

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is an important skill to access information and make meaning. Reading has a lot of benefits. Reading a book can provide much knowledge and useful purposes simultaneously. According to Pardede (2017) reading is the most crucial skill to master. Based on that statement, reading is the foundation for learning and acquiring knowledge in various disciplines. Reading must be balanced with understanding in reading. Students can read a text but are less able to understand it. That is why students need to understand and not just read the reading.

Reading is a useful skill in language. Unlike speaking and writing, the reading process and output cannot be directly seen and seen. As a result, all reading evaluations must be based on inference. Students more or less understand what they read, the more they read, the better they will understand it (Harmer, 2007). This statement means that reading is very important to achieve goals such as mastering the language well with various kinds of books, newspapers, magazines, and so on. If reading activities are carried out frequently, reading skills will increase and students will get a lot of information from the readings they read.

Reading comprehension is the foundation for all other academic skills. It helps children build vocabulary, learn about the world, and understand complex concepts. Good reading comprehension skills are essential for success in school. Students who develop strong reading comprehension skills are likelier to succeed in school and life. Reading comprehension is the cornerstone of academic

achievement, providing the foundation for all other educational abilities. Understanding written material is more than just an academic pursuit; it is a vital talent that enables students to navigate and flourish in the complicated terrain of education and beyond. The purpose of this research is to dive into the critical role that reading comprehension plays in molding students' educational journeys and life outcomes.

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating some complex operations that include word reading, world knowledge, and fluency. Reading comprehension is a thinking process by which a student selects facts information, or ideas from printed materials, decides how to relate to previous knowledge has acquired, and judges their appropriateness and worth for meeting his own needs and objectives (Kennedy, 1981: 191-192). Based on that statement, to quickly comprehend a reading selection, students must be able to use the information to draw conclusions and read critically, understand the figurative, determine the author's purpose, evaluate the ideas presented, and apply the ideas to real-world situations. However, students encounter difficulties and challenges such as students having difficulty understanding reading texts and connecting them.

Many contemporary ways of assessing reading comprehension are one-dimensional, with minimal diversity in the material read and relatively restrictive answer styles that do not vary among exams. As a result, some examinations rely nearly entirely on multiple choice, while others rely on fill-in-the-blanks and yet others on recounting. The desire for high dependability, particularly in high-stakes exams, sometimes leads to considerable constraints on the sort of content to be

read and the structure of replies.

Reading comprehension is something that must be balanced with the use of learning strategies. Reading comprehension was measured, using a combination of interests (Fletcher, 2006). Based on this statement, to measure students' reading comprehension abilities, strategies are needed to achieve learning objectives, such as the use of group learning strategies or what is usually called cooperative learning or individual.

Those problems indicate the need for an appropriate teaching strategy that cannot only help improve student's comprehension ability but that can make them actively participate in the reading class as well. In this case, the researcher suggests the use of a DRTA strategy. DRTA helps students comprehend texts by activating their background knowledge related to the texts and promoting the use of reading strategies. According to Stauffer (1969), DRTA strategy focuses on students' involvement with text because students predict and prove it when reading. Therefore, by engaging students intellectually and encouraging them to create questions and analyse information, and assess provisional answers, the teacher's DRTA technique can encourage students' effort and focus.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Based on background of the study students experience difficulty in understanding reading when reading words or sentences in texts in English. They can read them but students do not understand what they read. To solve this problem, researchers decided to use the DRTA strategy to improve students' reading comprehension. An appropriate test can measure how deep the comprehension of the students about the text or passage that they have read. The

test used to conduct the research is narrative text. Based on the background, the research problem can be stated as follows: can the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti in the academic year 2023/2024 be improved through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) Strategy?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

Related to the research problem already stated, the objective of this study is designed to answer the research problem that has been previously formulated which is to figure out whether or not the DRTA strategy can improve the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti in the academic year 2023/2024

### **1.4 Limitations of the Study**

The researcher limits research to improving students' reading comprehension through the DRTA strategy for understanding the information presented in readings or texts mainly identifying general information, specific information, textual references, and textual meaning in reading text for class VII students of SMP Widya Sakti in the academic year 2023/2024 through DRTA strategy.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The DRTA approach was used in this research to improve students' reading comprehension skills. The DRTA strategy makes it easier for researchers to improve learning, especially in improving students' reading comprehension. Application of the DRTA strategy approach is an action that can produce a significant increase in students' understanding of reading. The DRTA strategy encourages students to think critically by actively involving them in the reading

process. Educators can adapt their teaching according to student needs. Overall, the DRTA approach is a valuable tool for educators who want to improve their students' reading comprehension skills, both theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, the findings of the present study are expected to be able to enrich the teaching method. In teaching reading it can support the other existing research finding which have revealed of the importance of the different language in learning process. The results of this research are expected to be used as prove that Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is an effective strategy to improve reading comprehension, especially to eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti.

Furthermore, for practically, the results of this research are expected to give information to the eighth-grade students of SMP Widya Sakti in the teaching and learning process, especially in teaching reading to encourage the students to make and perform their ability in reading. Meanwhile, this study expected that the Eights grade students of SMP Widya Sakti in the academic year 2023/2024 were more motivated to increase their motivation, desire, and interest in learning reading and improve their English reading comprehension.

### **1.6 Definition of the Key Terms**

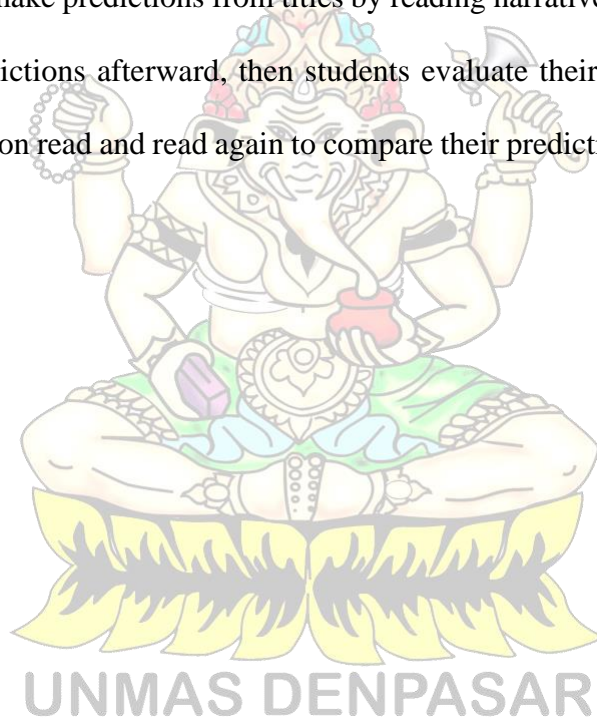
To avoid misunderstanding on the side of the readers, the key terms are briefly defined as follows:

1. Reading comprehension is defined as the process of getting information or ideas to clearly understand the meaning of a sentence. On the other hand, reading comprehension means students' ability to understand texts, conclude texts, and infer meaning through context. In this case, students



can ask questions about the text, make predictions, and also read to confirm or disprove their predictions.

2. Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is a strategy chosen by the researchers in this study which is used to improve students' achievement in reading comprehension. DRTA was used to improve students' reading comprehension. DRTA is operationally defined as a strategy in learning reading comprehension for the eighth-grade of SMP Widya Sakti where students make predictions from titles by reading narrative text and proving their predictions afterward, then students evaluate their predictions after each section read and read again to compare their predictions with the text.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

A theoretical review is a review of some theories related to the study. Therefore, it was used to support and build this study. The present study is based on the discussion of the following theoretical framework: Reading Skill, Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA), Narrative Text, and Reading Assessment. For the purpose of the present study, some theoretical new points as well as empirical evidence are reviewed. Some of the viewpoints are as follows:

##### **2.1.1 Reading Skill**

Reading is a crucial skill to master. Reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their background knowledge to build meaning (Nunan, 2003). That means reading is not only a passive activity in which students decode text on a page. Instead, it is a dynamic and active process in which students actively connect with the text and rely on existing knowledge and experiences to develop comprehension and meaning.

Comprehension in reading is needed by the readers to know what they read. There are five main purposes for comprehensive reading: first, reading for specific information, second, reading for specific application, third, reading for pleasure, reading for ideas, fifth, reading for understanding (Pang et al., 2003). Based on the statement above, comprehension is the most significant aspect of the explanation since it is difficult to know what they read without comprehension. Reading is one of the skills that must be fostered in the classroom in this instruction.

Reading comprehension is the level of comprehension of a piece or material.

Bentara (2015) state that reading comprehension is the process by which readers generate meaning by engaging with text using past knowledge and experience, information in the text, and so on as well as information in the text. Therefore, reading comprehension might be defined as the result of reading activity. It is the process of creating acceptable and appropriate meaning by linking what was read with what the students already know and thinking about all of the material until it is acknowledged. Reading comprehension occurs when students complete reading a piece or chapter and understand the message or goal that the researcher is attempting to convey.

### **2.1.2 Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)**

DRTA is strategy for reading and thinking directly, so that students can focus on the text and predict the content of the story by proving it while reading. Stauffer (1969) state that DRTA strategy focuses students' involvement with text, because students predict and prove it when reading. Based on the statement with the DRTA strategy students can be more active and students' critical thinking increases. DRTA makes students' understanding levels better in reading. Based on Stauffer (1969), there are Predicting , Reading, Proving as a procedure of DRTA.

By using the DRTA strategy, students do what is assigned to them. Students was asked to make predictions based on the title clue where at this stage the teacher writes the title of the reading text that students were read on the board. After that the teacher asks students to predict the contents of the reading text that was read based on the title. Then students were asked to read the reading text, then students prove it is in accordance with the predictions that have been made. This stage is repeated until everything is covered. By using the DRTA strategy, during the



learning process it increase student motivation in learning.

DRTA effectively helps students develop text comprehension skills. They learn to not only read word for word, but also to connect story elements, understand characters, and explore possible messages or themes in the text. Using DRTA with narrative text creates a holistic reading experience. Students not only read texts mechanically, but also absorb the story and learn to think critically about what they read. It supports the development of comprehensive literacy skills.

According to (Nerim, 2020) the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) model emphasizes the process of full student involvement to be able to find the material being studied and relate it to real-life situations so as to encourage students to be able to apply it in their lives. It means that there are several things that can be observed. The DRTA learning model emphasizes the direct experience of students. The learning process in DRTA students do not only receive lessons, but the process of searching and finding. Then students are encouraged to be able to apply it in life, meaning that the DRTA model does not only expect students to understand the material they are studying but how the subject matter can be understood to colour their behaviour in everyday life.

The researcher concludes that DRTA is an effective strategy to be done by the researcher while teaching reading especially reading comprehension in the classroom. Through this strategy, the students will be easy in comprehending the meaning of the text. In addition, the students will understand the text easily

### **2.1.3 Narrative Text**

Narrative text is one of various genre of text. Narrative text is a text that tells a series of events sequentially and are connected to one another. (Anderson &

Anderson, 2003) state that narrative is a piece of text which tells a story and, in doing so, entertains or informs the reader or listener. Therefore, a narrative's primary goal is to entertain or instruct the reader or listener. Novels, short stories, movies, plays, and even personal recollections are all examples of narratives.

Narrative text tells the story from one incident to the next to create a cohesive overall story. Gerrig (2018) state that narrative texts always describe a topic that is handled by characters (actors) that have a variety of personalities. Thus, causal events or problems can be seen in paragraphs. The entire story with a timeline of events was be written in narrative text. The characteristics that will appear can be explicit or implied because this is just a fictional story and it depends on how it is from the point of view of the author of the story.

Learning with narrative text material is crucial learning in the context of literacy learning. It can provide significant benefits for learning to read and understand texts, providing benefits such as increasing student engagement where narrative text, with an interesting storyline, naturally attracts students' attention. When DRTA is used in the context of reading narrative texts, students can actively engage with the text. They can ask questions, make predictions, and test their understanding, all of which can increase students' engagement in reading, understanding Narrative Structure, Narrative text often follows a specific narrative structure, such as introduction, conflict, climax, and resolution.

#### **2.1.4 Reading Assessment**

Assessment is the process to determine the strengths and weaknesses of a certain object. Assessment may be conducted for many purposes, but the ultimate goal is to improve instruction for the students. The assessment of reading

comprehension is a critical component of any research effort aimed to improve the understanding of what is reading comprehension and how it can be best to teach in the classroom. describes assessment is a tool that measures a learner's knowledge and ability. The teacher has to assess the student knowledge and ability whether they understand with the certain material that the teacher has taught. Forms of assessment should be based on, and reflect, what is taught in the classroom. Or in other words, teachers assess what they have been taught in the classroom.

To assess the students' comprehension, the teacher can ask students about some questions related to the reading text to check whether they understand or not. However (Klingner et al., 2007) also state that reading comprehension assessment has different purposes. One of these is to compare student's comprehension levels to those of students in a norming sample. Another is to find out if students have met pre-established criteria for their grade level. A third purpose is to inform instruction by determining when students understand what they read and how efficiently they use which comprehension strategies.

As a teacher, the researcher needs to assess student' comprehension for many different purposes. Assessment helps us to make informed decisions regarding the level of materials our students can handle (Blachowicz, 2008). But knowing what the students can read is only the first step. The researcher also needed to know how they read, so the researcher can build on strong strategies and introduce new ones. The teacher can assess the students' comprehension in many ways to get the result. The result will show whether the students can handle the or not so that teacher can develop the students' understanding.

In assessing reading comprehension, the teacher expects the students can reach the goal. (Pang et al., 2003) state that are two forms of reading assessment. The first is to find out how well the students are reading in order to help them improve. The second is to measure how much progress has been made. Both forms of assessment are needed for effective reading instruction. Text comprehension is usually assessed through questions. Furthermore, the questions should focus on the main idea and viewpoints, not minor details. The student' responses can be spoken or written. Written responses can be in the form of a multiple-choice, short answer, or extended pieces of writing. Also, when teachers assess their student, they have to make an assessment which relates to the student in their daily life.

There are many types of assessment which can be used to assess student' reading comprehension ability, one of them is a short-answer task. According to (Alderson, 2005), short answer task is a semi-objective alternative to multiple-choice. Test-takers are simply asked a question which requires a brief response, in a few words. Furthermore, the researcher in the present study assesses the students' reading comprehension by using short answer task. By short answer task, the students should give the answer or idea about the test. They directly answer the questions their ide based on the questions. This kind of test is a good way of measuring grammatical form and meaning of reading comprehension.

The conclusion is both teachings and assessing are so closely interrelated in which the form of assessment is not just giving a test at the end of teaching process but also in every activity which appears in the class that can be in the form of test. In addition, the researcher focuses on the theory of (N'Namdi, 2005) describes assessment is a tool that measures a learner's knowledge and ability. The

assessment of reading comprehension is a critical component of any research effort aimed at improving understanding about what is reading comprehension and how it can be taught to be properly. In the presents study. the assessment on reading comprehension was conducted in the form of short answer task that was given to the students in pre-test and post-test.

There are several reasons for assessing reading and the skills and knowledge that are involve in reading. They include assessing to encourage learning, assessing to monitor progress and provide feedback, assessing to diagnose problems and assessing to measure proficiency the statement of reading comprehension is a critical component of any research effort aim at improving understanding about what is reading comprehension and how it can best to teach.

According to Brown (2004) in reading test, there are many things that must be considered, such as the components of reading ability, a number of different types or genres of written texts and specific tasks that are commonly used in the assessment of reading. For this reason, all assessment of reading must be carried out by inference. Some considerations are needed in designing assessment of reading, such as the types of genres of written text, the components of reading ability, and specific tasks.

Reading assessment is an important component in education that helps measure students' abilities to understand and interpret texts. Reading assessment helps teachers and educators understand the extent of students' reading abilities. It involves various aspects, including text comprehension, phoneme-based reading skills, word comprehension, and reading speed. This evaluation provides an overview of how well students are able to decipher the meaning of the text they



read. Through reading assessments, teachers can identify students' individual learning needs. This allows them to design learning plans that suit students' ability levels and needs, including interventions if necessary.

The use of regular assessments helps monitor student progress over time. This allows teachers and schools to assess whether the learning efforts implemented have been effective in improving students' reading skills. The results of the reading assessment are used to make relevant instructional decisions. Teachers can determine the type of reading material appropriate to a student's level, adjust teaching approaches, or provide additional support to students who need it.

Encouraging Student-Centered Learning: Reading assessment can be a tool for encouraging student-centered learning. Students can use assessment results to understand their strengths and weaknesses in reading, and together with their teacher, they can design specific learning goals.

Furthermore, the types of reading performance were influence the assessment tasks as well. Brown lists a number of possible tasks for assessing perceptive, selective, interactive and extensive reading. Short answer task, in this type of assessment, reading passage is presented. and the students read 10 questions that must be answered.

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## **2.2 Empirical Review**

The empirical review it a review of previous research that have similarity with the present study. The researcher reviews the information and theories currently available concerning the topic and the historical background of the topic Although the research which was used as the empirical review did not have the same so the present study but there were some similarities in some parts variable. The present study was improving student reading comprehension through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA). There were two related study which is used as reference in this study and described as follow:

The first, research from (Ardana et al., 2022). Improving Reading Comprehension Through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) Strategy With Pictures of The Eighth Grade Students Of SMPN 4 Mengwi In Academic Year 2020/202. Based on the result of the researcher and the data found, it can be said that Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy is effective to improve the students reading comprehension. In this research the kind of the test is used for the pre-test and post-test used written test (short answer task). The result of the study could be seen from the progressing mean score of the pre-test and post-test. After conducting two cycles of teaching, it was finding the reading comprehension can be improved by using DRTA.

The second research from Meliyani (2021) The Use Of DRTA Strategy to

Improve Reading Comprehension of Students. the result of the researcher and the data found, it can be said that Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy is effective to improve the student's reading comprehension. Data is collected through shared questionnaires disseminated via a website called Google Form. Questionnaires were issued in the form of multiple-choice answers with the following options: strongly agree; agree; disagree; and strongly disagree. The researcher computed the questionnaire findings for each question asked to students. Therefore, in this presents study the researcher used short answer task as the test item in conducting the pre-test and post-test. In the pre-test and post-test, the researcher provided ten questions in the form of short-answer task for the students in order to measure their comprehension after applying DRTA. And the researcher used narrative fable and fairy tales. It makes the student more interesting to study.

Based on the explanation above, the two studies conducted by researchers must improve students' reading comprehension skills through the DRTA Strategy. There are strengths and weaknesses in both types of research. The strength of this research is the learning process that the researcher carried out using the DRTA Strategy with pictures to improve students' reading comprehension skills. However, the weakness of this research is that the researchers did not provide clear instructions regarding. Lack of instructions makes students confused.

The difference between previous research and present research is that in the previous research, the teaching method used a strategy called DRTA, the practical part was carried out by the researcher. The researcher was repeat the strategy to help students learn. However, in present research, students themselves were in

charge of practicing DRTA strategies. They were the ones doing the repetition, not the researcher. This shift is important because it places more responsibility and involvement on students, making the learning process more practical and student centered. This marks a departure from the traditional approach, emphasizing a more active role for students in mastering DRTA strategies.

