

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In This Chapter, The Researcher Presents: (1) Background, (2) Focus and Sub-Focus of Research, (3) Formulation of the Problem, (4) Research Purpose, (5) Benefits of Research.

Background

Elementary education is critical for building students' character and reading abilities. Teaching materials, such as reading books, are critical in elementary education since they not only assist students learn but also expose them to local cultural values. Locally sourced reading materials can assist kids to grasp the cultural context of their surroundings and create a love of their cultural identity. The Indonesian government uses the local content curriculum to protect local culture inside the formal education system. This is consistent with government laws requiring the inclusion of local content in the national curriculum as theme material in elementary schools (Rahmawati et al., 2019).

The reason for choosing this title is based on the urgency to evaluate whether local culture is truly being represented in the learning process, especially in reading materials used by elementary students. SD Negeri 2 Mengulak, located in an area rich in cultural heritage, holds great potential to integrate local wisdom into formal education. However, there has been little to no academic research focused on how much local content is actually present in the reading books used at this school. By analyzing these materials, the researcher aims to identify the extent to which local values are embedded and whether they effectively support reading comprehension, cultural awareness, and student engagement. Furthermore, this study is expected to provide constructive input for improving teaching materials that are not only educationally effective but also culturally responsive. This research is relevant in helping to preserve cultural identity through education and ensuring that the national curriculum truly

reflects local diversity in practice, not just in policy. The result of this study showed that using Numbered Heads Together in teaching reading comprehension was effective, as it increased students' participation, collaboration, and understanding of the texts." (Theriana, 2019)

Learning to read and write starts in elementary school, which is a very important base. Using reading and comprehension materials with local information has been shown to help students get better at reading and understanding texts. Reading books that are culturally and historically important not only help students understand what they are reading better, but they also teach them cultural values and local wisdom.

It's too bad that not all elementary schools have clear rules about how to use local content-based learning. "The absence of formulation of competency standards causes local content study areas to differ between one elementary school and another" (Rakhmyta, 2022). This means that the quality of culture-based learning is not the same for everyone.

Studies by Gasong and Tandiseru (2022) actually show that learning with local content can "increase the learning motivation of fifth grade students through local cultural content" This shows that reading materials that reflect a student's society and daily life make them more emotionally and intellectually interested.

It has also been shown that literacy lessons created using local knowledge are not only possible to use but also very good at helping students learn. It was said by Rasyid, Kurniaman, and Guslinda (2023) that when local wisdom-based literacy modules were used, "student learning outcomes showed an average score of 84.54, indicating very good performance."

Local wisdom-based learning also gives students important and relevant learning experiences, especially during the time when they are still getting used to learning after a pandemic. It was written by Murwati et al. in 2022 that "students learn directly from nature and can raise awareness to preserve local wisdom."

Also, the creation of ethnopedagogy-based textbooks like Fagogoru in Halmahera has proven to be very useful for teaching local subjects. "The assessment of the effectiveness of textbooks confirmed high efficacy in teaching local content through Fagogoru ethnopedagogy" (Abdullah et al., 2024) according to Abdullah, Bundu, and Saman in 2024.

The ability to read comprehension is the ability of a person to reconstruct the message contained in the text they read (Dewi, 2021). Without understanding the content of the reading, we do not learn anything from what we have read if we do not comprehend the reading's substance. If we are unable to understand the material we read, our reading exercises become useless.

Furthermore, recent studies emphasize that integrating local cultural values into teaching materials is not only relevant but also has a significant impact on improving students' literacy skills. Laila, Budiningsih, and Syamsi (2021) demonstrated that textbooks based on local wisdom are *more effective than generic materials in enhancing elementary students' reading and writing skills* ([Laila et al., 2021](#)).

In terms of character education, Fairus et al. (2024) pointed out that *local wisdom integration into elementary learning plays a vital role in strengthening students' cultural identity and moral values* (Fairus et al., 2024). This is especially crucial in the face of global cultural shifts and technological advancement in the 21st century.

Additionally, Santosa, Basuki, and Puspita (2019) found that *local culture-based materials significantly enhanced students' creative writing skills*, indicating that such content enriches students' expression and imagination (Santosa et al., 2019).

Finally, integrating local values in curriculum design also fosters environmental awareness and life skills. Purwanti, Gunarhadi, and Musadad (2019) concluded that *local-*

based syllabi effectively develop students' concern for the environment while embedding character education (Purwanti et al., 2019).

According to (Djunaidi et al., 2021), Reading is a simple activity that helps keep children interested and aware in the face of global issues that have made learning more difficult. Long reading sessions improve vocabulary, comprehension, speech organ function, reasoning, and content responses. Academic success and lifelong learning need reading. Reading helps elementary students participate and learn. The brain is a muscle that needs to be strengthened in order to develop properly. Students read to learn. Useful reading requires this. Reading teaches. Many struggle to read and understand writing because they don't accept this. Reading affects lecture comprehension and learning. Useful reading requires this. Much data comes from reading. Many still have trouble reading

However, in practice, the utilization of locally sourced teaching materials frequently encounters a variety of challenges. A research in Surakarta discovered that just 10% of the entire content in 4th-grade English textbooks accurately reflects local cultural characteristics. The rest is dominated by global subject that has little relevance to the students' backgrounds. (Kaltsum et al., 2021). This highlights the need for more contextual and relevant educational resources that address students' needs in specific areas.

Aswadi Jaya from Universitas PGRI Palembang stressed how important it is to teach English while incorporating local traditional values to help build good character. He said that teaching a foreign language often brings in ideas from other cultures that don't always fit with the local culture. Adding local culture to learning English can be an alternative way to help students develop a stronger sense of nationalism and character (Jaya & Mortini, 2018).

According to Salingkat et al. (2023), the integration of local culture into the elementary school curriculum can enrich students' learning experiences by providing them with more socially and emotionally relevant material.

"The development of local wisdom-based teaching materials can strengthen the unique character of the Indonesian nation since it reflects the values Pancasila that live in local communities." (Masyhri & Yuliatin, 2022)

Local wisdom-based modules not only help students' reading skills but also raise their cultural understanding in the local setting, according to Pratama (2023).

According to Hermansyah (2020), the incorporation of local wisdom into the educational process in elementary schools has the potential to facilitate improvements in student literacy and comprehension. This is due to the fact that the learning material becomes more contextual and meaningful.

One of the elementary schools in an area rich in local culture is SD Negeri 2 Mengulak, Oku Timur has excellent possibilities to include local cultural values into the educational process. Along with reflecting the local culture that defines the local community, the reading books utilized in this institution should include general learning tools. By means of locally-based reading materials, kids not only acquire reading skills but also come to know and comprehend the cultural values that surround them.

This study is important because useful learning materials not only help students learn better but also help keep cultural traditions alive. Looking at these reading books can show whether local content is well represented and how these materials can be improved to make learning more meaningful and relevant. Learning materials are often used as a guide in lessons. They also help teachers and students go through the learning process more easily.

Teaching materials are any instructive texts that are systematically generated and can be used in teaching and learning activities (Prastowo, 2014). Teaching materials can also be defined as anything that contains lesson material and can be used to suit students' needs (Kurniasih, 2014). instructional materials take several forms, one of which is printed instructional materials. The majority of instructional materials in schools are printed.

The process of reading comprehension requires the reader to choose an etymological image and replicate it until the writer has prepared the entire thing. Reading comprehension is just a phrase used to describe reading; understanding is taken into consideration rather than articulation or reading load. Understanding the key ideas and associated nuances is a component of comprehension. It is worth noting that a great deal of thinking is offered, and in order to fully understand the meaning, he must learn the truth. (Erya & Pustika, 2021)

Focus and Sub-focus of Research

Research Focus

Focus of this research is to analyze the local content on reading Books of Fifth Grade elementary school students at SDN 2 Mengulak in understanding local content. This research emphasizes how students interact with and understand culturally relevant material provided through reading activities, as well as identifying the factors that influence their abilities

Research Sub-focus

Representation of Local Content in Reading Books

This sub-focus aims to analyze the extent to which local content is reflected in the reading materials used by fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Mengulak. The analysis includes elements of culture, tradition, and local values represented in the text, illustrations, and learning activities.

This research evaluated the extent to which local content in reading books is relevant to students' socio-cultural environment. This includes the relationship between the book's content and students' daily experiences in their local communities.

The Suitability of Reading Books with the Local Content-Based Curriculum This sub-focus aims to assess whether the reading books used are in accordance with the

national and local curriculum guidelines, which emphasize the importance of integrating local culture into the learning process.

Quality of Local Content Presentation in Reading Books

The research examined the quality of local content presentation, including the use of language, visuals, and learning activities in reading books. This aspect includes the appeal, readability, and comprehension of the material presented to the students. Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing Local Content.

The final sub-focus is to identify the obstacles faced in the implementation of local content in reading books and the potential solutions to improve the quality of local content integration at SD Negeri 2 Mengulak.

Formulation of the Problem

The research aimed to answer the following key questions:

1. What Kind of Local Content Written on Fifth Grader Book of SD Negeri 2 Mengulak?
2. How Does the Local Content Influence the Fifth Grader of SD Negeri 2 Mengulak on Their Reading Skill?

Research Purpose

The objectives of this research are:

1. Analyzing the representation of local content found in the reading books used by fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Mengulak.
2. Identifying the suitability of the reading books used with the local content-based curriculum guidelines

Benefits of Research

This research is expected to provide the following benefits:

1.1.1 Theoretical Benefits

1. Contributing to the development of theories on the analysis of local content in reading materials for elementary education.
2. Expanding the literature on the importance of integrating local culture into teaching materials, particularly at the elementary school level.

1.1.2 Practical Benefits

1. For Teachers and Schools

1. Serving as a reference for teachers in selecting and utilizing reading books that are relevant and of high quality to meet students' needs.
2. Assisting schools in designing contextual learning strategies based on local culture.

2. For Students

- a) Helping students understand and appreciate local culture through reading materials relevant to their daily lives.
- b) Enhancing students' literacy by providing engaging and contextually appropriate content.

3. For Book Publishers

- a) Offering insights for developing reading books that better integrate local content, including textual, visual, and activity-based elements.

1.1.3 Policy Benefits

1. Providing recommendations to education policymakers regarding the importance of producing teaching materials based on local culture.

2. Supporting the implementation of a more effective local-content-based curriculum, especially at the elementary school level.

1.5.4 For Future Researchers:

1. Lays the groundwork for further studies on reading ability and cultural education.
2. Suggests methodological approaches for similar studies in literacy development.