

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, English is considered to be the most important language in the world since a lot of people use it as a means of communication in society. Because of this, Indonesian government decides that English should be taught as a compulsory subject at all levels of schools in Indonesia.

In Indonesian context, the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language is emphasized on reading skill. The reason is that reading mastery becomes more urgently used for knowledge transfer in the society in general and in the academic community in particular. So, here reading is the major priority among other skills.

Durkin in Clemens (2011) stated that, this is natural since reading skill mastery may facilitate the mastery of other language skills. Through reading, basic grammar patterns and contextual vocabulary items are introduced. Also through reading, the students may learn one's ideas, concepts and attitudes and may take the benefit from them. Therefore it will be understandable if English teaching puts the emphasis on the reading lesson.

Reading is one of the skills in English study; the other skills are listening, speaking and writing. This study concentrates on literal reading

comprehension ability of eleventh grade students of SMA Sudirman Kupang in the school year 2014/2015. As everybody knows, the reading ability of each student is different. Some students are good and others are bad. Some of them feel English is difficult, when they found new vocabulary in the text that they didn't find before.

In the reading activities, the students' reading abilities are important because the greater abilities they have of what they are doing, the more effective their learning will be. For example, a good reader is able to distinguish between important information and details as they read. Moreover, a good reader is able to use clues in the text to anticipate information already stated. A good reader is also able to notice inconsistencies in a text and employ strategies to make these inconsistencies understandable (Barker and Brown 1984:20).

In general, the aim of teaching reading is to develop the students' ability in reading the material, to get information, and to understand about the text. The aim of teaching is for the reader to comprehend and to react to what is written (Brown 1982:18). However reading skill is not easy to master. Reading requires a familiarity on the part of the reader with the two fundamental building blocks of the particular language under study that is structure and vocabulary (Valette, 1967). Between the two building blocks, structure is more important because if the sentence is not structurally correct, then the reader will not understand the text. However, if he does not know the meaning of a word, he can find it in a dictionary.

Reading skill is very important for us, because with reading skill we can easily get some information from all sources for example TV, newspaper, magazine, English book and so on. Reading skill can help us to understand the reading text.

When we talk about the reading skill, certainly we will find difficulties. Inside the English reading text we often find some new vocabulary that makes the students confused to understand the reading texts. This problem come from the students themselves, the students do not have enough knowledge of vocabulary.

The writer choses SMA Sudirman as a sample because in this school the writer has done the teaching practice, especially in science class. The students in this class have a good knowledge in English lesson especially in reading text.

Based on the previous explanation the writer wanted to conduct a research entitled **“A Study on Reading Comprehension Ability of Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Sudirman Kupang in Academic Year 2014/2015”**.

1.2 Statement of the problems

The writer formulates the problem statement in the following questions:

1. Are the eleventh grade students of SMA Sudirman Kupang in the school year 2014-2015 able to understand the English reading text they have read?

2. What is the ability level of reading comprehension of the eleventh grade students of SMA Sudirman Kupang in the school year 2014-2015?

1.3 Objective of the study

There are some objectives of this study based on the problem statements:

1. To find out whether the eleventh grade students of SMA Sudirman Kupang in the school year 2014-2015 are able to understand English reading text or not.
2. To find out the ability level of reading comprehension of the eleventh grade students of SMA Sudirman Kupang in the school year 2014-2015.

1.4 Significance of the study

Significance is important in doing the study. Doing this study has some significance for some sides, such as the teacher of English, the students, and the writer himself. The significance of the study is presented below:

1. For the 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 Writer

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

3. For the students

Through the result of this study the students will be informed about their ability in reading

1.5 Scope and limitation

Chunsenbery (1998) identified four basic levels of reading comprehension skills as stated in the following. 1) Literal Reading: in this level readers remember details, note main ideas, which are directly stated or this skills enables readers to take out the information that is explicitly stated in the reading text. 2) Interpretative Reading: it is a level in which the reader is expected to discover the author's purpose, detect moods of the author, draw conclusion from what is written, and find the main ideas and cause and effect relationship when the factors are stated. The readers must concentrate fully on the reading passage in order that they can get out the message of its author because the information is implicitly stated in the text. 3) Critical Reading: at this point, the students are expected to determine if a statement is a fact or opinion. 4) Creative Reading: this level enables the reader to use the printed matter to solve problems, make value judgments regarding the actions of characters, and draw conclusion about what they have done. In this study the writer only focuses on literal reading comprehension.

There are some kinds of reading text, there are narrative text, recount text, hortatory exposition and analytical exposition. In order to avoid misinterpretation of the reader in the study the writer only focuses on the reading comprehension of narrative text of eleventh grade students of SMA Sudirman Kupang in academic year of 2014/2015.

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 should be defined in this study are as follows:

1. Reading

Reading is a complex of skills that the individual uses to derive meaning from the printed page (Karlin ; 1974 : 1). In this study reading means that the ability or skill of the student to understand the text that has been prepared by the teacher

2. Ability

Ability is capacity of someone physical or mental that can be developed through optimal exercises Hornby (1974). Here the ability means capacity of eleventh grade student of SMA Sudirman Kupang in comprehending a narrative text marked by being able to answer the question.

3. Comprehension

Comprehension is the mind's act or power of understanding (Devine 1986: 2). In this study comprehension means the power of

understanding a reading text of eleventh grade students of SMA Sudirman Kupang.

4. Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of using syntactic, semantic and rhetorical information. Sound in printed text to resentment in the readers mind, using that knowledge of the word his or he process, plus appropriate cognitive skills and reasoning ability (Devine: 1986:73). In the study, it is the process of reading comprehension by the use of cognitive skills in answering the reading text given to the students.

5. SMA Sudirman Kupang

SMA Sudirman Kupang is one the private senior high schools that is located in Salak Street, Sikumana.