

**Improving Students' Reading Comprehension by Using Reciprocal Teaching
at SMP YADIKA 2 Tegal Alur, Jakarta Barat**

Mawar S Hutasoit

mawarsartikahutasoit@gmail.com

SMP Yadika 2 Tegal Alur, Jakarta Barat

Abstract

The main objective of this research was to find out whether students' reading comprehension improved when taught using reciprocal teaching. The research method was classroom action research. The subject of this research was the 35 students of class VIII B at SMP YADIKA 2, consisted of six males and twenty nine females students. The qualitative data obtained from interview, observation, and researcher's diary notes, while the quantitative data obtained from the pre – test and post – test. The result indicated that there was an improvement of students' reading comprehension. It can be seen from the mean score of the students (Pre – test: 60.21; post – test cycle 1: 74.42; and post – test cycle 2: 86.78). In addition, from the interview result the researcher found that the students enjoyed learning reading using reciprocal teaching. The conclusion of the research is that reciprocal teaching technique can improve the students' reading comprehension. It is suggested that teachers should apply reciprocal teaching as a teaching technique in the classroom.

Keywords: classroom action reasearch, reading comprehension, reciprocal teaching.

Introduction

In learning a language, the learners will deal with the skills. There are four primary language skills that must be considered. Nevertheless, among the four skills mentioned, reading is the most important skill for most students of English throughout the world. It is reasonable, since the greatest importance of English for most people is to read English textbooks for getting information in many kinds of fields. In every subject, students' learning activities involve reading.

There are many definitions of reading stated by experts based on their own view. Goodman (as cited in Harland, 2013) affirmed that reading as a receptive language process. He said that there is an essential interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer expresses his thought as language and the reader reads and comprehends the language as thought. Reading is constructing the knowledge or language as Goodman said. People will receive many things around their life, news, story, or anything else and then it becomes information. Aebersold and Field (1997) review in general sense, that reading is what happens when people look at a text and assign meaning to the written symbols in that text, an interaction between reader and the text (Dakhi, 2009).

Reading without purpose will be useless. Reader must have the purposes of reading to understand the reading passage. According to Wallace (1996), there are three purposes of reading based on the personal reasons. The first is Reading for survival; almost literary a matter of life and death. For example, a stop sign for a motorist. The second is reading for learning; it is expected to be exclusively school-related. Reading is intended to support learning. The last is reading for pleasure; done for its own sake-readers do not have to do it. It is written originally to offer enjoyment.

Concerning to its comprehension, Elizabeth et al (2003) stated that comprehension is the process of deriving meaning from connected text. It involves word knowledge (vocabulary) as well as thinking and reasoning. Therefore, comprehension is not a passive process, but an active one. The reader actively engages with the text to construct meaning. This is in line with Smith and Robinson (1980) stated that "reading comprehension is the understanding, evaluating and utilizing of information and idea gained through an interaction between the readers and the author" (p.54). While Grellet (1998) stated that reading comprehension means understanding a written text to extract the required information from it as efficiently as possible. From the

definitions above, reading comprehension can be concluded as an interactive process of understanding, evaluating and utilizing information from a written text through an interaction between the readers and the author as efficiently as possible.

Related to the fact, teaching English is not totally organized in formal setting (Dakhi, 2016) and reading is one of the four major skills that students have to master. In fact, many students of Junior High School find it difficult to understand English texts. They are still poor at reading English texts. They usually get stuck because of some problems, such as unfamiliar words, inability in understanding the context, being reluctant, and so forth. Apparently, reading is a simple activity, which all English learners can do easily. However, it is not an easy skill to master. A complex process which require specialized skill of the reader and needs a comprehension.

Before doing the research, the researcher had a discussion with the English teacher of SMP YADIKA 2 Tegal Alur, Jakarta Barat, Mrs. ButetYanti, S. Pd, Based on the discussion, the researcher got information that the students' reading comprehension was still low. It can be seen in the learning process, that the students face difficulties in comprehending an English text and finding the meaning of the sentences in a paragraph. That condition caused the students have difficulties in answering questions following the text. As the result, their score in reading was low. The English teacher also told that the reading interest of the students was low. Most of the students did not read the text when they got assessment related to an English text. Only few students read the text and do their assessments. Some of them just copied their friends' work or even did not do it. Most of them were passive in reading class.

To overcome such problem especially students' reading comprehension, the researcher, therefore, applied one of the teaching techniques i.e., reciprocal teaching technique. Reciprocal teaching is one of the cooperative learning method that used by English teachers in reading class. Reciprocal teaching is an instructional procedure designed to enhance students' comprehension of text. The procedure was designed by Anne Marie Palincsar, from Michigan State University and Anne Brown, from the University of Illinois (Patti's Teacher's Corner). Reciprocal Teaching is a technique used to develop comprehension of text in which teacher and students take turns leading a dialogue concerning sections of a text. Four activities are incorporated into the technique: prediction, questioning, summarizing and clarifying misleading or complex sections of the text (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). The purpose of this strategy is to improve reading

comprehension through the use of student/teacher collaboration. It takes place in the form of a dialogue between the teacher and a group of students. In this dialogue the teacher and students take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading the dialogue about a passage of text.

A number of researchers have conducted some studies using reciprocal teaching, Nugraha (2011) who conducted his research at SMP Negeri 19 Surakarta in 2007/2008 academic year found that reciprocal teaching provides opportunities for the students to understand the lesson material more by asking other group member without being ashamed and afraid, since the students are usually afraid to ask the difficulties to the teacher. His finding revealed that reciprocal teaching technique can improve students' reading comprehension, increase their vocabulary, encourage them to be active, and enhance their skills. Another researcher, Windawati (2015) found that the use of reciprocal teaching technique could improve the reading comprehension of students of XI MIA 3 at SMA N 1 Lasem in the Academic Year of 2014/2015) significantly.

Realizing the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching to improve students' reading comprehension, the researcher in this current study would like to see whether the reciprocal teaching technique significantly improve the students' reading comprehension. Specifically, the study addressed the following research questions: (1) Is students' reading comprehension improved if it is taught by using reciprocal teaching technique? (2) What are the students' perceptions about learning reading comprehension using reciprocal teaching technique?

Methodology

The research was conducted at SMP YADIKA 2 TegalAlur, Jakarta Barat. It is located at Jl. Kamal Raya No. 42 TegalAlur, Kalideres, Jakarta Barat. The research was began with pre – test on April, 5th 2017 and ended on May, 23rd 2017. The research was conducted in the academic year of 2016/2017. One class from four parallel classes was taken as the subject of this research namely the grade VIII B. The numbers of the students were thirty five, consisted of six male and twenty nine female students. They were taught reading using reciprocal teaching technique.

The research was a two – cycled classroom action research, which consisted of four meetings in each cycle. The data was collected using test and non-test instruments. The test technique was used to collect quantitative data. Non-test techniques were used to collect

qualitative data, including: observation, interview, and researcher's diary note. Tests were carried out three times; the pre – test, post – test cycle 1, and post – test cycle 2. The non-test techniques were carried out using observation sheet, interview guide, and researcher's diary notes sheet. To analyze the qualitative data, the researcher used descriptive analysis technique. To analyze the quantitative data, the researcher used simple statistic calculation. To get the students' mean score of pre – test, post – test cycle 1, and post – test cycle 2, the researcher used the following formula:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Explanation: \bar{X} : Mean of score

$\sum x$: The total of students' score

N: Number of students

Result and Discussion

Result

At the beginning of the research, the researcher conducted a pre – test to measure the students' prior knowledge on reading comprehension. In this research, the number of the students were thirty five, consisted of six male and twenty nine female students. But, the subject of the research was twenty eight, because not all the students were participated from the pre- test to the post- test. The subject were they who participated in all tests, they were twenty eight students. The result of pre- test presented in the Table 1.

Table 1:
Students' Pre- Test Score in Reading Comprehension

No	Score	Number of Students	Percentage
1.	≥ 75	1	3.57 %
2.	≤ 75	27	96.43 %
Total		28	100 %

Table 1 indicates that the number of students who did not achieve the standard minimum score was larger (96.43 %) than the students who achieved that (3.57 %). In addition, the researcher computed that the mean score of pre – test was 60.21.

Report of cycle 1

a) Planning

The first plan of action learning focused to overcome the problem found during the initial observation and before cycle conducted. Based on the initial observation, the researcher found several problems: the students generally were lack motivation in learning reading, they hate reading, because it is bored them, they like reading, but not reading English text or English book, they like reading Indonesian novels, comics, magazines, and other entertaining reading, they did not like reading English text, because some time, they found many difficult words in the text. Based on these problems the researcher planned to make an improvement in their reading comprehension by using reciprocal teaching technique.

b) Acting

The first cycle was consisted of four meetings. The narrative texts used in this cycle were *LutungKasarung*, *The Kind Man and the Sparrow*, *The Prince and His Best Friend*, and *The Legend of Lake Toba*. The action process in the first meeting was begun by checking their knowledge about kinds of text, after that the researcher told them that they were going to study about narrative text. Then, the researcher explained about narrative text. The action continued by explaining reciprocal teaching technique to the students. After that, the researcher divided the class into groups, each group consisted of four to five students, then gave each them a reciprocal teaching work sheet and narrative text. After that, the researcher firstly leads the dialogue, modeling each of the four strategies in the first paragraph of the text. The students participated by asking the researcher to clarify difficulties, by agreeing or disagreeing with the researcher's stated main idea, by suggesting modification to the summary and by adding their own prediction about the content of the next paragraph of the text. After giving the model of how to lead the discussion, the researcher then invited one student of every group to be the discussion leaders for the next paragraph of the text. Obviously, the researcher provided guidance while the students applied the four strategies. The students then took over the teacher's role in small group as they assume responsibility for leading the discussion. Along the discussion, there were some students who were not focus in discussion, to solve that problem, the researcher spent more time to stay in

that group. To check the students' reading comprehension, the researcher asked some questions related to the text to check their reading comprehension. The same procedure was done in the second until the fourth meeting.

c) Observing

During the implementation of the action, the English teacher of class VIII-B as the observer in this research, observed the teaching and learning process. The observer found that there were some weaknesses of cycle 1: the researcher did not starting and ending the class on time, did not have the individual assignment in the end of the class, did not master the material, did not motivate the students, did not review material in the end of meeting, did not apply the four strategies of reciprocal teaching technique, and the students did not working together as a group member during the class. The condition occurred in cycle 1 was the problem to be solved and hoped the next cycle will be better. To achieve the better teaching and learning result, the researcher revised the lesson plan, and designed the better activities in teaching and learning process. The following table is the result of observation in the first cycle.

Table 2:
Observation Result of Cycle 1

No	Focus and Topics	Meeting 1		Meeting 2		Meeting 3		Meeting 4	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Learning process	2	2	2	2	3	1	3	1
2.	Giving assignment	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3.	Material	2	1	1	2	3	0	3	0
4.	Researcher's performance	1	4	2	3	2	3	2	3
5.	Technique implementation	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	2
6.	Students' interaction	0	2	2	0	1	1	2	0
Total		8	12	9	11	12	8	13	7
Percentage		40%	60%	45%	55%	60%	40%	65%	35%

Table 2 shows that in the first meeting of cycle 1, the researcher just fulfilled 40% of teaching activity. But, it was increased to 45 % in the second meeting, 60% in the third meeting, and 65 % in the fourth meeting. The percentage shown there was the improvement of the teaching learning process.

In addition, the researcher collected the result of respondents' reading comprehension test in order to know their improvement. The following is the result of post – test cycle 1.

Table 3:
Students' Post- Test Score of Cycle 1

No	Score	Number of Students	Percentage
1.	≥ 75	16	57.14 %
2.	≤ 75	12	42.86 %
Total		28	100 %

Table 3 indicates there are 57.14 % (16 students) out of 28 who achieved the standard minimum score while the rest, 42.86 % (12 students) did not achieve the standard minimum score. If the result of post- test cycle 1 compared to the pre- test result, we can see the improvement of their reading comprehension while they applied reciprocal teaching technique in the learning process, because in the pre- test, there was only one student who achieved the standard minimum score. In addition, the researcher computed that the mean score of post – test cycle 1 was 74.42.

d) Reflecting

After observing the implementation of the learning cycle I, the researcher conducted further analysis and reflection on all activities undertaken. It was found that the researcher and the students were fulfilled 65 % of teaching activity. The improvement of the mean score (from 60.21 in the pre-test to 74.42 in the post test I) also indicated that the use of reciprocal teaching technique was quite effective to improve the students' reading comprehension. However, since 12 out of 28 students did not achieve the standard minimum score, the researcher decided to conduct cycle 2 for achieving the optimal result.

Report of Cycle 2

a) Planning

Based on the reflection in cycle 1, there were some problems found: the technique was not implemented well, not all the students were participated in the discussion, the leader of the groups could not lead the discussion well, and 42.86 % of students did not achieved the standard minimum score. Therefore, the researcher revised the lesson plan. In this cycle, the researcher still used reciprocal teaching, the difference was every member of the groups had a chance to be the leader of the discussion in this cycle.

b) Acting

The second cycle was consisted of four meetings. The narrative texts used in this cycle were *La Liorona, the Crying Woman, The Old Grandfather and His Grandson, The Monkeys and the Cap Seller*, and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. After divided the class in to groups, the researcher distributed a reciprocal teaching work sheet, and a narrative text. In this meeting each member of every group had a chance to lead the discussion (within the group) about the text given by the researcher. This procedure was aimed for the students to acquire the four strategies. One student asked question, another student answered and the next one commented on the answer. While one student summarized, another student commented on or helped improved the summary. When one student identified difficult words, the other student helped to infer the meaning and gave reasons for the inferences they made. The concept of students providing support for one another, the concept of teacher support as students begin a task. This concept reflected what so called “teacher scaffolding”, which was the teacher provided support for the new learning but as students competence increased, the teacher support diminished.

c) Observing

In this cycle, the observer did the observation as she did previously at the first cycle. The observer found that the teaching and learning process was better than before. The researcher provided the details of the observation result in cycle 2 in the Table 4.

Table 4:
Observation Result of Cycle 2

No	Focus and Topics	Meeting 1		Meeting 2		Meeting 3		Meeting 4	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Learning process	1	3	1	3	4	0	4	0
2.	Giving assignment	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3.	Material	3	0	2	1	2	1	2	1
4.	Researcher's performance	4	1	5	0	4	1	5	0
5.	Technique implementation	3	1	4	0	3	1	4	0
6.	Students' interaction	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0
Total		14	6	15	5	16	4	18	2
Percentage		70%	30%	75%	25%	80%	20%	90%	10%

Table 4 indicates that the teaching and learning activity increased from the first until the last meeting. At the first meeting, 70 % of the teaching activity was fulfilled by the researcher while it was fulfilled 90 % at the last meeting.

d) Reflecting

The researcher analyzed the data was taken from test, observation, and researcher's diary notes. After computed the students' score, the researcher got the mean score of post – test cycle 2 was 86.78 while the mean score of post – test cycle 1 was 74.42. It proved that there was an improvement in students' reading comprehension after using reciprocal teaching technique. Table 5 is the result of post – test cycle 2.

Table 5:
Students' Post – Test score of Cycle 2

No	Score	Number of Students	Percentage
1	≥ 75	28	100 %
2	≤ 75	0	0 %
Total		28	100 %

Table 5 indicates that all the students achieved the standard minimum score. In other words, there was a significance improvement of students' reading comprehension from the pre – test until the post – test cycle 2 while using reciprocal teaching technique in the teaching and learning process. In addition, the researcher provided the students' mean score of each test in Table 6.

Table 6:
Students' Mean Score of Pre – Test, Post – Test 1, and Post – Test 2

Mean Score	Pre – Test	Post – Test 1	Post – Test 2
	60.21	74.42	86.78

Based on the researcher and observer finding during the implementation of the reciprocal teaching technique in the classroom, the process of teaching and learning was better from the first until the last meeting. The observation results in every meeting were recapitulated in the Table 7.

Table 7:
Observation Recapitulation

No	Focus and Topics	Meeting I – VIII	
		YES	NO
1.	Learning Process	26	6
2.	Giving Assessment	8	8
3.	Materials	18	6
4.	Researcher's Performance	35	5
5.	Technique Implementation	21	11
6.	Students' Interaction	13	3
Total		121	39
Percentage		75.62%	24.37%

All the result of observation from meeting I to meeting VIII was recapitulated in Table 7. The number of “YES” was fulfilled 121 (75.62 %) by the observer, while the number of “NO” was fulfilled 39 (24.37 %). It means that the researcher had successful in teaching the students through applied the reciprocal teaching technique.

At the end of the second cycle, the researcher conducted an interview to know the students' interest in learning reading using reciprocal teaching technique. The researcher selected six students who had different competence which was measured from their score in pre – test, post – test cycle 1, and post – test cycle 2. The researcher selected two students from high score level, two students from medium score level, and two students from low score level. In addition, the interview questions lead the students to elaborate what they got and felt during the treatment. Students were encouraged to state their opinion. The students' interview result can be seen in the following table.

Table 8:
Students' Interview Result

No	Questions	YES		NO	
		f	%	f	%
1.	Did you prefer studying in group?	4	66.67	2	33.33
2.	Did you enjoy learning reading comprehension using reciprocal teaching technique?	6	100	0	0
3.	Did the use of reciprocal teaching technique in learning reading comprehension help you comprehend the text?	6	100	0	0
4.	Did the use of reciprocal teaching technique help you in learning reading comprehension?	6	100	0	0
5.	Did you feel the benefits of reciprocal teaching technique in learning reading comprehension? If yes, why yes?	6	100	0	0
6.	Did you find any difficulties when we were learning reading comprehension using reciprocal teaching technique? If yes, why yes?	2	33.33	4	66.67
7.	Do you recommend reciprocal teaching technique applied in learning reading comprehension?	6	100	0	0

Table 8 shows that most of the interviewees (66.67 %) prefer to study in group, all the interviewees (100%) enjoyed learning reading using reciprocal teaching technique, all the interviewees (100%) were easier to comprehend reading text using reciprocal teaching technique and gave positive opinion about leaning reading comprehension using reciprocal teaching technique. The next description is all the interviewees (100 %) felt the benefits of learning reading comprehension using reciprocal teaching technique. However, 33.33 % of interviewees found the difficulties while learning reading comprehension, but they were still able to overcome them. The last description is all (100 %) interviewees suggested reciprocal teaching technique will be applied in learning reading.

From the result above, the researcher concluded that the students were enjoyed the learning process using reciprocal teaching technique, and the use of the technique helped them improve their reading comprehension.

Discussion

The data were obtained from two instruments; test and non – test. As the researcher analyzed before, reciprocal teaching technique was able to improve the students' reading comprehension. These findings were supported by the comparison of students' mean score as shown on figure 1. Before reciprocal teaching technique applied, the students' mean score was 60.21 points. Since treated with reciprocal teaching technique, the mean score improved to 74.42 points in cycle 1, and still improved to 86.78 points in cycle 2.

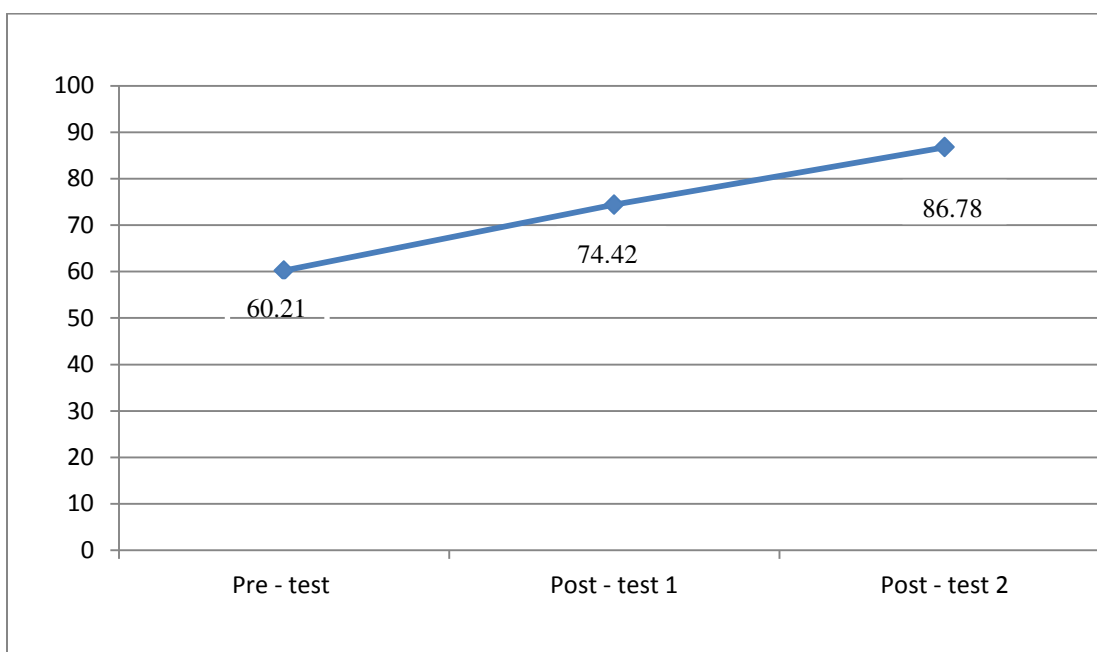


Figure 1. The comparison of students' mean score

The results of the tests, observation, interview, and researcher's diary notes showed the improvement in each cycle. In other words, the research has well done because the problems in this research have been solved.

Conclusion and Suggestions

After analyzing the data, it was known that the students mean score increased from the first cycle to the second cycle. The total improvement of students' mean score from pre – test to post – test cycle 2 was 44.12 %.The major finding of this classroom action research was supported by the qualitative data which were obtained by the result of the observation, interview, and researcher's diary notes. The results of qualitative data indicated the positive responses,

attitudes, and interests in learning reading comprehension using reciprocal teaching technique. The results of quantitative data (pre – test and post – tests) and qualitative data (observation, interview, and researcher's diary notes) concluded that reciprocal teaching technique has successfully improved the students' reading comprehension.

Realizing its high effectiveness, English teachers are recommended to use reciprocal teaching technique as an advantageous alternative to improve the students' reading comprehension, to the SMP YADIKA 2 TegalAlur, Jakarta Barat as the institution, it can be beneficial to improve the education quality, and to the other researchers, this research might be used as a reference to conduct the researches on the same area.

References

- Aebersold, J.A., & Field, M.L. (1997). *From reader to reading teacher: issues and strategies for second language classroom*. Texas: Cambridge University Press.
- Elizabeth et al. *Teaching reading: Educational practices series*. Sadag: Bellegarde.
- Dakhi, S. (2016). Foreign Language Acquisition of Souvenir Seller in Bawomataluo Village. *RETORIKA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa, Volume 2 (1)* pp. 16-32. doi: 10.22225/jr.2.1.243.16-32
- Dakhi, S. (2009). Students' difficulties in reading English newspaper. *Jurnal Littera, Volume 2 (1)*, pp. 19-27. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/36176373/STUDENTS_DIFFICULTIES_IN_READING_ENGLISH_NEWSPAPER
- Grellet, F. (1998). *Developing reading skills: A practical guide to reading comprehension*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harland, P. (2013). *Teaching reading narrative text through jigsaw technique at senior high school* (Undergraduate thesis, University of Bung Hatta, Padang, Indonesia). Retrieved from <http://ejurnal.bunghatta.ac.id.html>
- Nugraha, A. (2011). *The use of reciprocal teaching to improve students' reading comprehension*. (Undergraduate thesis, Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta, Indonesia). Retrieved from <http://thesis.uns.ac.id>
- Palincsar, A.S. & Brown, A.L. (1984). Reciprocal teaching of comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring activities. *Cognition and Instruction* 36,(1), 117-175. Retrieved from garfield.library.upenn.edu

- Smith, N.B. & Robinson, H.A. (1980). *Reading instruction for today's children*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Wallace, C. (1996). *Critical reading: principles, purposes, and practice*. Retrieved from eprints.ioe.ac.uk> Wallace
- Windawati, M. P. (2015). *The use of reciprocal teaching technique to improve students' reading comprehension in teaching analytical exposition text*. (Undergraduate thesis, Walisongo State Islamic University, Semarang). Retrieved from <http://thesis.uin.ac.id>