

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses about background of the research, problem of the research, purpose of the research, objective of the research, significances of the research, scope of the research and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

Reading is about understanding written text. Reading is also the window of knowledge. By reading, people may get much information by understanding the content of the text and may know everything in the world. According to Vassiliou (2011, p.7), the written word is present everywhere and therefore reading is a fundamental skill which is increasingly needed in almost every sphere of life. A wide range of reading skills including digital reading are essential for an individual's personal and social fulfillment for taking an informed and active part in society and exercising full rights of citizenship.

Reading is not an easy activity for Thailand students, of course because English is not the mother language. Thailand language and English are difference; they are different in vocabulary, pronunciation, structure, and even in dialect. So, reading is very complex. As stated by Scanlon (2010, p. 9 & 346) reading is a complex process that requires the analysis, coordination, and interpretation of a variety of sources of information. Reading is also a complex process and children react to instruction in very different ways. Moreover, Pang (2003, p.21) also argued that teaching reading is difficult work. Teachers must be aware of the

progress that students are making and adjust instruction to the changing abilities of students.

Reading functions as the window of knowledge can get much information that students need. The researcher has opinion that reading is one aspect of language skills which is very important in every person's life, both at school and university. Reading skill (looking for a word meaning, find main idea, remember the text, guessing the difficulty of words at all levels of education should be mastered by students especially the students of English Study Program in the first semester. By reading the students of first semester will obtain variety information that has never been known all the events, whether in the past, present or future events. According to Ulmer (2000), reading is an interactive and complex process. The process through which the dynamic interaction of the reader's background knowledge, the information inferred by the written language, and the reading situation context is constructing the meaning. Without understanding, reading would serve no purpose. It means that understanding text is the most important aspect in reading. Not only to understand but also the students should comprehend the text that they read. The main purpose of reading is comprehending the text read. Everyone agrees that reading comprehension is not a simple matter of recognizing individual words, or even of understanding each individual word as eyes pass over it. All models of comprehension recognize the need for readers to build up a mental representation of text, a process that requires integration across a range of sources of information.

Townend (2003) states that comprehending reading means the student should be fully understand about the text.

In reading a text, students meet with many problems obstructing their reading comprehension. For example, the problems related to background knowledge, cultural knowledge, and knowledge of text type. Background knowledge is the students' prior knowledge or knowledge of the world. If a reader lacks prior knowledge in reading a text, he cannot follow and understand it because he does not know what the text is about. A reader uses background knowledge to integrate new information from a text into his prior information. In addition, cultural differences affect reading comprehension. An unfamiliar cultural context and distinguishing between content knowledge of culture and knowledge of vocabulary cause problems in reading, because the reader does not clearly understand the other culture. In addition, an inadequate knowledge of text type is a problem in reading texts. The text type such as newspaper articles, fairy tales, and business letters, if the reader does not know what kind of the text, he cannot follow and understand what the text is about. A reader can understand a text if he is familiar with the text type (Alderson, 2002).

In reading texts, students of English as a second or foreign language use context clues to help them better understand. Clues in sentences help students guess the meaning of words in context (O' Donnell & Wood, 2004). They also help them understand the function of words and grammar. Syntactic knowledge is the knowledge of sentence structure and the rules of word order (Kinzer & Lue, 1995). In addition, the knowledge of the differences in forms of texts, such as fairy tales, newspaper articles, and business letters, can guide the readers and help them anticipate the content of texts and understand the storyline (Kinzer & Lue, 1995).

Thai students are not successful in reading, and their reading ability is unsatisfactory. There were previous studies done by Mauli, (2014) in the research about Students' Difficulties in Finding Main Ideas, found that there were 6 problems faced by students; low interesting to reading, poor knowledge on vocabulary, long sentences, poor reading strategy, grammatical confusion, and poor knowledge on paragraph. The results showed that the 8th grade students felt difficult in finding main ideas because they did not know the meaning of main idea and many difficult words causing difficulties to find main ideas in the text. From this research, it can be seen that vocabulary is also one of big problems faced by students in reading comprehension. This shows that there is need to overcome the problem. Another study done by Chawwang, N. (2008) This study aimed to investigate English reading problems of Thai 12th-grade students in educational regions 1, 2, 3, and 7 in Nakhon Ratchasima, in the academic year 2006. The participants were composed of 840 students studying in grade 12, and 420 students were from science program and 420 students were from arts program. The participants were asked to take a reading test to test their English reading ability. The test was divided into three parts: (a) sentence structure, (b) vocabulary, and (c) reading comprehension. Percentage of students passing the test was used to determine the participants' reading ability. It was found that the reading ability of the participants in the three areas of sentence structure, vocabulary, and reading comprehension was at a low level. Most of them (over 70% of all participants) were unable to give the correct answers on the test. Therefore, the results of the study revealed that they had problems in all three

areas of the reading test: (a) sentence structure, (b) vocabulary, and (c) reading comprehension.

It can be concluded, the researcher identified the factors of causing the students' difficulties in comprehending English reading using Westwood (2001, P.16) in Savic (2016). Westwood said that the factor causing difficulty are they concern with learner's background, teacher's technique, and the learner's environment. On the other hand, the goal of all reading is about the ability of comprehension a reading text. It means that reading can be successful if the readers can comprehend the reading text well. The process of comprehending the reading text is not an easy thing to do for the students. In this case, the teacher should improve or create his/her strategy or technique in teaching reading. It aims to help the students in order to make the students easier to comprehend the text well. In teaching reading comprehension, the teacher uses some strategies to improve students reading comprehension. "Reading comprehension strategies are tools those proficient readers use to solve the comprehension problem they encounter in texts" (Moreillon,2007).

Based on the consideration, the researcher is interested to conduct research with the title "Difficulties of Thai student in Reading English Descriptive text".

1.2 The problem of the Research

Based on the background of the research above, the problems of the research are as mentioned below:

1. What are difficulties faced by Tenth grade in SMA Santivit Songkhla School in academic year 2021/2022 in reading descriptive text?
2. How are the strategies used by the Tenth grade in SMA Santivit Songkhla School in academic year 2021/2022 to overcome the difficulties in reading descriptive text?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

In relation to the research problem, the objectives of this research as follows:

1. To describe difficulties students faced in reading descriptive text for Tenth grade in SMA Santivit Songkhla School in academic year 2021/2022.
2. To find out the strategies used by Tenth grade in SMA Santivit Songkhla School in academic year 2021/2022 Academic Year to overcome the difficulties.

1.4 Purposes of the Research

Regarding the identification of the problem, the purpose of this research to find out The Difficulties of Reading Descriptive Text for Tenth grade in SMA Santivit Songkhla School in academic year 2021/2022 Academic Year.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The results of the research are expected to give both theoretical and practical significance for the teachers and students as follows:

1. Theoretical Significance

The teacher can take advantages of the information about the difficulties faced by students in reading text and she or he can evaluate whether this strategy and media better or not to be applied in the classroom.

2. Practical Significance

The researcher believes that this research help the students to identify what difficulties they faced during reading text and students can solve the difficulties and find the new strategies so that it not disturb their learning process. Hopefully, they have better improvement on their reading performance.

1.6 Assumptions of the Research

In this research, it is assumed that the difficulty of students in reading Descriptive text for tenth grade students is not really effective in underlining and understanding the text.

1.7 Scope of the Research

The scope of this research concerns the student's ability in the Reading difficulties in Descriptive text committed by Thai students studying in Thailand.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

1. Reading difficulties.

Reading difficulties are not the result of generalized developmental delay or sensory impairment, therefore, a student with a reading difficulty shows

difficulties in reading skills that are unexpected in relation to cognitive ability, intervention, quantity and quality of instruction, and age.

2. Thai students.

The students from Thailand who are studying in Thailand.

3. Descriptive text.

Descriptive text is usually focuses on describing a single location, object, event, person, or place. It endeavors to engage all five of the reader's senses to evoke the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feel of the text's subject.

