

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significant of the study, scope and limitations, and definitions of the terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is purely human and non instinctive method of language ideas, emotion and desires by means of system of voluntarily produced symbols. These symbols are, in the first sentence auditory and they are produced by organ of speech (Sapir, 1912: 8). In this definition he states that languages as a bridge in expressing one's feeling, ideas, emotion and desires by using oral and written forms. In another definition languages can be said 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. English is an international Language which is use in various aspect of life such as politic, economic, education, commerce, technology, and so forth. Take for example in education aspect many books written in English. Therefore, students are expected to master language main skills such as, Listening, speaking, reading and writing. While, language sub skills are grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation as supporting materials. Both the skills sub skills play an important role in teaching and learning english.

Reading is one of English skills and it is a language process requiring the understanding of written language. It constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking, and asking oneself questions. Therefore, this should be taken into consideration when devising reading conversation exercises.

Reading is one of the basic skills besides listening, speaking, and writing which must be acquired by an English language learner. Reading can be defined as an active attempt of the reader to understand the writer's message. Smith (1983: 6) says that in the process of reading the reader interacts with and tries to reconstruct what a writer wishes to communicate.

Reading is becoming more important in the knowledge acquisition and is still the most effective human activity for transforming information. Based on the statement the writer may say reading is done actively by readers to get information through a reading text because from one text reading the readers will know many things happening in this world.

Grabe (2002: 29) states that reading comprehension is an extraordinary balancing and coordinating many abilities in a very complex and rapid set of routines that makes the comprehension seemingly effortless and enjoyable. Reading as one of the English skills taught to all levels of education that is considered as the core skill if readers want to improve speaking, writing, listening, pronunciation skill and grammar mastery.

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 textbooks used in school contain reading

passage and followed by exercise. It is expected and even to learn improve pronunciation. With all these , students can help develop other language skills.

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

Based on the background above, the writer interested to conduct a study under the topic **“A Study on Reading Comprehension Ability of the Seventh Grade Students of SMP Negeri 16 Kupang in the School Year 2018/2019”**.

1.2 Statment of the Problem

The topic of the study is specified in some problems. The problems are stated in the following questions:

1. Are the seventh grade students of SMPN 16 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 able to comprehend English texts?
2. What is the level of ability on reading comprehension of the seventh grade students of SMPN 16 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Going line with the problems this study also have two objectives, as stated below:

1. To find out the students of seventh grade of SMPN 16 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 are able to comprehend English texts.

2. To find out the level of reading comprehension ability of the seventh grade students of SMPN 16 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study has some significance for the English teacher and the writer, as presented below:

1. For the English Teacher

This study can be used as a feedback for the teacher to teach English especially reading comprehension of the students.

2. For the Writer

Doing this study, the writer is trained in English and writing research.

3. For the Students

This study is very important to students , because they are able to know and improve their knowledge about reading comprehension.

4. For English Study Program

The result of the study can give information to the lecturer and students of English Education Study Program of Teacher Training And Educational Science Faculty of Widya Mandira Catholic University Kupang about english assesment of Junior High School including of SMPN 16 Kupang.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study is about analyzing the ability of reading comprehension of the seventh grade students of SMPN 16 Kupang, especially the students of class VII J.

In this study the writer wants to know about student's level of ability in reading comprehension. There are three types of comprehension: literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and critical comprehension. In this study the writer will focus on literal comprehension. There are five types of reading text taught in SMP : Narrative text , Descriptive text , Recount text , Procedure text , Report text. In this study the writer only focuses on comprehending descriptive text.

1.6 Definition of Terms

To help the readers understand the terms used in this study , the writer presents some definition of terms as follow:

1. Ability

Ability is potential capacity or power to do something physically or mentally (Hornby, 1982:2). Dealing with this study, ability means the students capacity in comprehending 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 for the brain to process and create a news similar text to that of the original one (Anderson, 1984).

3. Comprehension

Comprehension is a process by which people understand the meaning of the written or spoken language (Richard 1985). In this study , comprehension is a process by the second year students of SMPN 16 Kupang understanding the reading text they have read.

4. Reading Comprehension

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

5. Literal Comprehension

Literal comprehension is reading in order to understand remember or record the information explicitly contained in a passage.

6. SMPN 16 Kupang

SMPN 16 Kupang is one of the Junior High Schools in Kupang. It is located in East Nusa Tenggara Province. It is a public school that is located on JL. Supul Raya, Pasir Panjang which uses this location as research.