CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research background, research questions, research objectives, hypothesis, importance of the research, scope and limitations of the research, and definitions of key terms.

A. Background

Reading is an essential skill in language learning that enables individuals to understand and interpret written texts. Reading is an active and complex process that requires readers to do more than just recognise words on a page.[1] It involves comprehending the written text, thinking deeply about its meaning and making sense of it in a way that is appropriate to the type of text, the purpose of the reader and the context in which it is read. This means that when we read, we do not just receive information, but we actively engage with it, interpreting the message and deciding how to use what we have learnt in different situations. Reading involves the processes of decoding, comprehension, and interpretation, all of which are interconnected in shaping the meaning of the text read[2]. The decoding process allows readers to recognise words in a text, comprehension helps in linking new information with existing knowledge, while interpretation plays a role in interpreting the message and intent contained in the text. It means that reading becomes a skill that is not only complex, but also fundamental in language

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[1] Peter Afflerbach, *Understanding and Using Reading Assessment K-12*, 2018, https://lccn.loc.gov/2017030622.

[2] H. D. (2001). Longman Brown, *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy.* (Longman, 2001).

acquisition because it plays a role in enriching vocabulary, increasing analytical power, and developing readers' critical thinking skills.

Reading comprehension skills are essential as they play a role in academic success and lifelong learning. Reading enables students to acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking, and improve linguistic competence. Good reading comprehension is essential for students to access information, interact with text effectively, and participate in academic discussions[3]. In the context of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the development of reading comprehension skills becomes very important as it helps students understand the structure, vocabulary, and meaning of the language.

Although it is important, many students experience difficulties. Many students, especially at the junior high school level and in environments where English is not the primary language, experience difficulties in learning English, especially in reading comprehension. These difficulties are often caused by a lack of experience in using English as well as limited use of appropriate reading strategies[4]. In addition to these general difficulties, there are some specific factors that contribute to low reading comprehension. These factors include limited vocabulary, difficulty finding the main idea, low motivation, and the use of ineffective reading strategies[5]. These challenges indicate the need for effective learning strategies to help students improve their reading comprehension skills.

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[3] N. J Anderson, *Active Skills for Reading*, Book 1 (Heinle & Heinle, 2003).
[4] I. S. P. Nation, *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing* (Routledge, 2009).
[5] Grabe and stoller, *Teaching and Researching Reading* (Pearson Education, 2002).

This challenge in reading comprehension is a major concern in the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* in Indonesia. For grade VII (Phase D), the government, through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, has established Learning Outcomes (CP) for the "Reading and Viewing" element[6]. This CP requires students to not only read but also to discover explicit and implicit meanings, critically evaluate information, and interpret texts. This curriculum requirement underscores the need for learning strategies that explicitly teach students how to interact actively and think critically during the reading process.

One strategy that can answer this challenge and is in line with the demands of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* is the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA). DRTA is a learning approach that encourages students to make predictions, read actively, and confirm or revise their predictions based on text evidence [7]. This strategy encourages critical thinking, student engagement, and deeper understanding of the text. By guiding students through the reading process using structured questions and reflections, DRTA enhances their ability to interact with the text and develop metacognitive skills.

A lot of research on DRTA strategy in improving students' reading comprehension have been conducted across different education levels. The first is in elementary school research conducted by Minard, with the title "the effectiveness of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) in improving reading

[6] Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, "Capaian Pembelajaran Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Fase A-Fase F," *Kementrian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, Dan Teknologi*, 2022, 23.
[7] Duke and Pearson, "Effective Practices for Developing Reading Comprehension," 2004, 205–42, https://doi.org/10.1598/0872071774.10.

comprehension of grade three pupils at Toro Hills Elementary School". The researcher conduct experimental method of research. The main source of data came from thirty Grade Three pupils at Toro Hills Elementary School, selected through purposive sampling and divided into two groups: 15 pupils in the control group and 15 pupils in the experimental group. The findings showed that the DRTA strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension skills, highlighting effectiveness at the elementary school level.[8]

Then the research conducted in junior high school level, under title "The Effectiveness of using Drta Strategy Toward Students' Reading Comprehension In Descriptive Text At 8th Grade Of Smpn 1 Pulung Ponorogo". Using a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, the study concluded that the DRTA method was effective in improving students' reading performance.[9] In addition, the other title was "the impact of the DRTA strategy on reading comprehension of story texts among eighth grade students at MTs Imam Al Ghozali Panjerrejo Rejotangan". Their research, using a pre-experiment design, found that DRTA, especially when integrated with short videos, was effective in improving student engagement and comprehension. However, their focus was limited to narrative texts.[10]

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[8] Minard. Abenojar, "Effectiveness of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) in Improving the Reading Comprehension of Grade Three Pup," *International Journal of Open-Access, Interdisciplinary & New Educational Discoveries of ETCOR Educational Research Center (IJOINED ETCOR)* III, no. 2 (2024): 435–46, https://etcor.org.

[9] Kanti Nur Haidah, "The Effectiveness of Using Drta Strategy Toward Students' Reading Comprehension In Descriptive Text At 8th Grade Of SMPN 1 Pulung Ponorogo" (IAIN Ponorogo, 2022).

[10] Robbi, "The Impact of the DRTA Strategy on Reading Comprehension of Story Texts among Eighth Grade Students at MTs Imam Al Ghozali Panjerrejo Rejotangan." (IAIN Tulungagung, 2019).

The last research conducted in senior high school level by at the secondary school level, Ismail conducted a classroom action research entitled "DRTA to Improve Reading Comprehension of Class X Students of SMK Pembangunan Kota Ternate". The study showed that the DRTA method significantly improved students' text comprehension[11]. Furthermore, Akmal investigated the application of DRTA in teaching descriptive text reading to grade X students at SMA Muhammadiyah Kisaran in the 2016/2017 academic year. Using a pre-experimental research design, this study found that the DRTA strategy encouraged student activity, supported the development of prior knowledge, encouraged prediction making, and encouraged purposeful reading. However, this study only focused on descriptive texts.[12]

Based on previous studies and the problems described by the researcher above. The researcher concludes that there are a lot of research which use DRTA (Direct Reading Thinking Activity) as a teaching strategy to measure students reading comprehension. And some of the research was conducted in the primary school level, junior high school especially at second grade, and senior high school. But there are no research use DRTA (Direct Reading Thinking Activity) at seventh grade of junior high school. Moreover, although some studies have combined DRTA with media, few have explored the integration of DRTA with interactive educational technologies. Therefore, this study proposes a new approach by combining DRTA with interactive quiz apps such as Quizizz or Kahoot, to increase

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[11] M Ismail, "The Use of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (Drta) to Improve Students Reading Comprehension of the First Grade of Smk Pembangunan Kota Ternate Mirna Ismail," *Langua: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Language Education* 1, no. 1 (2018): 42–48, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1412229.

[12] Akmal, "The Effects of Directed Reading Activity Strategy (DRTA) in Descritive Reading Texts," *Journal of Science and Social Research* 4307, no. August (2018): 116–21.

students' engagement and motivation during reading comprehension lessons. Therefore, the researcher wants to know how the influence or effect of the application of DRTA in reading comprehension found in the research observation. Considering the importance of reading comprehension and the challenges faced by students, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of DRTA in improving reading comprehension of grade VII students at MTs. Miftahul Huda Ngunut. Therefore, the researcher is interested in verifying these problems in a study entitled **"The Effectiveness of Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) on Reading Comprehension of Seventh Grade Students at Mts. Miftahul Huda Ngunut"**

B. Statement of Research Problem

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulates the research problem as follow:

"How is the effectiveness of DRTA Strategy on the students reading comprehension at seventh grade of Mts. Miftahul Huda Ngunut?"

C. The Objectives of the Research

Based on the research problem above, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of DRTA Strategy on the students reading comprehension at seventh grade of Mts. Miftahul Huda Ngunut.

D. Research Hypothesis

There are two types of hypothesis formulated, namely the Null Hypothesis (H0) and the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha).

1. Null Hypothesis (H0)

There is no significant effect in students before and after teaching using DRTA in students reading comprehension.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha)

There is significant effect in students before and after teaching using DRTA in students reading comprehension.

E. Significant Of the Research

1. For Teachers: The researcher hopes that the results of this study can be used by teachers, especially to provide alternative reading learning methods that are more interactive and comprehensive, and can increase the effectiveness of reading learning in the classroom. In addition, their reading instruction can also be improved in the teaching and learning process to increase students' comprehension in the classroom.

2. For Students: this research is expected to increase students' motivation and engagement in the reading process, as well as develop critical thinking skills through in-depth comprehending of the text.

3. For Other Researchers: this research is expected to provide a reference for other researchers in developing DRTA method in teaching reading.

F. Scope of study

This research was conducted on seventh grade students of MTs. Miftahul Huda Ngunut as the sample. The scope of the subject under study is English which focuses on teaching reading especially to increase reading

comprehension. In addition, researchers used the DRTA strategy to determine its effect on reading comprehension, especially on descriptive text.

G. Definition of Key Term

1. Teaching Reading : Teaching reading is the process of helping learners develop the ability to decode written language and comprehend texts, involving strategies to improve fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.[13]

2. Reading Comprehension: Reading comprehension is the ability to understand, interpret, and derive meaning from written text. It involves recognizing words, understanding vocabulary, making inferences, and integrating information with prior knowledge.[14]

3. DRTA Method : The Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) method is an instructional strategy designed to improve reading comprehension by actively engaging students in the reading process. The DRTA method focuses on students making predictions about the content of the text and then verifying those predictions as they read.[15]

H. The Thesis Structure

1. Chapter I presents an introduction consisting of the background of the study, formulation of research problem, research objectives, research hypothesis,

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[13] William Grabe and Fredricka L. Stoller, *Teaching and Researching Reading, Third Edition*, ed. David Candlin, *Teaching and Researching Reading*, Second Edi (Routledge, 2011), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315726274.
[14] C Snow, *Reading for Understanding: Toward a Research and Development Program in Reading Comprehension.* (RAND Corporation, 2002).
[15] Farida. Rahim, *Pengajaran Membaca Di Sekolah Dasar.* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2008).

the significance of the research, scope and limitation of the research, definition of key terms, and the thesis structure.

2. Chapter II presents a review of related literature and previous studies. This chapter discusses several related topics that emphasize the implementation of this research. The purpose of this discussion is to outline the theories, research reports, and literature reviews related to reading comprehension and the DRTA (Direct Reading Thinking Activity) strategy.

3. Chapter III is the research method that deals with the description of the research design, population and sample or subjects, research instrument, validity and reliability testing, data collecting method, and data analysis.

4. Chapter IV presents description of data and also the discussion of the study.

5. Chapter V presents a conclusion that summarizes the findings based on results and data analysis in the previous chapter, and also suggestions that are addressed to teachers and further researchers.