

# THE APPLICATION OF DRTA (DIRECTED READING THINKING ACTIVITY) TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION OF SECOND GRADE STUDENTS OF SMK MUHAMMADIYAH 2 PEKANBARU

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**Abstract:** *This was a Classroom Action Research. This research was about the application of DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) to improve reading comprehension. The objective was to improve the ability of the second grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru in reading comprehension by using DRTA strategy. It was conducted to the second grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 2 pekanbaru especially XI AK 2 as the subject of research. Reading comprehension test and observation sheet were used as the tools of collecting the data. The result of this research showed that DRTA strategy could improve the students' ability in comprehending reading texts. Students' mean score improved from 46.62 in pre-test to 63.39 in post-test 1, and to 79.19 in post test 2. It is in line with the activeness of students that improved from post test 1 to post test 2. The students were able to identify the main idea, references, and supporting idea of the text. DRTA strategy could improve the students' prior knowledge by predicting the text and confirm or revise their prediction. This research recommended that teacher could use DRTA strategy to improve students' ability in reading comprehension since it was an effective strategy by predicting the text and then confirm or reject their prediction.*

**Key words:** *DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) strategy, reading comprehension*

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**Abstrak:** Ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas. Penelitian ini adalah tentang Aplikasi *DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity)* untuk meningkatkan Pemahaman membaca. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan kemampuan pemahaman membaca pada siswa kelas 2 SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru dengan menggunakan strategi *DRTA*. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk kelas2 dari SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru khususnya kelas XI AK 2 sebagai peserta dari penelitian. Tes pemahaman membaca dan observasi digunakan sebagai alat untuk mengumpulkan data. Hasil dari penelitian melihtakan bahwa strategi *DRTA* bisa meningkatkan kekampuan siswa dalam pemahaman membaca teks. Rata-rata siswa meningkat dari 46.62 di pre-test ke 63.39 di post-test 1, dan 79.19 di post test 2. Ini sama meningkatkatnya dengan aktifotas siswa did ala kelas yang juga mengalami peningkatan dari post test 1 ke post test 2. Siswa bisa untuk mengidentifikasi ide pokok, referensi, dan ide pendukung dari sebuah teks. Strategi *DRTA* bisa meningkatkan pengetahuan sebelumnya dengan memprediksi sebuah text dan menerima atau memperbaiki prediksi mereka. Penelitian ini direkomendasikan untuk guru untuk menggunakan strategi *DRTA* untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam pemahaman membaca selama ini adalah strategi yang efektif dengan memprediksi dan memperbaiki prediksi mereka.

**Kata Kunci:** *DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) strategy, reading comprehension*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is an interactive process of communication. The interaction between the writer and the reader is made possible through the text. According to Hudson (1960) reading is a process that does by the reader to catch the message that the author want to send through the written media. There is a clear understanding that reading is something related to the activity of acquiring information and it is done either silently or aloud.

Reading means dealing messages in written or pointed form, it involves processing language messages. Reading as a receptive skill is important skill because through reading we can get something valuable. Reading is also ways for us to know about the past, present, and future. But some people are boring to read; maybe it caused their lack of knowledge and motivation to read. To get some information and knowledge of the text we have to comprehend the text first. That is way reading is important skill that should be learn by students.

Reading is one activity with purpose a person may read in order to get information or verify existing knowledge. There are four skills thought in the classroom but the main object is reading comprehension, it means that reading becomes the most important skill to be developed in the classroom.

Comprehension takes the learner to a new level of active understanding and insight. It enhances language and vocabulary knowledge. Good learner uses a variety of comprehension strategies simultaneously. According to Pressley (2002), they know how to deliberately apply specific strategies to aid their comprehension, particularly with regard to challenging text/ information.

Most of the students face some difficulties in understanding some of reading text. They read word by word and try to identify the meaning of those words. In this case, the teacher's role is very important in education, because they can guide, influence and develop student's ability, in order to be clever and skillful. The teacher should be able to choose appropriate teaching approach, methods, and techniques. In teaching reading, the teachers have the ability to guide students in learning reading. The aim in teaching reading is to make students able to read the text effectively and efficiently.

There are some components of reading that should be focus on comprehending reading text; finding factual information, finding main ideas, finding the meaning of vocabulary in context, identifying references, and making inferences.

The researcher had interviewed through the discussion and observation to some students of the second year students of SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru, almost all of students in the class confused and not interested about the text. Even, they did not understand to what they read because the students could not catch the idea of the text. It can be caused by their lack of vocabulary. Some students are passive in class, they did not want to give their opinion or idea in discussion of learning and teaching process. The students did not want to ask the teacher if they did not understand about the topic or material.

Beside, the researcher had interviewed the English teacher of SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru through the discussion and interviewed. Based on the observation and interview, the researcher got some information about teaching and learning process. There are some problems that faced students while they learn English especially in reading. In teaching and learning process, the teacher still used conventional technique and teacher centered. The teacher is more active to talk than the students. The teacher only focused on the text book and then asked the students to do

the exercises. The teacher's way of teaching can't motivate students to enjoy the lesson. So, the students felt bored and unsatisfied on learning easily.

Based on test given by the teacher, and that is multiple choices, showed about 45% of students reached the minimum criteria of achievement since the Standard Minimum Criteria (KKM) of SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru is 78. There are about 55% students failed in the test. They were failed in identifying the main idea of the text and also to determine the supporting idea of the text. It means most of students did not reach the minimum criteria of achievement.

Based on the fact above, it would be necessary to find an appropriate technique to be applied in order to improve the student's skill in reading. The writer decided to use Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy to be used in this research. According to William in his book entitled *Reading in A Second Language* (2009), DRTA draws an empirical research, which demonstrates the effectiveness of predicting, clarifying, monitoring and evaluating strategies, and so it has indirect and powerful support for its instructional activities.

In order to make this research focus, the writer limits the problem of the research to improve the students' reading skill on narrative texts by using DRTA strategy. According to the syllabus, narrative text is one of the subjects that second grade students' should learn at the end of second semester. So, it can reflect to the other kind of text. The aim of this research is to improve the ability of second grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru after being taught by using DRTA strategy.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This was a classroom action research. It was conducted from May to June 2014, in academic year 2013/2014.

According to David Hopkins (2008) Classroom Action Research is a kind of research in which teachers look critically at their own classroom primarily for improving their teaching and quality of education in their school. Then, Thomas Angelo (1993) said that Classroom Action Research is the patient, systematic study of students learning by disciplinary faculty in their classrooms.

Then, Hopkins (2008) add that classroom action research provide teachers with an opportunity to look critically at their own classroom, mainly of the purpose of improving their teaching and quality education in their school.

Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988) states that Action research is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice on their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices carried out. Kemmis and Mc. Taggart (1988) say that there are four fundamental aspects that occurred in the action research; they were planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These four aspects are included in the cycle of action research that DRTA strategy applied.

### 1. Planning

The researcher chooses Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in order to improve students' reading comprehension. Before doing the research, a plan

is needed. The planning included the information about all activities that would be done in the study.

The plan that was needed in the action research is a lesson plan. The lesson plan is used as guidance for the researcher in constructing teaching activities in the classroom. Therefore, before doing the research, the researcher made some preparations, such as:

a. Making lesson plan.

Before teaching, the researcher needed to prepare the lesson plan. It was the step and activity that the researcher would do in the class.

b. Making test and answer task.

The researcher made a test to measure the students' ability in reading. The test was in the form of multiple choices.

c. Making observation sheet

The researcher prepared the observation sheets. They were used to see the students' involvement in teaching and learning process using DRTA strategy.

d. Choosing the text being taught. (In this case, the writer choose narrative text according to the syllabus, as the research instrument)

## 2. Action

The researcher applies the procedure of DRTA which has been done by Wilhelm (2001). There are the different treatment between cycle I and cycle II. In cycle II the researcher asks the students to find the main idea and supporting statement of the text and make the summarizing of the text. They are as follows:

### 1. Pre-Reading

- Teacher explained the aim of teaching and learning process
- Teacher choose a text for the students and presenting the clues (titles or key words)
- Help the students make predictions about the text's content
- Have students write their prediction down on Prediction Verification Checklist.
- Make sure students understand how to use the checklist to classify their prediction as: prove, disproved, requires revision, not mention, not enough information.
- Help students establish a purpose for reading by predicting them to read the text to determine whether it proves or disproves their predictions.

### 2. During Reading

- Have students read the text, silently or aloud, individually or in groups, to verify their prediction.
- Instruct the students to place a check mark under the appropriate category on the Prediction Verify Checklist as they read the text.

### 3. Post-Reading

- Have the students compare their predictions with the actual content of the text.
- Ask the students to analyze their checklist and determine how well they predicted the content of the text.

- Verify that the students have learned the DRTA strategy by having them answer the following met cognitive questions:
  - What is the name of strategy you learned?
  - How does the strategy help you understand what you read?
  - What should you do before you read? While you read? After you read?

### 3. Observation

Observation is used to file the effects of the action which has been done by the writer while the teaching and learning take place. Checklist is done during the classroom activities. It must be done carefully in order to find the facts about the student's behavior and activities.

In doing this research, the researcher helped by collaborator. The collaborator is one of the English teachers in SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru. She would help the researcher to observe the students' and teacher's activities during the learning process. The collaborator did the observation based on the observation sheet.

There are two kinds of observations, they are:

#### a. Students' observation sheet

The collaborator observed the students' activities, both individual and group during the teaching and learning process.

#### b. Teacher's observation sheet

Collaborator observed the researcher's activities in teaching reading by using DRTA strategy during teaching and learning process.

### 4. Reflection

In reflection, the researcher analyzed, and responded to the previous learning process in the cycle to create the next plan for the next cycle. In this aspect, if the result of the research is not really satisfied, the researcher has to review the reconstruction of the planning. If the result of the first cycle has fulfilled the minimum criteria of the successful action, that is 78, the second cycle doesn't need to be carried out.

In this research, the researcher used two technique in collecting the data; qualitative data and quantitative data. The qualitative data is used to describe the situation during teaching and learning taking place while the quantitative data is used to analyze the score of the students.

The qualitative data were obtained and analyzed from the observation sheet to see the progress of the students' reading comprehension in reading text through Directed Reading Thinking Activity and whole process when the teaching and learning taking place. Quantitative data was obtained through test, while the qualitative data was obtained through observation. In this research, there were three instruments used to measure the students' ability in comprehending narrative texts.

This following formula was used to know the students' score in answering the question.

$$P = \frac{X}{N} \times 100$$

(Kunandar, 2009)

Where:

P = Raw score of each individual

X = the number of correct answer

N = the number of items tasted

To know the students ability in pre-test and post-test, the data that have been collected analyzed by using the following formula:

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

$\bar{X}$  = Mean

$\sum fX$  = Sum of the Raw Score

N = Total number of students

(Heaton, 1991)

To know the validity of the question by using the following formula:

$$F.V = \frac{R}{N}$$

Where:

F.V = Facility Value (index of difficult)

R = The number of correct answer

N = the number of respondents for one of items

(Heaton, 1991)

Heaton (1991) stated that if the index of facility value is between 0.30 and 0.70 the test items is accepted. But, if the index of facility value is smaller than 0.30 and bigger than 0.70 the test items is rejected because the test is either too easy and too difficult.

Table 1 The Level of Ability

No	The Score Ability	Category
1	81-100	Excellent
2	61-80	Good
3	41-60	Mediocre
4	21-40	Poor
5	0-20	Very Poor

(Adapted from Harris, 1974)

In analyzing qualitative data, it deals with meanings, descriptions, values, and characteristics of people and things. According to Gay (2000) the steps to analyze the qualitative data as follows:

a. Data managing

Data managing involves creating and organizing the data collected during the research. The data organization is checked for completeness whether it has gotten

from qualitative data (observer's comment on students' reading activities and teacher's teaching activities using story mapping strategy). The observation checklist both for students' and teacher's activities was prepared in this step.

b. Read the data

The first step in analyzing is reading. The observer's comment on observation every end of each cycle seemed important was read and noted. The record of initial thoughts and sense of the data were collected.

c. Categorize the data

The typical ways of qualitative data analysis were broken down and organized it through the process of classifying. The observer's comment on students and teacher's activities in comprehending narrative texts using story mapping strategy class are ordered in this step.

d. Describe the data

The researcher described the data got from teaching and learning process in order to complete the information about students' and teacher's activity during reading narrative texts using story mapping strategy class.

e. Interpretation

The researcher should know about the aspects and correction of the data to make a summary. It determined how one identified what was important, why it was important, and what it indicated about the students and context studies in observation checklist on students and teacher's activities in reading class.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Presentation of Research Findings

In this part, the writer presents the findings of the research in improving students comprehension by using DRTA strategy.

Table 2 The Comparison of the Pre Test and Post Test

No	Test	Ability Level									
		Very Poor		Poor		Mediocre		Good		Excellent	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Pre Test	-	-	14	35.8	21	53.8	4	10.3	-	-
2	Post Test I	-	-	1	2.6	19	48.7	16	41.1	3	7.7
3	Post Test II	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	64.1	14	35.9

Based on the Table 2, we can see the improvement increase significantly from pre test to post test I and post test II. The percentage of '*Poor Level*' in pre test was 35.8%, it was come down in post test I to 2.6% and 0% in post test II. The percentage of '*Mediocre Level*' in pre test was 53.8%, it was decreased in post test I to 48.7% and 0% in post test II. The percentage of '*Good*' in pre test was 10.3%, it was increase in post test I to 41.1% and 64.1% in post test II. Then, there was the percentage of '*Excellent*'



in pre test was 0%, it was increase in post test I to 7.7% and post test II 35.9%. It means '*Excellent Level*' was increased significantly. There were 24 students had passed the standard minimum criteria in cycle 2.

Table 3 The Comparison of Each Component of Reading Comprehension of the Pre Test and Post Test

Test	Component of Reading					Average
	Main idea %	Factual information %	Meaning of word %	Reference %	Supporting Idea %	
Pre Test	52.6	48.7	44.9	43.2	41.9	46.2
Post Test I	65.4	64.9	62.4	63.2	58.1	62.8
Post Test II	77.8	74.4	78.6	81.6	85.5	79.6

For question of 'main idea' in the average of pre test was 52.6, it was increase in post test I to 65.4 and then increase in post test II to 77.8. For question of 'Factual information' the average in pre test was 48.7, it was increase in post test I to 64.9, and increase in post test II to 74.4. For question of 'guessing the meaning of the word' the average in pre test was 44.9, it was increase in post test I to 62.4 and increase in post test II to 78.6. For question of 'finding references' the average in pre test was 43.2, it was increase in post test I to 63.2, and in post test II to 81.6. For question of 'supporting idea' the average of the pre test was 41.9, it was increase in post test I to 58.1 and post test II to 85.5.

Table 4 The Comparison of Mean Score of Pre-Test, Post Test I, and Post Test II

Average Score of Pre Test	Average Score of Post Test I	Average Score of Post Test II
46.6	63.4	79.19

The different mean between pre test and post test I was 16.8, the different mean between post test I and post test II was 19.8, and the different mean between pre test and post test II was 15.8. Based on the fact above, the writer decided to finished the research in cycle II because the result is satisfied and higher than minimum criteria. It can be conclude that DRTA strategy could improve reading ability in comprehending text of the second year students of SMK Muhammadiyah 2 Pekanbaru.

Table 5 The Improvement of Students' Ability from Cycle I to Cycle II

No	Students' Activity	Cycle I			Cycle II		
		1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
		meeting %	meeting %	meeting %	meeting %	meeting %	meeting %
1	Students grouped into small groups	82.1	89.7	89.7	97.4	97.4	100
2	Students pay attention	69.2	82.1	87.2	92.3	92.3	97.4
3	Students read the title	64.1	71.8	84.6	89.7	94.9	100
4	Students make a prediction	64.1	64.1	74.4	84.6	94.9	97.4
5	Students read the text	61.5	79.5	74.4	84.6	89.7	94.9
6	Students confirm or revise the old predictions	58.9	64.1	74.4	79.5	92.3	94.9
7	Students compare their predictions with the actual content of the text	58.9	66.7	69.2	74.4	92.3	97.4
8	Students analyze their checklist/ prediction	58.9	66.7	69.2	74.4	92.3	97.4
9	Students do the quiz individually	53.8	64.1	76.9	76.9	92.3	100

## Discussion

Based on the result of the research, it can be concluded that DRTA strategy could improve students' ability in comprehending reading text. It can be seen in students' score after being taught by using DRTA strategy. This strategy can activate students; prior knowledge and make students more active to talk and ask about their own opinion. Besides, the students more easy to comprehend the text by make a prediction first before they go to read the whole text. According to Conner (2006) DRTA encourages students to make a prediction while they are reading. After reading a segment of a text, students stop, confirm or revise previous prediction, and make a new prediction about what they will read next.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

Based on the analysis of findings of the research, the researcher concluded that DRTA strategy can improve the students' ability in reading comprehension. It could be seen from the score of the students that had increased from the first to the third test. According to the data, the average of pre test was 46.6 (*Mediocre Level*), the average score in post test I was 63.4 (*Good Level*), and the average of post test II was 71.19 (*Good Level*), while the minimum criteria of English subject at SMK Muhammdiyah 2 Pekanbaru is 78. It means DRTA strategy can improve students' ability in reading comprehension. These findings answer the question of this research, '*Can DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) improve the students' ability in reading comprehension?*'

Then, there were also increased of students' activity and motivation in reading. It could be seen in the observation sheet for students that showed the percentage students activeness in each meeting. It can be conclude that DRTA strategy could motivate the students during teaching and learning process.

Besides, the students can predict very well the question on the text, and also they organize the key point of the text. The activities of DRTA make students more enjoyable in learning reading.

### Recommendation

Based on the result of this research, the writer would like to offer some recommendations. The suggestions might be helpful for the teacher and students. The recommendations are as follows:

1. It is important to teacher to use the appropriate method in order to make the lesson more interesting in teaching and learning process. The teacher can use DRTA strategy as one of the alternative method, because according to the result DRTA could improve students' ability in reading comprehension.
2. The researcher recommends the teacher has to be able to give some motivation to the students in order to make the students interested to the lesson.

3. English teacher should be creative to make a good situation during teaching and learning process in order to make students enjoyable situation for students in the class.
4. In applying DRTA strategy, the teacher should give clearly instruction to the students, so they are not confused about the step of the strategy.

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