

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some fundamental reasons underlying the topic of the study. In detail, this chapter consists of background, research questions, aims of the study, hypothesis, scope of the study, significance of the study and research methodology.

### **1.1 Background**

Having a good proficiency and communicative competence in English is the purpose of all learners who learn English. In order to achieve this purpose, consciously or unconsciously, learners employ learning strategies in the learning process, and each learner may employ different learning strategies. According to Oxford (1990) foreign language strategies are specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques used by student to improve their progress in comprehending, internalizing, and using the foreign language. While, Richard and Platt (Hismanoglu 2000) state that learning strategies are “intentional behavior and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information”. Dansereau (Ok 2003) defines learning strategy as a “set of processes or steps (used by learner) that can facilitate the acquisition, storage or utilization of information.

Further, Oxford (1990) divides strategies into two major classes, direct and indirect. Direct strategies consist of memory strategies (for storing and retrieving

new information), cognitive strategies (for manipulating and transforming learning materials), and compensation strategies (for overcoming deficiencies of knowledge in language, consist of guessing and gestures). Indirect strategies consist of metacognitive strategies (for directing the learning process), affective strategies (for regulating emotion, attitudes, and motivation), and social strategies (for facilitating with other people). The students' learning strategies, as has been reported by some research undertaken, have powerful impact on the students' learning outcome (Lengkanawati 2004) The most common finding is that the use of appropriate language learning strategies leads to improved proficiency or achievement overall or in specific skill areas (O'Malley and Chamot 1990; Oxford and Crookall 1989; Wenden and Rubin 1987 in Lengkanawati 2004).

According to Kulik et al. (Weinstein et al. 1988) relationship between language learning strategies and achievement is one in which affective study strategies usually result in greater learning. This is demonstrated by a number of studies in which students were taught to use more effective study strategies with a resultant improvement in achievement. The learning strategies used by learners can be observed from the student's success. Oxford (Shmais 2000) states that "the most successful learners tend to use learning strategies that are suitable to task, material, self-objective, needs, motivation, and stage of learning". Further, Rossi-Le (Shmais 2000) reveals that proficient learners employ a variety of strategies in many situations than those less proficient learners.

Based on those explanations and findings, the writer decides to conduct a study entitled "The Correlation between Students' Language Learning Strategies

and their Academic Achievement” (A Descriptive analytic study of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester students of English Department at Jenderal Soedirman University).

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The problems investigated in this study are formulated as follows:

1. What is the correlation between students' language learning strategies and their academic achievement?
2. What kinds of language learning strategies are mostly used by the students?

## **1.3 Aims of the Study**

The study aimed to investigate:

1. The correlation between students' language learning strategies and their academic achievement.
2. The type of language learning strategies that mostly used by the students.

## **1.4 Hypothesis**

The hypothesis of this study is as follows:

*Ho: There is no correlation between students' language learning strategies and their academic achievement.*

*Ha: There is correlation between students' language learning strategies and their academic achievement.*

The writer used a simple paradigm for the hypothesis:



(Sugiyono 2003)

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study is focused on investigating the correlation between students' language learning strategies and their academic achievement, and the type of language learning strategies that mostly used by the students.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Since language learning strategies are considered as a good indicator to measure of how learners understand and approach the new information; how learners face the problem during the process of language learning. Hopefully, this study will give language teachers valuable information on how their students process and learn new information, select and apply the most suitable learning strategies to understand and solve the problem they face in learning process. This study was conducted to give teacher information about the language learning strategy that work best in certain learners to help teachers decide what strategy that must be trained to certain students.

## **1.7 Research Methodology**

### **1.7.1 Research Method**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative and quantitative method. The qualitative method was used to analyze data obtained from interview. The quantitative method was used to analyze data in the form of scores and numbers obtained from the students' SILL scores and students' GPAs. Working with quantitative data requires an appropriate selection of research design. In this study ex-post facto design was used as the research design. Schematically the design in this study is as follows:

$$T_1 \quad T_2$$

(Hatch and Farhady 1982)

$T_1$  = Students Language Learning Strategy (SILL score)

$T_2$  = Academic Achievement (GPA)

### **1.7.2 Population and Sample**

The population of this study was the third semester students of the English Department of Jenderal Soedirman University. The research samples were taken by using cluster sampling. Of four available classes that consist of 231 students there was one class that consists of 50 students chosen as the observed class. However, not all students were taken as the sample only 30 students taken randomly as the sample of this study. This decision made based on Ibnu Hadjar (1995) statement that in correlation research, the sample should be 30 students in minimum.

### **1.7.3 Research Instruments**

There were three kinds of instruments used in this research. The instruments were SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning), documentary analyses and interview. SILL was questionnaire used to investigate students' language learning strategies. This study employs The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) version 7.0 developed by Oxford especially for speakers of other languages learning English. There were fifty (50) items that covered the six strategies of language learning arranged in the form of the Likert Scale Model. The documentary analysis was used to analyze the students' academic achievement that was indicated by their GPAs. The interview used to get information from the students on language learning strategies they utilized in language learning activities both inside and outside classroom.

### **1.7.4 Research Procedures**

Some procedures were followed in conducting this research. The first was administering try-out test in order to investigate the validity and reliability of the instrument. The second was administering SILL in order to investigate students' language learning strategies. The third was conducting documentary analyses in order to investigate the students' GPAs, in which GPA is considered as the indication of their academic achievement, the next step was conducting the interview to investigate the students' language learning strategies that applied inside and outside the classroom. The last step was analyzing the data obtained from the SILL, documentary analyses and interview.

### **1.7.5 Data Analysis**

The data analysis performed in this study consisted of several processes. The first was analyzing the students' scores on try-out test in order to investigate the validity and reliability of the instrument. The second was analyzing the student scores on SILL in order to investigate their language learning strategies. The next step was analyzing the students' GPAs. The fourth was correlating the students' language learning strategies (SILL scores) and their academic achievement (GPAs) using the Pearson Product Moment correlation formula. The fifth was comparing the means of each strategy to investigate the type of strategies that mostly used by the students. The sixth was analyzing the interview data. The last process was interpreting the research findings.

### **1.8 Clarification of the Key Terms**

To keep away from the possibility of misunderstanding to the problem investigated, the following are the clarification of the key terms:

1. Correlation means relation between two things, whether a thing (a variable) has something to do with another thing (another variable).
2. Achievement is the students' score at the end of the semester (GPA).
3. Learning strategy can be defined as the behavior of a learner that is intended to influence how the learner processes information (Mayer in Weinstein, et al., 1988). Language learning strategies consist of memory strategies (for storing and retrieving new information), cognitive strategies (for manipulating and transforming learning materials), and compensation strategies (for overcoming

deficiencies of knowledge in language, consist of guessing and gestures, metacognitive strategies (for directing the learning process), affective strategies (for regulating emotion, attitudes, and motivation), and social strategies (for facilitating with other people). (Oxford 1990)

### **1.9 Organization of the Paper**

This paper is organized into five chapters: Those are introduction, theoretical foundation, research methodology, findings and discussion, and conclusion and suggestion.

The first Chapter is introduction. This Chapter presents the background of the study, research questions, the aims of the study, hypothesis, scope of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, and clarification of the key terms.

The second chapter is theoretical foundation. It presents the theoretical foundation of the study which becomes the source of references for investigating the research problems.

The third chapter is research methodology. This chapter presents an explicit description on the research methodology that has been briefly introduced in Chapter 1. In details, this chapter covers research question, research design, population and sample, research instruments, research procedures and data analysis.

The fourth chapter is findings and discussion. It presents the result of the research and the discussion of the research findings.



The last chapter is conclusion and suggestion. This chapter elaborates the research interpretation in form of conclusion and suggestion in accordance to the research findings.

