CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Reading comprehension is the essential part during reading activity. The students who can read with good comprehension are indicated as good readers. In contrary, the students who cannot read with good comprehension are indicated as poor readers. Thus, reading comprehension is indispensable to the reading activity.

According to Brassell and Rasinski, “reading comprehension is the ability to take information from written text and do something with it in a way that demonstrates knowledge or understanding of that information”.\(^1\) It means, the core of successful reading comprehension is the ability to identify meaningful relation among the various parts of a text and between these parts and the students’ background knowledge. For that reason, comprehension becomes the most important factor to indicate how well the students read.

School Based Curriculum (KTSP) offers reading as one of the skills in English mastery that should be taught in Junior High School. The students have to accomplish two competencies; they are standard competence and basic competence. For the standard competence, the students are required to comprehend short functional written text and

\(^1\) Danny Brassel, and Timothy Rasinski, Comprehension that Works Taking Students Beyond Ordinary Understanding to Deep Comprehension. (Huntington Beach: Shell Education, 2008), p.18.
simple essay in forms of descriptive and procedure in daily life. Whereas, for the basic competence, the students should respond meaning of short functional written text and simple essay in daily life in forms of descriptive and procedure accurately, fluently, and understandably.²

State Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency, which is located in Garuda Sakti KM 6 Street Tapung, is one of the schools that also applies School Based Curriculum (KTSP) as its guidance in teaching and learning process. In State Junior High School 10 Tapung, English has been taught since the first year of English teaching period. English is taught twice a week with time duration about 40 minutes. The KKM (the minimum criteria of passing grades) of this school is 70.³

Based on School Based Curriculum (KTSP), especially at reading lesson, the students are expected to be able to get the main idea, supporting idea, and gather the information from the text that they read. There are some text types in monologue which are learned by the seven grade students at Junior High School 10 Tapung such as descriptive, procedure, and so on.

In order to be able to read those different text types with good comprehension, the students need intelligence and also other factors that encourage their reading comprehension. Bagheri and Faghih indicate two important factors that affect the process of reading comprehension that the

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²Department of National Education. *School Based Curriculum Syllabus of English.* (Jakarta: Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan, 2006) p. 132
reader’s variable that includes the strategies used by readers, their background knowledge, motivation, personality, self-esteem and sex, and the text variable. Furthermore, as one of the important factors, the teacher should pay more attention to students’ self-esteem because it can give effect to their reading, especially in reading comprehension.

Dedmond in Hisken, defines self-esteem as “the complication of feelings about ourselves that guides our behavior, influences our attitudes, and drives our motivation”. Another expert, Barrow explains self-esteem as “the ability to cope with life’s challenges, the feeling of being worthy, and deserving and the right to enjoy the product of hard work”. Therefore, self-esteem can be defined as the ability to cope with challenges of life and have positive of feeling worthy.

According to Hisken, “a high level of self-esteem acts as a buffer against anxiety so students with high self-esteem are not as likely to struggle with reading challenges”. It means that high self-esteem can be a successful factor for students to get success in reading because they will not feel discourage if they struggle. Students who have self confidence and high self-esteem will try and try again if they are failed. They will

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5 Loree J. Hisken. 'The Correlation between Self-esteem and Students Reading Ability, reading Level, and Academic Achievement.' Self-esteem and Reading. (Warrensburg:,University of Central Missouri, 2011), p. 1
6 Ibid
7 Ibid, p. 25
comprehend that failure is part of learning process, so they will continually try to comprehend their reading comprehension.

Based on the researcher’s experience during the teaching practice at seven grade students of Junior high school 10 Tapung, researcher found that students’ reading comprehension was generally poor, especially in learning descriptive text. Most of the students were not able to identify the information from descriptive text well eventhough they had been taught by their English teacher. Some of the students were not able to answer questions from the teacher during reading lesson. Besides, the English teacher at the Junior High School 10 Tapung taught English by using lesson plan, the curriculum and textbook, she also used various techniques and strategies in teaching reading. In point of fact, the students were not able to comprehend reading lesson.

As Bagheri and Faghih state, self-esteem is one of the affective factors that plays an important role in reading comprehension. For that reason, it is better for the students to have high and positive self-esteem. But in fact, students’ self-esteem is still low. It can be seen from students’s attitude such as some of the students do not open to criticism about acknowledging mistakes, some of the students are not comfort in giving and receiving their compliments, expressions of affection, appreciation, and the like, some of the students gave up when they faced any difficulty, some of the students are not flexible in responding to situations and challenges, and so on.
In addition, those problems could be seen from the following symptoms:

1. Some of the students were not able to identify the information from descriptive text.
2. Some of the students were not able to identify the generic structure of descriptive text, they could not answer.
3. Some of the students had lack of vocabulary, of course it made them difficult to comprehend the text.
4. Some of the students felt embarrassed and fear of making mistakes
5. Some of the students gave up when they faced any difficulty
6. Some of the students are not flexible in responding to situations and challenges

Several problems above might happen because of internal and external factors. Internal factors such as the way of students’ learning, the ability of students, self-esteem, strategy used by students, time, and so on. Whereas, the external factors in such difficult lesson to students, the strategy of teacher is not appropriate to the students, etc.

Based on the explanation and the problems above, the researcher can interpret that factors that affect the process of reading comprehension are not only the text variables but also the students’ variables. One of students’ variables which has an important role here is students’ self-esteem. It means, it is possible that low self-esteem could be a cause of those problems. So, it is necessary for the researcher to find out whether
there is or not a correlation between students’ self-esteem and their reading comprehension. Thus, the title of this research is “The Correlation between Students’ Self-esteem and Their Reading Comprehension in Descriptive Text at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency”.

B. Definition of Term

1. Correlation

Gay and Airisian stated that “correlational research involves collecting data to determine whether and to what degree a relationship exist between two or more variables.” Correlation meant in this research is the relationship between students’ self-esteem and their reading comprehension of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency.

2. Self-esteem

Coopersmith in Crozier, defines self-esteem as the evaluation in which the person makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself: it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the five personality traits extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. The point of this research is

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students’ self-esteem in reading comprehension of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency.

3. Reading Comprehension

According to Brassell and Rasinski, “reading comprehension is the ability to take information from written text and do something with it in a way that demonstrates knowledge or understanding of that information”.\(^\text{10}\) It means reading comprehension is essential part that should be mastered by students during reading activity. In this research, reading comprehension refers to the ability to take information from written text in form of descriptive text of the seven grade students at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency.

C. The Problem

1. The Identification of the Problem

From the background above, the researcher can identify some problems that faced by the students as follows:

1. Some of the students are still difficult in identifying the informations of descriptive text.

2. Some of the students are still difficult in identifying the generic structure of descriptive text.

3. Some of the students have lack of vocabulary

4. Some of the students are fear of making mistakes

5. Some of the students give up when they face any difficulty

\(^\text{10}\) Danny Brassel, and Timothy Rasinski, *Loc. Cit.*
6. Some of the students are not flexible in responding to situations and challenges

2. The Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problems above, it would be sincerely better to restrict the problem in order to pay more attention to the specific problems. In this research, the researcher limits the problems on the students’ ability in comprehending descriptive text of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency.

3. The Formulation of the Problem

The problems of this research are formulated in the following research questions:

a. How is the students’ self-esteem of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency?

b. How is the students’ reading comprehension of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency?

c. Is there any significant correlation between students’ self-esteem and their reading comprehension of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency?

D. The Objective and Significance of the Research

1. The Objective of the Research

a. To get the information about the students’ self-esteem of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency
b. To get the information about the students’ reading comprehension of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency

c. To know whether there is or not a significant correlation between students’ self-esteem and their reading comprehension of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency

2. The Significance of the Research

Related to the objectives of the research above, the significance of the research is as follows:

a. These research findings are hopefully contributing the researcher as a novice researcher in term of learning research.

b. These research findings are expected to be valuable inputs for both English teachers and students of the seven grade at Junior High School 10 Tapung Kampar Regency.

c. These research findings are also expected to give the positive contribution related to the process of teaching and learning reading.

E. The Reasons of Choosing the Title

The reasons of choosing the title are:

a. Self-esteem is one of the important affective factors which has an important role in reading comprehension.

b. The problems in this research are very interesting and challenging to be investigated.
c. This research is relevant to the researcher’s status as a student of English Education Department of Education and Teacher Training Faculty, State Islamic University of Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau.