I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Problem

In our country, English is the first foreign language. It is a compulsory subject which is learned from elementary school until university. There are four major skills that should be mastered by students. Those major skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to the SMA School Based Unit Curriculum (KTSP 2006) for SMA, the students are expected to be able to understand reading texts in the form of descriptive materials including report, narrative, analytical exposition spoof, and hortatory exposition.

One of the basic competence standards of reading skill which should be achieved by second grade students of SMA/MA is that the students must be able to understand the meaning of short functional text and the simple essay in the form of report in daily living context and to access of the science, accurately and fluently. In other words, the students should comprehend the text well.

Reading comprehension is considered as the most important skill for students to master among the other English skills. Since much information and knowledge are mostly recorded in written forms, the students should have good ability in reading. There are many ways to be good at reading such as: the readers should know the purpose in reading, they should also have awareness of type of material they are reading, and kinds of reading techniques which can help them in comprehending the content of the text.

Referring to the 2006 English Curriculum for SMA, students are expected to be

able to comprehend the content of some kind of texts. In other words, they have to be able to find out the main ideas and specific information of the text. But in fact, according to the result of reading test in pre-observation, the writer found that students' average score was 63.28 and there were 14 students who got score 65 or more. It means that most students cannot reach minimum standard score that has been stated by the school that is 65 (See appendix 1). The students could not achieve the curriculum target because of their low reading ability, especially in finding main ideas, reference, inference, and specific information of the text.

In order to know the factors that caused students' low reading ability, students were asked why they could not comprehend the text. There were some factors that caused students' low ability in reading, for example, they did not have good knowledge in reading skill, and the crucial point, and they were bored with the teaching techniques used by teacher.

To minimize the problems above, teacher have to apply useful technique in teaching reading that can improve students' reading comprehension and make them enjoy during

teaching learning process. There are many techniques can be applied in the teaching of reading comprehension; one of them is Information Transfer Technique. Palmer (1982) stated that information transfer technique is the transfer or the change of information from linguistic form to non-linguistic form, or vice versa. During the transfer the information remains substantially the same but the form of information changes. This technique is one of the simplest ways of helping students recognize, know and use generic pattern in written texts. (Palmer in Nation, 1991: 56).

Some researchers such as Latorre and Alan (1982), Nation (1991), and Nur (2005) in their study have found that the application of Information Transfer Technique is able to make students' reading comprehension better as well as enhance students' interest. By applying Information Transfer Technique in reading class, it is hoped that the students' reading comprehension will be improved.

Then, in Information Transfer Technique, the information in a text is transferred to a table or diagram. In the process, the text becomes reduced and its content is presented in a partly graphic or visual form. The language items are linked with the information structure and the ideas of the text. The graphic form can be seen to compartmentalize language - this essentially places language items in categories with boundaries, so that students can notice them.

In addition, information transfer will help learners in understanding the text by means of nonverbal devices such as a diagrams, graphs, or tables. Other types of information transfer may include ordering a sequence of pictures, comparing text and pictures, and completing documents. Information transfer devices focus on the function of language in

a given text and draw students' attention to the logical organization of the text, to the ways in which the writer has deployed information, and to how language reflects this organization. Therefore, Information Transfer Technique will help students in comprehending the text with enjoyable ways, such as labeling diagram, drawing diagram, marking position, plotting routes, etc.

Nur (2005) conducted previous research at SMA Al-Kautsar dealing with the use of Information Transfer Technique. However, she focused on the students' perception dealing with teaching reading comprehension through Information Transfer Technique. The result was that 21 (100%) students told that the exercise was the most interesting activity and 90% (19 of 21) students told that they have more understanding to the content of the text through this technique.

Based on the description above, the researcher proposed Information Transfer Technique as one of the techniques that is considered as an interesting and useful technique to be applied in teaching reading comprehension. This research is in form of classroom action research which implements four stages: (1) planning, (2) implementation, (3) observation, and (4) reflection (Arikunto, 2006:16).

B. Formulation of the Problems

Referring to the background of the problem explained above, the problem will be formulated as follow:

1. How does Information Transfer Technique improve students' participation in reading class?

2. How does Information Transfer Technique improve students' reading achievement?

C. The Objectives of the Research

Based on the formulation of the problem, the objectives of the research are:

1. To find out how Information Transfer Technique can improve students' participation in class-reading.

2. To find out how Information Transfer Technique can improve students' reading achievement.

D. The Uses of the Research

The uses of this research are:

1. Theoretically, this research may contribute useful information for English teachers, students, and for the future research.

2. Practically, the result of the research can be used by teacher in teaching reading comprehension and for the students as one of strategies in comprehending reading.

E. The Scope of the Research

This research was in form of classroom action research. It was conducted at SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung. The subjects of the research were the second year students of SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung. In this research, the researcher focused on the implementation of information transfer as a teaching technique in improving students' reading comprehension. The materials used were based on 2006 English Curriculum for SMA. This research only focused on one type of the text, which is report text.

The research was done in two cycles. The first cycle was done based on the problem of the research, and the second cycle was done based on the result of the analysis from the first cycle.

F. Definition of Terms

In this research, the writer used some definition of key term as stated below:

1. Reading comprehension: a process of understanding the writers' idea and combining it with schemata to construct or establish new concept in the reader's mind.

2. Information Transfer Technique: a technique which involves the transfer or change of information from linguistic form to non-linguistic form, or vice versa.

During the transfer, the information remains substantially the same, but the form of the information changes (Palmer: 1982).

3. Classroom Action Research: a research, which can be done by the teacher, researcher, and the teacher with his/ her colleague, and allows the teachers to investigate events to take constructive steps toward solving immediate problems and systematically reflecting on the outcome.

4. Minimum Standard Score (KKM): score that has been decided by the teacher and should be achieved by the students to show their learning achievement.