LEARNING STRATEGIES AND ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LEARNING

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Abstract: A successful language classroom requires not only a skilful teacher but also prepared students. By preparing the students to learn, we can assure the smooth knowledge transfer from the teacher to students. One aspect of the readiness is learning strategy. A good student usually applies his/her strategy to be succeeded in learning. The use of the strategy usually correlated to their learning style, gender, culture and intelligence preference. It was found that high achiever students applied learning strategy which is appropriate to their learning style, gender, culture and intelligent preference. While the low achievers did not use the strategy which is appropriate for them. They even applied it randomly without considering its appropriateness to their needs.

Keywords: *Learning Strategies, Achievement in English Learning*

English Learning in Indonesia has several purposes that a learner; 1) develop the competence to communicate orally and written to achieve informational literacy levels, 2) have an awareness of the nature and importance of the English language to enhance the nation's competitiveness in a global society, and 3) to develop students understanding of the interrelationships between the language and the culture (Suherdi , 2014).

Learning strategy is an important tool for the language learner. It will help students to learn language. The use of the strategies in language learning can improve proficiency. Therefore appropriate language learning strategies may result in improved proficiency and greater self-confidence (Oxford, 1990). The strategies are especially important for language learning as tools for an active, self-directed involvement in learning. This is essential for developing communicative competence (Oxford, 1990). The strategy can be applied for four skills in language learning such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

According to Oxford (1990, p. 8) learning strategies are specific actions taken by learners to help their own learning, to make the learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable, the students should know what learning strategies are suitable for them to master the skill. Every student has a different style and strategies to acquire the skill. According to Cohen (1998: 4) defines learning strategies as learning process which are consciously selected by the learner.

Achievement is one of the important aspects in many countries national education systems. It is usually taken as an indicator of the successfulness of the education in a country. (Hayati, 2015). It is believed to be a supporting factor of the students' success later in carrier and in academic. One of the factors which may enhance the achievement is learning strategies.However, many educators are still not very cautious about the importance of learning strategies. Many still believe that learning strategies are subject to the students' individual development and it is not necessary then to introduce it to the students. Yet, recent development revealed that learning strategies can be taught and trained in order to prepare the students to learn. It will make them ready to learn and acquire the materials effectively. This study is aimed at finding the prove on the effectiveness of learning strategies acquisition towards learning achievement.

Method

This research was a comparative design. Arikunto (2006) mentioned that "Comparative research is used to find similarities and differences about things, people, work procedures, ideas, critical of people, groups, of an idea or a working procedure. The data of this study were analysed by quantitative method. The quantitative method was used since the researcher needed to find the

percentage result of the data. The population of this research were 74 students. Arikunto (2006) suggested if the population is consisted of less than 100, it is better to take all population. On the other hand, if the number of population is more than 100, 1015% or 20-25% of population can be used as a sample. In this research, the researcher used total sampling.

The instruments of this research were questionnaire and documentation. The questionnaires were divided into cloze ended and open ended questions. Cloze ended question to answer the research questions for strategy used. Meanwhile the open ended question was used to find the students' reason. The documentation was used for classifying the successful and unsuccessful students. To classify the students into successful and unsuccessful students, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) from Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) was used. The data were analysed based on quantitative method by using this formula Categorizing the result with table

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:
P = the percentage of respondents' answer
F = frequency of the respondents
N = the total number of respondents

Result and Discussion

The Result for Reading Strategy Categories by Unsuccessful Students Strategies Mean Score Percent age Category Cognitive 3.03 18% High Social 3.03 18% High Compensation 3.02 16% High Metacognitive 2.88 16% High Affective 2.81 16% High Memory Related 2.72 16% High Among unsuccessful students,) Cognitive strategy and Social strategy (M=3.03 (M=3.03) appear to be the most frequently used strategies by the students to promote their English reading skill, followed by Compensation strategy (M=3.02), Metacognitive strategy (M=2.88), Metacognitive strategy (M=2.95), Affective (M=2.81) and Memory Related strategy (M=3.12).

Table 1. The Most Frequently Reading Strategy Used

Students group	Memory related strategy	Cogn itive strat egy	Compen= sation strategy	Meta c ognitive strateg y	Affective strategy	Social strategy	Overall strategy
Unsuccessful students	2.72	3.03	3.0 2	2.88	2.81	3.03	2.92
Successful students	2.72	3.01	2.9 7	2.77	2.87	3.1	2.91

Result of Strategies Used by the Students showed that the students mostly applied the strategies of the six strategy categories (Oxford. 1990). The application of the strategies is almost the same. However, the interview results revealed that most of the unsuccessful students applied the strategies randomly. Most of the time, they just imitated what the successful students done. They hope by doing the same thing, they may catch up with the successful students. Based on the data, it can be seen that sometimes the unsuccessful students exaggerated the usage of the strategies. The successful students, however, used the strategies effectively based on their careful observation and self-reflection. If they think that the strategy is appropriate for them, they will use it wisely.

The strategies that the successful students applied were gained from their usual conducts in learning. They might not aware that what they have applied was a strategy. This caused by the absence of the strategies introduction or training. Because of this, the students on their own capacity randomly seek for the most appropriate strategy for them. For those who succeed in finding the strategies they may be a successful student. While for those who could not find it, they may keep searching for the best strategy and once at a time may imitate what the successful student do.

Current development of learning strategies research revealed that learning strategies can be taught or trained. Teacher may start doing this by classifying the students based on their learning

style, and their competency. Then the students are introduced to learning strategies. The teacher should understand the student characters, learning style and competency and help them to find the most appropriate strategy. It is hoped that in the future the students may apply the strategies appropriate to their own needs.

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