

THE READABILITY LEVEL OF THE READING TEXT IN *PATHWAY TO ENGLISH* BY ERLANGGA FOR XI OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Rohmanita Riski Istikhomah, Muh Syafei, Nuraeningsih
Universitas Muria Kudus

Abstract:

*The objective of the research was to find out the readability level of reading text in *Pathway to English* by Erlangga of 2017 edition for XI of Senior High School, which is generally used in the school as a written source and used by the teacher to deliver the material. This research is categorized as descriptive quantitative research and the data was collected and analyzed using Flesch Reading Ease formula. The results of this research show that 17 from 20 reading text is readable for XI of Senior High School, 2 of them is for the 13th to 16th grade, and 1 reading text is for College Graduate. Then, the average of readability score of the reading text is 62.88, which can interpret that *Pathway to English* for XI of Senior High School by Erlangga of 2017 edition for *Kelompok Peminatan in Standard level* and it's readable for 10th to 12th grade, which can be concluded that this textbook is readable and appropriate for XI of Senior High School.*

Key words: *Readability Level, Reading Text, Flesch Reading Ease*

INTRODUCTION

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is already considered as a compulsory subject at the secondary education level. There are four skills that the EFL students must master; listening, speaking, writing, and reading. Among those skills, reading is the most potent skill to improve the students' ability in the teaching and learning process. By reading, the students can get a lot of information to answer the question from a book, journal, blog, magazine, or other media. The students can increase or enhance their knowledge of the outside world by reading. For example, the students who read English texts have many benefits. First, it can increase their vocabulary and their reading comprehension. Secondly, it can also improve their brain's memory. Due to a lot of reading, it will hone our brain abilities regularly.

Therefore, it is necessary to provide suitable reading materials for students who learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at school. Because the suitable reading material correlates with the student's perception and achievement. Furthermore, by reading and get a good perception, they will encourage to get a high score. And to provide suitable reading material for the student, the teachers usually use the textbook as the written media to deliver the material. Learning is a process to get knowledge of a subject or skill by study, experiences and instruction (Syafei *et al.*, 2021). So, textbooks have become the primary source for English teaching and learning material since they contain reading text, instructions, and tasks. The students have to understand the written text or reading text in the textbook as the primary written material. The low achievement might be due to the internal factor coming from the students, for example, the level of intelligence and the level of motivation (Nuraeningsih *et al.*, 2021). The selection of an appropriate reading text in the textbook is important because if the textbook is not interesting

to read, has difficult vocabulary, or the passage is too long, the students have difficulties understanding and getting the gist of the material, and it's also influence with the students motivation in reading section.

Brown (2001:314), states that there are three criteria for reading text selection. The first is the *Suitability of content*, it means material in which students will find interesting, enjoyable, challenging, and appropriate for their purposes in learning English. The second is the *Exploitability*, it means a text which facilitates the achievement of a particular language and content aims, that is exploitable for instructional assignments and techniques, and that is integrated with other skills. And the last is the *Readability*, which is a text with lexical and structural difficulty that will challenge students without forcing them. Based on the statement above, there are three criteria to determining or selecting the appropriate reading text. The first is by the content of the textbook. The second is by the function or the benefit that the reader will get from the textbook. And the last is the difficulties, which means how easy or how difficult the reading text is for the reader.

Handayani (2014), readability is a measurement of the suitability of a particular reading for readers to rank certain readers. It means that readability is an attempt to match the reading content with the reader's level of understanding. The purpose of readability itself is to find the right fit between the students' reading ability and the success of learners to get a good comprehension in reading.

This study aims at analyzing the readability of the textbook "Pathway to English" for XI Senior High School published by Erlangga in 2017. Several reasons were considered when conducting this research. The first is, an appropriate reading text can support the readers to understand the text. Second, an appropriate reading text can increase the enjoyment and effectiveness of reading. And the reason why the researcher interested in analyzing the readability level with a focus on the textual aspect of reading text materials in "Pathway to English" for XI published in 2017 is because this book is the latest edition by Erlangga which is generally used in the school as a written source used by the teacher to deliver the material and also has been used in almost every Senior High School that has the English subject for *Kelompok Peminatan*. This textbook has fulfilled the curriculum K13 revision of Indonesian education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study mainly reports the readability level in the reading text in "Pathway to English" by Erlangga (*Kelompok Peminatan*) for XI of Senior High School. This study employed descriptive quantitative research. According to Matthews (2010), quantitative research methods are applied to the collection of data that is structured and which could be represented numerically. It also deals with the observations, impressions, and interpretations of the researchers. This textbook consists of 10-unit materials, 39 reading materials, and has 220 pages based on the current curriculum. Among 39 reading materials, 20 reading materials can be classified into several kinds of text. And 19 reading texts consist of poem and song which cannot be categorized as a text because poem and song in the form of stanzas.

Before collecting and analyzing the data, the researcher classified the reading text into several kinds of text. The researcher used *Flesch Reading Ease* formula to collect and analyze the data. Dubay (2004:21), *Flesch Reading Ease* readability formula calculates an index score of a text sample based on the number of words, sentences length, and the number of syllables. To know the readability score from the textbook after applying the formula is counting the average results of all the readability scores of the reading text. After applying the formula and got the readability score of each reading text, to describe, elaborate, and analyze the readability level of the reading texts, the researcher used the table score shown in the *Flesch Reading Ease* formula.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The The results of classifying the reading text into several kind of text before collecting and analyzing the data were presented in Table 1.

Table 1
The Result of Classifying the Reading Text into Several Kinds of Text

No.	Kind of Text	Code	Page
1.	Descriptive Text	D1	28
2.	Descriptive Text	D2	28
3.	Descriptive Text	D3	29
4.	Descriptive Text	D4	29
5.	Narrative Text	N1	32
6.	Narrative Text	N2	76
7.	Narrative Text	N3	80
8.	Narrative Text	N4	90
9.	Narrative Text	N5	91
10.	Narrative Text	N6	96
11.	Narrative Text	N7	98
12.	Report Text	B1	40
13.	Report Text	B2	134
14.	Report Text	B3	151
15.	News Item	A1	40
16.	Recount Text	R1	89
17.	Hortatory Exposition	H1	156
18.	Hortatory Exposition	H2	157
19.	Hortatory Exposition	H3	161
20.	Hortatory Exposition	H4	168
Total		20	

The researcher described the data in the table above by presenting the type of text, code, and page of each text. The code provided is intended to make the texts easier for both the researcher and the reader. The code is an acronym for the type of text based on the first letter of the kind of text or the alphabet.

From the Table 1 we can see that there are 20 text with different kind of text, 4 text classified as Descriptive Text, 7 Narrative Text, 3 Report Text, 1 News Item, 1 Recount Text, and 4 Hortatory Exposition Text. After classifying the reading text into several kinds of text, the readability level is gotten by counting the number of sentences, words, and syllables of each reading text, and counting the ASL (Average Sentence Length) and ASW (Average Number of Syllables per word), the calculation result is presented in Table 2:

Table 2
 The Calculation Result of Sentences, Words, Syllables, ASL (Average Sentence Length) and ASW (Average Number of Syllables per word)

No.	Code	The Number of Sentence	The Number of Word	The Number of Syllables	ASL	ASW
1.	D1	7	87	134	12.43	1.54
2.	D2	10	150	204	15	1.36
3.	D3	5	100	147	20	1.47
4.	D4	6	113	159	18.83	1.41
5.	N1	14	153	184	10.93	1.20
6.	N2	24	328	480	13.67	1.46
7.	N3	48	883	1232	18.40	1.40
8.	N4	9	262	366	29.11	1.40
9.	N5	47	1659	2238	35.30	1.35
10.	N6	56	628	934	11.21	1.49
11.	N7	43	523	676	12.16	1.29
12.	B1	10	177	308	17.70	1.74
13.	B2	11	261	404	23.73	1.55
14.	B3	13	259	422	19.92	1.63
15.	A1	9	139	187	15.44	1.35
16.	R1	14	251	366	17.93	1.46
17.	H1	10	137	228	13.70	1.66
18.	H2	12	218	338	18.17	1.55
19.	H3	9	124	247	13.78	1.99
20.	H4	6	103	153	17.17	1.49

After counting the number of words, sentences, syllables, ASW, and ASL, to find out the readability level of the reading text, the researcher used the *Flesch Reading Ease* Formula by Rudolph Flesch (1948). And here is the calculation result presented in Table 3.

Table 3
 The Readability Score of The Reading Text in “Pathway to English” by Erlangga

No.	Code	Readability Score	Difficulty Level	Readability Level
1.	D1	63.92	Standard	8th and 9th Grade
2.	D2	76.55	Fairly Easy	7th Grade
3.	D3	62.17	Standard	8th and 9th Grade
4.	D4	68.68	Standart	8th and 9th Grade
5.	N1	94.00	Very Easy	5th Grade
6.	N2	69.16	Standard	8th and 9th Grade
7.	N3	70.13	Fairly Easy	7th Grade
8.	N4	59.11	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th Grade
9.	N5	56.88	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th Grade
10.	N6	69.63	Standard	8th and 9th Grade
11.	N7	85.14	Easy	6th Grade
12.	B1	41.66	Difficult	13th to 16th Grade
13.	B2	51.80	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th Grade
14.	B3	48.77	Difficult	13th to 16th Grade
15.	A1	77.34	Fairly Easy	7th Grade
16.	R1	65.28	Standard	8th and 9th Grade
17.	H1	52.14	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th Grade
18.	H2	57.23	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th Grade
19.	H3	24.33	Very Difficult	College Graduate
20.	H4	63.74	Standard	8th and 9th Grade
Total Score		1257.65		

According to the table and previous explanation, the difficulty level of the reading texts is determined by the length of the text. In the calculation of Flesch Reading Ease Formula, the researcher cannot determine the text as middle, short, and long text or easy and difficult text only based on the researcher’s perception. The texts can be classified as middle, short, long texts, or as easy or difficult texts, based on the results of ASL (Average Sentence Length) and ASW (Average Number of Syllables per word).

In other words, the proportion of the sentences, words, and syllables influences the readability score and the level of difficulty of the reading text. If the text has a higher Average Sentence Length (ASL) and Average Syllable per Word (ASW), it has a lower readability score and it’s more unreadable (difficult). And if the text has a lower ASL and ASW, it has a higher readability score and it means the text is easier to read.

According to the table 3, those texts are classified into very easy, easy, fairly easy, standard, fairly difficult, difficult, and very difficult. And here is the explanation of the result of the research based on table 3:

1. The student's textbook "Pathway to English" for XI Senior High School published by Erlangga (2017) for *Kelompok Peminatan* consists of 4 Descriptive Text. From 4 Descriptive Text, the code text D1, D3, and D4 can be classified as Standard level which are readable for 8th and 9th grade. The text with code D1 has readability score 63.92. The D3 text gains readability score 62.17. The D4 text has readability score 68.68. And the last descriptive text with code D2 gains the readability score 76.55 can be classified as Fairly Easy level with readability level for 7th grade.
2. This textbooks also consist of 7 Narrative texts. The first is N1 with readability score 94.00 can be classified as Very Easy level and readable for 5th grade. Then, the text with code N2, N3, and N6 can be classified Standard level which is readable for 8th and 9th grade. The N2 text with readability score 69.16. The N3 text gains readability score 70.13. And The N6 text has readability score 69.63. For the text with N4 and N5 can be classified as Fairly Difficult level which are readable for 10th until 12th grade. The N4 text gains the readability score 59.11, and the N5 text with 56.88 readability score. The last is N7 with readability score 85.14 can be classified as Easy level and readable for 6th grade.
3. The other kind of text is Report Text, this textbooks also consist of 3 Report Text. From 3 Report Text, the text with code B1 and B3 can be classified as Difficult level which is readable for 13th to 16th Grade (College). The B1 text gains readability score 41.66. And the B3 text with 48.77 readability score. The last is B2 with readability score 51.80 can be classified as Fairly Difficult level and readable for 10th until 12th grade.
4. This textbooks also consist of 1 News Item with code A1. The A1 text has readability score 77.34 can be classified as Fairly Easy level and readable for 7th grade.
5. The other kind of text in this textbooks is Recount Text, this textbooks consist of 1 Recount text with code R1. The R1 text has readability score 65.28 can be classified as Standard level and readable for 8th and 9th grade.
6. The last kind of text in this textbooks is Hortatory Exposition. From 4 Hortatory Exposition text, 2 of them can be classified as Fairly Difficult level with code H1 and H2 and readable for 10th to 12th Grade. The H1 text gains readability score 52.14. And the H2 has readability score 57.23. The H3 text with 24.33 readability score can be classified as Very Difficult level and readable for College Graduate. The last is H4 with 63.74 readability score can be classified as Standard level and readable for 8th and 9th grade.

Based on the table 3, to get the score of the readability level of the textbook, the researcher calculates all the readability score of the text.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{The readability of the textbook} &= \frac{\text{The total score of readability}}{\text{The number of text}} \\ &= \frac{1257.65}{20} \\ &= 62.88\end{aligned}$$

The result shows that all the 20 reading texts gains the readability score 62.88. It means the readability level of the textbook is Standard level and readable for 10th to 12th grade. And this textbook is readable and appropriate for XI of Senior High School. The average readability of the reading texts in “Pathway to English” for XI Senior High School published by Erlangga (2017) for *Kelompok Peminatan* should be at Fairly difficult level to achieve XI grade level, and the average readability score should be at 50-59. The result of the readability scores in table 3 shows that the proportion of the reading text that is suitable for XI of Senior High School is not balanced, because there are 12 texts below XI grade level, 5 texts suitable for XI of Senior High School, and 3 texts is not readable for XI of Senior High School.

Based on the result of the research, there are 3 factors that can influence the readability score from the internal factor which is from the textbooks. The first is the number of sentences, the number of words, and the number of syllables. And the score of the readability itself can relate to the reader’s level of understanding.

Pikulski (2002), who suggests that readability is the level of ease or difficulty with which reading text material can be understood by a particular reader who is reading the text for a specific purpose. So, to make sure the student can understand the reading text, the teacher needs to provide suitable reading material based on their level. The suitable reading material also correlates with the student’s perception, motivation, achievement, and improvement. If the reading text is too easy, the student will get bored, feel unchallenged, and get a low motivation. And if the reading text is too difficult, the student also feels frustrated and will get a low reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION

From the entire explanation of the result and after conducting the research about the readability level in “Pathway to English” for XI Senior High School published by Erlangga (2017) for *Kelompok Peminatan*, the researcher can conclude that from 20 reading texts with a different kind of text, 17 reading text are readable for XI of Senior High School, and 3 of them are not readable for XI of Senior High School. From 17 text that readable for XI Senior High School, these 17 texts consist of 4 Descriptive Text, 7 Narrative Text, 1 Report Text, 1 News Item, 1 Recount Text, and 3 Hortatory Exposition. The result of the average readability score from this textbook is 62.88 which can be classified as Standard level on Flesch Reading Ease table and it’s readable for 10th to 12th Grade. From the explanation above, the researcher concluded that the reading texts in “Pathway to English” for XI Senior High School published by Erlangga (2017) for *Kelompok Peminatan* is appropriate and readable for XI Senior High School.

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