CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of study, statement of problems, purposes of study, significance of study, scope and limitation, and the definition of key terms. Each section is presented as follows:

1.1 Background of Study

Education has a big role in every person’s life. It also occurs for the exceptional child. According to Allen and Cowdery (2012), the exceptional children are different from typically developing children. The term of exceptional children are designated for students who have different needs than the average children. They require a special education program and related services to help them fulfill their potential from education. The exceptional children refer to children who have mental and/or physical disabilities, children with physical disabilities or sensory impairments and children with learning and behavior problems.

The exceptional children who refer to children with mental and/or physical disabilities are classified for several categorizes, such as: mental retardation, deafness, blindness, learning disability, and emotional disturbance (Allen and Cowdery: 2012). In this study, the researcher decides to study about teaching English strategies for students with mental retardation.

Children with mental retardation require a special educational to help their unique and different capabilities in developing skills. The special education for
students with special disabilities has come a long way at the turn of the century. Today there are a number of special schools in Indonesia called Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) especially in Malang.

One of those schools is Sekolah Menengah Pertama Luar Biasa (SMPLB) Eka Mandiri Batu, Malang. Based on information obtained from the English teacher at this school, teaching English began from the junior high school. It was found in junior high school, there is one class with two categorized students: hearing impairment (deafness) and mental retardation students. In this study, the writer concerns on teaching mental retardation students.

Maanum (2009) states that mental retardation is a genetic disorder manifested in significantly below average intellectual functioning and deficits in adaptive behavior begins in childhood, before age eighteen. It means that mental retardation students have Intelligence Quotient (IQ) which falls below 70, and disabilities in skill areas. Because of mental and physical limitations, students with mental retardation need lifelong support in terms of health, social, and education which have an impact in determining his or her ability.

English is not only subjects in academic field but it is also a media of communication that is used to transfer information, ideas and feeling from one person to another person. Teaching vocabulary is one of the important aspects of language learning and language use because without vocabulary, speakers cannot convey meaning and communicate with each other (Laufer: 1997 as quoted in Behlol: 2010). It is used to communicate both in written and spoken form.
Considering the importance of the language, many schools or courses have applied English as the lesson of study including SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu, Malang. The important point is students get the basic learning in English to make them easier to learn further. For the basic step, teacher gives a stronger base in teaching vocabulary. According to Mukoroli (2011), teaching vocabulary is an important and indispensable part of any language teaching and learning process. Furthermore, teaching vocabulary aims at mastering four basic skills of language, such as: listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

The English teacher applies two strategies in teaching vocabulary for student with mental retardation such as discovery strategies and consolidation strategies (Schmitt, 1997). In discovery strategy, teacher teaches the students with mental retardation how to learn vocabulary and to guess a meaning. Furthermore, students also learn how to discover the meaning of the unknown word by asking someone who knows which help the student to make a social contact with another person.

While in consolidation strategies, teacher teaches students how to memorize the vocabulary, develop written and verbal vocabulary and control their learning process (Schmitt, 1997). Teacher’s responsibility in this study is important, because students with mental retardation still need supervisor by the teacher or the other education staff.

Different strategies are effective in different contexts and situation, especially for students with mental retardation. Therefore, it essential to find out
the strategies that are used for teaching vocabulary in SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu, Malang in order to accelerate the learning process.

In *A Study on the English Teacher’s Strategy in Teaching Vocabulary for Slow Learners at SMPLB Bondowoso* conducted by Pratiwi (2013), it is found that the teacher used different strategies in teaching vocabulary for slow learner, such as: using of personal approach adaptation, pictures, practice, make a wordlist, role model, and look up the dictionary. Moreover, Widyastuti (2009) had carried out a research about the techniques of teaching English to hearing impaired students of SMPLB Panca Bhakti Magetan. The result mentions that the teacher used techniques which suitable with the ability of the students but they had to learn a lot of sign and made this technique inefficient.

Those previous studies inspire the researcher to conduct a study on the strategies of teaching English and to identify the problems occur from the implementation of teaching English strategies for students with mental retardation in learning vocabulary in SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu, Malang.

### 1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the background of study above the researcher formulates the questions as follows:

1. What are the strategies applied in teaching vocabulary for mentally retarded students at SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu?
2. What are the problems occurring from the implementation of strategies in teaching vocabulary for students with mental retardation at SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu?

1.3 Purposes of Study

The purposes of the study are to formulate answer of the following research questions. The purposes as follows:
1. To know strategies applied in teaching vocabulary for students with mental retardation at SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu.
2. To identify the problems occurring from the implementation of strategies in teaching vocabulary for students with mental retardation at SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu.

1.4 Significance of Study

The researcher hopes that this study will have three advantages for mentioned persons as follows:
1. English teachers in special school

This study gives important information for English teacher in special school about teaching strategies for students with mental retardation. It provides practical yet theoretical suggestion of several problems occurred during the implementation of the strategies.

2. The next researchers

The next researchers, who want to conduct research on students with mental retardation and gain knowledge about vocabulary teaching strategies for
students with mental retardation, can get beneficial reference and empirical data from this study.

3. The researcher and the other English department students who are interested in analyzing of special children education.

This study will also be beneficial to the researcher and the other English department students about how to apply better vocabulary teaching strategies and improve their student’s vocabulary especially for students with mental retardation.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study focused on strategies in teaching vocabulary for students with mental retardation. This study is limited in SMPLB Eka Mandiri Batu takes in class 7C which is consists of ten students: one female and nine male.

1.6 The Definition of Key Terms

The researcher gives the definition of the key terms in order to avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity in the study, they are as follows:

1. Teaching strategy is the structure, system, procedures, and processes that teacher uses during instructions (Richards, 2002).

2. Mental retardation is developmental disabilities as well as mental limitation which the child is likely to have difficulties in using their memory, associating concepts, and problem solving (Gallagher, 2012).