

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of the Study

In the context of Indonesian education, English as a foreign language has been learned by Indonesian learners since they were in Elementary School. According to the latest government policy as stated in the 2013 Curriculum, English at Elementary schools is now only a local-content subject taught once a week. Indonesia has also started English teaching earlier as compared to that previously which started at grade 7. Since the establishment of the decision letter of Minister of Education and Culture No. 060/U/1993, which states that English could be taught at primary education starting from grade 4, many schools initiated it from grade 1. As a result, even kindergartens followed it.

In line with above statement, Arnold and Rixon in Tomlison (2008: 39) and Chodidjah 2008 stated that:

*“Introducing English in the primary school is in such as cases sees as offering a double advantage: the number of years available for learning the language can be extended, and as mentioned above, younger children are seen as particularly effective language learners, Younger is Better”.*

It can be said that, starting to learn English at elementary school level is effective. For the student, the importance of English is as the key to the international communication. According to Aedi and Amaliyah (2016:195) stated that “ *Di era globalisasi dan instant sekarang ini, anak didik mulai dari usia SD bahkan TK sudah dituntut bersaing dalam mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris*” (In the current era of globalization and present, students starting from elementary school and even kindergarten have been required to compete in English subjects). In such

a situation, a breakthrough is needed to help teachers at primary education to teach English effectively and attractively as well.

There are three reasons why does English at elementary school need in learning English. First, a young learner learn language easily; second, all of life systems uses English in this digital period, so that it can be easier to accept technology; third, the young learner accept English easily when they will continue to study at the junior high school (Maili, 2018). It is therefore, English can be learned and mastered by students which include four skills namely, listening, speaking, writing and reading.

Reading is one of the four skills which is viewed as the most important language skill that should be developed in the classroom. Reading is defined as a human skill in which it is possible to interact with the written text, becoming one of the ways to acquire knowledge in a receptive way. Some previous studies have proven that reading is essential. In Indonesia, learning to read English starts at the fourth grade of elementary schools, and it continues at junior and senior high schools up to the higher education (Hamra and Syatriana, 2010). It can enhance people's social skills, improve hand-eye coordination, and provide people with endless hours of fun and entertainment.

Since English in Indonesia is a foreign language, most students at any levels of education get difficulty in reading English text. Many research results (Sariati, 2018; Fu, 2018; Sibarani, 2017; Muvidah, 2017; Karman, 2017; Damaianti, Damaianti and Mulyati, 2017; Kusuma, 2016; Hakim and Anggraini, 2015) indicated that the ability of Indonesian students to read English text was very low.

There are two statements why does reading is important to be learned. According to Pang in Arias (2007), learning to read is an important educational goal for children and adults because the ability to read opens up new worlds and opportunities. In line with this statement, Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, and Snowling (2014:9) reading becomes more important as children progress through educational system. Consequently, reading is central to teaching and learning and it is vital to consider the circumstances in which the developing child is required to extract and apply meaning derived from text.

In addition, as Royani 2013 cited in Fu (2018),

*“Local culture texts can be implemented in any level of study. Teacher only needs to give the students a text which contains of a local culture. It will not change the genre or the type of the text because local culture which is inserted in the text.”*

Text is the original words and form of a written or printed work. Text covers a variety of topics, fulfilling every students needs. Texts also are followed by a number of questions to test students' comprehension. So, it can be said that reading has text which called material.

Materials take an important part in teaching learning process. It is in line with Dirgeyasa 2014 as stated that there are some factors that play important role in the process of teaching and learning, namely learning materials, teaching methods, assessments, the students, and the lecturers. So that, materials are the most influencing, it is vitally important to evaluate the existing teaching materials. Considering with reading, it is very important to pay attention to give materials that appropriate with student's condition and students need. Good and appropriate materials will give positive influence to the students' learning process. In line

with this, good material contains interesting text and enjoyable activities (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 107).

Students are expected not only have good ability in reading but also have deep knowledge of local based need at tourism destination topics teachings. Therefore the understanding of local based need at tourism destination topics itself can also be inserted. The reading materials are expected to be able to guide students to learn and know the local based need through the English reading materials. To make student easier to understand the text, the reading materials should be well organized.

However, most teachers in Indonesia still rely on textbook as the primary teaching resource. The content of materials are all the same, no matter where in the region the students are, in the city or in the village. Meanwhile, elementary students learn English as a local content (*muatan lokal*) subject. Thus, the students of Elementary school have a period of 2 X 35 minutes per session. One of Elementary school can be seen is in Lobulayan. Lobulayan as one of the Elementary school is in South Tapanuli regency. In SDN 100107 Lobulayan, English has been placed as one of local content (*muatan lokal*) subject. Based on preliminary observation in some of Elementary schools in South Tapanuli regency, SDN 100107 Lobulayan is one of elementary school which introduces English from the fourth students to sixth students. That is very important to teach this subject since it is helpful for student when they learn English in Junior High School.

Januari 2019, an interview was conducted to the students of sixth grade at SDN 100107 Lobulayan to get preliminary data. Four questions were given to the students, for instances is the existing holiday text interesting?, is the existing holiday text easy?, is the existing holiday text useful?, and if you have not known the holiday text, do you find difficulties in comprehending it?. From the result of interview, some of the students think that the holiday text in the textbook used are quite interesting and difficult. They do not have background knowledge about the text. It can be concluded that, the existing holiday text are good to be used in the teaching and learning process but they are not close to students' live for the sixth grade students of SDN 100107 Lobulayan, South Tapanuli. Here is the interview excerpt with one of the student (Nd) "*kadang-kadang, kadang menarik, kadang tidak. Tidak meanarik karena saya tidak mengerti dengan isi teks tersebut*" (Januari 2019). (Sometimes, it is not interesting if I do not understand the content of the text).

To get the preliminary data, the researcher also observed the student's English book. Grow with English Book 6, English textbook is one of series of English books for elementary school sixth grade. In their books, it has found that reading materials are totally irrelevant with their needs. They often get confused because they didn't understand. Further, the researcher has found most of students were not good in comprehending the text. The students did not understand the content of the reading material given by the teacher. They just keep silent when the teacher read the texts in front of the class. Without being supported by teacher's explanation in Indonesian language, they couldn't understand at all about the content of the text given. *Then*, the students also have low motivation in

studying and not active in the class. *Last*, teaching and learning process becomes a monotonous activity. As a consequence, the students are difficult to comprehend the text. It is therefore the good materials that can fulfill the students need are required.

The researcher found that their textbooks were irrelevant as expected by the students and the teachers since some of the material was irrelevant. The topics in the current textbook did not insert local based need at tourism destination topics in which they were useful for the students. For example there were some texts which are irrelevant for students under the topic.

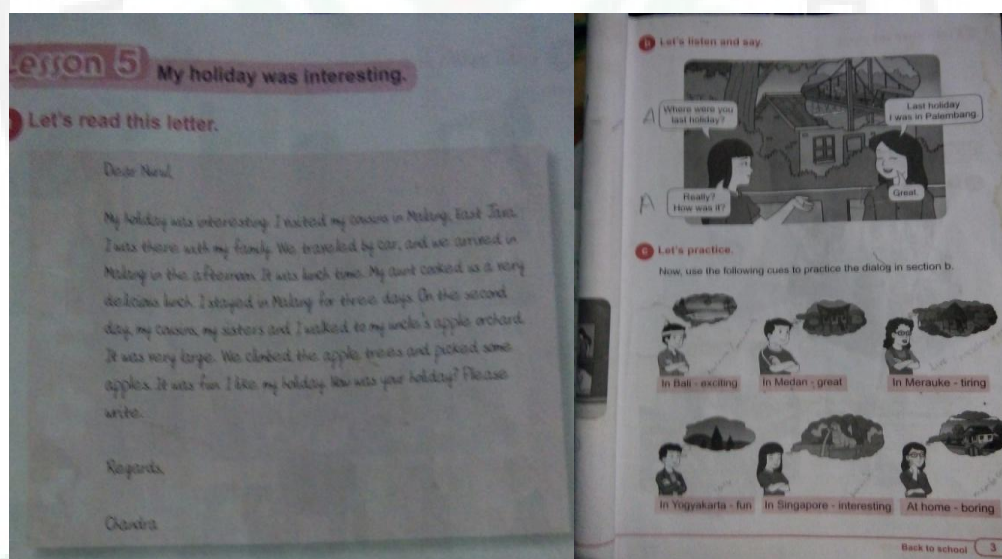


Fig. 1 Example of existing English reading material "Holiday in Malang"  
(Source: handbook "Grow with English book 6" by Erlangga)

This text is about holiday in Malang. The place is irrelevant for the students at Elementary School in Lobulayan because this text may be relevant and contextual for other students in other area but did not match with what the students in *Lobulayan* knew. On the other hand, it is unfamiliar with them. So the students are uninterested when they study about this text.

The second text is about Holiday in Florida. Florida is too general and so far to the students at Elementary School in Lobulayan. The text also is not appropriate with their lives. Another thing, the words are not common for them, so it was quite difficult to be understood by the sixth graders. The researcher may say that the words are new for them. The words were found in the text such as, orchard, took, went, shuttles, and etc. The next of reading text talk about the food we eat. The elementary students are not suitable to eat or consume fast food or junk food. Because this food is too general for them and the food is irrelevant to their daily.

From the two reading texts about holiday in *Malang, we went to Florida*, are not North Sumatera or South Tapanuli students' real world. The students are not really familiar with them although they can also be input texts in receptive skills. However, it will be more meaningful if reading texts as inputs are about local based need at tourism destination topics and local culinary in South Tapanuli. Thus, the development of reading material English should be based on the characteristic of South Tapanuli regency.

Moreover, students' difficulties in comprehending the English reading materials affected their achievement in English subject. Grade VI students of SDN 100107 Lobulayan, for instances the average score in their formative 1 administrated by the teacher was still low, that is 6.6 with the Minimum Mastery Criteria (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal: KKM*) that should be achieved is 7.5.

Actually there are some various factors that have influenced them such as; schools that have the English language teachers also merely rely upon the textbook play an important role in classroom. Thus, English language subject in

schools is hard to teach. It is because the authors do not know the real conditions of the students. Thus, it is common to have the students cannot even read the text in English language. Unfortunately, the reading skill of sixth grade students of SDN 100107 Lobulayan is still low. It is because students' low competence in reading skill. The students get difficulties in finding ideas. They feel confused to start their reading; they have low motivation in reading. They read because the formal education system forces them to read as one of the requirement of the standard competency.

In developing these reading materials, the researcher will insert local based need at tourism destination topics and culinary themes though English materials to solve those problems. Local based need means the needs of the students in Lobulayan area. There are three researchers previous why does local based needs is essential and really need in learning English. According to Dirgeyasa and Ansari (2015), the local based need promotes and empowers the tourism resources locally to meet the needs of tourism industry. The local based-analysis in tourism industry has an important and significant contribution to make to the quantities of natural and human resources. Referring to the needs and research finding, Al Mahrooqi and Al Busaidi (2010), stated that local needs can be met more effectively. In line with Aspiandi, Sutapa, and Sudarsono studied recommend that local needs based materials. They also stated that teaching materials developed from the local needs have a good impact to learning activities. Last, Floris (2008) suggests that the teaching materials be designed to better meet the students' needs and institutional requirements (Aspiandi, Sutapa, and Sudarsono).



Based on the fact stated previously, the researcher assumes that the facts will become a problem if not overcome soon. By doing this research, the researcher expected that this research can solve the problems stated previously by developing reading materials for elementary school through local based need. There are some reasons why does local based need. First, it is also urgent because by developing the reading material which involves local based need, the students are hoped to be able to improve their understanding about the material given since the material will be contextual and close with their culture and to be able to preserve the Angkola culture in the modernity of the globalization era. This is accordance with Firoz, Maghrabi, dan Kim statement (2002) in relation to globalization is "Think globally manage culturally" Another reason for producing these kinds of materials is to help students become aware of their own cultural identity. Because the local based need of each place is different. Designing teaching materials for elementary students based on local need, where student learn their own local based need in order to talk about their tourism with the destinations.

In addition, Jandt (2018:27) classifies culture into many elements that include language and gesture, personal appearance and social relationships, religion, philosophy, values, courtship, marriage, family customs, food and recreation, work and government, education and communication systems, health, transportation, government system, and economic systems. Those elements can be the content of the English materials presented in the process of English language teaching and learning. It can be concluded that, the researcher will choose food and recreation as the element of this research.

South Tapanuli, for example, has unique local tourism and beautiful nature/views. The researcher will choose South Tapanuli because of South Tapanuli is a district which has a lot of world tourism destination and local culinary. This regency is well known for its destination area in south Tapanuli regency are: Aek Sijornih Baths, hills (tor) Simago-mago, Benteng Huraba, Lake Artificial Cekdam (in the area Pargarutan), Lake Siasis, Lake Marsabut, Aek Parsariran Bath (in Batang Toru) and soon as well-known around South Tapanuli. Besides, this regency is also known with the local culinary are namely, *bulung gadungna diduda*, *lasiak tuktuk*, *sambal taruma*, and soon. The language in this regency is also unique. Angkola language is used for the people of South Tapanuli regency to communicate with each other in daily life and several tribes.

As people who live in an area which has world tourism destination and local culinary, people in South Tapanuli regency, North Sumatera is required to have competency in using English better than in other areas. Therefore, they need competency in using English which is better to be done in early age. However, the competency of English is not the only requirement of Angkola children. The knowledge of local based need is also needed to make them competent as the prospective tourism and local culinary.

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

Based on the background of the study, the problems of the study are stated in the form of questions as below:

1. What are the existing syllabus and existing English reading materials used by the sixth grade students at SDN 100107 Lobulayan in South Tapanuli regency?

2. What English reading materials are needed by the sixth grade students at SDN 100107 Lobulayan in South Tapanuli regency?
3. How are the English reading materials developed through local based need for the sixth grade students at SDN 100107 Lobulayan in South Tapanuli regency?

### **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

To answer the research problems, the objectives of the study were to:

1. To find out the existing syllabus and the existing English reading materials used for the students of sixth grade at SDN 100107 Lobulayan in South Tapanuli regency
2. To find out English reading materials are needed by the students of sixth grade at SDN 100107 Lobulayan in South Tapanuli regency
3. To develop the students' English reading materials through local based need for students of sixth grade at SDN 100107 Lobulayan in South Tapanuli regency.

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

This study was focused on developing reading materials through local based needs of South Tapanuli for elementary students. It was applied in the grade sixth students of SDN 100107 Lobulayan, South Tapanuli.

Developing teaching materials for students of sixth grade would be important thing to start well introduced and implemented. Local needs are available in the society South Tapanuli regency. The materials should be always adjusted to the

present needs of the students. The focus of reading materials development is on related to tourism destination and culinary includes holiday, animals, and food. Because of the students who studies in this field need to communicate in reading a text.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

Findings of the study are expected to be significant and relevant theoretically and practically:

Theoretically, this research can provide information and theories about developing English reading materials through local based needs. Meanwhile, practically, it can be useful for

1. It is expected to students who learn English at elementary school and who want to master English that they need. They can also get more motivation to learn English because they can integrate into their environment condition.
2. To teacher who wants to provide relevant English reading material especially for elementary students. This research can be as reference in attempting to develop English reading materials.
3. Other researchers, this research can be a reference to the next researchers who want to conduct a research about developing reading materials through local based needs.