READABILITY LEVEL AND HIGHER ORDER OF THINKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOK USED BY THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMAN 1 INDRALAYA

Thesis

By:

Muhammad Abiyyu Azhar

Student Number: 06011281722019

English Education Study Program

Language and Arts Education Department

FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

UNIVERSITAS SRIWIJAYA

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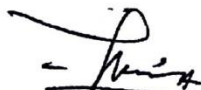
FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY

INDRALAYA

2021

Approved by

Advisor I

Drs. Muslih Hambali, M.L.I.S
NIP.195708261984031001

Advisor II

Dedi Kurniawan, S.Pd., M.Pd.
NIP.198212122014041001
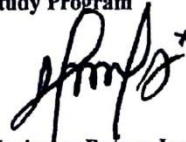
Certified by,

The Head of Language and Arts
EducationDepartment

Dr. Didi Suhendi, M.Hum
NIP. 196910221994031001

Coordinator of English
Study Program

Hariswan Putera Jaya,S.Pd.,M.Pd.
NIP. 197408022002121001

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Muhammad Abiyyu Azhar

Student Number: 06011281722019

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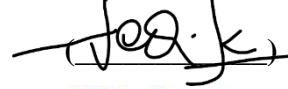
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5. Member : Dr. Margaretha Dinar Sitinjak, M.A. ( )

Indralaya,   2021

Certified by

Coordinator of English Education Study Program,

Hariswan Putera Jaya, S.Pd., M.Pd.
NIP. 197408022002121001

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned,

Name   : Muhammad Abiyyu Azhar

Student's Number : 06011281722019

Study Program   : English Education

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06011281722019

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THESIS DEDICATIONS

This thesis is dedicated to:

- My beloved parents, Erwani and Sri Wahyuningsih, and also to all of my family for supporting me in any condition.

MOTTO :

"ITTAQILLAAHA HAITHUMA KUNTA"

Have taqwa (fear) of Allah wherever you are(HR. Tirmidzi).

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The Writer,

Muhammad Abiyyu Azhar

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the readability level of reading text and higher order thinking skills in reading comprehension questions in English textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggrisfor Senior High School students grade x* used by the tenth grade students of SMAN 1 Indralaya.Readability refers to how easily writing is to read and understand. Readability was created to assess the suitability of text for students at certain grade levels or ages. Higher order thinking skillrefers to the highest three levels of the cognitive domain which include analyzing, evaluating, creatingUsing the descriptive content analysis, this study was aimed to determine the readability level of the reading text used by the tenth grade students of SMAN 1 Indralaya,to know the students reading level using reading test, and to know what level of HOTS included in the textbook using analysis card from the revised Bloom's taxonomy. There were 24 reading texts analyzed for their readability. The results revealed that, as a whole,the readability index of the English textbook is *fairly difficult* to read with an average Reading Ease score of 56.94. Theoretically, the textbook is readable and appropriate for the tenth grade students in general. However, since the students' reading level of the tenth grade of SMAN 1 Indralaya is at level 6, the English textbookdoes not represent the students reading level.No one in the previous related studies have combined the readability with HOTS, and compared readability with the students' reading level. The other result revealed that the distribution of HOTS in the reading comprehension questions is low, only 16.90% from 142 reading comprehension questions. In conclusion, the English textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggrisfor Senior High School students grade x* was not appropriate for the tenth grade students of SMAN 1 Indralaya.

Keywords: *Textbook, Reading, Readability, Higher Order Thinking Skills*

Readability level and Higher Order Thinking Skills in English Textbook used by The Tenth Grade Students of SMAN 1 Indralaya

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Textbook is one of the essential aspects of classroom activity.Textbooks offer instruction and activity plans for beginner teachers. It ensures structure measurement, continuity, and logical improvement in the class. Moreover, it suits the desires or aspirations of a learner to have something specific to work with and take home for further study(Wen-Cheng et al., 2011). It means textbooks' availability is essential in the teaching and learning process. Hutchinson and Tores (1994) explains thattextbook is a widely accepted aspect of teaching English. Therefore, teachers are obligated to provide the textbook which is suitable with the students' cognitive level and for sure match with the current curriculum.

Textbook can be a supporting tool to improve the quality of teachers and students. Brown (2000) states thattextbooks are the most noticeable and basic source of material support for language instruction. Sometimes, there are some problems caused by the selection of textbook. The issue that often occurs as the result of the inaccurate selection of textbooks for students is that the materials provided are too easy for them, so that even though their academic achievement is good, they do not improve so much cognitively. Furthermore, if the content providedare too problematic to the students, it may results in low academic achievement, and a drop in students' willingness in learning.

The English textbook used by SMA students in Indonesia contains language skills and language aspects.Sundayana (2004) states that language skills include 4 skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while language components include vocabulary and grammar. The teaching English in Indonesian high schools focuses more on reading skill. As the researcher observed the questions in the English national examination of senior high school students from 2016 until 2019, there are 35 reading & vocabulary questions out of the 50 total English language questions. In reading skill, English textbook provides English reading texts as teaching materials. There are several forms of English reading text, such as narrative, descriptive, recount, news item, parody/spoof, review, and also analytical exposition.In the process of learning English in the classroom, students will face those kinds of text to improve

their knowledge and English competence.

The process of selecting a proper textbook is important. It has to be suitable with the criteria of a good textbook. Since a textbook contains reading material, in choosing a suitable reading text in the textbook, Nuttall (2005) recommends at least three requirements, readability, exploitability, and suitability.Readability involves lexical and structural challenges that empower them without making the students upset. The exploitability of the text offers an opportunity to achieve learning objectives and can thoroughly explore the instructional methods, techniques, and even combine them into other sections of linguistic skills, and Suitability implies that the content is interesting, fun, and satisfying for students.

One way to determinewhether an English textbook is readable or not is by analyzing its readability. Richards et al. (1992) states thatthe readability relates to how easily a content can be read and comprehended, this is determined by a variety of considerations, including the average length of sentences, the number of new words in the passage, and the grammatical complexity of the language used.Readability requires clear and easy identifying material with the widest possible audience.Focusing on readability increases the target audience's chances of actual reading and engaging with published content.The readability of a textbook or a reading text can be measured quantitatively using some online programs such as Flesch Reading Ease Formula and Flesch-Kincaid Readability Test. By usinga tool like Flesch-Kincaid Readability Tests, the level of what the reader needs to comprehend the reading text can be properly measured. Bidyarani (2012)states that the readability can be measured using Flesch Reading Ease Score, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Gunning Fog Index, and Simple Measure of Gobbledygook (SMOG)

On the other way, reading is also interrelated to the higher order of thinking skills (HOTS). As stated by Linse and Nunan (2005), higher order thinking skills and reading are related.People would be able to grasp the meaning through reading,as well as interpret and synthesize what they have learned.HOTS or higher order thinking skills are thethree highest levels of the cognitive domain based on the Bloom's taxonomy.Revised version of Bloom's taxonomy divides cognitive domains into six grades: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. The first three levels are categorized as lower-order thinking skills, while the remaining three upper stages are classified as higher-order thinking skills (Atiullah et al., 2019).HOTS are important aspects in teaching and learning since thinking skills are fundamental ineducational process. HOTS can be seen in the form of

questions accompanying the readingtext.

Bloom's Taxonomy is a theory that provides the right cognitive levels of questioning in the construction of the test paper, and it is still known as a valuable educational instrument to this day. There are three main parts of domain in Bloom's taxonomy; cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Bloom et al. (1956) states that cognitive domain is the most important domain compared to the other domains. Cognitive domain is divided into six levels, and the term of higher order thinking skills is known as the three highest levels of it. Higher order thinking skills in learning process is able to enhance students' abilityto interpret knowledge critically. Higher order thinking skill is crucial for educating students to think about the real world.

HOTS-based questions are essential for the students as they have to be able to answer questions in reading activities. HOTS is recognized as a set of important devices of cognitive development. It is important for students to have higher order of thinking skills.Students with HOTS are able to learn, improve their performance, and reduce their weaknesses (Heong et al., 2011).

Based on the researcher's experience and the information from the English teacher at SMAN 1 Indralaya. The problem that is often faced by students in general is that the textbooks they use do not match their reading ability level.Sometimes the textbooks that the students use are too difficult to understand ortoo easy. There is a possibility that the English textbooks published by the government are difficult to understand by the tenth graders in Indonesia because of the difficult words and complex sentences. This results in students not being able to fully understand the material, which results in low academic achievement in English subject.

The other problem is the reading comprehension questions or tasksthat accompany the reading text which should reflect various cognitive levels.It could be that the cognitive level of higher order thinking skills is too low, too high, or not evenly distributed. Since the current curriculum is focusing on higher order thinking skills, it is important to analyze the reading comprehension questions contained in the English textbook.

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that the readability and higher order thinking skills of a textbook is important to be analyzed. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a research on English textbook used by the tenth grade of SMAN 1 Indralaya to

match the reading level of the students with the readability level of the English textbook used, and also to know the level of the cognitive thinking especially higher order thinking skills containing in the textbook.In some previous related studies conducted by several researchers, none have combined the textbook readability and HOTS simultaneously.The previous related study concerning the readability conducted by Azizi (2015) with the title "*The Readability Level of Passport to the World 2, a textbook for second grade of junior high school(A Case Study at the Eighth Grade of SMPN 17 Depok)* revealed that, the textbook was not readable for the eight grade students of *SMPN 17 Depok*. And the other study related to the HOTS conducted by Apriani (2019) with the title "*Evaluating the Higher Order Thinking Skills in Reading Exercises of EFL Textbook Pathway to Englishfor Tenth Grade of Senior High School Students*" revealed that the distribution of HOTS-based questions is low. Thus, this study is analyzing the English textbook used by the tenth grade students of SMAN 1 Indralaya entitled *Bahasa Inggrisfor the Senior High School Students Grade X* in the aspect of reading text readability level and higher-order thinking skills.

1.2 Research Question

1   What is the readability level of the English reading text used by the tenth grade student of SMAN 1?
2   Does the reading text level of the textbook used by the tenth grade student of SMAN 1 Indralaya represent the reading level of the students?
3   What levels of higher order thinking skills areincluded in the reading comprehension questions of the English reading text used by the tenth grade students of SMAN 1 Indralaya?
4   What is the portion of six cognitive thinking skills included in the English reading text used by the tenth grade student of SMAN 1 Indralaya?

1.3 Focus of the study

This study focus on the readability of the reading text and higher order thinking skills in reading comprehension questions in English textbook used by the tenth grade students of SMAN 1 Indralaya

1.4 Objective of the study

1.   To know the readability level of the English reading text used by the tenth grade student of SMAN 1
2.   To know whether the reading text level of the textbook used by the tenth grade studentof SMAN 1 Indralaya represent the reading level of the students
3.   To know what levels of higher order thinking skills are included in the reading comprehension questions of the English reading text used by the tenth grade students of SMAN 1 Indralaya
4.   To know what is the portion of six cognitive thinking skills included in the English reading text used by the tenth grade student of SMAN 1 Indralaya?

1.5 Significance of the study

This current study is intended to get involved in helping the teachers, students, book authors,and also other researchers who are interested in researching the same kind of topic as in this study. This analysis is significant for teachers to recognizethe methods used to teach the English textbooks that have been recommended by the school principal or government. For the students, this research is expected to help students understand the topics and enhance their academic achievement. For the book authors, this study is aimed to suggest them to serve better content related to the higher cognitive levels. Moreover, for the other researchers, hopefully this study can help them as a reference on how to do the textbook analysis.

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