

## ASSESSMENT OF READABILITY LEVEL OF READING MATERIALS IN INDONESIA EFL TEXTBOOKS

Ika Apriani Fata<sup>1\*</sup>; Endang Komariah<sup>2</sup>; Andira Riski Alya<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1-3</sup>Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Syiah Kuala  
Jl. Krueng Kale No. 21, Darussalam, Banda Aceh, Aceh 23111, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup>ika.apriani@unsyiah.ac.id; <sup>2</sup>endang.komariah@fkip.unsyiah.ac.id; <sup>3</sup>andirariskialyaa@gmail.com

Received: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021/Revised: 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022/Accepted: 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022

**How to Cite:** Fata, I. A., Komariah, E., & Alya, A. R. (2022). Assessment of readability level of reading materials in Indonesia EFL textbooks. *Lingua Cultura*, 16(1), 97-104. <https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v16i1.8277>

---

### ABSTRACT

*The research aimed to assess the readability of reading material in two different English textbooks published by different publishers. Many pieces of research have been conducted to examine the reading materials in English textbooks, and it had been discovered that the reading materials were insufficiently adequate for the levels of students. The research applied a descriptive content analysis method to analyze, interpret, and describe the data. The Flesch Reading Ease formula was as an instrument. The research's data were derived from the English textbook "Pathway to English" by Erlangga grade X and the English textbook "Bahasa Inggris" by The Ministry of Education and Culture grade X. Based on the findings of the research, five reading texts out of 15 match with students' level (fairly difficult level) of grade X in the first textbook, while three texts out of 13 equal with students' level (fairly difficult level) of grade X in the second textbook. Furthermore, the first textbook's average readability score indicates that the texts are 'standard', whereas the second textbook indicates that the texts are 'fairly difficult'. Based on the study findings, some recommendations for teachers are to use the readability formulas to provide appropriate reading material for students, as well as for other researchers to conduct a larger context about readability.*

**Keywords:** reading assessment, readability level, EFL textbooks

### INTRODUCTION

The textbook is one of several tools that may be utilized to aid teachers and students in teaching and learning English. In the classroom, textbooks serve an important role in teaching and learning. A textbook is a fundamentally important aspect of teaching and learning, according to Gunantar (2017), because it serves as a medium for both the teacher and the student. Bojanic and Topalov (2016) have also mentioned that textbooks are sources that provide a set of materials and activities for instructors to employ during the teaching process. It provides teachers with guidelines for communicating the materials to students and assisting them in understanding the materials.

Textbooks are also an essential media for teachers and students as a reference in the learning process. To better support students in understanding

the material and getting new knowledge, it is crucial to identify whether the passage in the book is suitable for students based on their grade level. Even though there are many problems found in using a textbook, professional development could concentrate on developing modified assignments from these textbooks so that the content of the textbooks can be understood by the students (Hong et al., 2018).

Many English textbooks are available these days, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture or by private or other public publishers. These textbooks are used as the primary source by both teachers and students. Although several English textbooks for senior high school have been published, it is important to evaluate whether the textbooks used in senior high school are compatible with the level of learners' learning needs because the appropriateness of the textbook and learners' reading level aids them

in properly comprehending the reading materials. According to Azizifar and Baghelani (2014), the reasons for evaluating textbooks are to implement new textbooks, so parties involved in education programs can understand certain strengths and weaknesses in the textbooks, and the outcomes of analyzing textbooks can be immensely beneficial to education progress and professional development. The purpose of evaluating the textbook is to find the most suitable English learning teaching materials for learners, particularly in reading comprehension.

In selecting an appropriate textbook, a teacher should consider three components when selecting text for reading material. According to Nuttal (2005), there are three fundamental components of a good student reading material. First is the suitability of the content, which indicates that the materials are fascinating, entertaining, challenging, and relevant to their purpose in learning English. The second is exploitability, where a text helps the achievement of specific language and material goals that is usable for instructional tasks and approaches. It may be interpreted using other competencies, such as listening, speaking, and writing). The third is readability, which refers to the text's lexical and structural difficulties, as well as its proper level of difficulty for learners. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that reading materials are readable for students to understand them properly.

Analyzing and considering the readability of the reading material is one method to know whether the textbook is suitable for students' level or not. The readability of a text determines how easy it is to read. Readability refers to the ease with which a text can be understood while reading it (Dubay, 2004; Fata, Gani, & Husna, 2020). Thus, it is essential to investigate the readability level of the reading passage to predict whether a text is tough, basic, or easy for students.

There are several commonly used formulas in determining the readability of reading passages according to Bailin and Grafstein (2016), namely the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, and the Fry Graph, SMOG Grading, and the Dale-Chall Formula. In the research, the researchers utilize the Flesch Reading Ease formula to find out the readability of reading text based on the student's level of grade tenth of senior high school. As those readability formulas are used in written texts, they provide a text score, including the average sentence length and the average number of syllables per word. Thus, the text's readability score is classified with a particular categorization, such as very easy, easy, standard, fairly difficult, difficult, or very difficult, as well as a reading grade level. In assessing the readability level of the English material, the research employs The Flesch Reading Ease formula. The updated formula of the Flesch Reading Ease Scale is  $\text{Score (RE)} = 206,835 - (1,015 - \text{ASL}) - (84,6 \times \text{ASW})$ . The Flesch Reading Ease scale ranges from 0-to 100, with a higher score indicating that the reading passage is more comprehensible. The research emphasizes that in the tenth grade of senior high school, a score

of 50-60 is considered adequate with a grade level of 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, indicating the difficulty level is at a “fairly difficult” level.

In recent research, many researchers have taken out studies about analyzing reading materials. For example, research conducted by Amer (2021) about lexical density and readability of secondary stage English textbooks in Jordan illustrated that the selected reading passages are easy to read. On the contrary, one research conducted by Coco et al (2017) has analyzed the readability level of the Spanish-language patient-reported outcomes measures in audiology and otolaryngology. The result found that many Spanish-language PROMs are above the 5th-grade reading level proposed for health-related materials. Related to this, Gyasi and Slippe (2019) have illustrated that the reading texts in textbooks for diploma students of the University of Cape Coast are at a low readability level since the textbooks are beyond the students' reading level. Later, Gyasi and Slippe (2019) have suggested that textbooks should be revised to supply the primary goal and contribute to successful English language teaching and learning.

In line with these statements, it is recognized that not all reading materials in English textbooks are always relevant to students' grade levels. Since fewer researchers conducted the assessment of readability in these textbooks, the researcher aims to investigate the readability level of reading materials in two English textbooks from different publishers. It is conducted to show the comparison these textbooks are appropriate to the level of students' ability as well as to fill the novelty of this research.

## METHODS

The research applies qualitative research. In qualitative research, the researcher uses content analysis as the type of qualitative research for two main textbooks, the English textbook *Pathway to English Grade X*, published by Erlangga publisher, and *Buku Bahasa Inggris Grade X*, published by Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia 2017. The reading passages from each chapter are contained in these textbooks. In the research, the Flesch Reading Ease formula is used as an instrument to determine the estimated readability level as proposed by Flesch. Then it is also proven the validity of the instrument and reliability of the score by having one eligible interrater who has taught the English textbooks in the classroom. Shabankhani (2020) has explained that Inter-rater Reliability (IRR) is a term to describe people that measure and evaluate the instruments in a study and addresses the issue of consistency in using the rating system, which occurred between judge and researcher.

The updated formula of the Flesch Reading Ease Scale, according to Dubay (2004), is  $\text{Score (RE)} = 206,835 - (1,015 - \text{ASL}) - (84,6 \times \text{ASW})$ . Where RE is Readability Ease; ASL is average sentence length

(number of words divided by the number of sentences); ASW is the average number of syllables per word (the number of syllables divided by the number of the words).

In addition, the level of reading ease difficulty has been merely formulated as shown in Table 1. In the first data collection process, the researchers chose the English textbook used for senior high school students grade X from two different publishers. Secondly, the researchers spot the reading material, which is reading passages from the textbook *Pathway to English grade X*, published by Erlangga, and the textbook *Bahasa Inggris grade X*, published by the government. Lastly, it counts how many syllables, words, and sentences are throughout every passage. The researchers employ a word counter from wordcounter.net to prevent any miscalculations and to ensure the validity of the total quantity of syllables, words, and sentences.

After obtaining the data, the researchers calculate the text's estimated grade level. Then, the data are described in greater detail based on the Flesch Reading Ease scale. Afterward, the researchers classify the data into smaller parts using a table by comparing the score to other criteria that are suitable to the level of senior high school students grade X.

Table 1 Difficulty Level by Flesch Reading Ease

| Score (RE) | Difficulty level | Grade                                                   |
|------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 90 – 100   | Very easy        | 5 <sup>th</sup> grade                                   |
| 80 – 90    | Easy             | 6 <sup>th</sup> grade                                   |
| 70 – 79    | Fairly easy      | 7 <sup>th</sup> grade                                   |
| 60 – 69    | Standard         | 8 <sup>th</sup> to 9 <sup>th</sup> grade                |
| 50 – 59    | Fairly difficult | 10 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade              |
| 30 – 49    | Difficult        | 13 <sup>th</sup> to 16 <sup>th</sup> grade<br>(college) |
| 0 – 29     | Very difficult   | College graduate                                        |

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The first step in counting the readability score is done by measuring the Average Sentence Length (ASL) and Average Number of Syllables per Word (ASW). Then, the readability score is calculated by Flesch Reading Ease Formula. Therefore, Tables 1 and 2 present the readability score, readability level, and estimated reading grade of each reading passage in two English textbooks.

The data analysis is conducted by calculating the score of the text's estimated reading grade level obtained through the Flesch Reading Ease Formula. Then, it is described in a table of the result calculation of the text's estimated reading grade level. The data are described in greater detail based on Flesch Reading Ease Formula. Afterward, the researchers classify the data into smaller parts using a table by comparing the score to other criteria based on the Flesch Reading

Ease table that is suitable to the level of the first grade of a senior high school student. In the last phase, the data are analyzed based on the focus of the research to investigate the readability level of the reading material of both textbooks. Table 2 shows the result of the readability score in the English textbook *Pathway to English* published by Erlangga Publisher.

As shown in Table 2, the result finding of text 1 based on The Flesch Reading Ease Formula is 76,10, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 2 has a result of 67,11, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'standard' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 3 is 76,19, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 4 is 50,20, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. The result of text 5 is 55,54, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school.

The result of text 6 is 46,55, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'difficult' level. Therefore, the text is harder for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 7 is 57,18, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. Text 8 is 55,18, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. Text 9 has a result of 67,79, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'standard' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 10 is 57,36, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school.

Text 11 is 68,26, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'standard' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 12 is 64,25, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'standard' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 13, based on The Flesch Reading Ease Formula, is 83,15, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at an 'easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 14 is 85,92, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at an 'easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. The result of text 15 is 85,04, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at an 'easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school.

To conclude, five reading passages are suitable for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. Those reading passages are text 4, text 5, text 7, text 8, and

text 10. The readability levels of those five reading passages are at a 'fairly difficult' level.

Based on Table 3, the result finding of text 1 based on The Flesch Reading Ease Formula is 79,39, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 2 has a result of 58,20, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. Text 3 is 56,32, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the

text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. Text 4 is 63,35, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'standard' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 5 is 51,04, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Therefore, the text is matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school.

Text 6 is 40,16, which means that the difficulty level of the text was at a 'difficult' level. Therefore, the text is harder for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 7 is 45,26, which means that the difficulty

Table 2 The Result of the Readability Score in the English Textbook Pathway to English Published by Erlangga Publisher

| Text code            | Readability score | Calculation by the interrater | Level            | Quality for 10 <sup>th</sup> grade |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1                    | 76,10             | 76,095                        | Fairly Easy      | Easier                             |
| 2                    | 67,11             | 67,105                        | Standard         | Easier                             |
| 3                    | 76,19             | 76,185                        | Fairly Easy      | Easier                             |
| 4                    | 50,20             | 50,195                        | Fairly difficult | Appropriate                        |
| 5                    | 55,54             | 55,535                        | Fairly difficult | Appropriate                        |
| 6                    | 46,55             | 46,545                        | Difficult        | Harder                             |
| 7                    | 57,18             | 57,175                        | Fairly difficult | Appropriate                        |
| 8                    | 55,18             | 55,175                        | Fairly difficult | Appropriate                        |
| 9                    | 67,79             | 67,785                        | Standard         | Easier                             |
| 10                   | 57,36             | 57,355                        | Fairly difficult | Appropriate                        |
| 11                   | 68,26             | 68,255                        | Standard         | Easier                             |
| 12                   | 64,25             | 64,245                        | Standard         | Easier                             |
| 13                   | 83,15             | 83,145                        | Easy             | Easier                             |
| 14                   | 85,92             | 85,915                        | Easy             | Easier                             |
| 15                   | 85,02             | 85,035                        | Easy             | Easier                             |
| <b>Average score</b> | <b>66,38</b>      | <b>66,383</b>                 | <b>Standard</b>  | <b>Easier</b>                      |

Table 3 The Result of the Readability Score in English Textbooks by the Government

| Text code            | Readability score | Calculation by the Interrater | Level                   | Quality for 10 <sup>th</sup> grade |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1                    | 79,39             | 79,385                        | Fairly easy             | Easier                             |
| 2                    | 58,20             | 58,195                        | Fairly difficult        | Appropriate                        |
| 3                    | 56,32             | 56,315                        | Fairly difficult        | Appropriate                        |
| 4                    | 63,35             | 63,345                        | Standard                | Easier                             |
| 5                    | 51,04             | 51,035                        | Fairly difficult        | Appropriate                        |
| 6                    | 40,16             | 40,155                        | Difficult               | Harder                             |
| 7                    | 45,26             | 45,255                        | Difficult               | Harder                             |
| 8                    | 77,87             | 77,865                        | Fairly easy             | Easier                             |
| 9                    | 45,04             | 45,035                        | Difficult               | Harder                             |
| 10                   | 43,04             | 43,065                        | Difficult               | Harder                             |
| 11                   | 62,69             | 62,685                        | Standard                | Easier                             |
| 12                   | 74,75             | 74,745                        | Fairly easy             | Easier                             |
| 13                   | 77,10             | 77,095                        | Fairly easy             | Easier                             |
| <b>Average score</b> | <b>59,32</b>      | <b>59,321</b>                 | <b>Fairly difficult</b> | <b>Appropriate</b>                 |

level of the text is at a 'difficult' level. Therefore, the text is harder for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 8 is 77,87, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 9 is 45,04, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'difficult' level. Therefore, the text is harder for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school.

The result of text 10 is 43,07, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'difficult' level. Therefore, the text is harder for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Text 11 is 62,69, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'standard' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. The result of text 12 is 74,75, which means that the difficulty level of the text is at a 'fairly easy' level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. The result of text 13 was 77,10, which meant that the difficulty level of the text was at a "fairly easy" level. Therefore, the text is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school.

In summary, three reading passages are suitable for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. Those reading passages are text 2, text 3, and text 5. The readability levels of those five reading passages are at a 'fairly difficult' level. Furthermore, Table 4 compares *Pathway to English grade X* by Erlangga publisher and the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris grade X* by the government.

Table 4 compares the English textbook *Pathway to English grade X* by Erlangga and the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris grade X* by the government. The differences in the total text found in these textbooks can be seen. The first textbook provides 15 reading passages, while the second textbook provides 13 reading passages. Likewise, the result of the average readability score in the first textbook is 66,38, which is at the 'standard' level; the readability score is between 60 and 70 based on Flesch Reading Ease. Therefore, the average score of the first English textbook points out that the texts are easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school.

On the other hand, the average readability score in the second textbook is 59,32, which is in the 'fairly difficult' level; the readability score is between 50-60 based on Flesch Reading Ease. Therefore, the second English textbook's average score indicates that the texts are matched with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school.

The result findings of reading materials in the English textbook *Pathway to English* show that there

are 15 reading passages categorized into five levels: the first category is an 'easy' level with three reading passages (20%) at this level. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 6<sup>th</sup>-grade students in elementary school. The readability score is between 80 to 90. The second category is a 'fairly easy' level; there are two reading passages (13%) at this level. The readability score is between 70 to 80. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students in junior high school. The third category is a 'standard' level; there are four reading passages (27%) at this level. The readability score is between 60 to 70. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students in junior high school. The fourth category is 'fairly difficult'; there are five reading passages (33%) at this level. The readability score is between 50 to 60. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. The last category is a 'difficult' level, with one reading passage (7%) at this level. The readability score is between 30 to 50. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> grade or college students.

Meanwhile, the result findings of reading materials in the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris* by the government-grade X show that there are 13 reading passages categorized into four levels: the first category is a 'fairly easy' level with four reading passages (31%) at this level. The readability score is between 70 to 80. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students in junior high school. The second category is a 'standard' level with two reading passages (15%) at this level. The readability score is between 60 to 70. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students in junior high school. The third category is a 'fairly difficult' level, with three reading passages (23%) at this level. The readability score is between 50 to 60. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. The last category is a 'difficult' level, with four reading passages (31%) at this level. The readability score is between 30 to 50. Therefore, based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula, the estimated reading grade is for 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>-grade or college students.

Overall, the result of the analysis of readability levels in the English textbook *Pathway to English*

Table 4 The Comparison Between Two English Textbooks

| Textbook                                          | Total of Text | Average Readability Score | Average Level    | Quality for 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Pathway to English</i> published by Erlangga   | 15            | 66,38                     | Standard         | Easier                             |
| <i>Bahasa Inggris</i> published by the government | 13            | 59,32                     | Fairly difficult | Appropriate                        |

shows that there are five (33%) out of 15 texts which suitable with the level 'fairly difficult' estimated readability level for the 10<sup>th</sup>-grade senior high school based on the Flesch Reading Ease formula. Therefore, 10 reading passages are considered unappropriated to 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students since the readability score is above and under the readability level of 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students. On the other hand, the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris grade X* by the government shows that only three (23%) reading passages among 13 texts are suitable with the level 'fairly difficult' estimated readability level for the tenth grade of senior high school. While 10 reading passages are unappropriated to senior high school students of tenth grade.

The results of the research are likely related to recent studies that have measured the readability level of reading materials in an English textbook. Handayani and Wirza (2021) have analyzed reading materials in *Learning Daily English* published by Grafindo Media Pratama grade five of elementary school and found five out of 13 reading texts are matched with the level of fifth elementary school students, while most of the texts are below and above the level of five grade students. Another research conducted by Hakim, Setyaningsih, and Cahyaningrum (2021) has shown that only one reading text matches with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school in the textbook *English on Target grade X* published by Erlangga.

Maryansyah (2016) has also conducted research about analyzing the readability of English reading texts for third-grade students in junior high school. The researcher employs Fry Readability Formula in collecting the data and measuring the readability. The final result of his research has revealed that the findings are not optimal; there are only six reading texts out of 63 texts that meet the grade of ninth-grade junior high school students. Therefore, the demanded reading grade level of the text should be the majority included in the textbook.

Similar to this, research conducted by Amer (2021) about lexical density and readability of secondary stage English textbooks in Jordan illustrates that the selected reading passages are easy to read. Amer (2021) has analyzed two English textbooks used in Jordan for 12<sup>th</sup> grade and 11<sup>th</sup> grade. He points out that the average readability score in English textbooks for 12<sup>th</sup>-grade is 65,58, which means the reading materials are appropriate for 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students. While the average readability score in the textbook for 11<sup>th</sup>-grade is 70,97 indicates the reading materials are suitable for 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students.

This investigation is similar to Handayani, Furaidah, and Ivone (2020), who have investigated the readability level in the Erlangga textbook for 11<sup>th</sup>-grade students using Coh-Metrix as a tool for collecting the data. Their findings point out that the text with the lowest total number of sentences and the lowest total of words indicated the text is difficult, with two total sentences and 56 total words. Similar to this, the result findings by Suheri, Azhar, and Afrianto (2018) have also shown that the text with the lowest total number

of sentences and the lowest total of words illustrating the text is difficult, with 10 total sentences and 141 total number of words. Kadayat and Eika (2020) and Putri (2021) have added that the readability of a text is connected to sentence length. This is also supported by the finding of Kamarudin and Sugianto (2020) and Fata and Aprilya (2021), who have mentioned that readability is affected by sentence and word aspects of the materials.

Hidayatillah and Zainil (2020) have examined the readability of students' textbooks used in the semantic and pragmatic courses in the English language. Based on their result, it is shown that the readability level of the textbook is difficult to comprehend by the students since there are several difficult words and unfamiliar words in the textbook. Thereby, it is supported by the findings by Odo (2018), who has examined the textbook used for pre-service EFL teachers. The main finding shows that the texts are excessively difficult for L2 readers to comprehend. Morales (2019) has also evaluated readability in Chilean EFL high school textbooks for 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The result proves that the readability of the texts used in textbooks for 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade is appropriate, but the texts used for 11<sup>th</sup> grade are highly difficult to read. Additionally, Owu-Ewie (2014) has analyzed four English textbooks used in Ghana. He has indicated that the majority of the texts are irrelevant to the students' level. Owu-Ewie (2014) has mentioned that the complexity of the language used concerning the reader's reading ability is a factor that makes reading texts unreadable. His research shows that most passages are above the student's age; therefore, students might find it difficult to comprehend and read the reading materials in the textbook.

However, the comparison of the English textbook *Pathway to English* by Erlangga and the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris* by the government shows the difference in the average readability score and the average readability level. The average readability score in the English textbook *Pathway to English* is 66,38, which indicates the textbook is at a 'standard' level. Appropriately, this textbook is below the readability level of tenth-grade students of senior high school based on Flesch Reading Ease. Meanwhile, the average readability score in the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris* by the government is 59,32, which indicates the textbook is at a 'fairly difficult' level. Thus, this textbook is considered relevant and readable for tenth-grade students of senior high school.

In the sense of the dissimilarity between the research and current research, it can be inferred that there are several studies with contrasting results with this research. Several recent studies mentioned previously indicate that the average readability levels of the texts are difficult to comprehend or read. Moreover, the average readability level in this research shows that the first textbook is easier, which is at a 'standard' level, and the second textbook is appropriate, which is at a 'fairly difficult' level.

To conclude, the English textbook *Pathway*

to English, published by Erlangga, is still readable for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. This textbook can also be used for students in junior high school since the average readability level is at the 'standard' level, and the estimated reading grade is for 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. On the other hand, the average readability level is at a 'fairly difficult' level; therefore, the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris* by the government is appropriate for 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school.

The results of the research can provide crucial information to English teachers on how to choose and supply relevant reading materials based on students' levels. Poor materials can negatively affect students' interests, fluency, and motivation (Bojanic & Topalov, 2016). It also supports the result of recent research by Nanda and Azmy (2020), indicating that the implications of giving poor reading materials may cause to lack of motivation, poor English vocabulary, and low prior knowledge of students.

Therefore, the implications of the research propose that the texts that are appropriate for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students should be used in the teaching and learning process. The passages that are below and above students' level should be modified to adjust students' reading levels; in addition, besides the use of English textbooks, a teacher can utilize students' worksheets in giving reading materials. Moreover, result findings conducted by Anwar, Furwana, and Iksan (2020) have mentioned that the usage of students' worksheets or known as LKPD, is remarkably beneficial for both teachers and students since it can support teachers in providing reading materials also encompasses many elements of reading, activities, and exercises.

## CONCLUSIONS

The research aims to determine the level of readability of reading materials in the English textbook *Pathway to English* by Erlangga and the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris* published by the government for grade X of senior high school. After utilizing Flesch Reading Ease to analyze the data of reading materials, it is discovered that the English textbook *Pathway to English* published by Erlangga has five readability levels: easy (three reading passages), fairly easy (two reading passages), standard (four reading passages), fairly difficult (five reading passages), and difficult (one reading passage). In the meanwhile, there are four readability levels in the English textbook *Bahasa Inggris* published by the government: fairly easy level (four reading passages), standard level (two reading passages), fairly difficult level (three reading passages), and difficult level (four reading passages).

It is found that in the first textbook, there are five texts out of 15 texts which is relevant to 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school. Likewise, three out of 13 texts in the second textbook are relevant to 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students of senior high school.

Also, the average readability score in the first

textbook is 66,38, which indicates the reading texts are at a 'standard' level, which is easier for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students in senior high school. Therefore, the textbook is appropriate for 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>-grade students in junior high school. Likewise, the average readability score in the second textbook is 59,32, which shows the reading texts are at a 'fairly difficult' level that matches with 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students.

In relation to results and discussion, sentence length and word aspects of the materials are connected to readability. Therefore, vocabulary and word complexity have also influenced the readability. Furthermore, the findings of the research have several implications, the passages that are appropriate for 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students should be used in the teaching and learning process; the passages that are below and above students' level should be modified to adjust students' reading levels; teachers can utilize student's worksheet to supply reading materials for students; also, to supply a proper text, teachers may create additional reading passages which have been analyzed with readability formula.

Moreover, the findings of the research can be insight and reference to teachers and other researchers regarding the readability of the textbook, as well as provide information to English teachers in choosing the reading materials. For that reason, the stakeholder and teachers must be genuinely aware of selecting the proper English textbook that contains suitable reading passages for students. Therefore, if the textbooks used are low readability, the school may add supplementary materials to support students in enhancing their reading skills. Additionally, an author of textbooks may utilize the readability level to publish an adequate textbook based on students' level.

The research has several limitations, which emphasize assessing the readability level of reading material in two different English textbooks. Another limitation is that the data analysis is only calculated by the Flesch Reading Ease formula. Therefore, further studies may utilize two or more readability formulas to expand the research to strengthen the findings. Thus, further researchers can utilize different textbooks by other publishers of the higher educational level. Additionally, further research is recommended to assess the readability of reading material based on students' perceptions.

## REFERENCES

- Amer, M. A. B. (2021). Lexical density and readability of secondary stage English textbooks in Jordan. *International Journal for Management and Modern Education*, 2(2), 11-20.
- Anwar, L., Furwana, D., & Iksan, M. (2020). Developing reading worksheet for tenth grade students of SMA Negeri 4 Palopo. *FOSTER: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 1(1), 1-8. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24256/foster-jelt.v1i1.2>.
- Azizifar, A., & Baghelani, E. (2014). Textbook evaluation

- from EFL teachers' perspective: The case of "Top-Notch" series. *International SAMANM Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 22-41.
- Bailin, A., & Grafstein, A. (2016). *Readability: Text and context*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bojanic, B. B., & Topalov, P. (2016). Textbooks in the EFL classroom: Defining, assessing, and analyzing. *Review Paper*, 46(3), 137-153. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5937/ZRFFP46-12094>.
- Coco, L., Colina, S., Atcherson, S. R., & Marrone, N. (2017). Readability level of Spanish language patient-reported outcome measures in audiology and otolaryngology. *American Journal of Audiology*, 26(3), 309-317. [https://doi.org/10.1044/2017\\_aja-17-0018](https://doi.org/10.1044/2017_aja-17-0018).
- Dubay, W. H. (2004). *The principles of readability*. Costa Mesa: Impact Information.
- Fata, I. A., & Aprilya, A. (2021). Examining personification in songs as one of the English teaching materials. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, 8(2), 1-15. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v8i2.7186>.
- Fata, I. A., Gani, S. A., & Husna, N. (2020). Cultural elements: A textbook evaluation in Indonesia. *International Journal of Language Studies*, 14(4), 93-104.
- Gunantar, D. A. (2017). Textbook analysis: Analyzing English as a Foreign Language (EFL). *Language Circle: Journal of Language and Literature*, 11(2), 173-182. <https://doi.org/10.15294/lc.v11i2.9590>.
- Gyasi, W. K., & Slippe, D. P. (2019). Readability of English language textbooks for diploma students of the University of Cape Coast. *International Journal of Research Studies in Learning*, 8(1), 107-115. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5861/ijrsl.2019.3008>.
- Hakim, A. A., Setyaningsih, E., & Cahyaningrum, D. (2021). Examining the readability level of reading text in English textbook for Indonesian senior high school. *Journal of English Language Studies*, 6(1), 18-35. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30870/jels.v6i1.8898>.
- Handayani, R., Furaidah, F., & Ivone, F. M. (2020). The readability level of reading texts in Erlangga straight point series: English for eleventh grade students. *Jurnal Pendidikan: Teori, Penelitian, dan Pengembangan*, 5(11), 1579-1587. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17977/jptpp.v5i11.14168>.
- Handayani, G. M., & Wirza, Y. (2021). An analysis on language content and readability level of primary English textbook. *Proceedings of the Thirteenth Conference on Applied Linguistics (CONAPLIN 2020)* (pp. 203-208). Paris: Atlantis Press.
- Hidayatillah, N., & Zainil, Y. (2020). The readability of students' textbook used in semantic and pragmatic course in English language education program of UNP. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 9(1), 144-159. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v9i1.107848>.
- Hong, D. S., Choi, K. M., Runnals, C., & Hwang, J. (2018). Do textbook address known learning challenges in are measurement? A comparative analysis. *Mathematics Education Research Journal*, 30(1), 1-27. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s13394-018-0238-6>.
- Kadayat, B. B., & Eika, E. (2020). Impact of sentence length on the readability of web for screen reader users. In *International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction* (pp. 261-271). Denmark: Springer Cham.
- Kamarudin., & Sugianto, N. (2020). A readability level of reading materials for vocational high school students in Lombok, NTB. *Jurnal Pedagogy*, 7(4), 265-274. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jp.v7i4.2852>.
- Maryansyah, Y. (2016). An analysis on readability of English reading texts for grade IX students at MTsN 2 Kota Bengkulu. *Premise: Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics*, 5(1), 69-88. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24127/pj.v5i1.416>.
- Morales, B. C. (2019). Readability and types of questions in Chilean EFL high school textbooks. *TESOL Journal*, 11(2), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.498>.
- Nanda, D. W., & Azmy, K. (2020). Poor reading comprehension issue in EFL classroom among Indonesian secondary school students: Scrutinizing the causes, impacts, and possible solutions. *English Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, 8(1), 12-24. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v8i1.6771>.
- Nuttal, C. (2005). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language* (new edition). Oxford: Macmillan Education.
- Odo, M. D. (2018). A comparison of readability and understandability in second language acquisition textbooks for pre-service EFL teachers. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 15(3), 750-765. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2018.15.3.12.750>.
- Owu-Ewie, C. (2014). Readability of comprehension passages in Junior High School (JHS) English textbooks in Ghana. *Ghana Journal of Linguistics*, 3(2), 35-68. <https://doi.org/10.4314/gjl.v3i2.3>.
- Putri, A. L. (2021). *A content analysis of "Gateway English" textbook for the eleventh grade of senior high school based on BSNP Criteria*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Banten: Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten.
- Shabankhani, B. (2020). Assessing the inter-rater reliability for nominal, categorical and ordinal data in medical sciences. *Archives of Pharmacy Practice*, 11(4), 144-148.
- Suheri, M. D., Azhar, F., & Afrianto. (2018). A study on the text readability of an English textbook entitled Bright: An English course for junior high school students grade IX published by Erlangga. *Jurnal Online Mahasiswa Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pengetahuan*, 5(2), 1-13.