# IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF RECOUNT TEXT THROUGH TWO STAY TWO STRAY (TSTS) TECHNIQUE
# AT GRADE VIII 1 OF SMP N 2 TILATANG KAMANG AGAM

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**Abstrak:** *Latar belakang penelitian adalah rendahnya kemampuan pemahaman membaca teks recount siswa dengan menggunakan teknik mengajar yang selama ini dipakai. Untuk itu peneliti mencoba menerapkan tekhnik Two Stay Two Stray untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut. Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) ini terdiri dari dua siklus yang dilakukan di kelas VIII 1 SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam terhadap 20 siswa pada bulan September 2012. Tiap siklus terdiri dari tiga kali tatap muka dengan menggunakan Two Stay Two Stray dan satu kali tes. Data diperoleh melalui nilai tugas dan tes, lembar observasi, wawancara, catatan lapangan. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan : (1) Two Stay Two Stray teknik mampu meningkatkan kemampuan pemahaman membaca teks recount siswa yang terlihat dari peningkatan proses pembelajaran dimana siswa menjadi lebih aktif mengikuti kegiatan pembelajaran dan lebih mudah memahami teks recount yang mereka baca. Disamping itu nilai rata-rata tes siswa juga meningkat pada setiap siklus. Rata-rata nilai pre-reading tes adalah 57.00, meningkat menjadi 68.50 pada tes I dan menjadi 75.50 pada tes II. (2) Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi peningkatan tersebut yaitu; materi ajar, teknik mengajar membaca, pengelolaan kelas dan pengetahuan awal siswa..*

**Key Words:** *Reading Comprehension, Recount text, Two Stay Two Stray technique*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is an essential part of language learning at every level. Reading activities can support the learners in learning English in some ways. For example, the learner may do reading activities in order to learn the language. In this case they use reading material as language input. By giving students a variety of materials to read, the teacher provides opportunities for students to gain vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, and others. Moreover, for Indonesian students this is a bridge in understanding scientific books. Since they lack knowledge of English, they often encounter difficulties when reading their compulsory books written in English.

Besides, reading activities can also support the learners for cultural knowledge and awareness. Reading everyday materials as the Junior High School students have in short functional text like notice, invitation, announcement, shopping list, advertisement, short message, greeting card, label, brochure and others can give students insight into lifestyles and world views of English. When they read those kinds of text they are exposed to culture of target language that is English.

Reading, for Junior High School students, is always as the center of their

activity in the classroom. The students spend most of their time to do reading task since most of the activities done in the classroom is usually deals with reading. The basic competence to be achieved that is comprehend the meaning and the function of the functional written text and short monolog text find in descriptive text, procedure text, recount text, narrative and report text. Even reading in Junior high School become one of the most important skill to be tested in daily test, mid-semester test, semester-test, school examination and national examination ( UN ) as well.

However, a great number of the students at Junior High School especially the grade VIII 1 of SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam do not realize that reading activity has much more contribution toward their success in learning English. The researcher often found that her students just came to the text without having purpose in their mind. They read the text just because the teacher asked them to read. The reading activities happened unconsciously for most of them. They did not read the text because they wanted to know the content of the text.

Based on the researcher's experience and preliminary observations on the previous daily reading test of recount text at grade VIII 1 of SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam, the researcher found the fact that from the test result only about 25% of the class members passed the score of 70 as required by the minimum achievement criteria or Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum (KKM) stated by the school. The students had difficulties to find the general or detail information, the word meaning and also generic structure found in the text. It meant that those students could not catch the ideas of the text and having difficulties in

comprehending the text so that they could not answer the comprehension questions properly.

To overcome the problem the researcher applied *Two Stay Two Stray* (henceforth: TSTS) to help the students in comprehending the text. TSTS technique essentially is a group discussion model. Each member of group has its own responsibilities (two students become 'strayers' and other two students become 'stayers'). This technique employs student-centered activities rather than teacher-centered activities. It can guide and facilitate learning process in order to enable the students learn and create a better atmosphere of learning. The strategy also may attract the students' attention toward comprehending of recount text and increase their motivation by actively involving in a group work. TSTS technique trains the students to have the ability to express their ideas and to be active participants in comprehending the text. It also gives students experience in gathering information and reporting back to their teammates.

Based on the focus of the problem of this research, the researcher formulated research questions as follows: (1) To what extent can *Two Stay Two Stray* (TSTS) technique improve students' reading comprehension of recount text at grade VIII 1 of SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam? (2) What factors influence the changes of students' reading comprehension of recount text through *Two Stay Two Stray* ( TSTS ) technique at grade VIII 1 of SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam? . Therefore the main purposes of this study were : (1) To find out whether *Two Stay Two Stray* (TSTS) technique can improve the students' reading comprehension of recount text at grade VIII 1 of SMP N 2

Tilatang Kamang Agam (2) To find out the factors that influence the changes of the students' reading comprehension of recount text by using *Two Stay Two Stray* (TSTS). technique at grade VIII 1 of SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam.

### Reading Comprehension

Reading is not just saying the words. Reading should always be a meaning getting process. Many students can read the words in a passage perfectly, but are unable to answer questions for identifying the main idea or finding references. Some of the students are not able to answer even the simplest questions even though the answers were directly contained in the words they pronounced. Johnson (2008:279) states that ,"Comprehension is a process of making sense of a text in the most effective way. It is an active process in the construction of meaning and extracting the required information from text as effectively as possible". Hedge (2008: 195) adds that, "reading comprehension activities, from the beginning, should have some purposes and the reader should concentrate on the normal purposes of reading." They are to get information, to respond to curiosity about the topic, to follow instruction to perform task, for pleasure, amusement, personal enjoyment, to keep in touch with friends and colleagues. Therefore, reading comprehension is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or checking existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read that is English. In the classroom, teachers need to be aware of their students' learning needs, including their motivation for reading and their purpose.

An important thing to be considered about reading comprehension activity is having the goal or purpose in reading. Before starting reading anything, ask yourself why you're reading it. Are you reading with a purpose, or just for pleasure? What do you want to know after you've read it? Skilled readers approach texts, not only with purposes for reading, but with expectations about how the texts will be organized.

In fact, there are many different purposes for reading comprehension. A reader reads a text to understand its meaning, as well as to put that understanding to use. Another reader reads a text to learn, to find out information, to be entertained, to reflect or as religious practice. The purpose for reading is closely connected to a person's motivation for reading. It will also affect the way a book is read. We read a dictionary in a different way from the way we read a novel.

Moreover, comprehension is the only reason for reading. Without comprehension, reading is a frustrating, pointless exercise to do. A major goal of teaching reading comprehension, therefore, is to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and experiences they must have if they are to become competent and enthusiastic readers. Reading comprehension skills increase the pleasure and effectiveness of reading. Strong reading comprehension skills help in all the other subjects and in the personal and professional lives. Moreover, to be able to comprehend the text better, a reader need to employs various kinds of knowledge. These kinds of knowledge help a reader to interpret the text.

### Teaching Reading Comprehension

Hedge (2008: 89) mentions that, "teaching reading comprehension is not easy; actually it is a difficult work. Teachers must be aware of the progress

that students are making and adjust instruction to the changing abilities of students. It is also important to remember that the goal of reading comprehension is to understand the texts and to be able to learn from them.

Most of the teachers probably have been going about the conventional reading lesson in teaching reading. Basically, the teacher selects the passage for the students to read, introduces the reading selection to the students, have the students read it, and then offer some questions for them to see if they understand what they read.

Teachers have a crucial role in helping students learn to read by modifying circumstances, stimulating students' interest, and making reading meaningful. Where students have difficulty in reading, teachers must see that they are helped to read what they would like to read. In part, this assistance can be given by developing the confidence of learners to read for themselves, in their own way, taking the risk of making mistakes and being willing to ignore the completely comprehensible. Where learners find little interesting in reading, teachers must create more interesting situation. No one ever taught the students to read who has not interested in reading, and students cannot be told to be interested.

Moreover, there is no simple formula to ensure that reading will be comprehensible, no materials or procedures are guaranteed for a student's progress. Instead teachers must understand the factors that make reading difficult, whether induced by the learner, the teacher, or the task. Teachers should not rely on one method, but on their own experienced teaching skills. No one is in a better position than a teacher to identify a particular learner's need or interests or difficulties at a particular time. Then,

the teachers must still decide which expert to trust, which materials to try. Teachers should be familiar with instructional material, programs and techniques. But teachers must still decide how and when to use particular material and techniques with particular students times. In order to decide, it requires knowledge and understanding from the teacher. At last, teachers should also not blindly trust everything they do, even if they are generally successful.

To sum up, teachers have to find the techniques to fulfill the students' need for reading that is a technique that can help to solve the problem. In this case, the dynamic strategy of teaching reading should be considered. The appropriate teaching technique, like cooperative learning techniques, helps the teacher to solve the problems in the class because the cooperative learning techniques employ student-centered activities rather than teacher-centered activities. It can guide and facilitate learning process in order to enable the students learn and create a better atmosphere of learning. The strategy also may attract the students' attention toward comprehension of reading text and increase their motivation by actively involving in learning.

### Recount text

In this research the focused only in comprehending recount text. Recount text is one of the genres learned in junior high school started at the grade eight students. Recount text is the text which composed by the writer to tell the past events or past experience. It might be closely linked to actual or various experiences.

Coogan (2006:3) states that, "recount text is written to retell event with the purpose of informing or entertaining their audience or reader". In line with that idea Derewianka

(1991:14) confirms that," recount text is a text that retells events for the purpose of informing or entertaining. It tells an event or an experience happened in the past". In addition, Roison et al (2004:5) says that, " a recount is the retelling or recounting past experiences". Recounts are generally based on the direct experiences of the author but may also be imaginative or outside the author's experience. In recount text, a writer tells a reader about his/her personal experience or tells others experience to readers. In other words, Recount is a text which retells events or experiences in the past. Its purpose is either to inform or to entertain the audience. There is no complication among the participants and that differentiates from narrative.

Similarly, Derewianka (1991:15) identified, "three types of Recount text, namely Personal Recount, Factual Recount, and Imaginative Recount." Personal Recount exposes an event in which the writer or the author got involved or acted in the event himself. Belong to this type among others are daily funny incidents, entries of a diary, etc. Factual Recount is a note of an event, such as scientific experiment report, police report, newspaper report, history explanation, etc. Imaginative Recount is an unreal event or story, like reading texts for language lesson, a story about a life of a slave, etc.

Furthermore, Derewianka (1991:14) states that, "recount text focuses on sequence of events all of which relate to particular of occasion." It generally begins with orientation. That is giving the reader or listener the background information needed to understand the text. Then, the recount unfolds with series of events. They are ordered in chronological sequence. At various stages, they may be personal comment on incident. In line with the idea above,

Roison et a (2004:45) explains that, "The text organization of recount text is orientation and followed by series of events. Sometimes a recount text has evaluation or re-orientation at the end of the text".

In line with the ideas above, Coogan (2006:4) reveals that, " a recount text consists of three parts, they are: Orientation, series of events, and re-orientation". Firstly, the orientation which giving the reader the background information needed to understand the text such as who was involved in, where it happened and when it taken place. Person who involved in this text is the writer himself (by using subject I) or the writer with the related persons (by using subject we). Secondly, series of events include chronological sequences. Events, describing series of event that happened in the past. The last part is re-orientation. It is optional in which the writer deal with their feeling or attitude toward actions or series of events happened. In here, the writer stating the personal comment to the story.

In other words, it can be concluded that recount is a text that contains of retelling events that happened in the past. This text usually uses the past tense and past continuous tense in its content and its sequence of events told. Its generic structure is the orientation, series of events, and re-orientation. The Orientation is a part of recount text that tells the introduction of the interesting event being told. The series of event is the sequence of things that happen from the beginning until the end. Lastly, a re-orientation is the feeling and impression after doing the events.

### Two Stay Two Stray (TSTS) Technique in Teaching Reading

Two Stay Two Stray (TSTS) technique is developed by Spencer Kagan (1992:63). This technique can

be applied for every subject at any level of the students. The form Two Stay Two Stray allows the group members to share and inform the other group members about the result of their group discussion. In here the students work in a team or groups. They are allowed to ask and argue with their friends that brings their social life by having interaction with other instead of working individually (Lie; 2002:60). In other words, by applying TSTS technique there will be an interaction and two ways communication between students instead of just listening to the teacher explanation or doing the task alone. The students can ask or even argue and share their opinion within the group members.

Especially for TSTS, there are some excess of this techniques such as; it can be applied to all classes or ages of the students, more oriented to the liveliness of the students in learning, mutual help in improving student learning outcomes, student learning more meaningful. Moreover, Two Stay Two Stray technique is completely students' centered since the students may change the teacher's roles to suit their particular situation. In TSTS technique, not only the teacher can speak and explain in front of students, but the students have opportunities to speak and explain in front of their friends, too. This means that each student has the chance to contribute and to learn something which causes each student develops his/her accountability. Meanwhile, engaging students in competency based class need employing TSTS technique since using this technique students have a chance to answer, ask questions, apply the knowledge they have acquired and gain feedback from group members while they are socializing in groups.

In order to have clear description of TSTS technique let's take a look at how this technique work in the classroom. TSTS technique can be applied in the classroom as the following example: students can work in groups to solve a set of problems for review. It is in a group of four students. When they have completed the problem set, the teacher can signal groups to each send two members to the group on the right. The stray and the visited group can compare answers to the problem set. They can discuss differences and attempt to arrive at common answers. When the strayer has completed consulting, the strayer returns to his/her group. The group now shares what they learned from the strayer that visited and the group their stray visited. During the "straying," the teacher may want to stay with one group to ensure that answers/problem solutions are correct. The teacher can reconvene the class to go over any information or problems that were unsolved.

In conclusion, TSTS is one of cooperative learning technique that be used for teaching reading comprehension class. This cooperative technique can be applied in lessons where students do task in group of four that is called *Home-Group discussion 1*. Two members stay and share the group result to the guest. Other two members stray to find out what other group have discussion in *Strayer-Group Discussion*. The strayers then return to their original group and tell what they have observed; the groups then discuss and revise their work again in a *Home-Group Discussion 2* before coming to the final work. This technique allows the student to share and interact with other students whether from the same group or different group.

**METHOD**

It was a Classroom Action Research (CAR) type since this research was conducted in order to have a self-reflection, finding the solution on the problem faced by researcher in her own real classroom as well as to get an improvement on a students' reading comprehension on recount text. Mettetal (2001:1) defines that, "CAR is a way for instructors to discover what work best in their own classroom situation, thus allowing informed decision about teaching". The research was conducted in cycle forms following the four stages namely plan, action, observation and also reflection.

The setting of this classroom action research was at SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam grade VIII 1. There were 20 students in this class; 9 girls and 11 boys. They had participated in this research cooperatively. The collaborator was another English teacher, Yoshie Anggela,S.Hum .

The data was collected by using the instruments namely; task, test, observation, field notes and also interviews. Then, they will be analyzed into two ways: (1) Quantitative Data; the score of the students' test and task was interpreted and counted based on the indicators to find the mean by using formula offered by Gay and Airasian (2009:307) and the formula of percentage proposed by Sudijono (2007:43) to percentage the students' reading score. (2) Qualitative Data ; the collected data were analyzed by using the steps: Data managing, Reading/ Memoing, Description, Classifying, Interpreting (Gay and Airisian ;2009:449-456),

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the data gained during the research and from the quantitative analysis of the data at the first cycle, the average score gotten by the students in doing reading comprehension of recount text task were not satisfied yet. It meant that a great number of students still having difficulties in comprehending recount text. Based on the result of students' reading comprehension tasks which was held at the end of each meeting at the first cycle, the result of students' achievement can be illustrated in graphic 1.

*Graphic 1.*

*The students' reading comprehension achievement through reading comprehension task in each meeting (M) in the first cycle (in percentage)*
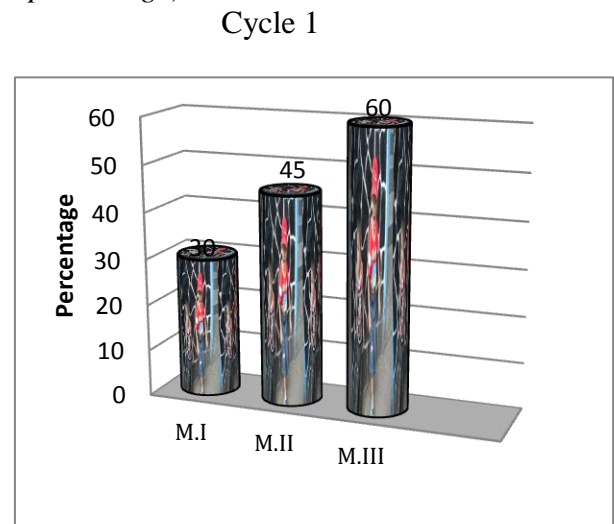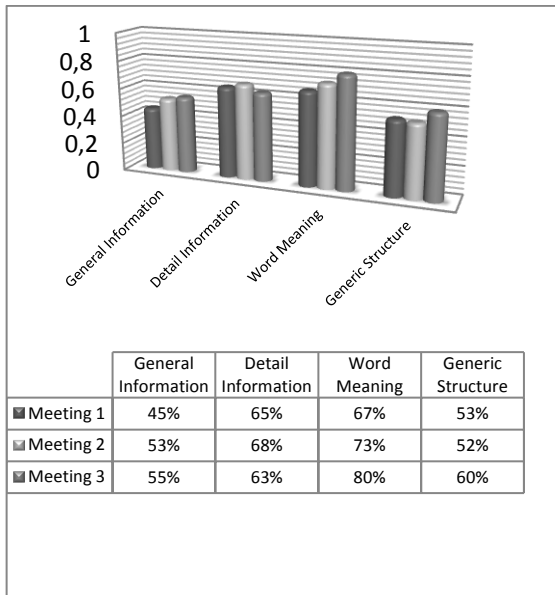
Cycle 1



The graphic 1 above showed that the condition of students' reading comprehension of recount text in this cycle was low. However, there was a rising of the students' task score from the first meeting up to the third meeting in cycle 1.The mean scores for each indicator of reading comprehension of recount text during the first cycle could be seen in graphic 2.

*Graphic: 2*

*The condition of each indicator on Students' Reading Comprehension of Recount text through Reading Comprehension Task for every Meeting( M ) at Cycle 1*

CYCLE 1

| | General Information | Detail Information | Word Meaning | Generic Structure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ☑Meeting 1 | 45% | 65% | 67% | 53% |
| ☑Meeting 2 | 53% | 68% | 73% | 52% |
| ☑Meeting 3 | 55% | 63% | 80% | 60% |

Referring to the graphic 2, it could be seen that the condition of students' reading comprehension for each indicators in every meeting was different. In the first meeting, the students mostly found difficulties in finding the general information especially in searching for the main idea of a paragraph. When they answered the question about main idea of a certain paragraph, they tend to just re-write almost a whole paragraph. Then, for understanding the generic structure of the recount text it seemed that the students were still confused to make certain about the re-orientation of the text. It is because not all of the recount texts ended with the re-orientation. Re-orientation is an optional part of recount text. When they were asked to find the re-orientation, the students mostly thought that the last paragraph should be the re-orientation of that text. The students did better in finding the detail information that was related to finding stated and unstated information from the text. Next, in finding the word meaning seemed that the students did it much better since about 67% of them could answer the questions related to sub-indicators reference, synonym, and antonym. In the second and the third

meeting of the first cycle, the graphic showed almost the same condition for each of the indicators. The indicator for finding the generic structure of the text got the lowest percentage; it was 52% in second meeting and 60% in the third meeting. And for general information in the second meeting was 53% and in the third meeting it became 53%. Next, in finding the detail information 68% students could found the answer in second meeting but it decreased to 63% at the third meeting, while 73% of the students at meeting 2 were able to answer the questions dealing with the word meaning. The number was increased up to 80% at the third meeting. Although the percentage for all of the indicators increased for every meeting, the result of students' reading comprehension was not satisfied yet. The condition of reading comprehension in each meeting still got problem because the percentage scores of students' reading comprehension for each of the indicator were still low. The indicator of generic structure and finding general information especially for the sub-indicator of finding the main idea were the most difficult indicators for most of the students. They were the lowest score gotten by the students followed by the indicator of detail information and finding the word meaning. It indicated that the students still had difficulties in comprehending the recount text.

Based on the result of the students test at the first cycle, the researcher was informed that the students' reading comprehension of recount text improved slightly. It was far from the result expected. The researcher and the collaborator did the reflection and found there were some problems during the first cycle. They discussed the problems found and then decided to make some

revisions of the plan for the next cycle. She decided to make some revisions of the plan and put the emphasize the weaknesses found in the first cycle. Next, she agreed to conduct the second cycle and followed the steps done in the first cycle by maintaining the strength .

The researcher ran the second cycle and having the data about the students' achievement in performing the tasks at the end of the first three meetings. It was shown through graphic 3.

*Graphic 3.*
*The students' reading comprehension achievement through reading comprehension tasks in each meeting (M) in the second cycle (in percentage)*
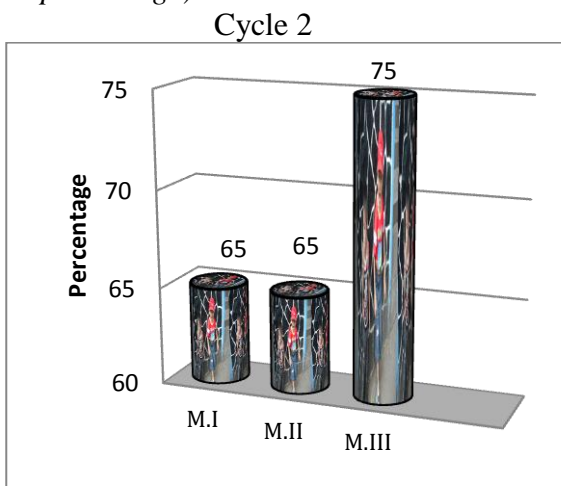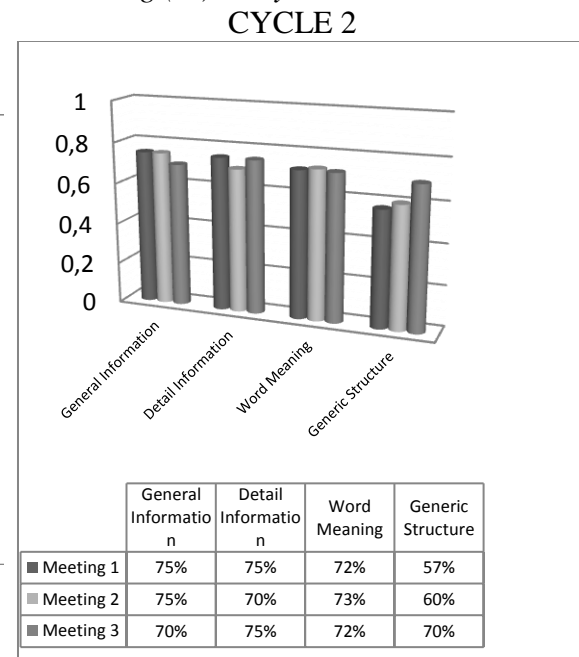


The graphic 3 above showed that, the students' achievement on reading comprehension of recount text in cycle two were getting better. For the second and the first meeting there were 65% of the students could achieve the MAC but in the third meeting it became 75%. It was increase significantly for about 10 point at the third meeting. Based on the field notes taken by the collaborator, it informed that the topic given by the teacher was interesting and the text was somewhat easier and too simple to be read by the students. They

found almost familiar words on the text. Besides, at this meeting they seemed became familiar with the questions. Since they were given repeatedly since the first meeting of the previous cycle. They started to understand which question ask for what indicators as well as how to find the answer on the text.

The following graphic showed the mean scores of each indicator from students' reading comprehension tasks of this cycle from the first up to the third meeting.
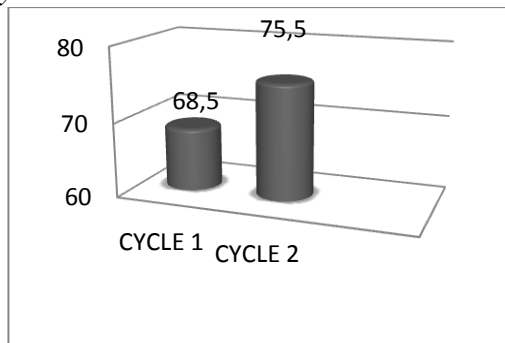*Graphic 4:*
*The condition of each indicator on Students' Reading Comprehension of Recount text through Reading Comprehension Task for every Meeting (M) at Cycle 2*



|  | General Information | Detail Information | Word Meaning | Generic Structure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ■ Meeting 1 | 75% | 75% | 72% | 57% |
| ■ Meeting 2 | 75% | 70% | 73% | 60% |
| ■ Meeting 3 | 70% | 75% | 72% | 70% |

The condition of students' reading comprehension in each meeting was varying for each indicator according to graphic 4. In general all of the indicators got such a better improvement than previous cycle. The lowest score, however, was still in finding the generic structure and finding general information especially for sub-indicator of finding the main idea of a paragraph.

There were such better improvements at this cycle. The table 10 showed that the students' score for indicator increase significantly comparing the score at the previous cycle. It indicated that there were some progresses on students' reading comprehension at this cycle. It could be seen in the following graphic:

*Graphic 5: The comparison of students' achievement through reading comprehension test on cycle 1 and cycle 2*



The graphic above showed that the students' achievement in reading comprehension test was significantly improved from cycle 1 to cycle 2. In cycle 1, the average scores of the students reading comprehension test was 68.50. It increases for about 7.0 point in cycle 2 which became 75.50.

*Table 9: The improvement of the class average score of students' reading comprehension test.*
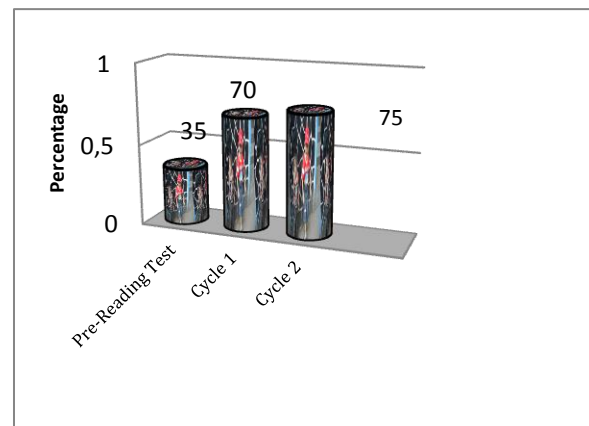
| Pre-reading test | Cycle 1 | Cycle 2 |
|---|---|---|
| 57 | 68.50 | 75.50 |

Before conducting the first cycle, the researcher conducted a pre-reading test. The test was based on all of the indicators used for the research. It was held to get the real data about the students' weaknesses and strength in all of the reading indicators. The average score of students' reading test in the pre- reading test was 57, at cycle 1 it was 68.50 and it became 75.50 at cycle 3. In the cycle 3 the students' score was highly increase since they had good willingness to get involve in home-discussion and also strayer-group discussion.

The increasing of the result of the test in each cycle can be seen from graphic 6 below.

*Graphic 6:*
*The students' achievement in each cycle. (From the pre test to the second cycle).*



The graphic showed that there was improvement of students who could pass MAC. In pre-reading test that was before the treatment was given, only 7 (35%) students could pass the MAC. In cycle 1, after three meetings of implementing TSTS, it increased to 14 (70%) students could achieve MAC. The number increased to 15 (75%) students could achieve the MAC at the end of cycle 2. From the data she drew conclusion that there were improvement of the students' average score in reading comprehension on recount text from the pre-reading test, cycle 1 and cycle 2. It showed that TSTS technique was able to overcome the problem of students' low reading comprehension of recount text. The progress could be identified from the increasing of students' average score and also the increasing of the number of the students that could achieve the MAC.

The implementation of TSTS technique in teaching reading comprehension of recount text proven to be effective toward the improvement of students' reading comprehension of recount text. The data collected during the research through observations, field notes and interviews informed that there were some factors that influence the students' improvement on reading comprehension of recount text. They are as teaching materials, teaching reading technique, classroom management and background knowledge of the students.

### Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the data collected from the tasks and tests, observation, field notes, interview it can be concluded: (1) The implementation of TSTS technique better improves the students' reading comprehension of recount text at grade VIII 1 of SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam in the first semester of 2012 – 2013 academic year (2) There are some factors that influence the changes of students' reading comprehension of recount text at grade VIII 1 SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam as follows: Teaching material, Classroom management, Interesting technique and Background knowledge of the students.

### Suggestion

Based on the finding the researcher derive the following suggestions: (1) The researcher as an English teacher of SMP N 2 Tilatang Kamang Agam should continue to apply the technique in teaching reading comprehension of recount text as an alternative technique in teaching (2) For other researchers to conduct further and longer studies about the effectiveness and implication of TSTS technique in order to find out whether this technique can be used effectively to solve the problem at the other classes or other school as well as to other skill like speaking or writing.

**Note :**
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