

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The purpose of this Chapter is to present the literature review related with this research. There are some points to be explained which is Lexical Density, reading Materials in English language teaching, textbook, index of difficulty, and previous studies.

#### **A. Theoretical Framework**

##### **1. Language**

Language plays a central role in human life, functioning as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for communication. It is a highly structured phenomenon, where each unit interacts meaningfully with others. Language operates on two primary dimensions: as a social and a psychological phenomenon. Linguists recognize language as a productive and creative tool, enabling speakers to construct and comprehend an infinite number of sentences, including novel ones. Psychologically, language reflects individual speakers' cognitive ability to produce and interpret meaning. Socially, it connects individuals and communities through shared symbols and structures. Halliday (1985) describes language as a semiotic system essential for communication, interaction, and information exchange. In addition, Halliday (1985) also emphasizes the distinction and relationship between spoken and written language as forms of communication used in different contexts. This dual nature of language underscores its importance in facilitating understanding and social cohesion.

## **2. Text**

In the context of learning, a text is defined as a meaningful unit of language, either spoken or written, that is used as a resource for teaching and learning. Hyland (2004) explains that a text serves as a model for students to understand how language is organized and used in real contexts. It reflects specific communicative purposes and demonstrates how linguistic features and structures are applied to convey meaning effectively. This is supported by Putra and Lukmana (2017), who emphasize that texts in textbooks should represent meaningful language use in context.

Through texts, students can learn how language functions in different social and cultural contexts. Rindawati et al. (2014) also state that texts play an important role in helping students understand how language is used in real situations. Therefore, texts are essential in developing students' language skills, particularly in understanding how to produce and interpret language appropriately. In line with this, Rahman et al. (2024) highlight that well-designed reading Materials can support students' comprehension and overall learning outcomes.

## **3. Genre of Text**

### **a. Narrative Text**

Narrative text is a type of text that tells a story or sequence of events, usually to entertain the readers. Its social function is to amuse, entertain, and sometimes to teach moral values through the story. The generic structure of narrative text consists of an orientation, which introduces the characters, setting, and situation, followed by a complication, where a problem or conflict arises, and a resolution, which

provides a solution to the problem. Sometimes, a narrative text may also include a reorientation or coda as an optional ending. The language features of narrative text include the use of past tense, action verbs, temporal conjunctions, and descriptive language to make the story more engaging. Tomlinson (1998) explains that learning materials, including texts, should present meaningful and structured language to support students' understanding. In line with this, Salsabila (2025) states that appropriate text types, such as narrative text, can help students understand stories and improve their comprehension skills. Therefore, narrative text plays an important role in developing students' reading ability and supporting meaningful learning experiences.

#### b. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a type of text that describes a particular person, place, or object in detail. Its social function is to provide a clear and vivid description to the readers. The generic structure of descriptive text consists of identification, which introduces the object, and description, which explains its characteristics. The language features of descriptive text include the use of simple present tense, adjectives, linking verbs, and specific participants. Pamungkas (2010) explains that effective learning materials should present clear and understandable descriptions to support students' comprehension. In line with this, Muslikhati (2015) states that descriptive texts can help students better understand objects by providing detailed and structured information. Therefore, descriptive text is used to help readers visualize and understand the characteristics of a particular object.

#### c. Recount Text

Recount text is a type of text that retells past events in the order in which they occurred. Its social function is to provide the audience with information about what happened and when it happened. The generic structure of recount text consists of an orientation, which introduces who, what, where, and when, followed by a sequence of events presented in chronological order, and a reorientation, which serves as a conclusion and is optional. The language features of recount text include the use of proper nouns, descriptive words, past tense, and temporal conjunctions to show the sequence of events. Perfetti and Roth (2017) explain that understanding a text involves organizing information in a meaningful sequence, which supports comprehension. In line with this, Pourhosein Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) emphasize that structured texts can help students follow and understand information more effectively. Therefore, recount text is used to retell past experiences in a clear and chronological way so that readers can easily understand the sequence of events.

#### d. Procedure Text

Procedure text is a type of text that explains how to do or make something through a sequence of steps. Its social function is to guide the readers in performing a task. The generic structure of procedure text consists of a goal, which states the purpose, followed by materials, which list the required items, and steps, which explain the process in order. The language features of procedure text include the use of imperative sentences, action verbs, and sequence connectors such as “first,” “then,” and “next.” Nnamdi-Eruchalu (2012) explains that instructional materials should present clear and structured guidance to help learners understand and perform tasks effectively. Therefore, procedure text is used to provide clear and

systematic instructions so that readers can follow each step easily and complete a task correctly.

e. Report Text

Report text is a type of text that presents general information about something based on facts. Its social function is to describe and classify phenomena in the world. The generic structure of report text consists of general classification, which introduces the subject, and description, which explains its features in detail. The language features of report text include the use of simple present tense, general nouns, relational verbs, and technical terms to present objective information. Salsabila (2025) states that appropriate text types can help students understand factual information more effectively and systematically. Therefore, report text is used to provide factual and well-organized information about a subject so that it can be clearly understood by the readers.

f. Explanation Text

Explanation text is a type of text that explains how or why a phenomenon occurs. Its social function is to describe processes and show cause-and-effect relationships. The generic structure of explanation text consists of a general statement, which introduces the topic, followed by a sequence of explanations that describe the process in a logical order. The language features of explanation text include the use of simple present tense, passive voice, and causal conjunctions to show relationships between events. Sucipto and Cahyo (2019) state that well-structured reading Materials can help students understand processes and relationships between ideas more effectively. Therefore, explanation text is used to

help readers understand how and why something happens in a clear and systematic way.

g. Exposition Text

Exposition text is a type of text that presents arguments to persuade the readers. Its social function is to convince the audience about a particular point of view. The generic structure of exposition text consists of a thesis, which introduces the issue, followed by arguments that support the position, and a reiteration, which reinforces the writer's stance. The language features of exposition text include the use of present tense, logical connectors, mental verbs, and abstract nouns to express opinions clearly. Syahid et al. (2024) state that well-designed texts can support students in understanding arguments and developing critical thinking skills. Therefore, exposition text is used to present and support ideas logically so that readers can be convinced by the arguments provided.

h. Discussion Text

Discussion text is a type of text that presents different viewpoints on an issue. Its social function is to explore arguments for and against a topic before reaching a conclusion. The generic structure of discussion text consists of an issue, followed by arguments for and against, and a conclusion. The language features of discussion text include the use of present tense, contrastive conjunctions, and modality to express different perspectives. Sari (2016) states that well-developed reading Materials should present balanced information to help students understand different points of view. Therefore, discussion text is used to present and evaluate multiple perspectives so that readers can form their own understanding of an issue.

#### **4. Reading**

Reading is an interactive and strategic process involving decoding written symbols, interpreting meaning, and understanding the author's intent. Grabe (2014) emphasizes that reading requires skills such as anticipating content, organizing information, and monitoring comprehension. In addition, Linse and Nunan (2005) define reading as deriving meaning from text and assigning significance, making it a critical skill for academic success. Effective reading involves the interaction between the reader, the text, and the author's purpose. In line with this, Amin (2024) states that appropriate reading Materials play an important role in helping students understand texts more effectively. Therefore, reading is not only about understanding written symbols but also about processing information and meaning, especially in educational contexts where comprehension is essential for learning and application.

#### **5. Reading Materials**

Reading Materials are an essential component in the process of learning to read, as they provide the content through which students practice and develop their comprehension skills. Grabe (2014) emphasizes that reading involves skills such as anticipating content, organizing information, and monitoring comprehension, which can be supported through appropriate materials. In addition, Linse and Nunan (2005) explain that reading is the process of deriving meaning from text, highlighting the importance of texts as the medium for understanding meaning.

In line with this, Amin (2024) states that appropriate reading Materials play an important role in helping students understand texts more effectively. Therefore,

reading Materials are not only sources of written language but also tools that facilitate students in processing information, constructing meaning, and improving their comprehension, especially in educational contexts.

## **6. Criteria of a good reading material**

According to Widianasari (2016), the criteria of a good reading Materials are

- a. Content suitability, materials or texts given to students should be interesting, fun, and in accordance with the learning objectives or materials they are learning in learning English.
- b. Readability. reading texts have a reasonable structure and level of lexical difficulty.
- c. Presentation. The text or reading presented should appear to attract students' attention, this can trigger students' attention to continue to want to read.

The criteria mentioned above are characteristics of good reading Materials and can help students improve their reading skills. With relevant reading texts that have clear learning objectives, appropriate structure, and complete content covering the four English skills, students can be better supported in the language learning process. Akhmad et al. (2022) state that well-designed learning materials should meet certain criteria to ensure their effectiveness in supporting students' learning.

Furthermore, Kanina (2016) emphasizes that the quality of reading Materials plays an important role in students' comprehension. Therefore, the selection and use of reading Materials need to consider various aspects so that the process of delivering knowledge can achieve the intended learning objectives. Without paying

attention to these criteria, students may face difficulties in understanding the material being taught.

## **7. Textbook**

Textbooks are essential tools in education, providing structured content, promoting interaction, and supporting individual learning. Heinle (2014) describes a well-designed textbook as integrating linguistic competence with communicative skills, enabling students to apply knowledge effectively. Textbooks also include activities and resources to guide teachers and learners. This study examines the "English for Nusantara" textbook, focusing on its ability to meet the linguistic and pedagogical requirements of 9th-grade students under the Merdeka Curriculum.

## **8. The Function of Textbook**

A textbook has many functions. According to Tomlinson (1998), the textbook has many functions as follows:

### **a. Individualization of instruction**

A textbook helps students to individualize instruction by enabling them to proceed at their own rate and to a limited extent, according to what they are interested in studying

### **b. Organization of instruction**

A textbook helps students to organize instruction by providing experiences, suggested activities, recommended reading and question. Written textbook give unity to classroom interaction and are graded to introduce new concepts or contents they build upon what has preceded.

### **c. Tutorial Contribution**

A teacher often uses the textbook to help students learn how to read better, to study, to weigh evidence, and to solve problems.

d. Improvement of Teaching

Textbook is also regarded as a helpful utility which is used by teachers to improve their skills in teaching.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that textbooks are one of the visual aids that support the learning process. In a sense, textbooks serve as important tools for teachers in conducting the teaching and learning process and help them deliver learning materials in the classroom. In addition, textbooks can also help students improve their understanding of the material that has been taught. Kurnianto (2016) states that textbooks play a significant role in supporting students' comprehension through structured materials. Similarly, Reid and Kováčiková (2017) emphasize that selecting appropriate textbooks is essential to ensure effective teaching and learning.

## **9. Criteria of Good English Textbook**

According to Sulistyana (2020) textbooks must have several criteria, namely:

- a. The subject matter or text must be adapted to the students' readiness and skills that they already have according to their level.
- b. The content of the textbook must be able to motivate students to study hard
- c. The textbook can encourage students to be active and creative in learning in the classroom through various activities

- d. The textbook can support students to actively ask questions, discover something without the help of others through their conceptualization to create a learning network.
- e. The textbook must support teachers to conduct assessment and evaluation in a certain way through the process and student achievement.
- f. Textbooks should support students in building their skills
- g. The material in the textbook can make students excited to learn.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that a good English textbook should meet various criteria that support both students' and teachers' needs in the learning process. The materials should be appropriate to students' level, engaging, and able to encourage active participation in the classroom. Ayu and Indrawati (2019) state that well-designed textbooks should provide meaningful tasks that can improve students' learning outcomes. In addition, Dharma and Aristo (2018) emphasize that textbooks must be relevant to the curriculum and support the achievement of learning objectives. Furthermore, Noviyenti (2021) highlights that the quality of textbook content influences how effectively the materials support teaching and learning in the classroom. Therefore, selecting and using appropriate textbooks is essential to ensure an effective and meaningful teaching and learning process.

### **10. Lexical Density**

Lexical Density measures the proportion of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) to the total number of words in a text, providing insights into text complexity and readability. Ure (1971) introduced Lexical Density to evaluate

how densely information is packed in a text. Higher Lexical Density indicates greater complexity, while lower Lexical Density reflects simpler, more accessible texts. This measure is calculated by dividing the number of content words by the total number of words and multiplying by 100%. Eggins (2004) categorizes words into content carrying words and grammatical function words, a distinction adopted in this study to calculate Lexical Density. Nesia and Ginting (2014) further explain that Lexical Density can be used to analyze the level of information contained in reading texts. In addition, Siregar et al. (2024) state that Lexical Density is closely related to text readability and comprehension. Similarly, Suminih et al. (2024) highlight that Lexical Density is an important indicator in evaluating the suitability of textbooks for students. The findings are used to assess the readability and appropriateness of educational texts.

Based on the explanation above, Lexical Density can be understood as a measure of the amount of information contained in a text. It is determined by calculating the proportion of content carrying words (content words) and grammatical function words within a text. This calculation helps to show how information is distributed and how dense a text is in terms of meaning. A higher proportion of content words indicates that a text contains more information, while a lower proportion suggests that the text is simpler and easier to understand. Therefore, Lexical Density can be used as an indicator to evaluate both the complexity and readability of a text. In this study, the classification of grammatical and content words proposed by Eggins (2004) is used as the basis for analyzing Lexical Density in the selected reading Materials.

a. Content Word (Lexical Items)

Content words are nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs that carry significant lexical meaning. These words function as the main elements that convey ideas and important information in communication, unlike function words that mainly serve grammatical purposes. According to Ure (1971), content words represent the informational core of a text and are essential in measuring Lexical Density. This idea is supported by Fadhil et al. (2023), who state that content words play a crucial role in delivering meaning, as they carry the main information that readers need to understand.

1) Nouns

Nouns are the names of person, thing, or place or a word that refers to persons, things, events, activities, which generally function as the subject or object of a sentence.

There are several categories of nouns

- a) Common noun, A common noun refers to a person, place, or common things
- b) Proper noun, A proper noun normally used a particular person, place, or things.
- c) Compound noun, A compound noun is a combination of two or more words and is used together as a single noun

2) Verbs

A verb shows the happening or state of something. A verb is the most important part of any sentence. There are two Types of verbs.

- a) A regular verb

b) An irregular verb

### 3) Adjectives

An adjective is a word that is used to explain or modify a person, place, or thing. Example: yellow, beautiful, good, expensive, important, ugly.

### 4) Adverbs

Adverbs are words that are used to describe verbs or adjectives.

a) Adverbs of manner for example: beautifully, well, fast, hard, quickly.

b) Adverbs of place and direction for example: away, here, west, there, in Solo, etc.

c) Adverbs of time for example: ago, now, last, since, then, today, etc.

d) Adverbs of frequency for example: always, never, often, sometimes, usually.

e) Adverbs of degree for example: indeed, of course, rather, in fact, really, too, very.

f) Adverbs of modality for example: likely, maybe, perhaps, possibly, probably, unlikely

### b. Grammatical Function Word

Grammatical function words are words that mainly serve grammatical purposes and function to connect ideas within a sentence rather than carry lexical meaning. These words include prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, and pronouns. According to Halliday (1985), language is composed of both lexical and grammatical elements that work together to create meaning in a text. In line with

this, Eggins (2004) states that grammatical function words play a role in forming relationships between concepts and structures in a sentence.

#### 1) Preposition

Prepositions are the words that we put before nouns or pronouns. Example: about, above, across, after, at, behind, besides, by, in into, inside, among, around, before.

#### 2) Pronouns

Pronouns are words that are used to replace a noun or noun phrase. There are different types of pronouns.

- a) Personal pronouns: I, you, she, he, them.
- b) Demonstrative pronouns: this, that, these, those.
- c) Possessive pronouns: mine, yours, his, hers, its.
- d) Intensive pronouns: for example, myself, yourself, himself, herself, themselves.

#### 3) Auxiliary verb

Auxiliary verbs are verbs that cannot stand on their own but those words help to combine with another verb. There are several categories of Auxiliary verbs

- a) Be (is, am, are, was, were, been)
- b) Do (does, did)
- c) Have (have, has, had)
- d) Modals (can, could, may, might, must, must not, may not, shall, should, will, would).

#### 4) Conjunction

Conjunctions are words that connect sentences, phrases, or clauses There are several categories of Conjunctions

- a) Coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so, etc.
- b) Correlative conjunctions: either,neither,not only / but also.
- c) Subordinating conjunctions: because, since, as, although, though, while, and whereas.

Here is how to identify Lexical Density

### 1. Identify

The first thing to do is to identify which words include content words (lexical words) and which words include grammatical function words by marking or highlighting

### 2. Count Total Words

After identifying which words are content and grammatical function words Count the number of all words in the text, including lexical words and grammatical function words

### 3. Apply Formula

Enter the number of content (lexical) words into the formula to get the percentage of Lexical Density. In this study, the researcher used Ure's (1971) formula to calculate the Lexical Density of the reading text. The formula:

$$\text{Lexical Density} = \left( \frac{\text{Number of Lexical Words}}{\text{Total Number of Words}} \right) \times 100\%$$

Qualification of the Lexical Density:

- a) 41 – 50% = low (easy to understand)
- b) 51 – 60% = medium (still quite easy to understand)
- c) 61 – 70% = high (difficult to understand)
- d) >70 % = very high (very difficult to understand)

## **11. Index Difficulty**

Index difficulty in textbooks is an indicator used to measure or determine the extent to which the text in a textbook is easy or difficult for students to understand. This is important for evaluating the feasibility of teaching materials, especially in reading texts used for language learning. The index of difficulty usually shows how complex the content of a reading text is, both in terms of language, sentence structure, and lexical level (vocabulary). Febraningrum and Suroso (2023) state that analyzing textbook content is important to determine whether the materials are suitable for students' level. In addition, Yusuf et al. (2024) emphasize that text difficulty is closely related to language complexity and readability. Therefore, the assessment of this analysis can help determine whether the text is appropriate for the students' ability level.

According to Sumarsono (in Hartati and Yogi, 2019), a good textbook should have a balanced ratio, widely known as a 1:2:1 ratio, with 25% easy texts that can help weaker students stay engaged, 50% moderate-level texts that are suitable for most students, and 25% difficult-level texts that provide challenges for higher-ability students. This proportion reflects the importance of balancing text difficulty to accommodate different student abilities. A well-balanced distribution of text difficulty can support inclusive learning and ensure that all students, regardless of

their level, are able to participate in the learning process. Therefore, applying an appropriate difficulty index is essential in selecting and evaluating reading Materials in textbooks

## **B. Previous Studies**

This research was not the first study in analyzing the Lexical Density of reading. The researcher found some research that related to this study

1. The study conducted by Yuni Lailatul Maufiroh from Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq State Islamic University of Jember is entitled “Lexical Density of reading Material in English Textbook ‘Passport to the World’ for Grade 8 Junior High School Based on Curriculum 2013.” The purpose of this study was to analyze the Lexical Density in the textbook and evaluate the conformity of its content with the 2013 Curriculum standards. Through document analysis, Yuni found that the book covers three genres of reading texts: descriptive, recount, and announcement, with descriptive texts dominating. The Lexical Density analysis showed that there were 2 low-density, 11 medium-density and 4 high-density texts, with most of the texts classified as medium density. However, the distribution of text difficulty levels did not fulfil the ideal ratio of 1:2:1 for easy, medium, and difficult texts, with percentages of 11.76% (easy), 64.70% (medium), and 23.52% (difficult). These findings highlight the unsuitability of some textbooks for students' ability levels and the learning objectives of Curriculum 2013 and point to the need for improvements in genre variety and text difficulty distribution to achieve more effective learning outcomes.

Yuni Lailatul Maufiroh's research is useful as a reference in this study because it shows the importance of analyzing Lexical Density and genre variation in textbooks. Yuni's findings reveal that the distribution of text difficulty levels is not ideal, thus supporting the need for evaluation of English for Nusantara books in the context of Merdeka Curriculum to ensure the suitability of the material with students' abilities and learning objectives. This previous study also provides a relevant basis for understanding how Lexical Density and genre variation can influence the effectiveness of reading Materials used in textbooks. In addition, it strengthens the importance of evaluating textbooks carefully so that the materials provided can better support students in achieving the expected learning outcomes.

2. This research was conducted by Siti Maimunah from Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau State Islamic University in 2019 with the title "An Analysis of Lexical Density in English Textbook at VIII Grade Al-Huda Junior High School Tembilahan." In her research, she analyzed the Lexical Density of reading texts in the book *When English Rings a Bell*, focusing on two types of texts: descriptive and narrative. The analysis showed that descriptive texts had a Lexical Density of 44.57% (low), while narrative texts had 52.20% (medium). The findings concluded that the reading texts in the book were relatively easy for students to understand and appropriate for their level of comprehension.

Siti Maimunah's research makes an important contribution as a basis for comparison in this study. Her findings on the level of Lexical Density of descriptive and narrative texts show how the level of text difficulty can affect

students' comprehension. This is an important reference in analyzing the English for Nusantara book, to find out whether the reading material in the book has a level of density that is appropriate for grade 9 students' abilities and whether it is in line with the learning approach promoted in the Merdeka Curriculum. This study also helps to strengthen the importance of evaluating reading Materials to ensure their suitability with students' needs and learning objectives.

3. This research was conducted by Ghaffir Khamahani in 2015 with the title “A Corpus-Based Analysis of Tehran Times and Azeri News Headlines: Focus on Lexical Density and Readability.” In this study, Khamahani analyzed the Lexical Density and readability of news headlines in the Tehran Times and Azeri News newspapers, especially for graduate-level readers. The results showed that most of the headlines had a Lexical Density between 60–70%, which was categorized as high. Based on the Flesch reading Ease scale, the headlines were considered suitable for readers, both native and non-native speakers of English, at the postgraduate education level.

This research provides important insight into how texts with high Lexical Density can still be considered readable by certain groups of readers, depending on their proficiency level. This finding is relevant to this study as it can serve as a reference in assessing whether the level of Lexical Density in the reading texts in the English for Nusantara book is appropriate for the proficiency level of grade 9 junior high school students. Thus, this research reinforces the importance of matching the lexical complexity of a text with the background

and ability level of the readers in the context of English language learning. In addition, it highlights that readability is not only determined by text complexity but also by the readers' level of proficiency.

4. This study was conducted by Desi Widianasari, a student of Brawijaya University, to analyze text types and Lexical Density in high school English textbooks. The researcher found that the book contained three types of texts, namely descriptive, recount, and narrative. Of the total texts analyzed, there were seven descriptive texts, four recount texts, and two narrative texts. Further analysis showed that none of the texts had a high level of Lexical Density. Most of the texts had Lexical Density in the range of 50%–60%, indicating that the texts were not too difficult to understand. Based on these results, the researcher concluded that the textbook is suitable for use because the level of language complexity is appropriate for high school students. The average Lexical Density of the book reached 52.50%, which shows that the texts are relatively easy to understand and can be used effectively in the learning process.

This study makes an important contribution to this research as it provides an overview of text types and levels of language difficulty commonly found in English textbooks. The findings on Lexical Density serve as an important reference to measure the suitability of teaching materials for students' abilities and level of comprehension. By comparing the results of this study with the materials analyzed in this research, it is possible to evaluate whether the selected texts are appropriate for students' level and learning needs. In addition, this study helps to strengthen the importance of analyzing both text types and

Lexical Density in order to support the development of students' reading and comprehension skills in English. This also reinforces the need for careful selection of reading Materials to ensure that they align with students' abilities and learning objectives.

5. This research was conducted by Satriawan in 2018 analyzing Lexical Density in the textbook "English on Sky VIII." Based on the analysis, the researcher found that the reading texts in the book have varying levels of Lexical Density. Of all the texts analyzed, nine texts belong to the medium category (moderately dense), three texts belong to the low category, and two texts belong to the high category. The two texts that fall into the high Lexical Density category are the text titled Camping with a percentage of 60.50% and the text about Thomas Alva Edison with a percentage of 67.68%. These findings indicate that the textbook provides a range of text difficulty levels that can be used to support students with different abilities.

This study makes an important contribution to this research because it provides information that can be used as a reference for comparing the suitability of language levels in reading texts with students' abilities. By identifying which texts are classified as low, medium, and high in Lexical Density, this research helps in assessing and selecting appropriate reading Materials based on students' needs. In addition, it supports the evaluation of whether the reading texts are aligned with the learning objectives and students' reading levels. This also highlights the importance of considering Lexical Density in choosing teaching materials to ensure effective learning outcomes.