

CHAPTER I

INTROCUPTION

1.1 Bakcground

Inclusive education is education provided to students who have disorders, have the potential for intelligence and special talents (A. Saputra, 2016). Inclusive education is increasingly becoming a global concern for its more serious implementation which is pioneered by various international organizations around the world (Anjarwati et al., 2019). The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia is described through National Government Regulation Number 70 of 2009 (Anjarwati et al., 2019). In essence, inclusive education for children with special needs (ABK) in Indonesia occurs because the existing education system is not able to provide changes for ABK. Based on the 1945 Constitution, article 31 paragraph 1 and Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning t he National Education System, the state provides full guarantees to childern with spesial needs to get the same opportunities as other children in the world of education. (A. Saputra, 2016).

The city of Surabaya is one of the pioneers of inclusion cities in East Java. However, the inclusion education program that is currently running still faces major challenges, especially in the availability of adaptive learning media for childern with spesial needs. Data shows that around 65% of inclusive schools in Indonesia still have difficulties in developing teaching tools and media that suit the specific needs of individuals with disabilities (Ziyana et al., 2025). One of the categories of childern with spesial needs in Indonesia is *slow learner students*. A slow learner is a child in the special needs category where the child has low intellectual power, is below the average normal intellectual power (usually has an IQ between 70-90), but is not included in the category of intellectual disorder level (blind spot). (Diknas, 2005)

Slow learner is a condition in which children experience basic cognitive delays, such as reading, arithmetic, and social interaction. This condition is caused by various factors, both internal, such as learning motivation, and external, such as a less supportive learning environment or an inappropriate learning process (Wahyuningsih & Suranti, 2020). This causes them to take longer to digest information and require repetitive learning methods to understand the learning material. Therefore, they need effective learning strategies to adapt to their specific needs, including the media used in the learning process.

To overcome these problems, it is necessary to implement interesting and effective learning strategies that can help slow learners in their learning process (Lutfi & Usamah, 2019). Practical and innovative learning media is one of the main factors in achieving the goals of the learning process (Juhaeni et al., 2021). The use of learning media can increase students' interest in learning. One of the media that can be applied in the learning process is board games (Lutfi & Usamah, 2019). Board games are a type of game with board as the main medium of play. The game has various shapes and patterns. The use of cards and dice is an element contained in the game. Board games also have different story rules according to the purpose of their creation (Najib, 2018).

According to Simkin (2013) board games are effective games to introduce new things to students effectively, because they can attract students' interest and arouse enthusiasm in the learning process (Afi Dliyaulhaq & Marsudi, 2021). The board *game media* was chosen because it supports the character development of elementary school children. Elementary school children (Age 6-12 years) are a phase of children in the process of forming themselves, learning right and wrong, high curiosity, love to imitate and play (Reviana Ardila et al., 2025). Board games can play an interesting learning medium, because in its application there is communication and interaction between the players (Dliyaulhaq & Marsudi, 2021). According to Vygotsky's theory, *board games* as a learning medium have collaborative advantages, thereby improving children's social cognitive abilities. These games allow children to learn through repetition and directed social interaction. Studies by Smith and Jones prove that the use of educational *board games* can improve children's cognitive abilities such as reading, arithmetic, and social skills of children with special needs.

The effective application of media can help students develop their abilities to the maximum for various materials taught in the learning process, such as animal recognition (Niningsih, Salam & Ramadhan, 2025). Introduction of animals to early childhood through learning media is one of the effective strategies to develop various aspects of children's potential (Niningsih, Salam & Ramadhan, 2025). Fauna introduction not only enriches children's knowledge of the surrounding environment, but can also increase interest in learning through attractive themes and bright visuals, according to the needs of *slow learners* who require strong visual stimulation (Faomasi Gowasa et al., n.d.).

Recognition and understanding of animal types from an early age is very important, because of the close relationship between humans and animals in an ecosystem, but in the process of early childhood learning it is difficult to understand the types of animals such as their names and physical characteristics, because their learning is less interesting (Arbaah Barmula et al., 2023). In the learning process at school, one of the materials taught is the introduction of animals in science subjects (Argo et al., 2020). *Slow learners* have difficulty in spelling and memorizing the names of the animals they learn because the delivery of the meter is not interesting. Children often only use their imagination on animals they know. Animal recognition media can be used to develop children's cognitive potential and creativity. For example, the use of animal-shaped hand puppets in storytelling, helping children get to know the characteristics of animals and enriching their vocabulary (Niningsih, Salam & Ramadhan, 2025). The introduction of animals is also a facility for children in building an initial concept of the animal world, so that they can understand the concept of the relationship between animals and the surrounding environment. When a teacher introduces an animal with a distinctive sound, children are likely to follow the teacher making animal sounds and ask about the animal. Animal recognition through learning media also supports children's social-emotional development (Salam & Ramadhan, 2025).

The educational media model for ABK students emphasizes the ability to communicate using media, namely pictures, letters, numbers. The media is done conventionally and if the media is damaged, the teacher makes it again and usually makes materials that are easily damaged, such as folding paper and images taken from the internet by printing or printing (Andarwati & Amrullah, 2016). Most inclusive elementary schools in Indonesia do not have learning media that suits the needs of children. Teachers often have difficulty delivering material, especially when adequate props or adaptive media are not available (Adri & Suwarjono, 2025). According to research (Tasti Adri, 2025) conducted in 20 inclusive elementary schools in Bogor Regency, with 20 respondents special supervisors (GPK), said that the biggest obstacles in teaching ABK are limited learning media with a percentage of 50%, lack of training in GPK by 30%, and school support for learning media and GPK by 20%.

Based on the observations made, it has not been found *Board games* Animal Introduction Specially Designed as a Learning Media for Children *Slow Learner*. With the design of this

boardgame, it is hoped that it will foster children's knowledge and curiosity about animals in their environment. In this design, it will also be carried out *Pre-test* and *Post-test*

1.2 Identification of Problem

Based on the background that has been presented, the problems that can be concluded are as follows:

1. *Learning Loss* due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has caused an uneven shift in online learning in Indonesia. This is supported by data by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022 which shows a decrease in student academic scores equivalent to 5-6 months which hinders the achievement of academic competence and decreases student learning motivation. Especially for children with special needs who require a structured learning system and direct interaction.
2. In the research conducted (Argo et al., 2020) at SLB Bina Anak Bangsa Pontianak, in the learning process at school, one of the lessons taught is the introduction of animals in science subjects. In the learning process, sometimes *slow learners* have difficulty in spelling and memorizing the names of the animals they learn because of the delivery of the material done conventionally by teachers. The method of delivering material to *slow learners* cannot be done in monotony, because it causes them to be bored and even not interested in learning.
3. Based on research (Helmia, 2020) teachers experience obstacles in teaching, one of the factors is the lack of adaptive learning media for ABK, with a percentage of 50%. Lack of effective learning media for *slow learners*, *slow learners* need interesting and innovative learning strategies, including learning media that support their special needs, but there has been no discovery of *board games* based on animal recognition that are specifically designed as their learning medium.

1.3 Problem Formulation

So the problems that can be formulated based on this background are:

How to plan board games About Fauna Recognition That Can Improve Cognitive and Social Abilities for Children Slow Learner?

1.4 Problem Limitation

To explore the problems raised in problem identification and problem formulation, problem limits are made. This is so that the design focuses on the problems raised.

1. Focus on elementary school-age slow learners (6-12). Does not cover children with disabilities with disabilities or other disabilities with special needs.
2. The designed media is an animal recognition board game, with supporting elements such as dice, pawns, cards that support social interaction and repetitive learning.
3. The board game theme focuses on fauna that is common to elementary school children, with an emphasis on animal characteristics, and the relationship with the environment.

1.5 Purpose of Planning

The purpose of this plan is:

1. Increase knowledge about animals, introduce the concept of the animal world to *slow learner children* including the types of animals, the surrounding environment, and their characteristics.
2. Improve the cognitive and social abilities of *slow learners*.
3. Provide learning media that suits special needs with a design that considers the needs of *slow learners*.

1.6 Design Benefits

This design is expected to provide benefits both academically and practically.

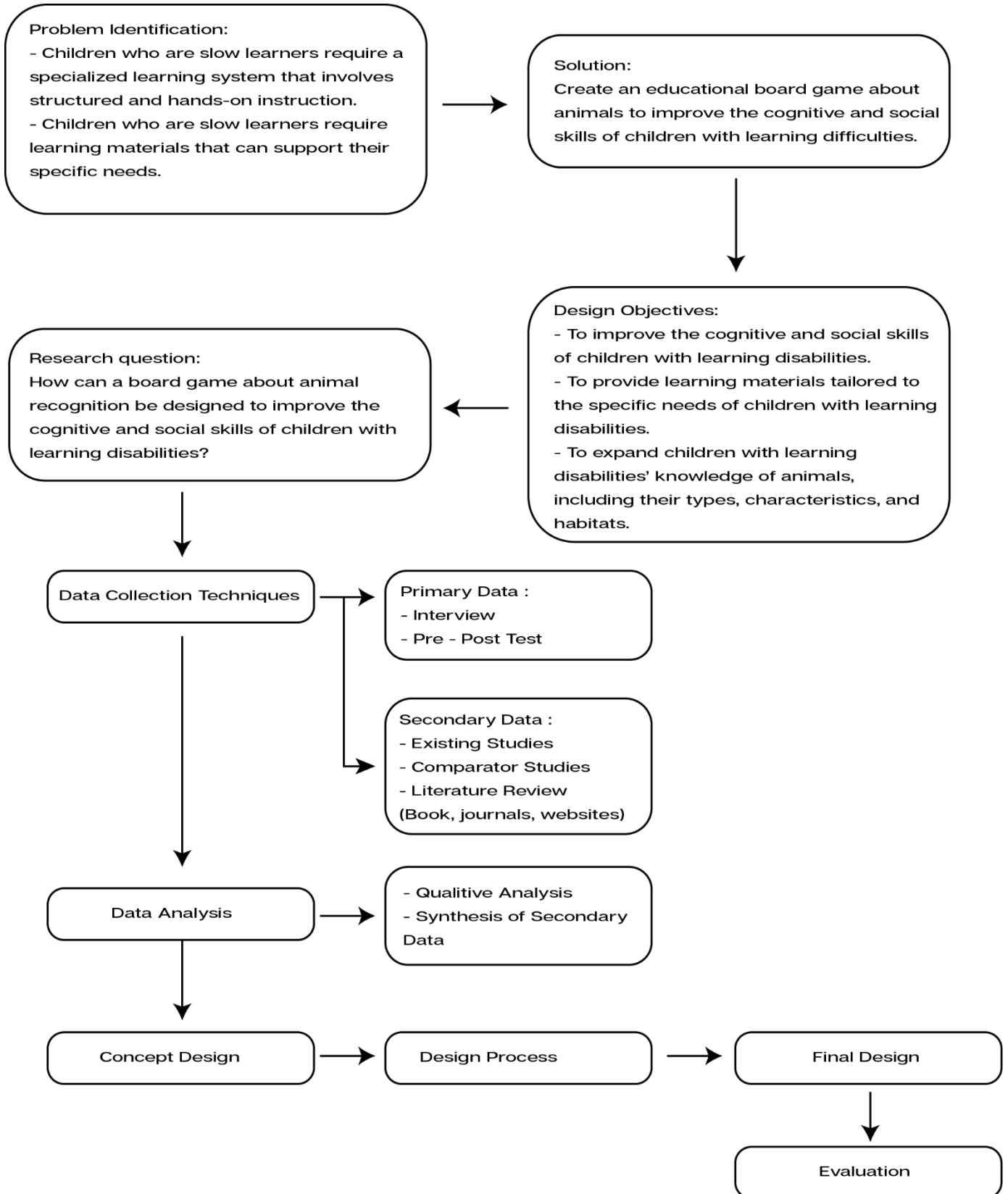
a. Academic Benefits

1. Help children Slow Learner Improve basic cognitive abilities, such as understanding and recognizing animal characteristics.
2. Increase knowledge about the animal world, including animal types, sounds, characteristics, and the environment.
3. Increase learning motivation with an interesting and fun approach.

b. Practical Benefits

1. Easy-to-use learning media. *Board games* are designed with simple rules and visual elements, making them easy to use.
2. Supports social interaction. *This board game* encourages collaboration between players, helping slow *learners* practice social skills.
3. Flexibility, *board games* can be used in learning contexts such as school or used as a companion medium for parents and children to play.

1.7 Design Framework



1.8 Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this design is that children with special needs need adaptive learning media to meet their special needs in the learning process. This design was made as an initial assumption that adaptive learning media such as *Board games* can be a learning medium that helps improve cognitive and social abilities for children *Slow Learner*.