

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Language is very useful in daily activities to communicate with each other. According to Brown (2000), language is used to communicate. It is really significant in human life. It is used to express their feelings and ideas. According to Sapir (1921), language is often seen as a vehicle for thought, a system of expression that mediates the transfer of thought from one to another.

Mastery of English in Indonesia is very necessary in order to open the horizons of the Indonesian people to absorb the development of science and technology from other countries.

Learning English in Indonesian still faces various obstacles. This can be seen from several research results and reports which show that students' mastery of english in Indonesia is still very low. Sukamerta (2013: 4) states that mastery of English after basic education in Indonesia is not successful compared to neighboring countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore.

There are four skills we have to master in order to be able to use English well, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Besides, there are also English sub skills; they are grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. One challenge the students encounter in learning English is using grammar correctly both in speaking and writing.

There are many aspects in grammar. One of them is modal auxiliaries. They are used to express certain hypothetical conditions, such as advice, capability, or requests. Since they are auxiliary verbs, they can not be used discretely.

In English syllabus at SMP Negeri 10 Kupang, modal auxiliaries are one of the teaching materials the students learn. Therefore, the writer would like to conduct a study to find out the ability of the students at SMP Negeri 10 Kupang to use modal auxiliary.

The author takes the study of modal auxiliaries because modals auxiliaries are important. Modals auxiliaries are used to help explain whether something is a must, a possibility, a permit, a need, an obligation, and so on. It is important for students to master modals auxiliaries so that English sentences made contain so called modal auxiliaries may show the correct meaning. The difficulty faced by students in learning modals auxiliaries is that they still cannot place the modals in the correct context of the sentence. They have not been able to place modals auxiliaries according to the right situation and time.

Research on the ability to use auxiliary verbs is important because auxiliary verbs are one of the key elements in English grammar. Auxiliary verbs are used to form a variety of verb forms, including tense, aspect, causative, and passive tenses.

The inability to use auxiliary verbs correctly can lead to difficulties in understanding and using English effectively. For example, if someone doesn't understand the difference between "will" and "would", then they may have difficulty making promises or giving suggestions in the future context.

The results of the study can be very useful for teachers of English and students at SMP Negeri 10 Kupang because it can become inputs concerning students' ability to use modal auxiliaries so that the students' knowledge about modal auxiliaries can be increased and improved.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the background d above, the writer formulates the following research questions, they are:

1. Are the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Kupang able to use modal auxiliaries?
2. What is the level of ability of the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Kupang in using modal auxiliaries?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Going in line with the problem statements this study has some objectives. These objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out whether or not the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Kupang are able to use modal auxiliaries.
2. To find out the level of ability of the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Kupang in using modal auxiliaries.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The results of the study will give beneficial contributions to the following parts:

### **1. English Teachers at the Researched School**

The results of the study will become inputs for the teacher of English about their students' ability to use modal auxiliaries so that they can improve or increase the students' knowledge about modal auxiliaries.

### **2. Students**

The grade ninth students of SMP Negeri 10 Kupang will know how far they have mastered modal auxiliaries so that they can learn more.

### **3. The Writer**

The writer will know the students' ability to use modal auxiliaries. In addition, the author gains experience on how to improve students' ability to use modal auxiliaries.