

# Improving Reading Comprehension of Simple Reading Text Using Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) Strategy for Deaf Students

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to describe the steps in using the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy to improve reading comprehension skills of simple reading texts in class VII deaf students of SMPLB Karya Mulia Surabaya. This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) carried out in two cycles. Each cycle consists of 2 meetings. The subjects used were class VII SMPLB Karya Mulia Surabaya students, with ten students. While the object used is a simple reading text. The data sources of this research are students and teachers. Data collection techniques using tests, observations, interviews, and documentation. Test the validity of the data using triangulation techniques. And for data analysis used is qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques.

**Keywords:** Directed reading thinking activity (DRTA) strategy, Reading comprehension, Deaf students.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Deaf children are known as hearing less or not hearing at all. Physically, deaf children do not have a significant difference compared to hearing children and normal children in general. It is just that deaf individuals have a hearing impairment. About the deaf, the deaf is divided into deafness, hearing loss [1]. This deafness automatically affects language skills, including speaking, reading, listening, and writing. The language development of deaf children themselves experience delays in pre-operational development due to the minimal amount of receptive language that he gets so that his vocabulary is not too much.

Language is a code where ideas about the world are represented by signs mutually agreed upon for communication purposes [2]. The direct impact of deafness is the inhibition of verbal/oral communication, both expressively (speaking) and receptively (understanding other people's speech). The inhibition makes it difficult to communicate with the environment. People who hear generally use verbal language as a means of communication. These communication barriers also result in obstacles in the education and learning process of deaf children. Deaf children will quickly understand what they have experienced, so the variety of

experiences greatly affects their cognitive development. An intensive language environment will be better for the cognitive development of deaf children. Even though they did not previously understand what was said, the deaf child will become richer in language so that it helps their cognitive development if they are accustomed to speaking.

In language, there is also reading skill, which manifests language communication in visual form. In conveying information, you must use grammar and words that deaf students easily understand. Reading ability is limited to reading writing and mentioning verbal words, but the information is contained in writing into children's cognitive processes. However, looking at the conditions in the field when learning in class, deaf children do not get maximum learning strategies; as a result, they do not understand the learning material. Limitations in hearing deaf children result in their reading comprehension abilities being below the average of normal children. The reading ability of deaf children is much different from normal children their age [3]. Based on this research, it is explained that reading comprehension is a language skill that is difficult for deaf children to master. This is supported by research that deaf children have difficulty understanding texts compared to

normal children their age. From 47 deaf students, it shows that 26 of these students show difficulties in understanding texts [4].

Based on the learning process observations, activities have not optimally run because the factor of delivering material provided by the teacher is still difficult to understand by children only with signs and oral without concrete examples. Referring to this fact, the researcher intends to provide an alternative as a solution using the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) reading strategy. The DRTA strategy, students are asked to provide predictions about what will happen in a text [5]. In making predictions, students use their background knowledge about the topic. The advantage of this DRTA strategy lies in the students' predictive or analytical abilities. Here students are invited to think. Therefore, providing interesting and simple material can help students think, and the strategies will work. For example, they gave concrete pictures related to the material [6]. More precisely, that is describing the contents of the reading through a media first before students read the reading that will be given. Thus, students' comprehension power after matching predictions with what has been read becomes stronger.

The DRTA strategy can help students improve their thinking skills, helping students become critical thinkers, become reflected students, and find ways to solve their problems [7][8]. In addition, thinking skills can help students understand the text, understand the meaning of the text, and find the conclusions from the whole text. The DRTA strategy provides an opportunity for teachers to guide students to think like readers who are good at anticipating, predicting, and then confirming and modifying their ideas with the story as it unfolds [9].

Based on the description above, problems can be formulated, namely: (1) how is the implementation of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in simple reading texts to improve the reading comprehension ability of class VII students of SMPLB Karya Mulia Surabaya? and (2) What is the implementation of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity strategy (DRTA) on simple reading text can improve the reading comprehension ability of class VII students of SMPLB Karya Mulia Surabaya?

The purposes of this study: (1) describe the implementation of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in simple reading texts to improve the reading comprehension skills of class VII students of SMPLB Karya Mulia Surabaya, (2) to determine the results of the implementation of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in simple reading text to improve skills.

## 2. METHOD

The research method, in principle, is the procedure or method taken in research. The research method is important because the success or failure and the high and low quality of research results are largely determined by the accuracy of the researcher in choosing his research method [10]. The research methods include (1) research design, (2) research subjects and objects, (3) implementation procedures, (4) details of implementation procedures, (5) data collection methods and instruments, and (6) data analysis techniques and success criteria.

The design of this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). It is called classroom action research because this type of research can offer a new way and procedure to improve and improve the quality of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In connection with that, CAR is research carried out in the classroom through certain actions to solve problems faced by researchers in learning [11]. This classroom action research was conducted to solve the problems teachers face in learning. In this case, the method offered by researchers to improve teaching and learn in the classroom is in the form of implementing the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy.

The research was conducted in class VII SMPLB Karya Mulia Surabaya, totaling ten students. Data collection tools are test instruments in the form of evaluation questions and non-test instruments in observation sheets and interview guidelines. Data collection techniques used are test techniques and non-test techniques. The test technique uses a written test, while the non-test technique uses an observation sheet in a rating scale and interview guidelines.

Test the validity of the data using triangulation of data sources, including students, class VII teachers, observers, and documents. Triangulation techniques were used in this study, including test techniques and non-test techniques. The form of data analysis uses the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three flows: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions [12]. The achievement indicator in this research is 75% for using the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The form of implementation applied to the DRTA strategy is contained in the stages of reading comprehension. The stages are explained by Table 1. This class action is implemented for two cycles; each consists of 2 meetings. Action research uses the following Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy steps: (a) predicting stories based on title clues, (b)

making predictions based on pictures, (c) reading activities, (d) assessment prediction accuracy, (e) presentation of group prediction results.

The following are the results of the data in cycle one and the results of cycle 2 (Table 2). Based on the results of table 1, it can be concluded that the observations of teachers in cycle 1 were 70.95% and in cycle two increased to 80.54%. And the results of observations of students in cycle 1 amounted to 69.78%, in cycle two increased to 77.24%. It means that it has met the performance indicators, namely 75%. Based on these data, it can be seen that there has been a very good increase, and cycle two has shown optimal results. From this increase, the classical learning completeness achieved by students has met the expected demands. This increase also occurs because the DRTA strategy has several appropriate steps to train students to think critically through predicting title and image clues. Other than that, in addition to self-confidence, students' learning motivation also increases during the implementation of the DRTA strategy. Through the active involvement of teachers by providing direct instruction, students are motivated to be actively involved in all stages of the reading process. This is reflected in their involvement in the learning process, which increased significantly from 69.78% to 77.24% for students and from 70.95% to 80.54% for teachers.

**Table 1.** The correlation stages between DRTA Strategy and Reading Comprehension

Stages of reading comprehension	Stages of DRTA strategy
Pre-reading stage	a. Make predictions based on title hints. b. Make predictions based on image clues.
Stage while reading	Read the material text
Post-reading stage	a. Assess predictions from reading material that has been read. b. Make a summary according to the understanding of each student.

**Table 2.** Results of observation of the use of the DRTA strategy

Cycle	Percentage of Observation Results	
	Teacher	Student
Cycle 1	70.95%	69.78%
Cycle 2	80.54%	77.24%

In addition, the increase in the value obtained in learning reading comprehension with the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy is caused by the learning process that encourages students to think from various perspectives. This activity is a way to stimulate students to gain a deeper understanding of what they read. Through prediction, of course, students will be more interested and active in finding information from the reading material. This material will make it easier for students to understand the material presented by the teacher. During the learning process, teacher involvement during the teaching and learning process is very important to assist students in achieving the learning objectives: understanding the content of the exposition text. However, the 'help' provided by the teacher here does not merely test the students' memory of the text they read. On the other hand, this reading procedure directs students to process the text by gradually guiding at the same time and then relinquishing responsibility to students.

Giving examples to students when predicting pictures also makes students' understanding better. This example is done by providing ways to read a simple reading text equipped with concrete images. With this, students will easily understand the contents of the reading. In addition to having the right steps to train students to think critically through predicting title and picture clues, this DRTA strategy also has several advantages in students' predictive or analytical abilities. The advantages of the DRTA strategy include (1) Sharpening students' thinking skills through predicting title and picture instructions. (2) Generating students' curiosity about the truth of their answers will increase motivation to be more careful reading text discourse [5].

Therefore, as teachers gradually relinquish responsibility to students, the students can independently utilize the DRTA procedure. This supports the findings of [13] that DRTA involves students in higher-order thinking skills, including making connections between interrelated texts, justifying thought processes, and drawing logical conclusions by guessing. They maintain that these skills can set the road to independent reading, foster responsibility, and improve reading comprehension.

Another finding, students gave a positive response to the application of the DRTA strategy assisted by image media in learning to read short stories. This response can be seen from the very conducive classroom atmosphere. Positive student responses are reflected in student behavior when participating in learning. In addition, this positive attitude can also be seen from students' enthusiasm in predicting the titles and pictures shared by the teacher. This is in line with research conducted by [14], which states that the DRTA learning strategy can improve student learning activities, responses, and intensive reading skills. This shows a positive response equation to the strategy that the researcher uses (in the form of the DRTA strategy).

The research identifies and reviews 52 studies related to learning reading comprehension between deaf and normal students in the United States [15]. The results stated that deaf students require more repetition in delivering material than normal students. It is concluded based on the results of studies that have been carried out. This research is supported [16], who developed a DRTA strategy with combines 4D techniques (Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate). The strategy can improve students' reading skills by developing learning materials in implementation and application. DRTA gives a trully significant impact that focuses on presenting a large percentage of students' reading comprehension [17]. The application of DRTA in learning reading comprehension will affect students in developing their reading comprehension skills on their thinking skills. They have a positive attitude that runs during the learning process.

From this description, the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy on the ability to read comprehension of simple reading texts is acceptable and successful. This can be seen from the increase in test results in the second cycle compared to the first cycle.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the results of the research discussion above, the use of the DRTA strategy has been suitable to be applied to the learning of deaf students; because the steps for reading comprehension in the DRTA strategy are explained coherently and make it easier for students to understand the reading text. The steps described are: (a) predicting stories based on title instructions, (b) making predictions based on pictures, (c) reading activities, (d) assessing the accuracy of predictions, (e) presenting group predictions. The implication of this research is to illustrate that teachers can use the use of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy to improve reading comprehension skills.

Suggestions that can be given are as follows: (1) teachers can use this DRTA strategy in learning if students cannot understand the content of reading learning materials in class. (2) to other researchers, the exposure of this study can be used as a reference or material in researching similar problems.

#### **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

All authors conceived and designed this study. All authors contributed to the process of revising the manuscript, and at the end all authors have approved the final version of this manuscript.

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