

**AN ANALYSIS OF READABILITY LEVEL OF READING TEXTS IN
ENGLISH TEXTBOOK ENTITLED “EXPERIENCING ENGLISH” FOR
GRADE VIII JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUBLISHED BY MASMEDIA**

A Thesis

Submitted to the English Department as a Particular Fulfillment of
Requirement for S1- Degree



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2022**

ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF READABILITY LEVEL OF READING TEXTS IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK ENTITLED “EXPERIENCING ENGLISH” FOR GRADE VIII JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PUBLISHED BY MASMEDIA

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This thesis entitled “An Analysis Of Readability Level Of Reading Texts In English Textbook Entitled “Experiencing English” For Grade VIII Junior High School Published By Masmedia”, in this research, it was found out that the students face some difficulties in comprehending some reading texts in the textbook. Based on the data, 30 students of eighth-grade only 11 (37%) got the score above criteria and 19 (63%) students got the score under criteria. Therefore, the researcher intended to find out the readability of the textbook.

This research used descriptive qualitative analysis and for the data source Experiencing English textbook for Grade VIII Junior High School was used. This research collected the data by using two techniques called "identification and counting". Meanwhile, the instruments of this research were Flesch readability formula and Flesch Kincaid Grade level formula.

Based on the result of Flesch Reading Ease Formula, from seven reading texts, 4 (57.14%) reading texts were easy for eighth grade students and 1 (14.28%) reading text was difficult for eighth graders. There were only 2 reading texts (28.57%) suitable for eighth grade students. Meanwhile, the result of Flesch Kincaid Grade Level formula showed that there were 5 texts (71.42%) had low readability, 1 text (14.28%) had high readability for eighth grade students and there was only 1 (14.28%) reading text suitable for eighth grade students.

Keywords: Reading Textbook, Readability, Reading Comprehension.



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DECLARATION

Hereby, I state a thesis entitled “An Analysis Of Readability Level Of Reading Texts In English Textbook Entitled “Experiencing English” For Grade VIII Junior High School Published By Masmedia” is completely my own work, I am fully aware that I have quoted some statements and theories from various sources and they are properly acknowledged in the text.

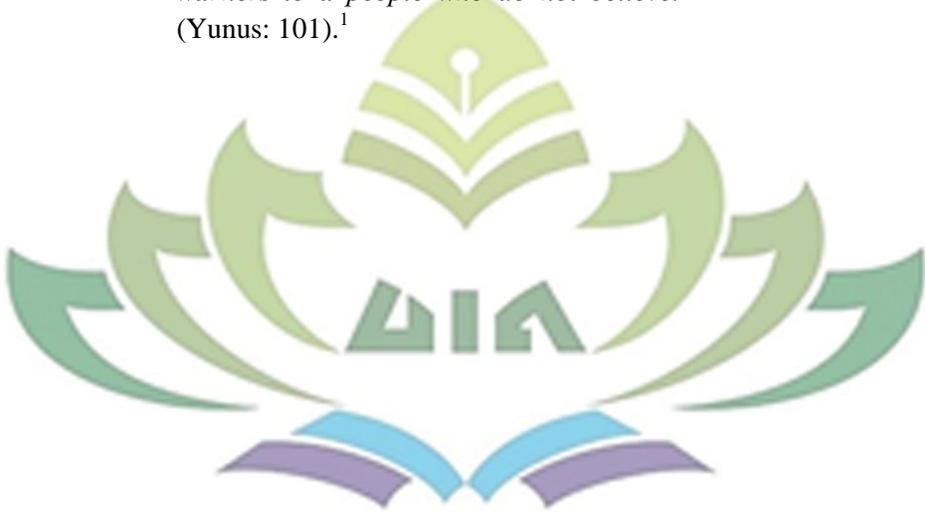


MOTTO

قُلْ أَنْظِرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا تُغْنِي الْآيَاتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ
قَوْمٍ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

The Meaning:

“Say, ‘Observe what is in the heavens and the earth.’ But of no avail will be signs or warners to a people who do not believe.”
(Yunus: 101).¹



¹ Saheeh International, *The Qur'an English Meaning*, (Jeddah: Al-Muntada Al-Islami, 2004), p. 188

DEDICATION

From the deepest place my heart, this thesis is dedicated to everyone who cares and loves me. I would like to dedicate this thesis specifically to:

1. My beloved parents: Mr. Teuku Syaiful Bahri and Mrs. Sumarni who have bestowed me with loves and affections and tirelessly pray for my life and success.
2. My beloved sister: Cut Anin Syakinah who always support and suggests my decision in pursuing my success.
3. My beloved Almamater UIN Raden Intan Lampung.



CURICULUM VITAE

Teuku Syahlefi was born in Bandar Lampung on February, 19th 1997. Teuku is the first child of two siblings of Father Teuku Syaiful Bahri and mother Sumarni. Teuku has one younger sister.

In Teuku's academic background, Teuku studied at the age of seven in Elementary school of SDN 1 Pengajaran Teluk Betung and graduated on 2009. Then Teuku continued to Junior High School of SMP Perintis 2 Bandar Lampung and finished on 2012. On the same year, Teuku was accepted to the nearby Senior High School which was SMA Perintis 2 Bandar Lampung and graduated on 2015. Stepping to higher education, on 2016, Teuku was accepted to one of state university in Bandar Lampung name State Islamic University of Raden Intan Lampung (UIN Raden Intan Lampung) for studying in English Department of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training Faculty.



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The final project cannot be completed without those who are helpful. Thankful to a lot of people who has helped, supported and prayed for this final project. Hence, best wishes to give the sincerest gratitude and appreciation is given to:

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Finally, nothing is perfect neither this thesis. Any corrections, comments, and criticisms for the goodness of this thesis are always open-heartedly welcome.

Bandar Lampung, January 10th 2022
The Researcher,

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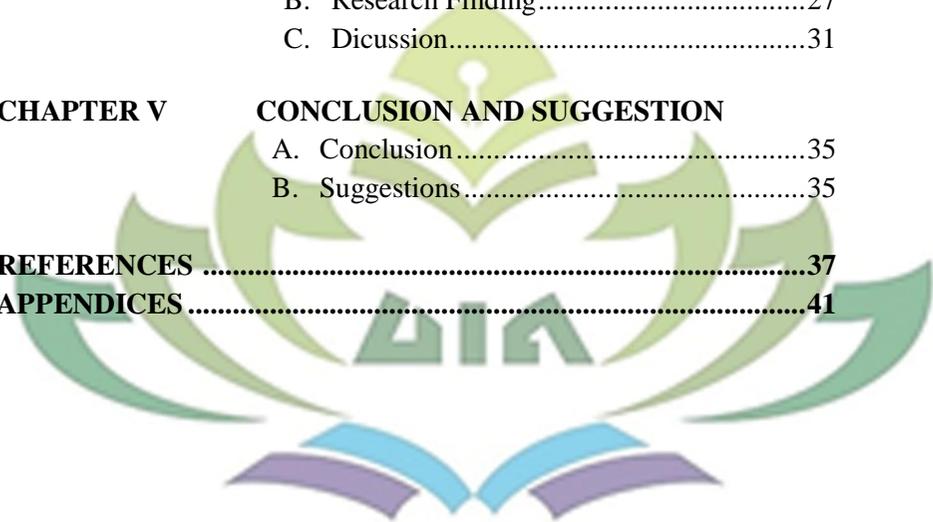
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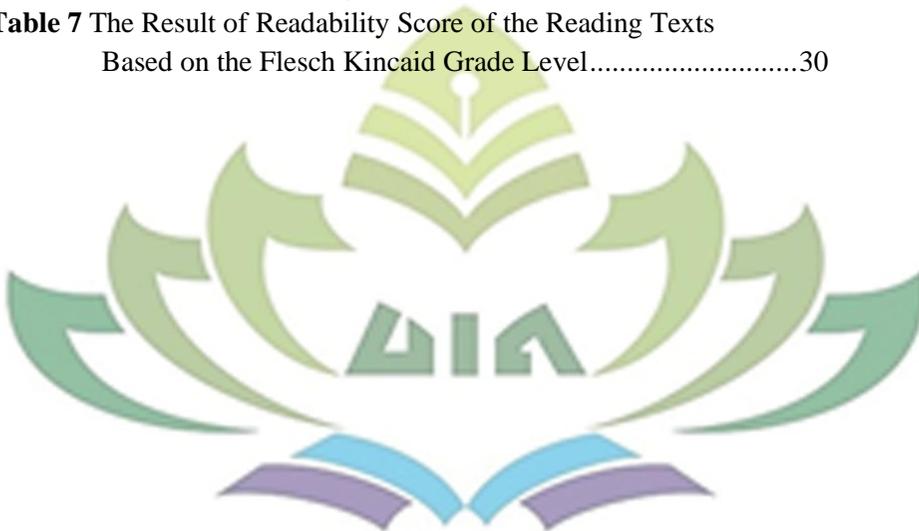
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the problem

English is one of the foreign languages that is very important to learn because there are many benefits if we mastered it well, such as easy to get a job, be able to interact with global society and so on. According to the ministry of National Education, English is required subject that must be taught in several education levels from junior high school, senior high school, up to universities to allow the students to communicate and master English well.¹ It can be stated that English is one of the compulsory subjects that students should be mastering from the beginner level up to university.

Moreover, English is become a major subject that has been used in the curriculum in Indonesia. There are four language skills that should be mastered in teaching and learning English, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading is one of the four-language skills that the students need to learn and one of the measures of academic success as it is effective and responsive. This is related with Grellet who states that reading is a constant process of guessing, and what one brings to the next is often more important than what one finds in it. In reading, the students should be taught to use what they know to understand unknown elements, whether these are ideas or simple words.²

There are many kinds of media instruction in teaching reading, such as power point presentation, textbook, etc. Textbook is one of media instruction that is used in almost every grade level student at school in teaching reading. Textbook is crucial teaching learning material composed of text or images that is used in many schools and facilitating sequences of learning activities. Moreover, Brown

¹ Siti Jamilah, *English in indonesia primary school international journal of English and education [on-line]*, available: <http://researchengine.com/siti/0908.html> [februari, 14 2017]

² Grellet. F, *Developing Reading Skills*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.7

states that the most obvious and most common form of material support for language instruction comes through textbooks.³

For the students, the textbook can guide to organize their learning both inside and outside the classroom. It helps them to learn the material better, faster, clearer and easier. In the textbook includes the reading materials, the students can develop their ability and understand the reading materials by reading. The role of textbook is very important for both students and teachers in teaching learning process. However, choosing the appropriate English textbook is not easy. It is often difficult to convince students of English as a foreign language that text in English can be understood even though there are vocabulary items and structures that students have never seen before.⁴

Considering that issue, to finding readable text is important role in learning and teaching process. In other words, in order to encourage students to improve their reading skills, we must know how to match text or textbooks with students. Therefore, a good English textbook must be readable, understandable, and comprehensible for the students. Textbooks can be systematic about the amount of vocabulary presented to the student and allow the student to study on his own outside the class.⁵ It means that, with the existence of textbook will motivate them to learn English. If they have difficulty to understand the textbook, they usually get bored and it will make them frustrated in learning English.

Based on the preliminary research in SMP Negeri 6 Bandar Lampung on 15th September 2020, the researcher conducted an interview to an English teacher, namely Mrs. Moengil.⁶ The

³ Brown, H. Douglas, *Teaching by Principles 2 nd edition*, (California: Longman, 2001), p.137

⁴ Jack C Richard, *The Role of a Textbooks in Language Program*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 273

⁵ Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, (London: Longman Group Limited, 1983), p. 219

⁶ Interview to Moengil, S.pd, *The English Teacher of the Eighth-Grade, SMP Negeri 6 Bandar Lampung*

researcher asked about the textbook used in her class. She usually used textbook entitled “Experiencing English for Grade VIII”. She said that the students face some difficulties in comprehending some reading texts in the textbook and the reading texts on the textbook are difficult to be understood for her students. Then, some texts are too long, so they felt bored to read it. Moreover, the researcher asked the teacher about the criteria of the score in reading skill, according to Brown, the criteria of the students’ reading score is poor if the students get 45-67. Based on the data attained by reading test from the students of eighth-grade at SMP Negeri 6 Bandar Lampung, from 30 students of eighth-grade only 11 (37%) got above criteria and 19 (63%) students got under criteria. Therefore, it can be said that the students’ reading comprehension is low. It can be said that textbooks which are used in the school have not maximally helped the students in improving their reading comprehension.

Several researchers regarding to this issue have been conducted. The first previous research conducted by Hidayat (2015) discussed about The Readability Level of Reading Texts in the English Textbook Entitled “Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/MAK” for Grade XI Semester 1 Published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. This study was qualitative descriptive and the writer used Flesch Reading Ease formula to find out the readability of reading text in the textbook. There are five reading texts in the textbook. The results of this study are one text in Easy level, Reading Ease Score 82.94, two texts in Fairly Easy level, Reading Ease Score 71.06 and 76.48, one text in standard level, Reading Ease Score 61.83 and one text in Fairly Difficult Reading Ease Score 54.70. There is only one text appropriate with grade level.⁷

The second previous research by Bilqis (2018) discussed about An Analysis the Readability Level of Reading Texts in English

⁷ Hidayat, *The Readability Level of Reading Texts in the English Textbook Entitled “Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/MAK” For Grade XI Semester 1 Published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia*, (IAIN Palangkaraya, 2015), p.1

Textbook Entitled “Bahasa Inggris” for Senior High School Student Grade XII. This research was descriptive qualitative. The data were gathered through analysis the readability level of the texts used Flasch Reading Ease Formula. The finding results of this research show that there are 6 texts from 16 texts that is readable or suitable with Senior High School students grade XII. Those are categorizing as readability level range Score 50-60 and readability level range score 30-50. The description style of the text is fairly difficult and difficult.⁸

The third previous study conducted by Zantoni (2018) discussed about The Readability Level of Reading Texts in The English Textbook Entitled English on Sky 2 for the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Budaya Bandar Lampung Published by Erlangga. This research used quantitative approach to analyze the data. Based on the result of reading ease formula, from sixteen reading texts, ten (62.5%) reading texts are too ease for eighth grade students. They were only two reading texts (12.5%) suitable for eighth grade students. Meanwhile, the result of Flesch Kincaid Grade Level formula showed ten reading texts (62.5%) the score under the eighth-grade students and five reading texts (31.25%) above the grade eighth, only one text was suitable for the eighth-grade students.⁹

From those several researches above, the researcher wants to know whether the text of the textbook used by the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 6 Bandar Lampung is suitable in readability level with their grade or not. Therefore, this research will not test whether certain textbook is good or bad, but the most important thing from this research is the suitability of the textbook in the readability level texts.

⁸ Bilqis, *An Analysis The Readability Level of Reading Texts in English Textbook Entitled “Bahasa Inggris” for Senior High School Student Grade XII*, (Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya; 2018), p.1

⁹ Zantoni, *The Readability Level of Reading Texts in The English Textbook Entitled English on Sky 2 For the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Budaya Bandar Lampung Published by Erlangga*, (UIN Raden Intan Lampung; 2018), p.1

Based on the background of problem, the researcher will conduct research the level entitled “An Analysis of Readability Level of Reading Texts in English Textbook Entitled “Experiencing English” for Grade VIII Junior High School Published by Masmedia”.

B. Identification of The Problem

Based on the background of the problem above, the researcher identifies the problem as follows:

1. The students got difficulty in understanding the text.
2. The textbook that is used had not been able to help students maximally to increase their reading ability.

C. Limitation of The Problem

Based on the problem, the researcher focused on the subject matter in analyzing the readability level of the selected reading texts on English textbook that is used by the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 6 Bandar Lampung; there are seven reading texts in this English textbook. The researcher took the underlying theories which were used to analyze the data from a theory statistical readability formula Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch Kincaid Grade level.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the statement above, the researcher formulated the problem: How is the readability of Reading texts in English Textbook entitled “Experiencing English” Published by Masmedia for the students of Grade VIII of Junior High School?

E. Objective of the Research

Based on the question of formulation of the problem, the objective of this research to find out the readability of reading texts in English Textbook entitled “Experiencing English” Published by Masmedia. Particularly, this research aimed to be used by the students of Grade VIII of Junior High School.

F. Significance of the Research

The advantages of doing this research are as follows:

1. The teacher

To inform English teachers for choosing the appropriate English textbook that would be useful for their students and the teachers could predict whether the text is difficult, plain, or easy. In addition, teachers can apply these learning outcomes to teaching and learning activities, also can increase knowledge in choosing the appropriate book.

2. The students

It can provide information to the Grade VIII students on the readability on Experiencing English textbooks Published by Masmedia.

3. The researcher

It is used for researcher because it can increase the researcher's knowledge about analyzing textbooks based on the readability of textbook.

4. The other researcher

Analysis of textbooks can be an alternative in determining research, this research can also be developed on the scope of research and other specific expertise.

G. Scope of the Research

1. Research Subject

The subject of this research was English Textbook entitled “Experiencing English” for the students of Grade VIII of Junior High School Published by Masmedia year 2019.

2. Research Object

The object of this study was English Textbook entitled “Experiencing English” for the students of Grade VIII of Junior High School Published by Masmedia.

3. Research Time

The time of this study became the time while the researcher analyzed the readability of reading texts, locating the end result and deliver the realization from this study withinside the academic year of 2021/2022.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Concept of Reading

1. Definition of Reading

Reading is one of the important skills which needed by the students from elementary school up to university. It is important because not only students but also all people can get information by reading text. Many experts define reading with different meaning.

Nunan states that reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning.¹⁰ Then, Dallman points out that reading is a verbal process interrelated with thinking and with all other communication abilities such as listening, speaking, and writing. In general, reading is the process of reconstructing the ideas and information intended by the writer from the written patterns on the paper. Reading is a knowledge system exchange where the author tells all readers about his ideas or text. Such as, the author is regard as the informants (sender) and the reader on the other hand is receiver¹¹. During the reading process, this means that the reader can only understand and interpret information during the reading operation, while he cannot explicitly comment or challenge the writer.

Furthermore, reading is seen as a tool for gaining new knowledge and rethinking current knowledge.¹² Therefore, through actively learning, the readers bring their background knowledge, sentiment, and experience to develop their idea in understanding the text's meaning. The readers must try to

¹⁰ David Nunan, *Practical English language teaching*. (New York: Mc Graw.Hill Companies Inc., 2003), p. 68.

¹¹ Dallmann, *The Teaching of Reading*, (New York: Saunders College Publishing, 1982), p. 22.

¹² David, P. Perason, Roehler, Laura, R., Janice, A., Dole, & Gerald, G., Duffy, *Developing expertise in reading comprehension: Whatshould be taught? How should it be taught*, (Champaign, IL: Center for the Study of Reading, 1991), p.125

construct the idea, feelings of the author when reading the text and visualize the visual images.

In short, learning is a cycle of collaborative and critical thinking between the readers and the text. Reading ability is not just a question of reading, but the reader must understand the text they have written. While the readers are in the process of learning, in understanding the meaning of the text they are expected to create their concept of reading and comprehension are one activity to grasp the meaning of written materials with full understanding.

B. Concept of Textbook

1. Definition of Textbook

According to Hamilton, “textbook may be any book or a book substitute, including hard-covered or paperback books, workbooks, designed to be written in and used up, certain newspapers, news magazines and manuals which a student is required to use as a text or a text substitute in a particular class or programme as a primary source of study material intended to implement a major part of the curriculum.”¹³

Moreover, Richards says “textbooks are perhaps the commonest form of teaching materials in language teaching”.¹⁴ In language program, textbook was used in different ways. For example, a reading textbook might be the basis for a course on reading skills. It provided both asset of reading texts and exercises for skills practice. A writing textbook might provide model composition and a list of topics for students to practice their writing. A grammar textbook might serve as a reference book and provide examples as well as exercises to develop

¹³ Kahlid Mahmood, *Aga Khan University Pakistan. The Process of Textbook Approval: A Critical Analysis*, (Buletin of Education & Research, Vol.28, No.1, 2006), p.3

¹⁴ Jack C. Richards, *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.254

grammatical knowledge. A speaking textbook might provide passages for students to read and discuss; as a result, they can practice their speaking. A listening textbook together with audio cassettes or CDs might serve as the primary listening input in a listening course.¹⁵

Textbook is considered as the primary instructional resources in school. It played an important role in educational programs, it still used dominantly in teaching learning process. Moreover, the term of textbook, is not only as a course book but also as a set of teaching and learning guidelines. Theo Van Els, define “textbook is a coherent body of teaching materials which may consist of either just the course books, but also for the learning package consisting of several parts.”¹⁶

Additionally, Kolahi and Shirvani defines “textbook is the core learning composed of text/images designed to bring about a specific set of educational outcomes; traditionally a printed and bound book including illustrations and instructions for facilitating sequences of learning activities”.¹⁷ As we found textbook that we usually saw or used, it was a printed book that consists of materials with instructions/illustrations that was designed based on the sequence of learning activities. Textbook was intended to be used as one of learning facilitations and to make a specific educational outcome.

From those definitions, the researcher concluded that textbook was a coherent body consisting of some materials in form of printed text and/or images that was used as an instructional material in the teaching and learning process.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Theo Van Els, *Applied Linguistics and Learning & Teaching Language*, (London: WoltersNoordhoff, 1991), p. 289

¹⁷ Sholeh Kolahi and Elaheh Shirvani, *A Comparative Study of the Readability of English Textbooks of Translation and Their Persian Translations*, (International Journal of Linguistics, Vol. 4, No. 4, 2012), p. 346.

2. Criteria of a good Textbook

To evaluate textbooks, some criteria of good textbooks need to be understood. These criteria help the evaluator to make textbook evaluation instrument which will be used to assess the aspects being evaluated.¹⁸ Some criteria of good textbook are:

- a. It has base, principal, and certain viewpoint which base on the concepts that used in textbook clearly.
- b. It should be relevant with curriculum.
- c. It is interesting and increasing reader enthusiasm.
- d. It can give motivation to the reader.
- e. It can stimulate students' activity.
- f. It has interesting illustration for reader.
- g. The understanding should be preceded by correct communications.
- h. The content of the book supports the other subject.
- i. It appreciates individual diversity.
- j. It tries to reinforce the value that is applied in society.
- k. It has clear viewpoint.

3. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Textbook in Language Teaching

The first stage is understanding the advantages and disadvantages on the use of the textbook in ELT in order to minimize the dearth of the textbook usage. The following table shows the summary of advantages and disadvantages of using textbook.¹⁹

Several advantages of textbooks as follow:

1. Providing a syllabus for the learning process
2. Providing security for the students because textbook offers road map of the course; they know what to expect and they know what is expected from

¹⁸ Djago Tarigan, dan Henry Guntur Tarigan, *Telaah Buku Teks Bahasa Indonesia*, (Bandung: Angkasa, 2009), p.27-28.

¹⁹ Kathleen Graves, *Designing Language Course, A Guide for Teachers*, (Boston: Heinle Cengage Learning, 2000), p.175

3. Giving a set of visuals, activities, readings, and other materials which save the teachers time in finding or developing such materials
4. Giving teachers with basic guidance to assess students' learning.
5. Providing supporting materials such as teachers' guide, CD, worksheets, and videos
6. Providing sequences of students' levels

Moreover, Harmer said that good textbook often contains lively and interesting material; they provide a sensible progression of language items, clearly showing what has to be learnt and in some cases summarizing what has been studied so that students can revise grammatical and functional points that they have been concentrating on. Textbook can be systematic about the amount of vocabulary presented to the student and allow students to study on their own outside the class. Good textbooks also relieve the teacher from the pressure of having to think of original material for every class. Indeed, there is a greater variety of published material for teaching and learning English than ever before".²⁰

Based on the statement, it can be concluded that several advantages of a good textbook are the textbook could interest the students because it is easy to read so they could study on their own, textbook provides suitable materials for the students, and textbook could be used as a good guidance by the teachers. In addition, they do not feel burdened to prepare different material for different class. There are some disadvantages:

Several disadvantages of textbooks are as follows:

1. Providing inappropriate content as it may not reflect the students' needs
2. Containing inauthentic language

²⁰ Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, (New York: Longman Publishing, 1991), p. 257.

3. Displaying boring visuals, reading text, and teaching activities
4. Does not take the students' background knowledge into account
5. In accordance between sequence of units with the real work-related
6. Unrealistic timetable for completing task

Having knowing the advantages and disadvantages of textbooks, it can be stated that there is no perfect textbook for every class situation. Therefore, the teachers should be careful in choosing appropriate textbooks for the students to achieve learning objectives. The teachers should have knowledge on how to measure the good and the bad textbooks as it seems impossible to teach English without textbook especially in Indonesia where English as a foreign language. A textbook is a kind of learning materials, it is very crucial for the teachers to know the characteristics of good materials in order to select the materials which suit to the students' needs and learning goals. It is in line with Richards who stated that good materials are an important part of the process of instruction²¹ and Littlejohn and Wendeatt as cited in Kitao argue that materials have a hidden curriculum that includes attitudes toward knowledge, attitudes toward teaching and learning, attitudes toward the role and relationship of the teacher and students, and values and attitudes related to gender, society, etc.²²

4. The Role of Textbook in English Language Teaching (ELT)

Nowadays, textbook plays important role in English language teaching process. According to Sheldon in Wong "a textbook can be referred to as a published book specially designed to help language learners to improve their linguistic and communicative

²¹ Jack, C. Richards, *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 15

²² Kathleen Kitao, *Selecting and developing teaching/ learning materials*, (The Internet TESL Journal, 1997, Vol. 5), p. 4

abilities.²³ In addition, Byrd in Fernando states that most teachers depend on textbooks often as require tool because they provide content and activities that shape what happen in the classroom.²⁴

In Indonesia where English is as a foreign language, textbooks are the main teaching source which the teachers are mostly depended on. Both teachers and students consider textbooks as their guidance, sources, motivation, and potential learning sources. Commonly, in Indonesia the textbooks are the main sources for the teachers in teaching, for giving a task, homework, and test to the students because the students hardly have opportunities to practice English outside their schools. Additionally, Hutchinson and Torres stated that textbook is an almost universal element of teaching and guidance for a teacher, a memory aid for pupils, and a permanent record for measuring what has been learnt. A textbook can also become the supplement for teachers' instruction in classroom and teachers can provide ideas on kinds of materials and techniques. It is generally accepted that the role of the textbook is to be at the service of teachers and learners but not to be their master.²⁵

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that textbooks are an important and main resource for teachers in teaching English, because textbooks provide some material and lesson content to students. Textbooks can also guide teachers to provide ideas on how to plan and teach lessons as well as formats that teachers could use.

²³ Wong Pak Wing Lawrence, *Textbook Evaluation: A Framework For Evaluating The Fitness of The Hong Kong New Secondary School (Nss) Curriculum*, (Department of English City University of Hong Kong, 2011), p. 5.

²⁴ Luis Fernando Gomez-Rodriguez, *English Textbook for Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language: Do They Really Help to Develop Communicative Competence?*, (Universidad de La Sabena, 2010), vol.13, no.3, p. 332.

²⁵ Rohmatillah, *Readability Level of Reading Text in English Textbook Entitled English Alive for Senior High School Tenth Grade Publish By Yudhistira*, (Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris, IAIN RadenIntan Lampung,2015), p.89

Moreover, the researcher used English textbook entitled “Experiencing English”. This book is one of the English Book that published by Masmedia, this book had judged by Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan which has fulfilled curriculum K13 revision year 2019 regulation of Indonesian Education. It consists of writing skill, speaking skill, reading skill, and listening skill. This study focused on analyzing the readability of reading text on this textbook.

C. Concept of Readability

1. Definition of Readability

Readability is derived from the root word “read”, “able” and “ity”. In Webster Collegiate Dictionary, is noun form of readable (adj) that means able to read easily. Readable is also defined as a fit to read, interesting, agreeable, attractive in style and enjoyable.²⁶

According to Walter, readability is one of the most important aspects that should be considered in selecting a good passage for students.²⁷ Since readability could determine the achievement of the goal in teaching reading, some experts defined the term readability of a text differently. In fact, readability is not only determined by the length of the passages or the length of the words, but it is also determined by how interestingly and attractively the text is written.²⁸ Barbara Woods also stated that the readability of text was investigated to measure the writing complexity and to estimate the reading or education level required for comprehension of the text.²⁹¹¹

Based on the description above, it can be stated that

²⁶ Merriam Webster, *Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed.*, (Massachusetts: Merriam Webster’s Incorporated, 2003), p. 1035

²⁷ Hill Walter, *Secondary School Reading: Process Program and Procedures*, (Boston: Allyn & Abcon, 1979), p. 190.

²⁸ William H. Dubay, *The Principles of Readability*, (California: Costa Mesa Impact Information, 2004), p. 3

²⁹ Barbara Woods, et, al, *A Critical Review of Readability and Comprehensibility tests*, *The Journal of Tourism Studies*, 1998), Vol. 9, p. 51

readability means how many ideas and language are presented in a long reading text that is understood by the reader which determines his success in reading. Readability also measures how well and how easily a text conveys the meaning of a text to the reader.

2. Readability Formula

The easiest formula to read only explains a number of factors, especially sentences, word lengths and syllables, since these factors best indicate ease of reading. It depends on various factors, including content, structure, style, and layout and design²⁹. The parts of readability formulas are mentioned as bellow:

a. The Flesch Reading Ease Formula

Rudolf Flesch has developed number of formulas in his pursuit of more readable writing. His reading ease (RE) has been one of the most frequently employed in evaluating materials for mature reader and is considered among the most accurate for formulas not requiring a special word list. Flesch's Reading Ease formula became the most widely used formula and one of the most tested and reliable. In an attempt to further simplify the Flesch Reading Ease formula, Farr, Jenkins, and Paterson substituted the average number of one-syllable words per hundred words for Flesch's syllable count. The formula for the Flesch Reading Ease score is:

$$\text{Score} = 206.835 - (1.015 \times \text{ASL}) - (84.6 \times \text{ASW})$$

Where:

Score = position on a scale of 0 (difficult) to 100 (easy), with 30 = very difficult and 70 = suitable for adult audiences.

ASL = average sentence length (the number of words divided by the number of sentences).

ASW = average number of syllables per word (the number of syllables divided by the number of words).³⁰

³⁰ Willian H. Dubay, *The Principles of Readability*, (California: Impact Information, 2004), p.21

Table 1
Reading Ease Scale of the Flesch Formula

Score	Difficult Level	Reading Grade
0 – 30	Very difficult	College graduate
30 – 50	Difficult	13 th to 16 th grade (college)
50 – 60	Fairly difficult	10 th to 12 th grade
60 – 70	Standard	8 th to 9 th grade
70 – 80	Fairly easy	7 th grade
80 – 90	Easy	6 th grade
90 – 100	Very easy	5 th grade

b. The SMOG Readability Formula

SMOG Readability formula is a method that are able to use to determine the reading level of your writing material if a person reads at or above a grade level, they will understand 90 – 100 % of the information. Besides, to ensure the text is readable and clear, this is how to use the SMOG formula to measure reading level:³¹

- 1) Count 10 sentences in a row near the beginning of your reading texts. Count 10 sentences in the middle. Count 10 sentences near the end (30 total sentences).
- 2) Count every word with three or more syllables in each group of sentence, even if the same words appear more than once.
- 3) Calculate the square root of the number arrived at in Step 3 and round it off to nearest 10.
- 4) Estimate the square root of the number of polysyllabic words counted.

This is done by taking the square root of the nearest perfect square. For example, if the count is 95, the nearest perfect square is 100, which yields a square root of 10. If the count lies roughly between two perfect squares, choose the lower number. In addition, if the count is 110, take the

³¹ Harry G. McLaughlin, *HSMOG grading: A new readability formula*, (Journal of Reading, 1969), 12(8), 639-646.

square root of 100 rather than 121.

- 5) Add 3 to the approximate square root. This gives the SMOG grade³². The conversion table of SMOG formula is stated in table 2:

Table 2
SMOG Conversion Table

Word Count	Grade Level
0-2	4
3-6	5
7-12	6
13-20	7
21-30	8
31-42	9
43-56	10
57-72	11
73-90	12
91-110	13
111-132	14
133-156	15
157-182	16
183-210	17
211-240	18

c. Flesch Kincaid Grade level Formula

The Flesch Kincaid Grade level formula translated the 0-100 to a grade level, making it easier for teachers, parents, librarians, and other to judge readability level of various books and texts. It could also mean the number of years of education generally required to understand this text. The grade level was calculated with the following formula.³³

³² *Ibid*

³³ Peter J. Kincaid, Robert P. Fishburne, Richard L. Rogers, & Brad S. Chissom, *Derivation of new readability formulas (automated readability index, Fog count and Flesch reading ease formula) for navy enlisted personnel*, (Research Branch Report. Naval Air Station, Memphis, TN, 1975), p.75

$$FKGL = (0.39 \times ASL) + (11.8 \times ASW) - 15.59$$

Where:

ASL: Average Sentence Length (the number of words divided by the numbers of sentences)

ASW: Average Number of Syllables per word (the number of syllables divided by the number of words)

The result is a number that corresponded with a grade level. For example, a score of 8.2 would indicate that the text is expected to be understandable by an average student in 8th grade (usually around the ages 12-14 in Indonesia).³⁴

d. Fry Readability Graph

In 1968, Fry published a succinct graph and directions for use to estimate the readability of reading materials. Fry created the graph while teaching reading in Uganda.³⁵ Fry readability graph is developed by Burns, Roe and Ross in 2006. He claimed did not require the use of long vocabulary and mathematical computations. He explained that Fry's Graph has its own advantage. By using a chart, the teacher could write down his own criteria. The procedure involved counting the number of sentences and syllables in each hundred-word samples and plotting on the graph the average number of syllables per hundred words. The following are the directions for computing Fry's Formula:

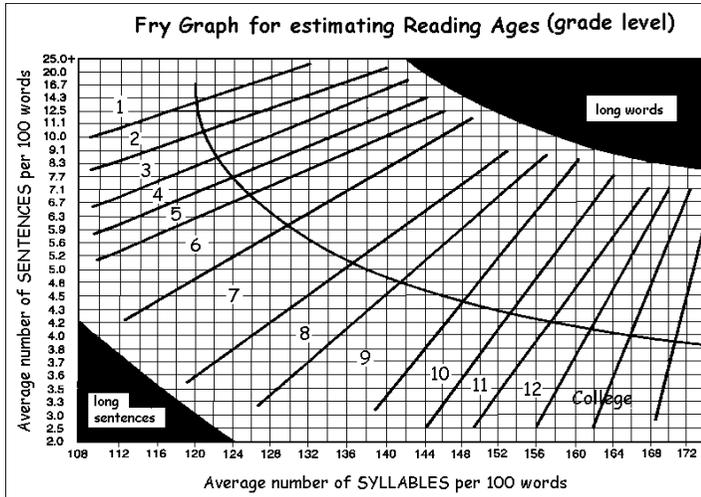
1. Select three 100-word passages from near the beginning, middle and end of the book.
2. Count the total number of sentences in each 100-word passage, estimating to the nearest tenth of a sentence. Average these three numbers.
3. Count the total number of syllables in each 100-word sample and average them for the three samples.
4. Plot on graph the average number of sentences per 100 words.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 40.

³⁵ *Op. Cit*, Heidi Anne E, 2008, p.27

The example of fry graph is shown as below:

Figure 1 Picture of Fry Graph



e. Cloze-Test Procedure

The Cloze Test Procedure (Taylor, 1953; Bormouth, 1963), is another technique for determining of contextual material. This technique is quite different from the other indexes discuss so far. In the Cloze Test technique one simply deleted every fifth word from textual material, replacing the deletion with a standard-length blank. The cloze test might be considered a “personalized” measure of . It assesses each individual learner’s ability to comprehend a particular section of the text. Unlike other indexes, which offer grade-level designations of difficulty, the cloze procedure attempt to predict whether a given learner will be able to extract meaning from a specific text. Some guidelines in constructinga Cloze Test are follow:

1. Select a sample of written text from the assigned textual material
2. Begin with the first sentence in a paragraph
3. Leave this first sentence intact – that is, deleted no words

4. Beginning with the first word in the second sentence, deleted every fifth word.
5. The blanks for deletions should be of equal length and large enough for written responses.
6. Continue deleted every fifth word.
7. Leave the remainder of the sentence containing the fiftieth deletion
Intact

After constructing the Cloze Test, we score and interpret student's result. Here some guidelines in scoring and interpreting a cloze passage:

1. Scoring a facilitated if students have transferred words from the blanks to a separate sheet of paper.
2. Score only exact word replacement as correct.
3. Compute the percentage of correct responses. If a standard fifty- deletion selection is used, the simply multiplying the number of correct responses by two provides this percentage.
4. Arrange students by scores into the following four groups:
 - 60 percent or above correct – text is predicted to be quite easy
 - 35 – 59 percent correct – text is predicted to be of appropriate difficulty
 - 20 – 34 percent correct – text is predicted to be very difficult
 - 0 – 19 percent correct – text is predicted to be inappropriate, far too difficult
5. Begin to plan instructional differentiation based on result.³⁶

³⁶ Richard Allington, *Learning Through Reading*, (Massachusetts: D.C Health and Company, 1980), p.107

3. Guidelines in Readability

In works about technical communication, we are often told how to avoid such problems. For example, Jo Ann Hackos and Dawn Stephens in *Standards for Online Communication* (1997) ask us to “conform to accepted style standards.” They explain: Many experts, through much research, have compiled golden rules of documentation writing. These rules apply regardless of medium:

1. Use short, simple, familiar words.
2. Avoid jargon.
3. Use culture-and-gender-neutral language.
4. Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
5. Use simple sentences, active voice, and present tense.
6. Begin instructions in the imperative mode by starting sentences with an action verb.
7. Use simple graphic elements such as bulleted lists and numbered steps to make information visually accessible.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that readability formula provides a quick, objective, and inexpensive means of anticipating the reading ease of written materials. They are not exact predictors of reading difficulty. Commonly, the sample only one dimension of writing - the difficulty imposed by lexical and syntactic complexity of style. In this research, the researcher used two of the readability formulas that is Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch Kincaid Grade level.

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