

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research question, the research objective, the scope and limitations, the significance of study, and the definition of key terms. Each sections will be discussed below.

1.1 The background of the Study

Language development in children involves several stages, including sound recognition, vocabulary expansion, understanding word meanings, sentence formation, and using language according to conventional norms. Early-age children go through two stages in language acquisition: first-language acquisition from their immediate environment, primarily from their mothers, and second-language acquisition, such as Indonesian or a foreign language, through formal or informal education. Therefore, early teaching of English is crucial for developing children's language skills because, as active learners, they acquire the knowledge from the people and things around them. (Ayu, 2020).

Language development in young children can be pursued through three educational pathways: informal education like home schooling, non-formal pathways like early childhood education (PAUD) or special programs (SPS), and formal pathways like kindergarten (TK). Language development becomes especially crucial at a young age, particularly since English is an important international language. As a policy, Ministry of Education and Culture issue Decree Number 060/U/1993 dated February 25, 1993 about the possibility of the English program as a local content (Ayu, 2020).

Children should learn foreign languages, especially English, from a young age because it is assumed that they can learn foreign languages faster than adults. This approach is based on the belief that children can effectively learn foreign languages, supported by various research studies and the views of experts, as mentioned by Santrock (2007: 313) in his book "Child Development." Therefore, introducing foreign languages to children from an early age is a wise effort to facilitate their learning process and prepare them for a more diverse and global future.

One important aspect of language learning is vocabulary enrichment. Proficiency in language and a rich vocabulary are essential for understanding and communicating in foreign

languages, such as English. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (Depdiknas, 2022) Indonesian students should have the ability to understand and communicate information, ideas, feelings, as well as develop knowledge, technology, and culture through the English language.

In the context of English language learning for children, the role of board books as a learning resource has become increasingly recognized and utilized. According to Dorothy (1989), all children in a literate society learn to read and write starting very early in life. Therefore, board books are designed for children to improve children's literacy skills. Board books are thick cardboard-based books designed specifically for young children. They often feature engaging illustrations and simple text, allowing children to understand words and concepts visually and auditorily. However, there are still questions about the extent to which board books can lead to vocabulary enrichment in children in the context of English language learning. Therefore, this research aims to fill this knowledge gap and address important questions about how the use of board books can enhance English vocabulary enrichment in young students.

1.2 The Research Questions

From the background mentioned above, the research problem formulation in this study is as follows:

1. Do students who are using board books show better vocabulary enrichment than those who are not using board books?
2. How do board books help young English learners build their vocabulary?

1.3 The Research Objective

Based on the aforementioned background, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To prove the language development in young children, especially in the vocabulary enrichment of English of Young Learners using board books.

1.4 The Scope and Limitation

Considering the numerous issues that arise in research, to facilitate the study, the author confines the focus to "language development in young children, especially in the context of foreign language introduction like English, and the impact of using board books in English language learning on vocabulary enhancement in young students within a formal educational environment.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

This research holds several significances based on the presented background:

1) Cognitive Development in Early Childhood:

Understanding the impact of board books on vocabulary enrichment is crucial for shedding light on the cognitive development of young learners. Research in this area contributes to theories of early childhood education and language acquisition.

2) Curriculum Design and Selection:

Practical implications of this study extend to the development and selection of educational materials for young learners. Insights gained can guide educators in choosing board books that align with effective vocabulary enrichment strategies.

1.5.1 Importance of Early Childhood Language Education

The research background emphasizes the importance of language education in early childhood. It highlights that early childhood is a critical period in a child's development where language abilities can be effectively nurtured. This has significant implications for shaping children's communication skills, knowledge, and adaptation in an increasingly connected and multicultural society.

1.5.2 The Significance of English in Education

This research underscores the importance of English language in the education of children. English is an international language with a substantial impact on enabling individuals to participate in the global world. Governments acknowledge this importance and have included English in the basic curriculum.

1.5.3 The Use of Board Books in English Language Learning

This research raises questions about the study of using board books in English language learning for young children in a formal educational environment. It indicates that this method has proven to be effective in enhancing English vocabulary in early childhood.

1.5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This research will help fill the knowledge gap regarding the impact of using board books on the enhancement of English vocabulary in young students within a formal educational setting. It will provide a better understanding of how this learning method can be effectively used in children's education.

1.6 The Definition of Key Terms

1.6.1 Board Books

Board books are a specific type of children's books designed to be durable and suitable for toddlers and young children. They have several distinctive features that set them apart from regular books, including:

1) Board book

A board book is a type of children's book characterized by its durability and construction. Unlike traditional paperbacks or hardcovers, board books are designed with thick, sturdy pages made of cardboard or paperboard.

2) Vocabulary Enrichment

The process of enhancing and expanding one's vocabulary. It involves actively learning and incorporating new words into one's repertoire of language skills.

3) English Young Learners

This term refers to children in their early stages of learning the English language. It encompasses individuals, typically in preschool and elementary school, who are in the process of acquiring English as an additional language.

