CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents about background of the study, focus of the study, formulation of research question, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study and review of relevant studies.

A. Background of The Research

Reading is one of the important skills in learning English, besides other skills such as speaking, writing and listening. By reading, the reader can get much information about anything from book, journal, magazine, blog and other, so that's why reading is very influenced with our knowledge. Moreover, the reader can get much information, but also the reader can increase or enhance their knowledge of the outside world. For instance, the students who read English text most have many benefits. First, it can increase their vocabularies and understanding about reading English. Second, it can also improve the memory of our brain. If we read much, we will regularly continue to hone the ability of our brain.

According to Dadzie (2008), reading is the ability to understand words in a document and utilize the knowledge for personal growth and development. It means that reading is about understanding written texts. The reader prosecuted to understand the reading text. If reading English text is not interest, vocabularies are hard to understand and the reading of the passage is too long, the students get difficult to understand the reading passage. The ability to read is the most essential to functioning in a literate society.

Reading text is generally involves reading 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.

The selection of an appropriate reading text is crucial. Furthermore, Cunningsworth (1995) in Richards (2001) listed eight criteria in evaluating textbooks. The criteria suggested include: 1) Aims and approaches, 2) Design and organization, 3) Language content, 4) Skills, 5) Topic, 6) Methodology, 7) Teachers' books, and 8) Political considerations. If the chosen part is inappropriate for any reason, the chances of success for that particular lesson are substantially diminish. Textbooks serve as a reference to help teachers track their success and focus on the teaching process. The best way to reach goals with the help of students is to consider textbooks as a source for students' needs. Readability is commonly defined as comprehension difficulty. It is necessary to actually present the teaching materials according to the ability and level of the student.

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. The reading text must have quality to attract students' attention from the first line to the last line of written

discourse.

Readability research was done by experts and librarians who tried to find a way to provide the right book in the hands of the right reader. Education generally connects people and books, so it should be suitable for readers of all education levels. In other cases, it is based on small-scale observations by researchers, with differences in student results that are documented in textbooks and can be caused by external factors such as readability and text readability levels. In addition, some private publishers have produced and published English official textbooks for schools. Assuming publishers guarantee the overall quality of a book, including readability, most teachers take the book for granted.

Previously, readability measurements were being run manually using the Flesch-Kincaid grade level and other readability formulas. Brown (1998) adopted the Gunning-FOG readability tests Flesch Reading Ease Formula, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Coleman Liau, Automatic Readability Index and SMOG-Index. The readability of the textbook may have deteriorated.

Another popular tech support measurement tool is Flesch Kincaid Calculator. Created by John Sanders and Andrew Stacy (2022), Flesch Kincaid Calculator demonstrates Flesch Readability Ease Score and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score based on the Flesh Kincaid formula. The Flesch Reading Ease Score indicates the readability of a document on a scale of 0-100. A value around 100 means the document is very readable, a value around 0 means the document is very complex and difficult to understand. A conversion table can be used to convert scores to education levels. If the score is around 70-80, the text is roughly equivalent to 7th grade. The average adult should find it fairly easy to

read.

Despite the fact that tech support readability mesurement is developing in many regions of the world, in Indonesia, this region is still under-researched. Three prior studies by Hidayat (2016), Tasaufy (2017), and Miftaahurrahmi, Fitrawati, and Syarif (2017) that focused on English textbooks utilized by Senior High School were as yet directed utilizing manual readability method. On the other hand, in this study, the researcher would like to attempt to highlight the English textbook published by a private school publisher for Islamic Junior High School using Flesch Kincaid Calculator. This study also develops previous studies of readability measurement by building a dialogue between readability obtained from Flesch Kincaid Calculator and students' perceived readability.

B. Formulation of the Research Question

Based on the background above, the researcher formulated problem statements as follow:

1. What is the readability of reading texts in English official school textbook entitled UKBM English Lesson for Fourth Semester MTsN 2 Probolinggo published by a private publisher?

2. What is the students' perception of the readability of reading texts in English official school textbook entitled UKBM English Lesson for Fourth Semester MTsN 2 Probolinggo published by a private publisher?

C. **Purpose of the Research**

Based on the research problem, the researcher aimed the purpose of the study as follows:

1. Measuring the readability texts in English official school textbook entitled UKBM English Lesson for Fourth Semester MTsN 2 Probolinggo.

2. Build the dialogue between the result of readability measured by Flesch Kincaid Calculator and the students' perception of text readability.

D. **Significance of the Research**

This study is expected to give benefits theoritically and practically.

1. Theoritical Significance

This research helps to increase the literature on the readability of the text. It not only explains a relatively new area of readability measurement using Flesch Kincaid Calculator, but also opening and exploring the dialogue between human and machine measurement readability. This dialogue is important in determining the gap between the standard and the actual experience of the reader. This information is valuable in establishing the real impact and opening up new area of research.

2. Practical Significance

The results of this research provide material developers, teachers, and editors with information about the readability of the text. Especially for the teachers, this research can help them determine appropriate reading materials for the students' grade level based on Flesch Kincaid Calculator

results. When there may be a gap between the standards and the students' perception of the readability of the text, the teachers may wish to develop a plan to address the gap.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Research

The researcher limits this study only on measuring the reading texts with 111 words or more but less than 300 words.

F. Definition of Keyterms

1. Official School English Textbook for Second Grade of MTsN 2 Probolinggo

    This book is one of the English Book that published by MTsN 2 Probolinggo, this book had published by private publisher from MTsN 2 Probolinggo which had fulfilled curriculum K13 revision year 2018 regulation of English education. This book consists of writing skill, speaking skill, reading skill, and listening skill. This book of this research refers to the textbook that used to analyze the reading text in this book.

2. Reading text

    Reading text generally involves reading notes, memos, letters, specifications, books, regulations, journals or manuals reports. It also includes labels and forms that contain at least one paragraph of text. Reading text of this research refers to reading material in the form of sentences and paragraphs which measured the readability level.

3. Readability

Readability was designed to assess the suitability of book for the students at particular grade levels or ages. Readability in this research is defined by measuring the reading text level in English textbook at Second Grade of MTsN 2 Probolinggo using Flesch Kincaid Calculator.

4. Flesch Kincaid Calculator

Flesch Kincaid Calculator is a readability measurement tool on web named Good Calculators. It was created by John Sanders and Andrew Stacy in 2022. Flesch Kincaid Calculator demonstrates Flesch Readability Ease Score and the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score based on the Flesch Kincaid Formula.