

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Living in an era of globalization where science and technology are the key factors of human civilization, we need access to the global communication either orally or in written form. Realizing the importance of English for accessing the global communication, the government has increasingly paid serious attention to the English instruction in this country. And the quality of English learning outcomes is greatly influenced by learning process.

Learning is a process through which experience causes permanent change in an individual knowledge or behavior (Wolfolk 196). In learning something, one needs special way and special tool, called strategy. Because more effective learners are strategy-using learners, less-effective learners have been found to use fewer learning strategies (Maltby, Gage, Berliner 284).

Sometimes, students do not learn despite teachers' best effort at instruction. The fault may lie in the students' motivation or intellect, but it could also lie in their failure to use a learning strategy while instruction is occurring. Before a teacher decides that students do not have the interest or intellectual ability to learn something, the teacher needs to be sure that the students know how to learn what the teacher is trying to teach them.

One way to achieve well in school subjects is to use learning strategies. Oxford defines learning strategies as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self directed, more effective and more transferable to new situation (8).” Studies on the learners’ success in foreign language learning showed that learning strategies are one of the variables that influence the success or failure in language learning.

In this case the learning strategies that I want to observe is learning strategies dealing with language learning especially English. In classifying learning strategies the experts have different ideas and classification. Wenden for instance, divides learning strategies into four categories; they are cognitive strategy, metacognitive strategy, communicative strategy and social strategy (18). Oxford divides the learning strategies into two major classes that are direct and indirect. These two classes are subdivided into a total of six groups (memory, cognitive, and compensation under the direct class; metacognitive, affective, and social, under the indirect class) (14).

Actually the aim of each learning strategy is the same, that is to understand the subject easier and to get a good achievement. Besides that, learning strategy also aims to schedule and monitor the time and help to concentrate.

A lot of research has been done in this field, for example, research done by Fyake and Mendelshon, 1986; Hosenfeld, 1977, Papalia and Zampogna, 1977. Those studies have shown that more effective language learners use more appropriate strategies than do less effective learners in each of the four language

skills. Based on the phenomenon above I am interested in doing research into the learning strategies used by Indonesian students in learning English.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

From the background of the study above, I have two questions to be stated.

They are;

1. What are the learning strategies used by the Students at SMU Unggulan Darul ‘Ulum Jombang in learning English?
2. What are the learning strategies frequently used by good and poor language learners?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are to answer those two questions stated above: to know what the learning strategies are used by Senior High School Students in learning English, and also to find out what learning strategies are frequently used by good language learners and poor language learners.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Theoretically, the result of this study will contribute some insights to the discovery of the process of language learning.

Practically, the study of learning strategies in English used by Senior High School Students will help teachers of English guide their students in learning English. By knowing the strategies used by their students, teachers can teach

them the strategies that will bring more benefit because the strategies help the students become good language learners.

1.5. Scope and Limitations

This study is limited only to identified the learning strategies used by the students in SMU Unggulan Darul 'Ulum Jombang according to Oxford classification of learning strategies.

Another limitation of this study is that it didn't explore factors that influence the learning strategies used by the students. This limitation may encourage others to study further about the factors affecting choice of learning strategies.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

This study basically uses the theory proposed by Oxford, who classifies the language learning strategies into two categories, that are direct and indirect strategies, which are subdivided further into six sub-categories: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies(14). Besides that I also use other theories to support my study. For the details, see Chapter 2 (Literature Review).

1.7. Method of the Study

In doing this study, I used the qualitative method. It is the method that is concerned with quality, and does not deal with number. The major characteristic of this method is that it is naturalistic, preferring it to study people, things and events in their natural settings (Punch 148-149). Another characteristic is that qualitative research is conducted through an intense and/or prolonged contact with a “field” or life situation. These situations are typically “banal” or normal ones, reflective of the everyday life of individuals, groups, societies and organizations (Miles and Huberman, cited in Punch 149).

In this study I described the learning strategies used by students. What I observed were people, in this case, the students, how they used learning strategies in their learning process especially in learning English. I investigated their strategies naturally without giving any treatment to them. For those reasons I used qualitative method in this study

1.7.1. Definitions of Key-Terms

1. Learning

The process of acquisition and extinction of modifications in existing knowledge, skills, habit or action tendencies in a motivated organism through experience, practice or exercise.

(Webster’s Third New International Dictionary Principal 1286)

2. Strategies

The art of devising or employing plans or stratagem toward a goal.

(Webster's Third New International Dictionary Principal 2256)

3. Learning Strategies

Specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferrable to new situations (Oxford 8).

4. Poor Language Learner

Language learner (students at SMU Unggulan Darul 'Ulum Jombang) who has the mark between 65 up to 79.

5. Good Language Learner

Language learner (students at SMU Unggulan Darul 'Ulum Jombang) who has the mark 80 and more.

(see appendix 1)

1.7.2. Location and Population

The location of this study is SMU Unggulan Darul 'Ulum Jombang. The reason why I chose this school is because this school is one of the favourite Senior High Schools in Jombang; hence, the students who study here are the qualified ones.

The second reason is that I intended to identify as many as possible language learning strategies that they use. According to Maltby, Gage &

Berliner, “more effective learners are strategy-using learners, less-effective learners have been found to use fewer learning strategies (284).

The population of this study consist of students of SMU Unggulan Darul ‘Ulum Jombang. I took sixty students as my respondents. In this case the respondents should be:

1. Taught by the same teacher
2. On the same grade or year

1.7.3. Sampling

Sampling is necessary for research, because it is a technique in which an individual is selected in order to get a representative sample, (Koentjaraningrat 89). So, we have a certain feature of sample that can describe the real situation of all population.

There are many students who study in SMU Unggulan Darul ‘Ulum Jombang. So, I find the difficulties to investigate all of them. For that reason, I use cluster sampling technique which means choosing one cluster of respondents from several clusters there. Here, the respondents or samples refers to people who give answers towards the questions in questionnaires. They may give free opinion to each item (Hadi 158). And the items are in the form of questions that are provided.

About the number of samples that are taken from population, there is no certain number. As stated by Sutrisno Hadi, “problem about how many samples that must be taken for a research is a serious problem” (50).

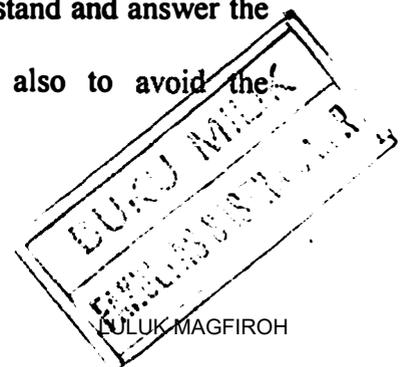
the population. Besides that, Arikunto says that the number of respondents depends on the ability of the research from time, energy, and cost point of view (107).

Because of those reasons, I only take sixty students as the respondents from all the number of students in SMU Unggulan Darul 'Ulum Jombang.

1.7.4. Techniques of Data Collection

A technique of data collection is a process in which primary data are obtained for the research's purpose (Nasir 211). The technique of data collection used in this study was questionnaire.

Firstly, I prepared a questionnaire to be distributed to the students. The questionnaire contains eighty questions taken from the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, version 5.1. created by Oxford (1990). Questions number one to number fifteen (part a) belong to memory strategies, the next questions, number sixteen to forty (part b) belong to cognitive strategies. Questions number forty one to forty eight (part c) belong to compensation strategies while the statements for metacognitive strategies are number forty nine to sixty four (part d). Number sixty five to seventy one (part e) the questions for affective strategies and the rest (part f) are belong to social strategies (see appendix 2). I translated the questionnaire into Indonesian because it would be easier for the respondents to understand and answer the questions in Indonesian (see appendix 3). This is also to avoid the misinterpretation of the meaning of the questions.



questions in Indonesian (see appendix 3). This is also to avoid the misinterpretation of the meaning of the questions.

To the respondents in this study, I gave instructions about how to answer the questionnaire questions without influencing the answer of the respondents. Here, there is also a chance in giving an explanation for the difficult questions (Koentjaraningrat 175).

Briefly, the steps of collecting the data are:

1. Preparing the questionnaire
2. Distributing the questionnaire
3. Giving the instructions

1.7.5. Technique of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data there are three steps to be done. As stated by G.E.R. Burroughs (Cited in Arikunto), “...in analyzing the data someone needs three steps, including preparation, tabulation and classifying or processing the data (qualitative or quantitative data) (192).”

Firstly, I identified and classified the learning strategies according to Oxford's classification of learning strategies that are direct and indirect learning strategies. Those two strategies are sub-divided further into six categories, that are memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies.

In identifying the learning strategies used by the students, firstly I gave the score to each questionnaire. The score that I used here is the one that

was used in SILL (strategy inventory for language learning). The score are 5 for always use, 4 for generally use, 3 for sometimes use, 2 for generally not use, and 1 for never use. After that I summed up those scores and counted it to find the average value of each learning strategy categories. From those average values I can judge whether the score is belong to low, medium or high level of used.

The next step, I identified the learning strategies used by good language learners and poor language learners. The instrument I used to decide which students belong to good language learners and which ones belong to poor language learners was the book report on the result of English examination for the first quarter of this year.

In short, the steps of data analysis are:

1. Identifying and classifying the learning strategies
2. Identifying learning strategies used by good language learner and poor language learner

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW