

# **IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT BY USING INDEX CARD MATCH STRATEGY**

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## **Abstract**

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This study deals with improving students' reading comprehension by using Index Card Match strategy. This study was conducted by using classroom action research. The subject of the research was class VII<sup>a</sup> MTs.Lab. IKIP Al- Washliyah Medan which consisted of 36 students. The research was conducted in two cycles and every cycle consists of four meetings and two meetings. The instruments for collecting data were multiple choice tests as the quantitative data and observation sheet, questionnaire sheet and diary notes as the qualitative data. Based on multiple choice test score, students' score kept improving in every test. In test I, the mean score was 63.05, in test II, the mean score was 67.63, and in test III the mean score was 72.77. The finding of the study indicated that the implementation of Index card Match strategy was successful since the criteria of success were achieved. The result of observation sheet and questionnaire sheet showed that students were active involved in the classroom. Based on the finding before, it's concluded that Index Card Match strategy could improve students' reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** Reading comprehension, ICM (Index Card Match) strategy, classroom action research.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***The Background of the Study***

Reading is one of the most important skills in language learning beside speaking, listening, and writing. Reading provides some activities to help the reader comprehend the written expression. The reader can get a lot of knowledge, information, enjoyment, or even problem solution. Reading is one way for the reader to receive information from

the writer in the form of text. Based on The Unit Level Curriculum of Education (KTSP), the students are required to master four basic skills of English, namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The emphasis of the curriculum is that the students are able to communicate both spoken and written language. However, it is not easy to master all the skills; there must be one important skill that covers the whole skills. Moreover, reading has been formed as a part of teaching English syllabus because there is a competence standard in reading where students are expected to be able to comprehend the meaning both interpersonal and transactional in the text.

Based on Competency Standard (Standar Kompetensi) and Basic Competency (Kompetensi Dasar), the first year students are expected to be able to understand and respond meaningful written texts in term of functional written text and simple short essay in the form of descriptive and recount text interact with people in the nearest environment. There are many types' texts in reading, which are closely related to the purpose of each type. Descriptive text is one of the text types that taught at the first year of Junior High School.

Descriptive text has a social function is to describe a particular person, place or thing, for instance, description of a particular place, specific animal, and specific person.

To achieve the goal of learning, and to come solve those problems teacher must have or create a good strategy to make the class effective and well organized. Therefore, in teaching descriptive text, teacher needs good strategy. Index card Match is one of active learning strategy, active learning engages students with content in ways that develop competencies and build skills rather than simply transfer knowledge. Silberman (2006:250) states that Pass out index cards and request anonymous answers to your

questions. Use response cards to save time or to provide anonymity for personally threatening self-disclosures. The need to state you concisely on a card is another advantage of this strategy.

Based on the explanation above, it is essential to use a suitable and effective strategy to help students solve their problem. This study is design and conduct to prove whether Index Card Match strategy improves students' reading comprehension in descriptive text.

### ***The Problem of the Study***

“Does the application of Index Card Match strategy significantly improve the students' reading comprehension achievement in descriptive text?”

### ***The Scope of the Study***

The scope of this study is focused on descriptive text in improving students' reading comprehension achievement by using Index Card Match (ICM) strategy and levels of comprehension, in this study there will be limited and focused on literal comprehension and interpretative comprehension.

### ***The Objective of the Study***

The objective of the study is to investigate the application of Index Card Match strategy to the students' reading comprehension in descriptive text.

### ***The Significance of the Study***

Finding of the research are expected to contribute both the theories and practices for:

#### **Theoretically**

- a. The researcher as reference to conduct the research related to ICM Strategy.

- b. The other researcher who want to conduct the same research in applying Index Card Match strategy in teaching reading descriptive text or other skills.

### **Practically**

- a. The English teachers as the source of learning improve the students' reading comprehension descriptive text.
- b. The students, it helps their interest in reading comprehension in descriptive text.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Reading**

Reading is a foreign language consists of grasping in that language through its written representation. Reading is not just saying the word; reading must always be a meaning getting process. Reading is an important activity in life with which one can update his/ her knowledge and most useful and important skill for people. This skill is more important than speaking and writing, because reading is a source of joys. Many children can read the words in passage perfectly, but are unable to answer questions that call for making inferences of for identifying the main idea.

Reading is not only a source of information and a pleasurable activity but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language. Reading is certainly an important activity for expanding knowledge of a language. Reading habits not only help the student to get knowledge and wisdom from the cultural of heritage, but are also very helpful in passing for leisure period.

Generally, people read something because they want to or because they have a desire to do so and a purpose to achieve.

Grabe and Stoller (2002:9) state that reading as the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately. This definition is almost

like what Patel and Jain (2008:113) states that reading means to understand the meaning of printed words i.e. written symbols.

### **Index Card Match Strategy**

Good teaching includes teaching students how to learn, how to remember, how to think, and how to motivate themselves. The reasons why students need to learn strategic practices for learning is they contend that for learning to occur, students must be able to remember newly acquired information so that they can retrieve the information and use it whenever necessary. Index Card Match (Silberman 2006:250) Pass out index cards and request anonymous answers to your questions. Use response cards to save time or to provide anonymity for personally threatening self-disclosures. The need to state you concisely on a card is another advantage of this strategy.

This strategy is one of active learning instructional techniques to review material that has been learned is “*How to Make Training Unforgettable*” This section contains ways to conclude a training program so that the participant reflects on what he or she has learned and considers how it will be applied in the future. The focus is not on what you have told the participants, but what they take away. In addition to being active, these strategies all make reviewing fun.

### **The Steps of Index Card Match (ICM) Strategy**

This is an active, enjoyable way to review course material. It allows participants to pair up and quiz the rest of the group.

1. On separate index cards, write down questions about anything taught in the class. Create enough question cards to equal one-half the number of students.
2. On separate cards, write answers to each of these questions.

3. Mix the two sets of cards and shuffle them several times so that they are well mixed.
4. Hand out one card to each student. Explain that this is a matching exercise. Some students have review questions and others have the answers.
5. Have students find their matching cards. When a match is formed, asked the matching student to find seats together. (Tell them not to reveal to other students what is contained on their cards.)
6. When all the matching pairs have seated, have each pair quiz the rest of the class by reading aloud their question and challenging classmates to tell them the answer.

## **THE METHOD OF RESEARCH**

### **Research Design**

The research was conducted by applying action research. Action research is an observation of an activity that appears in a class. As Tomal (2003:5) states that action research is a systematic process of solving educational process and making improvement.

The research analyzed data from two kinds of data. They were quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were taken from students' score in reading comprehension evaluation, while qualitative data were taken from observation sheet, questionnaire sheet, and diary notes which had gathered within two cycles. Every cycle consisted of four steps of action research (planning, action, observation and reflection). The first cycle was conducted in four meetings. The second cycle was conducted in two meetings, so there was six meetings altogether. The data were taken from one class. The class was class VII<sup>a</sup> which consisted of 37 students. But, two of them was absent during

the research. So the writer only took 36 students who came from the first meeting until the last meeting.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The result of the research implementation is described in the following cycles.

**The First Cycle:** First cycle was in four meetings.

### **Planning**

There are the activities that were done in planning, they were: Making lesson plans which covers the step of the action, Preparing the teaching material of descriptive text, and Preparing the instrument for collecting data: observation sheets and questionnaire sheets.

### **Action**

Action means the process of activity that was done. Action was the implementation of planning. In this step, students were taught how to comprehend the descriptive text by applying Index Card Match strategy. After the teacher show the picture to the students, teacher asks the students to describe and mention the characteristics of the pictures, then gives out one card to each student and explain that is a matching activity, teacher direct students to find their matching cards. When a match is formed, ask each pair of participants to find seats together, and then when all the matching pairs have been seated, teacher asks students to discuss about their matching card. All of the students present it in front of the class was asked to make conclusion.

### **Observation**

In this research, the observation focused on: The situation of teaching-learning process, Students' activities, Students' ability in comprehending the text and their discussion and the interaction between students and teacher.

### **Reflection**

Based on the result of evaluations in the first cycle, it was decided to conduct the second cycle. It would be repeating the steps in the first cycle, but with more improvement according to students' problem observed in the previous cycle.

**The Second Cycle :** Second cycle was in two meetings.

### **Planning**

There are the activities that were done in planning, they were: Making lesson plans which covers the step of the action, Preparing the teaching material of descriptive text, and Preparing the instrument for collecting data: observation sheets and questionnaire sheets.

### **Action**

Action means the process of activity that was done. Action was the implementation of planning. In this step, students were taught how to comprehend the descriptive text by applying Index Card Match strategy. After the teacher show the picture to the students, teacher asks the students to describe and mention the characteristics of the pictures, then gives out one card to each student and explain that is a matching activity, teacher direct students to find their matching cards. When a match is formed, ask each pair of participants to find seats together, and then when all the matching pairs have been seated, teacher asks students to discuss about their matching card. All of the students present it in front of the class was asked to make conclusion.

### **Observation**

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### **Reflection**

Improvement of students score was showed. Based on the observation and result of the evaluation tests, it could be concluded that the students could read and comprehend better through the Index Card Match strategy. The score from the second cycle showed a great improvement from the first cycle. The mean score of students reading can be seen in the following table:

#### **The Improvement of Mean score of Students' Reading**

Meeting	Meeting	Total Score	Mean
Evaluation I (Cycle I)	II	2270	63.05
Evaluation II (Cycle I)	IV	2435	67.63
Evaluation III (Cycle II)	VI	2620	72.77

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

#### **Conclusion**

After analyzing the data, it was found out that the average scores of students in every test kept improving. It means there is a significant improvement on students' reading comprehension in reading descriptive text by using Index Card Match strategy. It can be seen from the improvement of mean of students' score namely the mean of in the evaluation I (63.05) increased to the mean evaluation II (67.63) increased to evaluation III (72.77). The score continuously improved from the first evaluation to third evaluation. Observation sheet and Questionnaire sheet which indicate improvement in teaching learning process by using Index Card Match strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension in descriptive text in MTs Lab IKIP AL-Wasliyah Medan.

#### **Suggestion**

Since the result of this study showed that the application of Index Card Match strategy has significant affect on the students' reading comprehension in descriptive

text, is suggested that English teachers are suggested to use Index Card Match strategy as affective strategy to stimulate the students learning reading descriptive text. It is suggested that this study can be as reference to the other researchers, who have the same problem and interested in conducting research by using Index Card Match strategy in teaching reading descriptive text or other skills.

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