

## **IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH DIRECTED READING THINKING ACTIVITY (DRTA) STRATEGY WITH PICTURES OF THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPN 4 MENGWI IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Reading is considered as an essential skill in English that should be mastered by the students in all grades as well as in junior high school. On the other hand, many students faced many problems and difficulties in reading. The present classroom action research was mainly intended to figure out whether the subjects' reading comprehension can be improved through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) with picture. However, based on the preliminary investigation which was conducted in SMPN 4 Mengwi, it was found that most of the subjects' reading comprehension was low and most of them could not pass the minimum passing grade, 75. It was supported by the result of pre-test which was carried out in the pre-cycle, there were 31 subjects who did the pre-test had low reading comprehension. The study was then carried out by implementing Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) With Picture in two cycles. The result of the post-test in each cycle clearly showed there was significant improvement concerning the subjects' reading comprehension a narrative text. Furthermore, there were positive responses concerning the implementation of the technique which combined with teaching media in improving the subjects' reading comprehension. In other words, the present study proved that reading comprehension of the eighth grade students of SMPN 4 Mengwi in academic year 2020/2021 can be improved through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) Strategi with Picture.

**Keywords:** Improving, Reading Comprehension, DRTA with Picture

### **ABSTRAK**

*Membaca dianggap sebagai keterampilan penting dalam bahasa Inggris yang harus dikuasai oleh siswa di semua kelas maupun di sekolah menengah pertama. Di sisi lain, banyak siswa menghadapi banyak masalah dan kesulitan dalam membaca. Penelitian tindakan kelas ini terutama dimaksudkan untuk mengetahui apakah pemahaman bacaan subjek dapat ditingkatkan melalui Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) dengan gambar. Namun, berdasarkan pemeriksaan pendahuluan yang dilakukan di SMPN 4 Mengwi, ditemukan bahwa sebagian besar pemahaman bacaan mata pelajaran masih rendah dan sebagian besar tidak dapat melewati nilai kelulusan minimum, 75. Hal ini didukung oleh hasil pre -tes yang dilakukan pada pra siklus, terdapat 31 subjek yang melakukan pretes memiliki pemahaman bacaan yang rendah. Penelitian kemudian dilakukan dengan menerapkan Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) With Picture dalam dua siklus. Hasil post-test pada setiap siklus secara jelas menunjukkan adanya peningkatan yang signifikan dalam pemahaman membaca teks naratif subjek. Selanjutnya, terdapat tanggapan positif mengenai penerapan teknik yang dikombinasikan dengan media ajar dalam meningkatkan pemahaman bacaan mata pelajaran. Dengan kata lain, penelitian ini membuktikan bahwa pemahaman membaca siswa kelas VIII SMPN 4 Mengwi tahun ajaran 2020/2021 dapat ditingkatkan melalui Strategi Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) with Picture.*

**Kata kunci:** Peningkatan, Pemahaman Membaca, DRTA dengan Gambar.

## INTRODUCTION

To get information, people should read many kinds of information. Reading is a source of getting information. No one can get much information without reading. Actually, reading is the easiest and the cheapest way to get information, because it can help to know the simple information to the more complex one. Reading is not only a source of information and pleasurable activity but also a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language. There a lot of information, they should know, and they should find many kinds of information sources that are written in English. According to Brown that reading is the most essential skill in the educational context as it can be the assessment for students' general language ability. Reading comprehension is one aspect of language skills that must be mastered by the student. To be able to interpret and absorb information from reading material, students should have a good understanding ability. Reading comprehension is required in each subject because each lesson is inseparable from the act of reading. Therefore, students are required to have good understanding capabilities.

In the fact, there are still many problems in the learning process of reading comprehension. In the reading text, students often find some difficult words that they do not know their meaning. However, before we translate the word, we must know or understand through comprehension so that they can describe their ideas or can give conclusions from English reading text through their comprehension Applying strategies to the teachers' own reading not

only helps the teacher become better prepared to provide Reading comprehension strategy instruction but also demonstrates the potential for improvement that such strategies hold for their students. The use of suitable strategies will be one of the determinants in teaching-learning. Even in terms of learning reading comprehension.

Based on observation and interview through a phone call with one of the English teachers, at SMP N 4 Mengwi students difficulty understanding English text and low comprehension, even most of them do not interest in reading. They lacked the vocabulary and grammatical knowledge important to comprehend the texts. And also there are some students who still difficult to answer the question based on the text. Besides that, the students also difficult to find the main idea in the text. Also, the strategy or method used by the teacher still conventional, the teacher just taught conventionally. They are only asked the students to do assignments in LKS and to reading comprehension learning, a teacher just asked the students to answer the question based on the text. It is known from the researcher's interview with some students in that school.

Those problems indicate the need for an appropriate teaching strategy that cannot only help improve student's comprehension ability but that can make them actively participate in the reading class as well. In this case, the researcher suggests the use of a Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DR-TA) strategy with pictures. DR-TA helps students comprehend texts by activating their background knowledge related to the

texts and promote the use of reading strategies. In addition, the student's comprehension progress before, while, and after reading is monitored during the discussion so as to prevent the students from misunderstanding the texts. DR-TA can help the students understand the text and make them actively involved in the teaching and learning process.

Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DR-TA) strategy is one of the strategies in teaching and learning comprehension. DR-TA strategy focusing student's engagement with the text, because students have to predict and prove when the students read. In teaching reading comprehension, students can find the main ideas in the text. DR-TA strategy is an attempt to equip readers with the ability to determine the purposes of reading, the ability to extract, comprehend, and assimilate information, the ability to make predictions to examine reading materials based on the purposes of reading, the ability to pass judgments, and finally the ability to make decisions based upon information gleaned from reading. With the prediction of the strategy of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DR-TA) strategy students automatically questioning their own questions that are part of the process of understanding a text. Students will be careful and will be of critical thinking in reading so that students understand the reading text. DR-TA strategy expected will be an effective way to teach

students reading to improve their comprehension.

Regarding of those researchers, the strength of both researchers was from how they had delivered the material well and the implementation of DRTA as the strategy of teaching reading In the classroom. In this study, the researcher would apply DRTA to improve students reading comprehension. The difference this study with previous research is the researcher would apply DRTA with pictures to teach reading of the narrative text. Furthermore, the researcher would use DRTA as the strategy and picture as the interesting media to improve students reading comprehension. Moreover, the researcher chooses the Legend, Fable and Fairy tale story as the material to improve student's reading comprehension of narrative text. The researcher would use the short answer task as the test item in conducting the pre-test and post-test. Meanwhile, in the post-test in each cycle the researcher provided twenty questions in the form of a short-answer task for the students in order to measure their comprehension after applying DRTA with pictures.

Based on the background above, the researcher focused entitled "Improving Students Reading Comprehension through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DR-TA) Strategy with picture of the Eight Grade Students of SMP N 4 Mengwi in Academic Year 2020/2021".

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design was used Classroom Action Research. Classroom action research had a purpose to find out and overcome of teaching problems in the classroom. Through classroom action research, the teacher knows what actually happened in the teaching process compared with what the teacher planning before teaching in the classroom. In the other words, classroom action research given the advantage to the teacher to extend their teaching skill and get more understanding related to themselves as a teacher, there, and their students' real condition. It was in line with the idea of reflective practice and the teacher as the researcher. The goal of the classroom action research was to improved professional competency, change learning behavior, upgrade self-confidence and develop the subjects' knowledge. In this study, an appropriate technique was used and

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The present study made use of classroom action research design as what has been mentioned in chapter III. All data needed for this study were collected from the eighth-grade students of VIII class, SMPN 4 Mengwi in academic year 2020/2021. The subject consisted of 31 students. They were selected as the subjects of the research because they had problems in reading comprehension and it needed an improvement in order to achieve the minimum passing grade.

There were two instruments used in the presents study; those were tests and questionnaires. The tests were pre-test and post-test. The pre-test that was administered

combined with interesting media. This classroom action research was concerned with the used of DRTA with pictures to improve reading comprehension.

Ferrance (2000:1) states that classroom action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully using the technique of research. It has been particularly well developed in education, specifically in teaching and is now used widely across the professions. Everyone did classroom action research, so it was for 'ordinary' practitioners as well as principals, managers and administrators. Action research could be a powerful and liberating form of professional inquiry because it means that practitioners themselves investigate their own practice as they find ways of living more fully in the direction of their educational values.

before the teaching and learning process was put into practice to the subjects. In addition, the post-test was given to collect the main data which were administered at the end of each cycle after implementing DRTA with pictures in teaching reading comprehension. To gather the additional supporting data, the researcher administered the questionnaire to the subjects to know their responses toward the DRTA with pictures in teaching reading comprehension in this classroom action research.

After successfully carrying out the cycles in the classroom by applying DRTA with pictures in teaching reading compression, the findings of this classroom action research such as the data from pre-test, post-test 1, post-test 2 were tabulated.

Furthermore, to support the main data, the questionnaire was given in the end of the study. Main data from pre-test and post-test showed the ability of the subjects in reading comprehension and the indication whether there was improve or not.

Therefore, there were three kinds of activities obtained for the present classroom action research which consisted of pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle II. In pre-cycle, the researcher administered the pre-test to get the data of the subjects' preliminary reading comprehension. After getting the result of the pre-test, the researcher conducted cycle I. In cycle I, the researcher collected the data by administering post-test 1. Furthermore, the researcher collected the obtain data by administering post-test 2 in cycle II. Moreover, all of the data were collected by using the research instruments. After gathering the main data from pre-cycle, cycle I and cycle II, the researcher also collected the additional data from the questionnaire. It was given at the end of the last cycle. The results were analyzed by the researcher in order to know the success of the implementation of DRTA with pictures.

In administering the pre-test, the researcher gave an explanation about how the subjects should do the test individually also they were asked to answer it on the answer sheet. The questions of the pre-test were focused on identifying general information, specific information, textual meaning and textual reference of the reading passage. The reading passages used in the pre-test were about the narrative text of two topics; fairytales and fable. The total score of the pre-test was 1891 (see table 4.1). In addition, it showed that reading

comprehension of the subjects was low and needed to be improved.

Related to the result above, the mean score that was obtained by the eighth-grade students in pre-cycle was 61.00. This result was extremely under the minimum passing grade which was 75. Moreover, among 31 subjects who did the pre-test, there was none subject who passed the minimum passing grade. It also founded that most of the subjects of the study had difficulties in reading text, especially in answer the question based on the text. Since the results of the pre-test showed that the subjects' reading was still low, it really needed further improvement. In addition, the pre-test was administered in order to know the real problems faced by the subjects in reading comprehension. The pre-test was in the form of answer the question based on the text. In administering the pre-test, the subjects under study were given a pre-test to measure their pre-existing comprehension in reading.

Cycle I was carried out based on the result of the pre-test in the pre-cycle. It showed that the subjects in class VIII C had low comprehension in reading. Therefore, cycle I was conducted by the researcher to solve the subjects' problems in reading comprehension. In this cycle, the researcher administered two sessions namely session 1 and session 2. Cycle I consisted of four interconnected activities namely planning, action, observation and reflection. In this cycle, the researcher carried out the main process of reading comprehension through DRTA with pictures.

Planning was an important step to be concerned in order to make the action in the teaching-learning process ran as smoothly as

possible. In planning, the researcher prepared the lesson plan, learning material worksheet and post-test 1. In this step, everything which was needed for the implementation of the strategy was well prepared. It needed to create a plan that addressed the problem faced by the subjects of the study that had been identified. Planning was focused on constructing lesson plans to be suitable with the syllabus used in the school and it was fixed with the time allotments of 80 minutes in each session. Furthermore, the researcher designed the lesson plan which consisted of two sessions. For session 1 cycle I, the researcher prepared the learning material about the narrative text which provided the definition of narrative text, generic structure, and types of narrative text. The researcher also prepared an example of narrative text, picture and a worksheet of narrative text about fairytales and fable. The worksheet was administered to the subjects to practice their reading comprehension. For session 2, the researcher prepared a different picture and worksheet of narrative text and post-test. The researcher constructed a post-test for the subjects under study in order to know their progress after the implementation of DRTA with picture in teaching reading comprehension.

In action, the researcher taught the subjects in the class by applying DRTA with pictures. The activities were divided into three namely pre-activity, whilst- activity and post-activity. Based on the 2013 curriculum, there were four interconnected activities namely observing, questioning, exploring and associating, and communicating. The teaching and learning

process was acted based on the planning that has already been prepared before. There were two sessions in each cycle, sessions 1 and 2. In session 1, the researcher presented the learning material about the narrative text. Furthermore, the researcher gave the subjects an example of narrative text entitled "The Beauty and The Beast". After that, the researcher gave the subjects DRTA column sheet, picture and reading text worksheet entitled "Pinochio" which consisted of ten questions. The researcher guided them to make a prediction in the prediction column, read the text individually to each stopping point and evaluated their prediction in confirm column. Then, the subjects were asked to answer the ten questions to measure whether they have already understood the text. After they have finished answering the questions, they discussed the answer together and summarized the material. In session 2, the researcher asked the subjects to practice by using the different pictures and reading text entitled "Rapunzel" which consisted of ten questions. Besides, the researcher also applied DRTA with pictures as in session 1 to help the subjects understand the text. Then the researcher asked them to answer ten questions.

After that, both the researcher and the subjects discussed the answer together. At the end of session 2 in cycle I, the researcher administered the post-test to each subject. The subjects were asked to finish the post-test in 30 minutes. The clear steps of the action in cycle I of the teaching and learning process in the classroom can be seen in Appendix 3. During the teaching and learning process, the researcher also did observation in the classroom. Here, the

researcher did not only act as a teacher but also as an observer to know subjects' responses toward the implementation of DRTA with pictures as well as the subjects' improvement in reading comprehension. Afterward, by looking at the result of the observation, it seemed that some of the subjects enjoyed the teaching and learning process.

On other hand, some of the subjects did not really pay attention to the explanation of the material. They still had less attention during the teaching and learning process of reading. Therefore, they still had difficulties answering the worksheet. By reflecting on it, in the next cycle, those few students were becoming the focus of the attention of the researcher. It was for the sake of sharing attention and giving fair treatment to all subjects. Also, the researcher did emphasize identifying textual meaning and textual reference when remaining the material. Moreover, to get the data of the subjects' improvement after the application of DRTA with pictures, the researcher then gave the post-test.

The post-test was administered at the end of session 2 in cycle I in order to know the progressing scores of the subjects. The subjects were asked to answer 20 items of the short answer task in 30 minutes.

Cycle II was conducted in order to get a better improvement of the subjects. Reviewing the weaknesses of cycles I, cycle II was carried out in a revised version. The researcher did emphasize identifying textual meaning and textual reference by explaining identifying textual meaning and textual reference and giving more questions related to the material to the subjects. This version

was made based on the results of the post-test. As same as cycle I, cycle II was divided into two sessions namely session 3 and session 4. There were also four interconnected activities that were done namely: planning, action, observation and reflection. This cycle was conducted to improve subjects' reading comprehension to achieve the success indicator.

Based on the previous cycle, in the planning of cycle II, the researcher prepared the same planning as cycle I. Planning in cycle II was needed to be improved. The researcher then prepared the lesson plan, learning material, worksheet, post-test 2 and questionnaire. The researcher designed the lesson plan of cycle II which consisted of two sessions and the time allotment was 160 minutes for two sessions. The researcher prepared a picture on the reading passage and to the practice subjects' reading comprehension, a worksheet was given. The researcher also conducted a post-test in the end of session 2 for the subjects under study. In cycle II, as the supporting data, the researcher also prepared a questionnaire to know the subjects' responses after being taught toward the implementation of DRTA with pictures.

In action, the researcher applied the planning that has been well prepared. In general, the teaching-learning process in cycle II was also similar as in cycle I it took 80 minutes in each cycle. The main task of the researcher was to do the planning that has been made and teach the subjects by using DRTA with pictures. There were two sessions in cycle II, session 3 and session 4. In session 3, the researcher gave the subjects a narrative text entitled "The Ugly Duckling

and New Friend” The researcher reminded the subjects about the learning material in cycle I and did emphasis on identifying textual meaning and textual reference. Then, the subjects were given DRTA column sheet and a narrative text entitled “The Mouse Deer and Crocodile” The researcher implemented DRTA with pictures to help subjects more understand the text. The subjects were guided to make a prediction in the prediction column, read the text individually to each stopping point and evaluated their prediction in confirm column.

Then, the subjects were asked to answer the ten questions to measure whether they have already understood the text. After they finished answering the questions, then they discussed them together. In session 4, the researcher gave the subjects a picture, DRTA column sheet reading text entitled “The Rabbit and The Bear” The subjects were guided in implementing DRTA with pictures in reading comprehension and they had to answer ten questions. After discussing the worksheet, the researcher was administered post-test 1. The subjects had 30 minutes to answer the post-test. After they finished answering the post-test, they were also asked to fill a questionnaire and it took 15 minutes in order to quantify their responses on the implementation of DRTA with pictures in teaching reading comprehension.

During the teaching process, the researcher did observation. The observation was done to know the subjects’ behavior during the learning process Besides, as a teacher, the researcher was also an observer to know the subjects’ response toward the

implementation of DRTA with pictures. The result of the observation during the teaching and learning process in cycle II showed that the subjects were motivated and very active in the learning process. It can be seen from many subjects who asked the questions to the researcher. The subjects could understand the material and answer the question grammatically base on the text. Moreover, the subjects enjoyed the lesson, they did not feel bored again and more attention to the teaching-learning process. The subjects were more interested and active in the learning process by using DRTA with picture strategy. After the teaching and learning process, the achievement of the subjects was figured out by administering a post-test. The researcher administered post-test 2 at the end of the cycle to know whether there was an improvement in the subjects’ reading comprehension compared with the result of post-test 1 in cycle I. In the process of analyzing the post-test, the result of the subjects’ test was used as a measurement to know whether the strategy was good or not. Furthermore, post-test 2 was also followed by 31 subjects.

The minimum passing grade of SMPN 4 Mengwi was 75. Based on the data resulted in the post-test of cycle II, it showed the significant improvement of the subjects. The result of the score of post-test 2 mean scores was 81.09. It had passed the minimum passing grade of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Mengwi that was 75. There were 29 of 31 subjects who achieved the minimum passing grade. In addition, they were more active and pay more attention during teaching and learning process in classroom. It could be seen from the mean

score of the post-test in cycle II which showed that from 31 subjects, 29 subjects has achieved the minimum passing grade of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 4 Mengwi that was 75. Therefore, the researcher could be stopped because the study was considered successful and it has achieved the success indicator.

To obtain the additional supporting data, the researcher administered the questionnaire to the subjects under the study at the end of cycle II. The data gathered from administering the questionnaire showed the subjects' responses on the implementation of DRTA with pictures in improving reading comprehension. The questionnaire consisted of ten statements that were written in *Bahasa Indonesia*. Moreover, the results of the questionnaire were analyzed by using a rating scale of 5 to 1. Based on the tabulation of the questionnaire in table 4.2 the subjects' responses of strongly agree were 825, agree were 544; undecided 27; and none disagree of the subjects' responses showed disagree nor strongly disagree.

Moreover, the data were taken to find out the percentages of the subjects' responses on the implementation of DRTA with picture based on the questionnaire which was given in the end of the last cycle. The tabulation data of the subjects' responses after being taught through DRTA with picture were presented in table 4.2. The data obtained from questionnaire have to be calculated and then discussed to know the subjects' responses after being taught through the implementation of DRTA with pictures in improving the students reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students

of SMPN 4 Mengwi. The percentages calculation for the scores of the questionnaire's items showing the subjects' total answer for items of strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree.

From 31 subjects, the results of the questionnaire showed that there were 59.10% of the responses strongly agree; 38.97% of the responses agree; 1.93% of the responses undecided; and none of the responses showed disagree and strongly disagree. In addition, from the results of the questionnaire, it could be stated that most of the subjects gave positive responses with the implementation of DRTA with pictures. The subjects were more interested and active in the learning process by using DRTA with pictures. They paid more attention to the teaching learning process. The results of the questionnaire also supported the major findings data of pre-test and post-test in cycle I and cycle II. Therefore, the implementation of DRTA with pictures in teaching reading comprehension had successfully solved the problem faced by the subjects. Moreover, in order to give clear presentation of the data on how the subjects' improvement and also responses toward the implementation through DRTA with pictures in reading comprehension. The findings of the presents' classroom action research showing the rising comparative mean score of pre-test, post-test 1 in cycle I and post-test 2 in cycle II, and also the questionnaire

In addition, the data of the questionnaire showed that most of the subjects gave positive responses about the implementation of DRTA with pictures in improving reading

comprehension. The data showed that more than 90% of the responses showed that the subjects agree with the implementation of DRTA with pictures. It meant that most of the subjects agree that the implementation of DRTA with pictures in the teaching and learning process can improve the students' reading comprehension. Can be seen from the results of the pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2 that significantly improve after the implementation of DRTA with picture.

The present study was in line with the previous study that DRTA with pictures could improve students' reading comprehension; moreover, the present study was more effective and successful. Based on the findings of the presents study, it can be stated that reading comprehension of the eighth grade students of SMPN 4 Mengwi in academic year 2020/2021 could be improved through DRTA strategy with pictures.

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