CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Reading is a fundamental skill that students must acquire. Reading provides growth opportunities and broadens access to new information. Through reading, students can encounter challenging vocabulary, refine their reading intonation, and strengthen their reading skills through consistent practice. According to Banditvilai (2020), reading enhances students' vocabulary and deepens their comprehension of written texts. Despite this, many students struggle to grasp the meaning of what they read, which is reflected in their low reading scores. To comprehend texts effectively, students must apply various strategies to help them process, retain, and recall information. Today, resources such as books, magazines, journals, and the internet serve as valuable learning tools, all of which require strong reading and comprehension skills in English. Through reading, students gain more experience, expanding both their knowledge and proficiency in the language. Additionally, readers should be able to recognize the different purposes behind the texts they read.

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According to Smith et al. (2021), reading comprehension is closely linked to a reader's prior knowledge, which is often reflected in their vocabulary. While trying to understand a text, students rely on the meanings of words they already know. If they struggle to grasp a word's meaning, it indicates a gap in their knowledge. Therefore, having a strong vocabulary is essential for understanding the overall message of a paragraph or text. Reading is a skill that continues to grow

over time (Johnson, 2008). Its development is an ongoing process that requires regular and consistent practice. Without frequent reading, one's ability may weaken, as improvement depends heavily on practice. However, reading also serves as a positive and productive way to develop oneself.

According to Nurdianingsih (2021), reading comprehension supports the understanding of written language. When students engage in reading activities and comprehend well, they actively monitor their understanding and use specific strategies to interpret the meaning of the text. This enables them to grasp the content and draw conclusions from what they have read. Without proper comprehension, it becomes challenging to understand the text's meaning and identify its main ideas. Students need to master four key aspects of reading: general information, specific details, textual references, and textual meaning. Therefore, teachers must recognize their students' abilities to select the most effective teaching strategies. One approach that has been proven to enhance students' reading comprehension and provide meaningful learning opportunities is the Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy.

Unfortunately, the prevalent problem among seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Kuta Utara is a deficiency in reading comprehension. Many students still struggle with reading comprehension, particularly in identifying main ideas, specific details, references, and overall meaning. This issue arises because most students tend to read texts without truly processing the meaning or paying close attention to each word and sentence. Such a habit negatively impacts their reading comprehension. One of the main causes of this problem is the lack of effective strategies that teachers use in teaching reading skills.

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Teachers' instructional strategies can contribute to students' reading comprehension difficulties. When methods are not suitable, students struggle to understand the text, leading to passive classroom activities with minimal interaction. Typically, students are only asked to read and answer questions without truly engaging with the material. As a result, they often feel confused and find it hard to respond to questions due to their lack of understanding. This leads to poor comprehension of the material. Therefore, teachers need to apply effective strategies that can enhance students' reading comprehension.

Various strategies can be used in teaching reading, and one of them is the Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy. This approach is specifically designed to support students who struggle with reading. According to McKenna (2002), the three phases of the LRD strategy, before, during, and after reading, cover the essential components of an effective reading lesson. By applying this method, students are better able to understand the content of the text and enhance their grasp of the information presented. Additionally, the strategy encourages students to exchange ideas through group discussions.

Depending on the previous explanation, the use of the LRD strategy can be an effective way to enhance students' reading comprehension. This strategy helps students identify general and specific information, textual meaning, and references in a text. Through group discussion, students actively collaborate to find answers, which supports better comprehension of the reading material.

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1.2 Research Problem

Based on the previous explanation, the researcher applied the Listen–Read–Discuss (LRD) strategy to overcome students' difficulties in reading comprehension. Therefore, the research problem of this study is formulated as follows: Can the reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 2 Kuta Utara in the 2025/2026 academic year be improved through the implementation of the LRD strategy?

1.3 Limitations of The Study

This study was limited to improving the reading comprehension of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 2 Kuta Utara through the implementation of the Listen–Read–Discuss (LRD) strategy. The focus of the study was on students' ability to understand general information, specific information, textual meaning, and references in reading texts.

The Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran for seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Kuta Utara aims to develop students' ability to effectively recognize general information, specific information, textual meaning, and textual reference. This lesson's major objective is to use the LRD Strategy to identify the previously listed components of reading comprehension. The researcher analyzed the impact of the LRD strategy on enhancing students' reading comprehension of a text. The researcher used descriptive text. Based on the school's curriculum and SMPN 2 Kuta Utara's official syllabus, descriptive texts, in this context, describe people, with appropriate grammar and contextual clarity. To measure comprehension levels, students completed short-answer tasks based on Brown's (2004) framework.

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1.4 Significance of the Study

The goal of this research is to find out whether the LRD strategy can solve the problems that students face. Moreover, this research aims to improve the reading comprehension of seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2025/2026 through the LRD strategy. The researcher hopes the research results can provide new information about improving students' reading comprehension using the LRD strategy. Apart from that, it is hoped that this research will be helpful for English teachers at SMPN 2 Kuta Utara and other researchers undertaking similar investigations, offering both theoretical and practical advantages.

Theoretically, the results of this research may be valuable in enhancing students' reading comprehension through LRD. The study aims to contribute new insights into the use of LRD to improve students' reading abilities. Furthermore, this research is also expected to serve as a reference for other scholars conducting similar studies, enriching the theory with more accurate evidence on how to improve reading comprehension.

Practically, the findings of this study will be beneficial for teachers, students, and future researchers. For teachers, short-answer tasks will serve as a useful tool to assess students' reading comprehension abilities. Additionally, these tasks will help teachers select appropriate assessments that can enhance students' knowledge and motivate them to engage with the test. For students, the study will help improve their reading skills not only in understanding word meanings but also in identifying main ideas, specific details, textual meaning, and references within a text. For future researchers, the study will provide valuable insights into the application of the

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Listen-Read-Discuss strategy in teaching reading comprehension, which can serve as a foundation for further research.12

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid any confusion or uncertainty among readers regarding the significant words commonly used in the context of this study, it is crucial to provide clear explanations of the main key terms. This study encompasses various essential concepts that are directly relevant to the investigation. The key terms are defined as follows:

1.5.1. Reading comprehension

Operationally, reading comprehension in this study refers to the seventh-grade students of SMPN 2 Kuta Utara in the 2025/2026 academic year understanding descriptive text, focusing on four key aspects: identifying the main idea, locating specific information, recognizing textual references, and interpreting textual meaning.

1.5.2. Listen-Read-Discuss

The Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy was implemented to enhance the reading comprehension of seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Kuta Utara during the 2025/2026 academic year. Teachers introduce three steps in this strategy: listen, read, and discuss. The process begins with the teacher preparing a descriptive text and reading it aloud with proper pronunciation and intonation. Next, students take turns reading the text, one sentence per student, while also focusing on understanding its meaning. Finally, the students engage in a discussion about the text and answer related questions.

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CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

A theory represents a collection of interconnected concepts, definitions, and propositions that offer a structured perspective on a phenomenon. It serves to prevent any misunderstanding of the concepts and terms that apply in this study. The purpose of the theoretical review is to showcase the researcher's understanding and expertise in the selected research area, with a focus on the research problem. A scientific investigation should be grounded in relevant theoretical frameworks and supported by empirical evidence. Thus, this chapter defines and explores several topics, including reading comprehension, the Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy, and reading comprehension assessment. The following sub-discussion discusses these matters.

2.1.1 Reading comprehension

Reading plays a vital role in language learning, serving as a tool for acquiring language, communicating, and exchanging ideas. Like any language activity, reading involves a complex interaction between the reader and the text. It is not just about pronouncing words on a page or following written lines; it includes a range of mental processes. Reading should be seen as an active, not passive, task, where readers connect the content of the text with their prior knowledge.

According to Brown (1994), how one defines reading in a foreign language may depend on one's own background in learning languages. Furthermore, Brown

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(2004) suggests that reading in a foreign language is often considered a skill that teachers assume students will naturally develop.

According to Nouwens et al. (2021), reading comprehension is a complex activity that involves the use of advanced cognitive abilities. When students read, it is expected that they can grasp the main ideas presented in the text. Identifying the central message is essential to fully understanding the entire passage. Through reading comprehension, students gain a wealth of knowledge by learning new vocabulary and acquiring fresh information, which can also enhance their critical thinking skills. This process helps them interpret the content and expand their word knowledge. In this study, reading comprehension is defined as the ability to derive meaning from written material, where students aim to interpret the text's message and recognize its main theme.

According to Duffy (2009), reading comprehension relies on the reader's existing knowledge. This prior knowledge is conveyed through language, and as readers interact with a text, they interpret the meaning of the words they see. Difficulty in understanding a word suggests a lack of necessary knowledge (Dwijanatha et al., 2022). Vocabulary plays a key role in grasping the meaning of paragraphs or entire texts (Yasmini et al., 2022). While understanding a text can be difficult, readers often predict meanings based on their vocabulary skills. A broad vocabulary supports better comprehension (Fikriah et al., 2021). If a reader does not fully understand the text during the reading process, it becomes hard to grasp the meaning and to identify the main idea (Antari et al., 2023).

Smith et al. (2021) explain that reading comprehension involves the ability of students to truly understand what they are reading. If students read without grasping

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the meaning, the reading process becomes meaningless. Comprehension results from a range of cognitive activities such as decoding words, accessing vocabulary, analyzing sentence structures, making inferences, applying reading strategies, and engaging in post-reading tasks like summarizing, asking and answering questions, and forming arguments. Word recognition plays a key role in helping students understand the text, as it supports their ability to interpret its meaning. Through reading, students gain substantial knowledge, expand their vocabulary, and find it easier to engage with and understand written material.

Understanding is a mental process where meaning is drawn by connecting ideas within a text, involving both word knowledge and active thinking or reasoning (Pang et al., 2003). In reading, the emphasis is on how readers use the information they gather, combined with their knowledge and reasoning skills, to make sense of the text. Skilled readers are aware of their level of comprehension as they read and will take steps to overcome any challenges they face. The primary goal of reading is to comprehend the material (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Comprehension happens when a reader constructs the meaning from the words, sentences, or the overall content they are reading.

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In this study, the researcher adopted Sadoski's (2004) definition of reading comprehension as the process of thinking about and extracting meaning from written texts. Readers actively work to interpret the content of what they read. For students to truly understand the meaning and identify the main idea during reading, they must comprehend the text. Reading comprehension involves making sense of written material. Students strive to grasp the significance and recognize the key ideas in the text. Successful readers can identify four important components of

reading, which include general information, specific details, textual meaning, and textual references.

2.1.2 LRD strategy

The cooperative learning model is an instructional approach that focuses on collaboration among students, often through small group discussions during learning activities. In this method, students work together in groups to achieve shared objectives. Cooperative learning enables students to solve problems collectively and more effectively. According to Kagan & Kagan (2009), assigning individual grades based on group performance in cooperative learning is considered appropriate. This model supports students in understanding the material, making it a valuable tool in the learning process. The emphasis on active, student-centered approaches such as discussions and problem-solving underscores the importance of teaching strategies that encourage interaction, critical thinking, and engagement (Pramerta, 2024). One of the most effective strategies in this context is the Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) method. It actively involves students in reading and enhances comprehension. Additionally, for students who lack prior knowledge, the teacher's brief explanation helps build background knowledge, which is crucial for improving their reading understanding.

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According to Bravida (2022), the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy is designed to help students better understand a text by activating their prior knowledge before reading. Its effectiveness lies in its simplicity and ease of integration into regular teaching practices. The strategy involves three main steps. The first step, "Listen," involves the teacher giving a lecture that previews the text's content and structure, clarifies difficult concepts in the order they appear, and concludes with a guiding

question or purpose. The second step, “Read,” has students read the text while focusing on the question or purpose introduced earlier. The final step, “Discuss,” involves a class discussion centered on the guiding question, helping students clarify main ideas and address any confusion. What sets Listen-Read-Discuss apart from other strategies is its initial step, where the teacher provides a full explanation of the content, making it feel almost as if students aren’t required to read independently at that point.

Tawali (2021) explained that the Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy is a structured approach that encourages students to participate actively and work collaboratively in small groups. It allows learners to take responsibility for setting their learning objectives and managing how they learn. This method promotes teamwork and minimizes the time spent merely answering questions based on the reading. Originally introduced by Manzo, the LRD strategy was designed to engage students in exploring problems together and finding solutions. It encourages them to follow their curiosity and think critically, rather than simply focusing on memorizing content.

The Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy is designed to improve students' background knowledge before, during, and after reading a text. This is done by having the teacher give brief lectures, guide students through reading selected materials, and lead discussions afterward (Richardson, 1999). Before reading, the teacher provides a short lecture introducing key concepts and vocabulary to build a strong foundation for better understanding. During reading, students are encouraged to connect the content with their own experiences, which boosts engagement and helps them remember the material. After reading, group discussions allow students

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to clarify misunderstandings, share deeper insights, and enhance their comprehension through collaboration. This well-rounded strategy ensures that students grasp the content while also developing critical thinking and analytical skills.

Teachers need to carefully choose strategies that help students master learning activities by both capturing their interest and improving their concentration on reading comprehension. These strategies must be clear and easy for students to understand. Effective learning, which also involves developing teaching skills, requires a well-organized plan to avoid randomness or confusion (Terasne et al., 2018; Amaliya et al., 2023). Based on their insights into what makes learning successful, teachers may consider using the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy introduced by Manzo and Casale (as cited in Syafitri and Maisaroh, 2020). This approach actively involves students and encourages them to gain a deeper understanding.

Kasyulita et al. (2020) showed that the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy greatly improves students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, Adelia and Darmawan (2021) point out that having a limited vocabulary can make it difficult to understand informational texts. In this context, the Listen-Read-Discuss method not only proves to be effective but also meets important needs in teaching and learning reading comprehension (Terasne et al., 2018; Lusiani et al., 2021). This strategy stands out as a powerful tool to help students enhance their reading abilities.

The Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy offers a straightforward and effective approach to enhancing students' understanding of a text's content or meaning. This strategy covers all reading activities across three phases: before,

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during, and after reading. According to McKenna (2002), the three stages of LRD are as follows:

1. Listen: Students listen carefully to the teacher's explanation of key concepts and background information related to the selected text.
2. Read: Students read the text actively with specific goals or tasks in mind.
3. Discuss: Students participate in a guided discussion based on the objectives set during the reading activity.

There are many strategies available for teaching reading, but teachers must choose the most appropriate ones to ensure effective learning in the classroom. The Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy is particularly well-suited for improving students' reading comprehension. This method supports students who lack prior knowledge by providing it during the listening phase, where the teacher delivers important information to help build their understanding. This foundation makes it easier for students to grasp the text during the reading stage.

Using the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy can boost students' reading comprehension and increase their participation in project-based tasks. It encourages them to work together in groups to solve problems, which builds their confidence and promotes interaction among all students, regardless of their ability level. When students study the text with peers, they can better predict its meaning, which aids in understanding the main ideas, specific details, textual references, and overall meaning. Additionally, the LRD strategy fosters a sense of community in the classroom, helping students rely on each other and value one another's input. Overall, this approach not only enhances reading skills but also develops essential life skills like collaboration, critical thinking, and effective communication.

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2.13 Assessment of reading comprehension

Reading assessment is used to evaluate the skills students have gained and to identify areas that need improvement. The way these assessments are conducted depends on the type of reading involved. Evaluating reading comprehension is a key part of the learning process in the classroom. Klinger et al. (2007) point out that assessing comprehension is particularly challenging because it is hard to precisely measure students' understanding and their thinking processes. Additionally, teachers may administer tests to gauge students' proficiency in reading comprehension and to assess how well they understand the material.

Assessment plays a crucial role in teaching reading, as it serves to evaluate students' reading achievement. Often, assessment is viewed as something that takes place after instruction, such as having students answer questions after reading a chapter or a story. However, according to Linse and Nunan (2005), assessment involves collecting information for a specific purpose and happens continuously. This suggests that even when choosing a book to read, we are naturally assessing whether it will be informative or enjoyable, sometimes without realizing it. From this perspective, it can be concluded that assessing reading comprehension is essential for teachers to determine the effectiveness of their teaching methods. It also helps measure how much students have improved in reading comprehension, especially through collaborative reading activities in the classroom.

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According to Klingner (2007), assessing comprehension poses a challenge, as it can be hard to gauge students' understanding and thought processes. Through testing, however, teachers can evaluate students' reading comprehension performance and determine how effectively they understand the text.

According to Bailey and Heritage (2008), assessment plays a vital role in identifying students' strengths and areas that need improvement in reading. Teachers can apply formative assessments to ensure they are targeting the right group of learners. In the context of reading, comprehension assessment involves multiple methods aimed at gathering reliable information for making educational decisions. A strong understanding of reading material is essential, as it significantly affects students' ability to perform well on tests. Conversely, students with weak reading comprehension skills are likely to receive low scores. Therefore, assessment serves as an important instrument for evaluating classroom progress and student learning.

Bailey (2008) emphasizes that assessment plays a vital role in recognizing students' strengths and weaknesses in reading. Teachers can utilize formative assessments to ensure they are effectively targeting the right groups of students. Reading comprehension assessment involves various methods to gather evidence that supports educational decision-making. A strong understanding of the material is important because it is closely linked to students' ability to perform well on tests. Conversely, students with weaker reading comprehension skills are likely to receive lower scores.

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This study focuses on improving students' reading comprehension through the use of the Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) strategy. The assessment chosen for this research is a short-answer task created by Brown (2004) to evaluate students' understanding of the reading material. This type of task measures grammatical skills by asking questions, providing sentence fragments, or using visual prompts. The accuracy of students' answers is judged based on one or more specific criteria.

Additionally, using the short answer format helps increase the reliability of the research by minimizing the chances of students copying each other's answers. The results from this assessment are important as they offer the researcher valuable information about the effectiveness and progress of the strategy used.

2.2 Empirical Review

An empirical review is a critical examination of research conducted on a specific topic, whether from publications such as journals, books, or other sources. The empirical review comprises essential analyses from many different studies. The researcher employs appropriate theories to support the evidence in the present study. After that, the researcher presents a range of definitions and explanations provided by experts to substantiate the research and demonstrate the applicability of various theories and concepts. Thus, this chapter defines and explores several topics, including reading comprehension, LRD, descriptive text, and reading comprehension assessment.

The first study was conducted by Syamsir et al. (2021) under the title "Improving Reading Comprehension Skill through Listen-Read-Discuss (LRD) Learning Strategy." This research aims to determine the level of reading comprehension achievement among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 5 Mandai, located in Maros Regency, after implementing the Listen-Read-Discuss strategy. The findings indicate that the LRD strategy effectively enhances the students' reading comprehension abilities at that school.

The second study, conducted by Tawali (2021), is entitled "Improving Students' Reading Comprehension Using the L-R-D Strategy at SMP N 2 Lingsar in the Academic Year 2020/2021." The research aims to assess eighth-grade

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students' reading comprehension at SMP N 2 Lingsar during the 2020/2021 academic year, following the application of the LRD (Listen-Read-Discuss) strategy. The results reveal that using this strategy leads to a measurable improvement in the students' reading comprehension.

Both previous studies exhibit favorable reactions to the strategy employed for enhancing the participants' reading comprehension. In the current research, the investigator intends to apply the same method, but with improvements aimed at achieving a more comprehensive and refined outcome. By providing explicit reading guidelines, students are expected to gain a thorough grasp of applying the L-R-D strategy during reading sessions. Furthermore, the participants will be trained to use LRD strategy prompts at three stages: before, during, and after engaging with a text or article.

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