

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **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 schools 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, pronunciation is not separately taught from the four skills.

Pronunciation is one of the difficult parts in learning English since there are differences between the symbol and the sounds. When ones communicate with other people, they should not only have good vocabulary but also have good pronunciation. Therefore, it is important to teach pronunciation.

Based on writers' experience during his teaching practice at SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang, he 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 difference between their mother tongue and the English.

Therefore, the writer would like to analyze the students’ ability in pronouncing English words. The words are selected randomly from students’ handbook used by the teacher in teaching English. The students’ handbook was used when the writer did his teaching practice. Meanwhile, oxford dictionary is used as the reference to measure students’ correct pronunciation for the seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang.

Based on statement and examples 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 by the Seventh Grade Students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the School Year 2015/2016.”*

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The study attempts to answer the questions:

1. Are the seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2015/2016 able to pronounce English words taught to them?
2. What is the ability level of seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2015/2016 in pronouncing English words?
3. What words are mispronounced by the seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2015/2016?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of the present study is:

1. To know whether the seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2015/2016 are able to pronoun English words or not.
2. To know the ability level of the seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2015/2016 in pronouncing English words.
3. To know the words mispronounced by of the seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2015/2016.

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

This study is beneficial for the English teacher and the students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang and also for the writer.

1. For The English teacher of SMPK ST. Theresia 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 the 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 his 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, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. In correlation with the skills need to be learned by the students There are some subskills has 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 this study is on pronunciation English words consisting of Verb (20 words), Noun (20 words), Adjective (20 words), and Adverb (30 words). These words are randomly selected from the students handbook. The students' pronunciation will be assessed based on the oxford English reference dictionary by Persall and Trumble (1996). Meanwhile, the subject of this study will be the seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the school year 2015/2016.

## **1.6 Definition of Terms**

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

### **1. Ability**

Robbins (2003:52) in his book “*Organizational 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 a language is spoken: the way in which a 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 seventh grade students of SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang in the year 2015/2016.

### **3. English Words**

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

### **4. SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang**

SMPK ST. Theresia Kupang is one of the private junior high schools in Kupang which is located at Jl. Jendral A. Yani No. 52A Kupang.