

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the discussion on the background of the study, statement of problems, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, scope, and limitation, and definitions of terms. Those are explained in detail below.

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 the 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, there are four skills that should be mastered by students, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. These four skills should be involved by the teacher in the 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). They learn it at Junior High School (SMP). The process continues at Senior High School (SMA).

Reading is one of the language skills which is very important to be learned by students. Through this activity, students can improve their own language and experience. They will get information and ideas which they need to know.

Moreover, they will be able to know what they did not know before. Reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build the meaning. The goal of reading is comprehension (Nunan, 2003:68). Comprehension is an active process that involves strategies and behaviors (Crown, 2005:2).

In reading, there are many kinds of reading text, such as narrative, recount, report, descriptive, explanation, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, procedure, discussion, news item, and so forth. Descriptive text is one of the genres of text that should be taught to students of junior high school especially in the eighth-grade students of SMPN 10 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019.

Based on some experiences of the writer's in teaching practice in SMPN 10 Kupang, the majority of students could not understand what they read and could not answer the question based on the reading text. The ability of the students in terms of reading was not so good, the pronunciation, and the comprehension was not so good as well. 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 about the ability on reading comprehension under the title **“A Study on Reading Comprehension Ability of the Eighth Grade Students of SMPN 10 Kupang in the School Year 2018/ 2019”**

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There are two problems in this study. They are:

1. Are the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 able to comprehend the text they read?

2. What is the ability level of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 10 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 in comprehending the text they read?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the problems stated above the objective of this study are:

1. To find out whether or not the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 10 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 are able to comprehend the reading text.
2. To find out the ability level of the eighth-grade students of SMPN10 Kupang in the school year 2018/2019 in comprehending the text they read.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance is important in doing the study. Doing this study has some significances for some parties, such as the teacher of English, the students, and the writer herself. The significance of the study are presented below:

1. The Writer

The result of this study can be useful for the writer as a prospective teacher in preparing herself to become a teacher in the future. The writer is also trained in how to conduct research and to comprehend a reading text.

2. For the English Teacher

This study will inform the teachers of English especially at the researched school about the ability of the students in reading a text so that they improve or maintain the method of teaching English especially the teaching of reading comprehension.

3. For the students

By doing the test on reading the text the students can be motivated and illustrated about how to comprehend reading text. By seeing the result of the test, they can be motivated to study English better, especially in comprehending an English text.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

According to Heilman et al (1981:242), there are three main kinds of reading comprehension, they are literal comprehension, interpretative comprehension, and critical comprehension.

This study is aimed at investigating the ability level of the eight grade students of SMPN 10 KUPANG in reading comprehension.

In this study, the writer only focuses on literal comprehension, on Descriptive text.

1.6 Definition of Terms

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 which should be defined in this study are as follows:

1. Ability

Ability is a potential or power to do something physically or mentally (Hornby, 1974:2). Here the ability means the power of the eighth-grade students of SMPN 10 Kupang in comprehending reading text marked by being able to answer the questions.

2. Reading

Reading is a process of readers combining information from the text and their own background to build meaning. This means that the readers should combine their knowledge and what the information they read (Nunan, 2003:8). It is a very important skill that the students need for the success of their studies.

3. Comprehension

Comprehension is a means and has excessively aimed at improving or testing one's understanding of a language whether written or spoken. Comprehension is not only a need in student's reading activities but also to measure the ability of each student in the classroom (Hornby: 1995, p.235).

4. Reading Comprehension

Heilman, et al. (1981:242) stated: "Reading comprehension is a process of making sense of written ideas through meaningful interpretation and interactions with language." In other words, comprehension will be reached in the condition that a reader is able to interact and to interpret what the author wants to express on his/her written or printed language.

5. Descriptive Text

the description is a discourse that help us visualize. It focuses upon the appearance or the nature of an object. In the description, we see vividly and concretely, we perceive the object with a kind of fullness for which exposition does not strive (Temple, et al: 1998).

6. SMPN 10 Kupang

SMPN 10 Kupang is one of the public junior high schools in Kupang city that is located in Jl. Prof. Dr. Herman Johannes, Kelapa Lima sub-district, in which the writer uses as the location of the study.