

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Language is an inseparable part of human life. Generally, every country has its national language or dialect, yet English is an international language, so having English proficiency is beneficial. This fact makes me realize that it is better to learn English as early as possible. Learning English from early childhood is very beneficial as children are able to acquire any knowledge relatively easily and quickly, as stated by June R Oberlander in his book Slowly but Steady that “the fastest time for human brain to grow up[ is in the first three years” (iii).

In Indonesia teaching English to children has become quite popular. Schools are now putting emphasis on the English language in their curriculum. In Indonesia, English is treated as a foreign language, which means that English is “...not spoken by indigenous people” (Littlewood 3). However, the main aim of English teaching and learning is for the children to achieve English competencies in listening, speaking, reading and writing, supported by proper knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. I agree with Susan Holden that “The basic knowledge in learning language is started by learning vocabulary”. It means that vocabulary is the most

important thing in language learning. Shelley Ann Vernon states that “An ideal vocabulary class for preschoolers is an active class which encourages conversation where the teacher delivers something in a natural way to allow the children to learn without stress or fear of possible failure. The children listen and understand first. After a while they will begin speaking individual words and short phrases” (Par 4).

It is true that “The more they hear and experience the vocabulary that you are teaching them, the more likely they learn it, but who wants to sit in a class simply repeating words and what they mean? Certainly it is not three to five year olds...” (Richards 98). Thus, teachers need interesting and physically active activities in teaching vocabulary to preschool student, as Solveig-Alma H. Lyster states in her website that”...to create a fun English class you need a battery of games, activities, stories and ideas up” (Par 6). Based on the above theories, it is clear that the basic technique to teach vocabulary to 3-5 year old children is repetition. However, it is challenge for the teacher to find the effective ways to do repetition so as not to make the children bored and be inattentive.

During my apprenticeship in Tumble Tots, I have to teach vocabulary to children age 3-5 years old. In my class, there are 22 students. Having that many students, I find it hard to get 3-5 years old children’s attention when I teach vocabulary. When I deliver my material to the children in my class, I do not know how to engage their interest and make them feel comfortable in my English vocabulary class. I have to call their names continually to

make them be attentive to what I say. I realize that it is not an effective technique; in addition, this technique is wasting time and all of the children look bored and sleepy.

I find that my English vocabulary class has not yet become ideal, as when I explain or tell new vocabulary to the students because they cannot remember it. The students are also not participating well during the lesson. I observe that there are some of them who are always busy with themselves, crying, chit-chatting or getting sleepy. In my opinion, these problems happen because the children cannot focus and be attentive; so that they get bored with the material and the way that I use to deliver the material.

Beside that, I believe the teacher's attitude in handling problematic students influences the student's attention. I once experienced facing a boy who was out of control. He ran about, jumped and disturbed his friend when I was explaining the vocabulary. This made me angry, so I shouted to sit down to him. I even threatened to glue him to his seat so that he would not be able to run about. The boy sat down, but noticed he did not like what I had done. During the lesson he just sat down and daydreamed without paying attention to my teaching.

Based on my experiences that I have stated above, I am curious to find out the effective ways to support my teaching children of 3-5 years old. I would like to find out how to engage their interest, and make them enjoy the learning of vocabulary.

## B. Identification of the Problem

In this paper I would like to discuss the following questions:

1. What makes children at 3-5 years of age inattentive while learning vocabulary?
2. What should the teacher do to engage the children's interest in learning English vocabulary?

## C. Objectives and Benefits of the Study

The objectives of the study are to find out the effective ways to engage 3-5 years old children's interest in learning vocabulary. Through the study, I hope readers, especially teachers, can get some more benefits. They can find out why children become inattentive. Moreover, they can get some ideas on how to make children interested in learning vocabulary. By applying these ways, the children will not feel bored or depressed, so, they can be more interested in and enjoy learning vocabulary. As for Tumble Tots, this study can give some ideas to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning process.

## D. Description of the Institution

Tumble Tots established by a former teacher of Olympic Gymnastic from England, Bill Cosgrave in 1979. He tried to create an English course

for children that were suitable not only for learning but also for playing. At the moment, Tumble tots has a lot of branches such as in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. Tumble Tits is an English course that tries to teach English and uses some interesting activities such as indoor and outdoor activities to train children fine and gross motor skill. Tumble Tots also educate children since 6 months up to 5 year old and have a motto “Skills for Life”, which means Tumble Tots has a purpose to build the personality of the children to become more confident, independent and discipline.

Tumble Tots in Bandung was established in 2000. Tumble Tots is the first international preschool in Bandung. In the first three years, the Tumble Tots in Bandung has about 150 children and 2 kinds of classes for children aged 2-5 years old. Now, Tumble Tots has about 350 children whose ages are 8 months up to 5 year old and 4 kind of classes. This fact proves that Tumble Tots has grown up very fast and is being trusted by people.

#### E. Limitation of the Study

I would like to focus on the ways that are used in teaching English vocabulary to children 3-5 years old in order to make them interested in and enjoy their learning process. I make some observations during my apprenticeship, recorded in my apprenticeship journal and do library research to collect some theories that support my research.

## F. Organization of the Term Paper

The term paper is divided into four chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction which contains Background of the Study, Identification of the Problem, Objectives and Benefits of the Study, Description of the Institution, Limitation of the Study and Organization of the Term Paper. Chapter II is the Problem Analysis, which explains the causes and effects about my problem during my apprenticeship. Chapter III is the Potential Solutions, which discusses about the possible solution for my problem, along with the analysis of potential negative and positive effects. Chapter IV is the Conclusion, which explains about the best solution to the problem.