CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   BACKGROUND

Every child in the world is born differently from one to another. They are different in the field of mental characteristics, sensory abilities, communication abilities, social behavior, or physical characteristics. There are certain children whose characteristics are different from the normal ones, and they are called under-normal children. These children need to be educated in special schools because they need to socialize with others. They are educated in order that they can be good citizens and productive adults.

Based on their special characteristics mentioned above, they need to be educated in special schools. Special education programs are needed, and the programs are different from the regular programs because the special programs try to take into account the children inter-individual and intra-individual differences.

There are a lot of kinds of under-normal children, and one of them is mental retardation. Mentally retarded children need to be educated in special schools. Many schools for mentally retarded students are built, and those schools are named SLB-Cs in Indonesia.

In accordance with the development of the education for the mentally retarded students, the definition and classification of mental retardation are also developed. Kirk (1989:135-137) classified the type of mental retardation into four types: mildly retarded, moderately retarded, severely retarded, and profoundly

1

retarded. Among those four kinds, only the first three can be educated. The moderate and severe ones are educated in SLB-Cs. However, the mildly retarded one, whose IQ is higher than the other kinds of retardation, cannot be educated in SLB-Cs because they need different education programs. Children with this type of retardation are like normal people, but they have delayed mental development. They have the capacity to develop in three areas: academic lessons, social, and vocational. The mildly retarded students are also called slow learners because they are slow in understanding academic lessons. Therefore, they need to be educated in special schools such as Montessori schools.

In Indonesia, there are a lot of Montessori schools. The curriculum used by the schools is based on the national curriculum for regular schools. The question that may come up is what are the differences between the regular school and Montessori schools? The differences between regular schools and Montessori schools are: (1) In regular schools, the teachers have targets that make them finish the whole material at the end of term, while in Montessori schools, the targets depend on the students' capability, and (2) In regular schools, there are not any therapies for the students, but in Montessori schools, there are some therapies for the students like speaking therapy, behavior therapy, and motor therapy.

Montessori schools follow the national curriculum. In the national curriculum, English is one of the lessons taught from the fourth grade of elementary school. Because of that, English is also taught from the forth grade of elementary in Montessori schools.

When the slow learners learn English, they learn the English components such as vocabulary, pronunciation, patterns, and spelling. Among those four components of English, the writer chooses vocabulary as the main object of her theses because vocabulary mastery plays an important role in the process of achieving language-teaching objectives, that is the mastery of language skills. Vocabulary is the basic component in learning language (in this case, English). One cannot master a language if he or she does not understand the meaning of words. Therefore, it can be said that vocabulary is an essential component of all languages (Long, 1987:305). Fries (1974: 37) pointed out; "Learning a language practically always means primarily learning the words of that language." In line with Fries, Saville and Troike (1976: 87) said that, "Vocabulary is the most important for understanding knowing the names for things, actions, and concepts. Someone can understand what people say, and communicate his idea well if he or she masters vocabulary."

Teaching English vocabulary to slow learners needs special techniques due to their disabilities. They have been found to do less well than non-retarded peers on a variety of learning tasks. They seem to have a limited ability to understand abstract concepts. They have difficulty in understanding cause and effect. They have faulty concept formation. They have imprecise perceptions. They experience limited incidental learning. They have impoverished language, and it is difficult for them to generalize a concept. In order that teacher can teach English vocabulary and the slow learners can learn English vocabulary well, the teacher's

way of teaching must follow the slow learners' thinking processes that can be described as concrete, discrete, unrelated, immediate, and obvious.

Unfortunately, based on the writer's observation in a Montessori school, most slow learners have problems in learning English vocabulary because the teacher does not teach them with the ways that are suitable with their thinking processes. The teacher teaches them English vocabulary in traditional way, which is by using word lists only. Brown (1987:12) said that, "The help that teachers may give to the students, the sheet number of words to be learned in a new language (in this case English), is a burden for most learners." As a result, such students with such thinking processes cannot learn English vocabulary well. They forget what they learn easily. This is the reason teacher must find out the ways to teach them English vocabulary effectively so that the slow learners can understand and remember the words easily.

When we teach the slow learners English vocabulary, we will face problems in explaining the meaning of the words because they cannot accept abstract concept. Everything must be presented in concrete. Because the slow learners cannot accept the abstract concept, the writer suggests pictures as a mean of teaching English vocabulary to solve the problems that may come up in teaching them. Kruse (Long, 1987:312) said that, "Pictures, diagrams, and charts can be used as aids for learning vocabulary." Through pictures, they can see the reality. Bumpass (1963:32-33) said, "Pictures can make a learning experience more concrete, realistic, or dynamic for young children."

Learning English vocabulary using pictures in a monotonous way, an unenjoyable classroom atmosphere and without reinforcement makes the students bored, and they forget the words easily. When they are bored, they cannot learn English well. Curran (Long, 1987:51) found that students' feelings could create serious blocks to intellectual learning. In order to prevent the serious block between the teacher and the students, the teacher needs to make a conducive classroom atmosphere that can make the students enjoy and become interested in the lesson. The writer suggests games and repetition as the reinforcements. Through games, the slow learners can enjoy the teaching learning process in the classroom. Games can create opportunities for students to exercise their own communicating and learning initiative and play a role in directing their own learning. Through repetitions, they can memorize the vocabulary easily. Brown (1987:12) said: "New words must be repeated and practiced until they are established so firmly that they cannot be lost." From the quotation above, it is clear that repetitions should not be given once in order that the new words cannot be lost easily. Because of that, repetitions must be well planned in order that it can strengthen the students' memory of the new words.

From the explanation above, we can say that teaching vocabulary to slow learners is not an easy job. A teacher should not only ask the students to memorize the new words given, but she has to make the vocabulary become easier for them to memorize. Besides, a teacher also needs to make the students enjoy learning English. That is why it is necessary for a teacher to vary her techniques in

presenting the materials. The writer suggests using picture games as the way to solve the problems.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Based on the background of the study, the writer formulates the problem of this study as follows:

Are there different effects between picture games and pictures on the vocabulary achievement of the fifth year students of Galuh Handayani Montessori School?

1.3   THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

In line with the statement of the problem formulated above, the objective of the study is to find out whether the slow learners who are taught English vocabulary using picture games get better vocabulary achievement than when they are taught using pictures.

1.4   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In line with the objective of the study, the writer expects that the ideas presented in this study can help teachers and other education practitioners, especially for them who are in charge with education for slow learners, to vary their techniques in presenting their English vocabulary materials to teach their students. Hopefully, the teaching of English vocabulary can be effective and interesting by using picture games. The students will easily memorize the words

given by the teachers, and they can enjoy the learning process in the classroom so that the objectives of the teaching vocabulary could be achieved.

1.5   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the behavioristic theory. This theory is based on Skinner's operant conditioning theory. Behavioristic theory advocates a stimulus response methodology for learning a carefully analyzed sequence of knowledge. The main assumptions of this theory are: (1) behavior is reducible to responses or actions that can be measured, observed, and analyzed, and (2) responses are a function of such things as reinforcement, usually rewards and punishments.

In accordance with this theory, Brown (1987:68) said, "Learning is considered effective if the learner can produce correct responses to the given stimuli." In other words, we can say that learning process happens when the teacher gives the stimuli, the students gives the correct responses that can be observed, measured, and analyzed, and the students are conditioned by reinforcement." Based on the theory, this study uses pictures as stimuli and games as reinforcement.

1.6   HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis are formulated as follows:

1.6.1 The Null Hypothesis (Ho)

There is no significant different effect between the vocabulary achievement of the students when they are taught using picture games and when they are taught using pictures.

1.6.2 The Alternative Hypothesis (Ha)

There is a significant different effect between the vocabulary achievement of the students when they are taught using picture games and when they are taught using pictures.

1.7 DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS

To avoid misunderstanding, the following key terms need explanation, and they are:

1.7.1 Mental retardation

Schonell (Suparlan, 1983:6) defined mental retardation as those children whose intellectual powers prevent them from really profiting from the kind of instruction given in an ordinary school or even in an opportunity or a special school. They are the mentally retarded or trainable mental defectives that are best catered for in a training center.

1.7.2 Slow learner

Kirk (Kolstoe, 1976:6) described slow learner as children who could be expected to achieve a moderate degree of academic success although at a slower rate than average children. These children can be educated in the

regular grades, do not need special class placement, and can be expected to become self-supporting, independent, and socially adjusted adults.

1.7.3 Technique

Anthony (1972:70) said that "technique" contains activities, which take place in the classroom. In other words, "a technique" contains activities, which take place in the classroom and are selected by the teacher to achieve the teaching objective.

1.7.4 Picture

According to Kreidler (1968:1) "Pictures are kinds of instruments that can help the teachers add variety, clarity, and especially reality to the classroom situation which can be useful in the teaching-learning process.

1.7.5 Game

"Game is a form of play, especially with rules." (A.S. Hornby, 1986:353)

A game (Neufeldt, Ed., 1991:554) is: (1) a form of play or way of playing, (2) any specific contest, engagement, computer stimulation, or sport involving physical or mental competition under specific rules, and (3) any test of skills, courage, and endurance.

1.7.6 Vocabulary

A.S. Hornby (1986:959) said, "Vocabulary is a total number of words which (with rules for combining them) make up a language."

Neufeldt (1991:1494) states that vocabulary is a list of words and, often, phrases, abbreviations, inflectional forms, etc. usually arranged in

alphabetical order and defined or otherwise identified as in dictionary or glossary.

1.8   SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The writer finds that it is necessary to limit the scope and the limitation of this study. This study deals with teaching English vocabulary to the fifth grade of Montessori elementary school students. Pictures and games are used in this study. The reasons for choosing pictures and games are that they are not too expensive and easily made, and they can overcome the students' boredom.

1.9   ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis consists of five chapters. In chapter I, the writer discusses the introduction of this theses. Chapter II concerns with review to the related literature. It consists some theories, which support the study. Chapter III discusses the methodology used in this study. Chapter IV is research findings. It is about the analysis teaching vocabulary by using pictures and picture games. The last chapter is about conclusion that consists of summary and suggestions.