

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the writer presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of study, the significance of study, scope and limitation and definition of terms.

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Language is a tool used by people to communicate ideas, emotion and desires as means of voluntarily produced by symbols as stated by Sapir (1912: 8). In this definition, he states that language is a bridge in expressing one's, feelings, ideas, emotion, and desires by using oral and written forms. In other definition, language can be said as a means of communication and interaction we use in social life. There are so many languages in the world and one of them is English. As language of the world, people of Indonesia need to learn English in order that they can communicate with foreign people, especially those who speak English. The government of Indonesia has included English in the curriculum of Indonesian schools.

There are four main skills of language such as, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are closely related one to another and sub skills are grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling as supporting materials. Reading is one of the basic skills besides listening, speaking, and writing, which must be acquired by a learner of the English language and it is a language process requiring

the understanding of written language. Both the skills and sub-skills play an important role in teaching and learning English.

Reading can be defined as an active attempt on the part of the reader to understand a writer's message. Smith (1936: 6) said that in the process of reading the reader interacts with and tries to reconstruct what a writer wishes to communicate.

Reading is becoming more and more important in the knowledge acquisition and remains the most effective human activity for transforming information as stated by Mikhailov, (1998: 4). Based on this statement the writer may say that reading is an activity done by a reader to get information in a text and through reading one can know many things happening in the world.

Grabe et al (2002: 29) said that reading comprehension is an extraordinary feat of balancing and coordinating many abilities in a very complex and rapid set that makes comprehension seemingly effortless and enjoyable activity for fluent readers.

Reading as one of the English skills at all levels of education is considered as the core skill if a reader wants to improve his/her speaking, writing, listening pronunciation skills and grammar mastery. Reading can help the achievement of other language skills.

The essential goal of reading activity is comprehension. "Comprehension" refers to the ability to understand what is read. In real life, there are so many difficulties that the students face. The text books used in schools contain reading passage and followed by exercises. It is expected that by reading, the students can

learn structure, acquire more vocabularies and even to learn and improve pronunciation. With all these, students can develop other language skills.

The fact shows that many Indonesians are not accustomed to reading habit. Because of this habit, the students might encounter some problems in reading. They might not understand or comprehend what they are reading. In line with this, they might answer the question or doing the exercise given.

The writer wants to make a research to the tenth grade students of SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubena, because the writer thinks the students have known and able to use English. In this case, the tenth grade students are able to master reading as one of English four main skills. Seeing the situation above, the writer feels interested to conduct **“A Study on the Reading Comprehension Ability of the Tenth Grade Students of SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubena in the School Year 2018/2019”**.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problems**

The topic of the study is specified into two problems. The problems are formulated in questions.

1. Are the tenth grade students of SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubena able to understand the text they have read?
2. What is the ability level of the tenth grade students of SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubena in understanding the text they have read?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Going in line with the problem statements, the objectives of this study are formulated in the following statements:

1. To find out whether or not the tenth grade students of SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubenaao comprehend the reading text.
2. To find out the ability level of the tenth grade students of SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubenaao in comprehending the reading text.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

In line with the problem statements that have been presented above, this study may have contribution for the following persons.

1. For the English Teacher

This study informs the teacher of English about the ability of the tenth grade students in reading especially the ability of the students in answering the questions about the text they have read.

2. For the Writer

Through this study the writer would be able improve his knowledge and skills in reading.

3. For the Students in the research school

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

#### 4. For the Students of English Study Program

For the students of English study program, this study may become a reference in their way of learning English especially in reading.

### **1.5. Scope and Limitation**

There are four kinds of language skills, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading consists of skimming, scanning, and reading comprehension. According to Gullet (1982: 3) there are four main ways of reading: literal reading, interpretive reading, critical reading, and creative reading.

This study deals with students reading ability. In this study the writer only limits his study on the ability of students in answering literal questions about the text they have read.

### **1.6. Definition of Term**

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 are followed.

#### **1. Ability**

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

## **2. Reading**

Reading is an activity of contacting the eyes on printed material by which a reader is led to record the information to the brain to process and create a new similar text to that of the original one as stated by Anderson (1984).

## **3. Comprehension**

It is a process by which a person understands the meaning of the written or spoken language as stated by Ricard (1985). In this study, comprehension is a process by which the tenth grade students of SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubenao understand the reading text they have read.

## **4. Reading Comprehension**

Devine (1986: 73) said that it is a process of using syntactic and rhetorical information found in printed text to reconstruct in the readers mind, using the knowledge of the words she or he possesses, plus appropriate cognitive skill and reason ability.

## **5. SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubenao**

SMAS Taruna Mandiri Fatubenao is one of the public schools in Jl. Maromak Oan, Atambua, Belu Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province.