

CHAPTER I

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 the Study

Language is a tool of communication used by people to relate one another. By language they will be easy to express their ideas, opinions, feelings, etc. There are many languages in the world. English is one of the languages used as international language. As an international language, English is very important and has many interrelationships with various aspects of life owned by human being. Many people want to learn English in order to be able to communicate well and to be able to go abroad when they have mastered English. In Indonesia, English is considered as the foreign language and is taught formally from elementary school up to university level.

There are four skills that should be mastered, they are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The reading skill becomes very important in the education field, students need to be exercised and trained in order to have a good reading skill. Reading skill is also included in National Examination. It means that the students need to comprehend the text given when they answer the questions.

Reading is also something crucial and indispensable for the students because the success of their study depends on the greater part of their ability to read. If their reading skill is poor they are very likely to fail in their study or at least they will have difficulty in making progress. On the other hand, if they have a good ability in reading, they will have a better chance to succeed in their study.

According to Burhan (2012: 9), reading is a physic and mental activity to reveal the meaning of the written texts, while in that activity there is a process of knowing letters. It says a physic activity because the parts of the body, our eyes particularly, do it. And it says mental activity because perception and memory as parts of mind are involved in it. He then concludes that the main goal of reading is a process of comprehending written texts.

Grabe and Stoller (2011: 3) state that reading is the ability to draw meaning from printed page and interpret this information appropriately. It is also an interactive in that sense of linguistic from the text interacts with information activated by the reader from long-term memory, as background knowledge (Grabe and Stoller, 2011:12). We can conclude that reading as a way to draw information from a text and to form an interpretation of that information.

Over the past decade, students had become responsible for learning more complex content at the rapid pace to cover the material assessed on state wide outcome assessment. Despite any reading difficulties a secondary student might have an educational system and had expectations that these students would be able to decode fluently and comprehend material with challenging content.

In Indonesia English as foreign language is studied in order to master and develop knowledge, technology, arts and create a good relation with other countries.

Most struggling middle school readers have deficits in reading comprehension. Comprehension the ability to gain meaning from the text, is essentially the ultimate goal of reading.

Comprehension is something that occurs inside the reader. Teachers cannot actually observe comprehension happening inside a student. They cannot view the student's brain when the student read. Even they cannot view how readers' brains act while reading gives only every limited information about the areas of the brain that are more or less active while reading text.

Snow (2002:11) defines reading comprehensions as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. The emphasis is merely on the words extracting and constructing. In line with some definitions above, Aebersold and Field (1997:15) also argue that the processes of comprehending then involves decoding the writer's words and then using background knowledge to construct an approximate understanding of the writer's message. Furthermore, they state that the process of comprehending of the text is not exact since reading is a personal activity. It means that reading comprehension differs from one reader to another reader.

Reading comprehension is a very complex skill. It is thus much more than decoding. Its most essential elements involve: skill in reading text accurately and

fluently, sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to make sense of the content, skill in using reading strategies that improve understanding or repair it when it breaks down, ability to think and reason about the information and concept in the text, motivation to understand and learn from the text.

According to Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP 2006) teaching reading in senior high school aims to develop the students' ability to comprehend and create kinds of short functional text monologue essay formed procedure, descriptive, recount, report, narrative, and other genre that related to surrounding environment. It also hopes that the students can read the texts which have meaning of words, phrases and sentences with the utterance stress and motivation related with the near area. The target of achievement in English competence is hoped more than 70.

Not only do proficient readers demonstrate a willingness and ability to think about what they read and discuss their thought with others, but they also enjoy asking lots of questions and responding to what they have read. Davis observes (as quoted in Brassell & Rasinski 2008: 27) "Students who are able to comprehend a variety of text will be able to integrate comprehension strategies according to the kind of text they are reading. The students will be able to explain what they are doing when they comprehend and what they do when they realize that they do not comprehend".

The writer discusses about reading comprehension because based on the writer own experience when she did the teaching practice about four months at SMAN 7 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 problem above, the writer is interested to make a study on reading under a title : **A Study on the Reading Comprehension Ability of the Eleventh Grade Students of SMAN 7 Kupang in the School Year 2017/2018.**

1.2 Statement of Problems

Research problem is the key point of a research. Related to the rationale above the writer would like to conduct a research to answer the following questions.

1. Are the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 Kupang in the academic school year 2017/2018 able to understand the text they read?
2. What is the ability level of students of eleventh grade of SMAN 7 Kupang in the school year 2017/2018 in comprehending a reading text?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are formulated in the following statements.

1. To find out and whether the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 Kupang in the school year 2017/2018 are able to understand the text they read or not.
2. To find out the ability level of the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 Kupang in the school year 2017/2018 in reading.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study have some benefits for the following persons.

1. For the teacher

This study will make teacher of SMAN 7 Kupang more repair their teaching materials before teaching and the teachers also enrich their knowledge.

2. For the writer

This study will give the writer many experiences particular in accomplishing research and also will enrich her by understanding better in reading.

3. For the students

This study will provide a real data about the students ability in reading so they can find solution in improve their ability.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study is to examine the ability of the students in mastering English. There are four main skills in learning a language, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, this study focuses on measuring the ability of the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 Kupang in the school year 2017/2018 in reading texts especially narrative text. While the comprehension will focused on literal comprehension.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid confusion in understanding about the topic, the researcher will explain the definition of some main terms.

1. Ability :

Ability is potential capability or power to do something physically or mentally (Hornby,1987:2). In this case ability means the students potential in understanding narrative text they read.

2. Reading

Reading is an activity of contacting the eyes on printed material by which a reader is led to record the information for the brain to process and create a new similar text to that of the original one (Anderson, 1984:34). In this study reading is an activity of contacting the eyes on narrative text to record the information of the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 in the school year 2017/2018.

3. Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to understand something (William Chester Minor,2008). In this study comprehension is the ability to understand the narrative text by the eleventh grade students of SMAN 7 in the school year 2017/2018.

4. Reading comprehension

Hill (2000:4,5) states, "Reading is communication process and used by readers to get the message which is going to be delivered by the author through message or written language".

5. SMA N 7 Kupang :

SMA N 7 is one of the state senior high schools in Kupang, which is located on Frans Daromes Street, Tofa-Maulafa, Kupang city.