

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the following subheading (1) background, (2) the limitation of the study, (3) the research question, (4) objectives of the study, (5) and significance of the study.

I.1 Background

Language is many defined. In other words, language means a system of sounds, words, phrases, etc. that is used by humans to communicate, think and feel. Riyani (2016) states that language also is used in daily activities, without language people will be hard to have an effective communication and misunderstanding will be happening in this world. There are three aspects in language, they are linguistic aspect, psychological aspect, and sociocultural aspect. Every aspect of language has the closest relationship to each other. Lunenberg (2010) states that “There are some benefits or importance of language, such as for communication among people, to get more information and process transmitting then common understanding from one person to another” (p.1).

English is one of languages that used for communication all over the world; therefore, English has become a global language. English has become the dominant language of science, technology and commerce, and universal language. It is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air-traffic control, international business and academic conferences, science, technology, medicine, diplomacy, sports, international competitions, pop music, and advertising. Therefore, reality encourages many countries to put English as a subject that must

be learned in world education, one of those countries is Indonesia, English is used as first language, second language, or foreign language and also it can become a lingua franca (Mukminin, Ali, & Fadloan, 2015; Mukminin, Muazza, Hustarna, & Sari, 2015; Makmur, Ismiyati, Mukminin, & Verawaty, 2016).

According to Seguin (1989), “In teaching English process textbook is a written media in the classroom“ (p.5). Yansah (2017) states that “Textbook is one of the presentations of the material”. Then textbooks are one of the most important resources among teaching and learning materials. Islam (2013) states that “Since the 1960s, textbooks have been implemented as a wide range of supplementary materials. Almost all of the schools use textbooks as teaching tool to present the material” (p.117). Basen on the statement it can be concluded use of textbook can help teacher deliver the new curriculum and easy transfer the material, especially for the teaching leaning process.

Emilia, Damayanti (2014) states that “The textbook takes its main role on the teaching learning process for both teacher and students” (p. 290). Then textbook helps the teacher in creating tasks and developing teaching material. Cheng, Hung, Chien, Lee (2011) states that the textbook turns to become a useful tool to students because it summarizes the teacher’s explanation because in the textbook there is a short-written explanation along with providing any kinds of exercises. In summary, for both teacher and students, textbook can be used as a tool to evaluate the students’ understanding of every language skill that already given by the teacher.

According to Sholichatun (2011), there are some categories of a good book. First, the contents of the textbook should deal with the current curriculum, it might be from the genre with should be available in the textbook. Besides that, the contents of the textbook also go with the level of study. In the textbook include lexical density which is measure the proportion content words in a text. The second category is a textbook should have an interesting display because it can give motivation for readers to read the textbook.

In addition, Richards (2001) states that, “The language of the textbook should be correct in context and situation” (p.2). It means that the language does not enclose ambiguous and then identify particular strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use. So, the reader can understand easily.

The students must study basic skill in English. The skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. For many students, reading is the important of the four skills in second language. Khairudin (as cited in the US Departmen of education, 2005) also states that reading is one of the means to gain access to all the knowledge in this world and then reading is a complex, interactive process, using basic skills and advanced strategies to make meaning.

At the most basic level, Aliponga (2013) states that, “Reading is the recognition of words, from simple recognition of the individual letters and how these letters form a particular word to what each word means not just on an individual level, but as part of a text” (p.73). Nofitarina (2017) states that, “In reading process, the reader should comprehend what they have read to get the information from the text”. According to Kavaliauskenė (2010), “in reading the

learners also comprehend about the text in reading. most of students face difficulties in reading English text due to the different English language features from their first language. Basically, teaching reading is conveying or guiding the students to gain some important message and get meaning from written text. Reading an academic text does not simply involve finding information on the text itself. Rather, Hermida (2009) states that 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.

According to Misa (as cited in Braunger & Lewis, 2001), it is obvious that in reading activities, people make a communication with the writer by activating their prior knowledge and drawing a conclusion of the writer's ideas into our own so that it will help us understand what the writer meant . As a skill, reading is clearly one of important language skill that where students have to read English material for their subject. Lestari and Holandyah (2016) states that, "Reading and writing are important skills because they can be easily linked to other language skills and give more information than listening and speaking". Mawadda (2015) states that, "The reading skill became very important in the education field, students need to be exercised and trained in order to have a good reading skill" (p.55). The students often think to be easier to obtain information from written text by reading.

In additional, according to Rivers (1981), reading is not only a source of information and pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending ones' knowledge of the language. Rivers (1981) states that reading text

provide 3 level of meaning, they are, lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, and social-cultural meaning. Reading comprehension is the process of extracting meaning from a text, it becomes more complicated when reader cannot grasp meaning from that piece of text. Larki and Gorjian (2015) states that ,“One reason refers to lexical in the text that hinder comprehension when learners are not mastered on lexical items in the text “ (p. 96).

Reading material is one of the contents of the textbook besides listening instruction, some exercises, writing task and some conversation scripts. Reading material is usually in the form of text that is used to teach reading like pronouncing words, comprehending the content of the text, getting vocabulary, and also understanding of grammar. Through the text, the students can get information and the knowledge and also the vocabulary and the grammar. It is provided in some types which are called as genre. The types of genre are arranged well based on the curriculum”.

Related to teaching and learning process, Signes and Arrota (2015) state that to know the textbook especially reading text is hard or easy comprehend for student, there are rules which is known as lexical density percentage that is proportion words and content words such as noun, verb, adverbs, adjectives. Then Halliday (1985) states that as a rules, if the density is lower that is easy comprehend and if high means that the text is difficult to students. From the explanation in reading text lexical word is very important to the quality of text whether it is good or not as a guide for English teaching process. Johansson (2008) states that by investigating lexical density, it will be received a notion of

information packaging, a text with high proportion of content words contains more information than a text with a high proportion of function words (prepositions, interjections, pronouns, conjunctions and count words).

The density of text is often unavailable for the students' level. Sometimes, the students who are at the first level of senior high school get a text that has most lexical items which make the students difficult to understand the text. The amount of lexical items in a text can influence the length of a text and measure the level of difficulty of the text. The more the lexical items, the text has the more difficult the student has. The lexical items are known as an open system in which one word can have more than one meaning.

As the source of knowledge, textbook has an important role in learning process. When the students get difficulty to understand the content of the textbook especially the reading text, the students will be hard to get the knowledge of the textbook. The proportion between the lexical items and the grammatical items in the text certainly will determine the difficulty of the text. Through the lexical density of the text, teacher can know whether the text is easy or difficult for the students. So the teacher can decide which appropriate strategy can be applied in the reading text based on the complexity of the words especially the lexical items.

Moreover, Hidayat (2016) states that in choosing or developing texts to be used as a learning instruction, the lexical density is important to be considered. The lexical density determines whether the texts are appropriately suited to cater the readers' need or not. The content words are most important for explaining information. If the passage has a high number of content words, it has probably

written specialized academic text which will only be understood by well-educated people in that specific field. If it has low number of content words, it has a very simple, easy to understand piece. If the number of content words is too low, the passage may not adequately explain the premise of the text.

Additionally, Urquhart and Weir (1998) state that the procedures used for measuring readability mostly, emphasize the role of word length (number of syllables of a word) and sentence length (number of words in a sentence) as determining factors in text difficulty formulas. It is, however, believed by some authorities that there are so many other factors in determining text difficulty. They criticized these formula for considering only the average length of words and sentences, ignoring the other factors, such as syntactic complexity, textual cohesion, propositional density, and background knowledge of the students. Hence, the number of lexical and grammatical word becomes one of the factors that influence the level of readability of a particular text. In brief, lexical density has an important role for the students in understanding the text they read.

Two decades' ago in Indonesia have two differences famous curriculum there are 2013 curriculum and KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan). School based curriculum is developing by the school based on the school potential characteristics, and the culture of the society around the school and the student's characteristics. Hamid (2017) states that, "curriculums is what happens to learners in school as a result of what teachers do including all the experiences of the students for which the school should accept responsibility". It is developing by the teacher, school principle, school committee. Many schools in Palembang have use

KTSP curriculum and English textbook that use KTSP curriculum for junior high school. Besides that, School-Based Curriculum also deals with the four language skills, such as; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In reading, it refers to the text. It means that the students are able to understand and producing various shorts functional and monologue texts, and essay in the form of narrative, descriptive, recount, procedure, and report.

Related to the curriculum, one of the books which is suitable with the curriculum-based competency (KTSP) is English on Sky textbook which is published by *Erlangga*. Besides the book fits with the curriculum, this book is a popular book, which is used by almost school in Palembang. Based on the informal interview with *Gramedia Store* employee, Erlangga Company Palembang and some teachers junior high school in Palembang, they said that it was a well-known book and the best-selling English school book. This could be due to the price of the book that is achievable for all of the economic level of the parents in Palembang. Besides, based on the writer experience while he had PPL, some of English teacher said that like SMP Negeri 8 Palembang, SMP PGRI 11 Palembang, SMP Pembina Palembang, and SMP Negeri 9 Palembang it was quite difficult to use English on Sky textbook in teaching and learning process in class.

With reference to lexical density, Johansson (2008) found that 10-year-olds have higher lexical density in the written text than spoken text, 13-year-olds have a genre effect in their result where the narrative texts have higher lexical density than expository texts, 17-year-olds have higher lexical density in the written texts

than spoken texts with no genre effect, and the adults have higher lexical density in their written text and there is no genre effect.

In the other hand, To, Van, and Thomas (2013) state that investigated the lexical density and readability in English textbooks. The result shows that the text for upper-intermediate has low lexical density than other texts for elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate. Aside from written texts, lexical density has been examined in spoken texts. It is conducted by Alami, Sabbah, and Iranmanesh (2013) entitled male-female discourse difference in terms of lexical density. The result shows that male and female discourses are almost equally dense. In other words, the gender of the speaker has no effect on the lexical density of discourse. Based on the explanations above, there are several reasons why the writer chooses the textbook. First, it is one of the textbooks that is suitable with the current curriculum. Second, it is often used by some schools in Medan so it is important to know whether the reading texts are appropriate for the students. Third, the writer wants to know the lexical density of reading text in the textbook.

Therefore, based on those explanations, the researcher would like to analyze the lexical density of English reading material of *English on Sky* textbook for 8th grade of Junior High School published by *Erlangga* and then choose grade 8 because in grade 7 they still study about what is English like greeting and in part reading skill is little text, then in grade 9 the student prepares the final examination.

I.2 Limitation of the Study

In the textbook, especially *English on Sky* textbook have three parts, there are *English on Sky Jilid 1*, *English on Sky Jilid 2*, and *English on Sky Jilid 3* textbook for junior high school. Generally, based on textbook published by government, KTSP curriculum has similar approach, format, and organization for every grade. In the textbook *English on Sky* have significant differences of the unit English textbook for 7th, 8th, 9th grade. The researcher just analyzes generally from four English skills and choose one of them that is reading material for the 8th grade students.

I.3 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the problems of the research are formulated into these following questions:

1. How is the lexical density in each reading text of *English on Sky* textbook for 8th grade of Junior High School published by Erlangga?
2. Which text that belongs to high lexical density category in reading text of *English on Sky* textbook for 8th grade level of Junior High School published by *Erlangga*?

I.4 Objectives of the Study

In relation to research questions, the objectives of research are formulated below:

1. To find out the lexical density in each reading text based on *English on Sky* textbook for 8th grade level of Junior High School published by *Erlangga*.

2. To find out which text that belongs to high lexical density category in reading text of *English on Sky* textbook for 8th grade level of Junior High School published by *Erlangga* .

I.5 Significance of the Study

This research is really hoped to give significant influence for many parties. The result might give contribution to publisher and material developer, in which they can consider the proportion of lexical density in the passage which is suitable for the students' level that is based on the curriculum. By considering the students' level, teachers could choose the best material for their students for teaching and learning process. Therefore, learning goals and outcomes can be achieved successfully. Additionally, this study can become one of the resource for other researchers in conducting their study and last for the writer as a teacher can selected good material and using fits book for student and also can add the writer knowledge.