

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of study, formulation of research questions, purposes of study, significance of study, scope and limitation of the study and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

In the 1960s, there was a gradual but significant shift within the field of education, from teacher-centered to learner-centered approach (Nunan, 1990). One consequence of this shift was increasing awareness and interest in resources for learning styles and language learning strategies in foreign and second language teaching and learning. This was supported by the nature of classroom practice that was found by teachers and researchers.

Language learning strategies are very important in learning language sine it can help students to be more active and self directed (Oxford, 1990: 10). The self direction is necessary for learners for developing communicative competence, since teachers are not always able to help them to use the language outside the classroom. Besides developing the communicative competence of the students, teachers who train students to use language learning strategies can help them become better language learners. Helping students understand good language learning strategies and training them to develop and use such good language learning strategies can be considered to be the appreciated characteristics of a good language teacher (Lessard Clouston, 1997:3).

However, in practice, not all language learners - in this case, English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners recognize and use good language learning strategies. It can be seen that EFL learners in a class may range from the most successful EFL learners with most excellent scores to the unsuccessful ones. One of the reasons is that they generally use different strategies while learning English in and or outside classroom. Therefore, no wonder their achievements in EFL learning are different as well. It is assumed that those who are unsuccessful may not use them (Brown, 2001; Chamot & Kupper, 1989 in Tercanlioglu, 2004; and Gregersen, et al., 2001)

Consequently, appropriate EFL learning strategies should be recognized and utilized by EFL learners. By recognizing as well as using appropriate EFL learning strategies, EFL learners may gain success in EFL learning. It is in accordance with Brown (2001) who states that one of the factors contributing to the success of foreign language learning is “the role of the learner in the process” (p. 59) that is recognizing and using appropriate language learning strategies. Those who play their role well by using appropriate learning strategies may gain success while those who do not use them may gain less success.

Furthermore, besides by the learners, appropriate EFL learning strategies should be recognized by the teachers because teachers can help students to use strategies more effectively. If EFL teacher recognize the good EFL learning strategies, teachers can introduce them to their students and even teach them (Oxford, 1990 & Brown, 2001). Thus, learners can be encouraged to be autonomous learners because keys to greater autonomy and more meaningful learning are learning strategies (Oxford, 1990). Besides introducing and teaching the strategies, teachers can also create situation in classroom in which learners can do the good language learning

strategies; or, teachers can give tasks to students so the students do the good language learning strategies outside classroom. This will widen possibility of language learning success to occur.

This study is restricted on the issue of language learning strategies that employed by students employ in learning English. This study takes place at senior high school level. The site of this study is in the SMAN 1 Durenan Trenggalek. The researcher chooses the school because many students of this school have high achievement in English. They have joined and become the winner of English Olympiad and English contest. That's why the students with high achievement in English call as good language learners by the researcher. This study further investigates the most frequent language learning strategies employed by students categorized as good learners that help them to learn English effectively and to identify the influence of language learning strategies toward their achievement in learning English.

Since the purpose of this study is to find good language learning strategies employed by EFL learners of SMAN 1 Durenan Trenggalek, the study involved students who are categorized as good language learner in English to be respondents. Considering the importance of recognizing good language learning strategies for successful language learning, it is necessary to do a study which concerns with learning strategies employed by successful EFL learners that are those who gain the best achievement in their own class.

There are many researchers report about good language learning strategies. However, since strategies of successful language learners may differ from one learner to another, one place to another, or from one situation to another, it is still

essential to do study pertaining to the issue. Oxford (1990), in her book entitled “Language Learning Strategies”, list fifty learning strategies used in ESL/EFL learning. However, as time going on, she states, language learning strategies is also developing. Therefore, it is possible that there is any other language strategy has not been listed. Brown (2001) also mentions fourteen good language learners’ strategies that are based on collective observations of teachers and learners. He argues that the fourteen strategies are not all used by all successful language learners. It means that other successful language learners may exhibit some of them and or some others are not mentioned and revealed. So, there is still a wide chance to figure out other god language learning strategies.

In addition, a pilot study conducted by Gregersen *et al.* (2001) report types of strategies used by both successful and unsuccessful language learners which are investigated by using SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) of Oxford (1990). The study suggests that the use of foreign language learning strategies of good (successful) learners differ from poor (unsuccessful) learners and also change in different ways over time. Like any other studies (Goh & Fong, 1997), this study also suggests that the use of leaning strategies can affect learners’ proficiency. However, although the strategies used by successful and unsuccessful language learners are investigated, the study does not report specific strategies used by learners. Hence, the researcher wants to conduct a study on the same field i.e. learning strategies employed by EFL learners of SMAN 1 Durenan Trenggalek. The researcher chose twelfth graders of SMAN 1 Durenan as the subject of study because they have high achievement in many subjects including English. It is proven by their score in English relatively high. Some of them had joined in English Olympiad and English contest. The researcher considered that the school is potential to be studied.

Besides, the researcher obtains quite wide access into this school compared to other schools.

In conclusion, this present study is projected to discover specific learning strategies employed by EFL learners of SMAN 1 Durenan Trenggalek especially in the classroom setting. Furthermore, this study aims to discover the influence of language learning strategies toward their achievement in English.

B. Statement of Research Problems

Based on the background of the study above, the research problems are:

1. What learning strategies are used by EFL learners of SMAN 1 Durenan?
2. How do EFL learners perceive their learning strategies toward their achievement in English ?

C. Objectives of the Research

On the basis of the research problems mentioned above, this research has some purposes which are:

1. Discovering specific learning strategies used by EFL learners of SMAN 1 Durenan.
2. Identifying EFL learners' perception of learning strategies to their achievement in English.

D. Significance of the Research

This research is mainly to show the language learning strategies employed by students categorized as good language learners in learning English, to find if there is

a correlation between the language learning strategies students employ and their achievement in learning English.

The first is that this study is meant to show the language leaning strategies mostly used and needed by students categorized as good language learners in learning English. The findings, latter, will give perspectives to the teachers to decide the right LLS to teach to their students to learn English effectively. Besides, it will hopefully help teachers as well as book writers to select and provide appropriate classroom teaching learning activities and materials that fit the language learning strategies students employ in learning the language.

The second reason is due to the act that some students have good achievement and are assumed to learn the language effectively while some others get poor achievement indicating that they cannot learn English successfully. Concerning with this, this study will hopefully also give pictures on the LLS used by good language learners in learning English. Further, it is expected to help unsuccessful learners to learn from their friends, the successful ones, the better strategies to learn the language. By so doing, it is expected that they can learn English more successfully.

Finally for other researchers, the findings can give some contribution and information about language learning strategies employed by students categorized as good language learner in learning English. The result of the study can be used as a reference for other researchers to conduct a further research dealing with language learning strategies to improve English proficiency.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Research

In order to avoid the possible deviation from the purpose of the study, this study focuses only on language learning strategies employed by twelfth graders of SMAN

1 Durenan Trenggalek in learning English as foreign language and the learners' perception of their learning strategies toward their achievement in English. The language learning strategies in this study are focused on the learning strategy that is classified as Direct and Indirect strategies.

F. Definitions of Key Terms

1. Learning Strategy

In this study, learning strategy is defined as specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques used by students to enhance their own learning. The learning strategies in this study are focused on the direct strategies and indirect strategies.

2. EFL learners in this study are focused on the twelfth graders of senior high school who have relatively high achievement in English. The learners call as good language learners by the researcher.