

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION



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1.1 The Background of the Study

In the last twelve years, there are more and more children suffer from autism in Indonesia (Yatim, 2003:1). Unfortunately, there are many parents do not admit that the autistic children. They always say that their children suffer from “Down Syndrome.” However, some of them do not know that their children suffer from autism; what they know is that their children suffer from speech defect. This might be caused that these parents do not know what autism is. This term – autism – appears in Indonesia in 1993. Therefore, it is not surprising that autism is still a mystery to Indonesian people (Danuatmaja; 2003:2)

Indeed, experts get a difficulty to define autism. Some experts believe that autism is a brain disorder that effects a person’s ability to communicate, and respond appropriately to the environment (www.yahoo.com: NIHM; 13 March 2002). However, they may not define the characteristic of autism appropriately since an autistic child may have different characteristic and symptoms from one to another. They also add that the autistic children do not want to socialize and make eye contact to other people, and they often do repetitive behavior.

Education is one of the fundamental elements to develop our country into a better one. Indonesian people should have the same change to get education, including the autistic children. The change of the autistic children is more widely

open since t (UUD 1945) to article 31 paragraph one states, "*Setiap warga negara berhak mendapat pendidikan.*" (<http://dionginanto.blogspot.com/2010/02/pendidikan-bahasa-inggris-pada-anak.html>).

As Yassidi wrote in his article (2004), as quoted by Ginanto (Gianto, 2010), says that autistic children have very good language skills. Most of them can communicate by using symbols, pictures, computer and electronic equipment. So, their ability to communicate using symbols, pictures and computer can be used in providing teaching by using some of the equipment, especially in teaching English. He also added that everyone needs to master the English language better in this globalization era. Therefore, innovation is needed by anyone, especially the people around the child with autism to create a conducive atmosphere and innovative for the English language can be accepted by all anyone at any social level, including autism children. English language learning in children with autism is very important not only because children with autism have the right to learn, but also children with autism can be helped in revealing what their minds because there are much easier in English language pronunciation so that they can communicate with each other better. In addition, based on her observation at SD Kristen Kasish Karunia, the authors found that the teaching of English is also necessary because these autistic children frequently travel abroad so they are expected to master it which is very useful for communicating with other people when they are faced with a situation which really should be independent (<http://dionginanto.blogspot.com/2010/02/pendidikan-bahasa-inggris-pada-anak.html>)

Therefore, the writer decided to teach English vocabulary to autistic children since she expected that teaching English vocabulary might help the autistic children express their feelings, thought and needs. Furthermore, the writer chose pictures might give contribution not only to teach English vocabulary to normal children but also to autistic children. A study which was conducted by a therapist in United States said that pictures might help the autistic children in learning language faster and better (<http://www.polyxo.com/visualsupport/letsgetvisual.html>). The last reason the writer conducted this study was that many of autistic parents who expected their child could apply English words when they were travelling abroad. They expected that these autistic children could say or express what they want in English because they believed that it was impossible that they could be with these children all the time.

Furthermore, Grandine (<http://scholar.google.co.id/scholar>, 2001) said that she could speak fluently because her therapist forced her to speak by the help of photograph. She also added that most of autistic children are visual thinkers that makes them understand more easily and learn easier how to speak by the help of pictures (<http://www.grandin.com/inc/visual.thinking.html>, 2006).

The writer conducted her study at SDKr Kasih Karunia at Jl. Sutorejo Tengah V/38 Surabaya. She chose seventeen autistic children by random sampling. The writer used this sampling technique since it gave an equal chance to each population members to be included in the sample.

During the observation done in SD Kr. Kasih Karunia Surabaya, the writer found out several things. First, the autistic children became angry when they could

not express what they want, feel, and think. They were angry because the thought that nobody understood them. This was the reason why teaching vocabulary to autistic children was important. Therefore, the writer focused her study on teaching English vocabulary to autistic children.

Second, she found out that there were four methods used to treat autistic children. They are speech Therapy, Play Therapy, Occupancy Therapy, and ABA. Speech Therapy is a therapy used to treat autistic children to be able to speak well. They are trained to pronounce words correctly, so that other people can understand what they say. Play Therapy focuses on helping the autistic children are able to play appropriately. He can use toys or play with other children properly. The third therapy, the Occupancy Therapy, is the effort to cure autistic children who suffer from mental and physical deficiency by giving activities that may reduce suffer. They are taught how to move their hands such as using scissors to cut paper, on following the teacher hand movements, etc. The last therapy is ABA – Applied Behavior Analysis. It is a therapy whose aim is to build a social ability that is useful to reduce or eliminate the bad habits and change them with the good things

In conducting this research, the writer limited her study into teaching English vocabulary to autistic children using pictures. The therapists helped the writer taught English vocabulary to autistic children since they did not get familiar easily with someone new. They drilled the autistic children to memorize the words describes on the single pictures being showed since the writer hoped that autistic children might learn English – the most important language in the world.

1.2 Problem Statement

In line with the background and the title of this study, the research question that drove this study was formulated as “Do autistic children who are taught using pictures get better score than those autistic children who are assigned to memorize English vocabulary?”

1.3 Objective of the Study

The aim of the study was to find out autistic children who were taught using pictures could get better score than the autistic children assigned to memorize English vocabulary

1.4 Theoretical Framework

In completing this research, the writer used two underlying theories. Those were behaviorism theory and speech therapy. According to behaviorism theory, it is also that a child gets his speaking and comprehension ability from the environment reinforcements. It is assumed that a child is a passive receptor in his environment's pressure. Furthermore, he does not have an active role in the process of verbal behavior development (Chaer, 2003: 222-223).

Based on Skinner's language behaviorism, language behavior is influenced by reinforcement or stimulus that a child has during his language learning which he had since he was born as the result of the reinforcement (Chaer; 2003:91).

Speech therapy is the corrective or rehabilitative treatment of physical and/or cognitive deficits or disorders resulting in difficulty with verbal communication.

This includes both speech (articulation, intonation, rate, intensity) and language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, both receptive and expressive language, including reading and writing). Depending on the nature and severity of the disorder, common treatments may range from physical strengthening exercises; common treatments may range from physical strengthening exercises, instructive or repetitive practice and drilling, to the use of audio-visual aids ([www.yahoo.com:http://wikipedia/freeencyclopedia](http://www.yahoo.com/http://wikipedia/freeencyclopedia))

Based on the researches done in the other countries, pictures might have a contribution to the teaching vocabulary to autistic children because pictures help grasp the students' attention, give them clearer concepts of things and also remind the students about what they should do or tell to others.

Grandine also states that pictures may help her learn how to speak and broaden her vocabulary world so she could speak fluently like the normal people do (<http://scholar.google.co.id/scholar>; 2001).

1.5 The Hypothesis

The writer used two hypotheses in this study. The two hypotheses were Null hypothesis (H₀) and Alternative Hypothesis (H_a).

1. The Null Hypothesis (H₀)

The Null Hypothesis is accepted if the autistic children who were taught using pictures achieved better score than those autistic children who were assigned to memorize English vocabulary.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_a)

The alternative hypothesis is accepted if the autistic children who were assigned to memorize English vocabulary achieved better score than those autistic children who were taught using pictures.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The results of this study were expected to give theoretical contribution to the teaching English vocabulary to autistic children in Surabaya. In line with the study of pictures as a means of teaching vocabulary, it was expected that teachers use this study to conduct of support studies which investigate the language skills such as listening, speaking, writing, and reading.

The results of this study were also expected to give practical contribution for the teaching vocabulary to autistic children. For students, the study was expected to help them comprehend the vocabulary, understand, be able to apply them in their daily activity appropriately, and improve their ability in comprehending vocabulary in the appropriate time. While for the teachers, this study could be

used to motivate the therapists to use pictures as a mean of teaching vocabulary and to improve his or her ways of teaching vocabulary to autistic children.

1.7 Scope and limitation of the study

To keep this study on its track, the writer made some limitations for her study which mentioned as follow:

1. The population of this study are autistic children in Surabaya.
2. The sample of the study was 34 autistic children at SDKr. Kasih Karunia Surabaya. They were at the age of three until ten years old.
3. The materials taught were animals, plants, and parts of the body.
4. The media of teaching English vocabulary to autistic children was single pictures
5. The method used was Audio Lingual Method
6. The study was conducted from 26 September 2003 until 15 November 2003

1.8 Assumption

From many theories of autistic children and pictures, there were assumptions could be drawn for his study. Those assumptions were:

1. The Vocabulary Tests were valid and reliable, since those vocabulary tests were tested already before they were given to the experimental and control groups.
2. The therapists are experienced therapists so they know the characteristics of the autistic children and how to handle them appropriately.

1.9 Definition of Keys Terms

To help the reader comprehend this thesis, the writer defines some difficult words as follows:

1. Autistic children:

Autistic children are those children who have neurodevelopmental disability which affects their communication, social development, and behavior

2. Teaching English Vocabulary

Teaching English vocabulary is an activity to help someone to understand and know English vocabulary

3. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the total number of words which with rules for combining them make up a language (Hornsby, 1982:959)