

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Background**

Students who study foreign languages need to master four skills including reading, listening, speaking and writing. Study English such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and techniques for creating sentences, paragraphs and text. Reading is the main foundation for a student to become a genius in other fields (Harmer, 2010).

According to Bouchard (1997), reading is a complex activity that depends on the reader's thinking and language abilities. Reading is not just reading, but also requires thinking and other language skills. Without using these skills, students will misunderstand what is conveyed by the author of the text.

Reading comprehension is an interactive process that involves the reader, reading and context to derive meaning from written text. As stated by Silliman and Wilkinson (2007) "Reading comprehension is generally defined as the ability to acquire meaning from written text". Through the process of reading comprehension, readers gain understanding of the text they read regarding information and new vocabulary.

Reading comprehension is very important in academic fields such as analyzing, explaining, and expressing ideas from reading (Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016). Reading comprehension requires recognition skills and word fluency to be applied quickly so that readers can gain knowledge from the entire text.

Generally, students experience difficulties in reading comprehension due to reading texts that are too long and limited vocabulary. Apart from that, if the

reader is not familiar with the words in a text, it will make it difficult for the reader to understand the English reading text. According to Davoudi and Yousefi (2015), problems that students often face in reading comprehension include inappropriate reading method, lack of vocabulary and background knowledge, as well as a lack of understanding of grammar.

Based on initial observations, the majority of students at SMPN 3 Ternate City often experience difficulties in understanding reading English texts both when understanding the meaning of each word, looking for references, making conclusions, finding detailed information, and are less familiar with English language material. This shows that the reading comprehension ability of students at SMPN 3 Ternate City is still low. Therefore, the researcher need to analyze the reading comprehension problems that students of SMPN 3 Ternate City often face. By knowing the problem, researcher can provide appropriate strategies to improve students' reading comprehension skills so that the problem can be resolved.

## **1.2. Statements of the Problems**

Based on the background above, the problem formulation of this research includes:

1. What types of reading comprehension problems are faced by students at SMPN 3 Ternate ?
2. What strategies are applied by the students to solved their reading comprehension problems ?

### **1.3. Scope of the Study**

This research focuses on reading comprehension problems that are often faced by students at SMPN 3 Ternate and the strategies used in solving reading comprehension problems. Related to this, researcher used a case study approach to determine students' reading comprehension problems.

### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this research include:

1. To identify types of reading comprehension problems are faced by students at SMPN 3 Ternate.
2. To know the strategies are applied by the students to solved their reading comprehension problems.

### **1.5. Significances of the Research**

#### **1.5.1. Theoretical Significances**

It is hoped that this research can expand knowledge regarding case studies regarding reading comprehension problems as well as solutions that can be used to overcome reading comprehension problems.

#### **1.5.2. Practical Significances**

##### **1. Students**

Can improve their skills in understanding English reading. Apart from that, students can solve every problem they face, especially in understanding English reading texts.

##### **2. Teacher**

Can be used as input for teachers to develop their professionalism in teaching English reading comprehension.

## 1.6. Literature Review

The researcher looked for several studies that are relevant to the topic raised in this research. The research results relevant to this research can be explained as follows:

Research by Aida *et al* (2022) with the title "Reading comprehension; A study on students' difficulties". This research uses qualitative method with data collection techniques in the form of interviews and observations. The research results show that there are four problems faced by class VII students in reading comprehension. First, students have difficulty understanding the complexity of grammar. Second, students had difficulty knowing certain vocabulary when comprehending reading. Third, students experience difficulty in using reading strategies. Fourth, students have difficulty concentrating.

Research by Safitri (2023) with the title "Student's Difficulties In Reading Comprehension At The Eighth Grade Of SMPN 2 Weru In Academic Year 2022/2023". This research uses qualitative method with data collection techniques in the form of interviews. The results of the research show that there are five problems causing students' difficulties in understanding reading, namely the students' background, limited vocabulary knowledge, inadequate material presented by the teacher/teaching method, inadequate use of effective reading strategies and the students' environment.

Research by Khildainy (2023) with the title "Analyzing Students' Difficulties in Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text at Senior High School (A Mixed-Method Study at the Tenth Grade Students of SMAN 6 Kota Tangerang and SMAN 25 Kabupaten Tangerang)". This research uses

qualitative method with data collection techniques in the form of interviews. The research results show that there are six problems faced by students in reading comprehension, including limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of fluency, inadequate use of effective reading strategies, problems with information processing, low interest in reading, and lack of motivation.

This research has similarities with previous research, namely in the research method. This research uses qualitative method with interview data collection techniques. Meanwhile, the difference between this research and previous research lies in the research location. This research was conducted at SMPN 3 Ternate.

## **1.7. Theoretical Bases**

### **1.7.1. Reading**

#### **1.7.1.1. Concept of Reading**

According to Pang *et al.* (2003), reading is defined as understanding written text. Word recognition is defined as the process of discovering how written symbols match a person's spoken language. This is different from Grabe and Fredricka (2011), reading is the ability to interpret the meaning of reading correctly so that readers can obtain meaning from what they read. In other words, reading is an activity of getting ideas from a text that is read.

Reading is not an easy thing. According to Moreillon (2007), reading is interpreting the meaning of the text being read which requires a lot of practice and expertise. Reading is the result of the interaction between the perception of graphic symbols that form language and general knowledge of the external world. The reader tries to align his or her perceptions with the author's during

this process. Brown (2004) stated that reading can be considered an interactive process because to understand the author's meaning, readers use initial analysis and vocabulary during the reading process. This shows that to understand the text, readers use various strategies including context knowledge, vocabulary, grammar knowledge, experience with the text and others. Readers must be able to recognize main ideas, supporting ideas, and word meanings to master this skill.

Reading skills may also include: recognizing language scripts; inferring meaning, use of unknown lexical items; understand information stated explicitly and non-explicitly, conceptual meaning, communicative value of sentences, relationships within sentences and between parts of the text through lexical cohesion devices; recognize indicators and key information in discourse; distinguish main ideas from supporting ideas; selective extraction of relevant points from the text; basic reference skills; skimming, scanning, transcoding information from diagrams/charts (Munby, 1978).

Based on the definition above, it can be concluded that reading is very important in everyday life where reading is an activity of understanding the reader to find out the meaning of the text being read and the author's ideas. Apart from that, we can gain new information and knowledge regarding vocabulary.

#### **1.7.1.2. Aspects of Reading**

Reading is not just a process of identifying letters, words, and ultimately sentences that leads to understanding that is built from letter to word, to phrase to sentence. Readers utilize existing background knowledge (schema) to make

predictions about what will happen next in the text and about how some new and unfamiliar information relates to what is already known (Rumelhart, 1980).

Reading skills include: identifying the meaning of words, drawing conclusions, identifying the author's technique, recognizing the atmosphere of the reading, finding answers to questions.

## **1.7.2. Reading Comprehension**

### **1.7.2.1. Concept of Reading Comprehension**

Hafner and Jolly (2007) state that comprehension is a person's ability to understand and understand to absorb it with reason. Comprehension is divided into three categories, namely literal comprehension, interpretation, and critical reaction. The goal is for readers to understand the content of the reading text.

Comprehension involves linking two or more pieces of information (Kintsch, 1999). This information can come from long-term memory. However, in reading comprehension at least one piece of information must come from the text. These pieces of information can be simple ideas or quite complex. The connection can also be various, for example, the same as, causing, or acting in a certain way.

Reading comprehension is an indication of students' level of proficiency and cognition in learning. Apart from that, reading comprehension is also an active reading process where students know why, how, and when to implement certain strategies in order to become effective readers (Duke and Pearson, 2011).

According to Brassell (2008), reading comprehension is the ability to demonstrate knowledge obtained from written text. When readers are able to act, respond, or change information from a text, this is called comprehension.

This shows that readers can make conclusions and provide responses from the reading text.

Meanwhile, according to Klingner (2015), reading comprehension is the process of creating meaning by coordinating a number of complex things such as reading, word knowledge, fluency, idea construction and concepts. Reading comprehension is a process where the reader selects linguistic symbols and reconstructs them into the whole intended by the author. Recognizing and understanding the main idea and related details is part of comprehension.

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning with written language. Integrating skills and cognitive processes is very difficult to do so it can often lead to failure of understanding for readers (Wooley, 2011).

Snow and Chair (2002) define reading comprehension as the process of searching for meaning through interaction with written language. There are 4 elements needed in reading comprehension, including the reader's skills, abilities, knowledge and experience. Meanwhile, comprehension requires three elements, including being able to recognize words and meaning, understanding text, and activities that include reading functions, processes, and results.

Students can understand the text to get the essence of what they read. Reading comprehension is the process of building meaning by coordinating words, knowledge, and fluency. This means that in understanding texts, students try to make sense of each text they read (Klingner *et al.*, 2007).

Reading comprehension is determined by combining what is stated directly in the text with the reader's knowledge of the text topic (Scanlon *et al.*, 2010). A reader must be able to recognize and understand words and phrases



in the text. Once readers can access the various meanings of words, information, or knowledge in their memory and recall what they have learned. Then the reader connects all these elements into it to obtain the meaning of the entire text.

According to Mozayan (2012), the more reading, the more vocabulary and grammar that can be obtained from the text. Often without realizing it, this expansion of language knowledge can increase confidence in their overall language abilities, thereby influencing the increase in their ability to understand readers.

Reading comprehension abilities can be seen from students' achievements in controlling strategies. This can help students make meaning or realize when meaning cannot be mastered, then students must adjust their strategies in making sense of each passage they read (Reutzel *et al.*, 2005).

Reading comprehension strategies have been studied extensively. Dole *et al.* (1991) mentioned 5 main strategies, each of which is related to better reading comprehension, including: determining importance, summarizing information, drawing conclusions, generating questions, and monitoring comprehension.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is the process of obtaining meaning from the text being read. Most students find English very difficult to understand because it is a foreign language. Limited vocabulary and thinking make students unable to understand the author's ideas.

### **1.7.2.2. Problems in Reading Comprehension**

Readers must have the ability to filter, interpret, organize and reflect on the information they obtain from texts. Interpretation involves the skills of word recognition, connecting new information to previous knowledge, finding main ideas, questioning, inferring and predicting (Westwood, 2001).

Based on Majid and Tan (2018), understanding requires a foundation of vocabulary and knowledge. A child who has difficulty reading comprehension may need more developed academic language. However, a global problem has developed, citing various unfavorable factors associated with students learning new vocabulary. One of the causes of students' challenges in learning vocabulary is the difference in the grammatical form of a word, known as inflection.

According to Westwood (2008), there are problems in reading comprehension, including:

#### **1. Teaching methodology**

Texts are usually read by students to understand a particular field of study. If students find a text very difficult to understand, the teacher is obliged to explain the meaning of the text to the students. This also depends on the teaching method used. If the teaching method is fun, students will quickly understand the teacher's explanation. On the other hand, if the teaching method is boring, it will be difficult for students to understand the teacher's explanation.

#### **2. Use of reading strategies**

Inexperienced readers will not be skilled at reading. The use of reading strategies is one of the reading skills. Some students read using the skimming method to find the essence. Skilled readers can determine their reading speed

precisely. Meanwhile, other readers do not differentiate their reading time as a function of reading purpose.

### 3. Understanding argument structure

Inexperienced readers are less likely to divide complex material into separate items based on explicable functions. Usually students only read the text at a glance, looking at the overall structure, headings, reading themes, and so on.

### 4. Reconstruct the Text's Original Rhetorical Context

Usually inexperienced readers find it difficult to understand the conversations contained in the text regarding the author's background and the author's point of view. Students have problems understanding the author's reasons for writing the text.

### 5. Seeing Yourself in Conversation with the Author

This problem tends to occur because students view texts as sources of information and not as arguments that can change their views. Inexperienced readers often do not interact with the text they read. They don't ask what their similarities or differences are with the author. Readers do not realize that texts can be criticized and responded to so that they can help writers evaluate the texts they create.

### 6. Limited vocabulary and syntax problems

Limited vocabulary can hinder students' reading comprehension. Even though they use a dictionary, quite a few students know the context which can influence the meaning of words. Reading often contains technical terms that require extensive contextual knowledge. In addition, students often face problems in understanding complex sentence structures even though they are skilled in reading syntactically simple texts.

According to Rahim (2006), the factors that cause students to experience difficulties in reading comprehension are divided into external factors and internal factors. External factors include the family and school environment. Meanwhile, internal factors include physical, intellectual and psychological.

There are several internal factors that influence students' reading comprehension, namely difficulty understanding long texts, limited background knowledge, use of reading strategies and concentration problems.

#### 1. Difficulty understanding long texts

Difficulty understanding long texts is a common problem that students most often face in understanding complex sentence structures. Nearly 12 percent of students have difficulty understanding long texts and 20 percent in academic texts. As a result, many of them fail to understand the main ideas contained in the text.

#### 2. Use of inappropriate reading strategies

Students who are not familiar with reading strategies such as skimming and scanning will be frustrated because they often fail in reading comprehension. There are characteristics of students who do not understand the use of reading strategies. First, students read the text word by word and rely too much on visual information, which hinders their reading speed. Second, students are too focused on reading in detail so they don't find the main idea in the text. Students who do not have effective reading strategies are likely to fail to understand the text they read.

### 3. Concentration problems

Concentration problems when reading are caused by psychological factors. Poor concentration will lead students to fail to understand the text they are reading. Concentration problems can worsen students' reading abilities because concentration is an important factor in reading well and effectively. Understanding a text results from reading with concentration. However, most students cannot concentrate properly when reading.

According to Peter (2001), there are external factors that influence students' reading comprehension, namely the reader's environment. Environmental factors can also influence students in mastering and learning English. Home and school are two types of environments that can influence students in achieving reading learning achievement.

#### 1. Home environment

The role of parents cannot be ignored because it is very important for the development of students' reading abilities at home. Freeman and Long (1990) stated that every student needs attention from their parents to achieve learning achievement. English is not the same as learning Indonesian so children need their parents or family attention to learn English. Learning to read without family attention will make students find it difficult to learn. Students' motivation will decrease if no one supports them in studying English texts.

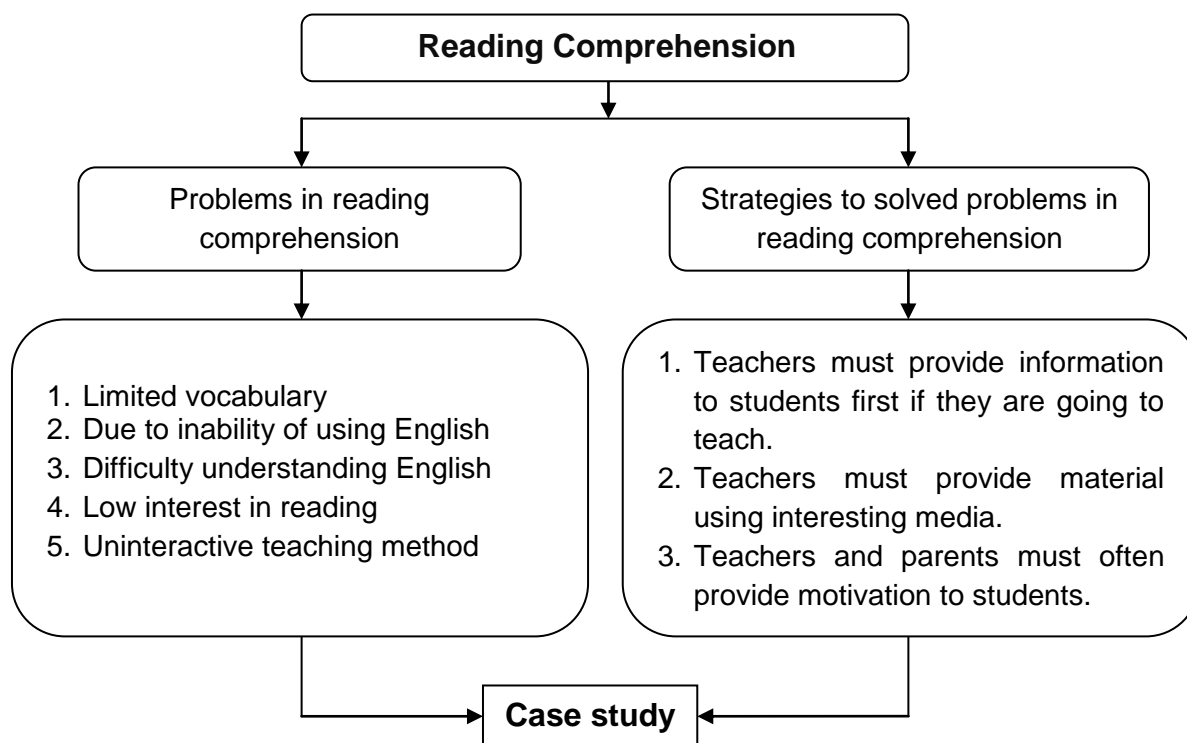
#### 2. School environment

The school environment can also be the cause of students experiencing learning problems in reading comprehension, such as schools that lack learning media. The lack of learning media such as English books, magazines or newspapers can hinder students from understanding the material and make the process of learning to read at school ineffective.

## 1.8. Conceptual Scheme

English language skills have quite important value in the world of education. Therefore, students are required to have good English language skills. One of the abilities in question is reading comprehension. However, in reality most students have problems in reading comprehension. Therefore, this research was conducted to find out the problems that students at SMPN 3 Ternate often face in reading comprehension.

Based on the description of the problem above, the author uses a case study research approach to look at the problems of SMPN 3 Ternate students in reading comprehension. After knowing the students' reading comprehension problems, the author will outline several strategies for overcoming reading comprehension problems. The conceptual scheme of the research can be seen in Figure 1.



**Gambar 1.** Conceptual Scheme

## **1.9. Method of the research**

Research method are the steps that are owned and carried out by a researcher in collecting information and data in direct observation. Therefore the information and data collected can be found and accessed, thereby raising the hope that the data will provide better results. This research uses descriptive and qualitative method.

### **1.9.1. Descriptive**

This research uses a descriptive method. Descriptive research is research that aims to create systematic, factual and accurate information (description). regarding the facts and characteristics of a particular population or region (Suryabrata, 1997).

Descriptive research is a type of research that presents a picture complete information about the social setting and clarification of a phenomenon social. This is done by describing a number of variables regarding the problem to be researched (Mulyani dan Haliza, 2021).

### **1.9.2. Qualitative**

Qualitative research is a method used by researcher to study the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out in combination, data analysis is inductive, and research results emphasize meaning. rather than generalizations (Sugiyono, 2018).

Qualitative research is of specific relevance to the study of social relations, due to the fact of the pluralization of life worlds. Key expressions for this pluralization are the "new obscurity" (Habermas, 1996). Qualitative method

are used to discuss descriptive method in depth. In this case, this method explains the problems that students often face in reading comprehension.

## **1.10. Data collection technique**

### **1.10.1. Observation**

Observation shows that a study is carried out deliberately, purposeful, systematically, planned and with precise objectives that will be achieved by observing and recording all events and phenomena and referring to the terms and rules in research or scientific work (Heru, 1996).

Observation method is a data collection method in which a person (usually trained) observes subjects of phenomena and records information about characteristics of the phenomena” (Adler, 1994). Observations were carried out by directly observing the activities of class VII students at SMPN 3 Ternate when reading English texts. Each student is tested on their English language skills through a reading test activity.

Students in the class became participants in this research because they had problems in reading comprehension. Therefore, all class VII students must be interviewed to ask for information regarding problems often encountered in English reading comprehension.

### **1.10.2. Interview**

An interview or interview is a form of interpersonal communication which is a form of direct communication without intermediary media individual, in this case the roles as speaker and listener are carried out alternately, and often the roles merge (Corfield, 2009).

Direct interviews with students regarding the problem of reading comprehension of English texts for class VII students at SMPN 3 Ternate. This



aims to find out the types of problems that students often face in understanding English reading. The author uses voice recordings in interviews with students as research evidence.

### **1.10.3. Documentation**

Documentation is any communicable material used to explain some attributes of an object, system or procedure (Gorichanaz & Latham, 2016). Documentation is a research technique carried out to collect various information related to the problem being researched by the author. Documentation in this research can be in the form of photos with students as well as supporting documents such as school data from SMPN 3 Ternate.

### **1.11. Technique Of Analyzing Of Data**

Data analysis is the process of organizing and sorting data into patterns, categories, and basic descriptive units so that themes can be found and working hypotheses can be formulated as suggested by the data. The data analysis technique used in this study is the Miles and Huberman (1992), model of analysis, which includes three steps, including: (1) data reduction, (2) data display/presentation, (3) Draw conclusions and then verify. Here's an explanation.

#### **1. Data reduction**

Data reduction is sharpening to organize data. At this stage the researcher records field data in the form of field notes, then interprets each data that is relevant to the focus of the problem under study. At this stage the researcher begins to consider whether the data generated from the research is in accordance with the research objectives.

## 2. Display/presentation of data

In this step the researcher arranges data regularly and in detail so that it is easy to understand. The data used, analyzed carefully to show the expected answers.

## 3. Drawing conclusions/verification

At this step the researcher has entered the stage of making conclusions from the data that has been obtained since the beginning of the study. This conclusion is still provisional, for this reason it is necessary to verify it during the research. These three components are interrelated and carried out continuously from the beginning, when the research progresses to the end.

### **1.12. Data Types**

#### **1.12.1. Primary data**

Primary data is data obtained directly in the field through observation, interviews and documentation (in the form of photos, sound recordings and documents). The population in this study was class VII students at SMPN 3 Ternate. Meanwhile, the sample in this study consisted of 8 students. The number of samples taken from each class VII was 4 classes with 2 students.

#### **1.12.2. Secondary Data**

This research also uses secondary data in the form of materials or references obtained through books, the internet, journals, theses or articles related to this research.

### **1.13. Sampling Technique**

The sampling technique uses purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a technique for sampling data sources with certain considerations. The sample

selection was seen from students who experienced problems in reading comprehension. Therefore, 8 class VII students were obtained with 2 samples in each class.