CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Reading is one of the four skills in English, besides of speaking, writing, and listening. Reading is one of the ways to get new knowledge and information. By reading kind of text people can get new information by the text they read. So people have to read as much as possible to broaden their horizon about knowledge that they have not know before. Reading an English textbook can help students to add their vocabulary when they learn English. Because when they are reading a text they have to focus of the text and should be able to understand it. Automatically, they get a new knowledge and information from the text. In this case, reading is an important thing in daily life. Therefore, as student hoped can read many English text in everywhere from any kind sources, it can help them to learn English, because they have much vocabulary.

That is not easy to attract the students want to learn English, because they lack of vocabulary, motivation, and background knowledge about English. Moreover, asking them to read a long text, it will make them get bored, because they do not know the meaning of the word. The students often unable to comprehend the text, that's why they get difficulty in learning English. The researcher thinks that the issue above always happening in this modern era, although the facility provided by the school mostly complete such as books or dictionary which can be read by them anytime in the library. Unfortunately, they

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are not interesting at all. In this case, students need more teachers' attention to help and guide them to learn English.

As we know that in teaching and learning process, student or teacher needs something that really important to support teaching and learning process, it's called textbook. A textbook has important role in facilitating students in the learning process and make them easier to get the material that given by the teacher. Sometimes, students feel bored when the teacher asking them to understand the text in textbook. So teachers have to careful in selecting English textbook for their students.

A good English textbook is readable, understandable, and comprehensible. The textbook which has those criteria will make the students interesting to learn English. As we know, the content in the textbook sometime is not appropriate with the level of the students. That thing is making them difficult in learning English. Therefore, the teacher should be able to select a good English textbook based on the competence and background knowledge of the students, although in selecting appropriate textbook is hard to do by the teacher, because every students has differences competence in read a text.

A good textbook should consist of readable reading texts. It shows that the reading texts in that textbook have to go with the level of students. Readable means that the reading texts are not too difficult and not too easy to understand. Choosing readable textbook is really important to make the students learn appropriate textbook based on their grade.

Dubay (2007:3) explains readability is what makes some texts easier to read than others. The criterion must be a measure of success that a large number of readers would have with the text. Readability is dependent upon many characteristics of a text and many characteristics of readers. Readability of a text generally refers to how well a reader is able to comprehend the content of a text, through reading. Readability is used to provide users with high quality service in text recommendation or text visualization. The study on readability has begun in the education field to measure the level of a text.

Similar with definition above, Handayani (2014) explains readability is a term in the field of teaching reading that takes into account the level of difficulty of the material that is appropriate to read. It means that in teaching and learning process, the teacher should be give the appropriate material for the students, especially texts that can be understood and comprehend by the students.

There are many formulas to measure the level of readability, such as fry graph, cloze test procedure, gunning fog index, smog test, flesch reading ease, flesch-kincaid grade level, and others. But here the researcher only focuses on one of the formulas that is gunning fog index. Kunz and Peggy (2010) explain the gunning fog index is a readability index designed to show how easy or difficult a passage is to read. It gives the number of years of education an individual hypothetically needs in order to understand the text he or she is reading. The Fog Index implies that short sentences written in plain English achieve a better score than long sentences written in a complicated language. Based on gunning formula, ideal reading texts are in the "8" score. It means that those texts able to read by

the readers. More than "8" the text is difficult to understand and less than "8" the text is very easy to understand.

Based on preliminary observation to the English teacher and also the students of SMP Negeri 3 Stabat on April 22th 2016, especially on eighth grade, the researcher get some information when do the interview with the English teacher and the students. For the first, the researcher asks the English teacher about the reading text that include in the textbook they used that difficult or not for the students. The English teacher said that sometime the students get difficulties in reading the text, understanding the text, and also interpret the text, it because the students very lack of vocabulary and also not interest to learn English. So the teacher should give them more examples about what they do not know. For the second, the researcher asks the same question to the students. They answered that they not understand the meaning of the text that they read, because the text consist of most of hard words. Even though, they always brought the dictionary, but it still hard for them to interpret the meaning of the text without help from their English teacher. So it make them not interest to read the English text anymore and it's make them missing their motivation to learn English also. For instance, the researcher takes one of reading text from English for junior high school textbook that they learn. The researcher chooses one text from narrative text genre and calculates the reading text by using gunning fog index formula to get the score.

Once upon a time, there was a boy called Piscine Molitor Patel who lived in Pondicherry, India. He decided to change his name to Pi. His father owned a zoo, and Pi loved to learn about all the animals and he spent all his free time with them. But the political situation in India became difficult, and when Pi was 16 they decided to sell the zoo and move to Canada. They took many of the animals on the boat with them to sell in Canada but somewhere in the Pacific they sank and Pi found himself to be the sole human survivor. He and a Bengal tiger, shared a life boat to reach the beach.

The texts above consist of 116 words, 6 sentences, and 7 complex words. The writer find the result of the text above has the fog index is 10.1. Gunning (1952) in his book explains that the ideal text has score 8. It means that the text above difficult to understand. We need to underline that Indonesian students are foreign learners; it shows that 10.1 is really difficult for students. Furthermore, it can conclude that the text with score more than 8 will make the students difficult to understand the text. While the text with score less than 8, it shows that the text is really easy to understand.

Based on the preliminary observation the researcher says that it's hard for the students to get knowledge from the textbook. If the textbook they used is not appropriate for them. Selecting a good textbook is really important. So the students do not get difficulties in reading an English text, because every text that include in the textbook is appropriate for their competence. Because of it, the students will be attracted in learning English.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher tries to observe the readability level of the textbook that used by SMPN 3 Stabat. They used English for junior high school textbook of "School-Based Curriculum" (Kurikulum

Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP)). The researcher chose the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Stabat.

B. The Problem of the Study

The problem of the Study is formulated in the form of a question as states "How is the readability level of reading texts in English for junior high school textbook for the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Stabat?"

C. The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out the empirical evidence of readability level of reading text in the English for junior high school textbook whether is difficult or not for the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Stabat.

D. The Scope of the Study

In this research, the researcher focuses the subject matter in analyzing the readability level of the selected reading texts in the English for junior high school textbook which is used for the eighth grade students of SMPN 3 Stabat by using Gunning Fog Index formula. There are sixteen reading texts in the English for junior high school textbook; the researcher will analyzes them by using Gunning Fog Index formula to know the readability level of the reading text in that textbook.

E. The Significances of the Study

In conducting this research, the researcher hopes that this research has benefit theoretically and practically to the readers.

1. Theoretically

Theoretically, the result of this research is able to enrich the theory about readability and the theory is able to use for the readers.

2. Practically

Practically, the school can be more selective in providing the textbook for the student. Because it's very influence for the students' motivation in learning English and it will be contribute also for the English teacher in selecting textbook and knowing whether the reading text in the textbook is readable, understandable, and comprehensible or not for the student. The students can be motivated to learn English and improve their reading skill. This result will be expected to the publisher to give more information in evaluating their textbook and provide another better textbook in the future. The other writers can use this research as the references, especially in the field of readability level.