CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents (1) background (2) problems of the study (3) objectives of the study and (4) significance of the study.

1.1. Background

Language is used for communication. Suri (2015, p. 181) defines that language is the most important tool and a basic for human in communication. It means that language can help human to have better social interaction between one and another. Meanwhile, Choudhury (2014, p. 1) also states that through language, we can express our feelings, emotions, thoughts, needs, desires, etc. Therefore, without language people cannot live and communicate each other without language.

One of the languages that people use in communication is English. It is because English is considered as one of the international languages in the world. Harmer (2001, p. 1) argues that English is one of the main languages of international communication. In addition, Sothan (2015, p. 88) states that English is needed in this era of globalization for information sharing, business communications, trade, international relations, and also travelling in the world for different purposes. Therefore, the number of English language learners increases globally.

In Indonesia English is a foreign Language. English is taught from elementary school until university level. English is also as a major subject too in

addition to Indonesian Language, Religion, Mathematic and Natural Science. According to Braine (2011, p.79), English has been described as the first foreign language in Indonesia and it is officially taught to students in the secondary school. Students learn English as a means to broaden their knowledge about science, technology, culture and arts. lt is stated that the aim of teaching English in Indonesia are to utilize the language to broaden the students' reasoning horizon as well as to improve their communicative competence.

Based on the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP 2006), there are four main skills that should be learnt in order to communicate in English well, they are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Harmer (2007, p. 265) states that speaking and writing are classified into productive skills, where language is actually being produced. Meanwhile, reading and listening are classified into receptive skills, where the meaning is extracted from the text or discourse.

Reading is one of four skills that hasan important role for the students. Saeedi, Khanmohamadi and Mahmodi (2016, p. 61) state that reading is the most important skill for foreign language students in the academic contexts. It means that students need to be active reader foracquiring new knowledge and gaining new access to alternative explanations and interpretations. According to Misa (2014, p. 304), reading is an activity to get information from the text. It means that reader must understand the implicit and explicit meaning from the text. Morever, Petel and Jain (2008, p. 113) state that reading is an important activity in any class. In other words, reading is not only a source of information and pleasurable activity but also as a means of consolidating and extending.

The importance of reading is stated by Komiyama (2009, p. 29) as an important skill for English language learners in today's worlds. It supports the development of overall proficiency and provides access to crucial information at work and in school. It can be concluded that reading as one of English language skill is essential for learners to get not only knowledge but also information.

For many students, reading is a difficult skill to improve because in reading, students have to concentrate but sometimes they feel lazy to read. It also needs a big motivation to improve reading skill. Some facts reveal that reading ability of Indonesian students is very low. It indicates that Indonesian students have problems in reading. The data taken from the OECD Pisa (2012) shows that Indonesia was in the 64th position from 65 countries included on the survey reading. Based on the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) conducted in 2011, it was revealed that out of a total of 45 countries surveyed, Indonesia ranked 42nd in students' literacy rate. According to the PIRLS, Indonesian students scored an average of 405 in reading literacy, far below the mean international score of 500.

In terms of reading, there are some types of texts that must be acquired by the learner. They are narrative, descriptive, procedure, news item, recount, spoof, discussion, and expository text. Based on curriculum KTSP 2006 used of SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang especially for the eighth grade students, there are several types of reading text that must be introduced to eighth grade students of junior high school. There are recount, narrative, and descriptive. Narrative text itself mostly appears in national examination.

Narrative Text is a text which contains about story then followed by the resolution.According to Flippo (2014, p. 102), narrative text usually includes most story type of materials. Moreover, Oakhil et.al. (2015, p. 92) say that narrative text are usually fiction, i.e. made up. They concern their characters, their actions, their mental states and emotions, their interactions with others in the text and also with the physical world of the narrative. Narrative text is learnt by students as one of materials in English. Besides, Dole and Donaldson (2014, p. 23) also describe that narrative has been proven to be essential to comprehension because the distinctive and identifying characterictic of a narrative is that it has a "chain of events" things that happen in a certain predictable chronological order.

However, there are many problems that students encountered in comprehending the narrative text. Leinhardt, Isabel, and Catherine. (2009, p. 70) explain that students appear have difficulty identifying the main story of the text and are limited in their ability to connect events into causal chains. It means that most of the students got difficulty to predict and identify the content of narrative text.

The problems in narrative reading text were also found by the writer at SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang. The writer gained the information from the English teacher of SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang (Personal Communication, 14th of December, 2016) that the students sometimes found it hard to understand English. Then, the teacher said that the students found it difficult to find the main idea in English reading textbook because of lack of vocabulary. The students felt lazy to read, they did not understand instruction in

reading task, the students could not predict the content of the narrative text, the students got difficulty to identify the character of the narrative text and most of the students also could not answer the questions correctly because they did not understand.

To overcome the problem above, it is necessary to improve the quality of teaching reading skill by applying an appropriate strategy of teaching and learning. According to Sarwono (2006), the inappropriate use of reading approach, method and strategy are assumed as the crucial factors causing unreachable of reading goal. In this study, the writer will use Literature Circles as the strategy to teach reading narrative text.

Literature circles can be used as one of the strategies in teaching reading. According to Daniels (2002, p. 2), Literature Circles is defined as small, peer-led discussion group whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article or a book. In the literature circles, the students are individually assigned roles. There are five main roles in Literature circles which are summarizer, connector, vocabulary enricher, discussion director and illustrator. The goal of dividing roles in literature circles is to give the students a focus to reading and comprehend to the text.

The study conducted by Daniels (2002) showed that literature circles are an excellent way to help students take ownership for their learning. Literature circles allow students book choice, as well as the ability to set schedules with their group members to determine how many pages they should read at a time. They also help students to develop their communication skills, by deciphering the most effective

way of expressing their thoughts in a way in which all group members can understand their main point.

In addition, the previous study done by Atmanegara (2009), who has applied the literature circles reading strategy to promote reading habit and to increase literacy achievement showed that there was a significant difference in students' reading skill. The results showed that the experimental groups outperformed the control groups and Literature Circles gave a significant contribution to both students' reading habits and literacy skills with the highest percentage contributed by every method was reading skill. There is also other research who conducted an experimental research by using literature circles strategy, it was found that literature circles helps the students to comprehend the stories easier (Tuzahra; 2016). Therefore, considering the advantages of Literature Circles in teaching English reading comprehension.

Based on the explanation above, the writer conducted an experimental research about teaching reading narrative text by using Literature Circles entitled "**Teaching Reading Narrative Text to the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang through Literature Circles".**

1.2. Problems of the Study

The research problems of this study can be formulated as follows:

1. Is there any significant improvement on the eight grade students' narrative text before and after treatment in SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang?

2. Is there any significant difference on the eight grade students' narrative text who are taught through Literature Circles and those who are not in SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem mentioned above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To find out whether or not there is significant improvement on the eight grade students' narrative text before and after treatment in SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang.

2. To find out whether or not there is significant difference on the eight grade students' narrative text who are taught through Literature Circles and those who are not in SMP Persatuan Tarbiyah Islam Palembang.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The results of this study are hopefully will be useful for :

1. The students

The students who are taught from this strategy can make the students pay more attention in learning reading especially in reading narrative text. They can improve their comprehension to the text easily and can be more interested in learning reading to reduce their difficulties in their reading

comprehension especially for narrative reading text and develop their reading instruction with Literature Circles.

2. The Teacher

It will also hopefully help the teachers to inform the teacher about an alternative strategy in teaching reading such as Literature Circlesthat can be used as a consideration to increase the teachers' awareness in developing and applying suitable method in teaching English especially in teaching reading narrative and other texts.

3. For the researcher

For the researcher, it is expected to add the researcher's knowledge about Literature Circles method and the researcher's experience in conducting an educational research.

4. For the other researchers

For other researchers, the result of this study can be a source of material in conducting similar studies and can be reference for other researchers for the future studies.