

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the discussion on the background of the study, statement of the problems, objective of the study, scope and limitation of the study, significance of the study, and definition of key terms.

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

Language is very important for communication. People use language to express ideas, feelings, emotions, etc. Without language people cannot communicate.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language. In learning this language students commonly have troubles. In their attempt to master the English language, they have to spend a lot of energies. They have to practice again and again in order that they are good in English. In learning English students must learn to write, to listen, to pronounce, to read, and so on. Indonesian students start learning English at the elementary school. They learn it at the Junior High School (SMP). The process continues at Senior High School (SMA).

Reading is one of the English skills. It is related to the establishing of readers' understanding of the so – called “written language”. Reading can help readers improve their listening, speaking, writing, pronunciation skill and grammar mastery. Through reading learners have to understand the concept of what they read and are hoped to speak out the concept they have read. By reading learners also try to learn grammatical unit and vocabularies. They learn the phonological

units about how to produce the sounds and try to connect the sounds nearly correctly. The teacher will be as the model of the appropriate pronunciation and learners can imitate and repeat it. If learners read, more and more, they can write based on their background knowledge which may come from what they have read.

For example reading learning, in addition to improving reading skills can also improve writing skills. Another example of learning to find key ideas in listening also improves the ability to find key ideas in reading, because the thinking activities both in oral and written language are essentially the same.

In the communication process, all aspects of language skills, both oral and written, are important. Experience is the basis for all the meanings conveyed and understood in a particular language. Children who have extensive language experience will be able to express their intentions and understand other people's intentions easily.

The ability to listen, talk, read, and writes all depends on the richness of vocabulary needed to communicate that one has. In addition language skills also require the ability to use language rules. Through reading learners have to understand the concept of what they read and are hoped to speak out the concept they have read. By reading learners also try to learn grammatical unit and vocabularies. They learn the phonological units about how to produce the sounds and try to connect the sounds nearly correctly. The teacher will be as the model of the appropriate pronunciation and learners can imitate and repeat it. If learners read, more and more, they can write based on their background knowledge which may come from what they have read.

Reading is for comprehension. Comprehension is the ability to understand what has been read. In learning English, many books are available. They contain reading passages and followed by exercises. Very commonly, students have problems to comprehend what they read.

In learning language, there are four skills which should be mastered by students, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four skills should be involved by teacher in process of teaching and learning in a classroom. Speaking and writing refer to productive skills while reading and listening refer to receptive skills (Harmer, 2003).

Language skills consist of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Regarding the four skills, the writer chooses, one of the skills that are to become the topic of his study. Reading is one of important materials in the curriculum both as objective and the means of learning the language. While the reading comprehension means that the reader should comprehend the information directly and indirectly from the text. Reading is for comprehension. Comprehension is the ability to understand what has been read. In learning English, many books are available. They contain reading passages and followed by exercises. Very commonly, students have problems to comprehend what they read.

Based on the writer experiences, the majority of students cannot understand what they read and could not answer the question based on the reading text. The writer assumes that it is the problem in learning English in general and reading comprehension in particular. Realizing about this, the writer feels interested to conduct **“A Study on the Ability on Reading Comprehension of the Eight Year Students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang in the School Year 2018/2019”**.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

The questions that will be answered in this study are as follows!

1. Are the eighth grade students of SMP St. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 able to understand the text they have read?
2. What is the reading comprehension ability level of the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2018/2019?

## **1.3. Objective of the Study**

The followings are the objectives of the study:

1. To find out whether the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Theresia Kupang are able to understand the texts they have read or not.
2. To find out the reading comprehension ability level of the eighth grade students in comprehending an English reading text.

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

The result of this study might be beneficial for the following persons.

1. For Teacher!

This study will inform the teachers of English about their students' ability in reading comprehension, where they can improve the method of teaching English particularly in teaching reading.

2. For the Writer!

Through this study the writer could know more about reading comprehension and how to evaluate reading comprehension ability.

### **1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study is about analyzing students' level of ability in reading comprehension. In Junior High School, here are 5 kinds of texts taught; they are: Descriptive text, Recount text, Narrative text, Procedure text and Report text. In this study, the writer will focus on comprehending descriptive text. In comprehending texts, there are three levels of comprehensions namely: Literal, Interpretation, and Critical comprehension of the eighth grade students of SMP St. Theresia Kupang in school year 2017/2018. In this study, the writer focused on Literal Comprehension.

### **1.6. Definition of Key Terms**

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

#### **1. Ability**

Ability is capacity or power of someone physically or mentally that can be developed through optimum exercise. (Chaplin, 1981).

#### **2. Reading**

Reading is an activity, which involves the identification and reorganization of printed or written symbols, which serve as a stimulus for the recall of meaning built up through past experience (Tinker and McCullough, 1975:9) states that the reading can be interpreted as activity ideas / ideas using reading another language.

#### **3. Comprehension**

Comprehension is the understanding of what is read.

4. Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the process of making meaning by extracting the required information as efficiently as possible from a text. (Grellend, 1981; 4).

5. SMP St.Theresia Kupang.

SMPK St.Theresia Kupang is one private school in Kupang city located in Jendral Ahmad Yani Street No.52 Kupang.