CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation and definitions of the key terms.

1.1 Background of Study

English was a compulsory subject of every school in Indonesia. It was taught since elementary school to university level. In English subject, there were four basic skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. All of them must be learnt by students.

Reading was the process of retrieving and comprehending some forms of information or ideas. These ideas are usually some sort of representation of language, as symbols to be examined by sight, or by touch. Reading was a process to understand and comprehend the information or ideas of written symbols.

Writing was a method of representing language in visual or tactile form. Writing systems used sets of symbols to represent the sounds of speech, and might also have symbols for such things as punctuation and numerals. Therefore, writing skill was aimed to guide the students to express the ideas in written form.

Listening was the absorption of the meanings of words and sentences through the hearing. Listening was one of the English skill that focused on listening to comprehend what a speaker said. Listening takes attention or sticking to the task at
hands inspite of distractions. It needed more concentration to understand what the speaker said.

Speaking was not only learning about the term of knowledge about speaking but larger than that. Speaking referred to the way how the learners produce the sound and practice it. Therefore, speaking was basic communication to express idea or opinions.

The students were expected to have the ability in those language skills, which covered receptive and productive language use. To know whether the teaching and learning process successful or not, tests were needed. A teacher must give a test to students in order to know the students ability in four basic skills. Kubiszyn and Borich (2003) stated that a test was a tool that can contribute importantly to the process of evaluating pupils, the curriculum and teaching method. It consisted of a set of question that have to be answered by the students.

Test was used for a great many reasons and test scores served as information for a variety and kind of decisions. Test helped teachers to increase their effectiveness by making adjustment in their teaching to enable a certain group of students or individual in the class to benefit more. A good test helped to show the precise area of difficult faced by the class.

According to Djiwandono (2008), “classification of test based on the development is divided into two: standardised test and teacher-made test. Standardized tests are test constructed by the test construction specialist, usually with assistance of curriculum expert, teacher and school administrator for the purpose of determining a students’ level of performance relative to the performance of other
students that have similar grade and age, or relative to state standards or other criteria”. Teacher-mad test was commonly achievement test prepared by a teacher to measure students learning in specific area.

To measure the students’ ability, some English teachers gave test which was constructed by themselves. Besides, to avoid some weaknesses of test item the teacher also took the test from the worksheet without evaluating it whether the items were appropriate.

Heaton (1988) stated that a good test should differenciate effectively between students who did well and those who did poorly on the test. Also, it had to be neither too easy nor too difficult. Since every test consisted of items, the quality of the test was determined by the quality of its items.

According to Ary, at. al.(2006), item analysis can be used to identify the quality of test items. Furthermore, Djiwandono (2008) stated that the item difficulty level was meant to investigate how easy or difficult the test was either as a whole or each item of the test. The item difficulty level was calculated by means of comparing between the students who did well and those who did poorly on the test. The test was categorized to be easy if many students were able to answer the test correctly. The more students answered the test incorrectly, the harder the test were. In addition, by knowing how students’ response to the items, a teacher was able to diagnose students’ errors and consider developing more effective teaching. Besides, students would recognize their weakness and improve their learning activities.
Based on the explanation above, the writer was interested to analyze the level of difficulty on reading test in English worksheet used by the second year students of SMAN 1 Sanggar, Bima.

The writer conducted the study at SMAN 1 Sanggar because the lembar kerja siswa (LKS) were frequently used in this school. The writer got the information from some teachers in that school through pre-interview. They said that in SMAN 1 Sanggar used LKS because it was more practical and economics. So, All of the students’ got the LKS to support teaching and learning process. Besides, Many teachers in that school took the questions in worksheet when they gave a test to students without evaluate whether it was appropriate or not with the students’ level. Hopefully, although the teacher took the test in textbook or worksheet, but they should evaluate the item test and this study can be the example for the teacher in that school how to analyze the difficulty level of the item test.

In reading skill, there were many kinds of text that must be learned by the students. Thus, the teacher ought to investigate whether the test was appropriate with the students level. To know its appropriateness the teacher should evaluate the item of test by analyzing the difficulty level of the item. Besides, the difficulty level of an item was important because it had relationship with the discrimination index. An item was extremely easy or hard can be effectively discriminated among students. High discrimination indeces required some optimal levels of difficult, but optimal difficulty level did not assure high indices. The optimal difficulty of a test relied on the change score and number of items making up the test.
1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study, the problem of study was:

How is the difficulty level of the reading test in English worksheet used by the second year students of SMAN 1 Sanggar, BIMA?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

According to the question exposed in the statement of problem, the purpose of this study was to find out the difficulty level of the reading test in English worksheet used by the second year students of SMAN 1 Sanggar, BIMA.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of the study was expected to be able to give contribute to the English teachers and the next researchers. For the English teachers, it was expected that they can evaluate and select the worksheet appropriately. To the next researchers, it was a review in doing further research in the related field. It provides valuable information for evaluating the quality of test in English subject. Detailed information about test presents necessary data in conducting next research.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study was focused on the difficulty level in reading test in English worksheet published by CV Graha Pustaka. There were three grades of students who are used worksheet (LKS) but the writer limits the study on the second year students of SMAN 1 Sanggar.
1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid the misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it is necessary to define the key terms, they are described as follow:

1. **The difficulty level**: the index of difficulty or (vacility value) of an item simply shows how easy or difficult the particular item proved in the test (Heaton, 1988). In this case, the index of difficulty generally expressed as the fraction or percentage of the students who answered the item correctly.

2. **Reading** is a language process requiring the understanding of written language (Charles, 2000).

3. **A Test** is set of stimuli presented to an individual in order to elicit responses on the basis of which a numerical score can be assigned (Ary, 2006).

4. **Worksheet** is a kind of book which is less than a hundred pages. It consists of item tests that cover all language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Sometimes, it contains vocabulary and grammar test as well and summary of material.