

# IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION OF NARRATIVE TEXTS BY USING SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS AT THE GRADE X A MA KMI OF DINIYYAH PUTERI PADANG PANJANG

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## **Abstract**

*Most of the students got difficulties in comprehending narrative reading texts. It could be seen from the result of exams given by teacher. Thus, this study is aimed at finding out (1) To what extent Small Group Discussion could improve the students' reading comprehension on narrative text at tenth grade MA KMI of Diniyyah Puteri Padang Panjang and (2) What factors could influence the students' reading comprehension of narrative text by applying small group discussions. The Classroom Action Research (CAR) has been conducted in three cycles. The participants were twenty three students of class X A MA KMI of Diniyyah Puteri. The data were collected by giving reading comprehension tests, observation, interview and field notes. They were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings have shown that (1) Small Group Discussions could improve students' reading comprehension of narrative text at class X A MA KMI Diniyyah Puteri Padang Panjang, and (2) factors which influence students' reading comprehension were limited number of students, reading materials and giving rewards to increase students' participations and motivations, monitoring and group discussion activities.*

**Key Words/ phrases:** *Students' Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text, Small Group Discussions*

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

In teaching reading, the students are expected to be able to develop their comprehension, which attempts students to grasp the message provided by the writer in reading text. Harris (1984) states that reading is the meaningful interpretation of printed letters into meaning. Readers will get knowledge, information, ideas, tips, sequence of events, details. Reading

also makes one build connection between words and thoughts.

The importance of reading as one skill can be proved from the percentage of the items on senior High school National Final Exams (UN), which are dominated by listening and reading. According to the latest year data, 15 items or 30 % of the whole items of UN's were listening, 30 items or 60 % were reading and 5 items

were vocabulary or 10 % of whole ones. It means reading as well as listening have an important role in evaluating students' ability on English subject. In this case, students are expected so much to have ability to comprehend various kinds of text.

Meanwhile, from researchers' experience and pre-observation in her class on teaching reading at first year students of MA KMI Diniyyah Puteri Padang Panjang, most of the students were facing some problems. The problems were as follows;

First, problem was coming from students. Some students felt difficult to comprehend reading texts. It could be seen from the result of exams given by teacher. Only 20 percents of the students were able to answer the comprehension questions with score ranging from 70 to 90, above Minimum Achievement Criteria (MAC), 30 percents with the score ranging from 50-70, while the others get less than 50. The answers sometimes were not relevant with the question. The answers were correct if information was only stated on the text. They would find difficulties if the answer were implicit information. They just let the items blank or repeated the questions only.

Second, some students had low motivation. This indication could be seen from their behavior in reading activity or answering questions. They were not so creative in asking and answering teachers and their friends' questions. The teacher observes that only about 30 percents of students do their task directly, while others talked with friends, write something on their books, and ask permission to go outside. As a result, only some students got involved in class

discussion. Some of them looked afraid in answering, feel afraid of making mistakes and commenting other students' answer.

Third problem is related to teacher's techniques and strategies which can give significant effect to students' success in reading comprehension. Usually the teacher asked the students to read the entire page by reading it loudly, then she explained difficult words if there were any. She asked the students to answer certain questions which were related to the reading text, but this way of teaching was not interesting to the students. Some of them said that they felt bored; they did not have interest on studying English especially reading session before. They preferred doing other activities like talking with friends, doing task from other teacher.

In teaching reading comprehension, the teachers have to teach some strategies to understand text. So the students are expected to have good comprehension on reading text. The appropriate strategy can influence students in psychological and physical aspects. The cooperative and attractive reading strategies can be helpful to improve students' interest, motivation, self confidence and reading comprehension (Fitrawati, 2007:96).

In conclusion, the problems of many students above were caused by inappropriate or ineffective reading strategies implemented by teacher. According to Carrel (2007), to make students become active and get involved in reading activities, it is necessary to teach them various reading strategies.

Psychologically, discussion creates closer friendship and solidarity among the students and they receive

the tailored to their needs (Gibbon, 1993: 201). And Miller, et. al. (2001) explains that group discussions have been shown as an effective technique for uniting the class toward a common goal. When the students discuss the goals and objectives, they become aware of other students objectives. This also has effects on motivation to support all students in the classroom.

Based on the problem, the questions of this research were stated in the questions of (1) to what extent can small group discussions improve students' reading comprehension of narrative texts at grade ten, class X A of MA KMI Diniyyah Puteri Padang Panjang ?, and (2) what factors change students' reading comprehension of narrative text by using small group discussions at grade ten, class X.A of MA KMI Diniyyah Puteri Padang Panjang?

Reading comprehension can be defined as the level of understanding of a passage or text. Reading comprehension skill separates the passive unskilled reader from the active readers (Wikipedia:2008). Skilled readers just read, then interact with the text by (a) predicting what will happen next in the story using clues presented, (b) finding main ideas or message, (c) monitoring understanding of the sequence, context, or characters, (d) clarify parts of the text which have confused them, and (e) connecting the events in the text to prior knowledge or experience."

Reading in communicative language teaching, the classroom technique used for teaching intermediate students are understanding sentences and understanding paragraph (Zainil, 2008:96). Moreover he adds that there are five components

that are essential to any act of reading comprehension in communicative language teaching which functions to identify topic, topic sentence, supporting details, by recognizing sub details transitions and reference.

Based on School Based Curriculum (2006), the demand of reading in curriculum for English subject is how to make students comprehend interpersonal or transactional written text, formally or informally in the forms of genres (narrative, procedure, descriptive, news item, report, analytical exposition, hortatory, exposition, spoof, and so on) in the daily life context. It means the demand of curriculum for reading is how teachers can deliver his/her students to comprehend text in form of genres. Related to the research, researcher focused her research on narrative text.

Narrative text is the text that narrates the events or the happening which usually occurred in the past. Narrative emphasizes the chronological sequences from the events, the happening and the problem (Yenti: 1999). It still wants to convince the reader about what writer saw and knew, the writer say," I narrate this fact to you and describe it like I saw and I knew".

Narrative deals with problematic events which lead to a crisis. According to Alderson (2000), the steps for constructing a narrative texts are orientation (set of scene and introduces participants who is in the story, when the story is taking place and where the action happening), complication (set off a chain of events that influences what would happen in the story, what problem the character had) and resolution (in which the

characters solve the problem created in complication).

The function of this text is to amuse, entertain and to deal with actual or vicarious experience in different ways or a reconstruction of event (Gerot and Wignell, 1995). On significant lexicogrammatical feature narrative text uses past tense, material processes, relational processes, mental process and temporal conjunction. The focus is on participants (what they did and what happened to them and it uses specific reference).

Narrative can be in the form of imagination (fiction) or factual. Some of them are myths, fairytales, mysteries, horrors, science fiction, romance novels, folktale, and legend. It always deals with special kind of story that is valued very highly. The way the characters in the story confront and resolve the crisis teaches the readers about ways of behaving which are valued in the culture (Butt et al, 2003:225).

Then, in relation to this, Syarif and Zainil (2008:1) states that narratives are composed of events which are presented in chronological order. They deal with problematic events which have specific features, namely, (1) the use of past tense, (2) the use of temporal conjunctions such as: when, while, and temporal circumstances, (3) focus on specific and usually individualized participants, (4) the use of material processes, and (5) dialog often included and the tenses change according to the circumstances."

Based on the theories above, the researcher assessed students' reading comprehension of narrative text by considering their indicators, such as (1) identifying general idea

and topic (2) identifying main idea of paragraph, (3) identifying unstated idea, (4) identifying details and specific information such as meaning of words, reference and transitions, and (5) identifying the generic structure includes orientation, complication, resolution and re-orientation (optional).

One of language learning strategies is small group discussion. It is a strategy of language teaching in which the teacher divides a class into small groups. The group can be labeled as group A, B, C, D and so forth. They discuss the tasks, homework, individual working, decide the meeting schedule, select the leader of group, discuss about responsibilities, correct the error tasks, make the planning of work etc.

According to Borchers (2007: 1), small group activities force students to take active role and must be stimulating, provocative, and exciting. It means that all the members of small group discussion must be active, shared ideas, and interact during discussion class. All students involve in the activities while the teachers monitor them in doing the activities and help them if it is needed.

If one student cannot understand about main idea of paragraph in reading narrative text, so the other students can help their friends. Through small group the students enjoy studying English. Besides that, that do not shame if they make mistakes. Moreover, in small group discussion the teacher should be as facilitator. He/she has to facilitate whether the students have problem in small group discussion or not and never blame their students, but the most important thing is the teacher

should be a good guide by overcoming the students' problem.

According to Chamot et al., (1996) working in small groups increases the students' involvement in the discussion. Students are also likely to be more open with classmates than in large discussion.

In doing small group discussion, the teacher should concern with some criteria or characteristic. As Rudduck (1978:83) explains that simple and useful set of criteria for an effective small group works are: all members participate; students argue among themselves; all students ask questions; all complete required preparation; all enjoy the meeting; discussion keeps close to the point; and students gain some understanding.

Group pressure or cohesiveness can set up rules for behavior for the group. A warm and friendly group that accepts ideas will encourage more complete and honest participation from members of the groups. Furthermore, Rabow et al.(1994) state the essential criteria for developing an effective discussion group are 1) group members must regularly attend and come prepared to discuss the material; students not only must show up, but must participate by expressing their understanding of the reading material 2) group discussion is a cooperative learning experience; asking for help and helping other members understand promote learning 3) everyone is expected to participate and interact; a group in which only a few members participate is obviously not a good group 4) group sessions and the task of learning should be enjoyable; a friendly to reveal their ignorance and confront their fellow students. When there is a climate of acceptance for

learning, a group learning is enjoyable 5) the material is adequately and efficiently covered. The students preparation, cooperative interaction, and cognitive skills are tools to cover the assigned materials adequately and efficiently 6) Evaluation of the group process and individual contribution to the discussion are integral parts of group operation; the goal of evaluation is not to hurt the feelings of others, but to give constructive feedback, be it negative or positive in nature.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

The researcher used collaborative action research. There were three cycles conducted in order to gain better result. Every cycle consists of four steps, namely; planning, action, observation, and reflection. In each cycle, those steps was followed and fulfilled by researcher in order to overcome the reading comprehension problems. At the end of every cycle researcher gave reading comprehension test and evaluated what had been done in teaching and learning process together with collaborators. Researcher and collaborators did discussion based on observation sheet, some notes and result of students reading comprehension tests.

## **C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

To know the students' competence before starting the research with cycle one, researcher had done test I in order to make sure that her students really had problem on reading comprehension of narrative text. Students' ability in comprehending of narrative test 'The Magic Candle' can be seen from the total score the students could answer the items. The average scores didn't reach the standard of minimum

achievement criteria (MAC=70). The average was only 29,18. There were only one (4,1%) student above MAC. It means that 23 out of 24 (95,8%) students did not complete or fail in test I.

After asking the students why they got low scores on the test. They answered, as follows:

*Teacher : Why did you get low score on last reading test?*

*Intan : The text was difficult, teacher.*

*Liza : Sorry, mom. It was not finished yet. It was difficult.*

*Putri : Reading was boring, mom. I didn't understand the difficult words.*

*Qilby : I didn't like reading text*

*Ririn : I didn't understand the story of "Magic Candle", Mom.*

*Wahyuni: It was difficult enough to find the idea, teacher.*

Researcher also analyzed the narrative text indicators. Total items were 15 includes: 3 items (20%) for general idea, 3 items (20%) for main idea, 3 items (20%) for unstated idea, 4 items (27%) for details and 2 items (13%) for schematic structure. To overcome the problem of understanding paragraph components or comprehension of narrative text, it was applied small group discussions which conducted in three cycles.

### **1. First Cycle**

Based on the observation, some students seemed to be interested in the way teacher's teaching technique. It could be seen from their enthusiasm and curiosity in answering the teacher's and students' question while discussing the content of the

text to catch the ideas in small group discussions.

However, there were some students who had low motivation in doing activities in small group discussion. Some students were only listening to their friend without giving any comments. Some of them didn't give full attention to their group discussion while she was applying the strategy. They were shy to talk and express their ideas. Even though, the students' comprehensions of narrative text were still low.

The first cycle was done for 4 meetings. Every meeting consisted of one reading topic. In other words, there were three reading topics discussed for first cycle. There were "Landi", "Lake Toba" and "Thumbelina".

After giving the reading material to students, the teacher asked the students to preview the text title. Students also tried to predict the content of the text. It was important to do because after examining the title or the heading, students would get some ideas if they read the text later. The next strategy was teacher modeling how to comprehend the narrative text by analyzing the components of one or two paragraphs. Then teacher asked the students to sit **in group of five**. After that researcher let them to understand or informed ideas of the narrative text in discussion.

At the end of group discussion activity, the students were asked by the teacher to summarize the story and did group presentation in front of class to tell about the story. This strategy was applied to the students to make sure that they could recall important ideas of what they had done in the discussion activity. Moreover, students

could practice their English skill by doing the presentation with their own sentences. In fact, only one or two groups were brave to come to the front of class in first cycle. Although the teacher had called other groups, they didn't come to the front of class by giving some reasons as follows:

*Teacher* : How about other groups? Please come to front of class and tell about the story!

*Group* : We are not ready, teacher.

*Other groups* : We feel embarrassed and we cannot.

*Other groups* : Can we bring the book, Mom?

*Other groups* : There are many new words and difficult to understand.

Sometimes researcher saw that one or two members of the group wanted to do the presentation but the others were not. So, researcher thought that most of the group didn't

solid yet. They didn't share ideas or cooperate optimally. Not all students participated and interacted in the groups. It means that indicators of small group discussion had not showed better improvement yet.

### 1) Students' activities in reading

It could be seen that there were many students who were not active in small group discussion activities. In indicator 1 there were 11 students attend regularly with their friends. Indicator 2, it was 11 students, indicator 3, it was 10 students, indicator 4, it was 10 students, indicator 5, it was 10 students. Particularly on indicator 6, the numbers of active students were 11 students.

From figure I below, it can be seen that students' comprehension of narrative text was not satisfied yet based on five indicators. For activity 1, its' average sum of students was 16, activity 2 was 13, activity 3 was 15,6, activity 4 was 10,3 and activity 5 just was 13,3 which was less than 50 %.

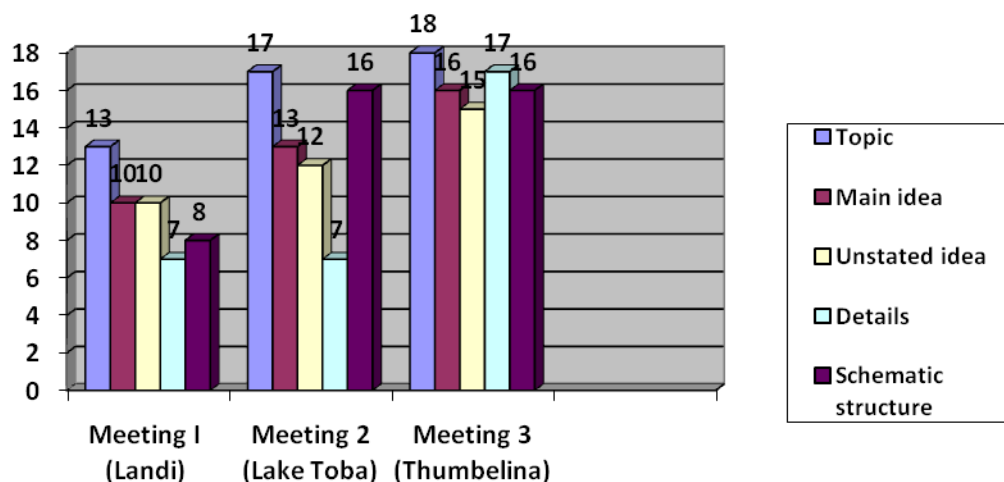


Figure 1. Students' comprehension of narrative text based on indicators on three meetings in cycle I

## 2) Teachers' teaching activities

Some students looked curious to do small group discussion which was explained by the teacher. They made some records by noting down some important information they got from the teacher. While, some others did not show an expression whether they liked or disliked the strategies. Few of them were still unmotivated to practice the strategies in reading. They tended to keep silent.

It seems that some students still faced some difficulties in understanding paragraph components of narrative text by applying the small group discussion activities. Besides few students were very easy to be satisfied to what they had done, even though the result was not satisfied yet. Some students kept silent when the teacher monitored their reading activities. It seemed that they lack of self confident to what they had done.

The students got better achievements in three meetings with different title of narrative text. However, there were no students passed, above minimum achievement criteria. The average in first meeting was 42,24, the average in second meeting was 60,70 and the average in third meeting was 70,33.

At the end of cycle 1, the researcher conducted the reading comprehension test to the students with maximum score was 100. The average score in cycle 1 was 54,35 only increases 25,16 points comparing with students' score in test I 29,18. The highest score was 85 and the lowest score was 25. There were only 3 students (13%) who were complete or pass minimum achievement criteria.

In order to be satisfied with the strategy given, researcher did test II to the students again after doing the reading comprehension test for cycle I with consideration that the students had forgotten with that test I as beginning test. The items on test II were the same with test I. As a result, the average was 56,28 and five students (22%) who were complete or passed the test.

After analyzing the average of the scores from test I and II, it surprised researcher because there was significant improvement for the students in comprehending narrative text after using small group discussion strategy. It was good improvement on scores and made sure researcher to continue to the next cycle by any evaluation from students and collaborators.

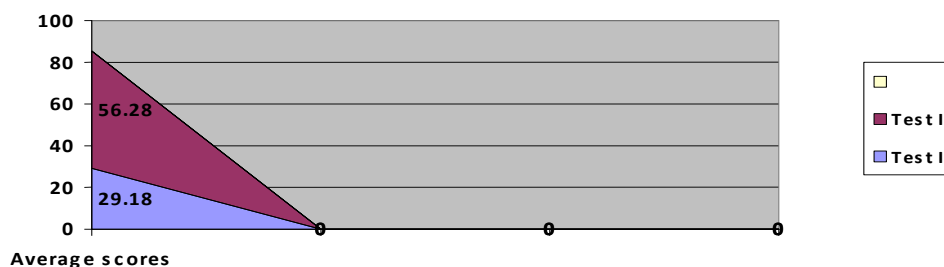


Figure 2. Students' Reading Comprehension Result on Test I and II



The figure above showed that the students average score on reading comprehension test II increases 27 points comparing with score on test I 29,18. There were 5 (22%) students who got score above MAC. If it was compared in test I, it was 1 of 24 students (4%), so the students' completeness increases (18%)

Based on the result of reading comprehension test on narrative text, it could be concluded that the first problem was not solved yet since the students result of reading comprehension tests were not satisfied yet. The second problem was not solved since there were still many students who were not active in group discussion yet. The interview below could prove the data, as follows:

*Teacher : What do you think about reading comprehension tests, Mar?*

*Mar : It is difficult, teacher. Because the material is quite difficult to understand.*

*Teacher : Refi, What about the topic, can you identify the topic of the Paragraph ?*

*Refi : Actually, yes, if the text is difficult and has many difficult words. I cannot identify the topic easily.*

*Teacher : Amelia, do you have problem in identifying the supporting details in the paragraph ?*

*Amelia : Sometimes, yes if the material is difficult. And I don't know how to get the supporting details yet.*

Dealing with the second problem (teacher's technique), it was identified the reasons why the students were not interested, that is, (1) the teacher provided less monitoring, (2) the teacher applied the concept too fast, (3) the teacher gave less feedback, and (4) the teacher gave less reward.

## 2. Second Cycle

Based on the reflection in the previous cycle, there might be two focusing problems that should be solved, students' comprehension and teacher's teaching strategies. Therefore, it was necessary to set up the plans for the coming cycle.

The following plans teacher's activities were set up as follows:

- 1) The team paid more attention to the students who had lack of self confident, less motivated and reluctant to study.
- 2) The teacher divided the students into **four** in group
- 3) The teacher built the context of text before coming small group activities.
- 4) The teacher provided more feedback to the students' reading activities.
- 5) The teacher provided reward

This cycle was done in four meetings with three kinds of reading topics of narrative text. To activate the students' background knowledge, the teacher asked the students several questions dealing with the topic. This way was also aimed to build students' interest toward reading. For example; *Do you know some fables? , What is your favorite fable? , What is the function of the fable?*

After distributing the text to each student, the teacher asked them

to look at the title of the narrative text. Then she asked the students to look at glance all paragraph to find the context. Next she asked the group to analyze the components of one or two paragraphs, to find topic, main idea, unstated idea, details. The teacher did this understanding slowly, since there were some students who still had difficulty to comprehend. Then, the teacher asked the students to sit in small group of four to find the more information from other paragraphs in the narrative text. Later, the students were assigned to find schematic structure of the narrative text in group. Of course, this activity was under the teacher's monitoring.

In monitoring the students, the teacher walked around the class to see the students work. Teacher also monitored whether the students had problems in doing this strategy. And the teacher asked several questions to make sure that the students understood what they read and did in the group. The questions could be like "What happened to fly and bull?", "What is the main idea of paragraph 3?" "What is the communicative purpose of this narrative text?" The students were encouraged to answer as many questions as possible. The questions were also addressed to other members of group. Next teacher also asked the group to summarize the story with their own words.

After gathering the activities in small group discussion, then continued it to do presentations in front of class by using their own words. The teacher gave reward by applause, or by saying "Good! Excellent! OK! That right!". The teacher tried to avoid blaming one particular group or student because it

could make them ashamed or unselfconfident.

The result was better than cycle I because more groups came to the front of class to do their presentation, three to four groups. The data was supported when the teacher asked the groups to do presentation in front of class, as follows:

*Teacher* : *How about other groups ?*

*Please come to front of class and tell about the story!.*

*Group* : *Is it ok if there is some mistakes, teacher.*

*Other groups* : *We would like to try, Mom.*

*Other groups* : *Don't laugh us, ya, Mom?*

*Other group* : *We want to try but we are afraid, teacher.*

Relating to students' group discussion activities, there were more students who were active in small group discussion activities. In indicator 1 there were few students didn't attend regularly with their friends, it was 16. Indicator 2, it was 11 students and in cycle 2 was 15. It means the increase was 4, indicator 3, it was 10 students and in cycle 2 was 13. It means the increase was 3, indicator 4, it was 10 students and in cycle 2 was 16. It means the increase was 6, indicator 5, it was 10 students and in cycle 2 was 16. It means the increase was 6. Particularly on item 6, the numbers of active students were 11 and in cycle 2 was 16.

The improvement also could be seen from the students who wanted to get involved in the discussion. The

data was supported by the interview with the students as the following:

*Teacher : Nur'aini, do you like to discuss narrative text with your Friends?*

*Yona : Yes, teacher. But I don't know all in the reading text.*

*Teacher : What about you Desi ?*

*Desi : Yes, Mom. Little little. But we still need help, Mom.*

*Teacher : Elda, after learning components of paragraphs in the previous meetings, do you like to discuss the reading text with your friends now ?*

*Elda : Yes, Mom. It makes me interested to discuss it together.*

*Teacher : Do you like to discuss the reading material with your friend?*

*Sathriya: Yes, Teacher.*

From the observation, it could be seen that most of the students were enthusiastic and serious doing

comprehension activities in small group discussion. In addition, they had self confident in practicing and using the strategies given by the teacher. It also was indicated by the students' participation in discussion, they were not afraid of making mistake anymore.

It indicated that they wanted to compete with their classmate. It can be seen in the next figure 3 which was based on checklist. From figure 4, it can be seen that students' comprehension of narrative text was better than in cycle 1. For activity 1, its' average sum of students was 16 and in cycle 2 was 16,3. It means the increase was 0,3 points. In activity 2 was 13 and in cycle 2 was 17,6. It means the increase was 4,6 points. In activity 3 was 15,6 and in cycle 2 was 17,3. It means the increase was 1,7 points. In activity 4 was 10,3 and in cycle 2 was 14,3. It means the increase was 4 points. In last activity just was 13,3 and in cycle 2 was 16. It means the increase was 2,7 points. In general, all activities based on indicators reading comprehensions were around 70 %.

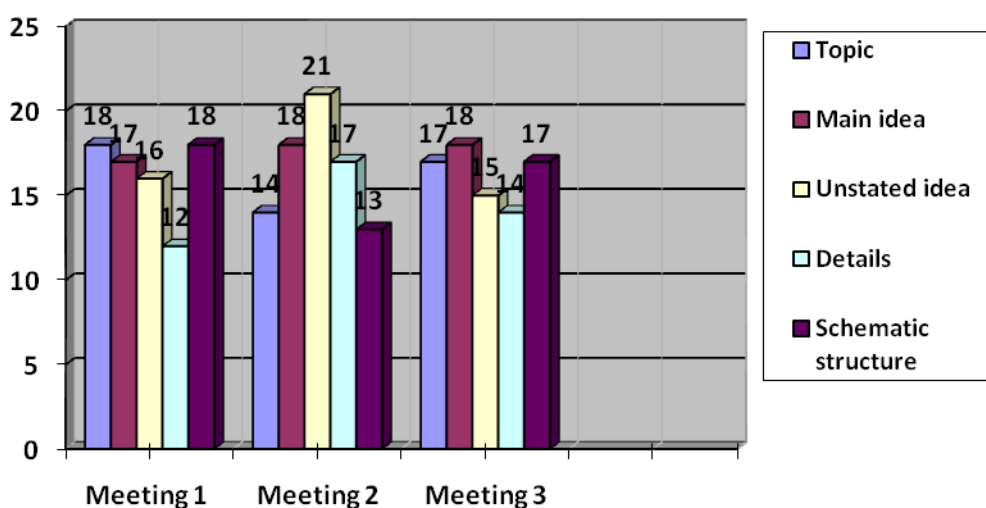


Figure 3. Comparison of students' comprehension of narrative texts based on indicators on three meetings in cycle 2

In answering the question, they didn't only want to receive their friends' opinion but they tried to do analysis by themselves and the students looked enthusiastic to interact each other. They were eager to take any opportunities to participate in the discussion. However, they were still few students looked reluctant to work and participate in the discussion. They began to get active when the teacher came closer to the group but when she went away; they stopped discussing the text and talked about the other matter.

Students' comprehension was different with three kinds of narrative

text. The students got better achievements in following meeting with different title of narrative text. Although, there was fifteen students passed, above minimum achievement criteria, the average in first meeting was 69,57. The average in second meeting was 73,04 and the average in third meeting was 70,65.

At the end of cycle 2, the researcher conducted reading comprehension test of narrative texts. There were 14 students pass or complete. The result can be seen on the figure below:

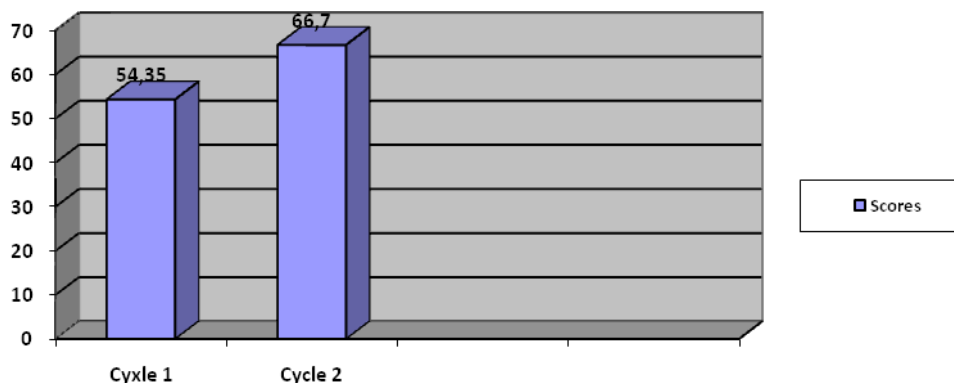


Figure 4. Comparing achievements of tests on cycle 1 and 2

Maximum score was 100. The average score in cycle 2 was 66.7. The highest score was 90 and the lowest score was 40. There were 14 students who were complete or pass the test, 61% of the students. Comparing from the first cycle, there was 39% average of the increasing of reading comprehension test. It means there was significant improvement of students reading comprehension of narrative text. In the cycle 2 indicated the huge

progress rather than what they had got in cycle 1. The reasons of the increasing were as follows:

- 1) The students felt comfortable in learning with the teacher and their friends.
- 2) They didn't feel shy to speak and interact with the teacher and their friends.
- 3) They enjoyed the learning atmosphere that had been built by the teacher.

- 4) The teacher gave more opportunities to the students to share their opinion

In learning reading comprehension of narrative texts based on the 5 indicators was not solved yet. This point should be solved deeply in the next cycle. Perhaps, the students who fully tried hard to solve their reading comprehension difficulties could be solved implicitly through teaching and learning in the next cycle.

In other words, most of the students didn't like to see their task unfinished to accomplish. So the students were already good students since they were motivated in learning therefore they never felt satisfied if they couldn't master the lesson well.

The reasons why they were not confident in learning were:

- 1) Some students were still confused with indicator 4 of reading comprehension of narrative texts.
- 2) Some students felt shy to express their ideas or they were afraid of making mistake.

In the contrary, the students who were active and interested in teacher's strategies indicated by some reasons, they were:

1. Small group discussion strategy helped them to be critical in reading the text.
2. Small group discussion strategy could help them to be self confident.
3. Small group discussion could make them to be teamwork.
4. Reading strategies by using small group discussion helped them understand the narrative text.

5. The materials given were suitable to interact with teacher and friends
6. The technique made them feel curious to read and understanding texts.
7. The reading strategies increased their motivation.

### **3. Third Cycle**

The plan and the action in the third cycle were almost the same as in the previous cycle. The teacher would emphasize on the group member, monitoring and rewards given to the students.

To solve the students' problems, the plans were set up as follows:

- 1) Redesigning the member of groups for **three** students.
- 2) Monitoring the students more carefully so they could express their ideas in group discussion and presentation.
- 3) Giving more rewards and indirect correction towards the students reading activities.

This cycle consisted of four meetings. The differences in this cycle were on the emphasis of the problems on students reading comprehension, group members, monitoring and rewards. And teacher also changed the group member by getting small paper. During the discussion, the teacher also gave more attention to the passive students. They were provided more monitoring from the teacher rather than the active ones. They were asked to do more practices like writing the details and specific information, like asking references and meaning of words. To support them, the teacher gave the rewards on the every task

they did. Even though, teacher gave small things for the good group. If they made mistakes, they were corrected indirectly, particularly for less confident students. It was done to avoid hurting them and making them down.

The result indicated the percentage of the students interaction was 83%, the students who had willingness to work together was 78%, the students who had willingness to show participating and interacting was 87%, the students who appreciating and accepting each other was 78%, the students who had self confident 78%, and the students who had been brave to give comment was 78%. In other

words, there was significant increasing percentage of the students who were active in this cycle comparing with the previous cycle.

From figure 5, it can be seen that students' reading comprehension by using small group discussions had been better and better. For activity 1, its' average was 17,6. It means the increase was 1,3. Activity 2 was 18,3. It means the increase was 1,3. Activity 3 was 18,3. It means the increase was 1. Activity 4 was 17,3. It means the increase was 3 and activity 5 was 16,3. It means the increase was 0,3. In general the achievement was more than 70 %.

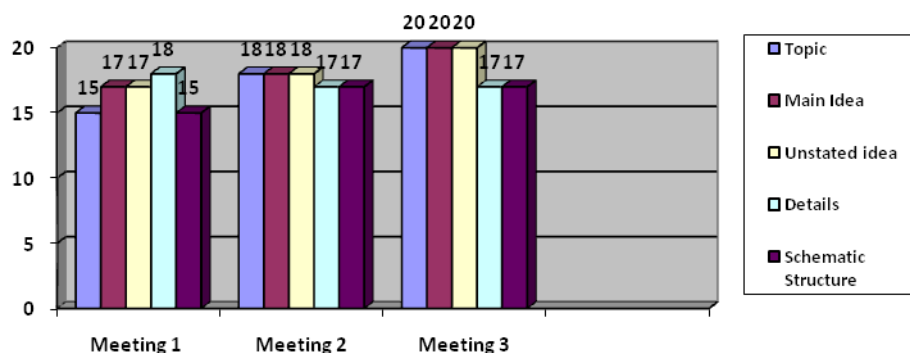


Figure 5. Comparison of students' comprehension of narrative texts based on indicators on three meetings in cycle 3

Students' comprehension results were different with three narrative texts. The students got better in the following meeting. There were 17 students passed, above minimum achievement criteria. The average in first meeting was 71,20. The average in second meeting was 76,09 and the average in third meeting was 80,43 The students got better achievements from three meetings than in cycle II. Figure 8. Students' comprehension of narrative texts in cycle 3

At the end of cycle 3, The average score which has been reached by the students was 76,30. The highest score was 100 and the lowest score was 40. There were only 5 students who didn't pass the target/standard score, 78%.

Concluding from the first cycle, the second cycle, and the third one, there were improvements of students reading comprehension test result. In cycle 1, students could only achieve 5 students above of the

minimal standard. Meanwhile, in cycle 2 there were 14 and in cycle 3 was 18. Finally, after conducting post test in cycle 3, the students' reading

comprehension indicated better progress than those in cycle 1 and 2. The comparison can be seen in the figure below.

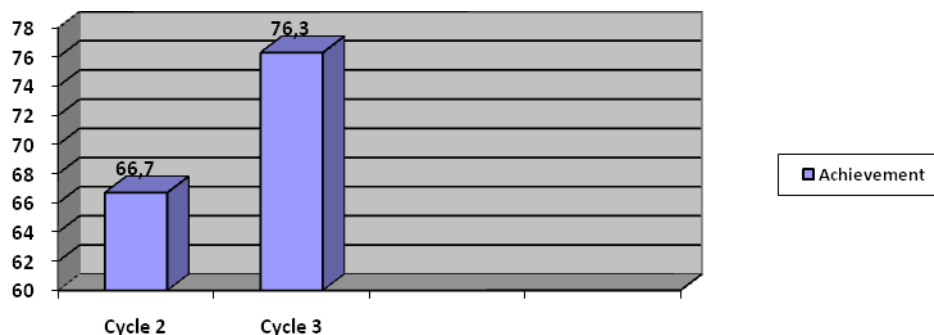


Figure 6. Achievement of tests on cycle 2 and 3

The checklist showed that most of the students had good willingness to be active in reading. They were also had self-confident to interact with their teacher and friends. Besides, they were not afraid anymore of making mistake in doing reading tasks. Moreover, only few of them 26% didn't have self confidence such as doing presentation in front of class.

However, most of them (17 students or 74%) tried hard to be better self confident. The average increasing of students' activeness in this cycle was 38%. The result of interview was not so far different from the observation data checklist which indicated that most of the students were improving their reading comprehension of narrative text.

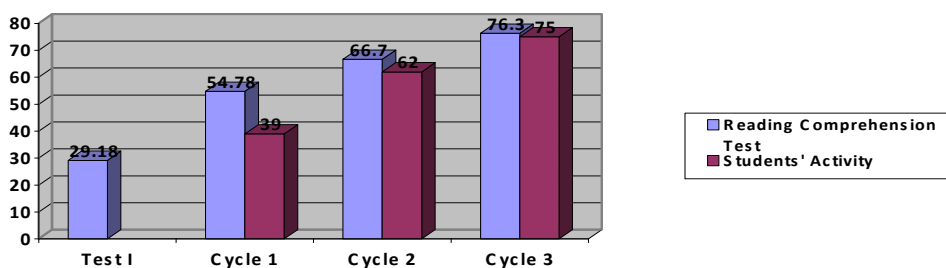


Figure 7. Students' reading comprehension test and activities

The implementation of strategies derived from small group discussion could increase students' activeness, interest. It could be identified from the percentage of the students' reading comprehension of narrative text in cycle 1 was 57%. At the end of cycle 2, the percentage of students' reading comprehension increased 70%. It was 13% average increasing percentage between cycle 1 and 2. Even though the result showed better result, there were 77% in cycle 3. However, the problems of teacher's teaching strategies had been solved maximally in cycle 2. So, the researcher considered not to continued to have the observation on this term in cycle 3

Furthermore, the number of active students toward small group discussion increased from cycle to cycle. At the end of cycle 1, the percentage of active students was only 35%. In cycle 2, the percentage increased 66%. This increasing was the most significant result from the students' activeness among the three cycles. The average increasing percentage between these two cycles was 31%. This significant reason was because the students had understood the strategies clearly.

In cycle 3, the percentage of active students increased from 66% to 80%. The average of increasing was

14%. The progress was because the problems which still faced by the students in the previous cycle could be solved in the third cycle, particularly the item dealing with low self confident, unwilling to do the tasks, and afraid of making mistake. So, the number of students who became active increased in cycle 3.

Before conducting the research, the researcher administered the reading comprehension test to the students. In test I, it showed that most of the students got low score (4%). It was because they didn't have in their mind the concept of reading comprehension also means understanding paragraph components, and how they applied the characteristics of the components in their narrative reading text. After conducting the action of small group discussion in cycle 1, 2, and 3, the result of students' score got improvement (13% in cycle 1, and 61% in cycle 2 and 78% in cycle 3). Many students who got the low score in the previous cycle were able to obtain a better score in the next cycle. So, it was approved that reading strategy of small group discussion could improved students reading comprehension of narrative texts. The improving of students' reading comprehension test could be seen in table 1.

Table 1. The Recapitulation of Students' Reading Comprehension Test

Students' code	Score (cycle 1)	Score (cycle 2)	Score (cycle 3)
1	55	55	70
2	60	75	85
3	50	45	60
4	60	70	85
5	65	85	100
6	60	40	70
7	55	70	75
8	50	55	90



9	55	75	65
10	30	60	50
11	55	45	70
12	40	75	90
13	50	70	40
14	60	55	95
15	55	60	75
16	25	75	80
17	45	70	80
18	70	50	75
19	85	90	85
20	35	75	50
21	60	85	95
22	80	70	80
23	50	85	90
<b>Average</b>	<b>54,78</b>	<b>66,7</b>	<b>76,30</b>
<b>Improvement</b>	<b>25,6</b>	<b>11,9</b>	<b>9,6</b>

The significant improvement could be seen in cycle 3, where the students' reading comprehension increased 78%. It meant only 5 students from the total students, 23. students, who didn't pass the target score of minimum achievement criteria (MAC)

Small group discussions, which have already proven, gave students with the opportunities to increase students' ability dealing with identifying topics, main idea, unstated idea, supporting details and understanding schematic structure of narrative texts. It means that small group discussions as one of the strategies which played significant contribution in determining the success of teaching reading comprehension of narrative texts. These results were supported by Tabrani (2008) and Nofri Anten (2008). They proved that small group discussions had improved students' reading comprehension and also increasing students' involvement and participation. There were increasing of students' ability in identifying general information, main idea, details,

unstated information and schematic structure of texts.

The small group discussions not only improve students' reading comprehension of narrative text, but also improve students' activities in learning reading. This result was supported by other researcher's finding as Kahler(1993). He explained that group discussions are an excellent means for raising the students' motivation level and increasing their involvement in the learning process. Such discussion promote the corporate skill of cohesion as well as analytical skills, and provide the students with an opportunity to express the needs, feelings, interests, and opinions in a non-threatening learning environment via the realistic and functional use of the target language.

Furthermore, reading strategies were of course not only the aspect that affected the students' comprehension. However, as already proven by a number of studies, reading strategies played an important role in determining the success of a foreign language teaching particularly in teaching reading. Nadrah (2006) and

Fitrawati (2007) had proved that reading strategies had the significant contribution to the students' comprehension. Moreover, Nunan (1998:144) said that ineffective reading strategies used by the students and false reading techniques were found become one of the causes of foreign language failure. The use of effective reading strategies would likely help both the teacher and the students to achieve the teaching reading objectives.

#### **D. CONCLUSIONS**

Regardless of this limitation, the conclusion can be drawn from discussion that by using small group discussions were attractive and cooperative. So, the students were interested in getting involved in reading activities. Based on the findings, it was found that

1. Small group discussion better improve students' reading comprehension of narrative texts at the grade X A of MA.KMI Diniyyah Puteri.
2. The factors that influence the changes of reading comprehension are:
  1. The limited number of students in the group. The small number of group member was an ideal one to study a language by using small group discussion because the students could interact more with the teacher and other students.
  2. By giving rewards to the students, it could encourage the students to be more active doing interaction in learning and answering questions.
  3. By giving suitable materials the students like to participate in group work. The familiar

materials could activate students' background knowledge, so they could discuss, interact, and help one another.

4. Monitoring would be helpful for those who had low motivation and self confidence. So they could be more active without feeling anxiety and worried of making mistake.
5. The group discussion could motivate the students to be active and could share their ideas in understanding the narrative texts. By implementing this strategy, the passive students could become more active students. The students had more motivation and braveness to answer the questions.

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