

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a great part in our life. Language and human beings are two unseparated components. Whenever and wherever, we express our feeling and through language. Language is what that enables us to interact in our social activity. Each language has its own norms. “Language as an arbitrary system of speech sound or a sequence of speech sounds which is used or can be used in interpersonal communication” (Ramelan 1984).

In the world, English is used for communication as an international language. Therefore, English plays a significant role in the various fields of activities, and has wide influences in the world. Related to this role, the Indonesian Government has treated it as a compulsory subject by the Act No. 097, Yayasan Pustaka Nusatama. Yogyakarta (2005). As a compulsory subject, therefore, English is included in the National Curriculum.

In the context of learning of English, there are four skills of English language, namely; listening, speaking, reading and writing. In English teaching learning process, reading dominates all of the activities and other English subject such as writing is usually presented in the reading comprehension test. In other words, during the time of teaching and learning activities, reading must be involved. So, reading comprehension skill is a basic skill in learning English,

because every activity in class involves reading (Grellet, 1996). Thus, reading comprehension is considered basic skill in the learning of English in Indonesia.

In relation to reading comprehension, in fact, senior high school students still find difficulties in comprehend a selected reading text. They hardly understand what they read. That is why teachers of English work harder to help students understand what they read.

Based on the writer to conduct a study on reading comprehension ability. The title of this study is “A study on reading comprehension ability of the Eleventh Grades Student of SMA Sint Carolus Kupang in School Year 2016/2017”.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background above, the writer would like to propose two questions that will be answered after analyzing the data. They are:

1. Are the eleventh grades students of SMAK Sint Carolus in the school year 2016/2017 able to comprehend the text they read?
2. What is the level of reading ability of the eleventh grades students of SMAK Sint Carolus in the school year 2016/2017?
3. What are the difficulties the students faced in comprehend 2 text the read?

1.3 Objective of the Study

In line with the problem statement above, the aims of the study are as follows:

1. To find out whether or not the eleventh grades student of SMAK Sint Carolus able to comprehend the text they read.
2. To find out the level of reading ability of the eleventh grades students of SMAK Sint Carolus in the school year 2016/2017.
3. To find out the area of difficulty the students may face in understanding the text.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is beneficial for the following persons; they are the English teacher, the students, and the writer.

1. For the English Teacher

This study is expected to be an information for the English teacher at the research school about the students' reading comprehension ability.

2. For the Students

This study is an input for the students to know about their reading comprehension ability.

3. For the Writer

This study is useful for the writer as a prospective teacher where she learns how to write scientific writing.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study talks about reading comprehension and there are four main kinds of reading comprehension, they are literal comprehension, interpretative comprehension, critical comprehension, and creative comprehension. However, in this study the writer focused on literal comprehension ability of narrative text of the eleventh grades students of SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang.

1.6 Definition of the Terms

To avoid misunderstanding of the readers, the writer would like to present some definitions of terms used in this study.

a. Ability

It is potential capacity or power to do something physically or mentally (Hornby, 1982). Dealing with this study, ability means the student capacity in comprehending reading text.

b. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand a written text (Soanes and Stevenson, 2004). The term of “reading comprehension “ in this study refers to the students” ability to understand a written text, in this case, narrative text.

c. Narrative Text

Narrative text is a story with complication or problematic events and it tries to find the resolutions to solve the problems. Parera (1993).

d. SMAK Sint Carolus Penfui Kupang

SMAK Sint Carolus Kupang is a Catholic senior high school in Kupang located in Jln Penfui Kec. Maulafa - Kota Kupang East Nusa Tenggara Province.