

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The writing of this begins with an introduction which contains a brief description of this thesis. This chapter explains the research background, research question, research purpose, research significant, limitations of the research and terminology

A. Research Background

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills in learning English because through reading, students are able to obtain information, expand their knowledge, and develop their critical thinking skills. Reading also plays a crucial role in supporting other language skills such as writing, speaking, and listening. Therefore, students are expected to have good reading comprehension in order to understand various types of texts effectively. However, in reality, many students still face difficulties in comprehending English texts, especially at the junior high school level. In the context of the eighth grade students of SMP N 7 Tempunak, students' reading comprehension has not been developed optimally. Many students still have difficulties in understanding the content of the text, identifying the main idea, finding specific information, and interpreting the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. These difficulties indicate that students are not yet able to construct meaning from the text effectively, which is the main goal of reading comprehension.

Based on the preliminary observation conducted by the researcher on January 28, 2026, it was found that one of the main problems in the reading class was the low participation of students during the teaching and learning process. Most students tended to be passive and showed low involvement in classroom activities. They rarely asked questions, expressed their opinions, or responded to the teacher's questions. In addition, students were not accustomed to predicting the content of the text before reading or discussing the text after reading. As a result, the learning process became less interactive, and students were not actively engaged in constructing meaning from the text.

Furthermore, based on an interview conducted with the English teacher, it was revealed that students still experienced significant difficulties in understanding reading texts. The teacher explained that many students struggled to identify the main idea of the text, find detailed information, and understand the meaning of words in context. Students also tended to wait for the teacher's explanation rather than trying to understand the text independently. This condition shows that students lack effective reading strategies that can help them become active and independent readers. Another important issue identified is that the teaching method used in the classroom is still teacher-centered. In a teacher-centered approach, the teacher becomes the main source of information and dominates the classroom activities, while students play a passive role as listeners. The teacher usually explains the material, translates difficult vocabulary, and then asks students to answer comprehension questions. This method does not provide enough opportunities

for students to think critically, interact with the text, or engage in meaningful learning activities. As a result, students become less motivated, less confident, and less active in the learning process. They also tend to depend on the teacher and do not develop their own understanding of the text. In addition, the lack of interactive and engaging learning strategies also contributes to students' low reading comprehension. Without appropriate strategies, students may feel bored and uninterested in reading activities. They may see reading as a difficult and monotonous task, which further decreases their motivation to learn.

Therefore, it is important for teachers to use effective teaching techniques that can involve students actively and help them understand the text better. To overcome these problems, an appropriate teaching strategy is needed to improve both students' participation and reading comprehension. One of the strategies that can be applied is Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA). DRTA is a reading strategy that encourages students to think actively by making predictions before reading, reading the text to confirm or revise their predictions, and discussing the text after reading. Through these stages, students are guided to interact with the text, use their prior knowledge, and develop their critical thinking skills. The implementation of DRTA is expected to create a more interactive and student-centered learning environment. By applying this strategy, students are encouraged to participate actively, share their ideas, and engage in meaningful discussions. DRTA also helps students become more aware of their thinking process while reading,

which can improve their comprehension skills. Therefore, the use of DRTA is expected to improve both students' participation and their reading comprehension. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting a Classroom Action Research entitled "Improving Students' Reading Comprehension through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) of the Eighth Grade Students at SMP N 7 Tempunak."

B. Research Question

Based on the background of the study above, the research formulate research question:

1. How does Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) improve the students' participation in learning reading comprehension at SMP N 7 Tempunak?
2. How can Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) improve the students' reading comprehension at SMP N 7 Tempunak?

C. Research Purpose

Based on the research question above, the aims of this study are:

1. To describe the students' participation in learning reading comprehension through the use of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) at SMP N 7 Tempunak
2. To find out the improvement of students' reading comprehension through the use of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) at SMP N 7 Tempunak.

D. Research Significances

In this research, significances was divided into two main aspects, namely theoretically and practically. The researcher hoped that the result of this research could contribute to the development of theory in the field of English language teaching and to the improvement of classroom learning practice, particularly in improving students reading comprehension through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy. The significances of this research could be explained as follows:

1. Theoretically

This research contributes to the development of knowledge in the field of English language teaching, particularly in teaching reading comprehension. The findings of this research provide empirical evidence that the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy can improve students' participation and reading comprehension, especially in identifying the main idea, understanding detailed information, making inferences, and understanding unfamiliar vocabulary in descriptive texts. In addition, this research supports previous theories and studies regarding the effectiveness of the DRTA strategy as an interactive reading strategy that encourages students to activate their prior knowledge, make predictions, verify their predictions, and construct meaning from the text. Therefore, this research is expected to serve as a useful reference for future researchers and contribute to the development of teaching strategies for reading comprehension.

2. Practically

a) For Students

The results of this study are expected to help eighth-grade students at SMP N 7 Tempunak improve their reading comprehension skills through the application of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy. With this strategy, students can be more active in the reading process, able to predict the content of the text, understand the main ideas, and find important information in the reading material. In addition, the use of DRTA is expected to increase students' interest and motivation in learning to read English so that learning becomes more interesting and meaningful.

b) For English Teachers

This study is expected to serve as a reference and alternative learning strategy for English teachers in teaching reading comprehension. The application of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy can help teachers create a more active, interactive, and student-centered learning environment. In addition, the results of this study can be used as consideration for teachers in choosing effective strategies to improve students' reading comprehension and overcome the problem of low reading skills in the classroom.

c) For the Researchers

This study is expected to broaden their knowledge and experience in directly applying the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in the classroom. This study also serves as a means for the Researcher to develop their professional skills as a prospective educator, particularly in conducting Classroom Action Research (CAR). In addition, the results of this study are expected to provide knowledge and references for improving the quality of English language learning in the future.

E. Limitation of The Research

This research had several limitations in order to keep the scope of the study focused. First, this study was conducted only at SMP Negeri 7 Tempunak, specifically in Class VIII A. Therefore, the findings of this research were not intended to be generalized to other schools or educational levels with different characteristics. Second, this research focused on improving students' classroom participation and reading comprehension ability through the implementation of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA). Third, this study only assessed reading aspects including identifying the main idea, finding specific information, making inferences, understanding vocabulary in context, and recognizing references, without examining other language skills such as writing, speaking, or listening. Therefore, the results of this research were limited to the use of DRTA in improving students'

participation and reading comprehension within the observed classroom context.

F. Terminology

Engaging in this study refers to students' active participation, attention, and involvement in the reading process, demonstrated through predicting, responding, discussing, and interacting with the text during the implementation of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA).

1. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability of students to understand the content of a text thoroughly, both explicit and implicit information. This ability includes understanding the main ideas, detailed information, the meaning of vocabulary in context, and the ability to draw conclusions from the text being read. In this study, reading comprehension refers to the ability of eighth-grade students at SMP N 7 Tempunak to understand English reading texts after the implementation of the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy.

2. Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)

Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is a reading learning strategy that emphasizes active student involvement in the reading process through activities such as predicting the content of a text, reading to confirm predictions, and evaluating comprehension of the reading material. This strategy encourages students to think

critically and reflectively while reading. In this study, DRTA was used as a learning strategy to improve the reading comprehension skills of eighth-grade students at SMP N 7 Tempunak. In the DRTA technique, the teacher directs students to look at the title, pictures, or certain parts of the text, then asks them to predict the content of the text. After that, students read the text to check whether their predictions are correct. During and after reading, students discuss their ideas, share opinions, and provide evidence from the text to support their answers. This process helps students develop critical thinking skills and a deeper understanding of the reading material.