

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

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

Reading is basically a set of processes that individuals apply to text for the purpose of gaining meaning, knowledge, or experience. Reading is one of the important materials in the curriculum both as objectives and the means of learning the language. It is one of the techniques that the people use to widen up their horizon or perspective. Through reading, people may get much information or knowledge and understand or comprehend what they read in order to get the message implied in the text. It is expected that by reading, the students eventually learn grammatical system, vocabulary, and the sound system of the languages. This, in turn, will help the students develop other language skills.

There are four skills in English as a subject. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are closely related one another. Reading as one of the skills is the most fundamental. It covers other language skills and sub skills such as speaking, writing, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. A research shows that a child who doesn't learn to read early will not early master other skills or the language (Cohrine 1999:22).

Reading is one of spiritual need of human being. By reading, a reader can satisfy his/her knowledge and for various bits of information happening around the world

Richards and Renandya (2002: 273) asserted that in many second and foreign languages teaching and learning situation, reading receives a special focus because of several reasons. Firstly, many foreign language students often have reading as one of their important goals. They want to be able to read information and pleasure for their career and for study purposes. In fact in most of the EFL situations the ability to read information and foreign language is all that the student ever won't to acquire. Secondly, written text serves various pedagogical purposes. Reading then is a skill that highly valued by the students and teacher alike. In other words, it can be said that reading ability will be developed with the association with listening, speaking, and writing activities since they are interrelated skills.

There are two separate stages involved in reading. There is the initial stage of decoding that is recognizing the relationship between the print on the page and the sounds of the language. This is the first step in learning to read. Traditionally, students have read aloud to demonstrate their ability to connect printed symbol and spoken sound.

The second stage is that of comprehension. It is possible to read aloud a piece of writing in a foreign language without understanding a word of it. Comprehension involves more than simply decoding. It involves recognizing the significance of the message, understanding the intentions of the writer, and going beyond what is written to guess at hidden, unstated or implied meanings.

In the early stage of learning to read, it may be helpful for the teacher to read the passage aloud to the class while the pupils follow the text in their books. The

teacher will provide a better model than any of the pupils can give if they read aloud, but the act of reading aloud does no more than help the students to see the relationship between print and sound. Because written language is different from spoken language, it is not a satisfactory form of listening comprehension, and you shouldn't expect pupils to attend such a reading as if it were a piece of ordinary spoken language.

Once students have gone beyond the first stage of decoding printed messages, they will be ready to understand the message itself. Understanding the meaning of the message depends on a number of things-our knowledge of the world, our reasons for reading, and our attitudes and beliefs. The teacher's job is to help create reasons for wanting to read something, and to help organize the students' thinking so that what they read fits into an existing mental framework.

This can be done in several ways. For instance, when we are going to deal with a non-fiction text which provides a lot of information on a given topic. We can ask the class to say what they already know about the topic.

Teaching reading is a process to establish the student's ability to understand the reading text. More concretely, students will use strategies to understand the text. For example students skim a text, looking subheadings or graphics so as to give themselves a general idea of the text. As a student read and look at the picture, they contact what are there in the materials to what they have in about the text looking back or ahead to link one part of the text to another.

Based on the writer's experience, she found that many students were not able to read well and could not answer the question based on the reading text. The writer assumes that the students have lack knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

Seeing the problems above, the writer wants to make the study entitled: **“A STUDY ON THE READING ABILITY OF THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPK FRATER MAUMERE IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2013/2014”**.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problems**

Regarding the background stated above the writer would like to answer the question as follows:

1. Are the eight grade students of SMPK Frateran Maumere in the school year 2013/2014 able to read English text ?
2. What is the ability level of the eight grade students of SMPK Frateran Maumere in reading English text?

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

Based on the problems above the writer provides the objectives of the study. They are as follows :

1. To find out and to know whether the seventh grade students of SMPK Frateran Maumere in the school year 2013/2014 are able to reading ability text or not.

2. To find out and to know the ability level of the eight grade students of SMPK FRATER in the school year 2013/2014 in reading ability text.

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

This study will be a concrete contribution in the field, both for the teacher, the students, and the writer herself. The significance of the study is presented below:

1. For the English teacher

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

2. For the Students

This study may be useful for the students to:

- a. help them develop their interest to study and to learn English seriously at the first stage of learning.
- b. have more opportunities to read.
- c. acquire new vocabularies encountered in the text.

3. For the writer

Through this study The writer would be able to improve her knowledge and skills in teaching English especially reading, because the result of this will be an input for her to find appropriate method to teach reading.

### **1.5. Scope and Limitation**

This study deals with students reading ability. In this study the writer only limits her study on the ability of students in answering questions about the text they have read and the comprehension here is only limited and literal comprehension.

### **1.6. Definition of Terms**

The following are the terms that need to be explained to help the readers to understand the study as a whole:

#### 1. Reading

Reading is an activity of contacting the eyes and creates a new similar text to that of the original one (Anderson, 1984). In this study reading is an activity done by students to comprehend the text.

#### 2. Ability

It is a potential or power to do something physically or mentally

(Hornby, 1987:2) Here the ability means the ability of the third year students of SMPN 2 Kupang in comprehending the reading text.

#### 3. Reading Comprehension

It is the process of using syntactic semantic and rhetorical information. Sound in printed text to resentment in the readers mind using the knowledge of the word he or she processes plus appropriate cognitive skills and reasoning ability (Devine, 1986:73)

In this study, it is the process of reading comprehension of cognitive skills in answering the reading text.

#### 4. Literal Comprehension

It is to remember details, note main ideas which directly stated. ( chunsen berry 1998:104). Related to this study, literal comprehension means the students understand the information explicitly stated in the text.