READABILITY LEVEL OF "BAHASA INGGRIS" TEXTBOOK

FOR THE SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS

Fahriah
Alumni of English Education Department , Tarbiyah and Teachers Training Faculty
IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin

Puji Sri Rahayu
A Lecturer at English Education Department, Tarbiyah and Teachers Training Faculty
IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin

ABSTRACT
This research aims to investigate the level of readability of "Bahasa Inggris" textbook for the seventh grade students published by Mediatama and to know whether "Bahasa Inggris" textbook is readable for the seventh grade students. The population of this study is $\pm$ 210 students of seventh grade of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin. The sample is 20% of the population or 42 students. The sample is chosen by using random-sampling techniques which is taken 6 students in each class. To collect the data, the writer uses two techniques that are cloze test and readability formula (Flesch Reading Ease Formula). The result of this research showed that through Flesch Reading Ease Formula, the readability score for the whole texts of the English textbook entitled "Bahasa Inggris" is 76,35 (fairly easy) and through cloze test, the textbook has high readability which shown by its readability score 62,068. It means that "Bahasa Inggris" Textbook Published by medaiatama is readable and suitable for the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin.
Key Words : Reading, Readibility level, *Bahasa Inggris* Textbook

Reading an English textbook is one of the key components of teaching English, since it generally serves as the basis for much of the language input that learners receive and the language practice in English teaching and learning processes, so that the high quality of textbook is required by every person involved in education. A teaching-learning process will run well if the material can fully comprehended by the student.

A good English textbook is readable, understandable and comprehensible for students. The suitable difficulty text level will make students motivated and enjoy reading the material. Then, it will help them to catch the material. Too low readability text will make students bored. Otherwise, if it is too difficult, there will be lost of interest and students get frustrated.

The way to know whether an English textbook is appropriate for students is using readability analysis. Readability analysis concerns on how easily written materials can be read and understood. Knowing that fact, the writer would like to try to analyse the readability level of reading materials found in "Bahasa Inggris" textbook for seventh grade of Junior High School Published by Mediatama and this analysis will be conducted to the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin.

The problems which are formulated by the writer are how is the level of readability of "Bahasa Inggris" textbook for seventh grade students published by Mediatama? and is "Bahasa Inggris" textbook readable for the seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin?. The research is limited to explore the readability level of five reading texts that are taken from the textbook entitled "Bahasa Inggris" published by Mediatama. The

readability analysis is carried out using cloze test and readability formula which is Flesch Reading Ease Formula.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Reading in language learning plays an important role. It is one of four language skills which students have to learn. It is assumed to be the central means for learning new information and gaining access to alternative explanations and interpretations.

Linguists give various opinions about reading. According to Hildreth written in his book "reading is a mental process involving the interpretation of signs perceived through the sense organs" (1959, p.2). Nuttal (1982, p.2) explained the meaning of reading as (a) understand, interpret, meaning, sense, etcetera, (b) decode, dechiper, identify, etc, (c) articulate, speak, pronounce, etcetera.. While Lado stated that "reading in a foreign language consist of grasping meaning in the language though its written representation" (1964, p. 132).

To enable the students to master reading activity, teacher of English should provide materials. According to Harmer, reading texts provide opportunities to study language such as; vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and the way to construct sentence, paragraph and text (Harmer, 1998, p.68).

Based on the definitions above, it is important for teachers to use a textbook when they teach a particular subject in order to help them when they conduct teaching and learning activities as well as to reach educational purposes. According to Thomson, "the textbook is a stimulus or instrument for teaching and learning"(Heinle, 2000, p. 175). In another definition, textbook is a manual of instruction or a standard book in any branch of study which is produced according to the demands of educational institutions (Wikipedia).

Nuttall (1989, p. 170) states that a good textbook should fulfil some criteria such as suitability of content, exploitability and readability.
   a. Suitability of content
      The most important criterion is that the text should interest the reader – preferably enthral and delight them. It is suggested to look for motivating material implies the students' interest. In addition to being interesting, some classroom text at least should represent the kind of material students will need to handle.
   b. Exploitability
      Exploitability - that is, facilitation of learning - is arguably the most important criterion after interest. When teacher exploits a text, teacher uses it to develop the students' competence as the reader.
   c. Readability
      The term "readability" is often used to refer to the combination of structural and lexical difficulty. It forces on the easiness with which a text can be read. Since the language of a text may be difficult for one student and easy for another, it is necessary to assess the right level for the students.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that a good textbook is a textbook that fit to the curriculum, teachers, and students. Dealing with the students, the textbook has to have certain readability level that is appropriate with the students.

Readability is derived from the root word "read", "able" and "ity". In Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Webster, 2003, p. 1035), readability is noun form of readable (adj) that means

able to read easily. Readable is also defined as fit to read, interesting, agreeable, attractive in style and enjoyable.

Readability is basically related to the level of ease of understanding of a text. A text which has high readability level is easy to understand. On the contrary, text having low readability level is difficult to understand (Sakri in Catur, 2010, p. 13). National Education Department in its website stated "Aspek Keterbacaan (readability) berkaitan dengan tingkat kemudahan bahasa (kosa kata, kalimat, paragraf, dan wacana) bagi siswa sesuai dengan jenjang pendidikannya..." (A Readability aspect is related to the ease level of language (vocabulary, sentences, paragraph, and text) for students based on their educational level ...)

Richard in Murwati (2010, p. 36) asserts that readability has many factors, namely (a) the average length of sentences in a passage; (b) the number of new words a passage contain; (c) the grammatical complexity of the language used. Among those elements, the element of the difficulty of vocabulary and the length of a sentence determine intensively the readability level of a text.

The readability of a textbook can be measured by using cloze procedure and readability formula. Cloze procedure is conducted by preparing one or more cloze passages taken from the material. W.L. Taylor is credited with being the investor of the cloze technique. Taylor in Murwati (2010, p. 39) introduces that actually the cloze procedure is an attempt to improve the existing readability measures. One approach which is focused on the reader's process through a text rather than on the text itself is cloze procedure. In cloze procedure, students are given a text, which has several gapped spaces for word place that has been deleted from the original text. Then, it is scored. By scoring result, teacher can identify if the text is at independent, instruction, or frustration grade for students. Moreover, it can be known whether the text is suitable for them.

Table 1. Cloze Scores:

Material is too easy	Independent Level	60% and above
Material is about right	Instructional Level	40%-60%
Material is too difficult	Frustation Level	Under 40%

While readability formula is computed by using some mechanical procedures involving use of average sentence length, vocabulary lists, and counts of syllable length. There are several types of statistical readability formulas, namely SMOG Readability Formula, McLaughhlin "SMOG" Formula, Fry Readability Graph, Gunning "FOG" Readability Formula, Flesch-Kincaid Formula, Powers, Summer, Kearl Readability Formula, Dale-Chale Formula, FORCAST Formula, and Flesch Reading Ease Formula.

A readability formula which is used in this study is Flesch Reading Ease Formula because it is the best meant for school text and is a standard used by many U.S. government agencies. Moreover, it is the most widely used formula and the easiest formula to use.

METHOD OF RESEARCH
In this research, the writer uses *descriptive quantitative* method in which the writer tries to measure, describe, elaborate and analyze the readability level of textbook entitled BAHASA INGGRIS for SMP/MTS Grade VII. There were five text taken from BAHASA INGGRIS for SMP/MTS Grade VII which were examined in this study.

The population of this research was the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin. There are $\pm$ 210 students which are separated in seven classes. The sample of the research is about 20% of the population or 42 students. The sample is chosen by using *random-sampling techniques* which is taken 6 students in each class.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Flesch Reading Ease
The readability score is gained by counting the syllables, words, sentences and paragraphs which are in the texts. The writer analyses the syllables of each text by using Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary then counts the number of these syllables. Then, the writer counts words by using Microsoft Word. The number of sentences and paragraphs of the texts are counted manually.
The results of the calculation are presented in the following table:

Table 2. The Number of Syllables, Words, Sentences, and Paragraphs of the Five Texts.

No	Components	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5
1	Syllables	291	349	348	348	203
2	Words	196	256	237	240	149
3	Sentences	13	27	24	26	23
4	Paragraphs	4	7	6	8	6

Then, the writer counts ASL and ASW. ASL is the result from the number of words divided by the number of sentence, while ASW is the result from the number of syllables divided by the number of words.

1) Text 1

$$ASL = \frac{196}{13}$$
$$= 15,07$$
$$ASW = \frac{291}{196}$$
$$= 1,48$$

2) Text 2

$$ASL = \frac{256}{27}$$
$$= 9,48$$
$$ASW = \frac{349}{256}$$
$$= 1,36$$

3) Text 3

$$ASL = \frac{237}{24}$$
$$= 9,87$$

$$ASW = \frac{348}{237}$$
$$= 1{,}46$$

4) Text 4

$$ASL = \frac{240}{26}$$
$$= 9{,}23$$
$$ASW = \frac{348}{240}$$
$$= 1{,}45$$

5) Text 5

$$ASL = \frac{149}{23}$$
$$= 6{,}47$$
$$ASW = \frac{203}{149}$$
$$= 1{,}36$$

Then, the writer puts the calculation of ASL and ASW of the texts into the Readability Score formula as follows:

$$\boxed{206{,}835 - (1{,}015 \times ASL) - (84{,}6 \times ASW)}$$

Text 1 (Birthday Traditions around the World)
$$= 206{,}835 - (1{,}015 \times 15{,}07) - (84{,}6 \times 1{,}48)$$
$$= 66{,}32$$

Text 2 (Tiger)
$$= 206{,}835 - (1{,}015 \times 9{,}48) - (84{,}6 \times 1{,}36)$$
$$= 82{,}15$$

Text 3 (My Town, Wilson Creek)
$$= 206{,}835 - (1{,}015 \times 9{,}87) - (84{,}6 \times 1{,}46)$$
$$= 73{,}29$$

Text 4 (Elephants: The Amazing Animals)
$$= 206{,}835 - (1{,}015 \times 9{,}23) - (84{,}6 \times 1{,}45)$$
$$= 74{,}79$$

Text 5 (I Want to Be a Firefighter)
$$= 206{,}835 - (1{,}015 \times 6{,}47) - (84{,}6 \times 1{,}36)$$
$$= 85{,}20$$

Another way to know the average sentence length and word length of the text can be seen from *readability chart* below. Then, take a strightedge or ruler and connect the two figures. The intersection of the rler with the center column shows the **readability scores**.

Readability Chart

Birthday Traditions around the World

Word per sentence	Readabilty score	Syllabe per word
5 -	100 -	1.2 -
	Very easy	1.3 -
10 -	90 -	1.4 -
	Easy	1.5 -
15 -	80 -	1.6 -
	Fairly easy	1.7 -
20 -	70 -	1.8 -
	PLAIN ENGLISH	1.9 -
25 -	60 -	2 .0 -
	Fairly difficult	
30 -	50 -	
	Difficult	
35 -	40 -	
	30 -	
	20 -	
	Very difficult	
	10 -	
	0 -	
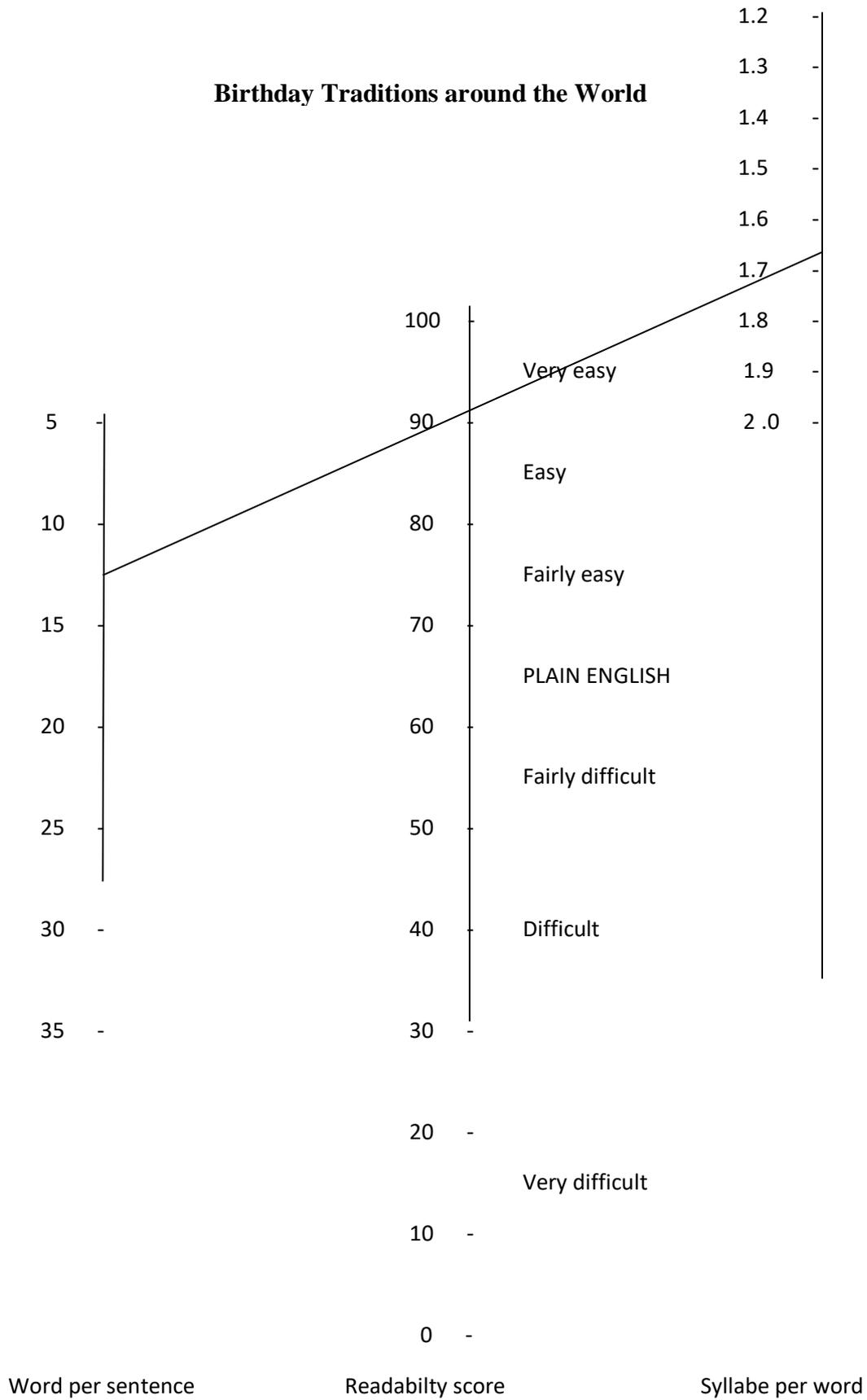
The chart shows that the text entitled "Birthday Traditions around the World" is in Plain English in which it has readability score of 66,32
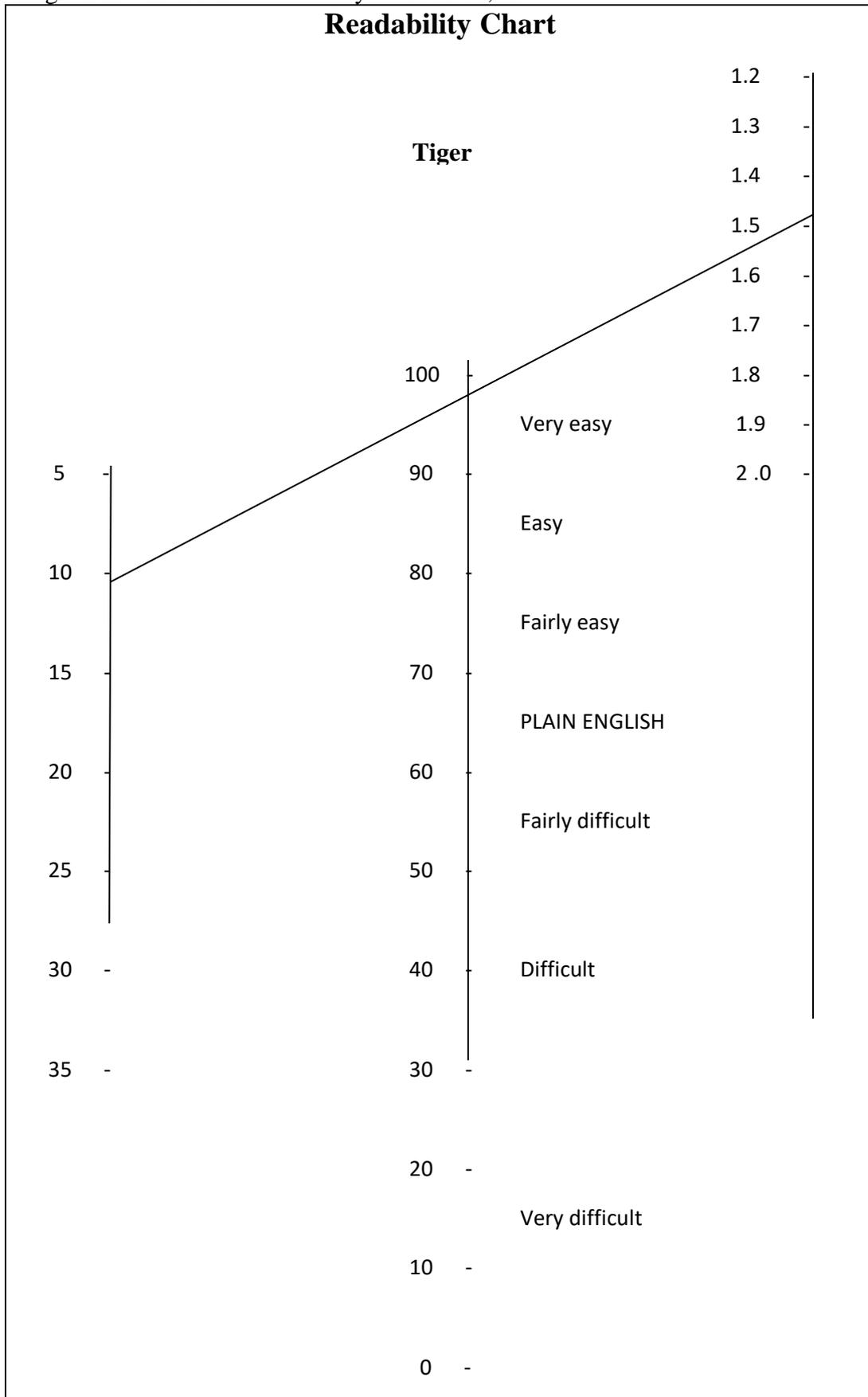
Readability Chart

Tiger

		1.2 -
		1.3 -
		1.4 -
		1.5 -
		1.6 -
		1.7 -
	100	1.8 -
	Very easy	1.9 -
5 -	90	2 .0 -
	Easy	
10 -	80	
	Fairly easy	
15 -	70	
	PLAIN ENGLISH	
20 -	60	
	Fairly difficult	
25 -	50	
30 -	40 Difficult	
35 -	30 -	
	20 -	
	Very difficult	
	10 -	
	0 -	

Word per sentence	Readabilty score	Syllabe per word

The chart shows that the text entitled "Tiger" is in Easy Level in which it has readability score of 82,15.
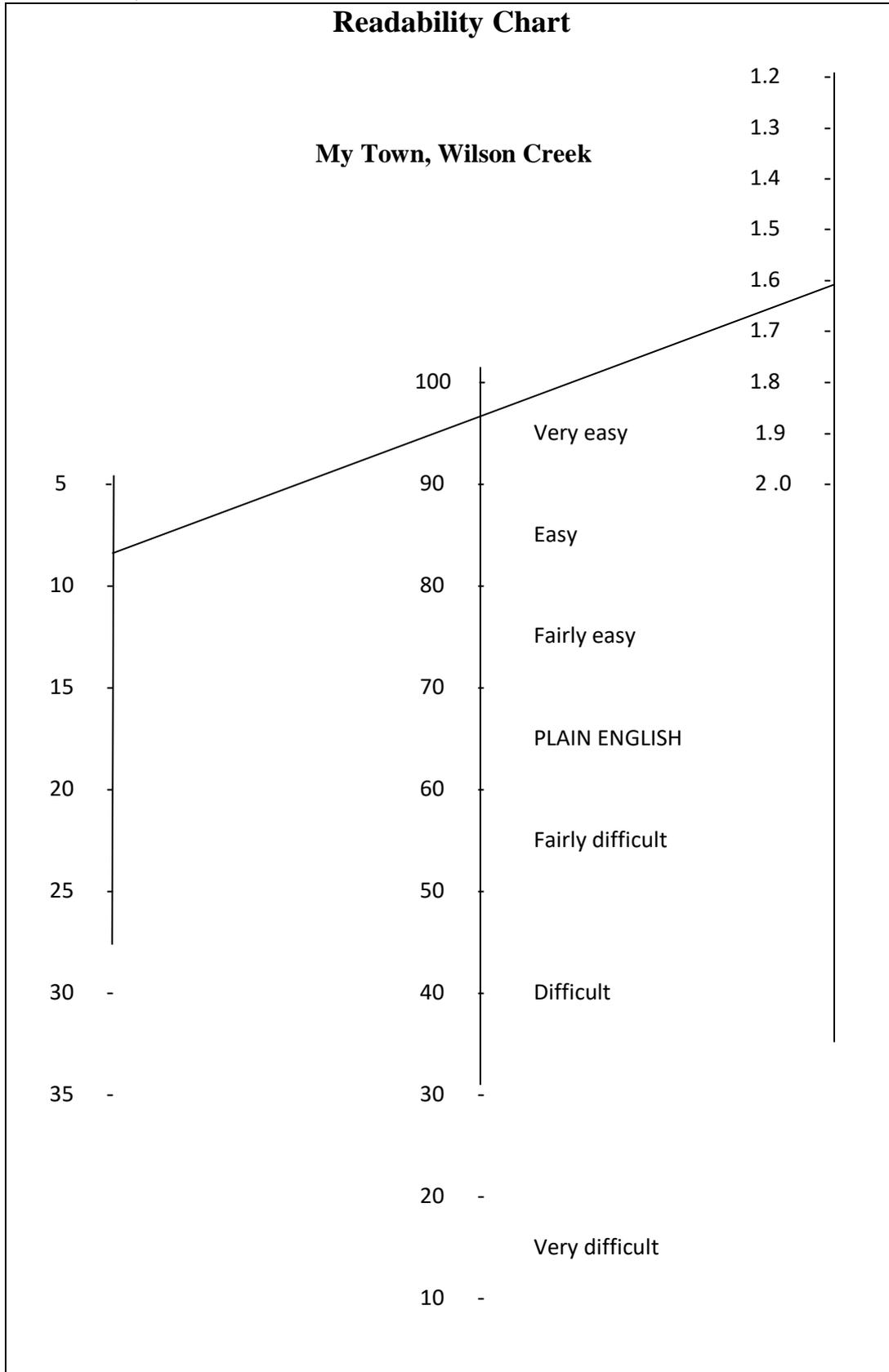
Readability Chart

My Town, Wilson Creek

Word per sentence	Readability score		Syllabe per word
			1.2 -
			1.3 -
			1.4 -
			1.5 -
			1.6 -
			1.7 -
	100		1.8 -
		Very easy	1.9 -
5 -	90		2 .0 -
		Easy	
10 -	80		
		Fairly easy	
15 -	70		
		PLAIN ENGLISH	
20 -	60		
		Fairly difficult	
25 -	50		
30 -	40	Difficult	
35 -	30 -		
	20 -		
		Very difficult	
	10 -		

	0 -	
Word per sentence	Readabilty score	Syllabe per word

The chart shows that the text entitled "My Town, Wilson Creek" is in Fairly Easy Level in which it has readability score of 73,29.
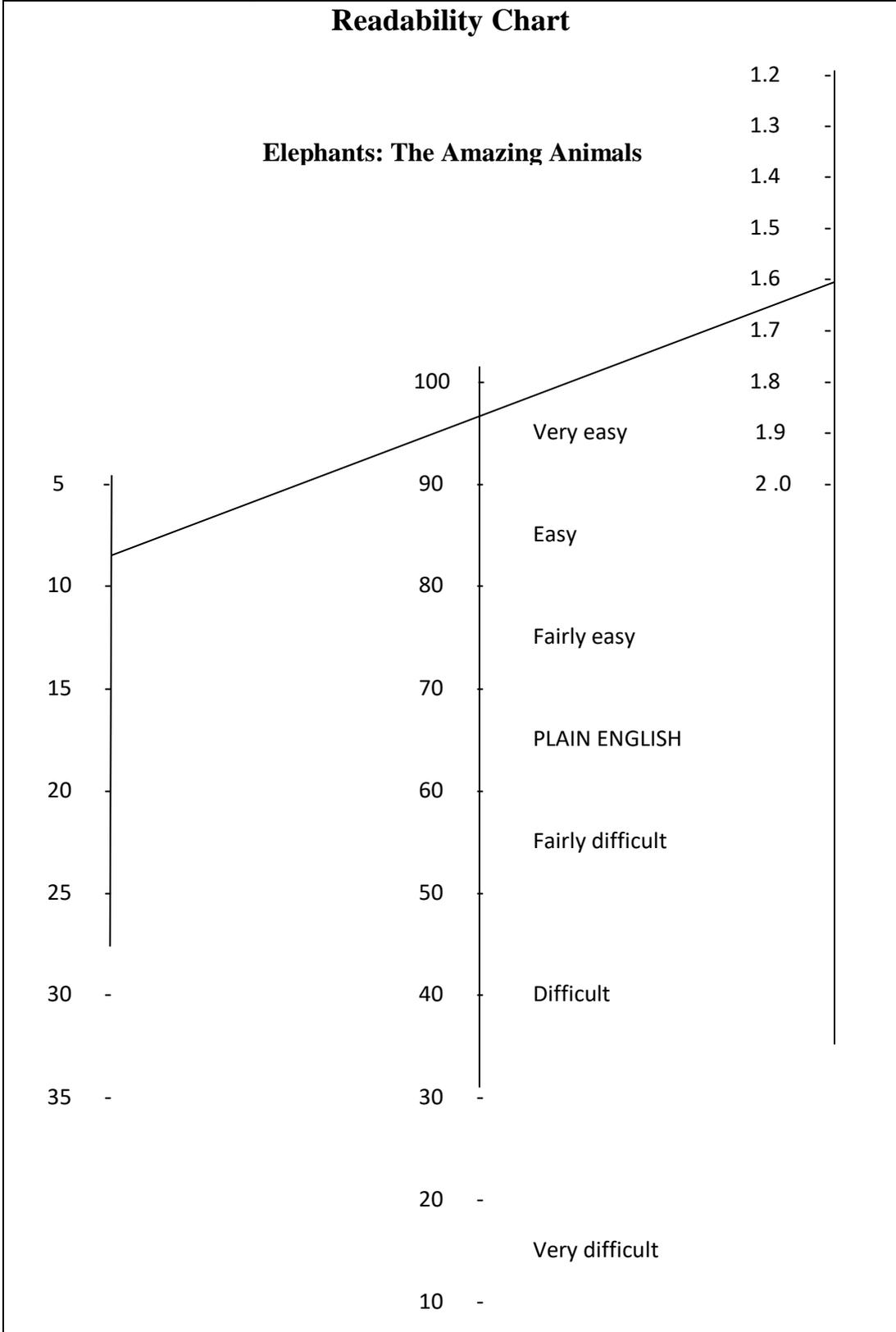
Readability Chart

Elephants: The Amazing Animals

Word per sentence	Readability score	Level	Syllabe per word
			1.2 -
			1.3 -
			1.4 -
			1.5 -
			1.6 -
			1.7 -
	100		1.8 -
		Very easy	1.9 -
5 -	90		2 .0 -
		Easy	
10 -	80		
		Fairly easy	
15 -	70		
		PLAIN ENGLISH	
20 -	60		
		Fairly difficult	
25 -	50		
30 -	40	Difficult	
35 -	30 -		
	20 -		
		Very difficult	
	10 -		

The chart shows that the text entitled "Elephants: The Amazing Animals" is in Fairly Easy Level in which it has readability score of 74,79.
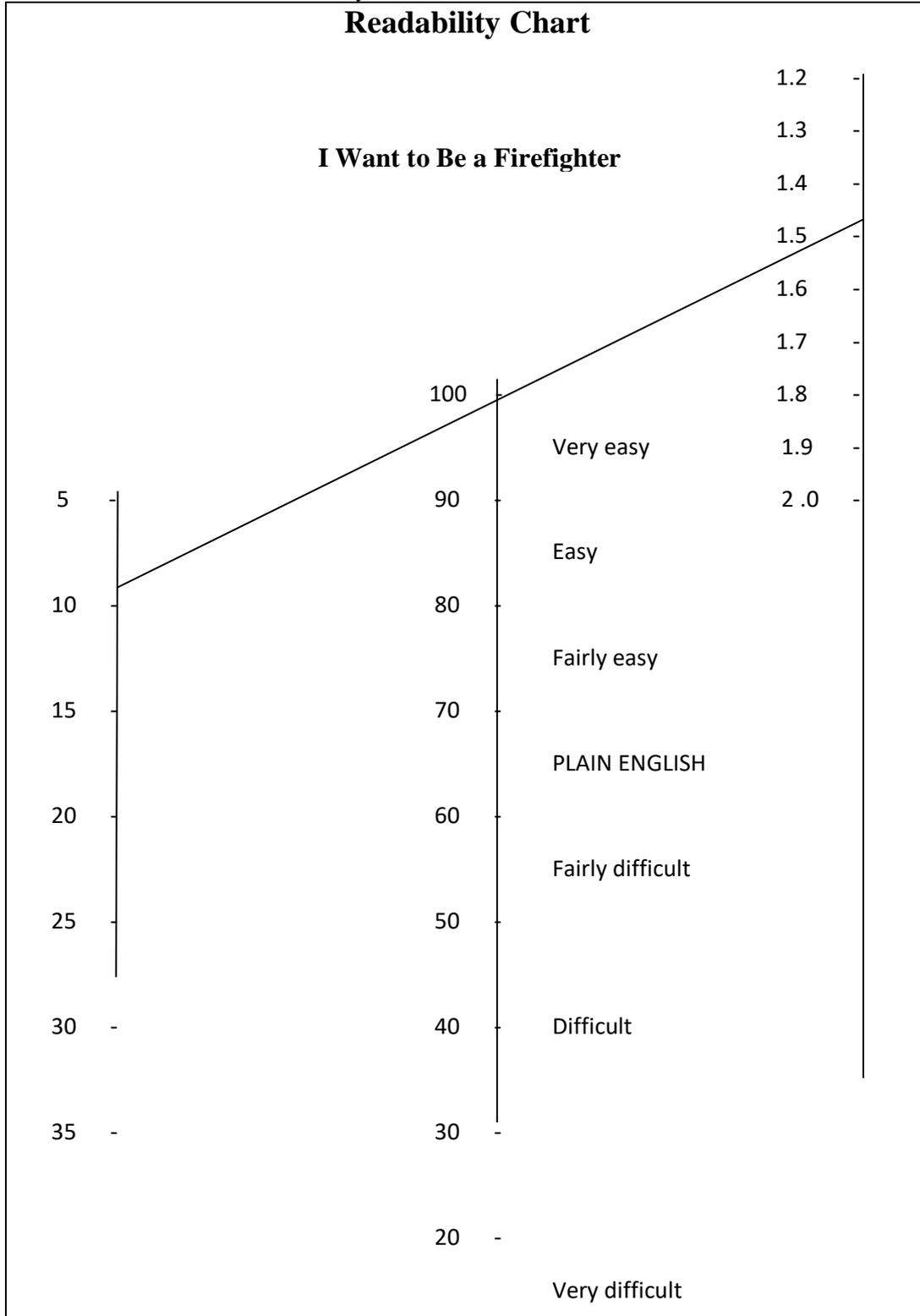
Readability Chart

I Want to Be a Firefighter

Word per sentence	Readability score		Syllabe per word
			1.2 -
			1.3 -
			1.4 -
			1.5 -
			1.6 -
			1.7 -
	100		1.8 -
		Very easy	1.9 -
5 -	90		2 .0 -
		Easy	
10 -	80		
		Fairly easy	
15 -	70		
		PLAIN ENGLISH	
20 -	60		
		Fairly difficult	
25 -	50		
30 -	40	Difficult	
35 -	30		
	20		
		Very difficult	

10   -

   0   -

Word per sentence   Readabilty score   Syllabe per word

The chart shows that the text entitled "I Want to Be a Firefighter" is in Easy Level in which it has readability score of 85,20.

To get score for the readability level of the textbook, the writer calculates the average results of each text.

$$\text{The readability of textbook} = \frac{66,32 + 82,15 + 73,29 + 74,79 + 85,20}{5}$$

$$= 76,35$$

The result shows that the five reading text get the level of 76, 35. It means that the readability level of the textbook is fairly easy level.

The Cloze Test Procedure

In the cloze test, the writer deletes every sixth (6th) word in the texts. The first and the last sentence of the texts are left intact. The writer give a cloze test to 42 students of the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin. And then, the writer analyzed the score of their results in order to find out the readability level reading texts in the textbook. The score of each student are presented in the following table:

Table 3. The Scores of Seventh Grade Students of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin Academic Year 2013-2014

No	Number of Student	Total Number of Right Answers					Total
		Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5	
		27	**38**	**36**	**35**	**22**	**158**
1	1	17	10	23	19	22	91
2	2	13	7	25	25	22	92
3	3	14	13	29	16	20	92
4	4	18	14	30	21	21	104
5	5	20	13	33	19	19	104
6	6	22	14	26	22	18	102
7	7	25	8	32	24	19	108
8	8	17	9	26	23	17	92
9	9	13	30	27	24	22	89
10	10	12	17	27	19	22	97

11	11	11	12	35	24	21	103
12	12	9	7	34	27	20	97
13	13	12	9	29	16	17	83
14	14	17	12	33	21	19	102
15	15	12	12	31	18	21	94
16	16	15	4	29	24	21	93
17	17	15	9	33	16	20	93
18	18	14	12	27	21	19	93
19	19	13	13	28	24	19	97
20	20	12	7	27	19	16	81
21	21	18	5	25	16	20	84
22	22	12	13	27	19	22	93
23	23	16	19	24	25	18	102
24	24	13	19	27	15	19	93
25	25	19	14	28	19	21	101
26	26	12	19	23	19	16	89
27	27	17	14	27	15	17	90
28	28	13	19	23	19	18	92
29	29	11	15	29	19	21	95
30	30	9	14	23	21	17	84
31	31	12	17	32	24	19	104
32	32	14	19	34	19	15	101
33	33	16	13	27	22	14	92
34	34	19	14	35	16	20	104
35	35	13	15	29	18	17	92
36	36	17	15	27	19	19	97
37	37	13	18	29	15	21	96
38	38	19	16	23	16	16	90

39	39	13	11	26	22	18	90
40	40	15	12	35	24	15	101
41	41	12	16	28	17	16	89
42	42	17	19	25	24	16	101
	Total	621	541	1190	845	790	3987
	Average	14,78	12,89	28,33	20,11	18,81	94,92

After giving the Cloze test to 42 students and correcting their answers, the writer percentages the students' score by using this formula:

$$S = \frac{r}{n} \times SM\,(100\%)$$

Where
S= Standard score
SM= Standard Mark (100%)
r= the number of the right answers
n= the number item

Table 4. Percentage of the Scores of the Seventh Grade Students of SMP Negeri 1 Banjarmasin Academic Year 2013-2014

No	Name of Student	Percentage of the Scores				
		Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5
		27	38	36	35	22
1	1	62,96%	26,31%	63,89%	54,28%	100%
2	2	48,15%	18,42%	69,44%	71,43%	100%
3	3	51,85%	34,21%	80,56%	45,71%	90,91%
4	4	66,66%	36,84%	83,33%	60%	95,45%
5	5	74,07%	34,21%	91,67%	54,28%	86,36%
6	6	81,48%	36,84%	72,22%	62,85%	81,82%
7	7	92,59%	21,05%	88,89%	68,57%	86,36%
8	8	62,96%	23,68%	72,22%	65,71%	77,27%
9	9	48,15%	78,95%	75%	68,57%	100%
10	10	44,44%	44,74%	75%	54,28%	100%
11	11	40,74%	31,58%	97,22%	68,57%	95,45%
12	12	33,33%	18,42%	94,44%	77,14%	90,91%

13	13	44,44%	23,68%	80,56%	45,71%	77,27%
14	14	62,96%	31,58%	91,67%	60%	86,36%
15	15	44,44%	31,58%	86,11%	51,43%	95,45%
16	16	55,56%	10,53%	80,56%	68,57%	95,45%
17	17	55,56%	23,68%	91,67%	45,71%	90,91%
18	18	51,85%	31,58%	75%	60%	86,36%
19	19	48,15%	34,21%	77,78%	68,57%	86,36%
20	20	44,44%	18,42%	75%	54,28%	72.73%
21	21	66,67%	13,16%	69,44%	45,71%	90.91%
22	22	44,44%	34,21%	75%	54,28%	100%
23	23	59,26%	50%	66,67%	71,43%	81,82%
24	24	48,15%	50%	75%	42,86%	86,36%
25	25	70,37%	36,84%	77,78%	54,28%	95,45%
26	26	44,44%	50%	63,89%	54.28%	72,73%
27	27	62,96%	36,84%	75%	42,86%	77,27%
28	28	48,15%	50%	63,89%	54,28%	81,82%
29	29	40,74%	39,47%	80,56%	54,28%	95,45%
30	30	33,33%	36,84%	63,89%	60%	77,27%
31	31	44,44%	44,74%	88,89%	68,57%	86,36%
32	32	51,85%	50%	94,44%	54,28%	68,18%
33	33	59,26%	34,21%	75%	62,86%	63,64%
34	34	70,37%	36,84%	97,22%	45,71%	90,91%
35	35	48,15%	39,47%	80,56%	51,43%	77,27%
36	36	62,96%	39,47%	75%	54,29%	86,36%
37	37	48,15%	47,37%	80,56%	42,86%	95,45%
38	38	70,37%	42,10%	63,89%	45,71%	72,73%
39	39	48,14%	28,95%	72,22%	62,86%	81,82%
40	40	55,56%	31,58%	97,22%	68,57%	68,18%

41	41	44,44%	42,10%	77,78%	48,57%	72,73%
42	42	62,96%	50%	69,44%	68,57%	72,73%
	Average	54,76%	33,90%	78,70%	57,48%	85,50%

The readability of the textbook can be measured by adding the average of each text which is presented in the table 4.7 above.

$$\text{The readability of textbook} = \frac{54,76\% + 33,90\% + 78,70\% + 57,48\% + 85,50\%}{5}$$
$$= 62,068\%$$

It means that by using cloze test the readability level of the textbook for seventh grade students published by Mediatama is *Independent Level*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings described previously, the conclusion is that through Flesch Reading Ease Formula, the readability score for the whole texts of the English textbook entitled **Bahasa Inggris** for seventh grade students published by Mediatama is 76,35. Based on the Flesch Reading Ease Scale, this score shows that the texts are fairly easy to understand. Furthermore, in the cloze test procedure, the textbook has high readability level which shown by its readability score 62,068. It means that the textbook is readable and suitable for students of the seventh grade of SMPN 1 Banjarmasin.

REFERENCES

Bay Du. *The Principle of Readability*. Retrieved February 13, 2014 from http//public.Ian/gov

Brown. James W.(1959). *A-V Instruction Materials Methods.* (New York: McGraw-Hill.

Carrell, Patricia L, Devine, Joanne and Eskey, David E, Editor. (1988). *Interactive Aproach To Second Language Reading.* (New York: Cambridge University Press)

Catur P.K, Dian. (2010). *An Analysis of Readabilitity Level of Bedtime Stories Entitled "The Boy Who Cried:'Wolf!'" Written By Mary Graham Braham Bonner and "Pinocchio"Written by Carlo Collodi.*Surakarta: Sebelas Maret University

Celce-Murcia, Mariane and Olshtain, Elite. (2000).*Discourse and Context in LanguageTeaching.*United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Finocchiaro, Mary and Bonomo, Michael. (1973). *The Foreign Language Learner; A Guide for Teacher.* New York: Tegent Publishing Company Inc.

Flesch, Rudolf. *How to Write Plain English*. Retrieved February 10, 2014, from www.goddg.com/plainlanguage/readability.html

Gans, Roma. (1963). *Common Sense in Teaching Reading.* (New York: The Boobs-Merill Company Inc.

Harmer, Jeremy. (1998). *How to Teach English.* United State: Addinson Wesley Longman

Heinle, Thomson. (2000). *Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers.* Canada: Kethleen Graves.

Hildreth, Gertrude. (1959). *Teaching Reading.* United States: Henry Hold and Company

Hornby, A S. (2003). *Oxford Advances Learners Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Kurniawan, Roni. (2008). *An Analysis on the Readability Level of "FOKUS".*Surakarta: UNS.

Lado, Robert. (1964). *Language Teaching as A Scientific Approach* . USA: Mc Graw Hill Inc

Mary, F. (1975). *English as a second Language:from Theory to Practice.*New York: Regents Publishing Company.

Meriam Webster. (2003). *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. 11thed.* Massachussets: Meriam Webster's Incorporated

Murwati, Indri. (2010). *Readability Of The "Science" Textbook used By The First Year of RSBI Class of Smp Negeri 3 Pati In The 2009/2010 Academic Year.* Surakarta: Sebelas Maret University

Nababan, Rudolf. 2003. *Teori Penerjemahan Bahasa Inggris*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar

National Education Department. *Keterbacaan.* Retrieved March 13, 2014, from (Http:/www.sibi.or.id/download/Bing.doc)

Nuttal, Christine. (1982). *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Langage.* Oxford: Heineman.

Pikulski, John J. (2002). *Readability.* Retrieved June 15, 2014, from http://www.eduplace.com/state/author/pikulski.pdf

Readabiliti Formulas. (2014). *Readability Formula.* Retrieved March 12, 2014, from http://www.readabilityformulas.com/smog-readability-formula.php

Smith, N. B. and Robinson, H. A. (1980). *Reading Instruction for Today's Children.* New York: Prentice-Hall.

Wikipedia: the free encyclopedia. *Textbook.* FL: Wikipedia Foundation, Inc. Retrieved March 10, 2014, from http://www.wikip.