

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Learning English is important, especially for Vocational High School students who are going to face the real working field right after graduating from schools. In learning English, there are four skills that have to be mastered by the students; they are listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of the skills is important in order that people get easier to obtain information from written text is reading. Reading is the skill that is learnt when people studies foreign language in educational institution. By reading people will be able to get many kinds of information or knowledge whether it from magazine, newspaper, books, notes, memos, letters, specifications, regulations, journals or manuals reports. It also includes forms that contain at least one paragraph of text. There are kind of reading texts in English Learning such as narrative text, recount text, Descriptive text, report text, explanation text, news item, spoof text, analytical exposition text, discussion text and review text. Based on Curriculum 2013, there are three kinds of texts in syllabus for the first year students of senior high school/ vocational high school; they are descriptive text, recount text, and narrative text.

One of the main components in a curriculum is textbooks. They determine many aspects such as the content, the procedures, the methods for teaching and learning. They also have a systematic syllabus for teachers to follow in teaching.

Textbooks usually published by authorized publishers. In addition, the government of Indonesia tries to make curriculums periodically which suit the demands in the global era. Several options of English language textbook are available under the guidance of National Curriculum Standards in Indonesia. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia has provided English language textbook for every level which originally published in the form of electronic book and freely printed by educators. This kind of English textbook is mostly used by the teacher and students to teach English lessons especially for those who teach in public school.

In the Regulation of The Minister of Education and Culture Number 71 of 2014 about the textbook lessons and teacher guides for Primary and Secondary education. This government role claimed that English teachers have to use the English textbook as guidance accordance to the curriculum applied. And another choice of English language textbook is the commercial textbook that also based in the current curriculum guidelines. Textbooks are generally sensitive to the students' needs; it should be well designed and well-written so it can be used effectively in the teaching learning process. A good English textbook is readable, understandable and comprehensible for students. They are easy to read and understand. It will motivate them to learn English. If they face difficulty in understanding the textbook, they usually get bored and it will make them frustrated in learning English.

Besides considering the criteria of a good textbook according to some experts, the teacher must know the appropriate materials to teach. The choice of the

materials in English textbooks can determine the quality of teaching. Because there are many English textbooks are offered by many publishers, even most of the textbooks are use standard of curriculum (Kurikulum 2013). Teachers should be able to choose the best one. So, as a teacher who uses the textbook, the lessons to be presented to the students should suit the students' need. Otherwise, the teacher doesn't know which books are appropriate with the students' grade or level.

One of the methods to help the teacher choosing appropriate reading materials English textbook for the student is by considering the readability of reading material found in the textbook. Dubay (2004) states that readability is what make some texts easier to read than other. It means that readability refers to the difficulty level of the written text based on the level of the students' educational background. According to Richards (1992), readability means how easily written materials can be read and understood. This depends on several factors including the average length, the number of new words contained sentences, and the grammatical complexity of the language used in a passage. Those are the parts to measure the readability level of the reading text (Richards, 1992:30). Analysing the readability level of reading materials can also help the teacher to predict whether the text is difficult, plain, or easy for the students. If the readability level of reading material is not suitable with students' level, it will be difficult for them to understand. Students commonly get difficulties in answering questions based on the text such as about the main idea, details, the moral values of the text, and etc. They find it difficult to understand because they think that the reading material is hard to be comprehended especially in grasping the main idea of the paragraphs and unfamiliar vocabulary.

So, to avoid it, teachers' task is to evaluate the readability level of text before using it in teaching and learning activities.

To support the selection of suitable textbook, teachers need to see if the texts in the textbook are readable and suitable with the students' reading level. There are three points of view in selecting text for reading material; they are readability, suitability of content, and exploitability (Nutall, 1982). According to Schulz (1982) there are three ways in measuring the readability level of the reading texts those are, by using the instructor's judgment, comprehension testing by cloze procedure, and the last by using statistical readability formulas based on some types of tally of linguistic elements. From this statement, it means that to evaluate readability of the material will be given to the students is let them to read the material, and question them about the author's message. The second technique is cloze readability procedure, which the teacher prepares a cloze passage taken from the material slated, then pupils fill in the deleted words. Another way is by using a readability formula involving use of average sentence length, vocabulary list, and syllable length to estimate reading difficulty level.

After knowing that selecting a textbook is important, the researcher tries to make a research about it. To answer and understand about the readability of reading materials in a textbook, she visited SMKN 1 Dolok Masihul to asking permission to do observation on Monday, 2nd March 2020. After she got permission, the researcher met the English teacher and discussed when the English teacher has spare time to do interview. On Wednesday, 4th March 2020, the researcher visited the school to interviewing the English teacher. The researcher asked the teacher

some questions about which the reading materials in English textbook which is used by the computer and network engineering students especially at the tenth grade of the school. The researcher chose the tenth grade students especially in computer and network engineering program because she considered if the tenth grade of computer and network engineering program is better than the eleventh grade and twelfth grade in this research.

As mention above the researcher got the preliminary data from interviewing the English teacher about which textbook used in teaching and learning process, the English teacher states there is only one textbook that they used in teaching learning process especially for teaching reading materials, the English textbook entitled “*Bahasa Inggris*” for SMA/MA/SMK/MAK grade X. This book is student books that prepared by the Government for the implementation of the Curriculum 2013 revised year 2016 written by Utami Widiati, et al. This students’ book is prepared and reviewed by the coordination of the Ministry of Education and Culture Indonesia and is used in the early stages of applying the Curriculum 2013. In teaching reading, the English teacher applied cooperative learning strategy and divided students into group discussion of 4-5 students. She said that almost all of the students have same problem in learning reading especially reading several kinds of texts in textbook. The students have difficult to comprehend the reading materials in textbook and not interest to reading the texts, it also because the reading materials are not suitable for them.

Based on the situation above, the researcher is interested to conduct a study entitled “*Readability of Reading Materials in Kemendikbud English Textbook*”

Revised 2016 for the Tenth Grade Students of Computer and Network Engineering Program at SMKN 1 Dolok Masihul”. Therefore, this study aimed to describe the readability level of the reading materials on that textbook especially on tenth grade students according to their educational levels.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the research problem is formulated as follows: “How is the readability level of reading materials in Kemendikbud English textbook revised 2016 for the tenth grade students of computer and network engineering program at SMKN 1 Dolok Masihul?”

C. The Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is as follows: “To describe the readability level of the reading materials in Kemendikbud English textbook revised 2016 for the tenth grade students of computer and network engineering program written by Utami Widiati, et al.”

D. The Scope of the Study

This study is conducted to describe the readability of reading materials in Kemendikbud English textbook revised 2016 written by Utami Widiati, et al. that are taken from nine chapters provided in the textbook which is used by the tenth grade students of computer and network engineering program at SMKN 1 Dolok Masihul. The researcher is focused to analyse the readability of reading materials in three kinds of genre in the textbook.

E. The Significances of the Study

By doing this study there is much benefit that can be reached. The result of the study, hopefully can give positive contribution for theoretically and practically;

1. Theoretical Significance

This study gives information in selecting the appropriate reading materials in English textbook.

2. Practical Significances

a. For Teachers

The finding of this study will be useful for English teachers in selecting English textbooks and knowing whether the reading materials in the textbook are readable and suitable for their students.

b. For Students

Reading the readable text will help students in improving their reading skill.

c. For Other Researchers

This research finding will be useful for other researchers who want to investigate the English textbook, especially dealing with the readability.