CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Language can be described as a means of communication that consists of sounds, symbols, and rules governing their arrangement to convey significance. As per Algeo (2005), language refers to a customary and widely accepted arrangement of vocal signals that facilitates communication among individuals. This definition encompasses various significant terms, each of which is thoroughly explored. These terms include system, signs, vocal, conventional, human, and communication. It is used by humans to express thoughts, emotions, and ideas, and to communicate with one another. Language can be spoken, written, or signed, and it is constantly evolving, adapting to the needs and circumstances of its users. Through language, humans are able to create and transmit culture, knowledge, and social norms, and it plays a critical role in shaping individual and collective identities. A form of interaction between individuals and other individuals, in the world of education language, become one of the compulsory subjects in every unit of education.

H. Horne (Retno Listyarti 2012: 2) defines education as an ongoing process that involves the progressive development of individuals who have attained physical and mental maturity, possess freedom, and are conscious of the presence of God as reflected in the natural environment, as well as the intellectual, emotional, and moral aspects of human beings. Education encompasses the comprehensive process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes through diverse avenues of learning, including formal education, training, and personal experiences. As stated in Article 3 of Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System, the main aim of national education is to foster the potential of students enabling them to become individuals who demonstrate loyalty and commitment to God Almighty, exhibit exemplary character, maintain good health, possess knowledge, showcase competence and creativity, strive for independence, and develop into democratic and responsible members of society. It involves transmitting knowledge and culture from one generation to another and aims to prepare individuals for the challenges and opportunities of life. Education can occur in diverse environments, encompassing schools, colleges, universities, workplaces, and communities, and can be delivered through different modes, such as classroom instruction, online learning, or experiential learning. The goals of education may vary depending on the context, but they often include promoting intellectual and personal development, fostering critical thinking

and creativity, building social and emotional competencies, and preparing individuals for future careers and roles in society.

Learning English is an essential skill for individuals who want to communicate effectively in today's globalized world. It can open up many opportunities for personal and professional growth, including international travel, education, and career advancement. In addition, applying good study strategies helps learners improve their communication skills. Lessard-Clouston in Hismanoglu asserted that learning strategies contribute to the development of students' communicative competence.[1] In addition, Oxford asserts that language learning strategies are an important factor for students to learn. Improve active classroom learning and self-directed activity, essential for the development of communicative competence.[2] According to Chamot, learning strategies are the thoughts and actions that learners use to achieve learning goals.[3] Since more, Weinstein and Mayer at Clouston have defined learning strategies as behaviors and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning.[4] This implies that the term "strategic" not only pertains to learning

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[1] Murat Hismagnolu, Language Learning Strategies in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching, *the Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 8, August 2000.

[2] Rebecca L. Oxford, *Language Learning Strategies–What Every Teacher Should Know,* (Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 1990), p. 1.

[3] Anna Uhl Chamot, Issues in Language Learning Strategy Research and Teaching, *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2004, p. 14.

[4] Michael Lessard-Clouston, *Language Learning Strategies: an Overview for L2 Teachers,* The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. III, No. 12, 1997.

strategies that enhance communicative competence but also encompasses the connection between thoughts and actions. It recognizes learners as active and accountable individuals who are conscious of their needs and objectives while engaging in the learning process.

Fun learning is one of the learning methods where the classroom atmosphere is comfortable so that students can think with full concentration in the implementation of learning. Tolstoy (as cited in Freire, 2004: 492) emphasizes the significance of enjoyable learning within the educational journey. Fun Learning is essential as it helps students to find meaning in the learning material, fosters motivation, and provides satisfaction in the learning experience. By incorporating elements of enjoyment and playfulness, fun learning relieves students from feeling burdened or pressured to learn. It creates an environment where students can engage with the content more willingly and experience a sense of joy and freedom in the learning process. Fun learning refers to an approach to education or learning that emphasizes enjoyment, engagement, and enthusiasm as key elements of the learning process. Walberg and Greenberg 1997, that the social environment or classroom atmosphere is the main psychological determinant that affects academic learning. The atmosphere of the room indicates an emotionally influenced learning arena. It involves incorporating games, activities, and other interactive and entertaining methods into the learning experience to make it more enjoyable, motivating, and effective. The goal of fun learning is

to create an environment that encourages curiosity, exploration, and experimentation, and that fosters positive attitudes toward learning. Fun learning can be applied in various contexts, such as schools, workplaces, and personal development, and can be used to teach a wide range of subjects and skills.

Brown (1994: 3) emphasizes the significance of vocabulary in foreign language learning. Having a limited vocabulary restricts one's understanding of the language. It is indeed impossible to effectively learn a language without acquiring a good command of its vocabulary. English language learners often face challenges in expanding their vocabulary. Additionally, Hatch and Brown (1995) define vocabulary as a collection or set of words that individuals use within a specific language. It includes words and expressions for different concepts, ideas, objects, actions, emotions, and other aspects of communication. Vocabulary holds immense significance in language proficiency, playing a vital role in effective communication and comprehension. The development of one's vocabulary can be achieved through various methods, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Additionally, vocabulary levels can differ based on factors such as age, education, culture, and language background. Vocabulary serves as a fundamental component of language learning and growth, with the expansion of one's vocabulary being an ongoing process that necessitates consistent practice and exposure to new words and expressions.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Given the background of the problem mentioned above, the authors of this study have formulated the following research questions:

1. What is the learning process of the fun learning method used to enhance students' interest in learning vocabulary in the New Concept Semarang English Language?

2. How do students respond to the learning process when the fun learning method is employed to increase their interest in learning vocabulary in the New Concept Semarang English Language?

3. How can fun learning methods be used to motivate students towards the learning process to increase interest in learning vocabulary in the New Concept Semarang English Language?

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Based on the stated problem statements, the researcher aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine how the learning process involving fun learning methods can enhance students' interest in learning vocabulary at the New Concept Semarang English Language.

2. To assess the students' responses towards the learning process that incorporates fun learning methods to stimulate their interest in learning vocabulary at the New Concept Semarang English Language.

3. To find out how to use fun learning methods to motivate students towards the learning process to increase interest in learning vocabulary at the New Concept Semarang English Language.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research aims to implement the fun learning method with the objective of enhancing students' mastery of vocabulary. The specific area of focus within vocabulary mastery is the word content, particularly nouns, and verbs, as these words are fundamental for effective communication. The study is carried out in English Language Classes at the elementary school level, with these classes serving as the subjects of the research.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE PAPER

To obtain systematic research of the whole thesis consisting of five chapters arranged systematically covering the subject matter, the author will describe in the form of an outline of the contents of the theory as follows:

Chapter One, presents an introductory chapter that contains an overview of the contents of the thesis, as well as an introduction to entering the discussion of the background of the problem as a basis for thinking to formulate the problems raised.

This chapter also presents the formulation of problems, hypotheses, operational definitions, research objectives, and research benefits as well as an outline of the contents of the thesis.

Chapter Two, contains a literature review that discusses interest in learning English, the definition of learning English, the process and stages of learning, learning theories, and fun learning methods.

The third chapter, of this research consists of a detailed explanation of the research methods employed. It covers various aspects such as the research subjects, research design, research instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques. These elements are discussed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the methodology used in the study.

Chapter four, contains a discussion of the study results, which includes an overview of the interest in learning physics before and after using the fun learning method and an overview of the increase in interest in learning English for elementary school students at the New Concept Semarang English course.

The fifth chapter, concludes the study by presenting conclusions from the previous sections and concluding with research suggestions.