often four facing one another.

c. Reading Materials

Based on the interview, it is found that students enjoy the narrative text especially the popular reading materials. The use of popular reading materials such as “Let Me Love You”, “The Faithful Lovers” and “Romeo and Juliet” make students more interested in reading the text. As the teenagers, the students enjoyed the reading material related to their experience. Below is a sample of interview:

TEACHER :

“Do you like love story?”

STUDENT 16 :

“I enjoy reading love story.”

TEACHER :

“Do you like love story?”

STUDENT 17 :

“Yes. Love story is very interesting.”

4. CONCLUSION

Based on findings of this research, it can be concluded that reciprocal teaching can better improve students’ reading comprehension of narrative texts at the grade XI Science One of SMA Handayani Pekanbaru.

1. Reciprocal teaching strategies can improve students’ reading comprehension of narrative text. The use of four steps (predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarizing) help the students in comprehending the narrative text. The improvement can be seen in the increase of mean score of students’ reading comprehension of narrative text from the base score, test1 and test..

Students’ scores increase after they apply four steps and they are able to know every indicators of reading comprehension of narrative text such as theme, orientation, complication, resolution and draw conclusion.

2. Some factors that influence the change of students’ reading comprehension of narrative texts are also concluded.
 - a. Participation of students
The students’ participation during the learning process improve their reading skill.
 - b. Classroom setting
Classroom setting is very helpful to motivate the students in sharing ideas among members of the group.
 - c. Reading materials
The popular reading materials are interested to the students so that they enjoyed in reading the text.

SUGGESTION

The researcher proposes some suggestions related to the results of this research as follows:

1. It is suggested to English teachers who have the same problem to apply reciprocal teaching for improving or developing students’ reading comprehension by giving students more opportunities in sharing their ideas.
2. It is suggested for English teachers, other researchers as well, to investigate the use of reciprocal teaching in improving reading comprehension at different level and different skill of English teaching.

REFERENCES

- Brown, A. L., &Palincsar, A. S. (1989).“Guided, Cooperative Learning and Individual Knowledge Acquisition”. In L. B.Resnick (Ed.), *Knowing, Learning, and Instruction:Essays in Honor of Robert Glaser* (pp. 393–451). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum
- Burns, A. (2010). *Doing Action Research in English Language Teaching: A*

- Guide for Practitioners*. New York: Routledge
- Guthrie, J.T., McGough, K., Bennett, L., & Rice, M.E. (1996). "Concept-oriented reading instruction to develop motivational and cognitive aspects of reading". In L. Baker, P. Afflerbach, & D. Reinking (Ed.), *Developing engaged readers in school and home communities* (pp. 165–190). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Mills, G. (2000). *Action Research: A Guide for the Teacher Researcher*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice-Hall.
- Omari and Weshah (2010). *Using the Reciprocal Teaching Method by Teachers at Jordanian Schools*. *European Journal of Social Sciences* – Volume 15, Number 1 (2010), p. 26-39.
- Palincsar, A & Brown, A (1984). "Reciprocal Teaching of Comprehension-Fostering and Comprehension-Monitoring Activities". *Cognition and Instruction*, 1(2), 117-175.
- Palincsar, A.S. (1986). Metacognitive Strategy Instruction. *Exceptional Children*, 53 118-124.
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.