

## A CASE STUDY OF THE SEATING ARRANGEMENT OF THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS

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### Abstract

This research aimed at observing the set-up of the seating arrangement during the instructions and identifying the students' reasons for having seating preferences. This study was conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Banjar, and the subjects were 32 students in 8F class. Two methods were applied in this study, namely observation and interview. Therefore, observation checklist and interview guide were used as the instruments. The results revealed that the set-up of the seating arrangement supported them in terms of comfort, flexibility in doing activities, doing tasks, spaciousness, and collaboration with the students. Meanwhile, it did not support them in terms of concentration, participation in class discussion, and collaboration with the teacher. Regarding their reasons for having particular seats, there were 14 reasons mentioned during the interview. Best friends and leaning on the wall were the factors that had the most and the least effect on the students in choosing their seats.

**Keywords:** classroom management, seating arrangement, seating choices

### INTRODUCTION

Classroom management has been regulated for the teachers in Curriculum 2013. Based on Kementrian Pendidikan (2018), education is based on standard (standard-based education), which regulates eight national standards, and one of them is process standard. In process standard, classroom management is regulated to be obeyed by the teacher. Here, classroom management skills need to be considered by the teacher to create a satisfying classroom environment (Warsono, 2016). In accordance with this matter, the ability to manage the classroom can be one of the crucial skills that are required by the teacher.

One of the classroom management techniques that can be considered is the seating arrangement technique. It can be done by arranging the tables and chairs (McCorskey & McVetta, 1978). In here, the simplest seating arrangement technique that is mostly applied in the classroom is the traditional seating arrangement or row-seating. According to McCorskey and McVetta (1978), traditional seating arrangement is a prominent seating type, and it is mostly applied in high school students. Besides, there

are also modular and horseshoe seating types. In accordance with the seating arrangement technique, Kementrian Pendidikan (2016) through decree No. 22, which is about process standard, regulates that the proper seating arrangement is required in the classroom to achieve a particular goal. It can be adjusted based on the purpose and the characteristics of the learning process to make the students get involved in the learning activity

On these days, the students' seat shows a gap in which some students dominate the learning activity, and the rest tend to be passive in the classroom. The different amounts of engagement in the classroom can be shown in their seat choices. Moreover, referring to the result of the observation, the traditional seating arrangement was implemented in SMP Negeri 1 Banjar. It was found that there was a discrepancy between the regulation and the fact in the place of study. Here, during the instruction, the seating arrangement was not managed well by the teacher. The traditional seating or fixed seating arrangement was mostly implemented in every type of instruction. It was also a monotonous seating type implemented in all instructions. Furthermore, the students showed a different amount of involvement in the classroom, in which the students who sat in the front row and middle row showed more active participation rather than others. Moreover, the teacher tended to give different attentions to the students. Here, the students who sat in the front row and the middle row got more attention from the teacher.

Consequently, the implementation of the seating arrangement should be correlated to the teaching and learning process. Here, the implementation of the seating arrangement can be adjusted with the purpose or the characteristics of the instruction (Kementrian Pendidikan, 2016). Similarly, in the syllabus, the teachers are required to design the instruction based on the learning goal as well as the students (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2017). In accordance with this matter, it has been revealed that the seating arrangement plays an important role in the success of the teaching and learning process as well as to achieve a learning goal. Harmer (2007) mentions that the seating arrangement encourages the learning process in the classroom. Moreover, the seating arrangement also creates collaboration or togetherness in the classroom, provides comfort, spaciousness, flexibility, as well as encourage participation in the classroom (Barkley, 2010)

For this reason, since the seating arrangement has effects on students' learning, the set-up of the traditional seating arrangement in the classroom was observed in this study. Moreover, the students' choices toward the seats were also considered since their preferences toward their own seat positions may be different because of a certain factor that also leads to the success of instruction. Here, the students' choice or where the students sit is a form of motivation (Sen, 1973; Hausman, 2005). Motivation is being the factor that encourages people to prefer a certain thing over another and has an important role in achieving the goal and creating an effective teaching and learning process.

Moreover, Dincer and Yesilyurt (2017) mention that when the students and the teacher have high motivation, the teaching and learning goal can be achieved easily. Consequently, the teacher needs to pay attention to the students to make them active and engage in the classroom. Thus, the learning objective can be achieved by the teacher as well as the students. Therefore, both the teacher and the students can improve the activity by participating more in the classroom. Furthermore, the teacher can give equal

attention to the students to motivate them in every learning activity as well, especially in English class.

Furthermore, researches on seating arrangement consideration have been widely conducted. First, Simmons, Carpenter, Crenshaw, and Hinton (2015) conducted a research focusing on the role of seating arrangement in doing students' independent work. Second, Supratman (2015) conducted a study to describe the implementation of seating arrangement toward students' communication and interactivity. Third research was conducted by Setiyadi and Ramdani (2016). They conducted a study to describe the implementation of various seating arrangement in traditional, horseshoe, and modular seating arrangement on scientific learning model in Curriculum 2013. Fourth, Shernoff et al., (2017) conducted research to identify how students' engagement, attention, classroom learning experience, and course performance are different in row-seating. Fifth, Xi, Yuan, YunQui, and Chiang (2017) researched the relationship between seating zone and their academic performances. Here, the students believed that seating arrangement affected their performances. Sixth, Correa, Lara, Pino, and Vera (2017) conducted research to find out the role of group seating arrangement and the students' involvement in speaking. The result reveals that separate tables enhance the students' speaking the most.

Moreover, Susanti (2017) conducted a classroom action research to improve students' speaking skill by implementing seating arrangement. The study showed that seating arrangement could improve students' speaking ability and increase their participation. The last, Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari (2019) researched the students' perspective toward their seat selections and their relationship with students' self-esteem. It revealed that the students chose their seats because of proximity to instructor or board, or projector and personal factors such as eyeglasses/hearing aids were the most critical factor.

As a result, if the seating arrangements are considered carefully, the students will be able to improve their academic performances in joining classroom activity. Daddi and Ul Haq (2014) also state that students' performance is affected by seating arrangements. For that reason, this research aimed at observing the set-up of the seating arrangement of the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Banjar and the students' reasons for having particular seating preferences was also identified in this present study. Moreover, the traditional seating arrangement or the row seating implemented in the classroom was being the main focus of this research. It was because, in a traditional seating arrangement, it is the first type of the seating arrangement implemented before the other types of arrangement (McCorskey & McVetta, 1978). Furthermore, the students also choose the seats in this seating arrangement type by themselves and prefer to sit by using their personal feelings (Brown, 2000).

## **METHOD**

This research applied a case study to investigate the set-up of the seating arrangement of the eighth-grade students. Denscombe (2014) stated that a case study refers to doing deep analysis toward a particular sample that is done in natural setting. Descriptive research was also implemented to describe the problem. Concerning the data analysis technique, a qualitative approach was used in this research. This research was conducted in SMP Negeri 1 Banjar and the subjects of the study were 32 students of 8F class. Eighth-grade students were the subjects of this study. SMP Negeri 1 Banjar was chosen for this research because the traditional seating arrangement in the

classrooms was mostly implemented in this school. Moreover, VIII F class was determined in this research because the students preferred their seats by themselves. Furthermore, according to pre-observation that was done, they sat based on the map that was made after choosing the seats. Besides, they also sat in the same place during the semester. In collecting the data, there were two methods applied in this study, namely observation and interview.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There were two findings found in this study. First, the finding was related to the set-up of the seating arrangement. To gather the data, observation and interview were applied in this study. The second finding was related to the students' reasons for having specific seating preferences. Here, an interview was applied to analyze the data.

### The Set-up of the Seating Arrangement Based on the Observation and Interview Done

The set-up of the seating arrangement in the 8F class was observed thrice to get the saturated data. The result is shown in table 1.

Table 1. The Results of the Observations

Observation Items	Observation Sessions					
	1		2		3	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
The class implements a traditional seating arrangement.						
The students sit in the same seat in each class session.						
The students look tired in following the lesson.						
The students are responsive during the instruction.						
The students do activities that are not related to the lesson.						
The students do interaction with their friends while sitting in their seats.						
The students do discussion actively with their friends.						
The students have a disruption in following the lessons while sitting in their seats.						
The students' seats are spacious enough for them to do their works easier.						
The students save their stuff in their desks easily.						
The student(s) swaps their seat positions with their friend during the instruction.						
The teacher gives attention to all students.						
The seat enables a variety of classroom activities						
The students show active participation during the instruction.						
The students' seat positions support the students to do their tasks easily.						

Based on the analysis of the data, the same results in the second and third observations were obtained. Here, in the first observation checklist, three items were different from the second and the third checklists. The items were items number 3, 8, and 10 (see table 1).

Furthermore, the set-up of the seating arrangement was also observed through an interview that was done with the students. The result can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. The Result of the Interview

Questions	The session of the interview							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Where do you sit?	Front and middle rows	Middle and back rows	Front and middle rows	Front and middle rows	Middle and back rows	Middle and back rows	Front and middle rows	Middle and back rows
Do you always sit in your seat choice?	All students in all sessions always sat in their seats.							
Are you comfortable to sit in your seat?	Most students in all sessions were comfortable to sit in their seats. Only one student in session 3 who was uncomfortable.							
Can you concentrate easily during the instruction?	Most students in all sessions could not concentrate easily. They concentrate depending on the topic only.							
Do you do activities that are not related to the lesson frequently?	All students in all sessions did the activities frequently.							
Can you do interact with your friends easily?	All students in all sessions did interaction easily.							
Do you do the discussion actively with your friends?	The students in session 1 and 8 did not do discussion actively. Meanwhile, the students in session 2-7 did discussion actively.							
Have your friends complained to you during the lesson?	Most of the students in the back row complained to the students in the front and middle rows.							
Can you work in your seat easily?	Most students in session 1-8 could work easily, only one student in session two who was disturbed by his friend.							
Where do you save your stuff?	The students in session 1-6 saved their stuff inside the desks. The students in session 7 and 8 sometimes put their stuff under and behind the table.							
Do you have another favorite sitting position?	Few students in the middle row had favorite seats in the front row. Few students in the back row had favorite seats in the middle row.							
Does the teacher do interaction with you frequently?	Most students in the front row did interaction with the teacher frequently. The rest did interaction rarely.							
Do you do activities that are related to the lesson easily?	One student in session 1 experienced disruption while doing classroom activities. All students in session 2-8 could do classroom activities easily.							
Do you participate actively in the discussion session?	The students in session 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 participated actively. The students in session 5, 7, and 8 participated rarely.							
Can you do your tasks in your seat easily?	All students in all sessions could do the tasks easily.							

The result of the set-up of the traditional seating arrangement was explained deeply based on the results of the two instruments above, namely observation checklist and interview guide.

Based on the result of those two instruments, the students sat based on their seat choices in the classroom. Moreover, the class only implemented the traditional seating arrangement type during the English class. Based on the result of the interview, the students mentioned that they liked the seats when they were arranged in row seating.

The similar results were also found in the studies by Xi et al. (2017) and Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari (2019). The result revealed that the traditional seating arrangement was quite popular for students. It was mostly implemented for a big class that focused on teacher-centered instructions. It was highly accepted by the students when the learning focused on teacher-centered learning style and material-oriented.

Referring to the students' sitting positions, the findings showed that all students always sat in the same seats during the instruction. Based on the results of the instruments, all students sat in the same seats in the whole class sessions, and none of them changed their sitting positions until the end of the class. It is also correlated to the eleventh item, in which the students did not swap their sitting positions. By contrast, in the result of the study by Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari (2019), most students changed their seats in the classroom. Here, the students changed their sitting position because of personal factors such as eyeglasses/hearing aids. Some students who could not see and hear changed their seats to other seats. Meanwhile, this present study revealed that even though the students could not see the writing clearly, they did not want to move their seats because of their best friends. They preferred to stay sitting in their seats because they did not want to leave their friends. Moreover, they preferred to see the writing from their friends' note rather than moving to other seats.

In terms of comfort, the students were comfortable to sit in their seats when they were arranged in row seating. Based on the findings, the students were pleased to sit in their seat choices during the English class. The students also showed an active, interactive, and cheerful atmosphere during the lesson. It was also supported by the second item, in which the students never moved their sitting positions during the lesson. It also corresponds to the theory by Cornell (2002), who states that comfort and safety are the main principles of good seating arrangement. By contrast, the result of the study by Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari's study (2019) reveals that the students were sometimes uncomfortable to sit in their seats due to their problems when they could not see the writing and hear the instructor clearly. The study showed that the students often moved to other seats near the podium. Meanwhile, in this present result, the students were uncomfortable with seats in all rows and did not want to move to different seats even though they experienced some personal problems.

Concerning the students' concentration, it was found that the students could not concentrate during the lesson easily. During the instruction, some students were irresponsive and often did activities that were not related to teaching. It is also correlated to item number 5, in which the students did activities that were not related to the lesson frequently. There were few students in the front and middle rows who were responsive during the lesson. Based on their confessions in the interview, most students mentioned that they could concentrate depending on the lesson topic only. This present result contradicts to the result found in Simmons, Carpenter, Crenshaw, and Hinton's study (2015), Shernoff et al.'s study (2016), Xi et al.'s study (2017) and Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari's study (2019). The studies found that the implementation of traditional arrangement supported the students to comprehend the material well and supported their focuses on doing their works. By contrast, this present study reveals that the students did not focus well while sitting in their seats. Most of them were irresponsive during the lesson.

In terms of interaction, the students could do communication easily with their friends. The findings revealed that the students did interaction with their pairs and friends near them. Their seats allowed them to have contact and communicate with

others. Here, they did interaction in terms of discussion and interaction about their personal lives as well. Moreover, the students who mostly did interaction were the students in the middle row. Similarly, the results of the previous researches revealed that the traditional arrangement supported the sense of togetherness in the classroom where the students could interact with each other. The similar results were shown in Xi, Yuan, YunQui, and Chiang (2017) and Susanti (2017). Moreover, in Correa, Lara, Pino, and Vera's study (2017), seating arrangement gave full meaning for students in doing interaction and collaboration with friends in the classroom. Nevertheless, Supratman (2015) found that the traditional seating arrangement did not give much contribution in terms of communication among students rather than in circle seating arrangement.

With regard to the discussion, their seats allowed the students to do discussion easily with their friends. The results of the two instruments revealed the students could do discussion with pairs, friends next to them, in front of, and behind them. In here, the students did the discussion without changing their sitting position, but, by turning their head only. Additionally, even though the lesson plans were designed for the students to work in a group, the teacher did not change the seating arrangement. Therefore, it indicates that the teacher had less ability in managing the classroom management aspect. It contrasts to the theory by Kementrian Pendidikan (2016), in which the teacher did not adjust the seating arrangement based on the purpose of the instruction. On the other hand, the opposite results were found in Xi et al. (2017). The results reveal that traditional arrangement was less appropriate for group work. Likewise, in Correa, Lara, Pino, and Vera's study (2017) and Simmons et al.'s study (2015), the result show that traditional seating arrangement did not support the students to do collaboration and it was only appropriate when the lesson was designed for individual work. Therefore, the results contradict to this present result.

In relation to the disruption, the arrangement of the seats disrupted some students. It showed that there were students who had disturbances during the lesson. Nevertheless, an unexpected confession was mentioned by some students. Here, even though the students felt disruption, such as being unable to see the writing clearly, they did not want to move to other seats. A similar result was also found in Xi et al.'s study (2017) and Shernoff et al.'s study (2016), in which the students in the middle and back rows had higher disruption rather than the front row. Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari's study (2019) also shows that the students in the back row tended to have problems such as vision. Therefore, this seating arrangement type often caused problems and had a disadvantage for some students. The students also felt that this seating type did not support them when they faced personal problems such as vision. Setiyadi and Ramdani (2016) also found that this seating type did not contribute much in terms of visibility. Here, the students in the back row could not see the teacher's writing, especially the students who had myopia.

In terms of space, the two findings show that the students could work easily in their seats. Their seats were spacious enough for them. This present study revealed that the students' seats were spacious enough for them to do their works more efficiently. None of them felt that the seats were tight for them. Moreover, it is also correlated to the fifteenth item, in which the students could do tasks/exercises without any disturbance and without moving to other seats. Moreover, based on the students' statements in the interview, the students also could do their tasks because they could discuss and work together with their friends when they faced difficulties in doing the tasks. The result is similar to Simmons et al.'s study (2015), in which row seating was

best to be implemented to do their assignments. Additionally, as has been stated by Harvey and Kenyon (2013), the good seats provide size and space that allowed the students to do their work easily.

In relation to flexibility for saving stuff, the data reveal that the students could use their seats to keep their stuff. The seats must provide enough facility both for the students and the teacher. Similarly, this present study revealed that they could save their stuff inside the desks easily. It indicated that their desks were spacious enough for them to save their stuff inside the desks. According to Harvey and Kenyon (2013), the main principle of seating design characteristic is flexibility in use. Therefore, in terms of flexibility, the students could save their stuff in their desks. Moreover, Barkley (2010) and Shaw, (2011) mention that flexibility in use takes an essential role for the students' seats to save their stuff.

Concerning the collaboration with the teacher, most students did not get attention or do interaction with the teacher equally. Likewise, this study also revealed that only the students in the front and second middle rows who interacted with the teacher frequently. Meanwhile, the students who sat in the third middle row and back row got less attention, and they did interaction rarely with the teacher. Similarly, the result of Supratman's study (2015) also revealed that the communication between students and teacher did not happen interactively in the traditional seating arrangement. Furthermore, Zomorodian et al. (2012) found that the interaction between students and teacher was mostly done with the students in the front row. Nonetheless, some students confessed that they felt more comfortable when the teacher did not notice them frequently. They felt happier when they sat farther away from the teacher.

With regard to the classroom activities, their seats allowed them to do classroom activities comfortably. Here, their positions supported them to do classroom activities easily as well. They did not have any severe disturbance that made them difficult to do activities. The students could do classroom activities for instances reading, writing, taking a note, and doing tasks efficiently while sitting in their seats. The result of the interview also revealed that the students tended to have similar choices and answered that they could do classroom activities easily from their positions. Similarly, Simmons et al. (2015) found that the traditional seating arrangement can be effectively implemented for the students in doing their works. It revealed that this seating type was less disruption from others and made the students more focus on their tasks.

In terms of participation, the findings showed that not all students participated actively when the traditional seating arrangement was implemented during the instruction. The students could participate in the discussion session depending on the topic of the lesson. The students also did not get an equal chance to participate in the discussion. Here, the students in the front row and middle row participated more often. On the other hand, the students in the back row tended to be passive in the discussion session. Similarly, this present result corresponds to the result in Shernoff et al.'s study (2016) and Xi et al.'s study (2017). It was found that the seats in traditional seating arrangement tended to show stratification in the classroom. It indicated that this seating arrangement type tended to differentiate some students from the active to the passive students.

By taking review to the result of the data, the empirical, and the theories, it can be stated that the seats' comfort, spaciousness, flexibility, and collaboration among students corresponded to the previous studies and the theories as well. Here, those aspects of seating arrangement can be felt in the traditional seating arrangement.



Meanwhile, in terms of participation and collaboration with the teacher, those factors did not contribute much in the implementation of the traditional seating arrangement. Some of the students could not participate actively and did interaction with the teacher rarely. Furthermore, it was found that the interaction and the discussion done by the students showed different results between this present study and the previous studies. Here, the students tended to do interaction and discussion actively with their friends by turning their heads only. They also did those activities easily. Therefore, the sense of togetherness and collaboration among the students in this seating arrangement type was felt by the students well.

Nevertheless, this seating arrangement had disadvantages in terms of concentration. The studies and the theories mostly reveal that the traditional seating arrangement supports them to comprehend the material well, since this seating arrangement type encourage teacher-centered and there is less disruption while following the lesson. Meanwhile, this study found that that the seating arrangement did not contribute much in terms of concentration. Most of them could not concentrate easily because they often felt disruption. It also did not have any correlation between their sitting position and their abilities to concentrate during the lesson. Here, the front row students did not always concentrate well during the lesson. Moreover, the back-row students were not always passive or irresponsive during the lesson. Here, the students concentrate depending on the topic only, not depending on the seating arrangement or their sitting positions.

### The Students' Reasons for Having Certain Seating Preferences

The aspects of the seating arrangement in choosing the seats were also identified in this study. Therefore, the interview was conducted to gather the data. The result of the interview can be shown in table 3.

Table 3. The Students' Reasons for Having Certain Seating Preferences

The Reasons	Students' Sitting Positions			Total Number	Percentage
	Front Row	Middle Row	Back Row		
Working together with friends	0	9	5	14	44%
Doing discussion	0	3	2	5	16%
Seeing the teacher clearly	1	1	0	2	6%
Listening to the teacher	2	0	0	2	6%
Social interaction	2	8	2	12	38%
Making a joke	2	4	1	7	22%
Seeing the writing clearly	4	0	0	4	13%
Best friends	6	9	3	18	56%
Sleeping	0	2	2	4	13%
Cheating	0	2	2	4	13%
Eating	0	3	4	7	22%
Leaning on the wall	0	1	0	1	3%
Getting the teacher's attention	2	2	0	4	13%
Did not get the teacher's attention	0	0	2	4	13%

Based on table 3 above, there were 14 reasons mentioned by the students in choosing their seats. In relation to the first reason, the students mentioned that their reasons for choosing the seats were doing a collaboration or working together with their friends. Moreover, it is also correlated to the second reason, in which the students could

do discussion with their friends actively. Five students mentioned this reason. Based on the students' confessions, they could efficiently work and discuss with their friends, especially friends near them. Based on the results, the students could do a discussion with their friends in English class. This present result corresponds to Correa, Lara, Pino, and Vera's study (2017), in which the sense of collaboration among groups influenced the students' preferences toward seating arrangement during the learning process. Therefore, it can be seen that the students chose their seats can be affected by collaboration. Moreover, Barkley (2010) also mentions that collaboration or sense of togetherness could lead the students to select their seats.

Furthermore, the students also chose the seats to see the teacher clearly (reason number 3) and listening to the teacher clearly (reason number 4). Here, these reasons were mentioned by the student who sat in the front row and second middle row. They had more extensive space, clearer view, and closer space rather than others. Moreover, the teacher also stood and interacted with the students in the front and middle rows frequently. The teacher gave more attention to them so that the students could easily see her. Similarly, Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari (2019) state that proximity to the instructor/board/projector was the most dominating factor that influenced the students to choose their seats. It indicated that to see the teacher and hear the teacher's explanation, the students chose the seats near the teacher's chair.

The fifth reason of the students was doing social interaction. This reason was also commonly stated by the students as their favorite reasons in choosing their seats. They did an interaction that was related to the lesson or even communication related to their personal lives. A similar result was also found in Xi et al.'s study (2017), in which the students gave positive feelings toward their seats because of the sense of togetherness provided in the classroom where the students could interact to each other. In Correa, Lara, Pino, and Vera study (2017), seating arrangement provided the students to do interaction with their friends easily in the classroom. As a result, social interaction was also their reason in choosing the seats.

With regard to the sixth reason, the students mentioned that making a joke was also their reasons for choosing the seats. This reason was also quite popular among the students. Seven students in all rows said this reason. The students in the middle row dominated this reason. In this reason, the students also chose their seats because they could make a joke with their friends. The data also showed that the students who sat in the middle and back rows showed negative attitude more frequently rather than the students in the front row. According to Waller (1932), the students who sit in the back of the classroom are labelled as rebellious students. Likewise, mention that the students in the back row are more likely to have lower self-disciplined in the classroom (Zhang, Zhang, & Liu, 2011). It happened because the middle and back row had access to contact with other friends and the teacher gave attention to them rarely as well.

Moreover, seeing the writing clearly was also their reason for having certain seat preferences. In this research, the students who mentioned this reason was the front row students only. The students mentioned that they chose their seat in the front row to see the writing on the whiteboard clearly. It also indicates that the students who sit in the front row had a clearer view and could see the teacher's writing easily when she explained the material in front of the class. Moreover, this was also found in the study by Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari, research (2019), in which the proximity to the instructor/board projector was the students' reasons in choosing the seats. Nevertheless, in that study, this reason got the highest percentage, and the students

mostly said it. Meanwhile, this present result showed that there were only a few students in the front row who mentioned this reason.

Concerning the eighth reason, the findings revealed that best friends were also their reasons for choosing the seats. Here, best friends were the favorite reasons in this interview and mostly said by the students in all rows. The number of students who had this reason was 18 students. Moreover, based on the students' statement, when they had trouble in seeing the writing on the whiteboard, they did not want to move to other seats because they had already sat with their best friends. Additionally, some students had planned to sit in their seats in the new academic year together with their close friends. Because of best friends, they also could work together and do interaction actively. Additionally, sitting with close friends gave them advantages when they could not see the writing clearly, had difficult tasks and had a problem in their personal lives.

Concerning the following reasons, the reasons were related to the low self-discipline. The reasons were sleeping, cheating, and eating (reasons number 9, 10, and 11). Those reasons were mostly stated by the students who sat in the middle row and back row only. Based on their confessions, the students got more advantages because they sat far away from the teacher and hid by using their friends' body. Furthermore, they chose the seats that were strategic enough because the teacher did not notice them when they did those activities. Consequently, low self-discipline plays an essential role for the students in preferring their seats. Weinstein's study (1979), sitting in the front row facilitated a positive attitude rather than others. Moreover, Zhang, Zhang, and Liu (2011) mention that the students in the back row are more likely to have lower self-disciplined in the classroom.

Regarding the twelfth reason, one student mentioned that leaning on the wall was also her consideration in choosing the seats. This reason was a part of comfort in choosing the seats. Here, the student who answered this reason was one student only who sat in the left side of the classroom in the middle row. This student mentioned that in the new academic year, she preferred to sit in her seat that made her felt relax and comfortable. Based on the interview, the student had planned to sit in the middle row near the wall, so that, she could lean on it. According to the statement, it can be assumed that this student had her comfort by sitting near the wall. Therefore, comfort takes an essential role for the students to choose their seats (Barkley, 2010). It was also supported by Cornell (2002) that comfort takes a vital role for the seat choices.

Getting the teacher's attention was also mentioned by the students. Here, the number of students who had this reason were four students. They sat in the front row and middle row near the teacher's seat. Based on their confessions, they were noticed by the teacher frequently. They also did interaction with her during the lesson. Take a look at this reason, high teacher interaction may play an essential role in forming the students' personalities and their preferences to sit in a particular seat (Totusek & Staton-Spicer, 1982). Similarly, in Losonczy-Marshall and Marshall (2013), most students sat in the front and middle rows because they like to be noticed more than those who sat in the back row. Moreover, in Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari's study (2019), expectation to participate from the instructor also appeared as students' reason in choosing the seats and got the percentage around 29.3%.

The last reason was the opposite of the thirteenth reason. It was avoiding the teacher's attention. Two students in the back row mentioned that they chose their seats because of this reason. The students who had this reason sat in pair in the back row. Moreover, based on the interview, these students mentioned that their teacher did not

move around to their seats frequently. The teacher did not give attention or did not do interaction with them. Similarly, according to Morrison and Thomas (1975), the students who had a lower level of self-esteem were likely to participate and sat in the back row of the classroom. Burda and Brooks (1996) also state that the students who sit in the back row are passive students who feel more comfortable when they sit farther away from the teachers and need less interaction with the teachers.

By taking review to the result of the data, the empirical, and the theories, it can be shown that the students preferred to choose specific seats because of the factors mention by Barkley (2010). Nevertheless, there was a new factor that appeared in this present study, namely best friends. Here, none of the studies and the theories specifically mentioned that best friends were such factors that lead the students to choose the seats in the empirical and theories. The students said that best friends were their main reasons for choosing the seats. By friends' role, they could do discussion, interaction and collaboration comfortably.

Consequently, the students were comfortable when they sat with their close friends. It also happened because they were allowed to choose the seats by themselves. Moreover, it was also found that the students' attitude during the learning process in which the students did not move to other positions when they experienced disruption. Based on their confessions, the students did not move because they had already sat with their best friends. By contrast, in Nomali, Sanagoo, Sarayloo, and Jouybari's study (2019), the students moved their sitting positions when they experienced disruption.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data found, the seating arrangement supported them in terms of comfort, flexibility in doing activities, spaciousness, participation in doing tasks, and collaboration with the students. By contrast, the traditional seating arrangement did not support them much in concentrating, doing a collaboration with the teacher, and participating in the discussion session.

The students had various reasons for choosing the seats in the new academic year. They mentioned that they had planned to sit in a particular position because of some reasons. There were 14 reasons that they said during the interview. From the perspective of the students, working together with friends, doing discussion, seeing the teacher clearly, listening to the teacher clearly, social interaction, making a joke, seeing the writing clearly, best friends, sleeping, cheating, eating, leaning on the wall, getting the teacher's attention, and did not get the teacher's attention were the students' factors that influenced their seat selection.

Best friends were their main reasons for choosing the seats. It was the highest factor mentioned the students. Meanwhile, the less reason mentioned by the students was leaning on the wall. One student mentioned this reason.

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