

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Reading is one of the important skills that students need to master in English, besides speaking, writing, and listening. Reading is used by the readers to obtain information. Budiantari et al (2013:4) state that reading can be said as a skill that plays a very important role on teaching learning activity. By reading, people will get many kinds of information. We can get some profitable information or knowledge from electronic and printed media. Hermida (2009:23) states that reading is an academic text. It does not simply involve by finding information on the text itself. Therefore, it is a process of working with the text. When reading an academic text, the reader recreates the meaning of the text together with the author.

One of the key components in teaching English is the learning material. Learning material should be appropriate with the need and level of the students. Diniah (2013:75) states that materials on textbooks should be authentic that the students can see that the textbooks are relevant to their real lives. Hutchinson and Waters (1987:107) explain the good material as follows:

“Materials should (1) provide a stimulus to learning; (2) help to organize the teaching learning process; (3) embody a view of the nature of language and learning; (4) reflect the nature of learning task; (5) have a very useful function in broadening the basis of teacher training; and (6) provide models of correct and appropriate language use.”

Reading an English textbook can help students to enrich their vocabulary because when they are reading a text, they do not thoroughly read it but they also

have to comprehend the meaning of the text. Thus, the content of the textbook should be appropriate with the background and the students' needs.

Rahmawati and Lestari (2012:1) state that textbook is a kind teaching and learning media most commonly used in every teaching and learning process although many innovated media have been developed to help the educators to teach in new ways. Looking at the textbook with good quality content can help the students to improve their learning outcomes.

A good English textbook is readable, understandable, and comprehensible. The textbook which has those criteria will make the students interested in learning English. The content in the textbook is not appropriate with the level of the students. The text in the textbook tends to be too difficult, not clear or too easy for the students. It makes them lose their motivation in learning and mastering the text because they think that reading does not match with their ability.

Consequently, a teacher has to select a textbook which is appropriate to the whole students in the class according to their competence level and the different background of knowledge. Besides, the teacher has to consider whether or not the materials in the textbook are appropriate with the syllabus and curriculum. One technique to evaluate the appropriateness of the textbook is by analyzing the readability level of the reading texts in the book. Dubay (2004:3) states that readability is what makes some texts easier to read than others. It is often confused with legibility, which concerns typeface and layout. All the stated reasons give a strong argument why the high quality of textbook is really important to the students because it plays very crucial parts in teaching and learning processes.

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 give the appropriate material for the students, especially texts that can be understood by the students.

Appropriate readability of a reading material will motivate the students to enjoy reading the materials. In result, it will be easier for the students to comprehend their reading materials and surely, it will help their learning process. Flesch (1949:147) states that the inappropriate reading materials will make the students bored and frustrated, furthermore if the students are forced to read a reading material which is too difficult for them, the students will not only fall behind in their education but will also have a miserable time.

Many factors cause students get low scores in the reading test, such as; test in the national test does not match with material in the student textbook, the national test is more difficult than test which has been given to student by the teacher. A national exam which is taken from the text directly from abroad or the readability of text is very difficult for the students.

In national examination, the question form is provided by the government in National Education Standards Agencies (BSNP) is applying the multiple choice form. By using the multiple choices, it will be very relevant and suitable. The readability of text and objective assessment in the national exam are expected by the students. Students can measure their comprehension to answer the question in the national exam.

Based on preliminary observation to the students of SMP Negeri 27 Medan, especially on ninth grade, the researcher gives two reading texts, one of the texts from the textbook entitled *English in Focus* and one from reading text in national examination in academic year 2015/2016. The researcher chooses type of text that is procedure text. The students consist of 33 students. The students must choose the correct words to complete the text. After they completed the text, the researcher gets the average score of all students. The average score of reading text in the textbook is 40 and the average score of reading text in national examination is 68. From this score, the reading text in national examination has the higher readability than reading text in the textbook.

The researcher will try to conduct a research about the readability between reading texts in English textbook and reading texts in national examination. The researcher will do the research to compare the texts in the textbook with the reading texts in national examination of the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 27 Medan. The researcher chooses the ninth grade because it will focus on their national examination.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the reasons above, the problem of the study is formulated as follows: “How is the readability of reading texts in the textbook compared with the reading texts in national examination used by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 27 Medan?”

C. The Objective of the Study

Related to the problem of the study above, the objective of this study is to analyze the readability between the reading texts and national examination texts used by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 27 Medan.

D. The Scope of the Study

In this research, the researcher focuses on the three reading texts in the English textbook entitled *English in Focus* published by Pusat Perbukuan Departemen Pendidikan Nasional in 2008 and three national examination reading texts in academic year 2015/2016. Related to the problem of the study above, the objective of this study is to analyze the readability between the reading texts and national examination reading texts used by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 27 Medan and by applying Dale-Chall Readability formula and Cloze Test.

E. The Significance of the Study

The result of this research is expected to give benefits theoretically and practically, as follows:

1. Theoretically, this study will extend and enrich the theories of readability as a tool to measure the quality of reading texts in textbook and national examination reading texts.
2. Practically, this study will give the teachers information in selecting suitable textbooks as the additional material for the students and the suitability with the text in national examination. For the students, this study will be useful in improving their reading comprehension skill by providing suitable textbook with readable texts and can train them to confront the national examination. This study is also hopefully becomes a guideline in conducting readability study for the next researchers.

