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## THE USE OF INTERACTION-BASED ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION

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### ABSTRACT

This research study was aimed at improving students' reading comprehension by using interaction-based activities of grade VIII B students at SMPN 1 Kramatwatu in the academic year of 2020/2021. The actions were conducted based on the curriculum and in line with the course grid and lesson plan developed before conducting the interaction-based activities.

This research was action research. It consisted of two cycles, which was conducted for three meetings in the first cycle and second cycle. The subjects of this research study were 36 students of grade VIII B at SMPN 1 Kramatwatu. The data were qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data were collected through observation, interviews with the students, the English teacher and the research collaborator, and documentation the teaching and learning process. The data were in the forms of field notes, interview transcripts, vignettes, and photographs. While the quantitative data were obtained from tests (pre-test and post-test). The validity of the data was obtained by applying democratic validity, outcome validity, process validity, catalytic validity, and dialogic validity. Time triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and investigator triangulation were also applied to check the trustworthiness of the data. The interaction-based activities were used in each stage to improve the interaction between the students and the teacher. The actions conducting during this research study involved implementing the interaction-based activities, training the students to use reading techniques and strategies, teaching grammatical points, using power point presentations, pictures, and handout, and motivating the students through stories and giving rewards.

The research study outcomes show that the students' reading comprehension improved through the interaction-based activities. There were also improvements in their involvement, confidence and motivation. In terms of reading the texts, the students used some reading techniques and strategies, such as scanning, skimming, and guessing. In terms of students' behavior, the students also improved their confidence to participate actively in the classroom. The students did not worry of making mistakes in using the English language. The students were active in the discussion activity and giving feedback to each other and helping each other in the classroom activities. The students were enthusiastically in learning reading. Moreover, the students could answer the comprehension tasks well. Furthermore, the students' reading comprehension were measured quantitatively by comparing mean score of Cycle I and Cycle II. The result revealed that the students' reading comprehension improved.

**Keywords:** Reading, Interaction-Based Activity, Teaching Learning Process

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### INTRODUCTION

Everyone agrees that English has significant role in our life. Typically, it is described as the important subject in the school because reading, writing, listening and speaking

are needed in every school and adult life. Indonesian students have to learn the subject from junior high school. As stated in the Ministerial Education Regulation No. 22/ 2006, there are several objectives of English learning in



junior high schools. One of the objectives is developing the students' communicative competences in oral and written forms to achieve the functional level of literacy. In the Standard of Competence and Basic Competencies, the students are expected to have good ability in reading certain text types: descriptive, procedure, recount, narrative, report, and short functional texts. They are required to comprehend the nature of the texts correctly.

Reading comprehension is needed to get the meaning of the texts. The reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meanings through the interactions and involvements with written language (Catherine, 2002:11). Catherine (2002:11) proposes three elements of reading comprehension. The first is the reader who do the comprehending, the text that is to be comprehended, and the last is the activity in which comprehension is the part of it. Those are needed when the students have to read several texts and answer the questions in the English examination.

Brown (2001) and Nation (2009) suggest techniques and strategies that the readers should take into account to comprehend the text. The first is identifying the purpose of reading. Knowing the purpose of reading makes the processes work well and the readers can get the goals efficiently. In reading class contexts, teachers should make sure that students know their purposes of reading the texts (Brown, 2001). The second is skimming. The readers do skimming to the texts to find the main ideas.

The third is scanning. The scanning is a reading technique used to find relevant information quickly. The fourth is using semantic mapping or clustering. The students try to connect other words that have connection with the main words or ideas (Brown, 2001). The fifth is guessing. The guessing activity is not only for predicting the meanings of unfamiliar words. The teachers also let the students guess grammatical relationship, discourse relationship, implied meaning, and etc. A vital key of this activity is to make students predict accurately. (Brown, 2001).

The sixth is analyzing vocabulary. There are some advantages of guessing unfamiliar vocabulary. Nation (2009: 31) suggests that teachers and students should focus on the most useful vocabulary which has benefits to the

majority of the students. The most useful vocabulary consists of high-frequently words, academic words, and technical words. The seventh is questioning. Nation (2009: 32) provides a variety of questions types that can be used: pronominal questions, yes/no questions, true/false sentences, multiple choice sentences, sentence completion, information transfer, translation, and précis. Elsewhere, Moreillon (2007) proposes strategies to maximize readers' impact on reading comprehension by activating or building background knowledge, using sensory images, questioning, making predictions and inferences, determining main ideas, and synthesizing.

Rivers (1987: 9) suggests that in the interaction-based activities teachers as well as students must appreciate the uniqueness of other individuals with their special needs – not manipulating or directing them or deciding how they can or will learn, but encouraging them and drawing them out (educating), and building up their confidence and enjoyment what they are doing. So, the purpose or goal of the interaction-based activities is to encourage students' activeness and to build their confidence to participate in the classroom.

Based on the information obtained in the observation in the English teaching and learning process conducted in SMPN 6 Yogyakarta, some problems had been identified related to their reading comprehension. For example, many of the students had low reading comprehension ability, some of the students had lack of vocabulary and there were no interactions between the teacher and the students in the teaching and learning process. The students also participate passively in the classroom. The good students' reading comprehension can be improved through applying the interaction-based activities. According to Brown (2001), the interaction-based activities can be done in the form of individual work, group work, and pair work to promote interaction in the classroom.

Considering the importance of reading comprehension ability, it is necessary to conduct the research study and try to find out an alternative solution to improve the result of teaching reading. By using interaction-based activities in the classroom, the problems can be solved.

### Definition of Reading

There have been discussions about reading definitions among the experts. Johnson (2008:3) defines reading as an activity of using texts to get comprehension and the meaning of the texts. Nuttal (1987) defines the reading is the activity of understanding the meaning of text through interpreting in some purposes. To comprehend the texts, readers extract the information from the printed texts and make use their skills as well (Grellet, 1981, in Hedgecock 2009:15); (Urquhart & Weir, 1998 in Grabe, 2006:13).

From the nature of its activity, reading is considered as an interactive activity. It describes a dynamic relationship between texts and the readers (Hedge, 2007:188). The readers strive to make sense of it. The term 'interactive' also refers to the interplay among various kinds of knowledge that the readers employs in comprehending text. Furthermore, Birch (2002:4) considers reading

as an interactive activity in three ways:

- 1) The different processing strategies, both top and bottom, along with the knowledge base, interact with each other to accomplish the reading.
- 2) The readers' mind interacts with the written text so that the readers can understand the message
- 3) The readers' interacts indirectly with the writer of the text across time and space because it is the writer who is communicating the information to the readers, but it the readers who must grasp the information from the writer.

The printed texts are not restricted as the texts that can be found in books, newspapers, magazines, or websites. There are many kinds of printed texts or written texts. Brown (2001) argues that the variety or genres of written texts are much larger than spoken texts. In his explanation, Brown mentions twenty-five genres of written texts. The following texts are included in the genres of written texts stated by Brown (2001): non-fiction (e.g., reports, editorials, articles, and dictionaries), fiction (e.g., novels, short stories), letters, greeting cards, diaries, journals, memos, messages, announcements, newspaper 'journalese', academic writings, forms, applications, questionnaires, directions, labels,

signs, recipes, bills, maps, manuals, menus, schedules, advertisements, invitations, directories, and comic strips or cartoons.

In fact, to construct meanings and infer the writers' messages, readers bring information, knowledge, emotion, experience, and culture to the printed words in order. Brown (2001) states that a text does not by itself carry meaning. It is known as schema theory. Moreover, Anderson (in Nunan, 2003) calls what the readers bring to construct meanings from printed texts as background or prior knowledge. Interweaving the readers' background or prior knowledge can make a better concept of the readers' thought in understanding the texts (Antony, Pearson, and Raphael in Farrel, 2009:20).

From the definitions above, reading can be described as the process of extracting information interactively from printed texts or written language in order to reach comprehension. In comprehending the texts, the readers should interweave their background knowledge to create a better concept of their thought.

One of the keys to reach comprehension is by knowing the aims or the purposes of reading. The experts propose some motives of doing reading. Grabe and Stoller (2011) classify, at least, four purposes of reading in general: 1) reading to search for simple information and reading to skim, 2) reading to learn from texts, 3) reading to integrate information, write, and critique texts, and 4) reading for general comprehension. Reading to search for simple information is a common reading ability, though some researchers see it as relatively independent cognitive process (Guthrie & Kirsch, 1987 in Grabe and Stoller, 2011:7).

In reading, the readers typically scan the text for specific information and skim the text for general understanding (Grabe and Stoller, 2011). Reading to learn typically occurs in academic and professional contexts in which readers need to learn a considerable amount of information from a text. Reading to integrate information requires additional decisions of the readers about the importance of information from some sources, especially by supporting the information, and restructuring their own concept. In reading for general comprehension, the readers need to have skills in forming a general meaning representation of main ideas.

## Process of Teaching Reading

In conducting the reading activities, the teachers should follow the steps. The steps are involved in a broad procedure or stages of language teaching. So, the teachers do not need to be confused with the framework of the steps. California State University Expository Reading and Writing Task Force (2008, in Hedgecock, 2009) outlines crucial academic reading activities and strategies for the reading in terms of what the teacher and students do before, during, and after reading.

The steps or stages are conducted systematically. Activities of pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading are important to do. The explanation about the activities while doing reading are presented as follows:

### (1) Pre-reading activities

Conducting pre-reading activities are crucial. This stage is preparing the students to read the text. The activities can build the students' interest, confidence, and motivation for reading the text. Furthermore, by having pre-reading activities, teachers can introduce reading strategies and facilitate comprehension.

#### a. Getting ready to read

There are at least three kinds of different activities included in this category: schema activation, schema development, and establishing purpose for reading. At schema activation, the teachers should think about what the students already know about the content, structure, and language used in the text. The teachers would start discussing the title, its meaning or structure. In other words, the teachers stimulate the students' knowledge and lead them to the broader discussion about the text.

At schema development, the teachers engage the students to use their background knowledge which has relation to the topic of the texts. If the text is about narrative, so the teachers should try to connect the students' background knowledge about kind of narrative text to the topic and then make a simple discussion. In addition to schema activation and schema development, the teachers should establish a purpose for reading. It is important to know the purpose of what is being read. It will facilitate the students, as readers, to comprehend. Teachers may inform the students about what they are going to do after reading the text.

#### b. Surveying the text

The point of this activity is to get along with the content of the text. Teachers need to guide the students to employ a variety of previewing strategies to survey the text. Surveying the text includes skimming and scanning. Teachers can lead the students to look at the text's title, subtitles, photographs, drawings, graphs, charts, tables, etc. After that, the students read the introduction and conclusion of the text. They first come to survey the title. They also can look at the subtitles, if any, and preview the photographs. Teachers guide them to read the introduction and conclusion of the text. After doing those activities, the students get important points about the text.

#### c. Making predictions and asking questions

This step emphasizes the result of surveying activities. The teachers have to guide the students to predict what the text is about and then connect their prediction with the result of survey activities. After that, the students can then formulate one or two questions that they expect the text to answer. For example, if the text title is 'Cinderella', at this category the students predict what the text is about. After predicting the text, they try to connect their prediction with the result of surveying activities. If their prediction is closely related to the result of their survey, this means they have succeeded to get the important point of the text.

#### d. Introducing key vocabulary

This final component of the pre-reading stage focuses on the introduction of important vocabulary which supports the students' comprehension. Teachers should use strategies to introduce the words since learning vocabulary is not the main focus of intensive reading. Therefore, teachers need references to make the process effectively done.

### (2) During reading activities

The activities at this stage are activities that focus on what the students do, or should do, while reading. The students are really working on the text intensively. Teachers should assist the students with bottom-up strategies, so that students achieve the goal of comprehension.

a. First reading

First reading is not a part of the pre-reading stage. It refers to “a quick read-through of the entire text to develop a sense of its main points and to confirm initial predictions made during pre-reading” (Hedgecock, 2009:172). Smalzer (2005, in Hedgecock, 2009) suggests that a first reading could be done by applying time limitation. Teachers set time limits to drill students to read faster and develop their quick overview of main ideas. So, students practice to skim the text at this step.

b. Re-reading the text

After doing pre-reading activities and first reading, at this step students are ready to read the text intensively through a careful and focused second reading. According to Grabe (2004, in Hedgecock, 2009), there are two goals for teachers at this point: (1) monitor and ensure students’ comprehension; and (2) teach and practice effective reading strategies. To monitor and ensure students’ comprehension, teachers can divide the text into sections that enable students to stop at the end of each section to check comprehension. To develop effective reading strategies, teachers can use several key strategies, such as highlighting, annotating, questioning and responding, and outlining charting.

c. Looking closely at languages

After students have quickly read through the text and got an overall sense of the content, they look carefully at the language of the text. This step could also be undertaken later, after re-reading step, or even during post-reading activities. Teachers guide students to look again at the vocabulary in the text. Students can be asked to make notes about any new or less familiar words or phrases they encounter in the text. Other focuses of this step are cohesion, sentence structures, and the structure of the text.

**(3) Post-reading activities**

After passing the pre-reading and during reading activities, the students have got the main ideas, comprehension of essential content, and considered the text’s language and structure. Post-reading activities are the final stage of the reading which aim to evaluate and extend what they have learned about the text and the reading process.

Post reading activities offer the opportunities for the teachers to assess the students.

a. Summarizing and responding

In this step, the teachers ask the students to summarize the key ideas in the text. Summarizing activities are closely related to the students’ writing skills. Summary-writing is a good review and comprehension check tool. The summary can be as short as one sentence or longer. So that the teachers also can assess the students’ comprehension and their writing skills at once.

b. Thinking critically

In this step, the teachers can give the students some questions related to the text and then instruct them to write down the answer or directly respond in the spoken answer. The teachers also can ask them to make group discussion. The activities in this step encourage the students to be more critical to the ideas from the text. Thinking carefully and critically about a text promotes deeper comprehension, good reading strategies, and improvement of the other skills, such as speaking and writing.

c. Reading-writing connections

In the end of reading activities, students can write down their ideas. They can make a summary about the text or a writing about their experiences related to the text. They make the writing in creative and interesting ways.

**Reading Comprehension Assessment**

Traditional measures of reading comprehension are limited. They provide only a general indicator how well a student understands text. Comprehension is typically measured by requiring students’ to read a short passage and then answer multiple-choice or short-answer questions or by using a cloze task (i.e., asking students to fill in the blanks where the words have been omitted). These traditional measures of reading comprehension provide only a basic indication of how well a student understands a text and offer little information about how the students uses cognitive and metacognitive processes. In short, they do not explain why the students may be struggling.

Recently, it is important to select a measure that must closely matches the users’ needs or purpose when selecting a test or assessment procedure to use. Based on Klingner



et al. (2007: 17) teachers should consider numerous factors when choosing a test or assessment procedure. Those factors are presented as follows:

- 1) The purpose of the testing (screening, progress monitoring, assessing level of reading, research, or assessing students' competence in comparison to peers).
- 2) The specific information needed about the students' reading comprehension types of questions missed, level)
- 3) The number of students being tested (i.e., an individual, a small group, or a whole class)
- 4) The length of the test (e.g., shorter tests can be easier to give and less stressful for the student, but may not have enough questions or types of tasks to provide sufficient information about students' performance).
- 5) Whether the test is an individually or group-administered test.
- 6) The number of forms available with the test, particularly if multiple administrations are needed (e.g., many norm-referenced tests come with two forms, making them useful for assessing progress over time students are given one version of the test as a pre-test and another as a post-test).
- 7) For norm-referenced tests, the extent to which the norming sample is similar to the students to whom the test will be administered.
- 8) The examiner's qualifications (e.g., whether the tester has the skills to give highly specific tests).
- 9) The amount of training needed to administer a test, score it, and interpret results (e.g., norm referenced tests typically require some training).

## **Interaction-Based Activities**

### **a. Definition of Interaction**

Brown (2001:165) defines interaction as the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other. In line with Brown, Malamah-Thomas (1991:7) states that interaction is more than action followed by reaction. Interaction is acting reciprocally, acting upon each other. Robinson (1994:7) defines interaction as the process of face to face action, can be verbal, channeled through written or spoken words, or nonverbal, channeled through touch, proximity, eye contact, facial expression, gestures, etc.

According to Rivers (1987:4), interaction can be two-way, three-way, or four-way, but never one-way. He adds that genuine interactive language learning requires individuals (teachers as well as students) to appreciate the uniqueness of other individuals with their special needs and not manipulate or direct them or decide how they can or will learn, but encourage them and draw them out (educate) and build up their confidence and enjoy what they are doing.

Nunan (2004:35) suggests that one of the most obvious facts is that in teaching and learning a great deal of interactive language works occurs because there is a significant amount of talking between the teacher and students and among students. It reveals a great deal about the teacher's purpose. Interaction will always involve more than one person because there must be someone who transmits a message and someone who receive it. In the educational setting, interaction occurs every day in the classroom activities between the teacher and the students.

The number of students in the class influences the number of possible variations concerning who transmit and who receive. Malamah-Thomas (1991:69) states that when teachers are seen as the ones who transmit the message, then he or she can be seen as trying to communicate with the whole class, a group of students and/or individual student. And when the student performs as the one who transmit the message, he/she then interacts with the teacher another single student, or a group of students.

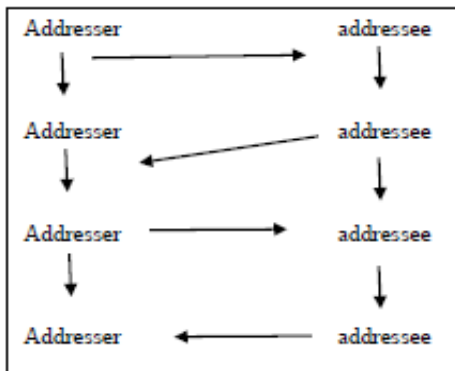
### **b. Types of Classroom Interaction**

Communication implies more than one person (Malamah-Thomas, 1991:12). Interaction happening in the classroom is not only between the teacher and the whole class. There are some activities where the teacher is a participant in interaction with an individual student, or with a group of students within the class. Malamah-Thomas (1991: 15) describes the pattern of interaction which happen in the class as follows:

teacher → whole class  
teacher → group of students  
teacher → individual student  
student → teacher  
student → student  
student → group of students

In normal everyday verbal interaction, addresser and addressee are constantly changing roles. The addresser of one minute is the

addressee of the next and vice versa. Malamah Thomas (1991:37) shows the normal pattern of conversation as follows:



**Figure 1. The normal pattern of the conversation**

From the description above, it can be seen that interaction process appears when the addresser acts upon the addressee to cause a reaction, which in turn informs an action performed by the previous addressee, now turned addresser, upon the new addressee, which causes a reaction in the same way, and so on. On the other hand, Thurmond (2004) suggest four types of classroom interaction: student-course content interaction, student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction and student-technology interaction.

### c. Purpose of Interaction-Based Activities

According to Rivers (1987: 9), in the interaction-based activities teachers as well as students must appreciate the uniqueness of other individuals with their special needs – not manipulating or directing them or deciding how they can or will learn, but encouraging them and drawing them out (educating), building up their confidence and enjoy what they are doing. So, the purposes or goals of the interaction-based activities are to encourage the students' activeness and to build their confidence to participate in the classroom.

The teacher - students' interaction and the student – student' interaction in the classroom can build up the students' confidence. Without building up the students' confidence, and creating many opportunities, classrooms will remain quiet places with inhibited students who dare not to try to express what really matter to them (Rivers,

1978:10). Rivers (1978: 10) also states that once teachers have tried to carry through a well prepared interactive class session and find it can be done, they lose their hesitancy and once students feel appreciated and valued, they are anxious to show what they can do, to propose and participate in activities.

The students usually know much the English word but they cannot used it to express their own meaning. In that time, the teacher as facilitator should guide their students to use their knowledge and express their meaning. Real interaction should build in the classroom between the teacher and the students. Rivers (1978: 9) states that real interaction in the classroom requires the teacher to step out of the limelight, to cede a full role student in developing and carrying through activities, to accept all kinds of opinions, and be tolerate of errors student makes while attempting to communicate.

### d. Possible Activities to Teach Reading

From explanations some experts, it can be concluded that interaction based activities emphasizes the interaction in the classroom. Using interaction-based activities in the class means that the teachers give a full role to the students in carrying out the activities, accept students' opinions, and tolerate errors. Rivers (1987: 13) states that in teaching reading, there should be lively interaction of reader and text–interpretation, expansion, discussing alternative possibilities or other conclusion.

#### 1. Teacher-Student Interaction

This type of interaction as Coulthard (1977) mentions has received a great deal from teachers in a wide range of disciplines. The teacher negotiates with the students the content of the course, asks questions, uses students' ideas, lectures, gives directions, criticizes or justifies student respond. The activities would be provided such as discussion, question and answer, lectures, criticizes and many more.

On the other hand, according to Harmer (2009) the teacher should focus on three things when they interact with the students. Firstly, the teacher must pay attention to the kind of the language the students are able to understand, i.e. the teacher should provide an output that is comprehensible for the level of all the



students. Secondly, the teacher must consider about what the teacher will say to the students, because what the teacher say is believed truth. Finally, the teacher also has to identify the ways in which the teacher will interact with them such as the voice, tone and intonation.

## 2. Student-Student Interaction

Johnson (1995) supports that if student-student interaction is well structured and managed, then it can be an important factor of cognitive development, educational achievement of students and emerging social competencies. It can also develop the students' capacities through collaborative works. So, the students will establish social relationship through this kind of interaction, where the sense of learning community is promoted and isolation is reduced in the classroom.

Naegle Paula (2002: 128) adds also that "talking students with their peers about the content of the course is a powerful way for them to reinforce what they have learned." The teachers, then must encourage such type of interaction between the students because it is the fastest and the best way, it makes the students active rather than passive participants.

Rivers (1987:7) states that there are some workable classroom interactive activities to build the interaction among the students such as presentation, pair works, discussions, debates, and written exercise. Group work gives many advantages to maintain linguistics interaction in the classroom. Brown (2001:177) defines group work as generic term covering a multiplicity of technique in which two or more students are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated language. Brown (2001:177) suggests some group tasks activities as follows:

- a. Games
- b. Role play and simulation
- c. Drama
- d. Project
- e. Interview
- f. Brainstorming
- g. Information gaps
- h. Jigsaw
- i. Problem solving and decision making
- j. Opinion exchange

One of the activities suggested by Brown is game. Game means an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging, and

an activity in which the learners play and usually interact with others (Wright, et.al. 2006). Many games provide repeated use of particular language form. Games also provide opportunity for the young students to sense the working of the language as living communication. Some games require four to six players. If there is to be a competition between groups, they should be of mixed ability (Wright, et.al. 2006:3).

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Setting

This research was carried out at SMPN 1 Kramatwatu. It is located in Jl. Raya Cilegon KM. 08 Kramatwatu-Serang. It has seven classes for each grade. It has forty-seven teachers in total including three teachers for English. Each of the English teacher teaches seven classes. There are thirteen administration staffs and two security guards. The students are dominated by female students but not the number is not too significant. Facilities such as library, science laboratory, computer laboratory, language laboratory can be found there.

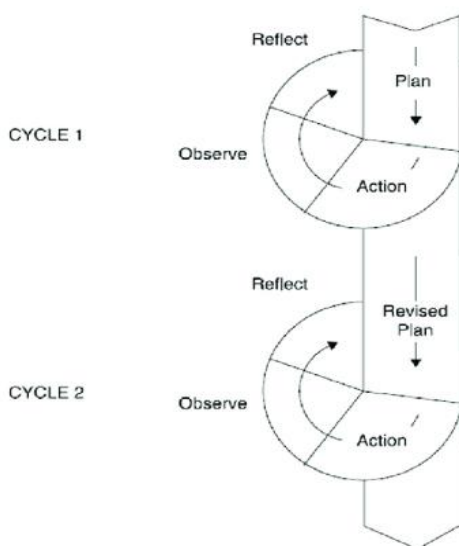
The English teachers rarely used language laboratory because some tools did not work properly. There are seven classes from VIII A to VIII G in eighth grade. Grade VIII B is located near the school yard. It has one white board, three fans, one LCD, two lamps, class administration data and cleaning equipment. There are 37 tables and 37 chairs. The characteristics of the school in general and the problems in the English classroom specifically, motivated the researcher to see closer. The school principal and the teacher welcomed the researcher and allowed me to conduct the research study.

### Research Design

The type of this research study was action research. Gaps between the fact and the ideal situation in the English class needed actions to be conducted. The research study aimed at overcoming the problems and improving the teaching-learning process. There are many definitions of action research proposed by the experts. Elliot (1991, in Burns, 2010:5) defines action research as "the study of a social situation with the view of improving the quality of the action in it." Mc Niff and Whitehead (2006:7) describe action research as a form of enquiry that enables practitioners everywhere to investigate and evaluate their work."

Furthermore, Burns (1999:5) states that “action research is a self-reflective, systematic and critical approach to enquiry by participants who are at the same time members of the research community.” The definitions above imply that action research is the study of a social situation that enable practitioners everywhere to improve the quality of the action in it. In general, action research has the following characteristics (Cohen and Manion, 1980; Burns, 1999 in McKay, 2006:30): 1) situational, contextual, small scope, and localized and relevant to the real situation, 2) evaluative and reflective, 3) participatory, and 4) the changes in practice are based on the information or data gathered that encourage the changes.

In action research, the task is not finished when the research study ends. The participants continue to review, evaluate, and improve practice. In doing the research study, the modified process of Kemmis and McTaggart (Burns, 1999, in Madya, 2006:67) includes: reconnaissance, planning, action, observation, and reflection (1988, in Burns, 2010:7. The process is described in the following figure.



**Figure 2. Action research process by Kemmis and McTaggart**

#### (1) Reconnaissance

This step consists of observation and interviews to find problems. The observation was done on November 22th, 2013. Some interviews with the teacher and the students were done at the

same day. The problems found were discussed with the research collaborators (the teacher and researchers' colleague).

#### (2) Planning

After discussing the problems and getting permission to conduct the research study at the school, some actions would be implemented to solve the problems. The actions focused on the efforts to improve the students reading comprehension skills. The plan was to implement the actions in one cycle first. The process of implementation would be continued to the next cycles if there were still problems to solve.

#### (3) Action and Observation

The planned actions were implemented in this part. The actions were conducted by the researcher as the teacher. The teaching and learning process was observed by the research collaborators. During teaching-learning process, one of the research the research collaborators filmed and took some pictures of the process for our research data.

#### (4) Reflection

In the end of the cycle, reflection was done by the researcher and the research collaborators. Comments and opinions were given by the researcher and the research collaborators about the implementation of the actions, the students' improvements, and the researcher's role as the teacher. The next step was discussing the next actions for the upcoming cycle based on the consideration of the reflection from the first cycle.

### Research Subjects

The subjects of the research study were thirty-six students of grade VIII B at SMPN 1 Kramatwatu in the academic year of 2020/2021. The grade VIII A consisted of 23 female students and 13 male students. This class was chosen based on the teacher's recommendation because most of the students have equal ability and skill in English subject.

### Types of Data

The data of this research were qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data were in the forms of the descriptions of the process during the actions written in field notes, vignettes, and



interview transcripts. On the other hand, the quantitative data were collected from the scores of the students' reading comprehension through individual test.

### Techniques and Instruments of Data Collection

There were several data collection techniques such as doing observation, interviews, test and documentation. The procedures of the data collection techniques are presented bellows:

#### 1. Interviews

The researcher conducted interviews to gain the information related to the teaching and learning process. To obtain the data, he used interview guidelines to interview the English teacher, the collaborator, and the students. The data was in the forms of interview transcripts.

The interviews were done in reconnaissance, action and observation, and reflection step. In reconnaissance, he interviewed the English teacher related to the teaching and learning process and the problems faced. Besides, he also interviewed the students to know about their opinions and also their difficulties during the teaching and learning process of reading. Later on, the interviews were conducted in reflection step of each cycle of the research. The interviews with the collaborator was conducted during the action and observation step. They were aimed to reflect on the results of the actions. The interviews were addressed to get the opinions and suggestions from the English teacher, the students, and the collaborator.

#### 2. Observation

To gather the information about the teaching and learning process, the researcher conducted classroom observations. Observation sheets was used to collect the data. The technique was conducted in reconnaissance and also during the action and observation steps of the research.

#### 3. Test

Reading comprehension' tests were also done to obtain the information about the students' reading comprehension before and after the implementation of interaction-based activities in the teaching and learning process of reading. The tests were done twice, in the forms of during the actions-test and post-test. Furthermore, the results

were used to see whether there were improvements after the actions or not.

#### 4. Documentation

Besides using those main instruments, the researcher also used a supplementary instrument. They were to support the research to get more complete data. To document the teaching and learning process, he used a photo-video camera in the reconnaissance and in the action and observation steps of the research. The data was in the forms of photographs and videos.

Below is the table of the types of the data, the instruments used, and the techniques of data collection of the research.

**Table 1. Types of data, instruments, and data collection techniques**

Data	Instrument	Collection Technique	Usage
During actions test score Post-test score	Test	Test (during actions- test and post-test)	Before and after the implementation
Field notes	Observation sheets	Observation	In reconnaissance, in action and observation
Interview transcript	Interview guidelines	Interview	In reconnaissance and in reflection
Photographs Videos	Photo-video camera	Documentation	In action and observation

### Validity and Reliability

In evaluating the quality and acceptability of the research study, there were five criteria proposed by Anderson (1994, in Burns 1999), namely democratic validity, outcome validity, process validity, catalytic validity, and dialogic validity. The democratic validity was fulfilled by having some discussions with the research collaborators. The activity in the reconnaissance step was discussing the problems democratically until deciding the specific problems to solve. On the other hand, the activities in planning the actions were discussing kinds of actions to be implemented, the course grids, the lesson plans, and the teaching aids. During the implementation of the actions, the research collaborators observed the teaching-learning process and recorded the



process. Then, the activities the in reflection step were reflecting the implementation of the actions, the changes, and the problems while conducting the actions.

Getting satisfactory outcomes were important to decide the actions for further cycle. It was used to fulfil the outcome validity. The next step was reflecting the results of the implementation of interaction-based activities at the reflection step to see whether the results were in line with the research study objectives or not. From the reflection of the results, the students' problems in reading comprehension were still existing in the classroom. For examples, after using interaction-based activities, some students' problems related to grammar could be seen. For this reason, the plans to deal with the students' problems were discussed.

After that, keeping the quality of the process was done to fulfil the process validity. Then, the improvement of the students observed by the researcher and the research collaborators. Some instruments, such as observation guidelines, interview guidelines, vignettes, a handy-cam and a camera were used to observe the improvement. This process guided the researcher and the research collaborators to see whether there were any changes in the students' reading comprehension or not.

If the improvement was not satisfactory yet, the reflection would be done together critically to find out the causes and discuss the solutions. The catalytic validity was fulfilled by considering the changes of the students in comprehending English texts. In addition, the research collaborators also observed the changes in the researcher's teaching and behaviour. Performances of the students and teachers, before and after the actions were compared to make sure that the catalytic validity have fulfilled. A critical peer-review was strongly needed in order to fulfil dialogic validity.

It was actually close to democratic validity. After the research study was done and the results ready to publish, the next step was reviewing the report collaboratively. Triangulation was applied to keep the trustworthiness of the data. The function of triangulation was to cross-check the data found from different techniques and sources. According to Burns (1999 in Madya, 2006:44), there were three types of triangulations used in this research

study: time triangulation, investigator triangulation, and theoretical triangulation.

Crosschecking the trustworthiness of the effects on the students during the implementation of the actions in a cycle was used to fulfil time triangulation. The next was to make sure that the effects were real by crosschecking the points of view of the researcher, the research collaborators, and the students. Then, to fulfil the investigator triangulation the data collected were constantly checked by the researcher. The data were collected to ensure that the result of our observation is the same. Theoretical triangulation was fulfilled by interpreting and crosschecking the effects with more than one relevant theory.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Implementing the Interaction-based Activities

Interaction-based activities made a good impact on reading activities in the classroom. The activities were more fun and active. The students read the text with clear instruction. They made interaction in the classroom either with the teacher or with other students through discussion. They looked happier and enjoyed the activities. They also did other activities that were useful to improve their language skills. During the implementation, there were some problems. Firstly, there were only some of the students who got involved.

They responded to the questions actively. However, there were also the students who were not active in the discussion. The second problem was the students often forgot the meaning of the words. They did not effectively use their notes. They needed something that could keep the words retained in their memory and more importantly they could use the words outside the classroom. Another problem was about the difficulties in varying the activities after reading. The questioning and answering activities were still the main activities. In order to check their understanding of the texts, questions were usually given to the students either written or spoken.

### Training the Students to Use Reading Techniques and Strategies

The techniques and strategies that planned before the actions were completely implemented. The next was training the students how to use the techniques, guessing in particular. For them, the guessing technique was something new. They



wanted to know how the technique was because there were methods to make them easy in reading English text without using dictionary that I told to them.

Psychologically, they were encouraged because they had problems with a lot of unfamiliar vocabulary. They were encouraged also to be confident in reading English texts. They just needed techniques or strategies to understand the texts. Something made me surprised and touched was the perfect answer from the students after having reading technique training. Then, interviews with some of the students were conducted to support the data. After that, making the conclusion that the technique was the big factor helped the students to comprehend the text.

### Teaching Grammatical Points

At first, in the opinion, it was no need to teach the students grammar in every meeting. Nonetheless, the students were still confused with some grammatical concepts. Integrating grammar into the reading texts was done in the reading class to make it efficient so that the students could also learn the applications in the real texts. The first cycle was focusing on checking the students' knowledge about grammar. Asking them to make a sentence was one of the activities to check their grammar. The text that they learnt was narrative text. In the narrative text, they had to use past tense. So, to check their grammar, they were asked one by one to make sentences using past tense.

The problem was some of the students could not make the sentences correctly. Then, guidance given to them made the sentence correctly. They looked happy that they could make the sentence correctly. Considering their ages and the materials, teaching grammar was serious although using the discussion activities. Through the discussion, the interaction would be built as much as.

### Using Power Point Presentation, Pictures, and Handout

The students got benefits of using power point presentations, pictures, and handout in learning English. They could learn English in different ways. They could also learn by themselves because they got the handout. They understood more through pictures series given to them. They were excited and active when the media provided in the classroom. The problem

was the students who sat in the back could not see slide of the power point clearly. They got difficulties to read the text. Therefore, the handouts of materials were given to them so they could learn and read individually. The pictures series provided them in the handout so they had no problem with.

### General Findings

Regarding to the findings of Cycle I and II, all actions were successful in improving the students' reading comprehension and the objective of the research was achieved. The English teacher and the researcher agreed to end the research in Cycle II. The research findings in improving the students' reading comprehension by using interaction-based activities supported by some actions in grade VIII B at SMPN 1 Kramatwatu were concluded as follows:

1. Interaction-based activities were successful to improve the students' reading comprehension. The students enthusiastically learnt English through fun activities.
2. The students' reading comprehension was improved from during actions-test to the post-test. The students' average score in during actions-test was about 81.7, while in the post-test was about 85.9.
3. Interaction-based activities were successful to improve students' confidence to speak and actively participate in the teaching-learning process.
4. The use of reading techniques and strategies was successful to improve students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, it directed the students' mind that English texts were not difficult. It improved the students' vocabulary.
5. The use of various media and activities could attract the students' interest towards the learning activities.
6. Giving rewards and appreciation could improve the students' motivation to participate actively during the teaching and learning process.

**Table 2. The changes (before and after the implementation)**

Before the actions were conducted	After the actions conducted	
	Cycle I	Cycle II

There was no communication between the teacher and the students. It made students passive in the classroom activities.	The use of interaction-based activities encouraged the students to participate actively in the classroom activities.	The uses of interaction-based activities made the students actively and confidently participate in the classroom activities.
The students thought that reading English texts was difficult. The students could not answer comprehension question. The students thought that they had to know all vocabulary since they did not have adequate vocabulary.	The use of reading technique and strategies eased them to comprehend the text. The students could understand some difficult words by using the reading techniques.	The students could answer comprehension questions correctly. The students had been acquainted to the technique and the strategies. It changed students' mind directly that reading English texts were not difficult. The students' vocabulary improved. The students could answer the comprehension questions well.
The students had low motivation in learning English.	Most of the students were happy and more motivated to join the activities.	The activities and media used in the teaching and learning process were more various. The competition atmosphere appeared on some activities. The students were highly motivated to do the activities
The students had low confidence to speak English.	The students encourage their confidence to speak in English. However, some students still lacked confidence.	All students showed their effort to speak English. Their confidence in speaking was improved. They could help each other in correcting mistakes.
The students were busy with their own activities when the teacher was teaching.	The students were excited to do the activities. They paid more attention to the researcher's explanation.	More various activities were used to maintain the students' interest. The students then reduced the activities which were unrelated to the topics.
The students were embarrassed to ask when they	Group works were implemented in some activities. The students worked together to solve the task.	Good interaction between the students and the researcher was formed. Some of the students could comfortably communicate their
The students had low enthusiasm in the class activities.	All of the students enjoyed the activities. Some of them who still got difficulties in literacy also could join the activities.	The competition atmosphere appeared in some activities. It made them more highly motivated to do the activities.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The research study was aimed to improve the students' reading comprehension through interaction-based activities. As stated in the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that:

1. The interaction-based activities improved the students' reading comprehension. The students did not only improve their reading comprehension but also their confidence to participate actively in the classroom. They also improved their English proficiency. It could be seen through some aspects; they were confident of making mistakes in using the English language and comprehending the English texts, they participate actively in the classroom. Having a lot of interactive and interest activities, they were enthusiastic in the teaching and learning process. They liked and enjoyed the activities. It could be seen through their participations in the classroom. They tried to be active and responsive towards the teaching and learning process. Through many interactions in the classroom, the students felt easy to understand and comprehend the text.
2. This result creates some changes towards certain actors who got involved in the teaching and learning process. The changes are:

### a. The teaching and learning process

The teaching and learning process became more interactive and interesting. It was also effective and efficient when it was well-designed and well prepared. When the teaching and learning process was well-designed and well prepared, the teaching and learning could run smoothly and systematically. By having the systematic learning process, the students could accomplish the learning objectives easily and it could help them to understand the lesson as well as the goals. It also could increase their attention towards the teaching and learning process.

The interaction-based learning activities made good impact on reading activities in the classroom. The activities were more fun and active. The fun atmosphere in the classroom made the students felt comfortable to develop their language ability. More interactions in the classroom encouraged the students to be more confident to participate actively in the

classroom. The classroom activities did not make the students bored in the classroom because of the activities such as the discussion, the question-answer, and the game. Those activities involved the students in the classroom and also created the two-way teaching learning process.

Reading techniques and strategies were trained to the students by using some exercises focusing on their comprehension. Through learning some techniques such as guessing, scanning and skimming, the students were encouraged to be confident in reading the English texts. These techniques could enrich the students' vocabulary since they did not have adequate vocabulary. It also improved the students' confidence in reading the English texts and answering the comprehension questions.

Grammatical explanation was given by using oral and written exercises focusing on their ability to construct the sentences. Repeated explanation accompanied by the media such as the pictures and the handouts were given to teach the grammar in the class. The game was also applied in teaching grammar to create fun activities. Through the discussion and the question-answer activities in the classroom, the grammar learning run effectively.

#### b. The students' behaviour

Being taught using interaction-based activities, the students became more active in joining the teaching and learning process. The students showed improvement on their reading comprehension. Their confidence and motivation were also improved. They could understand some difficult words easily. They could apply some reading techniques and strategies in the reading class.

The students were active in the discussion activity. They were also active in giving feedback to each other and helping each other in the classroom activities. They also have more awareness of the pronunciation so that they made fewer mistakes in accuracy and pronunciation. The rewards and motivation that were given to them successfully motivated the students. Moreover, they could answer the comprehension questions well.

#### c. The English teacher as the collaborator

There were also some changes related to the English teacher's behaviour since she involved in the research study. The teacher got a lot of experiences especially in teaching reading. The English teacher became more open minded to make the English teaching and learning process more interesting. She improved her knowledge in designing activities that could help her students to learn better

She improved her knowledge about the reading techniques and strategies. She also improved her knowledge in developing various media to support her teaching and learning process. She became more aware that conducting the interaction-based activities for teaching reading was important to do to improve the students' reading comprehension.

#### d. The researcher

After conducting this research study, the researcher got more understanding about the teaching learning process. The researcher learnt that the students had different characteristics. There were some students who learnt very fast and some who learnt slowly. The researcher became more aware that the students needed a lot of motivation, encouragement and exposure as well as a good atmosphere to make them involved in the classroom activities.

After conducting the interaction-based activities, the researcher also became aware that the students-teacher interaction and the student-student interaction were needed in the classroom. The researcher also realized that the classroom could be successful when there was good preparation. The researcher also got more knowledge on how to prepare the tasks, how to make the students comprehend the text, and how to handle the students during the activities. The various activities which could make the learning enjoyable for the students should be conducted in the classroom.

After conducting the research study, some suggestions were given for the English teacher in SMP, English Education Department students, and the school principals of SMP.

### 1. For the English teachers in SMP

It is important for the English teachers in SMP to make some actions to respond the findings in the research study. First, they need to enrich their self with the knowledge of how to develop interesting activity for their students so that she would not depend too much on the textbook. Second, the reading techniques and strategies should be provided by the teachers to ease the students in comprehending the texts. Third, they have to provide some activities in which all students can be involved.

Fourth, various media should be used during the teaching and learning process since they have to make the teaching and learning process become more interesting. Fifth, the interaction should be built by the teachers in the classroom activities so the students got involved in the activities. The last suggestion is that the teachers need to give appreciation and rewards as an alternative to motivate their students to learn. All of those actions will improve the quality of the English teaching learning process especially the students' reading comprehension.

### 2. For the English Education Department Students

The students should be more aware and careful in choosing method and activities to teach English, especially in teaching reading. The interaction-based activities can be one of the alternative activities to teach reading since the interaction-based activities allows the students to have active participation and interaction in the teaching-learning process.

### 3. For the school principals of junior high level

To support the teaching and learning process, the schools need to allocate the funds to the development of the media and materials. The schools need to provide the students with adequate books since the students need a lot of exposure to master English language.

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