

# THE USE OF THE DIRECTED READING THINKING ACTIVITY (DRTA) STRATEGY IN A READING CLASS AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL KRIDA UTAMA CENTRAL LAMPUNG

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**Abstract:** The purposes of this empirical research were to explore: (1) the implementation process of the DRTA strategy in the reading class, (2) effect of the DRTA strategy on the reading comprehension achievement. This research was conducted at SMA Krida Utama Gunung Sugih, Lampung Tengah. There were 30 students used as the subject. The data of this research were collected through observation, interviews, and pretest-posttests. The data were analyzed using content analysis and t-test. The results of the research show that: (1) the DRTA engage the students to actively pay more attention at the pictures, to imagine the situation, and to look up the dictionary; (2) the DRTA shows a positive effect on the students' reading achievement after they were taught through DRTA, this may be attributed to the effectiveness of the activity practiced by the students. This suggests that DRTA facilitated the improvement of students' reading comprehension achievement.

**Keyword:** teaching procedures, DRTA strategy, students' reading achievement.

**Abstrak:** Tujuan-tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan (1) proses dari strategi DRTA meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa, (2) pengaruh strategi DRTA dalam prestasi pemahaman membaca siswa. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di SMA Krida Utama Gunung Sugih, Lampung Tengah. Ada 30 siswa yang digunakan sebagai subjek penelitian. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan observasi, wawancara, dan tes pilihan ganda. Data dianalisis menggunakan analisis konten dan t-test. Hasil dari penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: (1) DRTA mengajak siswa untuk secara aktif memberi perhatian lebih pada gambar, membayangkan kejadiannya, dan membuka kamus; (2) DRTA memiliki pengaruh yang positif pada pencapaian membaca siswa setelah mereka diajarkan dengan menggunakan strategi DRTA, ini dapat dikaitkan dengan keefektifan kegiatan yang dilakukan oleh siswa. Ini menunjukkan bahwa DRTA memfasilitasi peningkatan prestasi pemahaman membaca siswa.

**Kata kunci:** prosedur mengajar, strategi DRTA, prestasi membaca siswa.

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is an active process for all of the students at all levels starting from elementary school through the university which consists of recognition and comprehension skill. It is in line with Harmer (2001), who

states that reading is not a passive skill. Reading is an incredibly active occupation. To do it successfully, we have to understand what the words mean, see the pictures, the words are painting, understand the arguments,

and work out if we agree with them. According to Berardo (2006), reading is considered to be an interactive process (a conversation between writer/reader, even though the writer is not present).

According to Grabe and Stoller (2001:188), reading is the ability to read-taking general comprehension as the exam-requires that the reader draws information from a text and combine it with information and expectations that the reader already has. Reading is a very important skill for learners. The students will get some benefit from reading, they are expected to be good at reading in order to increase their knowledge and get some information. In a fact, the students were found that they have failed in comprehending an English text. They said that reading an English text is a very difficult activity. The students fail to understand how sentences related to one another.

Considering the conditions above, the writer focused on students' purpose, where to comprehend an English text they have to learn from the text itself. By reading the text, the students recognize and build rhetorical frames that organize the information in the text, such as the genre of the text. To make students think critically, the writer uses the DRTA strategy which is developed by Stauffer (1969). DRTA is a comprehension strategy that guides students in asking questions about a text, making predictions, and then reading to confirm or refute their predictions. There have been several researchers who have conducted research dealing with DRTA strategy to improve students' reading comprehension.

Al Odwan (2012) has done the research on the effect of the DRTA through Cooperative Learning on English secondary stage students' reading comprehension in Jordan. The findings of his study were the use of DRTA through cooperative learning as a successful instructional strategy to improve reading comprehension. In line with Yazdani and Mohammadi (2015) states the DRTA strategy is an effective one for developing reading comprehension in the Iranian context. This strategy emphasizes the development of thinking skills and involves the students in processes to enhance learning. The findings of this study is consistent with the results of a number of studies which support the significant impact of DRTA on reading comprehension.

Moreover, Hasanah (2016) has investigated the application of DRTA on students' reading comprehension with cooperative learning. The result of the research was students' reading comprehension achievement has increased after being taught through DRTA into cooperative learning and that shows the improvement in the students' reading comprehension achievement.

Dealing with the previous studies which have been conducted by several researchers above, the writer assumes that they only paid more attention to quantitative data which only focused on the improvement of reading comprehension achievement. The previous studies only focus on the result. They only talk about the result of the students' reading achievement are increase, but they do not talk about the process. In this study, the writer focused on the qualitative data which regarded on the

process of how DRTA strategy helped the students to improve their reading comprehension. Therefore the researcher observed all of the students' activities in the teaching-learning process through the DRTA strategy.

## METHOD

This study was conducted by using qualitative and quantitative design. The qualitative data are used to describe the situation during the teaching and learning process while the quantitative data is used to analyze the score of the students.

The research participants are the students of the second year students at SMA Krida Utama Gunung Sugih, Lampung Tengah. In this case, the observation was used to answer the first research question. It was held during the teaching-learning process, to find out what activities helps the students in comprehending the text. Then for the interview, was

conducted in order to support the answer from the first research question based on the observation. The question of the interview was about the activities in the teaching-learning process through the DRTA strategy.

Then, there were 40 items of the reading comprehension test and it was used to answer the second research question. This instrument was given to the students after they learned reading by using the DRTA strategy. From the students' reading comprehension test, the writer would find out the improvement of the students' reading comprehension by comparing the result from the pre-test and the post-test.

## RESULT

After determining sample of the research, the researcher taught the students through the DRTA strategy.

**Table 1. The Role of DRTA In Helping the Students' Reading Comprehension**

No.	Pre Reading (Predicting)	%	During Reading (Verification)	%	(Post Reading) Reading with a Purpose	%
1.	Looking at the pictures	32%	Matching the pictures with the paragraph	30%	Making a conclusion	29%
2.	Reflecting the image	25%	Matching the paragraph and the other paragraph	25%	Matching the whole prediction	28%
3.	Looking up dictionary	23%	Finding the main idea	23%	Comprehending the text	23%
4.	Asking friends and teacher for translating	20%	Finding the keyword	22%	Connecting the word into sentences	20%

Table 1 above shows that looking at the pictures had the highest percentage in the pre-reading (predicting) stage (32%). This indicates that looking at the pictures was the best way to help the students in making a prediction. It is followed by reflecting the image, looking up the dictionary, and asking friends and teacher for translating respectively.

In during the reading (verification) stage, matching the pictures with the paragraph has a higher percentage (30%). This indicates that matching the pictures was the best way in helping the students to comprehend the text, followed by matching the paragraph and another paragraph, finding the main idea, and finding the keyword respectively.

In post reading (reading with a purpose), making a conclusion had the highest percentage (29%). This indicates that making a conclusion was the successful activity in post-reading followed by matching the whole predictions, comprehending the text, and connecting the word into sentences respectively.

After administering both reading comprehension pre-test and post-test, the researcher used statistical computerization; repeated measure t-test of SPSS 16 to analyze the increase in students' gain. The result of the pre-test was compared with the result of the post-test to analyze the difference on the students' reading

comprehension achievement before and after being taught through DRTA in a reading class.

The difference between the pre-test and post-test in the reading class showed that the students' mean score of reading comprehension post-test was higher than the pre-test. It increased from 62.1667 in the pre-test up to 74.1667 in the post-test, and the gain was 12. The data showed that sig. (2-tailed) is 000, sig <  $\alpha$  ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). It means that there was a positive effect on the students' reading achievement after they were taught through DRTA since the significant value is  $< 0.05$ .

**Table 2 The Significant Increase of Students Reading Comprehension Score**

No	Range Score	Pretest		Posttest		Description
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
1.	< 60	13	43%	5	17%	Low
2.	61 – 70	8	27%	9	30%	Middle
3.	> 71	9	30%	16	53%	High
	Mean score	62.17		74.17		
	Minimum score	50		55		
	Maximum score	75		90		

Table 5 above shows that there were three range scores in students reading comprehension; low level (< 60), middle level (61 – 70), and high level (>71). The maximum score in pre-test was increased from 75 to 90 in post-test. The students who were in a low level increased into the middle level, and the students in the middle level increased to a high level. However, there were some students who were still at a low level. The detail was 5 students (17%) still in the same score range (low level) and 8 students (27%) increased to the middle level. It could be concluded that the students in this score range (low level) could increase to the *middle level*.

Then, for the 8 students who were in the middle level increased to a high level. The detail was 1 student (3%) was in the middle level and 7 students (23%) increased to a high level. It could be concluded that the students in this score range (middle level) could increase to a good level and some students were still at a good level.

For the students who were at a high level of pre-test increased from 9 students (30%) up to 16 (53%) in the post-test. The detail was 9 students (30%) were still at the same level, 7 students (23%) increased from middle level into a high level. It could be concluded that the increase

could occur from all score range, but for a low level (< 60) and could not reach the highest level (>71). The students at this level only reached the middle level; from middle level (61.00 – 70.00), and high level (>71) could reach the highest level.

## DISCUSSIONS

From result of analysis it can be inferred that looking at the pictures had an important role to help them in making a prediction. According to Wright (1989), the use of pictures can be a good starting point to help the students develop their reading skills. Through the pictures, the students can get the information that will help them predict what the text tells about. It makes the students recognize the meaning of the text more quickly than they have to know and sort it from what they hear or read. He also states that there are many kinds of pictures that can be used in teaching learning activities such as individual pictures, picture in series, and composite pictures. It is in line with the researcher that used picture series in teaching reading through DRTA.

In addition, by looking at the picture series, the students were also able to imagine the situation in the text by reflecting the image. They use their imagination to help them in making prediction more easily. Besides that, according to Breitzkreuz (as cited in Hendra, 2010), pictures representing continuous events of the story with important information. It can make students become interested and motivated in the teaching-learning process. Even when the students have a lack in the vocabulary; they still can illustrate what is on the text

by looking at the pictures. At least, they know some of the events on the text.

The students were matching the picture series with the paragraph to help them in finding the information in the paragraph. In this activity, they can make a mental picture of text to comprehend processes they face during reading. This skill shows that the students perceive a text. Those who form a mental image as they read are able to remember what they have read better than those who do not image. Pressley (as cited in Sabouri, 2010).

In post reading, the students also can make the summary. The students combine information in a text to elaborate their own words of what the text is about. Summarizing is a significant strategy that allows readers to remember texts rapidly. In this strategy, readers can be aware of text structure, of what is significant in a text, and of how opinions are related to each other. According to Richardson and Morgan (as cited in El-Koumy, 2006), DRTA engages students in higher order thinking skills and that these skills include making connections between interrelated elements of the text, justifying thought processes, and drawing logical conclusions. They maintain that these skills can set the pathway toward independent reading, foster learner responsibility, and improve reading comprehension.

Based on the explanation above we can see that there were positive perceptions of the used of DRTA strategy in reading comprehension activity. From all of the activities in the DRTA strategy process,

predictions have a deeper role in the process of helping students understand the text. It is in line with Conner (as cited in Anjani et al., 2015) DRTA encourages students to make a prediction while they are reading. After reading a segment of a text, students stop, confirm or revise the previous prediction, and make a new prediction about what they will read next.

Furthermore, in predicting stage the students were active to open dictionary, ask the teacher, imagine the situation, and also make the students think hard. By making a prediction the students could comprehend the text better than before. Some of them said that the picture series also has an important role in making them more imaginative to imagine what happens in the text. The students also said this strategy engaged them busy to comprehend the questions, picture series, and write down their own idea in English in making a prediction.

The result of this research goes along with the research by Yazdani and Mohammadi (2015) states the DRTA strategy is an effective one for developing reading comprehension in the Iranian context. This strategy emphasizes the development of thinking skills and involves the students in processes to enhance learning. This strategy should be used for teaching reading comprehension from the outset of instruction. It should be noted that success with the DRTA does not come immediately, but the effort should be made for any teacher who wants to develop thinking readers. Likewise, improvements in the teaching and learning activities of reading also could be found. The

students were actively involved during teaching and learning process through the implementation of DRTA.

According to Hasanah (2016), the students' participation in predicting stage improved. The students were more confident to participate by presenting their prediction to the class since they had received feedback from the researcher regarding the grammar and the way they expressed their prediction. Besides, their ability to predict the content of the text and to express their prediction also gets better.

Based on the result of the pre-test and the post-test above there was a positive effect on the students' reading achievement after they were taught through DRTA strategy. It could be seen that the students' score of post-test was higher than pre-test. The mean score of pre-test increased from 62.1667 up to 74.1667 in the post-test, and the gain was 12. In other words, the increase was 12% the T-test revealed that the result was significant ( $p=0.000$ ). The finding of this research is in line with the previous research done by Al Odwan (2012). He has done the research about The Effect of the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity through Cooperative Learning on English Secondary Stage Students' Reading Comprehension in Jordan. The findings concluded that there was a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha= 0.05$ ) in reading comprehension among English secondary stage students due to the instructional strategy (Directed reading thinking activity through cooperative learning) compared with the conventional strategy. The results

presented that the reading comprehension scores across the experimental and control groups were significantly different.

The improvement in students' reading comprehension may be attributed to students' skills developing ability to read the material using DRTA. Because in this activity, the students are engaged in making predictions, reading silently, verifying their predictions, and re-reading the selection purposes specified by the teacher.

It meant that the DRTA strategy had a good effect on a students' reading comprehension achievement because the mean in posttest was higher than pretest. From the table above there are three score ranges that we can divide into three categories. From the result, we can see that the use of the DRTA strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension achievement. The improvement in students' reading comprehension may be attributed to students' skills developing the ability to read the materials using DRTA. Because in this activity, students set purposes, make predictions, read silently, verify predictions, re-read the selection of purposes specified by the teacher, and respond to evaluations and enrichment activities. This may be attributed to the effectiveness of the activity practiced by the students, which has enhanced the learning processes among students through a series of training activities such as brainstorming, activating prior knowledge, predicting, and checking that have affected the process of learning among students.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results and discussions of the implementation of teaching-learning through DRTA, the researcher draws the following conclusions:

1. DRTA strategy helped the students to monitor their comprehension through three stages; pre-reading, during reading, and post reading. From three stages above, prediction had an important role in DRTA strategy because in this stage the students were active used their critical thinking. It is proven by the activities that students have been done during the teaching-learning process in the pre-reading stage.
2. The DRTA shows a positive effect on the students' reading achievement after they were taught through DRTA, this may be attributed to the effectiveness of the activity practiced by the students.

By considering the conclusions above, the researcher proposes some suggestions as follow:

1. For English teacher  
For all the teacher who wants to use Directed Reading Thinking Activity in their teaching-learning process, it is better to know the condition of the class because one class may be different from another. The implementation of the DRTA strategy in individually at a big class it is not suitable because the teacher will get the difficulties to manage the students.
2. For other researchers  
Since this study only gives an emphasis on the use of DRTA to

improve the reading skill, it is also suggested that other researchers conduct a study on the use of DRTA to improve another receptive skill, which is the listening skill.

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