

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

One of the important factors in learning a second language is to know the way to learn effectively. People learn their first and second language by doing some practices either by themselves or with other people. Different people may use different ways of learning which is known as learning strategies. Language learning strategies are defined as “steps or actions taken by learners to improve the development of their language skills” (Oxford & Cohen, 1992, p. 1). Learning is an activity that people need because if we want to gain more knowledge, we should learn about it. Applying effective learning strategy can affect student’s motivation to learn more. By using effective learning strategy, it can help students to motivate themselves and improve the way they learn to get better result and understanding. Oxford (1990) sees the aim of language learning strategies as being oriented towards the development of communicative competence. Oxford divides language learning strategies into two main classes, direct and indirect, which are further subdivided into 6 groups: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies.

Most students do not realize what learning strategy that is most suitable for them or what learning strategy that they rarely use. So, they need to be more aware about it. Students usually study harder before the exam, but the problem is when the way they study is not effective so it would not give better impact on the result. For example, English Department students have to pass 550 for their English Language Proficiency Test score as the requirement to graduate but many of them feel hard to achieve it. It triggers us to think why English students still hard to pass that ELPT score, whereas they have learned English for about eight semesters. As the writer said before, students tend to study harder when they will face an exam, but if they do not know the way to learn effectively then it will be harder for them to obtain good result. Every year, English students prepare themselves to pass the 550 ELPT score in the last semester when they do their thesis. If the students are aware of their learning strategies they can optimize it to improve their English proficiency test score.

In our daily life as a student, we need to know how to improve our skill or how to increase our score and one of the ways to know it is by understanding our learning strategies. If the students understand the strategy they should use in learning a language, it can help them easily understand the learning materials and improve their language skill because these strategies have the power to: (a) increase attention essential for learning a language; (b) enhance rehearsal that allows linkages to be

strongly forged; (c) improve the encoding and integration of language material, and (d) increase retrieval of information when needed for use (Mayer, 1988; Oxford, 1990a).

There were several studies about Language Learning Strategies that have been conducted. Chang, Ching-Yi et. al. (2007) conducted a research entitle "*A Study of Language Learning Startegy Used by College EFL Learners in Taiwan*". They investigated the influence of gender and major on college EFL learning strategy used in Taiwan. Another research on learning strategy was conducted by Windranarti (2008) who conducted a research "*Language Learning Strategy Used by English Department Students of Universitas Airlangga Year 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007*", Windranarti also investigated Language Learning Strategy (LLS) most commonly used by the students and the differences of LLS used by Students of semester 1, 3, 5, and 7. There is also a research from Kevin Chi-Him Tam (2013) "*A Study on Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) of University Students in Hong Kong*". Him-Tam (2013) research was to investigate the relationship between gender, second language proficiency, socioeconomic status, and language learning strategies (LLSs).

This study aims to observe the language learning strategies used by first semester students of English Department in Faculty of Humanities at Universitas Airlangga and its relationship with English proficiency, thus the English student can prepare themselves earlier to pass 550 ELPT score and can improve their English well. The writer will give questionnaire

which is the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and relate it with the latest score of students ELPT (English Language Proficiency Test) then make an analysis and interpretation based on the data.

The relation between those previous researches with this research is concern with the Language Learning Strategy (LLS) most commonly used by the students and the relationship between LLS with students' English proficiency. Moreover, the previous research mentioned theory from Oxford about learning strategies and also use SILL questionnaire. In the present study, the writer discusses about learning strategies which are used by first semester students of English Department Universitas Airlangga and its relationship with English proficiency test score. The result of this research is expected to help students to be aware of their learning strategies and help them implement their learning strategies to improve their English proficiency.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the explanation above, in the background of the study, the problems in this study are as follows:

1. What type of Language Learning Strategies is most commonly used by first semester students of English Department students at Universitas Airlangga?
2. Is there any relationship between the Language Learning Strategies and English Language Proficiency Test score of first semester

students of English Department at Universitas Airlangga?

To answer the second problem of this study, the writer set up hypotheses as follows:

H_1 : There is a significant relation between students' Language Learning Strategies and ELPT score.

H_0 : There is no significant relation between students' Language Learning Strategies and ELPT score.

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem mentioned above, there are three objectives of the research:

1. To find out the type of Language Learning Strategies most commonly used by first semester students of English Department at Universitas Airlangga.
2. To find out whether there is or not the relationship between the Language Learning Strategies and English proficiency of first semester students of English Department at Universitas Airlangga.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is under the study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Hopefully it will extend the study of Second Language Acquisition, especially about Language Learning Strategies (LLS's) and also in English Language Teaching. The result of this research is expected

to help students to be aware of their learning strategies. It is also expected to help students implement their learning strategies to improve their English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) score. Besides, this research result is also expected to help lecturers understand students' need and help the lecturer to understand what kind or what way of teaching which is effective for the students. Moreover, the reader may get explanation about types of Language Learning Strategies. The writer wishes that from this research the finding will give more knowledge to students that are interested in conducting research in Second Language Acquisition, especially about Language Learning Strategies (LLS).

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

In order to understand more about this research, the writer will provides definition of several key terms used in this research:

1. Learning Strategies:

Specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990).

2. Direct Strategies

Strategies which involve mental process and directly influence the target language. Direct strategies consist of memory strategies, Cognitive strategies, and Compensation strategies. (Oxford, 1990).

3. Indirect Strategies

Strategies which support and manage language without directly involving the target language. Direct strategies consist of Metacognitive strategies, Affective strategies, and Social strategies (Oxford, 1990).

4. Memory Strategies

Strategies which are used to store and retrieve the new information (Oxford, 1990).

5. Cognitive Strategies

Strategies which enable learners to understand and produce new language by many different means (Oxford, 1990).

6. Compensation Strategies

Strategies which enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge (Oxford, 1990).

7. Metacognitive Strategies

Strategies which involve arranging, planning, and evaluating what the learner already know (Oxford, 1990).

8. Affective Strategies

Strategies which apply affective or emotional factors of learner (Oxford, 1990).

9. Social Strategies

Strategies which involve social interactions of learner such as asking questions, cooperating with others, and empathizing

with others (Oxford, 1990).

10. English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT)

ELPT is English language proficiency test as a test of TOEFL® ITP projection that is used by Language Center at Universitas Airlangga to measure the ability of the participants in using English at Universitas Airlangga academic environment, institutions or agencies that need it (pusatbahasa.fib.unair.ac.id, 2015).

