

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer would like to discuss about the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a very important means of communication in human daily life. People use language both in written and spoken forms to express their ideas. Language has sounds, forms, vocabulary, and grammar. Thus, it is reasonable that language is interesting to analyze.

People of different countries use English to communicate so that English has become an international language. English language is taught in Indonesian school from the Elementary until University level and also as the first foreign language.

In the English curriculum, the learning activities involve listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The four skills are taught integratedly. Although it is focused on the four skills, pronouncing is not separately taught from the four skills.

Pronunciation is one of the important aspect in English, especially in oral communication. Every sound, stress pattern, and intonation may convey meaning. The non-native speakers of English who speak English have to be careful in pronouncing some utterances or they may create misunderstanding.

This skill is complicated enough because there are some English words have one form with multiple meanings. If a word is pronounced incorrectly the meaning will be different. It can cause misunderstanding between speaker and listener. People who are speaking English need to understand the skills because pronunciation skill is an English skill which has correlation between other skills. Someone reading means producing sound by saying the words which are read and someone will listen to the reader or the speaker. If the speaker makes a mistake in pronouncing the listener could be confused.

Based on the writer experience during her teaching practice at SMPN 8 Kupang, she found that most students produced many errors in pronouncing English words when they spoke English. It is difficult for them to pronounce English words correctly, for example: when they are asked to pronounce the word “umbrella” /ʌmbrelə/ they may pronounce it as /umbrella/. It is because of the differences between their mother tongue and English as a targeted language.

Therefore, in teaching about pronunciation, the teacher does not only focus on the ability of students, but also how to build a learning atmosphere; build good relationship so students have high learning intentions. One example of materials that teacher can teach is about “Showing Appreciation”.

At the beginning of teaching the material, the teacher must explain the expressions about Showing Appreciation. For example: how we give appreciation or compliment and how to respond. After teaching how to express the expression, the teacher gives the conversation text. From the text, the teacher reads each word or sentence with attention to stress and also syllable so that they find it to read and after that it is followed by the students'. Next, students are given the opportunity to read

the text and of course the teacher must guide students to mention the words that are quite difficult for students to say.

The teacher also provides vocabularies related to the material being taught. Next, students are asked in pairs to make their own conversations based on the material (Showing Appreciation) then they are given the opportunity to present their result in front of the class and of course the teacher will correct the way they say each word. Meanwhile, Oxford Dictionary is used as the reference to measure students' correct pronunciation for the eighth grade students of SMPN 8 Kupang.

Based on the statement and example above the writer would like to conduct a research on the ability in pronouncing English words. It will be done in a study entitled **“A Study on the Ability in Pronouncing English Words of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang in the School Year 2018/2019”**.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The study attempts to answer the question:

1. Are the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 able to pronounce English words taught to them ?
2. What is the ability level of eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 in pronouncing English words ?
3. What are the difficulties committed by the students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 in pronouncing English words ?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To know whether the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 are able to pronounce English words correctly or not.
2. To know the ability level of eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 in pronouncing English words.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is beneficial for the English teacher and the students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang and also for the writer.

1. For The English teacher of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang

Through the result of the study, it is expected that the English teacher may know the students' ability and problem in pronouncing English words, so that they might find appropriate way to address the pronunciation problem.

2. For the Students

The result of the study can become a useful source of information about their ability in pronouncing English words and mistakes committed by the students so that they may practice harder to improve their pronunciation.

3. For the Writer

This study is expected to give the writer a good experience in doing scientific research and to enrich her knowledge about pronunciation.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

In learning language there are some skills of learning language need to be learned by the students such as listening, reading, and writing. In correlation with the skills need to be learned by the students. There are some sub skills which have to be mastered by the students in order to be able to speak English correctly such as Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation and Spelling. However, the focus of her study is on pronouncing English. The area becomes the writers concern is on stressed words. The words are one syllable, two syllables, three syllable words, and four syllable words. Meanwhile, the subject of this study will be the eighth grade students of SMPN 8 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019.

1.6 Definition of Terms

In order to help the readers understand this study, this section offers definition of some important terms.

1. Ability

Robbins (2003:52) in his book “Organization behavior” defines ability as the individual capacity to cope some duties on some field of work. The term “ability” in this study means the capacity of students in pronouncing English words given to them.

2. Pronunciation

It is the way in which the language is spoken; the way in which the word is pronounced; the way a person speaks the words of a language (Hornby 1995;928). In

this study, pronunciation refers to the way English sounds are produced by the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 8 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019.

3. English Words

Word is a sound or combination of sounds forming a meaningful element speech, usually shown with a speech on either side of it when written or printed. Webster (2005:46) English word is component of speech in a sentence used form a language that contains of grammatical elements such as: Noun, Verb, Adjective, and Adverb, those elements are used to make a sentence.

4. SMP Negeri 8 Kupang

SMP Negeri 8 Kupang is one of the junior high schools in Kupang which is located at Jl.S.K.Lerik Kelapa Lima Kupang.