

IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH RECIPROCAL TEACHING

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is an essential skill in English language learning that enables students to understand texts, develop critical thinking, and expand their vocabulary and knowledge. However, many junior high school students experience difficulties in comprehending English texts due to limited vocabulary and teacher-centered instructional practices. Preliminary observations at a junior high school in Malang indicated that students' reading comprehension achievement was below the minimum mastery criterion, particularly in identifying main ideas, understanding detailed information, and summarizing texts. This study aimed to improve students' reading comprehension through the implementation of the Reciprocal Teaching strategy. The study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design consisting of three cycles, each including planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Reciprocal Teaching was implemented through four strategies: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. The findings revealed a gradual improvement in students' reading comprehension across the three cycles. The mean score increased from 61.52 in the preliminary study to 67.61 in Cycle I, 74.57 in Cycle II, and 84.35 in Cycle III, with 100% of students achieving the minimum mastery criterion by the end of the study. Classroom observations also indicated increased student participation, collaboration, confidence, and metacognitive awareness throughout the learning process. These findings suggest that Reciprocal Teaching is an effective instructional strategy for improving reading comprehension and promoting active, student-centered learning among junior high school students. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to adopt this strategy to enhance students' reading achievement and classroom engagement.

Keywords: *Reading comprehension; Reciprocal Teaching; Classroom Action Research; English language learning; junior high school.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from written texts through the integration of decoding skills, vocabulary knowledge, reading fluency, background knowledge, and prior experiences. It is one of the essential competencies in English language learning because it enables students to understand academic texts, express ideas effectively, and acquire knowledge across various disciplines (Aprilianti & Andiar, 2024). Strong reading comprehension skills also promote critical thinking, enrich vocabulary, and support the development of other language skills.

Reading is not merely the process of recognizing words but also a cognitive activity that requires readers to analyze information, identify implicit meanings, and construct logical interpretations of texts. Reading comprehension is fundamental to both academic success and everyday communication (Yeshimbetova & Kulekenova, 2020). Moreover, effective reading supports the development of other language skills, including writing, speaking, and listening (Ni'mah & Umamah, 2020). Students who understand appropriate reading strategies are also better able to adapt their learning approaches according to their learning styles (Sholihah et al., 2024).

Despite its importance, many students continue to experience difficulties in reading comprehension. They often struggle to identify main ideas, interpret implicit information, summarize texts, and answer comprehension questions accurately (Alpian & Yatri, 2022). These difficulties are influenced by several factors, including low learning motivation, limited vocabulary, insufficient background knowledge, lack of concentration, inadequate learning facilities, and restricted access to reading materials (Harianto, 2020). Furthermore, students learning English as a foreign language frequently encounter obstacles because of limited lexical knowledge and interference from their first language (Widowati et al., 2021). Consequently, reading instruction should not only improve students' academic achievement but also promote active participation and positive attitudes toward learning English (Rahmawati & Dzulfikri, 2022).

Preliminary observations conducted at a junior high school in Malang indicated that students' reading comprehension achievement was relatively low. Many students failed to achieve the minimum mastery criterion in reading-related competencies, particularly in identifying main ideas, summarizing texts, and answering comprehension questions correctly. Classroom observations also revealed that reading instruction was predominantly teacher-centered. Teachers generally explained the reading materials and asked students to answer

questions individually, while students remained passive throughout the lesson. This conventional teaching approach reduced students' motivation, classroom participation, and engagement in the learning process (Wahyuni et al., 2024).

To overcome these challenges, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the reading process are required. One instructional approach that has received considerable attention is Reciprocal Teaching. Reciprocal Teaching is a collaborative learning strategy in which teachers and students take turns leading discussions about reading texts to improve comprehension (Vuong & Steklács, 2025). The strategy emphasizes four cognitive activities: summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting (Alwi et al., 2025). Through these activities, students actively construct meaning, discuss ideas with peers, clarify misunderstandings, and predict upcoming information in the text, thereby creating a more interactive and meaningful learning environment (Ahmed et al., 2025).

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of Reciprocal Teaching in improving students' reading comprehension. Obiageli and Nneka (2023) reported significant improvements in secondary school students' reading achievement after implementing Reciprocal Teaching. Similarly, Wahyuni et al. (2024) found that the strategy increased students' engagement and facilitated better understanding of reading texts. Ahmed et al. (2025) also concluded that teachers perceive Reciprocal Teaching as an effective instructional method for enhancing reading comprehension, particularly at the secondary school level.

Although numerous studies have confirmed the effectiveness of Reciprocal Teaching, several research gaps remain. Most previous studies have been conducted in primary schools, senior high schools, or educational settings outside Indonesia. Studies focusing specifically on Indonesian junior high school students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms are still limited. Moreover, previous research has primarily examined students' learning outcomes, while relatively few studies have investigated the implementation process using a systematic Classroom Action Research (CAR) design. Consequently, further investigation is needed to explore how Reciprocal Teaching can improve not only students' reading comprehension achievement but also their classroom engagement and learning process within the Indonesian junior high school context.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching to improve the reading comprehension skills of junior high school students in Malang through a Classroom Action Research approach. In addition to examining students' reading achievement, this study also explores changes in students' participation, collaboration, and critical thinking during the learning process. It is expected that the implementation of the four Reciprocal

Teaching strategies summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting will encourage students to become more active, independent, and collaborative readers, ultimately leading to significant improvements in their reading comprehension.

METHOD

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart, which consists of four iterative stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. This design was selected because it enables researchers to improve classroom practices while simultaneously evaluating the effectiveness of instructional interventions. The study aimed to improve students' reading comprehension through the implementation of the Reciprocal Teaching strategy.

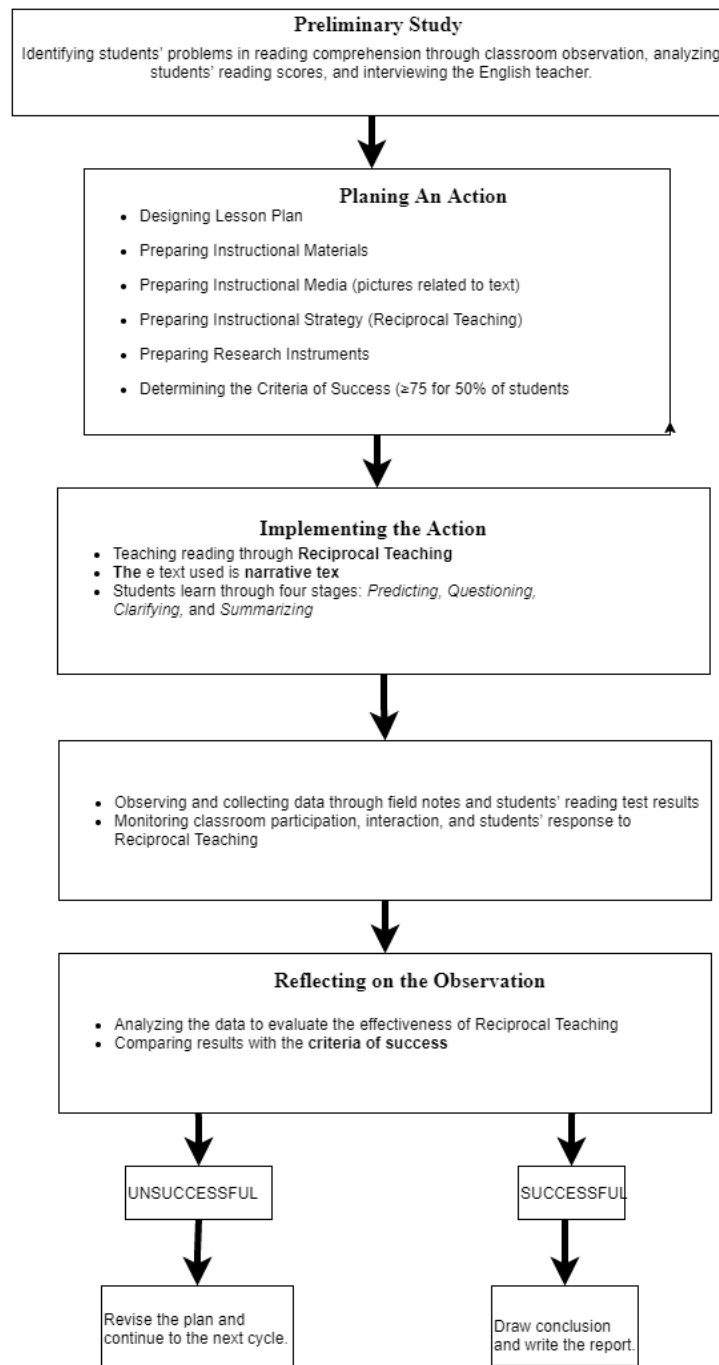


Figure 1. The Procedure of Classroom Action Research

(Adopted from Mc Taggart's in Nirawana and Romisa, 2024)

The research was conducted at a junior high school in Malang, Indonesia, involving eighth-grade students who demonstrated low reading comprehension based on preliminary classroom observations and students' achievement records. The English teacher collaborated with the researcher throughout the research process by assisting in classroom observations and reflecting on the implementation of the intervention.

Prior to the intervention, a preliminary study was conducted to identify students' reading difficulties. The findings indicated that many students had difficulty identifying main ideas, understanding detailed information, summarizing texts, and answering comprehension questions. These findings served as the basis for designing the instructional intervention using Reciprocal Teaching.

The study was implemented through one or more action cycles depending on the achievement of the predetermined success criteria. Each cycle consisted of four stages. During the planning stage, the researcher prepared lesson plans, instructional materials, reading texts, learning media, observation sheets, field notes, reading comprehension tests, and success indicators. The Reciprocal Teaching strategy was incorporated into each lesson by emphasizing four comprehension activities: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing.

During the acting stage, Reciprocal Teaching was implemented in classroom instruction. Students worked collaboratively in small groups while taking turns leading discussions using the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The teacher initially modeled each strategy before students independently applied them to comprehend narrative texts. Throughout the learning process, the teacher acted as a facilitator by providing guidance, encouraging discussion, and giving feedback when necessary.

The observing stage focused on collecting data regarding students' learning activities and reading comprehension achievement. Classroom observations were conducted collaboratively by the researcher and the English teacher using observation sheets and field notes. In addition, a reading comprehension test was administered at the end of each cycle to evaluate students' learning outcomes. The test consisted of multiple-choice questions designed to measure students' ability to identify main ideas, locate specific information, infer meanings, determine the author's purpose, and recognize the generic structure of narrative texts.

The reflecting stage involved analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented strategy. Observation results and students' test scores were discussed collaboratively to identify strengths and weaknesses of the instructional process. The findings from each cycle were then used to revise the subsequent instructional plan whenever the predetermined success criteria had not yet been achieved.

Two instruments were employed in this study: classroom observation and reading comprehension tests. Classroom observations and field notes were used to document students' participation, interaction, and engagement during the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching. Meanwhile, the reading comprehension test was used to measure students' improvement in reading comprehension after each action cycle.

Data analysis combined qualitative and quantitative techniques. Qualitative data obtained from classroom observations and field notes were analyzed descriptively to identify changes in students' learning behavior and classroom participation. Quantitative data were analyzed by calculating students' reading comprehension scores and comparing the results across research cycles to determine improvements in learning outcomes.

The success criterion of this study was established based on students' reading achievement. The implementation of Reciprocal Teaching was considered successful when at least 50% of the students obtained a minimum score of 75, which corresponds to the school's Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC). If the criterion was not achieved, the researcher proceeded to the next action cycle after revising the instructional plan based on the reflection results.

FINDINGS

Preliminary Findings

Prior to the implementation of the Reciprocal Teaching strategy, a preliminary study was conducted to identify students' initial reading comprehension ability and to examine the classroom learning conditions. This stage served as the basis for planning the classroom action and determining whether an instructional intervention was necessary. The preliminary study was carried out on August 5, 2024, at a junior high school in Malang and involved all students in the selected eighth-grade class.

Data were collected through classroom observation, interviews with the English teacher, and a reading comprehension pre-test. Classroom observation was conducted to identify students' learning behavior during English reading lessons, while the interview with the teacher aimed to obtain information regarding students' common learning difficulties and the instructional strategies that had been implemented. In addition, the pre-test was administered to measure students' initial reading comprehension performance before the Reciprocal Teaching intervention.

The pre-test consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions based on narrative texts. The questions were developed according to the reading comprehension indicators outlined in the English curriculum, including identifying the main idea, locating specific information, understanding vocabulary in context, identifying the communicative purpose of the text, and recognizing its generic structure. Each correct answer was awarded one point, whereas incorrect answers received zero points. The total scores were then converted into a scale of 0–100 to facilitate data interpretation.

The results of the preliminary study revealed that students' reading comprehension ability was still relatively low. The average pre-test score was 61.52, which was considerably below the school's Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC) of 75. None of the students achieved the required minimum score, indicating that the class had not yet attained the expected level of reading comprehension proficiency.

Table 1. Preliminary Reading Comprehension Results

Variable	Result
Number of students	23
Mean score	61.52
Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC)	75
Students achieving MMC	0
Mastery percentage	0%

The quantitative findings were supported by the classroom observation results. During the reading lesson, most students tended to be passive and depended heavily on the teacher's explanations. Only a few students actively participated in classroom discussions or responded to questions related to the reading text. Many students demonstrated limited confidence when expressing their ideas and were reluctant to ask questions when they encountered unfamiliar vocabulary or difficult passages. Consequently, classroom interaction was dominated by the teacher, while students mainly listened and completed the assigned tasks individually.

Furthermore, students encountered difficulties in several aspects of reading comprehension. Many of them struggled to identify the main idea of each paragraph, distinguish between important and supporting information, infer implicit meanings, and summarize the content of the reading passages. Limited vocabulary knowledge also became a major obstacle, preventing students from fully understanding the texts. When unfamiliar words appeared, students tended to stop reading rather than applying strategies such as predicting meaning from context or discussing the vocabulary with their peers.

The interview with the English teacher further confirmed these findings. According to the teacher, reading instruction had primarily been conducted using conventional teaching methods in which the teacher explained the content of the text, translated difficult vocabulary, and asked students to answer comprehension questions individually. Although this approach enabled the teacher to complete the lesson efficiently, it provided limited opportunities for students to actively construct meaning from the text or collaborate with their classmates. As a result,

students became accustomed to relying on the teacher rather than developing independent reading strategies.

Overall, the findings from the preliminary study indicated that students required a more interactive and student-centered instructional approach to improve their reading comprehension. Their low achievement, passive participation, and limited use of reading strategies suggested that conventional instruction was insufficient to meet students' learning needs. Therefore, Reciprocal Teaching was selected as the instructional intervention because it encourages students to become active readers through the systematic application of four reading strategies: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. These strategies were expected to improve not only students' reading comprehension achievement but also their participation, collaboration, and confidence during the learning process.

The results of the preliminary study therefore served as the baseline for evaluating students' progress throughout the subsequent Classroom Action Research cycles. Improvements in students' reading comprehension scores and classroom participation were compared with these initial findings to determine the effectiveness of the Reciprocal Teaching strategy.

Implementation of Reciprocal Teaching in Cycle I

Cycle I was conducted to introduce the Reciprocal Teaching strategy and to encourage students to become actively involved in the reading comprehension process. The implementation of this cycle was based on the findings of the preliminary study, which revealed that students had difficulties identifying main ideas, understanding unfamiliar vocabulary, and comprehending narrative texts. Furthermore, classroom observations indicated that students tended to rely on teacher explanations and rarely participated actively during reading activities.

Before the instructional activities began, the researcher prepared lesson plans, narrative reading materials, student worksheets, observation sheets, and a reading comprehension post-test. The instructional activities were designed by incorporating the four core strategies of Reciprocal Teaching, namely predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing, into each stage of the lesson.

The learning process began with the teacher introducing the topic and activating students' prior knowledge by asking several introductory questions related to the narrative text. Students were then encouraged to predict the content of the reading passage based on its title and accompanying illustrations. This activity aimed to stimulate students' curiosity and prepare them to construct meaning before reading the complete text.

After the prediction stage, students read the narrative text individually before continuing with small-group discussions. During the questioning stage, students were encouraged to formulate questions related to the content of the text and discuss possible answers with their group members. Initially, many students experienced difficulties generating meaningful questions because they were unfamiliar with this learning strategy. Most questions focused on literal information rather than inferential comprehension, and several students were hesitant to express their ideas during group discussions.

The clarifying stage provided students with opportunities to identify unfamiliar vocabulary, confusing sentences, and difficult parts of the text. Students attempted to clarify these difficulties by discussing them with their peers, consulting dictionaries, and asking for guidance from the teacher when necessary. However, classroom observations revealed that many students still depended on the teacher's explanations instead of independently applying clarification strategies.

In the final stage, students worked collaboratively to summarize the main ideas of the narrative text using their own words. Although several groups were able to identify important information correctly, many students still found it difficult to distinguish between main ideas and supporting details. Consequently, some summaries contained unnecessary information or omitted important points from the text.

Throughout the learning activities, the researcher acted as a facilitator by monitoring group discussions, providing feedback, and encouraging students to participate actively. Compared with the conventional learning observed during the preliminary study, students demonstrated greater involvement in classroom discussions, although their participation remained uneven. Some students actively led discussions and shared their opinions, whereas others preferred to listen to their peers without making significant contributions.

Students' classroom participation was evaluated using an observation checklist consisting of twenty indicators covering learning readiness, predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarizing, group collaboration, and classroom responsibility. The observation results showed that 12 of the 20 indicators (60%) were successfully achieved, indicating that students' classroom participation was categorized as moderately active. Most students showed readiness to participate in the lesson and were able to perform the predicting and summarizing activities. However, weaknesses were still observed during the questioning and clarifying stages, where many students were reluctant to ask questions or independently resolve comprehension difficulties.

To evaluate students' reading comprehension achievement, a post-test was administered at the end of Cycle I. The results indicated an improvement compared with the preliminary study. The mean score increased from 61.52 to 67.61. Nevertheless, the average score remained below the school's Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC) of 75. Of the 23 participating students, only five students (21.7%) achieved the required mastery level, while 18 students (78.3%) still scored below the criterion.

Table 2. Reading Comprehension Achievement in Cycle I

Indicator	Result
Number of students	23
Mean score	67.61
Highest score	90
Lowest score	55
Students achieving MMC (≥ 75)	5
Mastery percentage	21.7%

Overall, the findings from Cycle I demonstrate that the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching began to positively influence students' reading comprehension and classroom participation. Students gradually became more familiar with collaborative reading activities and the four comprehension strategies. However, the success criteria established for this study had not yet been achieved because fewer than 50% of the students reached the Minimum Mastery Criterion. Moreover, classroom observations indicated that several students still experienced difficulties in formulating questions, clarifying unfamiliar vocabulary, and actively participating in group discussions. Therefore, improvements were required in Cycle II, particularly by providing clearer modeling of the Reciprocal Teaching procedures, strengthening vocabulary instruction before reading activities, and increasing teacher guidance during collaborative discussions to ensure more balanced student participation.

Implementation of Reciprocal Teaching in Cycle II

Cycle II was conducted following the reflection of Cycle I, which indicated that although students' reading comprehension and classroom participation had improved, the predetermined success criteria had not yet been achieved. The post-test results from Cycle I showed that the class mean score increased to 67.61, with only 21.7% of students achieving the Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC). Classroom observations also revealed that many students remained hesitant to ask questions, clarify unfamiliar vocabulary, and actively participate in group

discussions. Therefore, several improvements were introduced in Cycle II to enhance both students' engagement and reading comprehension.

Before the implementation of Cycle II, the researcher revised the lesson plan and instructional materials based on the weaknesses identified in the previous cycle. Additional vocabulary reinforcement activities were incorporated before students began reading the texts to reduce comprehension difficulties caused by unfamiliar words. Furthermore, the researcher provided more explicit explanations and demonstrations of the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies—predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing—to ensure that students fully understood each stage of the learning process. Student roles within discussion groups were also assigned more systematically so that every learner had an opportunity to participate actively during the lesson.

The learning activities began with vocabulary review and activation of students' prior knowledge through questions related to the topic of the narrative text. Students then predicted the content of the reading passage based on its title and supporting illustrations. Compared with Cycle I, students appeared more confident in expressing their predictions and relating the topic to their previous experiences, indicating that they had become more familiar with the Reciprocal Teaching strategy.

After reading the narrative text individually, students worked collaboratively in small groups during the questioning stage. They were encouraged to formulate questions based on the text and discuss possible answers with their peers. The researcher actively monitored each group and provided guidance whenever students experienced difficulties constructing appropriate questions. As a result, more students participated in classroom discussions, and the quality of the questions improved compared with those generated in Cycle I.

During the clarifying stage, students identified unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult sentences before discussing their meanings with group members. They were encouraged to use dictionaries, contextual clues, and peer explanations prior to asking the teacher for assistance. This approach gradually increased students' confidence in solving comprehension problems independently and reduced their dependence on teacher explanations.

In the summarizing stage, students collaboratively identified the main ideas and supporting details of the narrative text before producing concise summaries using their own words. Compared with Cycle I, students demonstrated a better understanding of text organization and were able to produce more accurate summaries that reflected the essential information presented in the reading passages.

Throughout the learning process, the researcher served primarily as a facilitator by observing group interactions, providing constructive feedback, encouraging equal participation among group members, and reinforcing the correct application of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The classroom atmosphere became noticeably more interactive, with students showing greater willingness to express opinions, ask questions, and respond to their classmates' ideas. Students' classroom participation was evaluated using the observation checklist consisting of twenty indicators covering learning readiness, predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarizing, group collaboration, and classroom responsibility. The observation results demonstrated substantial improvement compared with Cycle I. Nineteen of the twenty observation indicators (95%) were successfully achieved, indicating that students' classroom participation reached the very active category.

Table 3. Students' Classroom Participation in Cycle II

Indicator	Result
Observation score	95%
Category	Very Active

The increase in classroom participation was reflected in students' reading comprehension achievement. At the end of Cycle II, students completed a post-test to evaluate their comprehension after the revised implementation of Reciprocal Teaching.

Table 4. Reading Comprehension Achievement in Cycle II

Indicator	Result
Number of students	23
Mean score	74.57
Highest score	90
Lowest score	60
Students achieving MMC (≥ 75)	14
Mastery percentage	60.9%

The post-test results revealed that the class mean score increased from 67.61 in Cycle I to 74.57 in Cycle II. Furthermore, the number of students who achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion increased from five students (21.7%) to fourteen students (60.9%). Although several students still scored below the required criterion, the overall improvement demonstrated that the instructional revisions implemented in Cycle II positively affected students' reading comprehension.

The findings also indicated that students became more actively engaged in applying the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies. They demonstrated greater confidence in predicting text content, generating questions, clarifying unfamiliar vocabulary, and summarizing reading passages collaboratively. These improvements contributed not only to higher reading comprehension scores but also to a more interactive and student-centered classroom environment.

Overall, the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching in Cycle II showed significant progress compared with Cycle I. Both classroom participation and reading comprehension achievement improved considerably, indicating that the instructional modifications effectively addressed many of the difficulties identified during the previous cycle. However, despite the substantial increase in learning outcomes, several students had not yet achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion, and some still required additional support in developing independent questioning and vocabulary clarification skills. Therefore, further refinement of the instructional strategy was considered necessary, leading to the implementation of Cycle III to achieve the predetermined success criteria.

Implementation of Reciprocal Teaching in Cycle III

Cycle III was implemented to address the remaining challenges identified during Cycle II, particularly students' limited confidence in generating questions independently and clarifying unfamiliar vocabulary. Although the results of Cycle II demonstrated considerable improvement in students' reading comprehension and classroom participation, several students still failed to achieve the Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC). Therefore, additional instructional improvements were introduced to maximize students' engagement and reading comprehension achievement.

Before the implementation of Cycle III, the researcher revised the instructional plan based on the reflection from Cycle II. Greater emphasis was placed on vocabulary reinforcement before reading activities, explicit modeling of questioning techniques, and increased opportunities for every student to participate as a discussion leader during group work. The researcher also selected narrative texts that were more appropriate to students' proficiency levels while maintaining the learning objectives of the curriculum.

The instructional activities continued to follow the four core strategies of Reciprocal Teaching: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. At the beginning of the lesson, students were encouraged to activate their prior knowledge by predicting the content of the text based on its title and illustrations. Compared with the previous cycles, students demonstrated

greater confidence in expressing their predictions and connecting the topic to their personal experiences.

During the questioning stage, students independently formulated questions related to the reading passage and discussed them with their group members. Unlike the previous cycles, most students actively participated in asking both literal and inferential questions, indicating an improvement in their critical thinking and comprehension skills. The researcher provided only limited assistance, allowing students to manage discussions more independently.

The clarifying stage also showed considerable improvement. Students actively identified unfamiliar vocabulary and difficult sentences, discussed possible meanings with their peers, and consulted dictionaries before asking the teacher for clarification. This collaborative learning process reduced students' dependence on the teacher and encouraged them to solve comprehension problems independently.

In the summarizing stage, students successfully identified the main ideas and supporting details before producing concise summaries using their own words. Most groups demonstrated a better understanding of the narrative texts by organizing important information systematically and presenting their summaries during classroom discussions.

Throughout Cycle III, the researcher functioned primarily as a facilitator by monitoring group discussions, providing feedback, and encouraging equal participation among all students. Classroom interaction became noticeably more student-centered, with students confidently sharing ideas, responding to peers' opinions, and collaboratively solving reading comprehension problems.

The observation results demonstrated that classroom participation reached the expected level. All observation indicators were successfully achieved, indicating that students actively participated throughout every stage of Reciprocal Teaching. Students showed excellent learning readiness, collaborated effectively within their groups, fulfilled their responsibilities as discussion leaders, and remained actively engaged throughout the instructional process.

Table 4. Students' Classroom Participation in Cycle III

Indicator	Result
Observation score	100%
Category	Very Active

The improvement in classroom participation was consistent with students' reading comprehension achievement. At the end of Cycle III, a post-test was administered to evaluate students' reading comprehension after the implementation of the revised instructional strategy. The results demonstrated substantial improvement compared with the previous cycles.

Table 5. Reading Comprehension Achievement in Cycle III

Indicator	Result
Number of students	23
Mean score	84.35
Highest score	95
Lowest score	80
Students achieving MMC (≥ 75)	23
Mastery percentage	100%

As presented in Table 5, the mean reading comprehension score increased to 84.35, exceeding the school's Minimum Mastery Criterion of 75. All 23 students achieved scores equal to or higher than the required criterion, resulting in 100% classical mastery. The highest score increased to 95, while the lowest score improved to 80, indicating that even students with lower initial achievement demonstrated significant progress.

The improvement in students' learning outcomes corresponded with the increased level of classroom participation observed throughout the instructional process. Students became more confident in predicting the content of texts, formulating meaningful questions, clarifying unfamiliar vocabulary, and summarizing information collaboratively. Furthermore, they demonstrated greater independence in applying reading strategies without relying heavily on teacher guidance.

Overall, the findings of Cycle III indicate that the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching effectively enhanced both students' reading comprehension achievement and classroom participation. The instructional improvements introduced after the reflection on Cycle II successfully addressed the remaining learning difficulties and enabled all students to achieve the predetermined success criteria. Since the class achieved 100% learning mastery and classroom participation reached the very active category, the Classroom Action Research was concluded at the end of Cycle III. These findings provide strong evidence that Reciprocal Teaching is an effective instructional strategy for improving reading comprehension among junior high school students.

DISCUSSION

The results of this classroom action research indicate that the implementation of the reciprocal teaching method was able to improve the reading comprehension ability of students at a junior high school in Malang gradually and significantly. This improvement is clearly reflected in the progression of scores from the pre-test, Cycle I post-test, Cycle II post-test, to Cycle III

post-test, and is further supported by increased student activity and engagement throughout the learning process.

Theoretically, these findings are in line with the concept of reciprocal teaching proposed by Palincsar and Brown as cited in (El Mehdi, 2025), which states that reading comprehension can be enhanced through structured dialogue between teachers and students by engaging four main strategies: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. These strategies function as metacognitive tools that help students monitor, control, and evaluate their understanding of reading texts. Through collaborative implementation of these strategies, students do not merely act as passive recipients of information, but rather as active learners who consciously construct meaning from texts. Therefore, the improvement in students' reading comprehension ability in this study demonstrates that reciprocal teaching is effective in promoting both cognitive and social engagement, which ultimately leads to better reading comprehension outcomes.

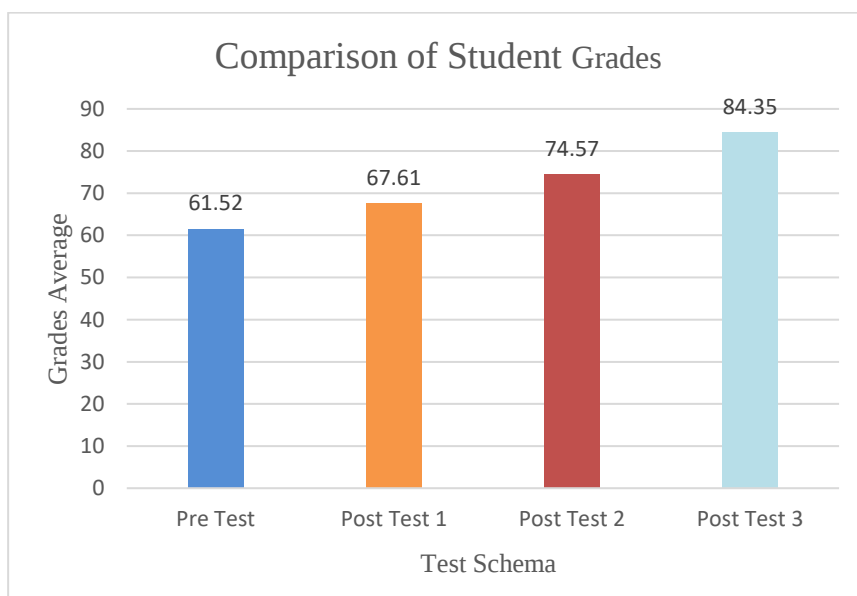


Figure 2. Graphic Comparison of Students' Grades

Findings from the preliminary investigation revealed that learners' reading comprehension proficiency remained suboptimal, with a mean score of 61.52 falling short of the Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC) set at 75. This outcome suggests that students encountered challenges in extracting central ideas, synthesizing textual conclusions, and comprehending lexical items within narrative passages. These findings are consistent with the theory of reading comprehension proposed by Snow in Smith et al. (2021), which posits that comprehension extends beyond mere decoding to encompass higher-order cognitive processes, including information integration, inferential reasoning, and meaning construction. Furthermore, the study corroborates existing literature indicating that comprehension performance improves when learners develop a solid understanding of narrative text structures. Understanding the elements of

a story helps students identify important information in the text, making the reading process more meaningful (Ni'mah, 2021).

Furthermore, the low pre-test results were also related to the conventional, teacher-centered instructional approach previously applied. According to Abdurrahman (2025), reading instruction dominated by teachers tends to make students passive and less cognitively engaged, resulting in suboptimal text comprehension. Therefore, a learning strategy that actively involves students in the process of understanding texts is required, one of which is the reciprocal teaching method.

In Cycle I, the implementation of reciprocal teaching began to show a positive impact on students' reading comprehension ability, although the results had not yet met the research success criteria. The average post-test score in Cycle I increased to 67.61 compared to the pre-test score. This improvement indicates that Reciprocal Teaching started to assist students in understanding reading texts. In Cycle I, the predicting and summarizing strategies were implemented relatively well, as reflected in students' ability to identify main ideas and compose text summaries. This finding supports the view of Aini et al. (2025), who argue that summarizing activities help students organize information and grasp the core ideas of texts.

However, observation results revealed that the questioning and clarifying strategies had not yet been optimally implemented. Some students remained passive in asking questions and were not accustomed to independently clarifying difficult vocabulary. This condition aligns with the findings of Amelia et al. (2025), who stated that at the initial stage of reciprocal teaching implementation, students often require an adaptation period because they are not yet familiar with taking active roles as independent and collaborative learners. Therefore, although improvement was evident in Cycle I, the implementation was not yet optimal and required refinement in subsequent cycles.

The results of Cycle II showed a more significant improvement in both student activity and learning outcomes. The average post-test score increased to 74.57, with a learning mastery percentage of 60.9%. In addition, student activity reached 95%, indicating a high level of engagement in the learning process. This improvement suggests that the refinements implemented in Cycle II, such as vocabulary reinforcement, clearer and more structured explanations of reciprocal teaching steps, and more intensive guidance during group discussions, had a positive impact on students' comprehension.

These findings are consistent with the research of Rosenshine and Meister, as cited in Putu et al. (2025), who state that the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching increases when teachers provide adequate scaffolding before students become fully independent in applying reading

strategies. Moreover, the Cycle II results support previous research conducted by Anggraini et al., (2023) which found that the gradual implementation of reciprocal teaching can improve junior high school students' reading comprehension, particularly in understanding main ideas and detailed information. With increased student activeness in questioning and clarifying, students became more aware of their own thinking processes (metacognition), as suggested by Muzeliati et al. (2025), who emphasize the crucial role of metacognitive awareness in successful reading comprehension.

The results of Cycle III demonstrated highly optimal success, with an average post-test score of 84.35 and a learning mastery level of 100%. All student activity indicators were also achieved at 100%, indicating that students were actively and consistently engaged in every stage of reciprocal teaching. This success suggests that students were able to internalize the strategies of predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing effectively. According to Palincsar, as cited in Kholifah et al. (2024), Reciprocal Teaching yields maximum results when students become self-regulated learners who are capable of controlling and evaluating their own comprehension processes. This condition was evident in Cycle III, where students were able to independently clarify vocabulary, pose relevant questions, and compose well-structured summaries.

Empirically, the effectiveness of this method is also supported by a systematic literature review of 28 studies, which found that reciprocal teaching improves subject comprehension, academic achievement, cooperation, communication, metacognition, and students' teaching skills (Mafarja et al., 2022). Mohamed (2023) demonstrated that university students in Saudi Arabia who learned through reciprocal teaching achieved better reading outcomes and monitoring skills than those in the control group, largely due to collaborative dialogue and structured scaffolding. Similar findings were reported by Rojabi (2021), who found significant improvements in IELTS reading comprehension among EFL learners through group work activities and increased learning motivation. At the primary education level, Hutaaruk et al. (2021) reported an increase in students' learning scores from 50.5 to 84.61 after the implementation of reciprocal teaching across several cycles, further confirming the effectiveness of this method in promoting learner autonomy and presentation skills.

In conclusion, the results of this study not only reinforce the theory of reciprocal teaching but also confirm previous research findings that this method is effective for teaching reading comprehension across various educational levels, including junior high school. Overall, the comparison of results across cycles demonstrates that the gradual and continuous implementation of reciprocal teaching significantly improves students' reading comprehension ability. The more

optimally students are engaged in the stages of predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing, the higher the learning outcomes achieved. The success in Cycle III confirms that reciprocal teaching is effective in creating an active, collaborative, and student-centered reading learning environment, and in improving students' reading comprehension outcomes comprehensively.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the classroom action research conducted at a junior high school in Malang, it can be concluded that the implementation of the reciprocal teaching method is proven effective in improving students' reading comprehension skills. The improvement was gradual and consistent, as observed from the pre-test to the post-test in each learning cycle. Each cycle showed enhancements in students' learning outcomes, both in terms of average class scores and the percentage of students achieving mastery.

The application of reciprocal teaching significantly increased students' reading comprehension skills progressively. This is evident from the comparison of results from the pre-test, post-test of Cycle I, Cycle II, and Cycle III. The average pre-test score was 61.52, which was still below the minimum mastery criteri of 75, indicating that most students had not yet achieved learning mastery. After applying reciprocal teaching, the average post-test score in Cycle I increased to 67.61, but the mastery percentage was still low (21.7%). In Cycle II, there was a significant increase, with an average score of 74.57 and a mastery percentage of 60.9%. Finally, in Cycle III, the average score reached 84.35, and all students (100%) scored $\geq$ MMC, achieving class-wide mastery.

In addition to the improvement in learning outcomes, the implementation of reciprocal teaching positively impacted students' activity and engagement during the learning process. Students became more active in discussions, more confident in expressing opinions, and capable of collaborating effectively in groups through the strategies of predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing. This demonstrates that reciprocal teaching not only enhances students' cognitive abilities but also develops social, metacognitive, and independent learning skills.

Therefore, it can be concluded that reciprocal teaching is a suitable alternative strategy for teaching reading comprehension, as it creates an active, collaborative, and meaningful learning environment while significantly improving students' learning outcomes.

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