

Improving Students' Reading Competence through DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Activity) Technique
(A Classroom Action Research in the Seventh Semester Students of D-IV Midwifery Program of Health Sciences Faculty of Kadiri University 2015/2016)

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of the research are to know whether DRTA technique can improve students' reading competence or not, to know what are the students' response to the DRTA technique and to evaluate the strengths and weakness of the DRTA technique when it is applied in teaching reading. The research was conducted in D-IV Midwifery Program of Health Sciences Faculty of Kadiri University August to November 2015. The subject of the research is the students of D-IV Midwifery students of Health Sciences Faculty of Kadiri University. The method of research is classroom action research and conducted in three cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In collecting the data, the researcher collected both qualitative and quantitative data. To obtain the quantitative data the researcher administered the result of pre test and post tense. In finding the qualitative data, the researcher and collaborative teacher observed directly the teaching in the classroom, interviewed the teacher and students, did questionnaire and also used photograph. The quantitative data were analyzed using the mean score. Questionnaire data collected usually answer respondents frequency of items alternatives by Likert Scale and score scale for observation. The research findings show that DRTA technique is an appropriate technique which can improve student's reading competence. First, DRTA can activate the students' background knowledge related to the topic. Second, various activities in DRTA technique can enhance students' confidence and motivation to have reading competence. Third, DRTA technique can guide the students to comprehend an overall description about the text. The improvement of reading competence can be seen from the result of pre- test which has the mean score 56.17, post test 1 is 67.11, post test 2 is 72.62 and post test 3 is 76.15. Some recommendations are made based on the research findings: (1) for English lecturer to use DRTA technique as one of alternative way of improving student's reading competence (2) for the students to eliminate their fear of making mistakes in giving ideas and comprehending the passage

Keywords : Reading Competence, DRTA Technique

INTRODUCTION

The education of Indonesia, especially in English learning, is often complained by people. Although English has been introduced since primary up to university it is still assumed as a difficult subject to be learnt. Few of them understand English. English becomes a compulsory subject in secondary schools and universities. Even some primary schools have included English in their curriculum. However, the more something develops, the more the changes it makes. This is true the education system which develops in line with the modern era. Thus, English curriculum always needs improvement in order to generate a better result of learning. Realizing the important of students' English mastery, the government tries to improve the quality of English teaching in this country. Teacher is required to have professional competence in order to be able to teach English well.

According to National Reading panel (2001) reading is a set of skills that allows readers rapidly decode text while maintaining high comprehension. Comprehension is the process of making the sense of words, sentences and connected text. It is fundamental purpose of reading. As far as reading is concerned in the field of reading the students of D- IV Midwifery Program of Health Sciences Faculty of Kadiri University still encounter some difficulties in using their English for comprehending English text. Many students have insufficient skills in reading. They get difficulties in identifying main idea, finding meaning of new words, recognizing references, determining text purpose, and determining detail information. Their reading achievement is poor. It can be seen from their reading test held on November 2015.

There are three reasons that caused the unwanted result of reading class; First, the passage itself which is difficult to understand by the students, Second, the teacher's boring technique in teaching reading. And the last, the class atmosphere, silent. One of steps to link the students' reading competence is through the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) technique. It is an instructional activity that uses predicting and confirming strategies to help build critical reading and thinking skill. It

is also guide students through any kind of text. It is because DRTA technique involves students by reading intensively. The parts are predicting, reading, and confirming.

RELATED LITERATURE

According to Nunan (1998: 33) reading is a process of decoding written symbols, working from smaller unit (individual letters) to larger ones (words, clauses, and sentences)

According to Harmer (2004: 70) there are six principles behind the teaching reading, those are:

- (1) Reading is not a passive skill
- (2) Students need to be engaged with what they read
- (3) Students should be encouraged to respond to the content of reading text
- (4) Prediction is a major factor in reading
- (5) Match the task to the topic
- (6) Good teachers exploit reading texts to the full

DRTA is a way of teaching students to read closely and purposefully. A text is revealed to the students in installments. As each is introduced, the students are asked to make prediction, reach conclusion, and consider the structures and features as supporting evidence from the text

(<http://www.education.tas.quo.ou/english/drta.htm>).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out at D-IV Midwifery Program of Health Sciences Faculty of Kadiri University, East Java. The subject of the research is the seventh semester students of D-IV Midwifery Program of Health Sciences Faculty of Kadiri University. There are five classes and the researcher take one class for this research. It is 7.3, namely 39 students. The method used in this research is action research which

consist planning, acting, observing, reflecting, and evaluating. In collecting the data, the researcher used the quantitative and the qualitative data to know the students' improvement in reading competence. To analyze quantitative data, the researcher used mean score to recognize the students' improvement and used questionnaire, observation, and interview given to the students.

RESEARCH FINDING

The implementation of DRTA technique through classroom action research consisted of three cycles. Each cycle consisted of three meetings for delivering the material and one meeting for post test. Each meeting took 90 minutes. In all cycles, narrative explanation and discussion text were used as teaching material. For the first cycle, the researcher used narrative text entitled "Your Health in Pregnancy", explanation text entitled "Conception", and discussion text entitled "Conception". For the second cycle, narrative text entitled "Deciding where to have your baby", explanation text entitled "Feeling and relationship", and discussion text entitled "Antenatal Class and Antenatal Visit. For the third cycle, narrative text entitled "The Feeding Questions, explanation text entitled "Babies who need special care", and discussion text entitled "What the baby need". Every cycle consisted of steps consisting of identifying problem, planning the action, implementing the action, observing and monitoring the action, reflecting and evaluating the result of the observation and revising the plan.

From the observation results of the cycle one, cycle two, and cycle three, there are some research findings in implementing DRTA technique. It has the positive results and the weaknesses one. The positive results are (1) the improvement of students' reading competence; (2) the improvement of confidence, motivation, and involvement in reading activity.

1. The improvement of students reading competence

Based on the finding of the research, the improvement is identified from the scores in each cycle.

Indicator	Pre test	Post test 1	Post test 2	Post test 3
a. Identifying main idea	51.92	62.50	70.53	76.84
b. Finding meaning of new word	59.83	64.91	71.05	74.21
c. Recognizing references	52.99	71.05	75.00	76.32
d. Determining text purposes	56.41	71.05	74.21	76.84
e. Determining detail information	57.88	65.79	72.25	76.32
Percentage	56.16	67.09	72.63	76.16

There were some indicators which showed that there was an improvement in their reading competence. They were:

- (1) Students could identify main idea
 - (2) Students could find meaning of new word
 - (3) Students could recognize reference
 - (4) Students could determine text purpose
 - (5) Students could determine detail information
2. The improvement of confidence, motivation, and involvement in reading activity

Students were motivated to learn English text more. By using some pictures series and video from You Tube which represented the text in the narrative, explanation, and discussion texts the presentation was more interesting. They made students learn enthusiastically. They enjoy and give good response during the teaching learning process. In discussion, they helped each other to finish the task. The group was ready when they had to report of their discussion.

The strengths of using DRTA technique in teaching in teaching and learning reading were:

a. Pre reading

It can activate student's prior knowledge

b. Whilst Reading

It helps students to monitor their understanding of the text as they are reading, encourages them to be activate and thoughtful readers.

c. Post Reading

It helps strengthen reading and critical thinking skills.

The weaknesses of using DRTA technique in teaching and learning reading were:

a. Students have read or heard the text. It is because prediction is only real when everyone is engaged in speculating.

b. It is not easy to find the material which covers the need of both students which high and low level of English ability in the same time

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The students are motivated to learn English text more. By using some pictures series and video from You Tube which represent the story in the narrative, explanation, and discussion text the presentation is more interesting. They make students learn enthusiastically. They enjoy and give good response during the teaching learning process. They like and feel they are easy to understand the content of the text. The research findings of the study imply that DRTA technique is one of effective technique which can be used in reading class, such as: the students can learn reading best because they are personally and actively involved in the learning experience, varies activities in DRTA technique can enhance students' confidence and motivation to have reading competence and the classroom relationship among students and teacher can be varied.

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