

Teaching Reading Narrative Text by Using Directed Inquiry Activity (DIA) Technique at Junior High School

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Abstract

Reading is one of the English skills taught at all different levels of education. There are various texts that should be mastered by students. They are transactional dan interactional, monologue, and short functional text. One of monologue texts found at the junior high school level is a narrative text. Students of Junior High School are expected to comprehend this text very well; however, there are still students who do not have good comprehension of this text. This might be caused by the students themselves or by the uninteresting techniques used by teachers to teach this text.

Among the techniques applied to teach narrative texts, there is DIA (Directed Inquiry Activity) which is expected to help increase the students' comprehension of the texts. This technique provides students with activities directing them to develop their own comprehension by using their own efforts. Teachers will explain some difficult vocabularies to the students and through a class discussion, the students are going to answer the questions and do the inquiries to the generic structure of the text.

Kata kunci : *Teaching Reading, Narrative Text, Directed Inquiry Activity (DIA)*

A. Introduction

Reading is the way to find ideas, information and knowledge from a written source. Reading lets someone get meaning from the interaction of his or her prior knowledge with the presented information in the text that he or she reads. According to Murcia (2001:154), reading will create a kind of circle where a text, a reader and a social context can interact one another. In conclusion, there are three important things in reading. They are a text, a reader and an interaction between them which involves the social contexts within the text.

Reading at the Junior High School level requires the students to read some texts. Based on *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP)*, there are five *monologs* texts that must be learnt by the students. One of them is narrative texts. According to Derewianka (1990:40), the basic purpose of a narrative text is to

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entertain or to gain and hold the readers interest in a story. In addition, Gerrot and Wignell (1994:204) state that a narrative text is a text which has social function to amuse, to entertain and to deal with actual or vicarious experience in different ways. Moreover, Hogin (in Putra, 1999) says that a narrative is a kind of text which tells a story or events in a chronological order or a time order. In short, it can be said that a narrative text is a text which tells a story or events in a chronological order and has a purpose to entertain readers.

To teach reading for the students, teachers should acknowledge the three standard processes known as pre reading activity, whilst reading activity, and post reading activity. Pre reading activity is the first activity conducted to raise the students' motivation. This activity encourages the students to participate actively in the learning process. The most important thing in this activity is that it should be focused on getting the students' attention about the information of the topic being discussed. The whilst reading activity is a learning process to reach the basic competence. This activity is carried out systematically through the process of exploration, elaboration, and confirmation. The post reading activity is conducted at the end of the learning process. At this stage, teachers can do the followings. They can summarize the lesson or make a conclusion of the lesson. They may give the assessment, give feedback to the students or do some "follow-up" activities.

Despite that the three standard processes above have been implemented in teaching reading for the Junior High School students, there are still problems faced by the students. Based on an informal interview with one of the English teachers in Junior High School in Padang, it is found that the students still get difficulty in comprehending the narrative text because the students are confused with past tense used in the text. Moreover, they do not have enough vocabularies to recognize the verbs and phrases used in the text.

In addition, the use of uninteresting techniques and materials by the teachers might be the other cause of why the students have difficulties in comprehending narrative texts. Most teachers just ask their students to read the text and answer the questions. After that, the teacher discusses some students' answers in order to get correct answers. There is no other activities involved to encourage the students to participate. Besides, the use of LKS (Students Work Sheet) often creates the students' boredom in reading narrative texts. There have been always *Malin Kundang*, *Timun Mas*, and *Situ Bagendit* found in LKS. These legends have been familiar for the students and they have read the texts many times.

In fact, Mirriam and Roz (2000: 109) say that to get the good result in reading, the teachers should have a good technique because by using good technique, the students are motivated to learn. One of the techniques suggested is the Directed Inquiry Activity (DIA) technique. DIA is a process that gathers fact, observes the text, and uses them to answer specific questions (Kauchack (2004:370). It is particularly valuable for giving students practice to answer the questions from the text. In addition, Sanjaya (2006:195) points out that DIA is the combination of a thinking process and an analysis to search and find the answers of the question.

DIA encourages the students to be active in reading narrative texts; in finding the orientation, the complication and the resolution in the text and then discuss them in a group. They actively communicate with their peers to figure out the correct answer towards the inquiries given by the teachers. Additionally, DIA involves the activities where the students can ask questions to the teachers when they do not understand about the text. Through this technique, it is hoped that students will be successful in reading a narrative text.

B. Discussion

1. The Teaching Learning Process

In implementing DIA technique in the classroom, there are three stages of teaching process that should be done by the teachers. They are pre-teaching, whilst-teaching and post-teaching. In pre-teaching, the teachers greet the students, check the students attendance and motivate them. In whilst-teaching, there are three processes; *exploration*, *elaboration*, and *confirmation*. In post teaching, teacher concludes the lesson and checks the students' understanding.

A follow up activity such as retelling the text in front of the class will also be useful at this stage to enrich the students' understanding.

a. Pre-Teaching Activity

In this activity, the teacher greets the students. After that, teacher checks students' attendance and also checks the students' readiness to study and also the condition in the classroom. It is really important because the students' readiness influences much on the success of the teaching and learning process. Next, teacher does apperception to relate the lesson that will be learned to the previous lesson. After that, the teacher tells the students the learning objectives that have to be reached.

b. Whilst-Teaching Activity

There are three stages in this activity. They are called exploration process, elaboration process and confirmation process. Each has its own focus. In exploration, the focus is to activate the students' knowledge related to the lesson being taught. Meanwhile, elaboration process is a process regarded as the main course. It is where the students are given meaningful exercise. The students are facilitated to analyze the answer for the given questions. They are supported to study cooperatively in groups.

1. Exploration Process

In this phase, the teacher writes some difficult vocabularies found in the reading text on the whiteboard. After that, the teacher can explain the meaning of the vocabularies by using pictures, synonym, context clues and so on. After explaining the vocabulary, the teacher plays a video as the visualization of the narrative text that the students are going to read.

2. Elaboration Process

Having conducted the exploration process, the teacher comes to the elaboration process. In this process, the teacher explains the elements of the generic structure of a narrative text as followings. The first one is the orientation. It is an introductory paragraph which setting (where and when the story takes place) and the participants of the story can be found. The next part is the

complication in which the main character faces problems. The last part of narrative texts is the resolution in which the problems and conflicts are resolved.

The teacher needs to relate the explanation with the video that has been watched by the students. Then, the teacher distributes a narrative text based on the video. She or he might ask the students to work in groups and to discuss the orientation, complication and resolution of “The Beauty and The Beast” with their friends. After that, she or he gives the inquiries to be answered by the students. The questions are as follows.

1. Where does the story take place?
2. When does the story take place?
3. Who are the characters in the story?
4. Who is the main character?
5. Did she face a problem in the story?
6. How does the story end?

The students work in their groups to answer the questions. In this process, the teacher's role is to monitor the students' activities. Instead of giving input to the students, the teacher only encourages the students to actively involve in the group work. The students' work will later be checked in the confirmation process.

3. Confirmation Process

Confirmation process is a process in which the teacher confirms the students' answers and check them whether they are correct or incorrect. In this process, the students will exchange their group work one another. The teacher will give further explanation on the significant errors made by the students.

c. Post-Teaching Activity

In post teaching, the teacher concludes the lesson together with the students. The teacher makes sure that all students are participating in concluding the lesson. They are expected to give their own opinions. If the teacher finds that the students still have problems in reading the text, he or she has to give further explanation. Furthermore, the teacher can also give the students a follow up activity such as to ask the students to retell the story in front of the class.

4. The Advantages of Using DIA Technique in Teaching Narrative Text in Junior High School

There are three advantages of using DIA Technique in teaching reading narrative text in junior high school. First, DIA technique can encourage students to be more actively involved in the learning process. They do not totally depend on their teacher anymore since they are asked to figure out the lesson by themselves. Secondly, DIA technique facilitates the students to see how well they have done and what they need to improve in reading narrative texts. Through their teacher's confirmation, they know their own mistakes and their own progress. Finally, DIA technique enables the students to work cooperatively with their peers. As the result, the students will not be afraid of making mistakes since they could help each other.

C. Conclusion

The use of Directed Inquiry Activity (DIA) in teaching narrative at the Junior High School can help students comprehend the text. It can solve the teaching problems faced mostly by the teachers in Junior High School, especially in teaching narrative texts. It can give a solution to the problems both from the teacher's side and the students' side. From the teachers' side, DIA can give solution to the use of monotonous media and uninteresting materials and it allows the teachers to use interesting materials such as the story of "The Beauty and The Beast" and interesting media such as video. The use of LKS (Students' Work Sheet) can be reduced by the DIA and the use of a video as a medium can be maximized to attract the students' attention. Meanwhile, from the students' side, DIA can solve the students' vocabularies problems by facilitating the teacher to give sufficient prior knowledge activation for the students. It is much easier for the students to understand the text because the teacher explains the meaning of the vocabularies by using pictures, synonym, and context clues.

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