

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is human speech either spoken or written. Language makes it possible for people to talk and to write to each other; to express their thoughts and ideas to each other. Language is, therefore, a medium for communication and a tool for thinking (Nasar, 1980:52).

There are so many languages in this world, and English is one of them. It is used as an international language, and it has an important role in the world. We can prove it in our life. If we know English well, we will know about the development that happens in this world.

Language skills consist of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Regarding the four skills, the writer chose one of the skills that is reading to become the topic of her study. Reading is one of important materials in the curriculum both as objective and the means of learning the language. While the reading comprehension means that the reader should comprehend the information directly and indirectly from the text.

Reading is even regarded both as objective and means of learning a language. Reading as objective refers to the final goal of learning English in high school, that is to be able to read later in higher education. Whereas reading as a means of learning a language refers to the fact that, through reading, language learners can learn the structure of English, vocabulary and pronunciation, as well as the use of language in

which learners use English in discussing reading materials. The text books used in the schools contain reading passages that are followed by exercises. This in turn will help the students develop other language skills.

However, the writer's experience when she was at senior high school showed that the content of the text was sometimes difficult to catch.

The writer assumes that the same difficulty also happens to some other senior high school students, because as far as she knows that many students just glance over only without getting information or comprehension about the text or the story telling they hear.

Considering the discussion above, the writer tried to make a study on reading comprehension at SMA Swasta Beringin Kupang, with the title : **A STUDY ON READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY OF THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMA SWASTA BERINGIN KUPANG IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2014/2015**

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to answer these following questions:

1. Are the eleventh grade students of SMA Swasta Beringin Kupang able to understand what they read?
2. What is the ability level of the students in understanding a reading text?

1.3 Objective of the study

The objectives of this study are formulated in the following statements :

1. To find out whether the eleventh grade students of SMA Swasta Beringin Kupang are able to understand a reading text or not.
2. To find out the students' level of ability in comprehending a reading text.

1.4 Significance of the study

The result of this study might be beneficial for the following persons.

1. For English teacher : this study will inform the teachers of English about their students' ability in reading comprehension, so that they can improve the method of teaching English particularly in teaching reading.
2. For writer : through this study the writer could know more about reading comprehension and how to evaluate a reading comprehension ability.

1.5 Scope and limitation

This study is focused on reading comprehension ability of the eleventh grade students of SMA Swasta Beringin Kupang. There are four types of reading comprehension. They are : literal reading, interpretative reading, critical reading, and

creative reading. The writer focused on literal reading, because in this paper the writer wanted the reader to see his/her own difficulties such as remembering in detail, noting the main idea, which is directly stated or skills allow readers to take the information stated in the reading texts given by the writer.

1.6 Definition of term

In this section the writer would like to give the definition of term that may help the readers understand the study as a whole.

1. Reading

It is an activity of contacting the eyes on printed materials by which a reader is led process; and create a new similar text to that of the original one (Alderson,1980), while Karlin defines reading as a complex of skills that the individual uses to derive meaning from the printed page (Karlin;2003).

2. Ability

It is a potential or power to do something physically or mentally (Hornby 2008). In this study, it means students ability to understand the text they have read.

3. Comprehension

Hornby (2008) defines understanding as knowing the meaning of importance or cause of something. Here it means knowing the meaning Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Beringin Kupang in the school year 2014-2015 to understand English reading text.

4. Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand the meaning of reading (Hornby, 1978). Reading comprehension in this study means the ability of the Eleventh Grade Students of SMA Beringin Kupang in the school year 2014-2015 to understand English reading text.

5. Reading comprehension ability

In this study reading comprehension ability is the capacity of eleventh grade students of SMA Swasta Beringin Kupang to comprehend a reading text.

6. SMA Swasta Beringin Kupang.

It is one of private Senior High Schools in Kupang City. It is located at Jalan Delima no.12 Oepura.