#### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTION

# A. Background of the study

Reading is one important way to improve our general language skill in English. In English teaching, there are four basic skills that must be taught by teachers. They are listening, speaking, writing and reading. Among the four skills, reading is the one of important skills for students because it is studied almost in all class activities.

In senior high school, English teaching mostly emphasizes on the reading skill. For senior high Scholl graduates that are supposed to continue their studies in universities, this objective is based on the student's need to be able to read text book and reference books in English. It is realized that much of the knowledge sources and references are mostly written in English. Therefore reading skill is really needed by the students in their effort to develop their knowledge and also to get more information from what they read.

Reading is one of the language skills that must be taught to the students.

Through reading we can access worlds of ideas and feelings, as well as the sknowledge of the ages and visions of the future.

Furthermore, reading is thinking process. Reading helps the students learn to think in English, enlarge English vocabulary, improve writing, and reading may be a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Alderson, J. Charles Assessing reading (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2000), p. x.

good way to practice our English speaking and reading. It is a good way to find out new ideas, facts and experiences.<sup>2</sup>

In teaching reading, the students in the class learn how to understand or comprehend some texts. What the meanings are making sense out of text. It is also means that a reader acquires the information from context and combining disparate elements into a new whole. It is the process of using one's existing knowledge to interpret text in order to construct meaning. Comprehension also includes understanding the information in the text as well as changing the knowledge one used to understand in the first place. Comprehension is changed by strategies for integrating text with personal knowledge and experience. <sup>3</sup>

Comprehension also means as consisting of parsing sentences, understanding sentences in discourse, building a discourse structure and then integrating this understanding with what one already knows.<sup>4</sup>

From those reasons, the students must be able to understand and comprehend the text. According to competence based curriculum, the general objective of reading is that the students are expected to understand and interpret the content of reading text trough observation and application. As we know that, students frequently get involved in unfamiliar problems because reading is the hardest skill to teach, and also it is not single skill but an interrelated process with the other skills.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mikulecky, Beatrice's /Linda Jeffries, *More reading power*, (USA: Addison-Wesley publishing company inc, 1996), p.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Brendan Heasley, Maskur, English in use for SMU, (Edinburgh Jakarta: Erlangga, 1997), p.7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Alderson, J. Charles, Assessing reading ...,ibid, p. 12.

In practice, most senior high school English teachers consume much of their time also in teaching structure. They think that structure may lead students to master the other language skills, namely, listening, speaking, writing and reading. As a result, what the students have is just a set of rules and a set of vocabulary. So it can be concluded that whether or not grammar has an important place in an institution's teaching, it has to be accepted that grammatical ability, or rather the lack of it, sets limits to what can be achieved in the way of skills performance.<sup>5</sup>

Knowing from those two reasons above which stated that both of reading ability and structure have important role in the process of teaching and learning so the researcher wants to know is there any significant correlation between the reading ability and structure competence by conducting a study at MAN Purwoasri Kediri.

The researcher conducts this study in the third year students because the students should prepare the easy way to answer all of the questions given which conclude both reading comprehension and grammar in the national examination.

The researcher also chooses the third year students because she assumes that they have got more same knowledge of reading and structure since they were in junior high school and senior high school, it means when they at the first and second year which have got the same curriculum application.

Considering the foregoing facts that reading English and structure are important and have big influence in their final examination, the writer on this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Hughes, Arthur, *Testing for language teachers second edition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 2003), p. 173

occasion would like to find out whether students reading ability and their structure competence significantly correlates in the hope that the result can be of some useful input to the teaching an learning, especially at the places where the researcher conduct the observation, at MAN Purwoasri Kediri.

## B. Problem of the study

Based on the reasons above, and the explanation that reading comprehension and structure competence are have the same major important role in the teaching and learning process, the researcher formulates the problem of this research as follow:

"Do students' reading ability and their structure competence significantly correlate?"

#### C. Objective of the study

The researcher conduct this study is intended to find out whether the ability to comprehend the reading text is significantly correlates with structure competence. In this study the researcher did not discussed about the influence of each variable. The researcher only want to find is there any correlation between the students reading comprehension with their structure competence or not.

### D. Significance of the study

It is expected that the result of the study will give a little contribution concerning the teaching and learning English as the foreign language in Indonesia. In addition to that, it is also hoped that the result can provide for:

- English teachers of MAN Purwoasri Kediri with some additional information about the correlation of language skills through reading and structure which they can determine the ideal way or strategy to teach English so they will enable the students to comprehend the reading and grammar properly.
- 2. For the students of MAN Purwoasri Kediri especially for the third year students who will face national examination, hopefully this study will give them more motivation and better strategies of comprehending English texts and grammar more easily. It is expected that the students will know their weakness during the process of learning so they will encourage their ability to improve their reading skill and grammar.
- 3. Finally, it is expected that the result of the study will provide a scientific reference on the applied teaching techniques of reading and structure.

#### E. Assumption

Concerning this study, the researcher assumes that:

 All the students especially the third year students of MAN Purwoasri have got the same knowledge of reading and structure from junior high Scholl and senior high school it means when they at the first and second year.

- The students being observed are not from the same class. In this case the
  researcher observes six classes consisting of two classes of language program,
  two classes of social program, and two classes of science program.
- 3. All teachers have applied the same curriculum to their students that is why she believes that the third year students of MAN Purwoasri may have got more or less the same knowledge of reading comprehension and English structure.
- 4. The students being tested took the test seriously and did the test by themselves.
- 5. The researcher supervises the class by herself.

#### F. Scope and limitation

- The research will be held in Islamic senior high school that is in MAN Purwoasri Kediri.
- 2. Since it is not possible to work with all students of MAN Purwoasri Kediri because of time limitation, the researcher would like to deal especially with the third year students to find out whether or not their reading ability and their structure competence are correlate.

## G. Definition of key terms

- 1. The correlation: a shared relationship or causal connection. It can also be defined as close relationship between two things or two variables. In this study, the variables are reading ability as the x variable and structure competence as the y variable. In this study, correlation aimed to find out is there any connection or not, if there is connection how tight it is.<sup>6</sup>
- 2. Reading ability: the ability to understand the content of a passage in order to answer some questions. Reading also means decoding-translating written symbols into corresponding sounds; understand all the words in order to understand the meaning of a text, and then gathering the meaning from what we read.<sup>7</sup>

In this study reading ability means that students are able to:

- a. respond the text given by answer some question related with the content of the text.
- b. identify the elements of text formation.
- c. identify the linguistic forms and meaning.
- d. identify the meaning and the function of each sentences in the text.
- e. identify certain information from short functional text.
- f. understand the framework of the text.

<sup>6</sup> Arikunto. Suharsimi, *Prosedur penelitian edisi revisi v*, (Jakarta: Rineka cipta, 2002), p. 239.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Penny Ur, A course in language teaching, (Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 1996), p.138-144.

- g. understand the logic relation between the sentence and paragraph.
- h. improve the strategies to interpret the meaning suitable with the context.
- i. answer certain comprehension questions.
- 3. Grammar: a specific instance of grammar is usually called a structure. Therefore, grammar means the way words are put together to make correct sentences.8

In this study grammar also means the set of rules that use in the sentences of narrative texts, discussion texts, explanation texts and reviews.

The grammatical features used in the text are:

- a. Present tense, past tense, past continuous, present perfect, passive voice, causative, should have and must have, subjunctive, relative clause, if clause and conjunction. This grammatical features that used in this study are suitable with the syllabus which used by the third grade students of MAN Purwoasri.
- 4. Structure competence: The knowledge of the student's grammatical ability.<sup>9</sup> In this study, structure competence means students are able to answer some grammatical question in the forms of complex sentences which explain the process of how something formed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Hughes, Arthur, Testing for language teachers...ibid., p. 173

5. Reading comprehension: the process of using one's existing knowledge to interpret text in order to construct meaning. It means, understanding the information in the text as well as changing the knowledge one used to understand in the first place.

Reading comprehension texts which used in this study for the test are generic texts which include the narrative text, discussion text, explanation text, and review. It was taken from the syllabus that used in MAN purwoasri at the third grade students. Each text has characteristic formed in the rhetorical steps, grammatical features, and also different social function. Because of those texts have each characteristic, students should be able to comprehend the text by:

- a. identifying the meaning of each word in the text.
- b. identifying the meaning of sentences in the text.
- c. identifying the structure of the text.
- d. identifying the event/ something happened in the text.
- e. identifying the rhetorical steps of the text.
- f. identifying the purpose of the text.