

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Background of the Study**

English covers four skills; reading, listening, speaking, and writing that are taught in Indonesia. Learning English means learning the four language skills (Widdowson, 1978:1) Listening and reading are called receptive skills while speaking and writing are called productive ones. In term of learning English, Indonesian learners still find difficulties. Those difficulties are partly caused by different aspects between Indonesian and English, such as vocabulary, grammar, culture, and so on. The different system also creates many problems in the procees of learning English.

Among the langua ge skills above, reading is the most important one. Simanjuntak (1988:1) says that ‘reading is one of the most important skill in language learning besides listening, speaking and writing and considered very important as a basic of further studies at a university’. From the statement above, it can be known that reading is very important for Indonesian students as a preparation of understanding their references that are mostly written in English. In other words, reading becomes a bridge of understanding scientific books.

In formal education, among the four language skills, reading is most frequently taught, because reading session always exists in every part of chapter of English books. Reading gets more emphasis than the others. This emphasis is very important because the graduates of Senior High School are prepared to continue their studies in the university where most reference books are written in English.

English and Indonesian language have different grammatical system or rule. Consequently, there is no guarantee that the students who have good understanding of Indonesian texts will have good understanding of English ones automatically. It is easier to read and understand Indonesian texts than English ones because the students have mastered vocabulary and structural systems of Indonesian. Many students still find difficulties in reading subject although English is always stated in every curriculum.

To read English texts is not easy. The students should develop their comprehensive skill in order to get information or ideas from the texts. It means that the students have to learn about words, phrases, sentences, and paragraph.

Based on the explanation above, Becks (1990:22) states as follows:

“Reading is the most difficult skill because reading does not only read (mention) the symbols of the words and read sentences or phrases or expression with accurate utterances, but it must be followed by the competence to understanding”.

The statement above shows that reading activity must result in understanding and comprehending of the texts. In fact, it is difficult for students to catch the ideas of the text.

The student should have skills of reading to build a good understanding of English texts. To be able to interpret the meaning of the text and understand them, the reader should have reading skill beside listening, speaking, and writing ( Simanjuntak, 1988:1 ).

The skills of reading above are not discrete skills but those are formed as the techniques of reading. Those are appropriate with the types of text and aims of reading activities.

Based on the explanation above, the writer wants to describe 'A Descriptive Study on the Ability of Understanding English Texts of the Second Year Students of SMU Negeri 1 Manyaran Wonogiri.

### **B. The Identification of the Problems.**

Based on the background of study above some problems can be identified:

1. Are the students able to understand and to apply the skill of reading?
2. Are the students able to use the technique to understand English texts?
3. What kinds of reading skill do students get difficulties in understanding English texts?
4. Are the students able to overcome difficulties of understanding English texts?
5. To what extent is the students ability in understanding English texts?

### **C. Problem Statement**

The writer formulates the problems of the study as follows :

1. How is the students ability in understanding English texts ?
2. Which of the reading skills do students get difficulties ?

### **D. Limitation of the Study**

Realizing that reading text needs complex abilities, so the writer would like to limit the problems as follows;

1. Among some skills of reading, the writer just investigates four skills. They are skimming, scanning, reading for detail information and reference skill.
2. The texts that are used in this research are those taught to the second year students.

### **E. Benefit of the Study**

This study is expected to have some benefits :

1. The result of this study will be helpful for the students in improving their reading ability .
2. The result of this study will be helpful for English teacher to know their students ability in understanding English texts .

### **F. Research Paper Organization**

In order to make this research is easy to follow, the writer organized this as follows:

Chapter I, Introduction, consists of : (a) Background of the Study, (b) The Identification of the Problems, (c) Problem Statement, (d) Limitation of the Study, (e) Benefit of the Study, (f) Research Paper Organization.

Chapter II is Review of Related Literature. It deals with : (a) Previous Study, (b) Reading Ability : 1. Definition of Reading, 2. Reading Purpose, 3. The Principle of Reading, (c) English Text : 1. Definition of the Text, 2. The Interaction between Reader and Text, 3. The Type of Texts, 4. The Function of Text, (d) The Skill of Reading : 1. Skimming Skill, 2. Scanning Skill, 3. Reading for Detail Information.

Chapter III, Research Method, presents (a) Research Method : 1. Type of Study, 2. Subject of the Study, 3. Source of Data, (b) Time and Place of the Research, (c) Method of Collecting Data, (d) Technique for Analyzing the Data.

Chapter IV is Data Analysis and Discussion which covers : (a) Description of the Data, (b) The Analysis of the Data, (c) Interpreting the Data.

Chapter V is Conclusion And Suggestion.