

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Reading as one of important skills for students in learning English. It can be defined as perceiving a written text in order to understand its contents. As Pang et.al (2003) mention that reading is about understanding written text. Furthermore, Eskey (2002:5) describes reading as a process of obtaining information from a written text. In conclusion, by reading the readers or the students make sense what a writer means and can also catch the information in a text. Therefore, a text can be a good model to learn English because it provides structures and information to support their learning.

Reading has a possitive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge, on their spelling and on their writing (Harmer, 2007:99). Then, he notes that good reading text can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussion, excite imaginative responses and provide the springboard of well-rounded, fascinating lessons. In other words, by having reading skill they will be easy to get information, knowledge, and science.

Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension refers to the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Readers typically

make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text.

In Indonesia there are two formal schools in Junior High School level. They are Junior High School (SMP) and Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs). Both of them have different disciplines. SMP tends to general education while MTs tends to accommodate a certain religion that is Moslem. It means that MTs has more specific lessons that should be mastered by students namely Fiqih, Aqidah Akhlak, Arabic, and Qur'an Hadits. In spite of having different disciplines, the government decides that teaching set such as curriculum, syllabus, and etc. are same. Not only teaching set but also all lessons learned in SMP are studied in MTs as well and one of the lessons should be learned is English.

As one of the compulsory subjects in Junior High School, English is needed to be mastered. This subject requires them to learn at least four hours in a week. The ultimate goals of learning English in the junior high school are written in the Content Standard of Curriculum. Those are communication tools to give and receive information, relate interpersonal relation, exchange information, and enjoy the English language aesthetic in the daily life context. Hence, they must study English in their school.

Materials are important part of teaching and learning English. Suitability of materials refer to the materials that meet the needs of students. Those materials will give a direct impact to the teaching and learning process. So, the students can understand what they learn in English. In other words, by providing the suitable

materials can help students to get more exposure in English as well as learn something new they have not known.

Considering that MTs tends to accommodate Moslem religion, so the selection of suitable English reading text materials for the students is important. As Nuttal in Sudirman (2015) state that there are three main criteria when choosing the text to be used in the classroom and one of them is suitability. This criterion can be considered to be the most important, because the suitability of text can interest students to study. Furthermore, the statement is strengthened by Hutchinson and Waters (1987:107) which claim that to improve the students' motivation and make learning better and faster, teachers or lecturers should prepare materials which are relevant to the students' needs. In conclusion, the text given to the MTs students should be based on their needs in line should be suited and related to the discipline of MTs itself that is about Islamic knowledge.

Relating to the explanation above, basic competence of school-based curriculum (*BSNP:2006*) also stating that the eighth grade students are expected to read a text in piercing and get the meanings that have relation to their environment. Here, the environment means as dicipline of MTs. In conclusion, the students are given the relevant text to their discipline, in order the students can read and comprehend the text easily.

Regarding to the basic competence that are reading and getting the meaning of the text, there are three types of text which should be learned by the eighth grade students, one of them is descriptive text. Descriptive text is a kind of text which has purpose to describe particular features of person, place or thing in

detail. Considering the previous explanation, so that, descriptive text which is given to the students should discuss of Islamic knowledge. It can be about Kabah, Al-Haram mosque, and other religious topics. These texts are expected to help them acquire the specific content of the reading materials which is useful for their study.

In fact, problem was found at MTs Insan Cita Medan by the researcher who conducted this research. The students of MTs used English textbook “Experiencing English for Junior High School Students Year VIII 2” written by Tim Masmedia Buana Pustaka. The materials were not relevant to the discipline of MTs itself. It was proven, in learning descriptive text, it discussed about “Mickey Mouse” as quoted “Mickey has bulky eyes and a long tail”. From the data obtained, it can be concluded that the textbook and the content of reading text materials were not suitable and not relevant to the students and also did not fulfill students’ needs, because the textbook did not serve the reading text materials in accordance with students’ needs and curriculum demanding.

Based on the fact above, it can be better for the researcher to develop the materials specifically in English reading descriptive text. Developing reading Descriptive text materials are needed because the existing descriptive text was not suitable to the students’ need. Then, Blagojevic (2013) claims that the students are truly motivated to study only if teaching materials constantly address their needs. In other words, the materials will motivate the students to study because the materials are developed focus on discussing specific content that is about Islamic knowledge.

In terms of education, the students of MTs are included as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) students because they have specific disciplines. So, the materials developed should meet the needs of students. It is supported by Evans and John (1998: 4) who claim that ESP material is designed (developed) to meet specific needs of the students and it may be related to specific disciplines. Furthermore, this materials are developed by using Content-Based Instruction (CBI). CBI is considered as the most appropriate approach/method used in teaching English for MTs since it considers content as the starting point. the implementation of CBI in the developed materials fits the needs of the students which aim to develop foreign language competence.

There are some studies which have conducted the reasearch development through Conten-Based Instruction (CBI). Purnamasari (2015) conducted about *Developing English Learning Materials for Grade X Students of Beauty Study Program*. She found that the English course book contains general English since it is used for all study programs and the input materials are also too general to them. So, she developed appropriate English material for the Grade X students of Beauty Study Program based on CBI. In her study, the new learning materials developed can help students to face the global competition. Regarding these, the English for Specific Purposes is required to support their English proficiency based on their expertise.

Ismiyati (2016) also consucted study about *Developing English Learning Materials for Grade XI Students of Patisserie Study Programme*. She found that that students of Patisserie Study Programme had low motivation in learning

English. That condition affected their achievement in learning English and the course books used in Patisserie Study Programs are the same with those used in senior high school. Then, she also designed the effective learning materials for grade XI students of Patisserie Study Programme through CBI. In her study, the new learning materials can help the students to master some competences in the field of patisserie including understanding ingredients, patisserie equipments, hygiene, health and safety work, making pastry such as bread, cake, and dessert, and preparing a business in field of patisserie.

Based on the studies above, so the researcher also conducted her study by using CBI. Brinton in Jayanti (2015) states CBI refers to the language teaching through exposure to the content that is interesting and relevant to learners. In conclusion, developing English reading text materials by using CBI can produce the new reading text materials focused on the needs of students. Then, it can interest them to study English.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the identification of the background above, the problem of the study was formulated as the following “What are the suitable English reading text materials that should be developed for the eight grade students of MTs?”

C. The Objective of the Study

According to the problem that have been mentioned, the objective of the study was to develop the suitable English reading text materials for the eighth grade students of MTs.

D. The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was developing English reading text materials specifically for genre Descriptive text. These developed materials should be relevant to the students' needs and the curriculum implemented. It was applied in the grade eight students of MTs Insan Cita Medan in the first semester.

E. The Significance of the Study

The finding of this study was useful for English teacher as the alternative materials which are suitable for the students. Then, for other researcher, as further information about the development of English reading text materials so that they are able to develop suitable materials better.