

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Nowadays, the number of children with autism is increasing. The article entitled "*Jumlah Anak Autis Meningkat*" tells us that in Indonesia the number of autistic children increases from year to year . . . (par.2).

Whereas in the US, as stated by Wilson, "There are also many more children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) – one in every 110 children nationwide, with nearly 10,000 eligible for services in Massachusetts alone" (22). Therefore, it is important for school teachers to learn about autism and how to deal with ASD children. Based on the research of Volkmar, Lord, Bailey, Schultz, & Klin, the definition of autism is stated as follows:

Autism is one of the pervasive developmental disorders (PDDs), also called autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs), which are characterized by severe and widespread impairments in social interaction and communication skills, and by stereotyped patterns of behaviors, interests, and activities (qtd. in Mash and Wolfe 284).

Wilson states that the characteristics of ASD are as follow:

does not respond to his name by 12 months of age, has delayed speech and language skills, avoids eye contact, has trouble understanding others' feelings or difficulty expressing her own, repeats words and phrases over and over, child is obsessed with specific objects (such as the wheels of a toy truck, or a ceiling fan); . . . (23).

It can be seen that pupils with ASD have difficulties in communication and social skills.

During my internship at *Kelompok Bermain Kristen "BETA"* (henceforth, KBK) I found a pupil with ASD. My position was as a teacher assistant. My jobs were assisting the pupils and also teaching English vocabulary, if there was an English class. There were between 15 (fifteen) until 20 (twenty) pupils in the class, I usually taught them for about 30 (thirty) minutes and then I helped the teacher when I had finished my teaching.

As a teacher assistant, I had difficulties in dealing with one pupil with ASD in KBK "BETA". The first time I saw the pupil it seemed that he would learn and play together with his friends. After one week, I realized that the pupil acted differently. I asked my supervisor in the class and I was informed that he was the pupil who had ASD. I noticed that when I tried to guide the pupil with ASD in Playgroup class to do his task, he did not understand what he should do, and he did not have eye contact when talking with me. At that time, I thought that he did not want to do his task but the next day he did the same things and his teacher said to me that he

was one of the pupils with ASD. I did not know how to deal with him in class. Therefore, this situation becomes a problem for me as the teacher assistant.

Based on the above explanations, I would like to analyze how to handle an autistic pupil, aged 3 years old. It is important to discuss this topic because there are many teachers who do not have any experience in dealing with children who have ASD, and they have difficulties in helping the children to learn. Therefore, I would like to get the best solution in solving the problem.

B. Identification of the Problem

In this study, I would like to analyze the following research questions:

1. Why did I have difficulties in dealing with an autistic pupil in KBK "BETA"?
2. How did the problem influence the pupil with ASD, other pupils, and also I, as a teacher assistant?
3. How should I overcome the problem to deal with an autistic pupil in KBK "BETA"?

C. Objectives and Benefits of the Study

There are three objectives of the study. First, to analyze the causes of the difficulties in dealing with an ASD child in KBK "BETA". Second, to figure out the effects of the difficulties in dealing with an ASD child in KBK

“BETA”. Third, to discover the best solution to deal with an ASD child in KBK “BETA”.

The benefit of this study for the teachers in *Kelompok Bermain dan TK Kristen “BETA”*, is to help the teachers to deal with autistic pupils. For the readers, this study will provide useful information to solve similar problem. And for me, this study will help me to broaden my knowledge about dealing with a similar situation if it happens again in the future.

D. Description of the Institution

Based on the information written in Sejarah Singkat Taman Kanak-kanak dan TK Kristen “BETA”, it is stated that the school is an educational institution especially for 3–6 year old children. Ms. Dra. Yan Aryanti is the founder of Kelompok Bermain dan TK Kristen “BETA”. At that time, she was still working as a lecturer in Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga for students taking a counseling major. Because of her passion to educate children, she decided to build Kelompok Bermain dan TK Kristen “BETA” on August 1, 1984, which was located at Jalan Ronggowarsito no.133, Surakarta. Due to the increasing number of students, Kelompok Bermain dan TK Kristen “BETA” was moved to Jalan Arifin no. 84 in 2005. Ms. Dra. Lea Sriwahyuni is the principal. There are 10 (ten) teachers, 2 (two) English teachers, 1 (one) Chinese teacher, and 1 (one) dance teacher. The students in the year of 2012 – 2013 were 108 pupils.

The vision of Kelompok Bermain dan TK Kristen “BETA” is to organize education and quality of teaching based on the love of Christ.

The mission is first, to provide teachers who are qualified, love Christ and their students; second, to equip the students to become competent, skilled, intelligent, and independent; and third, to implant the values of morals and faith in Jesus Christ (5).

E. Method of the Study

In order to analyze the problem in this term paper, I collect several data. I get some data from my internship journal. Besides, I also use library research in order to get the relevant theories from the books and the Internet. The data is used to analyze the problem and to find the best solutions to the problem.

F. Limitation of the Study

This study is based on my experience as an assistant teacher when I was doing my internship in *Kelompok Bermain dan TK Kristen "BETA"* from January 4, to February 9, 2013. The subjects of the research are I, myself, as a teacher, and a pupil with ASD. The discussion is related to the difficulties in dealing with an ASD child in KBK "BETA" in Surakarta, Central Java.

G. Organization of the Term Paper

This term paper starts with the Abstract, which contains the summary of the term paper in Bahasa Indonesia. It is followed by the Declaration of Originality, which contains the statement of the term paper's originality. Next, there is Acknowledgements, which contains the expressions of gratitude for the people who have helped me to write this term paper. And then, there is Table of Contents, which shows the titles and subtitles of each chapter and page numbers.

The main content of this term paper consists of four chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction, which is divided into seven parts, specifically, Background of the Study, Identification of the Problem, Objectives and Benefits of the Study, Description of the Institution, Method of the Study, Limitation of the Study, and Organization of the Term Paper. The second chapter consists of Problem Analysis, which describes the causes and effects of the problem. The third chapter is Potential Solutions. It presents the possible solutions, followed by the positive and negative effects. The fourth chapter is the Conclusion. It states the best solutions, supported by logical and systematic reasons. The last part of this term paper is the Bibliography, which is followed by the Appendix, which includes the Flowchart.