

## **THE READABILITY LEVEL OF READING TEXTS IN ENGLISH FINAL EXAM TEST FOR NINTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMP BERA TONDANO**

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**Abstract:** Reading is one of the language components that English learners must be familiar with. Reading is the act of extracting meaning from written text. Readers use their understanding of the writing system, language, and the capacity to deduce meaning from text. The aim of this research was to find out the readability level of reading texts of English final exam test for ninth grade students at SMP Bera Tondano. The writer analyzed 3 past final exam test. The writer used Flesch Reading Ease Formula to analyzed the test. The data was categorized in 5 level of readability. After analyzing the collected data, the writer found 1 text or (3.8%) in level very easy, 8 texts or (30.8%) in level easy, 7 texts or (26.9%) in level fairly easy, 7 texts or (26.9%) in level standard, and 3 texts or (11.5%) in level fairly difficult. Based on the collected data, 7 reading texts or (26.9%) were found in standard level, and the writer concluded that the test was suitable for the ninth grade students.

**Keywords:** *Readability, Reading Text, Test, English Final Exam*

### **INTRODUCTION**

English is the most widely used language in worldwide communication, and it is also the most crucial to know. Because of the reasons stated above, those whose native tongue is not English must learn English in order to compete in this global competition. Learning a foreign language can help them comprehend others better and gain a better understanding of how language works and how it relates to our thoughts (Lalogiroth & Tatipang, 2020).

English is gaining in importance as an international language in recent years (Lengkoan & Rombepajung, 2022). English is widely used not only in nations where English is the native language, but also in countries where English is a second or even third language, such as Indonesia. English is taught as a compulsory subject in Indonesia (Karisi et al, 2021).

Reading comprehension among junior high school students is still far from excellent, despite the fact that reading skill is given more importance in junior high school. They still have trouble understanding texts and are unmotivated to complete reading assignments (Tatipang et al, 2021). It may be demonstrated that only a small percentage of students receive good grades on their final exams. It is obvious that the reading teaching and learning process has not been successful. A variety of essential aspects involved in the instruction contribute to this lack of success (Lendo et al, 2021). The teacher's involvement in guiding pupils toward effective reading skills is critical. The teacher should be able to devise a method for making it easier for students to read and comprehend English materials.

Reading is one of the language components that English learners must be familiar with. Reading, according to (Williams, 1996), is the act of extracting meaning from written text. Readers use their understanding of the writing system, language, and the capacity to deduce meaning from text. Understanding English requires a strong grasp of grammar. Reading comprehension, according to (Mikulecky, 1990), is a complicated behavior that entails the deliberate application of a variety of tactics, including problem-solving skills, to construct a model of meaning that the writer is presumed to have intended.

The selection of an appropriate reading text for students is critical in matching their abilities to their reading levels. Readability, according to (Asem, 2012), is the ability to match the reader to the text. Readability refers to the degree to which a text may be comprehended by a reader (Penu et al, 2021).

If children are given a material that is too simple for them, their reading abilities will stagnate, but if the content is too difficult for them, they will struggle to comprehend it.

The researcher is interested in analyzing the readability level of reading material in the English final exam test, based on the above explanation. This study will be conducted on ninth-grade students' final exam exams.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

This study used a descriptive research design to examine the readability quality of reading texts in an English final exam examination for ninth grade students.

### ***Data Collection***

The writer used Flesch's Reading Ease formula to assess the readability of reading materials included in a ninth-grade English final exam examination. The techniques of the computation, according to (Langi et al, 2022) and (DuBay, 2007), are as follows:

1. The writer calculated the number of syllables, words, and sentences of each reading texts.
2. Then, by dividing the number of words by the number of sentences, the writer estimated the Average Sentence Length (ASL) of each reading material.
3. Next, by dividing the number of syllables by the number of words, the writer derived the Average of Syllables per Word (ASW) of each reading text.
4. After the ASL and ASW of each reading texts is known, the writer put the result of ASL and ASW that are calculated formerly into formula as follow:

$$\text{Score} = 206.835 - (1.015 \times \text{ASL}) - (84.6 \times \text{ASW})$$

4. The scores obtained from the formula above range from 0 to 100 which adjusted with the difficulty level and reading grade as in table follow:

<b>Reading Ease Score</b>	<b>Style Description</b>	<b>Estimated Reading Grade</b>
0 to 30	Very Difficult	College Graduate
30 to 50	Difficult	13 <sup>th</sup> to 16 <sup>th</sup> grade
50 to 60	Fairly Difficult	10 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade
60 to 70	Standard	8 <sup>th</sup> to 9 <sup>th</sup> grade
70 to 80	Fairly Easy	7 <sup>th</sup> grade
80 to 90	Easy	6 <sup>th</sup> grade
90 to 100	Very Easy	5 <sup>th</sup> grade

### ***Data Analysis***

In analyzing data, the writer used Flesch's Reading Ease formula:

$$\text{Score} = 206.835 - (1.015 \times \text{ASL}) - (84.6 \times \text{ASW})$$

Where:

ASL = Average of Sentence Length

ASW = Average of Syllables per Word

Score = Reading Ease Score

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Findings***

The final exam tests contained a total of 26 texts from the research. Since some of the texts are untitled, the writer categorized the reading texts from text 1 to text 26. From all the texts that has been analyzed by the writer,

the result of the words, sentences, and syllables of each text is presented in table below.

***Table 1. The Description of Total Words, Sentences, and Syllables Calculations***

<b>Text</b>	<b>Number of Words</b>	<b>Number of Sentences</b>	<b>Number of Syllables</b>
<b>1</b>	34	2	50
<b>2</b>	204	18	277
<b>3</b>	136	11	161
<b>4</b>	71	2	84
<b>5</b>	87	8	135
<b>6</b>	168	15	239
<b>7</b>	63	5	94
<b>8</b>	19	1	26
<b>9</b>	107	6	130
<b>10</b>	29	3	39
<b>11</b>	35	3	52
<b>12</b>	160	12	211
<b>13</b>	163	8	217
<b>14</b>	175	10	269
<b>15</b>	145	14	193
<b>16</b>	59	3	91
<b>17</b>	69	8	93
<b>18</b>	33	3	47
<b>19</b>	105	7	131
<b>20</b>	145	13	198
<b>21</b>	236	15	341
<b>22</b>	119	4	141
<b>23</b>	165	9	237

<b>24</b>	160	9	230
<b>25</b>	158	10	259
<b>26</b>	110	9	146

Then, the researcher calculated all of the text's Average Sentence Length (ASL) and Average Number of Syllable Per-word (ASW).

**Table 2. Result of ASL and ASW Calculations**

<b>Text</b>	<b>Average Sentence Length (ASL)</b>	<b>Average Number of Syllables Per-Word (ASW)</b>
1	17.00	1.4706
2	11.33	1.3578
3	12.36	1.1838
4	35.50	1.1831
5	10.88	1.5517
6	11.20	1.4266
7	12.60	1.4921
8	19.00	1.3684
9	17.83	1.2150
10	9.67	1.3448
11	11.67	1.4857
12	13.33	1.3188
13	20.38	1.3313
14	17.50	1.5371
15	10.36	1.3310
16	19.67	1.5424
17	8.63	1.3478
18	11.00	1.4242
19	15.00	1.2476
20	11.15	1.3655
21	15.73	1.4449
22	29.75	1.1849
23	1833	1.4364
24	17.78	1.4375
25	1580	1.6392
26	12.22	1.3273

The next step is to find out the readability score by using Flesch Reading Ease Formula. The result of calculation presented in table below.

**Table 3. The Readability Score of Reading Texts Based on Flesch Reading Ease Formula**

<b>Text</b>	<b>Readability Score</b>	<b>Difficulty Level</b>	<b>Reading Grade</b>
<b>1</b>	65.16823529	Standard	8th to 9th grade
<b>2</b>	80.45813725	Easy	6th grade
<b>3</b>	94.1344385	Very Easy	5th grade
<b>4</b>	70.71235915	Fairly Easy	7th grade
<b>5</b>	64.52101293	Standard	8th to 9th grade
<b>6</b>	75.11342857	Fairly Easy	7th grade
<b>7</b>	67.81742857	Standard	8th to 9th grade
<b>8</b>	71.78157895	Fairly Easy	7th grade
<b>9</b>	85.94911994	Easy	6th grade
<b>10</b>	83.25091954	Easy	6th grade
<b>11</b>	69.30190476	Standard	8th to 9th grade
<b>12</b>	81.73541667	Easy	6th grade
<b>13</b>	73.52738113	Fairly Easy	7th grade
<b>14</b>	59.03021429	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th grade
<b>15</b>	83.71698276	Easy	6th grade
<b>16</b>	56.38858757	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th grade
<b>17</b>	84.05453804	Easy	6th grade
<b>18</b>	75.17909091	Fairly Easy	7th grade
<b>19</b>	86.06142857	Easy	6th grade
<b>20</b>	79.99108753	Fairly Easy	7th grade
<b>21</b>	68.62583616	Standard	8th to 9th grade
<b>22</b>	76.39841387	Fairly Easy	7th grade
<b>23</b>	66.71030303	Standard	8th to 9th grade
<b>24</b>	67.17805556	Standard	8th to 9th grade
<b>25</b>	52.11825316	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th grade
<b>26</b>	82.14217172	Easy	6th grade

### **Discussion**

After taking the result of the data analysis by using Flesch Reading Formula to 26 reading texts, the writer got 5 categories of data based on the difficulty level.

1. Very Easy, there was 1 reading text in this level. The readability score was between 90-100. The writer found it in the text 3. It means that text 3 was suitable for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.
2. Easy, there were 8 reading texts in this level. The readability score was between 80-90. The writer found it in text 2, 9, 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, and 26. It means that text 2, 9, 10, 12, 15, 17, 19, and 26 were suitable for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.
3. Fairly Easy, there were 7 reading texts in this level. The readability score was between 70-80. The writer found it in the text 4, 6, 8, 13, 18, 20, and 22. It means that text 4, 6, 8, 13, 18, 20, and 22 were suitable for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students.
4. Standard, there were 7 reading texts in this level. The readability score was between 60-70. The writer found it in the text 1, 5, 7, 11, 21, 23, and 24. It means that the text 1, 5, 7, 11, 21, 23, and 24 were suitable for 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade students.
5. Fairly Difficult, there were 3 texts in this level. The readability score was between 50-60. The writer found it in the text 14, 16, and 25. It means that the text 14, 16, and 25 were suitable for 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Furthermore, to conclude the results, the writer made it in data percentage as shown in table below.

***Table 4. Data Percentage***

<b>No</b>	<b>Readability Level</b>	<b>Total Text</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>1</b>	Very Easy	1	3.8%
<b>2</b>	Easy	8	30.8%
<b>3</b>	Fairly Easy	7	26.9%
<b>4</b>	Standard	7	26.9%
<b>5</b>	Fairly Difficult	3	11.5%

Based on the data percentage above, the texts that used in the final exam test for ninth grade students at SMP Berea Tondano are mostly Easy.



The highest percentage achieved by Easy level of readability, there were 8 texts or 30.8%. Next, followed by Fairly Easy and Standard level, each of them consisted of 7 texts or 26.9%. Then, in Fairly Difficult level, there were 3 texts or 11.5%. And finally, there was a text or 3.8% belongs in Very Easy level.

Since the texts in Standard level same with Fairly Easy level, then from the writer's research on the reading texts in final exam tests that used in SMP Berea Tondano, the writer concluded that the final exam tests were suitable for the students in SMP Berea Tondano.

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