

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Language is a means of communication that is used to transfer information, ideas, and feelings from one person to another. It is used to communicate both in written and spoken form. Considering the importance of the English language, our government has drawn up English as a foreign language that should be mastered by the students. In Indonesia, teaching English aims at mastering four basic skills of language. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Nowadays, based on our newest curriculum that is KTSP, the students are expected to master those four skills in order to be able to use English communicatively. The aim of KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan) will not be successfully achieved if the language teaching does not consider the language components such as grammar or structure, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation. Therefore, grammar or structure needs to be mastered by the students since it is the basic rule of language.

Grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. The more we are aware of how it works, the more we can monitor the meaning and the effectiveness of the way we and others use language. It can help foster precision, detect ambiguity, and exploit the richness of expression available in English.

Preposition of time as one of the topics in grammar is very important to be mastered or understood by the students to make and use sentences to communicate

in daily life. In reality sometimes the students still find some difficulties in using preposition of time when they want to write a sentence or paragraph.

It is important to study preposition of time because we can know what the subject is or feel and can use it in sentences. Based on the writer's experience when she was in junior high school she found many students who still had difficulties in mastering grammar, especially in using preposition of time in sentence when they want to write sentences or to communicate in daily life.

There are many factors that caused the students' difficulties, such as, the lack of knowledge about the topic and this topic is not given much time allocation for practice in teaching and learning process.

The examples of the wrong use of preposition of time made by the students are :

a. I was born *on 1990* ( wrong)

I was born *in 1990* (correct)

b. I go to bed *in night* (wrong)

I go to bed *at night* (correct)

In the first sentence the student used wrong preposition. He used 'on' for year which is grammatically incorrect. It should be 'in', while in the second example, the usage of 'in' before "night" is considered wrong because "night" should be preceded by 'at'.

Based on the problem stated above, the writer is interested in conducting a study under the title **“A Study on the Ability in Using Prepositions of Time in Sentence of the Eight Grade Students of SMPK Shanti Karya Kupang in the School Year 2014/2015”**

## **1.2 Statement of Problems**

Based on the background above, the writer conducted the study in order to answer the following questions:

1. Are the eighth grade students of SMPK Shanti Karya Kupang in the school year 2014/2015 able to use the preposition of time in English sentences or not?
2. What is the ability level of the eighth grade students of Shanti Karya Kupang in the school year 2014/2015 in using the preposition of time?

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

In line with the statement of the problems stated above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To know the ability of the eighth grade students of SMPK Shanti Karya Kupang in the school year 2014/2015 in using preposition of time in English sentences.
2. To know the level of ability of the eighth grade students of SMPK Shanti Karya Kupang in the school year 2014/2015 in using preposition of time in English sentences.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The result of the study is expected to be beneficial for the following persons:

1. For the students in the researched school.

Through this study, the students know their ability in using the prepositions of time. So they are expected to learn more in order to improve their knowledge regarding the preposition of time, because one of the subject matters in English grammar which should be mastered by the student is preposition especially preposition of time.

2. The teacher at the researched school

The English teacher gets particular information regarding his or her students' ability in using preposition of time. By knowing the students' ability the writer expects the teacher of SMPK Shanti Karya Kupang to make review on teaching of the preposition especially preposition of time, if the students' mastery level is poor.

3. For the writer

Through this study the writer may know more about the use of preposition especially the use of preposition of time.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation**

This study is about grammar. There are various aspects of grammar that can be analyzed, such as tenses, modal auxiliary, pronoun and noun, and so on. In this study, the writer only focuses on preposition.

There are some kinds of preposition that can be classified: preposition of direction, preposition of purpose, preposition of manner, preposition of time, preposition of place. However, not all kinds of the preposition is being studied in this study; the writer only focuses on the use of preposition of time especially, *at, in, on, to and from*.

## 1.6 Definition of Terms

In this part, the writer would like to help readers in understanding the writing well and the writer would like to provide the meaning of terms used in study as follows:

### a. Ability

Ability is a potential or power to do something physically or mentally (Hornby, 1987:2). In this study, ability means the student's capability in using preposition of time in English sentences.

### b. Preposition

Preposition is a word used to show the relationship of the noun or pronoun to some other words in the sentences (Warriner S, 1959;67).

For example:

1. The cat is *in* the garden.
2. We usually go to school *at* six o'clock.
3. She/he runs *into* the room.

### c. Preposition of Time

Preposition of time is a kind of preposition, which refers to a period of time (Shepherd et. al.1984).

Example:

- a) "I go to school every day *at* 07.00 o'clock".
- b) I went *to* Atambua last year.
- c) Do you work *on* Monday?

**d. SMPK Shanti Karya Kupang**

SMPK Shanti Karya Kupang is one of the Catholic private Junior High Schools located in Kupang City where this study was be conducted.