

Improving Students' Reading Competence through Direct Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) Technique in Secondary Schools in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to improve students' reading Competence through "Direct Reading Thinking Activity"(DRTA) technique in some selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey was adopted, employing a sample of some selected secondary schools students in Five different public schools. A self constructed questionnaire was used to collect data for analysis, using Frequency counts and percentages. 100 students participated in the study; 46% were Males and 54% were Females. The result of data analysis showed, an improvement on the students' improvement, employing Direct Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) technique in the teaching and learning of reading comprehension. There was an improvement of students' result in which, 97% of the respondents agreed that the application of DRTA technique improves students reading competence, while 3% of the respondents disagreed. However, 87% of the respondents agreed that DRTA technique helps to solve students problem on reading comprehension, 13% of them disagreed. 81% of the population agreed that Learning through DRTA technique improves students' retention and capacity, but 19% of the respondent disagreed. The study recommended that, the DRTA can be more effective, teacher stimulates students' thinking, discussing what they predict, leading, without necessarily dominating the discussion.

Key words: Improvement, Reading, Thinking-Activity Competence, Comprehension,, Retention, Learning, Stimulate, Discussion.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Generally, the language skills needed in the acquisition of any language has been classified into two, namely: Oracy skills (Speaking and Listening) and Literacy skills (Reading and Writing). One of the major literacy skills as mentioned is reading. Reading is an interactive process between the reader and the text such that the reader uses his/her knowledge to build, create and construct meaning. In other words, it can be inferred from the above definition that the most key weapons for a successful reading is interaction and knowledge. Interactive reading in this context made up of the following conceptions. First, an interaction that occurs between the reader and the text, thereby, making the reader to make a constructive meaning based on his/her knowledge drawn from the text and the reader's existing knowledge. Second, it implies a simultaneous interaction among other component skills that results in comprehension. In explicating a number of processes readers adopt while reading, Grabe (2009:21) identifies low-level processes such as word recognition, syntactic parsing and meaning encoded as proposition; and higher-level processes such as text-model formation (i.e. what the text is all about), situation-model building (i.e. how the interpretation of text is decided), inferring, executive-control processing (i.e. how we direct our attention) and strategic processing.

Reading is an essential skill for all students at all levels starting from the elementary school to university. Besides, Reading is fundamental to function as human in today's society. It has a great deal with the students' success in their future life. By reading, the students will discover new things. Books, magazines, and even internet are great learning tools which require the ability to read and understand what is read. People who know how to read can educate themselves in any area of life they are interested in. We live in an age where we overflow with information, but reading is the main way to take advantage of it.

Considering the importance of reading, it is crucial giving it the greatest attention in any level of education. Westwood (2008:2) remarks that reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education

depends. This means that a child who doesn't learn the reading basics early is unlikely to learn them at all and any child who doesn't learn to read early and well, will not easily master other skills and knowledge, and is unlikely to ever flourish in school or in life. The ability to read and write is fundamental to all areas of learning in the school curriculum. Based on this, the purpose of reading competence is to comprehend the meaning of simple written text interpersonally, both in formal and informal situations, whether in the form of descriptive or narrative procedure, report or recount texts so as to enhance interaction (with people or students) in their close environment (Depdiknas 2006: 360). Moreover, all reading comprehension instruction comprises phonics, fluency, and vocabulary development.

One of the ways in identifying an effective reading is comprehension. Comprehension is the mental ability to understanding something. Comprehension is also an active process in the sense that it involves interacting with the information or creating internal dialogue with the material.

Furthermore, Westwood (2001:31), suggests that to comprehend, readers must use information they already possess to filter, interpret, organize and reflect upon information from the text. It means that, in order to be successful in reading comprehension, they have to be able to connect between ideas in a text and ideas in their mind. Hence, the readers need to be involved cognitively and mentally in reading comprehension process.

One major approach to reading for comprehension is the Direct Reading Thinking Activity (henceforth DRTA) technique. This approach is an instructional activity that uses predicting and confirming strategies to build a critical reading and thinking, guiding the students through reading any kind of text.

DRTA technique is a way of teaching students how to read closely and purposefully; predict and prove what they read. In other words, a text is gradually unveiled to the students. As each segment of the text is introduced, students are to make predictions, reach conclusions and consider its structures and features as supporting evidences from the text.

DRTA technique equips the reader with the ability to extract, comprehend and assimilate information, to make predictions, examine the reading material based on the purpose of reading, give judgments; and the ability to make decisions based on the information gathered from the reading. Thus, with all these, students automatically raise their own questions which are capable of making them comprehend and understand a text. In other words, students become more careful while reading, subjecting themselves to the task of critical thinking.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is guided by the following Research questions:

1. To what extent does DRTA Technique improve students' Reading Competence?
2. To what extent does DRTA Technique improve the teaching and learning of reading comprehension?

THE CONCEPT OF READING

Reading is the information derived from a text, either in the form of text, a picture or diagram, or a combination of it all. It is also a skill used to know, see and understand the contents of what is being read. That is, after reading something, the reader understands the communication between writer and reader.

Reading involves two kinds of activities, namely: vocal reading and silent reading. Silent reading on the one hand entails the readers' use of the eyes and their ability to understand the meaning of the written sign. In other words, comprehending the text will be given more emphasis in silent reading. Vocal Reading on the other hand entails the readers' audible production of words, clauses and sentences in a text. Here, emphases are given to speech development and understanding the text. However, this concept has been viewed differently by various scholars, educationists, teachers and curriculum planners.

Leli Sari (2017:17), while presenting the summary of Linguists definitions about reading, affirms that, it is the process of getting, understanding and catching the contents of the reading. That is, it is a process of understanding a written text through efficiently extracting the required information from it.

Hedgcock and Ferris (2009:49), argue that reading is "a complex interaction of cognitive processes and strategies (used by the reader) and various types of information (contained in the text)".

From these definitions, it can be stated that reading is a fluent process that involves the readers' combination of information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. In other words, for the readers to understand a text, they do not only interact with the text itself, but also activate their background knowledge about it. This helps them to understand words and sentences composing the components of the text and the text as a whole entity.

In addition, reading is an active process i.e. it is a sampling process in which the reader takes advantage of his knowledge of interaction between thought and language. It is also the meaningful interpretation of printed or written verbal symbols. All these concepts state that reading always deals with printed materials, with emphasis on grasping meaning from the printed language and setting up an interaction between the perception of the graphic symbols that represent the language and the readers' language, cognitive skills and the knowledge of the world. In this process, the reader tries to create meaning intended by the writer. However, to achieve this, the reader needs to have a purpose in mind when reading. Usually, the purpose of reading a passage is to find

ideas.. Some of the major reasons for reading are: reading for pleasure, reading for information (in order to find out something or in order to do something with the information derived), reading for indoctrination, pleasure or entertainment.

Earlier models of reading instruction have tended to focus primarily either on bottom-up processes (for decoding and comprehending the text) or top-down skills (for activating the background knowledge and prediction strategies of the reader) Reading involves learning how to make-reasonable interpretations of a written text.

The Three-way Process of Reading

a. Reading as a Trans-active Process

Meaning is realized when there is a transaction between the reader and what he/she is reading. In other words, as a person reads and responds to the text being read, the reader goes through a series of stages by constructing interpretations known as comprehension. During this trans-active process of reading, meaning is negotiated by the reader in order to comprehend what he/she has read; the reader's knowledge and purpose for reading; the language community the reader belongs to, and how closely that language matches the language used in the text; the reader's culturally based expectations about reading; and the reader's expectations about reading based on his or her previous experience.

b. Reading as a Constructive Process

Reading is a highly complex mental activity and can only take place when all of the required components are put together in a smooth and integrated performance. Reading, then, is a constructive process when the reader makes meaningful connections between the ideas in a text and his/her background knowledge.

c. Reading as a Strategic and Meta-cognitive Strategy

In order for readers to make meaning from the text they are reading, their schemata must be activated. The schemata are the background knowledge the reader brings to the reading situation of the book or topic. Dividends of reading comprehension can only be achieved through the use of instructional time to build background knowledge. In other words, readers need to bear a purpose for reading in mind so as to have a successful reading. Thus, reading as a strategic process means that the processes can be adjusted depending on the reader's purpose at that time. When a reader has an established purpose for reading, the comprehension of the reading is enhanced as the purpose serves to guide the reading process that students use, gives direction and provides motivation as well as providing the reader with a tool to use for monitoring his/her own reading. Therefore, when a student reads with an established purpose, sorting important from unimportant information becomes an easy task.

In sum, reading covers a lot of things. It does not simply imply knowing the meaning of individual words in a particular text. Invariably, reading can be defined as a process of making reasonable interpretation in apprehending a text which has four characteristics: purpose, selection, anticipation, and comprehension. However, focus will be given to comprehension as one of the characteristics of reading.

THE CONCEPT OF COMPREHENSION.

Mickulecky, and Jeffries (2004:74), state that "comprehension is making sense of what someone reads and connecting the ideas in the text to what he already knows".

According to Smith, (2004: 41) "comprehension may be regarded as relating aspects of the world around us--including what we read—to the knowledge, intentions, and expectations we already have in our head. It is clearly the purpose of reading and of learning to read".

Richard and Schmidt, (2002:99) affirm that comprehension is the identification of the intended meaning of written or spoken communication. They also add that contemporary theories of comprehension, emphasize that, it is an active process of drawing both on information contained in the message (bottom-up processing) as well as background knowledge, information from the context and from the listener's and speaker's purposes or intentions (top-down processing). This is also supported by Smith (2004:41) as he argues that "readers learn the meaning by making sense of words from their context, using what is known to comprehend and learn the unfamiliar". Thus, it can be inferred that comprehension is the mind's act or power of understanding what has been written..

However, making sense from words is basically related to the vocabulary mastery and this provides a permanent basis of knowledge for determining the probable meaning and pronunciation of new words. If readers know both the meaning and the pronunciation, they will have little difficulty in comprehending and using the new words in their own sentences.

Comprehension monitoring during reading includes the reader being aware that meaning is being constructed and that set purposes for reading are being met. However, immature readers usually do not monitor their own comprehension processes while reading and they are unaware that meaning is not being constructed.

In contrast, effective mature readers are aware of what they are doing and of what they need to do to meet their set purpose(s) while reading. This awareness of one's own mental activity is referred to as meta-cognition.

THE CONCEPT AND PROCESSES OF READING COMPREHENSION

Defining Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is one of the skills that must be developed at school. It has become something important and indispensable for students because their success, learning and progress largely depend on their ability to read.

Reading comprehension is the process of building the understanding of a written discourse which occurs in a way that matches or connects schemata of knowledge and experience that have been previously owned with the content of information of the discourse, building a good understanding of the discourse that has been read.

Smith (2004), suggests that reading comprehension is an activity or the activities undertaken by the reader to connect new information with old information in order to gain new knowledge. This is done in order to link information and gain new knowledge. The activities carried out by the reader in understanding the literature can be classified into literal comprehension, interpretive comprehension, critical comprehension and creative comprehension.

Furthermore, Brown (2006) states that the main principles of good readers are for them to:

1. actively participate in the reading process.
2. have clear goals and monitor their reading goals as it pertains to the texts, that they read.
3. use comprehension strategy in constructing meaning. This strategy involves the activity to make reviews, create their own questions, make connections, visualize, know how words shape meaning, monitor, summarize, and evaluate.

According to Sung-Hyun (2003: 14), reading is a complex thought process that involves understanding words and sentences written by the author, interpreting the authors' concepts, and summing it up in a good way. He affirms that reading comprehension is measured by the following three types of recall scores: common ideas, main ideas, and non-main ideas of a text.

In addition, reading comprehension is the readers' ability in gaining meaning from the content of the text. Reading and comprehension are literacy activities used to extract meanings from written and spoken texts. It is important in the identification of letters so as to recognize words that help in deriving meaning from what is read. This is done through making connections between words, ideas presented in the text, and the readers' own background knowledge about the text (Smith, 1983). Thus, there is no active reading without comprehension, and background knowledge is important in the process of building up the comprehension.

Reading comprehension also refers to the amount of understanding readers have when they read the text. It presents how well readers understand the implicit and explicit meanings of the content of the text they read. Thus, the more effortlessly students can recognize words, the more attention they can devote to comprehension. Also, the more time students spend in reading, the better their reading rate is (O'Connor et al., 2007: 33). Pressley & Block (2002: 38) assert that becoming a good reader requires practice in reading and constant exposure to text.

Text comprehension is improved when teachers use a combination of reading comprehension techniques such as questioning (i.e. questions generation and answering), and summarization. When students are able to use them successfully, they perform better in recalling, answering questions, generating questions, and summarizing texts (Farstrup and Samuels, 2002: 292).

PROCESS OF READING COMPREHENSION

Reading involves more than recognition, and recognition is not comprehension. Readers use a variety of reading strategies in decoding and translating symbol into sounds or visual representations of speech and comprehension. Readers integrate the words they have read into the existing framework of knowledge or schema in their brain. Schemata can be loosely defined as patterns which represent the way experience and knowledge are organized in the mind and used. Schema plays an important role in reading comprehension.

Sutarsyah (2014) gives the following six characteristics of schemata, in which the first four are the major characteristics:

1. Schemata have variables. The analogy of this characteristic presents that plays have roles, theories have parameters, and procedures have arguments.
2. Schemata can be embedded, one within another. The analogy can be illustrated between schemata and procedure. Schemata consist of sub-schemata as procedures consist of sub-procedures.
3. Schemata represent knowledge at all levels of abstraction. Just like theory can be grand and small.
4. Schemata represents knowledge rather than definition. This implies that our schemata are our knowledge. All of our generic knowledge is embedded in schemata.

5. Schemata are active processes. This is so because they are capable of evaluating the quality of their own fit to the available data. They also select and interpret environmental information as it constructs our knowledge. This process is called assimilation.
6. Schemata are recognition devices, whose processing is aimed at the evaluating their goodness or fit to the data being processed

Besides, in the discussions of reading and comprehension, experts generally mention the two processes of reading comprehension, namely: the bottom-up and top-down process. However, recent research has introduced one more kind of reading comprehension process, called interactive reading.

1) Bottom-up processing

Bottom-up model of reading process holds the view that reading is a process of building symbols into words, words into sentences and sentences into the overall meaning, which reflects traditional attitudes toward reading. The point of view of bottom-up model is the accuracy in understanding linguistic units.

In bottom-up processing, readers must first recognize a multiplicity of linguistic signals such as letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical cues, discourse markers. Thereafter, they use their linguistic data processing mechanism to impose some sort of order on these signals. These data-driven operations obviously require knowledge of the language itself. From among all the perceived data, the reader selects the signals that make some sense to what is called-meaning.

This model is very significant at the lower-level processing skills in reading.

2) Top-down processing

Top down, is a process in which the readers draw their own intelligence and experience into the understanding of a text. This model emphasizes the use of readers' real world knowledge in memory. Sutarsyah (2014) said that "The goal of reading is constructing meaning in response to text, and it requires interactive use of graphic, syntactic, and semantic cues to construct meaning." Readers do not read every word, but see through the text in order to be able to guess the meaning of the words or phrases. Top-down processing occurs when the system makes general predictions based on higher level and general schemata.

3) Interactive reading

Interactive reading is a combination of top-down and bottom up processing. It is always a primary ingredient in successful teaching methodology because both processes are important.

Sutarsyah (2014) opines that in interactive reading processing, both bottom-up and top-down processing should be occurring at all levels simultaneously. In this reading process, readers may employ bottom-up process as a base for comprehending a text, and then turn to top-down process to execute high-level interpretation of the content of the text. Prediction of the content will be confirmed, revised or rejected through further data analysis. Interactive model of reading process is the combination of bottom-up and top-down models, and thus absorbs their merits and avoids the limitations to a great extent.

TECHNIQUES IN READING COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension Technique is a way of accessing the meaning of texts, which are employed flexibly and selectively in the course of reading. Generally, reading techniques are often divided into the following three stages: before reading, during reading, and after reading. The process of reading is not a merely instant process that occurs without any strategy and sequence. Brown (2006) proposes the following techniques of reading:

- 1) Identifying the purpose of reading
- 2) Using graphonic rules and patterns to aid bottom-up decoding
- 3) Using efficient silent reading techniques for relatively rapid comprehension
- 4) Skimming,
- 5) Scanning
- 6) Guessing when the reader does not understand
- 7) Analyzing vocabulary
- 8) Distinguishing between literal implied meaning
- 9) Capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationship.

Brown (2007) similarly defines teaching as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand. Teaching is guiding and facilitating learning, enabling the learner to learn, setting the conditions for learning. In other words, teaching is a way of providing someone to get knowledge, to create attitudes, and to raise concept and skills. It is the transfer of knowledge from an experienced person to an inexperienced person.

The activity of teaching cannot be separated from learning. This is because the process of teaching should be based on how students learn. Thus, the learning process will determine the teaching style, techniques, and strategies of teaching geared at meeting the students' needs of learning.

Comprehension skills are strategies readers use to retrieve information and construct meaning from a particular text. They are the thinking processes which are broken down into steps of comprehension. The three general types of comprehension skills are Pre-reading, During reading, and Post-reading.

a) Pre-reading: Predicting

In this stage, students reflect on what they think the text was about by predicting the answer to the questions raised by the teacher. This step helps the students to set a purpose for reading i.e. to answer their prediction. In this stage, the teacher's role is both to activate the students' background knowledge to make a prediction and to agitate their prediction by asking them to defend their prediction.

Introducing the title of the text, pictures related to the text, and key words can prompt prediction. However, it is important to note that the teacher should first divide the reading text into meaningful segments in which the students gain understanding by comprehending segment by segment. This stage can be accomplished through following the steps:

- i. The teacher surveys the text with the students so as to look for the clues about the content of the text. The clues can be the title, key words, illustrations and other explanatory materials.
- ii. The teacher helps the students to make a prediction about what they think will be the main idea/theme of the text.
- iii. The teacher asks the students to write their predictions down. Students may write with a partner or contribute to an oral discussion, thereby, creating a list of the class' predictions.
- iv. The teacher helps the students to establish a purpose for reading by directing them to read the text to determine whether it proves or disproves their predictions.

b) During reading: When Reading

In this stage, the students are asked to support their predictions by locating the information in the text. Using the predictions in their minds, the students read the first section of text in order to prove or disprove their predictions. There is neither right nor wrong predictions. The predictions made are judged to be more or less accurate than others. The students having less accurate prediction should rework their predictions to make their predictions accurate. This stage can be accomplished through the following steps:

- i. The teacher asks the students to read the text, silently or aloud, individually or in groups, to verify their predictions.
- ii. The teacher asks the students to place a check mark under the appropriate category (ranging from accurate, less accurate, to inaccurate) on the Prediction Verification Checklist as they read the text.

c) Post reading: Proving/Disproving the Predictions

In this step, students engage in a discussion about what they have read, which are confirmed, rejected, or refined; their predictions are justified, by finding statements in the text and reading them orally to the teacher. In this stage, the teacher refines and deepens the reading and thinking process. This stage can be accomplished through the following steps:

- i. The students have a discussion by comparing their predictions and the actual content of the text.
 - ii. The teacher asks the students to analyse their checklist, and determine how well they predicted the content of the text.
 - iii. The teacher verifies that the students have learnt the DRTA strategy by having them answer the questions.
- The implementation of predicting, reading, and proving/disproving continues until the text is completely read. Then, the teacher closes the lesson with a review of the content of the reading, and a discussion of the prediction strategies students should use as they read a text.

Teaching reading comprehension is an activity in which the teacher guides and facilitates learning, gives a chance for the learners to learn and sets the condition for learning. Guidance is done by leading students to engage in activities that bring knowledge. The activity itself can be done by giving reading tasks, considering and applying the best techniques for a particular task or activity. In teaching reading comprehension, the teacher also helps the students to learn the following micro skills and macro skills of readings:

Micro skills:

- 1) Discriminate among the distinctive graphemes and orthographic patterns of English.
- 2) Retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory.
- 3) Process writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.
- 4) Recognize a core of words, and interpret word order patterns and their significance.
- 5) Recognize grammatical word classes (noun, verb, etc.), systems (e.g. tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, rules, and elliptical forms.
- 6) Recognize that a particular meaning may be expressed in different grammatical forms.
- 7) Recognize cohesive devices in written discourse and their role in signaling the relationship between and among class

The Concept of Direct Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)
Scholarly Positions on DRTA.

Prominent attention has been given to DRTA and its importance for improving reading comprehension in general. According to Tierney, Readence and Dishner (1995), the DRTA is a technique for building independent readers. They add that this technique has the potential to equip readers with the abilities to determine purposes for reading, examine reading materials based on these purposes, suspend judgments and make decisions based upon information gleaned from the material read.

Similarly, Richardson and Morgan (1997) state that the DRTA engages students in higher order thinking skills such as making connections between interrelated elements of the text, justifying thought processes and drawing logical conclusions. They maintain that these skills can set the pathway toward independent reading, foster learner responsibility and improve reading comprehension. DRTA helps students become aware of the reading strategies, understand the reading process, and develop prediction skills. They add that this strategy stimulates students' thinking, makes them listen to the opinions of others, and modify their own in light of additional information.

El-Koumy (2004) states that the DR-TA engages students in thinking about what they read in three phases. In the first phase, students generate predictions about what they are going to read based on the title of the text. In the second phase, they read to confirm or reject their predictions. In the third phase, they evaluate their predictions using information from the text to support their opinions. He maintains that this technique can develop students' reading comprehension skills as well as their higher-order thinking skills.

Along the same line of thought, Tankersley (2005) believes that the DRTA extends reading to higher-order thought processes, and provides teachers with a great deal about each student's ideas, thought processes, prior knowledge and thinking skills. It is also useful for processing all types of text.

Also, Abi Samra (2006) states that the DRTA is an effective strategy for teaching reading comprehension because it helps students set reading purposes by making predictions, read more actively, and remember more information from what they have read. Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is an activity that helps students' understanding that each segment of text can help them figure out the next segment. It is because the text is divided into smaller portions, the students can focus on the process of responding to higher - order questions.

The use of prior knowledge and prediction is clearly of great value in helping students set purposes for reading and use their own experiences as a basis for comprehending text. Prior knowledge and prediction is utilized in the Direct Reading Activity (DRA).

Teachers must vigorously engage in instructional processes that reveal the secrets of successful comprehension to the students. They also opine that teachers should share the secrets of their own successful reading comprehension with the students, and how to monitor and repair comprehension when it fails to take place.

Thus, during the process of conducting DRTA, the teacher guides the students, making sure that each student is actively involved in understanding each segment before continuing to the next. This encourages the students' participation in comprehending the whole text as they become more lively when activities such as discussion and reward-giving are employed

TEACHING OF READING USING DRTA TECHNIQUE

In Direct Reading Thinking Activity, the teaching and learning process includes the steps of the activity for both the teacher and students. The steps are employed so that students can set reading purposes and make predictions, read text, verify and revise predictions and prove set reading purposes. Therefore, the teacher assists the students by selecting the texts, dividing the text into meaningful sections, facilitating discussion, and giving feedback. The elaboration of the teaching of reading using DRTA is designed based on the following steps:

1) Before reading: predicting

In making predictions, students observe and identify the selection by looking at the title, picture (if available), the vocabulary, the grammar, and other language features in the text. In response to it, students formulate questions which bridge them to next selection of the text, and the whole part of it. In this stage, the teacher assists the learners in observing and identifying selection of text and notices the key words that help them to guess the global understanding of the text. The teacher also facilitates students to formulate questions, discuss and share their predictions of each selection of the text.

2) While reading: silent reading

Students read the whole text to gather information or data related to their earlier predictions. The teacher helps the students in identifying any crucial vocabulary items in context.

3) After reading: confirming the predictions

After reading the complete text to gather information, students are encouraged to explain what cause them to confirm or revise prior predictions. It is carried out through discussing the material read.

The aim of this discussion is to make teachers help students interpret the material. Students discuss among their group members about their prior predictions and the data in the text whether they are compatible or not.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question One: To what extent does DRTA technique improve students reading competence?

Table 1: DRTA technique and students reading competence

SN	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
		F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
1	DRTA technique improves students reading competence	63 (63)	34 (34)	2 (2)	1 (1)
2	DRTA technique makes reading comprehension more productive and understanding	45 (45)	46 (46)	6 (6)	3 (3)
3	I live in an in conducive home environment	44 (44)	35 (35)	11 (11)	10 (10)
4	Students develop good reading competence through DRTA technique	53 (53)	35 (35)	6 (6)	6 (6)
5	DRTA technique is effectively utilized by students while in the library	44 (44)	39 (39)	11 (11)	6 (6)

Table 1 shows the result of research question one, which shows in item one that 97% agreed that DRTA technique improves students reading competence, 3% disagreed. Item 2 showed that 91% agreed that DRTA technique makes reading comprehension more productive and understanding, 9% disagreed. Item 3 on the table showed that 79% agreed that they live in an in conducive home environment, 21% disagreed. Item 4 on the table showed that 88% agreed that Students develop good reading competence through DRTA technique, 12% disagreed. Item 5 on the table showed that 83% agreed that DRTA technique is effectively utilized by students while in the library, 17% disagreed.

Research Question Two: To what extent does DRTA technique improve the teaching and learning of reading comprehension?

Table 2: DRTA technique and teaching and learning of reading comprehension

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
		F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
1	DRTA technique helps to solve students problem on reading comprehension	45 (45)	42 (42)	6 (6)	7 (7)
2	DRTA technique helps student to study more than hours per day	40 (40)	39 (39)	12 (12)	9 (9)
3	DRTA technique reduces students problem on reading comprehension in English class	40 (40)	32 (32)	20 (20)	8 (8)
4	DRTA technique simplifies teachers activity while teaching reading comprehension in class	40 (40)	30 (30)	27 (27)	3 (3)
5	DRTA technique improves the teaching and learning of reading comprehension	46 (46)	33 (33)	10 (10)	11 (11)

Table 2 shows the result of Research Question Two, which shows in Item one that 87% agreed that DRTA technique helps to solve students problem on reading comprehension, 13% disagreed. Item 2 showed that 79% agreed that DRTA technique helps student to study more than hours per day, 21% disagreed. Item 3 on the table showed that 72% agreed that DRTA technique reduces students problem on reading comprehension in English class, 28% disagreed. Item 4 on the table showed that 70% agreed that DRTA technique simplifies teachers' activity while teaching reading comprehension in class, 30% disagreed. Item 5 on the table showed that 79% agreed that DRTA technique improves the teaching and learning of reading comprehension, 21% disagreed.

III. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Result of findings for Research Question One revealed majority of the respondents agreed DRTA technique improves students reading competence, majority agreed that DRTA technique makes reading comprehension more productive and understanding, majority agreed that they live in an in conducive home environment, majority agreed that Students develop good reading competence through DRTA technique, majority agreed that DRTA technique is effectively utilized by students while in the library. This is in line with the findings of Renn C. E. (1999) who conducted a research on the effect of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity on second grade reading comprehension. In this research, she compared Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) with Directed Reading Approach (DRA). The result of her analysis shows that the *mean* score of the DRTA group is significantly higher than the *mean* score of the Directed Reading Approach (DRA) group.

This affirms that Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is more effective than Directed Reading Approach (DRA) in improving reading comprehension.

Result of findings for Research Question Two, which shows majority of the respondents agreed that DRTA technique helps to solve students' problem on reading comprehension, majority agreed that DRTA technique helps student to study more than hours per day, majority agreed that DRTA technique reduces students problem on reading comprehension in English class, majority agreed that DRTA technique simplifies teachers' activity while teaching reading comprehension in class, majority agreed that DRTA technique improves the teaching and learning of reading comprehension. This is in line with the findings of Sears, and Burstein, (1994) used the DR-TA simultaneously with summarizing, questioning and clarifying strategies, and investigated their effect on the reading comprehension of eighth graders with special needs. Results showed a measurable gain on word recognition and reading comprehension.

Result of findings for research question Three, shows that less than half of the respondents agreed DRTA technique is time wasting, majority agreed that DRTA technique helps students to enjoy reading at night than day time, majority agreed that Team reading is discouraged by DRTA technique, majority agreed that Learning through DRTA technique improves students' retention capacity, majority agreed that DRTA technique is useful in the reading comprehensions in English language. This corroborates the findings of Odwan (2012), which examines the effect of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) through cooperative learning on English secondary stage students' reading comprehension in Jordan. He states, as the result of his study, that students' improvement in reading comprehension may be attributed to students' skills and ability to read the material using DRTA. This is because during the activity, the students set purposes, make predictions, read silently, and verify predictions.

IV. CONCLUSION.

Based on the result of the research and the data found, it can be concluded that DRTA is effective in improving the students' reading competence and not only that, but there was an improvement on the students' ability in reading comprehension using Direct Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) technique. DRTA technique can be acceptable with the senior's high school students in the teaching and learning of reading in the secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area, Nigeria.

Secondly, DRTA technique will improve the students' reading competence and the English teacher will find teaching reading exercise easier and more interesting.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are therefore made in light of the results of the study:

- (1) The goal of developing reading competence should go hand-in-hand with the goal of developing thinking skills.
- (2) The DRTA technique should be used for teaching reading competence from the outset of instruction.
- (3) For the DRTA to be effective, the teacher should stimulate students' thinking, engage them in discussing what they predict and lead them without necessarily dominating.

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