

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

There are four basic skills in teaching and learning English as a foreign language, they are; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Those four basic language skills cannot be separated, thus, teachers teach all of those skills integratedly during teaching and learning process.

Reading, as a receptive way in learning language, plays a significant role in developing students' English mastery. Alyousef (2006:64) reading is defined as an "interactive" process between a reader and a text which leads to automaticity or reading fluency. In this process, the reader interacts dynamically with the text as s/he tries to elicit the meaning and where various kinds of knowledge are being used.

The previous statement implies by mastering reading skill, students can automatically improve their other skills of English because the more students receive by reading, the more students can produce through language. Thus, it is needed to improve students' reading skill. In relation to the students' reading skill improvement, teachers should facilitate students appropriate textbook in order to make students motivated in reading.

Tok (2010:509) also states that textbooks play a prominent role in the teaching-learning process and they are the primary agents in conveying the knowledge to the learners. Besides, one of the basic functions of textbooks is to

make the existence of knowledge available and apparent to the learner in a selected, easy and organized way.

In the fact, unfortunately, there are many student's textbooks that have not been suitable with the students' reading level. It means that the contents of students' textbook haven't matched to the students' reading level. Thus, in relation to the difficult materials in the textbook that students face, students become unmotivated to read their own textbook and even this case will make students unmotivated in learning.

It means that some textbooks, themselves, that are claimed as the primary agents in conveying the knowledge to the learners cannot be guaranteed as a proper source to be used. This recommends that teachers surely need to select and choose the students' English textbook well in order to make students motivated in reading their own textbook. In relation to the good English textbook, thing that is more important to be paid attention by teachers is the reading materials as reading skill is a receptive way for improving the other skills in mastering English. Therefore, analyzing the quality of reading texts is important to know whether the published English textbook that has been used by teachers and students can be categorized as a proper source in teaching and learning process.

The extent of the difficulty in reading and understanding a text is discussed in readability. Dubay (2004:3) states that readability is what makes some texts easier to read than others. Asem (2013:7) says that the concept of readability is one of the most important factors that determines the efficacy of a written material. In addition, Al-Tamimi and Jaradat (2014:370) state that readability refers to the

ability of the reader to understand and comprehend a given text. To sum up, readability is a concept that determines the degree of the difficulty in reading a text in which the difficulty itself should be adjusted to the readers' level of reading comprehension.

There are several readability approaches in order to analyze the quality of texts involved. The approaches of readability are: (1) Quantitative Approach which consists of three approaches, they are: Readability Formula; Cloze Procedure; and Checklist and scales and (2) Qualitative approach which considers the reader characteristics such as the background of reader's knowledge, purpose of reading, personal interest and so on as determining factors of the readability level of text.

Based on the researcher's experience while doing her internship in SMA Global Prima Medan, the researcher found that some of the students could not understand the text which was available in their own textbook, while the others could. The researcher alleged that this case was caused by their textbook. They used textbook that didn't match the needs of all students. For some students the textbook had been in line with their reading level while others hadn't. The researcher assumed that the textbook contains some texts that consist of complex sentences which are difficult to be understood by some students. Indeed, the textbook itself was published by one of the international publishers. It was published by Pearson. The researcher makes up her mind to do this research supported by the statement of Al-Tamimi and Jaradat (2014:370) that readability has been widely used in education in order to write and select the appropriate

book and assessment for students' level. Its usage is not restricted only to education; it has been widely used in industry for writing manuals and instructions for the users in appropriate language. This statement implies that readability has been approved for analyzing the quality of texts in case how readable and suitable the text to its average readers.

Therefore, the researcher conducts this research to know whether the reading materials in students' textbook have been appropriate to their grade and she focuses her research on measuring the readability level of reading texts in a textbook used by the eleventh grade students of SMA Global Prima Medan based on the Flesch Reading Ease Formula.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of this research are:

1. What are the readability scores of reading texts in Choices textbook used by the eleventh grade students in SMA Global Prima Medan according to Flesch Reading Ease Formula?
2. How are the readability levels of reading texts in Choices textbook used by the eleventh grade students in SMA Global Prima Medan according to Flesch Reading Ease Formula?

E. The Significance of the Study

By conducting this research, it is expected that the findings of the study give both theoretical and practical significances.

Theoretically, the findings can enrich the horizons about the theories of language study, especially theories of readability as a tool to measure and identify the quality of texts in which how readable and suitable the texts contained in a textbook with average readers.

Practically, the findings may provide teachers useful information in choosing the suitable textbook with their students' reading level. Furthermore, this may help students to improve their reading comprehension by providing the suitable textbook which consists of readable texts. Finally, this study can be a guideline and reference for the next researchers in conducting the same research.