

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer would like to present about background of the study, statement of problems, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definitions of terms.

1.1 Background of Study

English is one of the international languages which is widely used nowadays. People use English as source of science and good information that can affect development of their countries. Referring to the importance of English, the Indonesia government makes English as compulsory subject to be taught and learnt from Junior High School to University Level.

There are four main skills in learning a language, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are closely related one to another. Reading as one of the skills is the most fundamental. It covers other language skills and sub skills such as speaking, writing, pronunciation, grammar vocabulary. A research shows that a child who doesn't learn to read cannot master other skills of the language (Lohringer, 1999).

Reading is one of spiritual need of human being. By reading, a reader can satisfy for his/her knowledge and for various bits of information happening around the world. Besides, he can extend his horizons for thinking, and providing himself with last that she may be involved with the reality of human life.

Richards and Renandya (2002: 273) asserted that in many second and foreign language teaching and learning situations, reading receives a special focus because of several reasons. Firstly, many foreign language students often have reading as one of their important goals. They want to be able to read information and pleasure for their career and for study purposes. In fact in most of the EFL situation the analysis to read information and foreign language is all that the students ever want to acquire. Secondly, written text serves various pedagogical purposes. Reading then is a skill highly valued by the students and the teacher alike. In other word it can be said that reading analysis will be developed with the association with listening, speaking, and writing activities since they are interrelated skills.

According to Finnochiaro and Bonomo (1973: 119) reading is bringing meaning to and getting meaning from printed and written material. Based on this definition, W. Norris (1971) stated further that reading ability doesn't develop simply as a product of training in the spoken language. It is not easy for a foreign language learner to transfer visual symbols to his comprehension merely based on what he has already gained from auditory signals. A successful reading depends on the readers' linguistic knowledge which is in accordance with his/her level of language capability as well as his/her knowledge of the language used by the author in the reading materials.

The writer discusses about reading comprehension because based on the writer own experience when she did the teaching practice about four months at SMPK St. Theresia "Disamakan" Kupang, she found that many students had

difficulty in learning English such as in comprehending the reading text especially in narrative text. The difficulties which they faced such as the lack of vocabulary, grammar and the lack of comprehension. The students could not understand and comprehend the content of the reading text especially in narrative text.

Based on the ideas above, the writer will conduct a study entitled: **A Study on Reading Comprehension Ability of the Eighth Grade Year Students' of SMPK St. Theresia "Disamakan" Kupang in the School Year 2017/2018.**

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background above, the problems of this study are formulated in the following questions:

1. Are the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia "Disamakan" Kupang in the school year 2017/2018 able to understand the texts they have read?
2. What is the ability level of the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia "Disamakan" Kupang in the understanding the texts have read?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Giving in line with the problem statements above this study has some objectives as stated below.

1. To find out whether the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia "Disamakan" Kupang are able to understand the texts they have read.
2. To find out the ability level of the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia "Disamakan" Kupang in the understanding the texts they have read.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study has some significance for the English teacher, the students, and the writer, as presented below.

1. For English Teacher

This study will inform the teachers of English especially at the researched school about the ability of the students in reading a text, so that they improve or maintain the method of teaching English especially the teaching of reading comprehension.

2. For the Students

The students by reading the result of this study the students will know their weakness in writing.

3. For the Writer

Through this study the writer would be able to improve her knowledge and skills in teaching English especially reading.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is aimed at investigating the ability level of the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia “Disamakan” Kupang in reading comprehension. There are four types of reading comprehension. There are literal reading, interpretative reading, critical reading and creative reading. While the comprehension will focused on literal comprehension. The reading is limited on reading narrative text. This study is also intended to find the difficulties found in reading the text about narrative test.

1.6 Definition of Terms

There are some terms used in this study that should be defined. The definition may help the readers understand the study as a whole. The terms that should be defined in this study are as follows:

1. Ability

Ability is a potential capacity or power do something physically or mentally (Hornby, 1982: 2). Dealing with this study, ability means the students capacity in comprehending reading text.

2. Reading

Reading is an activity of contacting the eyes on printed materials by which a reader is led to record the information for brain to process and create a new similiar text to that of the original one (Anderson 1984). Reading in this study is means the activity done by eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia Kupang in reading the narrative text.

3. Comprehension

Comprehension is means and has excessive aimed in improving or testing one's understands of a language whether written or spoken. Comprehension is not only need in student's reading activities, but also to measure the ability of each student in classroom (Hornby, 1995, p.235).

4. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the construction of the meaning of a written or spoken communication through a reciprocal, holistic interchange of ideas between the interpreter and the message. The presumption here is that meaning

resides in the intentional problem-solving, thinking processes of the interpreter, that the content of the meaning is influenced by that person's prior knowledge and experience (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p, 39). In this study, reading comprehension is the construction of meaning by the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia Kupang, in understanding narrative text.

5. Narrative Text

According to Pardiyono (2012), Narrative text is a text that tells a story about someone life in the past, about the adventures and others which in these stories found that a conflict problems or challenges and solutions.

6. SMPK St. Theresia Kupang

SMPK St. Theresia Kupang is one of state Junior High Schools in Kupang, located on Jend. Ahmad Yani Street, Kota Lama District.