

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

Reading serves a wide range of purposes in the lives of different categories of people who are literate. In school, it is the basis for learning different subjects. Good textbook contains material that is not only in accordance with the curriculum, but also must be written with a high level of readability. English textbook with a high level readability will support the student's achievement. Moreover, textbook providing the discourse with high reading level will also increase the ability of students in the learning process.

Reading material is one of the contents of the textbook besides listening instruction, some exercises, writing task and some conversation scripts. Reading material is usually in the form of text that is used to teach reading like pronouncing words, comprehending the content of the text, getting vocabulary, and also understanding of grammar. Through the text, the students can get information and the knowledge and also the vocabulary and grammar. It is provided in some types which are called genre. The types of genre are arranged well based on the curriculum.

In the reading section, every student usually get difficulties in comprehending a long text or a dense text such as narrative text. When they found long text with many paragraph, they would get bored firstly. Getting bored makes them get difficulties in comprehending the text. Sometimes, the student

who are in the first year of senior high school get a text that has most complex sentences which make the students difficult to understand the text.

There are many factors which cause students' reading ability is low, such as the textbook which is difficult to be understood, low readability of textbook, inappropriate teaching methods, students' interest, etc. The other factor such as; reading text that have presented does not match with the student age. It causes students cannot read a text because it does not reach students' grade. As a result, they do not understand what the content of the text and they can not answer some questions based on the text correctly.

Nowadays there have been many English textbooks published to fulfill the need of teaching-learning process and as an English teacher should choose the textbook that is appropriate to the students. The textbook should hold all instrument based on curriculum needed by the students. However, there is no perfect book that can fulfill various kinds of students needs. Sometimes some of them are not appropriate with the standard of curriculum yet. In this study the researcher chose *Pathway to English 1, English for Senior High School* textbook *Grade X* published by Erlangga to be analyzed.

Pathway to English 1, English textbook is one of series of English books for Senior High School. The book is published in line with the 2013 curriculum. All the activities in this book cover the four language skills namely; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They encourage students to develop their competence in phonological/graphological and lexicogramatical levels, as well as their discourse and cultural levels. However reading is one of the most important

skills in learning language. In other words, reading is considered as one of the most important skills which language students should obtain, particularly as it helps to build vocabulary and leads to lifelong learning and improvement in first and second language skills. Reading is considered as one of the most important skills which language students should obtain, particularly as it helps to build vocabulary and leads to lifelong learning and improvement in first and second language skills. Reading is an activity to get understanding from written text and the construction of the meaning of written text through an interaction between readers and the text. The main purpose of reading text is comprehension. Comprehension is the essence of reading because the goal of producing a written language is communication of messages.

Based on the description above, teachers and schools need to choose suitable textbooks and material for students. Since a good textbook should be readable for learners to make our intent transmittable to the intended learners. How well authors succeed will depend on the readability of the text they produce because the suitability of textbook and students' reading level will help student in comprehending reading text. If the students can understand the text well so they will increase their achievement . It means that textbooks should be readable for readers.

Gray and Leary, cited in DuBay (2004:18) identify four factors affecting readability, namely: content (including propositions, organization, coherence), style (including semantic and syntactic elements), design (including typography,

format, and illustrations), and structure (including chapters, headings and navigation). Those reasons make the selection of textbook used by teachers become relatively crucial. The textbook has to fit with the current curriculum, schools syllabus along with student's needs and also the aims and goals of teaching. Therefore, teachers have to choose the appropriate and ideal textbook as beneficial for both students and teacher as possible.

Readability or text difficulty is an important in Applied Linguistics. Establishing text difficulty is relevant to the teacher and syllabus designer who wish to select appropriate materials for learners at a variety of ability levels. It is also critical to test developers in selecting reading texts at appropriate levels for inclusion into the reading sub-tests of examinations. Writers of texts for various audiences also need guidance related to the range of factors which make texts more or less accessible.

Thus, Effort to measure the readability of textbook can be applied by using readability formula. There are many formulas that can be applied. They are Flesch Reading Ease Formula, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, SMOG Readability Formula, Gunning FOG Index Fry Readability Formula, etc. However, the researcher only use one of them, the Flesch Reading Ease Formula. This formula is more accurate and simple and it is primarily used to assess the difficulty of a reading passage written in English.

In line with the description above, the readability formula can be used to examine the readability of text. The text is easy to read by students who have high readability. Readability of text is very different from primary until senior

high school student because age differences can affect students in understanding the text. As Flesch (1948) stated in his readability score, the suitable level for students depends on the text. This formula is a numerical value between 0 and 100. The higher the Flesch Reading Ease score, the greater the number of people who can comprehend the document easily. For example if the score 50-60 is fairly difficult which is suitable for 10th - 12th grade of senior high school. It means that the text is appropriate for the student and they can learn the text easily. If the score of text in a textbook is not suitable for their grade or more difficult than their grade so they do not understand what the content of the text .It means that the textbook has low readability.

In fact, the low readability of the English reading textbook, the length of sentences and many unfamiliar words which cause low text readability can be found in a textbook. It can be seen from the example below:

Sumatra is an elongated landmass spanning a diagonal northwest-southeast axis. The Indian Ocean borders the west, northwest ,and southwest sides of Sumatra, with the island chain of Simeuleu, Nias and Mentawai bordering the southwestern coast. On the northeast side the narrow Strait of Malacca separates the island from the Malay Peninsula,an extension of the Eurasian continent. On the southeast, the narrow Sunda Strait separates Sumatra from Java. The northern tip of Sumatra borders the Andaman islands, while on the lower eastern side are the islands of Bangka and Belitung , Karimata srait and the Java Sea. The Bukit Barisan mountains, which contain several active volcanoes, from the backbone of the island, while that northeast sides are outlying lowlands with swamps, mangrove and complex river systems. The equator crosses the island at its center, in West Sumatra and Riau provinces. (Taken from Sumatra, Pathway to English 1,2014 :272)

From the example above it can be seen that the sentences are too long and the paragraph contains of complex sentences. Also it is found that many

unfamiliar words in each sentence . The text has most content carrying lexical item such as verb, noun, adjectives and adverb. The more content carrying lexical items the text has the more difficult the student has. Actually the sentences can be separated into simple clause and use familiar word to make student understand the text. It makes students assume that reading text is difficult.

Thus , the suitability level (readability) of a teaching material is very important because it affects the motivation and interest of the reader to read and understand the text. Readability is an attempt to match the reading level of written material to the "reading with understanding" level of the reader. John DM. Neil (1992:212) states that a text can be readable when the reader can match the concepts of the text and has scheme for processing it.

Some studies have been conducted to investigate readability to analyze texts to find the right fit between students and texts. One of them is Handayani (2014) the research about *Readability Level of Science Book for Junior High School Year VIII*, published by the Ministry of National Education Directorate General Management of Primary Education Directorate of Junior Secondary High School Development 2009. It is found that the lexis used contain many unfamiliar words and new ones for the students. In terms of grammatical complexity of the sentence it is found that the complexities are quite high with an average sentence length of 14 words per sentence. The complexity of lexis and grammar in the Science book affects the students understanding although the students have a good enough background of English mastery.

In conclusion, based on the results of the research is the Science book: Student's book for Junior High School Year VIII levels is less appropriate for junior high school students. The level of complexity of the sentence in the book is suitable with the level of students, but the lexis used, foreign words and new words, cause the students difficulty in understanding the existing discourse in the book.

Further, based on the descriptions above, the researcher is interested in conducting the research relates to readability of text in English textbook for senior high school grade X that is published by Erlangga , the title is *Pathway to English 1*. The reason the researcher chooses this textbook as the object of this study is because this book is the first English textbook in the market released with the current curriculum. Second, it is mostly used in Senior high school so it is important to know whether the reading texts are appropriate or not for the students. Third, the writer wants to know readability of texts from the lexical density of reading text in the textbook since the readability of reading text affects the students' mastery quality upon the text's content.

Based on the explanations above, the researcher would like to know the readability of texts in English textbook in term of reading text found in is *Pathway to English 1, English for Senior High School Grade X* textbook published by Erlangga.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem will be formulated as the following:

1. What are the levels of text readability in *Pathway to English 1* text book?
2. What type of genre which has the highest level of readability found in the reading texts in *Pathway to English 1* textbook?
3. How are levels of text readability realized among the types of text in the reading texts of *Pathway to English 1* textbook?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are formulated as in the following:

1. To find out the levels of text readability in *Pathway to English 1* textbook.
2. To find out the type of genre is the highest score of the text readability in *Pathway to English 1* textbook.
3. To describe how the levels of texts readability are realized among the types of reading text in *Pathway to English 1* textbook.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study focused only on text readability that is realized in *Pathway to English 1* textbook for grade X of Senior high School textbook published by Erlangga. It consists of 30 reading texts and written in 4 types of genres (recount, narrative, explanation and descriptive text). The researcher chose the reading texts in the textbook by choosing two texts in each genre. It means there were 8 texts analyzed in this study.

In this research, the readability text is explored by the calculating of Flesch reading ease formula and Lexical Density by Eggins (2004). Therefore, there are seven levels and frequencies score of text readability and three levels of lexical density.

Therefore, to avoid the scope of this study is too wide and that more focused research, the researcher make a limitation. There were three main aspects analyzed in this study. First the levels of readability text of reading text in *Pathway to English I* textbook. Second , type of genre which has the highest level of readability found in the reading texts in *Pathway to English I* textbook. Third, how the levels of text readability were realized among the types of text in the reading texts of *Pathway to English I* textbook.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be relevant and significant theoretically. The findings can give contribution to all readers for those who are concerned with this field. In the following significancies of the study are stated theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, the study can enrich the knowledge about analyzing text readability in English textbook.

Practically, the usefulness of findings is useful for :

1. The teachers, who wants to matching the textbooks with the students' grade level by counting the text of readability.
2. The students, to know what kind of text that appropriate for them by using readability formulas.
3. The librarians, to match the text with the readers.
4. The writers/publishers, in order to publish the textbooks, which are appropriate lexical density to the students/readers level.
5. The researchers, as their reference to investigate text readability in a textbook.