

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Reading in a foreign language, in this case English, is considered to be difficult for most Indonesian students. This is supported by numerous research that shows the ability of Indonesian students in reading English texts was very low (Syatriana, 2010:28). Teacher select text that stimulate students to read so that the difficulties of grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension can be overcome. Yet, this raises a question on how to make the students interested in reading English text and how the teacher selects the reading material that encourages the students to read.

Therefore, reading children's short stories can be good learning material since it is considered to be adequate for the learners from all levels (from beginner to advanced learners) (Collie & Slater, 1991). It is expected that the students will follow the storyline easier. In addition, short stories can motivate students since they will explore their feelings through experiencing those that happened in the stories and they will be encouraged to continue reading it until the conflict is resolved. As Elliott (1990, 197) asserted that literature is "motivationally effective if students can genuinely engage with its thoughts and emotions and appreciate its aesthetic qualities." (Sugiharto, 2006). Despite parents' enthusiasm, many students, especially those attending kindergarten, face some problems. Based on research observation, students' biggest problem is their lack of vocabulary. This often causes them to lose focus and motivation.

They are unable to express what they want to communicate and find English difficult to master. This is natural because vocabulary is very essential for comprehension and communication. If students do not know the meaning of words they listen to in a conversation or encounter in a text, their comprehension is likely uncompromised. On the other hand, the more

vocabulary someone masters in English the easier it is for him to communicate and understand English itself. Flohr (2010:2) emphasized that students need to learn the vocabulary because otherwise, they will not be able to express and articulate themselves in a way that other students or native speakers of English can understand them.

Based on the explanation above, increasing learners' vocabulary mastery should be made as first priority. Literature on vocabulary instruction asserts the significant role of vocabulary in both native and non-native language acquisition (Gass,1999). Research evidence supports the effectiveness of rich vocabulary instruction in language learning (Beck & McKeown, 2007). The growth of vocabulary knowledge is an essential prerequisite for language acquisition because a teaching-learning process will not run well if learners lack vocabulary, which makes them unable to comprehend English.

Vocabulary teaching is possibly one of the areas in ELT that provides the most diverse strategies and techniques. These strategies and techniques could be classified into direct and indirect approaches. Some of the most popular ways of direct approaches are having students look the word up in a dictionary, analyze the word root and affixes, find antonym or synonym, write the definition, and use the word in a sentence. The indirect approach is conducted by letting the learners incidentally acquire vocabulary through the act of reading. Gu & Johnson,(1996) suggest that both direct and indirect approaches to vocabulary learning can be useful. However, to decide which approach to use, teachers should keep into consideration the learners' linguistic background, learning abilities, and learning styles. In addition, vocabulary learning should be made enjoyable and meaningful to students

Reading is more than just seeing words clearly, more than just saying properly print words & more than just recognizing the meaning of isolated words. By reading, it requires us to think and feel the meaning in the reading (Dean, 2013). This technique is motivating to young learners because they are generally eager to learn new vocabulary from short stories. Reading stories can improve both EFL learners' listening and comprehension skills; therefore, enabling them to obtain vocabulary. Ellis and Brewster (2002,2) emphasized that. Story allow teachers to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing children to language in varied, memorable, and familiar contexts

Based on the background above this research focuses on the research title "The effectiveness of reading as shortstory to improve grade 9 students' vocabulary mastery of SMP 10 Kupang"

### **1.1 Research Problem**

Do short stories improve students' vocabulary mastery?

### **1.2 Aim of study**

Find out whether short stories improve students' vocabulary mastery

### **1.3 Significance of study**

This research can be divided into two, namely theoretical and practical.

**a. Implication**

This research can be a reference for subsequent research in improving students' vocabulary mastery through short story methods.

**b. Application**

This research can be useful for teachers to find out what types of methods can be used to improve students' vocabulary mastery in a simple and easy way in teaching and learning process.