# IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH METACOGNITION METHOD

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## ABSTRACT

The study aims at improving students' achievement in reading comprehension applying Metacognition Method by conducting classroom action research. The population of this research twelfth grade students of SMP Negeri 41 Medan. The number of the students was 33 students. There were two kinds of data collected during the study, qualitative and quantitative data. The instrument for collecting the quantitative data was objective test of reading comprehension, while the instruments for qualitative data were gathered through interview, diary notes, and observation sheet. The qualitative showed that the students were interested in Metacognition Method. Based on the data analysis, the mean of the students score for orientation test was 52, 12 and for test in cycle I was 63, 63 and for test in cycle II was 76, 51. The conclusion is that Metacognition Method can improve the students' achievement in reading comprehension.

**Keywords :** *Reading, Comprehension, Metacognition Method*

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# INTRODUCTION

## Background of the Study

In studying English, every student should well master the four language skills. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is one of the four language skills, which are important for all students at all levels. Urquhart and Weir (1998: 22) say that reading is the process of receiving and interpreting information encoded in language from via the medium of print. In reading, the students are expected to be familiar with what the teacher has explained based on the context, where in reading comprehension the students are expected to get the main ideas and the detail information from the text well. But, most of the students still find reading comprehension difficult even though they have done it for many years. They do not know how to comprehend a text and get some information from the text. Therefore, reading comprehension is in fact not as easy as some people think.

At teaching practice, based on the writer's experience in the school most of the students did not have any ideas or opinions to clarify the information from their reading or from the text. The other facts, when the teacher asked them to answer the questions based on the text, they could not answer or even they just cut the sentences from the text which the words exist such in the question. It showed that they were not interested in learning reading comprehension and the process of teaching reading did not run well. That is happened because the strategy or methodology which is used was not suitable.

Any some alternative method can be used in teaching reading comprehension; one of example is Metacognition method. In general, Metacognition method is thinking about thinking. More specifically, Taylor (1999) defines Metacognition as "an appreciation of what one already knows, together with a correct apprehension of the learning task and what knowledge and skills it requires, combined with the agility to make correct inferences about how to apply one's strategic knowledge to a particular situation, and to do so efficiently and reliably."

Metacognition literally means "big thinking." Where, we are thinking about thinking. During this process we are examining our brain's processing. Teachers work to guide students to become more strategic thinkers by helping them understand the way

they are processing information. Questioning, visualizing, and synthesizing information are all ways that readers can examine their thinking process. Through their knowledge and reciprocal teaching, students are able to practice the skills that lead to these overt acts becoming automatic. So, in this process the students must use their knowledge.

## Research Question

Based on the background, the problem of the study is stated as the following:

"Does Metacognition Method improve the students' achievement in reading comprehension?"

### The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is to investigate whether or not the application of Metacognition Method is effective to improve students' achievement in reading comprehension particularly in reading skill.

### The Objective of The Study

The Objective of the study is to find out whether Metacognition Method is able to improve the students' achievement in reading comprehension.

### The Significance of The Study

It is hoped that the result of the study was be significant to motivate the students to improve their reading comprehension in order to understand the English Well. Besides this study can also give some input for teachers of English to improve their teaching strategy. Then for those who are interested in conducting further study related to this research, the result of the analysis was be useful.

## Conceptual Framework

### Reading

Grabe and Stoller (2002:4) say that reading is a way to draw information from the text and to form an interpretation of that information. The process of drawing information and interpreting information requires the work of the brain actively. In

addition, Burns (1984:10) says that reading is a thinking process. The act of recognizing words requires interpretation of graphics symbols. In order to comprehend a reading text, a student must be able to use the information, to make inferences and to read critically and creatively to understand figurative language, to determine the author's purpose, to evaluate the ideas presented, and to apply the ideas to actual situation.

*Reading Comprehension*

Reading with Comprehension means understanding what has been read. It is an active, thinking process that depends not only on comprehension skills but also on the student's experiences and prior knowledge. Comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary seeing the relationships among words and concepts, organizing ideas, recognizing the author's purpose, making judgments, and evaluating. Wong (2004:252) says that reading comprehension is a necessary skill throughout schooling and a vital component of the successful to adult responsibilities. It is the complex outcome of the process of constructing meaning from print. Reading comprehension can be conceptualized as an interactive process requiring the dynamic combination of a reader's background knowledge with the information decoded from text.

*Metacognition Method*

Metacognition Method is a method of teaching. Laird and Deane (1997) developed the Reading Strategy Use to assess the students' cognitive and metacognition reading method use. Several items from the scale do not appear to be reading strategies; all items were forced into predetermined factors (matacognition and cognitive) on the basis of judges' ratings, and it was said that the researchers skipped exploratory factor analysis.

*Steps/Procedures Metacognition Method*

There are three critical steps to teaching metacognition:

1. Teaching students that their ability to learn is mutable

2. Teaching planning and goal-setting
3. Giving students enough opportunities to practice monitoring their learning and adapting as necessary.

Metacognition was found to be an effective method for helping students to use their background knowledge, especially in Reading Comprehension by Lovvets (2008). In this case, any some steps to teach Metacognition Method, there are:

Step 1: Teach students that the ability to learn is not a fixed quantity

The key to a student's ability to become a self-regulated (i.e., metacognitive) learner is understand that one's ability to learn is a skill like reading that develops over time rather than a fixed trait, inherited at birth. These students set reasonable learning goals for themselves and have the self-efficacy to choose and use productive learning strategies. These strategies then result in learning gains.

Step 2: Teach students how to set goals and plan to meet them

Many students don't set explicit learning goals for themselves, or make plans to meet any goals they might have. Yet students who received as little as half an hour of training (in the form of one-to-one tutoring) on the process of self-regulated learning outperformed students who did not receive the training in several important ways. First and foremost, they learned more. In addition, they planned how they would spend their time in the learning task, spent more of their time in goal-oriented searching, and periodically reminded themselves of their current goal (Azevedo and Cromley, 2004).

Step 3: Give students opportunities to practice self-monitoring and adapting

Accurate self-monitoring is quite difficult. Many first-year college students, in particular, are over-confident. For example, first-year students in University were asked what grades they anticipated earning in their science and English courses. These expectations were clearly not realistic and suggested some problems on the horizon for these students.

So there steps in above will be applied in teaching reading text as follows;

a. *Before Reading*

1). Supporing the students to formulate their ideas

2) Reviewing the objective for reading or students' target

3) Giving the model of Descriptive Text through the purpose

4) Motivating the student to think the sentences which is appropriate used.

5) Try to increase the students that the ability to learn is not a fixed quantity

6) Supporting the students to set learning goals for themselves.

7) Suggestion the students to practice self-monitoring and adapting to get the good result in the future

b. *At the point of reading*

1) Giving chance the students read the text

2) Giving chance the students to explain their achievement from the reading text

3) Asking the students to reread their work for clarity

c. *After reading*

1) Supporting the students to check their work and give chance the students to reflect their work.

2) Reviewing about text as clarity

# METHODOLOGY

The research was being conducted by applying action research. It was being focused on classroom action research (CAR). According to Watts (1985:118) action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research. It is based on the following assumptions:

- Teachers and principals work best on problems they have identified for themselves.
- Teachers and principals become more effective when encouraged to examine and assess their own work and then consider ways of working differently.
- Teachers and principals help each other by working collaboratively.
- Working with colleagues helps teachers and principals in their professional development.

Classroom action research is applied in this study in order to see the improvement of students' especially in reading comprehension achievement in the text through the Metacognition Method.

There are 2 cycles applied as the phases of action research which is called Cycle I and Cycle II. Each cycle covers four steps namely: planning, action, observation, and reflection. If the result in Cycle I is failed, it is continued to the Cycle II to revise the previous steps to find the problem solving. The Cycle II is expected to improve the students' achievement in teaching process. If the next cycles increase students' learning achievement, the cycle is stopped and if it doesn't increase the students' learning achievement, the cycle should be continued until the main goal is reached.
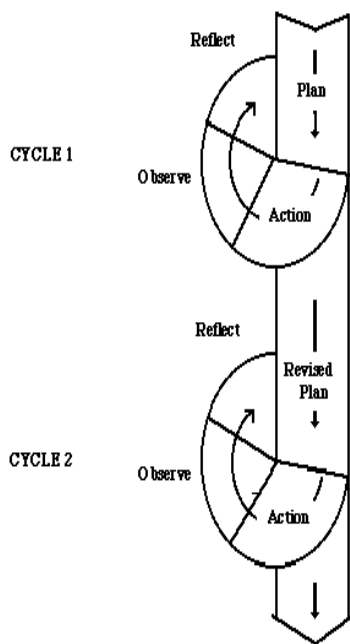
Figure 1: Simple Action Research Model

(Kemmis and Mc. Taggart, 1998)

1. Planning

In all these activities the researcher is as the teacher in the class. There are many things to prepare such as make lesson plan, find out the material, prepare the method of teaching, prepare the test, observation sheet and questioner sheet and ask the teacher as the collaborator to help the research.

2. Action

The research will be done planned before. In this phase, the writer conducting everything planned.

3. Observation

The writer will observe the situation in the teaching learning process. Record every action, comment, feeling and certain behavior of the students that appeared.

4. Reflection

Reflection is used to help in making decision what to do next or revise. In this step, the writer will reflect and improve the data.

**Subject**

The subject of this research is the second grade of SMP Negeri 41 Medan. The class taken as the subject of this research is VIII-4. The total number of this class is 33 students.

**The Procedures of Data Collection**

The procedure and the method of action research consist of two cycles. In conducting the action research, there are four steps such as planning, action, observation, and reflection. The data in this study were analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative design. The writer used written tests, diary notes, observation sheets, and interview sheets as the instruments of data collection.

# RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the research, the data were collected from quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data were analyzed from observation sheet and diary notes, while the quantitative data were taken from the scores of reading test during conducted research in six meetings. The reading test was given each meeting, but the students' reading score were only taken from the second, fourth, and sixth meeting. The orientation test was given in the second meeting without any treatment to students, while the tests after each cycle gave any treatments to the students.

The students' scores increased from the Cycle I and Cycle II. From the data which were got, it can be said that the mean of students' reading scores after applying Metacognition Method from 63, 63 to 76, 51. In orientation test the mean of the students' score were 51.12, in Cycle I the mean of the students' score 63, 63, and in Cycle II the mean of the students' score is 76, 51. Based on the data analysis, it could be concluded that all the students got improvement in their scores even though they got different improvement.

To know the development of the students' score for each cycle, the mean of the students was computed categorized the master students; the percentage of the students who get up to 75 was calculated. To obtain the scores for each cycle, the correct answer will be analyzed by using this following formula:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

Where: P = the Percentage of the Students Who Get Point 75

R = the Number of the Students Who Get Point 75

T = the Total Number of the Students

In the orientation test, there were 0 students who got points up to 75. But, the percentage of the students' reading comprehension increased when Metacognition method was applied. In the end of the first cycle, 15, 15 % of students got points up to 75, whereas in the end of the second cycle 18, 18 % of students who get points up to 75. The result above showed that from the first implementation of the Metacognition Method, students who get score increase from 15, 15 to 18, and 18. Thus, it can be concluded that Metacognition Method worked effectively in helping students to improve their reading comprehension.

The writer also analyzed the quantitative data to support this research finding. The quantitative data was taken from reading test score. The reading test was carried out in two cycles that was given to the students at the end of each cycle.

The qualitative data were taken from diary notes and observation sheet.

From the diary notes it was found that the students had difficulties in reading comprehension in the beginning of the research. They did not know how to get ideas from text; they did not have opinion to tell information from text that they read. But when Metacognition method was introduces to them, they became active and interested to read the text. They learned about how to get ideas from text and how to convey the ideas in their mind.

Based on the observation sheet, condition of the classroom is quite enough. There were not much unexpected noises from the students while teaching learning process run. The students listened and paid attention to the teacher's explanations and instruction. Some of them also delivered questions while teacher gave them chances. They gave good response the activities in the classroom, though there were three or four students who were lazy and not fully attention to the lesson. Sometimes they disturbed the other students.

The data in the observation sheet also described that the writer could manage the classroom effectively. Metacognition method gave the students a chance to enjoy their reading comprehension creatively. Then the writer also gave motivation before starting the lesson and the writer had good interaction with the students.

These all of qualitative data were supported the research findings which based on the quantitative. All of the data indicated that the students have a good attitude and good response during involved in the learning process. Based on the result of the quantitative and qualitative data, it found that the application of the Metacognition Method had successfully improved the students' achievement in reading comprehension.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

### Conclusion

In conclusion, Metacognition Method guided the students in selecting appropriate information from a reading to be analyzed and help them to get the message of the story through the text they read. The method is an effective way to help the students in activating their background knowledge while reading a story. So the students may get easier in comprehending the text they read, they also could interpret the message of the story well. Finally, it may be affected the students' interesting in following the students and to be more active during the learning process. As the result, the students' score improved each cycle and students' condition had been better than before doing the research.

After analyzing the data, the writer found that the students' score increased from the first meeting until the last meeting. It means that there is improvement in students' achievement in reading comprehension by applying Metacognition Method. It can be seen from the improvement of the students' mean score for orientation test (52, 13); cycle I (63, 63) and cycle II (76, 51). The students, score continuously improved in each test. Therefore, it can be concluded that Metacognition Method can improve students' achievement in reading comprehension.

### Suggestions

In line with the conclusion, some points are suggested for teacher, students or readers:

1) It is advisable for English teacher to improve students' achievement in reading comprehension because it helps the students to develop a deeper understanding through a creative and effective strategy.

2) It is suggested for the students to practice their reading comprehension by using Metacognition method because this method provide a fun way, so teaching learning process will not be boring and hard.

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