

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of The Study

English is an acknowledged passport to better education. English plays a crucial role to weave the world into a single thread which has a status of a second language in almost all the countries where it is not the first language. People around the world use English language to communicate to each other. It can be in spoken and also written. There are four fundamental skills are used in English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All are important, including reading skill.

Reading is the single most important fundamental skill a person can acquire. Reading comprehension refers to the ability to understand information presented in written form. Many students still have problems with their reading comprehension because they are unable to accurately understand written materials.

In the reading section, every student also gets difficulties in comprehending a long text or a dense text such as narrative text, explanation and others. In the author's experience as an English trained teacher at Saint Mary Senior High School in Medan, the author saw that twelfth grade students had problem when the author asked them to find out the main points of two different English Texts. When they found a text with long and many paragraphs, the students would get bored firstly. Getting bored makes the Students get difficulties in comprehending the text. But in fact the main point of difficult text is the lexical

density of the text, in which the more lexical items the text has, the more difficult the text is. If the text is formed in grammatical configuration and in lexical configuration, the text is categorized in difficult text.

Halliday (2005) states that written and spoken texts have their complexity namely Lexical Density (LD) and Grammatical Intricacy (GI), Grammatical Intricacy influence the reader's comprehension that can lead the students to be easier or harder to process the materials. So, it is important to analyze the textbook of the students in order to know about the ability of the students in understanding the materials which are given especially in reading texts. It refers to how often a clause complex appears in comparison with simple clauses.

Halliday (2004:363) states that the existence of intricacy in a text arises when the amount of clause complexes is more than simple clauses and the proportion of grammatical intricacy in the text certainly will determine the difficulty of the text. In other words, the more clause complexes than simple clauses the text has, the more difficult the text is.

Lexical density is a condition of the words' proportion in the text. It shows the ratio of lexical items to grammatical items. Lexical items consist of noun, adjective, verb, and some adverbs while grammatical items consist of determiner, pronoun, most preposition, conjunction, finite verb, and some classes of adverb. Lexical density shows the complexity of words within text. It describes the development of lexical in the written language.

Every student should be able to understand every reading text in the textbook which is covered in the curriculum of the unit level of education. In the

curriculum, reading material should be relevant to the students' needs. The teachers have the freedom to choose the teaching media or strategy to improve the students' communicative competence which is relevant to the students' condition and needs. One of the students' needs is to understand or comprehend the text based on the situation given in English subject.

In achieving the goals of the curriculum, it is obvious that the teacher holds a crucial role in selecting appropriate text in order to facilitate or to make the students understand and comprehend every text easily. In addition, Beck, McKeown, and Worthy (1995 : 220) state that students' success in school depends to a great extent on their understanding of the text, and this understanding is influenced "by variety of features that characterize the nature of text". So, it is important to analyze the grammatical intricacy and lexical density in the student's text book in order to know the efficiency of the textbook in the classroom instruction. There have been many English textbooks published to fulfill the need of teaching English-learning process and the English teacher should choose the textbook that is appropriate to the students.

Most teachers in Indonesia often use textbook as a primary resource book for ideas and instructional activities as well as giving guides for what they do. The textbook plays an important role in teaching-learning process because it is used to convey the teaching materials to students, facilitate teaching-learning process and support the demand of good English ability. In this study, the researcher will choose *Look Ahead 3, English for Senior High School Textbook Grade XII published by Erlangga* to be analyzed. The book is one of series of English

textbooks for Senior High School and is published in line with 2006 curriculum or in Indonesian it is called Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP). The textbook is used by the students of Senior High School of Saint Mary Medan. The book consists of 34 reading texts and is written in 3 different genres, they are narrative, exposition and discussion text. The textbook is important to be analyzed in order to know the total of clause complexes, simple clauses, and the lexical items of each text because both grammatical intricacy and lexical density really influence students' reading comprehension. Through the grammatical intricacy and lexical density of the text, teacher also can know whether the text is easy or difficult for the students.

B. The Problem of The Study

The problems of the study are formulated by the following:

1. What are the levels of grammatical intricacy of reading texts of Look Ahead 3, English textbook?
2. What are the levels of lexical density of reading texts of Look Ahead 3, English textbook?

C. The Objectives of The Study

The objectives of the study are described as follows.

1. To investigate the levels of grammatical intricacy and of reading text of Look Ahead 3, English textbook.

2. To investigate the levels of lexical density of reading texts of Look Ahead 3, English textbook.

D. The Scope of The Study

This study focuses on grammatical intricacy and lexical density in reading texts of *Look Ahead 3, English for Senior High School Grade XII textbook published by Erlangga*. There are 3 types of genre of this textbook; Narrative, Explanation, and Discussion. There are two main aspects in this study, the levels of grammatical intricacy and lexical density of reading texts of English textbook.

E. The Significances of The Study

1. Theoretically

The result of the research could be used as a reference for those who want to conduct a research about grammatical intricacy and lexical density.

2. Practically

Teachers; the result of the research could be useful for the teachers of reading to select the appropriate text in the process of teaching reading text.

The result could also be useful to design appropriate texts in English teaching or English curriculum design.