CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

    English, an international language spoken globally, is one of the subjects taught in junior high school. According to Rita Mae Brown (2019), language serves as a cultural roadmap, revealing one's origins and purpose. In English classes, students need to master four critical skills: writing, listening, speaking, and reading. Among these skills, reading is of particular importance as it involves understanding and applying language in various contexts. Reading includes tasks such as pronunciation, spelling, decoding symbols, letters, and transforming them into meaningful words and sentences. To develop reading comprehension, a fundamental skill that students should have, they need to study different types of texts, including Narrative Text, Story Text, Procedural Text, Descriptive Text, and Short Story Text. Short stories, a form of fictional prose, fall under the category of narrative text. Although narrative texts are not real events, they are created or imagined by the author. Narrative texts tend to be concise and focused compared to longer works of fiction, such as novels or novelettes. Typically, narrative texts consist of a few paragraphs to a few pages and feature limited conflict, plot and characters. Narrative text conveys a dominant impression and centers on one character in a particular situation. When reading a text, students must engage their minds to actively understand and interpret its meaning. This requires extensive practice and a thorough understanding of the material in the context of reading comprehension. This is in line with the findings of research conducted by Rahel Sonia Ambarita, Neneng Sri Wulan, and D. Wahyudin (2021), which states that students' reading comprehension skills can be improved by using appropriate models, strategies, and learning methods. However, various factors affect students' ability to understand narrative text, as revealed by Damastuti and Eviani (2015). Predictive factors that affect reading comprehension difficulties among students include initial reading ability, language ability, and learning motivation. However, it is crucial to identify, categorize, and characterize the abilities and factors that influence students' reading comprehension ability in terms of narrative text, which is referred to as ability analysis. Therefore, researchers are motivated to analyze students' abilities and the factors that influence them. By assessing students' abilities through questionnaires and interview tests, researchers can gain insight into their proficiency in understanding reading comprehension ability in the context of Narrative text,

as well as the factors that influence it. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is very interested in conducting a study entitled "AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS IN UNDERSTANDING NARRATIVE TEXTS IN SMP N 7 MEDAN". To achieve this, the researchers examined ninth grade students at SMP Negeri 7 Medan, with a special focus on analyzing reading comprehension in Narrative Texts, as these texts have an important meaning in foreign language teaching.

1.2 The Problems of Study

According to the research above, the following are the research's problems:

1. How is the reading comprehension skills of grade IX students of SMP N 7 Medan inunderstanding short story by narative text?

2. What is the most influential factor in reading comprehension skills of grade IX students of SMPN 7 Medan in understanding short story by narative text?

1.3 The Objectives of Study

Based on the problem above, this research intends to find out:

1. To analyze how the reading comprehension skills of grade IX students at SMP N 7 Medan in understanding short story by narative texts.

2. To analyze the most influential factor in reading comprehension skills of grade IXstudents at SMP N 7 Medan in understanding short story by narative text?

1.4 The Scope of Study.

The research has focused on the students' skills in understanding reading comprehension through short story by narative text. The participants in this research are grade IX students of SMP N 7 Medan during the school year 2023/2024.

1.5 The Significance of Study

The findings of this research are expected to provide the following information:

a. For Researchers

Researchers can utilize the knowledge and skills gained during their academic journey to effectively and efficiently teach reading comprehension when they become competent educators.

b. For Students

This study can help students in improving their reading comprehension ability and

reducing the factors that affect their ability in understanding texts. The results of this study are expected to increase students' motivation to learn and provide practical experience in understanding short stories through narrative text.

c. For Teachers

Teachers can benefit from this study by improving students' reading comprehension ability and reducing factors that affect their comprehension ability in terms of narrative text. The findings of this study are expected to be a reference for the development of English teaching models, particularly in the realm of narrative text comprehension.

d. For Other Researchers

This study is expected to help other researchers in finding references for further research in the analysis of reading comprehension ability. It is hoped that future researchers can apply their knowledge in understanding texts both in terms of grammatical and linguistic, which in turn can improve research results.