

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses on the background of the study, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

One of crucial English skills to be mastered by the students is reading and it plays an important role. According to Mart (2012) reading is crucial for language acquisition and it is a good method of understanding. In general, reading in education is the most substantial object to recognize all contents of English material. According to Agustin (2015), the students can improve information and it will not be difficult to reread when they disremember to catch the specific information by reading. Maina, et.al (2014) maintained that through reading, a student will get new vocabularies, new sentence structures, diverse records, and a good step to apply the language.

Educationally, reading is also taught for disability students, especially for the students of mentally retarded. The characteristic of mental retardation are having trouble in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour (Vig & Jedrysek, 2004). Besides, Alqahtani (2013) stated that the students of mentally retarded have difficulty in stuttering, lack of words, in which do not suit their mental age. Teaching language skills for mentally retarded students are difficult because they have remarkably low IQ and cognitive skills. The reading behaviour of mentally retarded students often lose his place in the page, jump lines or read

wrong letters into the words, difficult to pronounce certain words, fail to place events in the correct chronological order or orient from left to right (Allor, et.al, 2010).

Mentally retarded students have lack of attention and it is deprived of perseverance and concentration. The development of the ability to concentrate is a required condition for the acquisition learning such as reading (Drossinou, et.al, 2009). In addition, Lewis (2014) stated that practices and strategies for strengthening the reading ability of mentally retarded students are the comprehending practices with the text through questions that the teacher asked, creating a story with the use of pictures and words, and the comprehension of the environmental signals.

The researcher did a preliminary research by observing the school, SLB Negeri Cerme and did an interview with an English teacher to see the real condition of teaching-learning. The researcher found out some problems which the teacher teaches English only as an introduction by teaching vocabulary to the mentally retarded students. It is caused that they have low IQ and low short-term memory. Besides, the teacher only uses a whiteboard, English book, and pictures to handle the class which makes them bored in learning and the teacher said that the students are lack of motivation to learn. Meanwhile, the researcher did not find out more reading material in English book. Its contents are mostly about vocabulary and short dialogues. The activities are only introducing the vocabularies of the topics and gluing the pictures by giving their names.

Actually, learning reading in the level of mentally retarded learners do not require to be learnt deeply but they emphasize more on daily or in application

for daily communication. It is needed special consideration to adapt for the disability students (Mpofu & Chimhenga, 2013). According to Lundberg & Reichenberg (2013), there are some examples of teaching steps that mentally retarded students be able to read and understand ten lines of text, those are placing the pictures correctly, answering the questions by choosing the correct words, and placing the words in the correct order. Most of mentally retarded students are able to read simple by connecting the text to the meaning (Allor, et.al, 2010). In addition, Fajardo (2014) established the baseline of reading skill which mentally retarded students were measured reading comprehension that the average sentence length of 100 words and accompanied by literal and inferential questions.

Mentally retarded students can learn basic reading skill if they are given consistent, clear, and comprehensive teaching of reading. One of them is given the appropriate strategy. The researcher uses Project Based Learning (PBL) strategy to develop the activities of reading material. PBL strategy can support the learning process in which student-centered learning takes place. Mentally retarded students can learn collaboratively in peers or group to do the project. It is helpful to gain their knowledge and to increase their motivation in learning English.

PBL learning activities are long-term, interdisciplinary, student-centered, and integrated with real-world issues and practices (Yusoff, 2006). The students are producing and guiding their own learning, PBL takes teachers out of the center of instruction and allows the students to work collaboratively to demonstrate creatively their understanding of the content. Project Based Learning involves literacy skills of students, from reading, writing, speaking, and synthesis of information (Walsh, 2010). As Guven and Duman (2007) examined on his

study that PBL for mentally retarded students are effective and important to build their ability in social and literacy skill.

Based on Saad, et.al (2015), mentally retarded students can learn best with the use of different methodologies that engage their senses, such as using images, sounds and clips. The teachers can combine some media: texts, pictures and videos into a package through PCs, Laptop, etc. A package of some media is called multimedia. The multimedia contains more interactive features than printed materials. Multimedia technology has benefits to increase motivation for task completion. Generally, mentally retarded students have a longer attention span when interacting with the computer than printed material (Wah, 2007).

The accessibility of multimedia challenges the teachers to utilize it appropriately for learning needs. In the recent years, due to the growing progression of information technologies, the amount of multimedia for English reading materials have been improved to increase the learning performance of English reading. One of multimedia which is able to support teaching-learning is using Mash (Macromedia Flash). Macromedia flash is a package used to design, presentation and publication. The program is the supporting usage in picture, sound, text, video, and animation (Saputra & Tiarina, 2013).

In this circumstance, the researcher serves some appropriate and interesting materials through macromedia flash application which is reflected toward the topic. According to Lisda, et.al (2015), macromedia flash learning method is the system of learning using software-hardware which offers the data process in the form of picture, video, photography, graphic, and animation, in collaboration with sound, text, and voice data interactively controlled by

computer. It is also providing a sort of quiz which will contribute for teaching-learning process more interesting than before. Explaining and delivering lesson through picture, video, in collaboration with text attractively will make mentally retarded learners are more interested in learning and comprehending the material of reading.

The researcher does this study according to the previous studies by Sundari, et.al (2015), the researcher developed the application “Gredio” for learning reading for six mentally retarded students through phonetic method which the materials focused on introducing the syllables that arranged on each chapters. The methodologies of this study by doing ADDIE which the researcher did a survey to see need analysis. Even though, it was not clear enough explanation in methodology. The result showed that the application can help the students to read. The researcher suggested to the further researcher to provide more other materials, such as pronouncing sentences. Diwangkara, et.al (2016) also did a study to design interactive 3D animation learning media for reading and writing which was used by mentally retarded students. The researcher used Adobe Flash to create 3D animation. The result showed very positive based on the questionnaire decision. Meanwhile, the researcher suggested that it was needed to develop more related to reading words and sentences. Besides, Guven & Duman (2007) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of a project-based learning program delivered to children with mild mental disabilities. The results showed the importance of project-based learning for the children. Nurcahyoko (2011) about “Developing Reading Material of Public Tolerance through Interactive Multimedia Using Flash Player for the Fourth Grade Students of

Elementary School”. He wanted to know what reading problem of the fourth students in Elementary school and to know how to develop reading material containing public tolerance to the students effectively. The result showed that the multimedia reading material is significant for helping the students to understand the material.

Based on the previous studies above, the researcher wants to develop reading material for mentally retarded students using Macromedia Flash and PBL as a strategy. The subject of this study is 9 students from all grades of Junior High students because the English teacher mixes the grades into one class when teaching English and it will be more easy to know whether reading materials through PBL strategy using macromedia flash will improve their reading skill or not.

Linked to the problem, the researcher purposes Macromedia Flash as a way to develop Reading material for Junior High - mentally retarded students because it contributes in creating teaching media. Besides, macromedia flash is also giving support in teaching English for mentally retarded students.

1.2.Purpose of the Study

According to the formulation of the problem stated above, this study is aimed to develop reading material using Macromedia Flash for mentally retarded students.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study is hoped to give contribution toward two significances, they are theoretical and practical ones.

1.3.1. Theoretical significance

In theoretical significance, the researcher expects that this study provides implication in developing material for reading skill in order to improve mentally retarded students' comprehension with good content and interesting design using macromedia flash.

1.3.2. Practical significance

- a. For the teacher, to get new method of teaching using macromedia flash and to enrich the knowledge about the kind of method which is more effective in teaching learning for mentally retarded students. It is also valuable for providing an interesting media to increase mentally retarded students' motivation in learning English.
- b. For the students, it helps them to learn reading through macromedia flash.
- c. For the researchers, it will encourage them to increase into another skill of language by using more interesting media.

1.4. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The researcher scopes the study to Junior High-mentally retarded students of SLB Negeri Cerme. The limitation of this study is only focused on

developing reading material using macromedia flash which the topic is in the first semester. The topics are about number 11-20, expression agree or disagree, and part of house. The researcher will collect the data by giving questionnaire to the learners, interview the English teacher, and conduct the ADDIE model.

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

1. Developing material is process to develop English reading material for Junior High - mentally retarded students using macromedia flash.
2. Reading is a text which the topics are about number 11-20, expression agree or disagree, and part of house which will be learned by mentally retarded students in order to comprehend the content of the topics.
3. Macromedia flash is a learning media that provide pictures, video, animation in collaboration text, pictures, etc. to develop reading material for mentally retarded students.
4. Mentally retarded is a mental function disorder and having low ability in social communication, memorizing, and cognitive skill.
5. Project Based Learning is a strategy to let mentally retarded students to do a project based on the topics.