CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes about background, problem, objective, operational definitions, significance, and scope of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

As one of the four language skills, reading comprehension is really important for students of junior high school, especially those in Indonesia, since this skill is highly needed for them to deal with the growing exposure of English in daily life. Reading comprehension is really fundamental aspect for the students’ future study. As stated by Grabe (2009:15), reading is the process in which readers learn something from what they read and involve it in academic context as a part of education. As they move onto the higher level of education, the need of better reading comprehension is also bigger since this can also help them determine their success of study as well. In line with this, reading is also essential here merely because those students will face the final examination in which the students deal mostly with texts during the test in that exam. For such a reason, students are demanded to have abilities to understand many kinds of texts such as recounts, descriptive texts, narratives, expositions, procedures, news items, reports, explanations, and discussion either formally or informally.

They are also expected to be able to get the message of the texts. Indeed, the students need reading comprehension skills so that they can do the test on the
final examination well. In fact, on the data from Nasional Library Indonesia, and
UNESCO explain that reading in Indonesia is low and far from satisfactory. In the
Class VIII A of SMPN 01 Tempurejo shows that the students unfortunately had
some difficulties in comprehending the reading material. From the interview with
the English teacher, it is found that students had a problem related to vocabulary
mastery, which is an important aspect in comprehending a text. It is reflected by
their incapability in understanding the text because they could not find the
meaning of the words. They also had difficulties in finding the main ideas and
word comprehension. Students could not relate the information from one
paragraph to another. They got nothing in reading as they found difficulty in
grasping the information of texts. Consequently, the students’ score in there
comprehending a text is still low. From 28 students, there are only 5 students
who got score above 75. That students’ inability to comprehend texts is caused by
some factors as the following.

There some factors of the students’ weakness. First, students are not
interested in reading, most of them laid their head on the table, or having chat
with their friends when the teacher asked them to read the text. And also when
the teacher asked them orally about the text they just ignored her. Second, the
teacher dominates the whole session in teaching and learning process. Instead of
letting the students be active in the teaching and learning process, she dominated
the whole session. As a result, there was a lack of interaction between the teacher
and students. The students were not given a chance to contribute a lot to share
their knowledge in the teaching and learning process. The last, there is a low
intensity for the students to communicate with their friends. There is a fact that
group work was rarely conducted by the teacher. The students usually do the
activity individually. So, if they had difficulties in comprehending the text, they
tended to be silent. They did not want to have a discussion with other students
because they were not accustomed to do that. They were reluctant to discuss the
text with their friends. There must be a suitable method for teaching reading in
which students can explore their idea to achieve their reading comprehension. To
solve the students’ problem, the selected method which is relevant to the
condition of the students is Learning Together method to be used in improving
reading comprehension and students participation of the VIIIA grade students in
learning material. The principles of Learning Together consist of heterogeneous
grouping, positive interdependence, individual accountability, social skills, and
group processing. Heterogeneous grouping is considered on the basis of mixed
ability as obtained by past achievement. The most important features of this
method are the existence of the group goal and sharing the opinion, materials, and
division of labour. Therefore, the researcher use this method to solve students’
problem.

Moreover, teaching reading comprehension should encourage the
student’s cooperation, in expressing idea, sharing idea, asking and explaining each
other in a group so that the learning process of reading comprehension will
achieve the better result. That is why a new strategy or method to improve the
students’ reading comprehension is needed to overcome the above problems.
Based on the background above, the researcher is interested in conducting a
research to improve the reading comprehension by using Learning together method.

1.2 Problems of The Research

Based on the background above, the problem that should be answered in this research are:

1. How can Learning Together method improve the VIII A grade students’ reading comprehension at SMPN 01 Tempurejo in the 2017/2018 academic year?
2. How can Learning Together method can improve VIII A grade students’ participation in teaching and learning process?

1.3 Objectives of The Research

The objective of this research are:

1. To find out how Learning Together method can improve the eighth grade students’ reading skill at SMPN 01 Tempurejo in the 2017/2018 academic year.
2. To find out how can Learning Together method can improve students’ participate in teaching and learning process.

1.4 Operational Definition of the Term.

There are two terms that are needed to define operationally in order to provide clear illustration about the variables.

1. Learning Together Method

Learning together in this research refers to learning method in cooperative learning which is implemented by grouping the students with heterogenous ability. Each group is given a project to solve, and each member of the group solve substask of project based on their ability.
2. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension refers to the ability of the students to comprehend the word meaning, sentences, and paragraph of the text. It covers literal reading comprehension and inferential reading comprehension. Literal reading comprehension refers to the students’ ability to find specific information that is explicitly stated in the text. Inferential reading comprehension refers to the students’ ability to find the whole information explicitly stated in the text.

3. Students Participation

Student participation in learning process is the involvement of students in the learning process to achieve a goal that is satisfying student learning outcomes.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The result of this research is expected to give benefits practically. Practical benefits. The result of the research will give alternative method to solve the problem in teaching reading. It can be an input for english teachers to use or implement Learning Together method to improve students’ reading comprehension at SMPN 01 Tempurejo in 2017/2018 academic year.

1.6 Scope of The Research

This research is implemented to improve students’ reading skill by using Learning Together method on the VIIIA students’ reading skill focusing on comprehending narrative text at SMPN 01 Tempurejo in the 2017/2018 academic year.