

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a part of culture and a part of human behavior. It is a central instrument in every aspect of human life because language is essential to acquire other knowledge and skills. Language is used as medium of communication in human life. People use language to transfer their idea, express their feeling and interact with other people.

There are many languages in this world and one of them is English Language. Many countries in this world use English Language because English is an international language. In order to communicate well with other people, people living in a certain community use a certain language. English is one of the most important language because it is the most common communication tool in the world.

The government of Indonesia realize that English is one of thousand languages in the world which plays a very determining role in communication. So, the government of Indonesia has included English in the curriculum of Indonesian schools.

The English language skills of speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing are often divided into sub-skills, which are specific behaviors that language users do in

order to be effective in each of the skills. Reading and writing are a developmental continuum rather than acquired skills, (Neuman and Roskos).

Hafner and Jolly (1982: 4), defined reading as the process of looking at written language symbols, converting them into over and cover symbols, and then manipulating them so that both direct (over) and implied (cover) ideas intended by the author may be understood.

Learning to read is the process of acquiring the skills necessary for reading, that is the ability to acquire meaning from print. Reading skill is teaching from the Elementary school until the college. Even the reading has been though but the students still faced many difficulties to read. They do not have self-confidence to read. Sometimes the teacher ask them to read a simple text but they just keep silence because they are afraid to make mistake in reading, the other reason is because they do not know how to read so that they have difficulty to understand the meaning of simple text that given by the teacher.

In order to improve the students' ability in reading, the English teacher suggested to teach well the Reading subject to the students and teach them how to read word by word so that the students can read well and understand every meaning of words that they have read.

Learning to read is very important because reading is a basic life skill. It is a cornerstone for the students' success in school and indeed throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will lost.

Based on the problems states above, the writer would like to conduct a study entitled “ **A STUDY ON READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY OF THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPK Sta. THERESIA KUPANG IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2015/2016** “.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problems raised to be answered in this study are as follows :

1. Are the eighth grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang able to understand the text that they have read?
2. What is the ability level of the eight grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang in comprehending a reading text?
3. What are the difficulties faced by the eighth grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang in comprehending the reading text?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the problem statement, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To find out whether or not the eighth grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang comprehend the reading text.
2. To find out the ability level of the eighth grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang in comprehending the reading text.
3. To find out the difficulties faced by the eighth grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang in comprehending the reading text.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is stated in the following lines:

1. For the English teacher:

To inform the English teacher about the ability of students in reading a text, so he/she can improve his/her teaching of English especially in teaching reading comprehension.

2. For the writer:

The study would increase the writer's knowledge and skill in comprehending a reading text and conduct a study on reading comprehension ability.

3. For the students:

To inform the students about their level of ability in comprehending a reading text.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

There are types of reading comprehension skill : Literal comprehension, Interpretative comprehension, Critical comprehension and Creative comprehension. But in this study the writer only focuses on Literal Reading Comprehension.

1.6 Definition of Terms

a. Reading

It is activity of contacting the eyes and on printed material by which a reader record the information from brain to process and create a new similar text to that of the original one (Anderson, 1984). In this study, reading refers to the activity of

contacting the eyes of printed material that will be done by the eighth grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang in comprehend the reading material.

b. Ability

Ability is a potential capacity or power to do something physically or mentally (Hornby, 1982:2). Dealing with the study, ability means the students capacity in comprehending the reading text.

c. Comprehension

Comprehension is the mind's act or power of understanding (Hornby, 1987:2). In this study comprehension means a power of understanding a reading text of the eighth grade students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang.

d. Reading comprehension

It is a process of using syntactic, semantic and rhetorical information sound in printed text to reconstruct in the reader's mind, using the knowledge of the words that he/she processes, appropriate cognitive skills and reasoning ability (Devine, 1986:73). In this study, it is the process of reading comprehension of the use syntactic, semantic rhetorical information in printed texts and to use knowledge of the words by the students of SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang

e. SMPK Sta. Theresia Kupang

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