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**USING DIRECTED READING THINKING ACTIVITY (DRTA) STRATEGY  
TO IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS  
OF SMP NEGERI 12 PEKANBARU IN COMPREHENDING  
NARRATIVE TEXTS**

Irma Fitria Nesya

Fadly Azhar

Erni

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**Abstract**

*In learning English at junior high school, there are four skills that should be mastered by students, namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In term of reading, it is thinking process that is an activity to get information or an idea. Also, it gives a great contribution to the readers who are willing to gain information and increase their knowledge. This action research was supposed to the use of DRTA strategy to improve reading ability of the second year students of SMPN 12 Pekanbaru in comprehending narrative texts. The objectives of this research is to find out whether the using of DRTA strategy can improve the ability of the second year students of SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru in comprehending narrative texts. However, the teacher have tried many ways to teach the students, but the fact is there are still many students could not comprehend the text well. The problem that the writer intends to discuss in this paper is concerned with the reading comprehension ability. The reason for choosinh the strategy because, it could help the students to activate their prior knowledge. Besides, it can give a contribution to other tachers to innovate learning strategy, especially utilizing DRTA strategy, so that they can increase both teaching-learning quality and the students' learning achievement. By doing this research, the writer assumed that the students have comprehended narrative texts.*

**Keywords** : Reading Ability, Narrative Text, DRTA, improve

## **INTRODUCTION**

Reading could be an enjoyable when it is carried out effectively. Students should be motivated to acquire this competence and they should read a lot to cover information and increase their knowledge. Also, reading is an activity with the purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge or in order to critique writer's idea or writing style.

Besides that, reading can sometimes be very complicated since it very often requires certain skills so that reading can become an activity for restoring input from written text. However, reading academic texts is not easy since readers do not only focus on concrete aspect of the text, facts, and what is visible on the page. Reading also complex process and the students have to be able to comprehend it because each language has different structure, meaning and vocabulary. In fact, many students still get difficulties in comprehending and interpreting the ideas of paragraph.

Burnes (1991) states that reading is comprehend written discourse. Reader engages in an exchange of ideas with an author via the text in an interactive process. It is the process which transfer meaning from writer to readers that then we call it a message. The transfer message will run well if the reader can catch the writer's message. Message itself can form as writer's ideas, opinions, knowledge, facts, feeling, etc.

Furthermore, in order to make it easier for students to comprehend the text, students need to know components contained in reading texts. Kind and Stanly (1988) states that there are five components of reading comprehension may help students read carefully. They are finding factual information, finding main ideas, finding the meaning of certain word, identifying references and making inference.

The first is finding factual information. It requires readers to scan specific details. The factual information questions are generally prepared for students and those, which appear with WH question word. There are many types of questions: reason, purpose, result time, comparison, etc in which of the answer can be found in the text.

The Second is finding main idea, recognition of the main idea of a paragraph is very important because it helps you not only understand the paragraph on the first reading, but also helps you to remember the content later. The main idea of paragraph is what the paragraph develops. An efficient reader understands not only the ideas but also the relative significance, as super ordinate while other subordinate. Also, the main idea makes a particular statement or emphasizes a special aspect of the topic. The main idea is usually indicates the author's reason or purpose for writing the message he or she wants to share with the reader.

The third is guessing vocabulary in context. It means that the students could develop his/her guessing ability to the word which is not familiar with him/her by relating the meaning of the unfamiliar word to do the context in the text.

The fourth is identifying references. Recognizing references words and being able to identify the word to which they refer to will help the reader understand the reading passage. Reference words are usually short and very frequently pronoun, such as: it, she, he, they, this, etc.

The last is identifying inferences. It is a skill where the reader has to be able to read between lines. King and Stanley divide into two actions: draw logical inferences and make accurate prediction.

Based on the definition above, it can be seen that reading requires understanding for the readers so that they can comprehend the reading text well. The readers need to understand the message or information from the writer.

In this study the researcher choose the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy to be taught to the students in order to improve the students' reading ability. Based on the observation done in the second year students of SMPN 12 Pekanbaru, there is still lack of reading comprehension in narrative texts. One of the reasons is the method using by the teacher still gives less improvement to the students' reading ability. In addition, Duke and Pearson (2002) state that DRTA teaches students how to self-monitor as they read and learn, which leads to an increase in attention, comprehension, and achievement. It means that the method used by the teachers will truly influence learning strategies used by the students.

Furthermore, Abi Samra (2006) state that DRTA is an effective strategy for teaching reading comprehension because it helps students set reading purposes by making predictions, read more actively and enthusiastically and remember more information from what they have read.

In this study, the writer limited the reasearch to the increasing students' reading comprehension by using DRTA in narrative text that is legend, fable, and fairy tale. Narrative text is a kind of text that retells the story that happened in the past. The purpose of the text is to entertain and amuse the readers or listeners about the story. The essential purpose of narrative is also to tell a story, but the detailed purpose may vary according to genre. For example, the purpose of myth is often to explain a natural phenomenon and a legend is often intended to pass on cultural traditions or beliefs.

According to Heinemann (2002) the generic structure of narrative text is as follows; (1) Orientation: the setting, time, main character, and possibly some minor characters of the story are established. This part sets the moods and invites the readers to continue reading. (2) Complication: An event or series of events involving the main character then unfold lead to a complication in which the character is involved in some conflicts there are often minor conflict that serve to frustrate or hamper the main character from reaching ambition or wish. (3) Resolution: The complication is revolved satisfactory in the resolution and loose ends are generally tidied up.

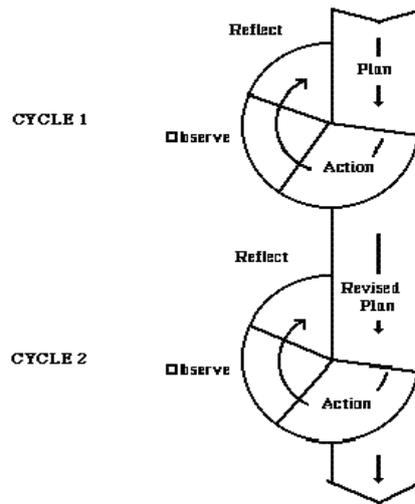
In short, by reflacting to the problems have exlplained above writer interested to do the reserach in this school by bringing a new strategy that have not been apply yet at this school before. Therefore, the writer used DRTA strategy as the main focus of this study.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research is an action research. Action research is defined as any systematic inquiry conducted by teachers or others with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process or environment for the purpose of gathering information about how their particular school operate, how they teach, and how their students learn. (Mills,2007). According to McNiff (1988), Action research is form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants (teachers,

students, or principals, for example) in social (including educational) situation in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices; (b) their understanding of these practices; and (c) the situations (and institutions) in which these participates are carried out.

In addition, action research is cycle process. It means that a teacher can applied certain treatment in order to give improvement to the students. When there is improvement after giving the treatment, the teacher can give more treatment until the teacher sees a good improvement of the students. The design of this research can be drawn as follows:



( Kemmis and Mc Taggart, 1988)

The participants of this research are the second year of SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru. The research will be held in class VIII.6 whose 32 students in it. The writer concludes that mostly students have problem in reading, especially in comprehending narrative texts. The research is conducted in SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru on January 2013.

The procedure of this research is following the steps of DRTA strategy. According to Kemmis (1993) there are some procedures in conducting the research related to the principle of research:

1. Planning

Before doing the research, a plan is needed. The plan was needed in order to help the researcher in constructing the research. The plan included the information about all activities that will be done in the study. They are as follows:

- a. Making lesson plan by using DRTA strategy.
- b. Making media and tool study.
- c. Choosing the reading text that will be taught by using DRTA strategy (narrative text).
- d. Making students' observation sheets to observe the students' progress in comprehending narrative text.
- e. Making evaluation list on the students' progress in reading comprehension.
- f. Preparing Pre - test
- g. Giving Pre - test

2. Action

Activities that were done in this section are follows:

## 2.1 Pre Activities

- a. Greeting
- b. Checking attendance list of the students
- c. Apperceptions

## 2.2 While Activities

According to El-Koumy (2006), there are some steps the teacher has to follow in using DRTA strategy:

- a. Teacher writes the title of the reading passage on the board and asks the students to read it
- b. Teacher ask students to make prediction about the title using this question;
  - What do you think about the passage?
  - Why do you think?
- c. Teacher lists the prediction on the board and invites a discussion with the students by asking them to respond to the following question:
  - Why do you think the prediction is a good one?
- d. Teacher invites students to work in small group to complete the following discussion in the same format.
- e. Teacher asks students to read the passage silently and confirm or reject their own predicitions, and then he ask them the following questions:
  - What do you think now?
  - Why do you think so?
- f. Teacher asks students to reflect their predicitions by responding to the following question:
  - What prediction did you make?

## 2.3 Post Activities

- a. Teacher and students together make conclusion
- b. Reflection
- c. Feedback
- d. Giving Post - test

## 3. Observation

## 4. Reflection

Beside that, the technique of collecting data in this research are explained in the following. In order to get the data on the students' score the ability in reading comprehension, the writer collects the data by giving test (Pre-test and Post-tes). The test consist of 30 items for pre-test and 30 items for post -test. To know the students' achievements in reading, the writer used a written test. The test consists of 5 passages with 6 questions for each passage. The students were given 60 minutes to answer the test included some reading skill. The question were in the form of multiplechoice items. The topic that would be asked was about narrative text, such as fables, legend, and fairy stories. Here are the components of reading comprehension which are included on the text:

### The Blue Print of the Test

Reading Text	Tittle of The Text			Reading Topic	Number of Item	Item Number
	Pre-Test	Summative Test	Post-Test			
Text 1	The Legend of Sura and Baya	The legend of Rawa Pening	Golden Eggs	Factual Information	2	1 and 2
				Main Idea of the	1	3

				paragraph		
				Meaning of the vocabulary in context	1	4
				Reference	1	5
				Inference	1	6
Text 2	The Old Woman and the Sparrow	The Smartest Parrot	A Terrible Dragon	Factual Information	2	7 and 8
				Main Idea of the paragraph	1	9
				Meaning of the vocabulary in context	1	10
				Reference	1	11
				Inference	1	12
Text 3	Snow White	Sincere Will Get a Great Return	Blind Listening	Factual Information	2	13 and 14
				Main Idea of the paragraph	1	15
				Meaning of the vocabulary in context	1	16
				Reference	1	17
				Inference	1	18
Text 4	An Arrogant Peacock	The Hermit and His Padi Seeds	The Smartest Animal	Factual Information	2	19 and 20
				Main Idea of the paragraph	1	21
				Meaning of the vocabulary in context	1	22
				Reference	1	23
				Inference	1	24
Text 5	The Purse of Gold	The Bear and The Rabbit	The Purse of Gold	Factual Information	2	25 and 26
				Main Idea of the paragraph	1	27
				Meaning of the vocabulary in context	1	28
				Reference	1	29
				Inference	1	30
				TOTAL	30	30

The technique for collecting data based on observation was done by giving checklist of item on the sheets. The advantages of conducting classroom observation was that teachers can gather the data about actual students' behaviour, as opposed to asking students to report their perception or feelings. In this case, the collaborator observed the teacher and students' activities in the classroom. After the collaborator finished his job, the results of observation were discussed together with the writer in order to solve some weaknesses that found during the teaching and learning process. Here are the format of observation sheet:

### Observation Sheet for the Teacher

No	Teacher Activities	Meeting 1	Meeting 2
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		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Teacher writes the title of the reading passage on the board and asks the students to read it.				
2	Teacher asks students to make prediction about the title using this questions: - what do you think about the passage?				
3	Teacher lists the prediction on the board and invites a discussion with the students by asking them to respond to the following questions: - why do you think the prediction is a good one?				
4	Teacher invites students to work in small groups to complete the following discussion in the same format.				
5	Teacher asks students to read the passage silently and confirm or reject their own predictions, then he asks them the following questions: - What do you think now?				
6	Teacher asks students to reflect on their predictions by responding to the following question: - what prediction did you make?				

### Observation Sheet for the Students

No	Name of students	Students' Activities											
		Predict the reading text		Discuss the text		Form Groups		Reading text		Respond		Evaluation	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

To support the result of the observation, the writer also gained the data by having field notes. Field notes were written by a collaborator because the writer could not monitor all of the students' behaviour in the classroom. Also the collaborator or observer commented on the teacher's observation notes which was also one way to integrate the reflection into the process of action research. The goal of this instrument is to gain the data of teaching and learning process by using Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA). Here is the form of field note which was used by the researcher in this study

To analyze the quantitative data, the researcher used the procedures as follows: To know the students' score individually, the data calculated by using this formula:

$$M = \frac{x}{n} \times 100$$

Notes:

*M = Individual Score*

*x = Correct answer*

*n = Number of Itmes*

Wayan and Sumartana (1986)

To know the mean score of the students' ability, the writer calculates by using formula based on Anas Sudjino (2010):

$$M_x = \frac{fx}{N}$$

Notes:

$M_x$  = The Average Score

$fx$  = The sum of the score

$N$  = Number of students

Anas Sudjino (2010)

To know the level of students' ability in comprehending narrative text by using DRTA strategy, the researcher used percentage grading based on the following classification:

#### Classification of Ability Levels

No	Scores	Classification
1	81 – 100	Excellent
2	61 – 80	Good
3	41 – 60	Mediocre
4	21 – 40	Poor
5	0 – 20	Very Poor

(Harris, 1986)

Qualitative data are the data taken from observation sheets or the data gained through the checklist of the observation sheets and field notes. There were some questions about the learning process through DRTA in the observation sheets. These data were taken by the writer and one of the teacher at SMP Negeri 12 Pekanbaru where the research is conducted.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

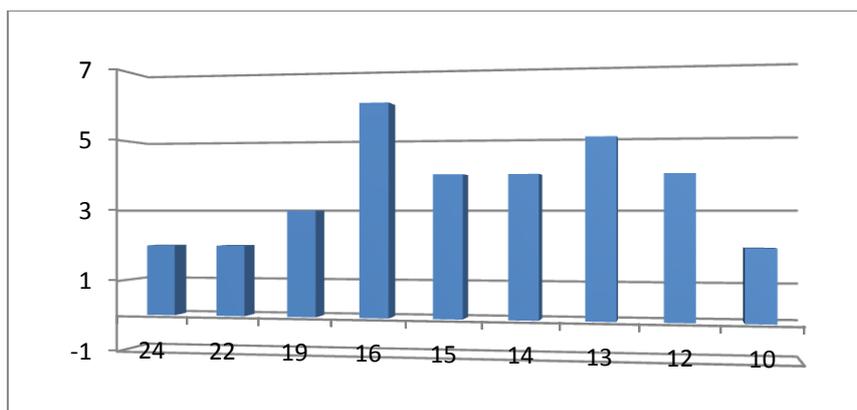
Before applying the method, the researcher started her activity by giving pre-test to know the students' reading ability. The pre-test was held on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. The pre-test was conducted before the students were given treatment by using DRTA strategy. The test was consist of 30 questions in which there were 6 questions in each passage. The questions is about 5 components of reading; finding factual information, main idea, vocabulary in context, reference and inference.

As the result of pre-test, the researcher found that the mean score of the pre-test was 51,46. It means that the scores of students in the pre-test was lower than the minimum criteria of successful learning process. The data was computed that it is shown in the followig table:

The Abilty Level of Student's Pre – Test Score

Score	Ability Level	Frequency	Percentage
<b>81 - 100</b>	Excellent	0	0%
<b>61 - 80</b>	Good	6	18.75%
<b>41 - 60</b>	Mediocre	20	62.50%
<b>21 - 40</b>	Poor	4	12.50%
<b>0 - 20</b>	Very Poor	2	6.25%
<b>TOTAL</b>		32	100%

The witer also found the result of students' ability in answering test items when doing the pre – test. Here is the chart of students' ability in answering test items (pre – test)



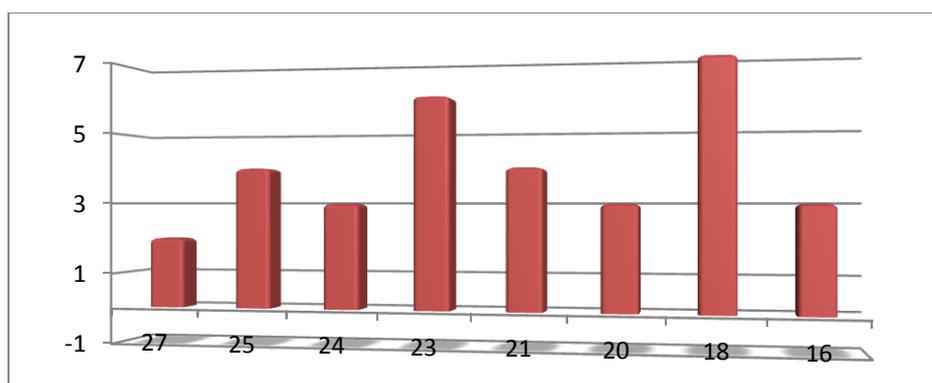
Based on the diagram above, none of the students could answer all of the questions correctly. There were 2 students could answer 24 questions correctly, 2 students could answer 22 questions correctly, 3 students could answer 19 questions correctly, 6 students could answer 16 questions correctly, 4 students could answer 15 questions correctly, 4 students could answer 14 questions correctly, 5 students could answer 13 questions correctly, 4 students could answer 12 questions correctly and 2 students could answer 10 questions correctly.

After students had been taught through DRTA strategy, the researcher gave the test to the students to know their improvement in comprehending narrative texts. The test was held on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The test items which were used for summative test is similar with those in pre-test. The number who followed the test were 32 students. The classification of the students' scores in summative test is shown in the following table:

The Ability Level of Student's Summative Score

Score	Ability Level	Frequency	Percentage
81 - 100	Excellent	6	19%
61 - 80	Good	17	53.13%
41 - 60	Mediocre	9	28.13%
21 - 40	Poor	0	0%
0 - 20	Very Poor	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

The witer also found the result of students' ability in answering test items when doing the pre – test. Here is the chart of students' ability in answering test items (summative score).



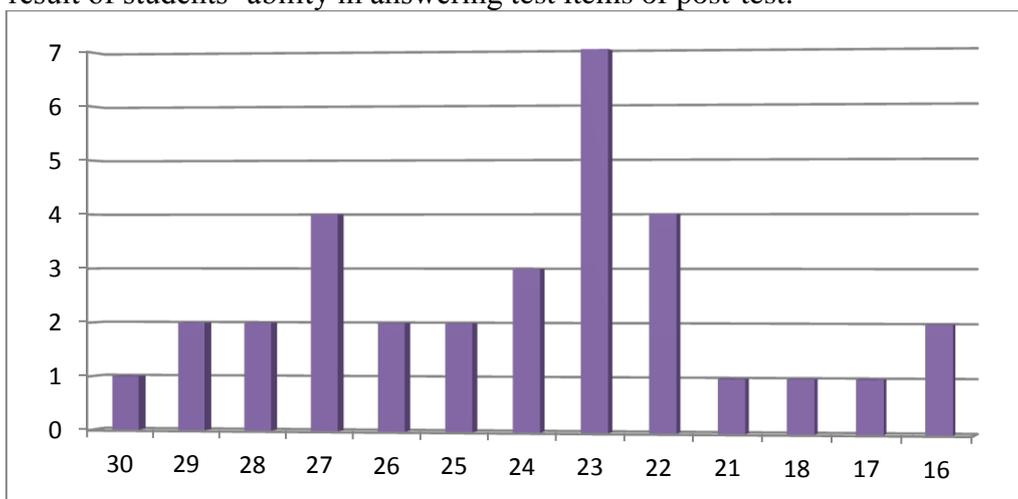
Based on the diagram above, none of the students could answer all of the questions correctly. Then, 2 students could answer 27 questions correctly, 4 students could answer 25 questions correctly, 3 students could answer 24 questions correctly, 6 students could answer 23 questions correctly, 4 students could answer 21 questions correctly, 3 students could answer 20 questions correctly, 7 students could answer 18 questions correctly and 3 students could answer 16 questions correctly. In short, the result showed that about 46.88% students can pass the minimum mastery criteria in which it was not satisfying.

By analyzing the result in cycle, the writer continued the research to cycle 2, there are some improvements that the writer found by giving some treatments in cycle 2. Then, the writer gave them a post-test. The post-test was held on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The test items which were used for the post-test are similar to those in the previous test. The number of students who followed the test was 32 students. The classification of the students' scores in the post-test is shown in the following table.

Score	Ability Level	Frequency	Percentage
<b>81 - 100</b>	Excellent	16	50%
<b>61 - 80</b>	Good	12	37,50%
<b>41 - 60</b>	Mediocre	4	12,50%
<b>21 - 40</b>	Poor	0	0%
<b>0 - 20</b>	Very Poor	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>		32	100%

Based on the table above, the writer could point out that there are increasing results from the summative to the post-test. There were 16 students or 50% who could reach the excellent level, 12 students or 37.50% who could reach the good level, and 4 students or 12.50% could reach the mediocre level while no student was in the poor or very poor level. The mean score of the post-test was 79.48. In short, there were 8.44 increasing points from the summative test to the post-test.

In addition, the writer also analyzed the students' ability in answering test items. Here are the results of the students' ability in answering test items of the post-test.



In this research, the researcher found an improvement of the students' ability in comprehending narrative texts by using Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy. It could be seen from the student's ability level in comprehending narrative texts

from the Pre-test, Summative test and Post-test result. Below is the table of student's ability level in comprehending narrative texts:

The Student's Ability Level in Comprhending Narrative Texts

No	Test	Very Poor	Poor	Mediocre	Good	Excellent
1	Pre-Test	6.25%	12.50%	62.50%	18.75%	0%
2	Summative Test	0%	0%	28.13%	53.13%	19%
3	Post-Test II	0%	0%	12.50%	37.50%	50%

The students' pre-test score in comprehending narrative texts were dominated by mediocre level of ability (62.50%), the followed by good level of ability (18.75%), poor level of ability (12.50%), very poor level of ability (6.25%), while the excellent level of ability is (0%). Meanwhile, the result of summative test were dominated by good level of ability (53.13%), then followed by mediocre level of ability (28.13%) , excellent level of ability (19%) and none in poor or very poor level of ability (0%). Then, the test shown the significant improvement in post-test which were dominated by excellent level of ability (50%), then followed by good level of ability (37.50%), mediocre level of ability (12.50%) and none in poor or very poor level of ability (0%).

The writer interpreted that average score of pre-test was 51.46 (mediocre). Then, the improving of their achievement was significant with the average score 71.04 (good) in summative test result. It increased about 19.58 point. But this result was not satisfying because less than half percent of students still could not reach the minimum mastery criteria (KKM) . Futhermore, the students showed the significant improvement with the average score 79.48 (good) in post-test. It increased about 8.44 point more than summative test. This result showed that most of the students could reach the minimum mastery criteria (KKM). So, it can be conclude by using DRTA strategy could improve the students' ability in comprehending narrative texts

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the result in chapter IV, the writer writes some conclusions for the research done in SMP N 12 Pekanbaru. Firstl, the use of Directed Reading Thinking Activity strategy improve students' reading ability more active in reading process. They would have a good responds to the learning material. The students could discuss about the material and the students could invidualistic interaction. Secondly, There was a significance improvement of students' scores after being taught by using DRTA strategy in teaching reading. The improvement could be seen from the increasing of the students' scores in pre-test was 51.46. The scores can be categorized as "Mediocre Level". Then, the score of summative test and post-test increased from 71.04 to 79.48 (good level). In short, the increasing score from pre-test to the post-test is about 28.02 point. That means the use of DRTA strategy in learning and teaching process was run well.

Next, For dominant factor, teaching reading by using DRTA strategy is an attractive way to improve students' ability. DRTA strategy involved students in setting purposes for reading by making predictions about the text. This could activate their prior knowledge, keep them engaged in the text, help them regulate their reading-thinking process and focus their attention on the text and encourage them to think as they read.

## **SUGGESTION**

Based on the result of the research, there are some suggestions might be helpful for the teacher and students in teaching and learning reading comprehension. First, teacher should be able to improve students' reading by using DRTA strategy that is interesting for the students. Second, the teacher should be creative and innovative to find out the interesting and motivating teaching or method in his/her learning. Third, for the DRTA to be effective, the teacher should stimulate students' thinking, engage them in discussing what they predict and lead them without dominating the discussion.

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