

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents about background of the study followed by problems of the study, objectives of the study and definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

In Indonesia, English as foreign language has been learned for a long time. It was started in Dutch Colonialism which took English as one of the subjects in MULO (*Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*) that was equivalent with Junior high school and AMS (*Algemeene Middle School*) which was equivalent with Senior High School. However, the opposite condition occurred when Japan colonialism came to Indonesia. Japan banned the using of Dutch, British and other Europeans languages which made English not taught and used during the war with Japan. Then, English was reused in Indonesia when the independent of country gained. Formally it was taught as the compulsory subject based on the decision of law 2 of 1989 on the National Education system (UU no.2 1989 Sistem Pendidikan Nasional). The law 1989 made English the first foreign language to be taught in secondary level but it may be taught as early as fourth grade at the school's discretion (Komaria 1998 cited in Launder 2008, p.16).

In learning English as Foreign Language, to be able to communicate is the prime goal which want to be achieved by all learners. When they could communicate effectively by using their English as their foreign language, they

will feel that they have got their goal during learning. In addition, their communication could be categorized as an effective communication when their messages could be understood and accepted by their interlocutors. To attain it, the learners usually use some ways such as making new words, switching the target language into source language, replacing the target word with other words or describing target word from its components or its characteristics. In this case the use of compensatory strategies occurs.

Compensatory strategies (CpS) are a type of communication strategy (CmS) which helps the learners to communicate their intended message by using other words. Oxford (1990 cited in Asuncion 2010, p.2) explains that Compensatory Strategies is a useful device for the learners because it enables the learners to use the language either for comprehension or production despite their limitation in knowledge. Furthermore, other explanation of CpS is given by Poullise *et al.* (1990) as the Universities of Nijmegen researcher who conducted the studies of CpS which involved 45 Dutch learners of English. They define CpS are “processes, operating on conceptual and linguistic knowledge representations, which are adopted by language users in the creation of alternative means of expression when linguistic shortcomings make it impossible for them to communicate their intended meanings in the preferred manner” (Poullise *et al.* 1990, p.192). Therefore, Compensatory strategies consist of two main strategies which are Conceptual and Linguistic strategies which help the learners to avoid communication breakdown.

According to Rubin (1975) there are good and poor language learners in L2 learning who are categorized as high and low achievers in this study. Both of those learners have its characteristics which differentiate each other in language learning. Rubin (1975) mentioned that high achievers seem to have high motivation to communicate or to learn from a communication, seek out opportunities to use the language that have been learned, and willing to make mistakes in order to learn and to communicate. In addition, Ellis (1985) also had proposed some of characteristics of high achievers such as be capable of adapting to different learning condition, be prepared to experiment by taking risks, supplement the learning that derives from direct contact with speakers of the L2 with learning derived from the use of study techniques and possess a strong reason for learning the L2. While, low achievers seem to have low motivation and desire to communicate, passively does what is assigned to him without trying to practice what they have learned, and never discovers and find out the way to improve their learning (Rubin 1975).

Since, high and low achievers have different characteristics in learning which influence their proficiency to learn language, the researcher thinks that it is important to examine the use of compensatory strategies by high and low achievers.

This study is restricted to an investigation of CpS used in oral production. The reason is because the spoken data like speech, conversation, etc. are typically more spontaneous and contain problem markers like pauses and repetition that are

not found in written data which is easier to be analyzed. (Faerch& Kasper 1983, cited in Poullise *et al.* 1990, p.12)

In this study, the researcher wants to investigate the use of compensatory strategies among high and low achievers of Study Program of English Universitas Brawijaya by using theory proposed by Poullise *et al.* (1990). The subjects of this study are taken from public speaking class 2014. The reason to choose public speaking course is because it is one of the courses that equip students with a skill to convey their idea in the form of debate and presentation so the students can use the strategies of debate and presentation well to convey their idea. The high achievers are the students of Public speaking of 2014 who have taken Academic Speaking and Basic Oral Auditory Skill, got A score in those two courses. While low achievers are the students of Public Speaking of 2014 who also have taken Academic Speaking and Basic Oral Auditory Skill, got score C⁺ on those two courses. By involving high and low achievers in this study, the differences of compensatory strategies which are used by those two groups of achievers can be identified. The strategies which are used by the high achievers that make them successful in communication can be imitated by the low achievers to keep their communication or conversation going on. Moreover, they are the students of third semester which are categorized as the beginner so that they still have much time to improve their speaking ability. Those findings can also motivate them to be more confident to communicate and to learn language more. The two groups of achievers are observed individually in their speaking performance of retelling a story. The story is presented with sequence of picture to help the subjects to retell

the story easily by looking at the picture. This type of task can make the learners use their creative skills and their communicative competence to produce the story differently for each learner (Poullise *et al.* 1990, p. 83). Moreover, the researcher can easily analyze the compensatory strategies which are used by the subjects according to their speech related to the picture. This study only focuses on lexical problems which are faced by the learners during their performance without paying attention on grammatical errors. It is because lexis has an important role in communication, without having vocabulary knowledge it is impossible to communicate (Poullise *et al.* 1990, p.12). The data is analyzed by using four kinds of CpS which was proposed by Poullise *et al.* (1990). The purpose is to find out the CpS which is used by high and low achievers.

This study is expected to be used for some parties. Firstly, in terms of academic purpose, this research is expected to perform as valuable input for instructing speaking in L2. Secondly, this research hopefully can encourage the students to be more confident in communication using L2. The last, this research is aimed to give additional knowledge for the reader about Second Language Acquisition with the specific discussion about compensatory strategy.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the description of background of the study, the researcher wants to investigate the following problems:

1. What are the types of compensatory strategies used by high and low achievers of Study Program of English Universitas Brawijaya?

2. What are the compensatory strategies types mostly used by high and low achievers of Study Program of English Universitas Brawijaya?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems of the study, the objectives of the study are:

- 1. To identify the compensatory strategies types used by the high and low achievers of Study Program of English Universitas Brawijaya.
- 2. To find out the mostly compensatory strategies types used by the high and low achievers of Study Program of English Universitas Brawijaya.

1.4 Definitions of Key Terms

- 1. **Communication Strategies (CmS)** : A systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his/her meaning when they faced some difficulty in communication (Corder 1981 cited in Dörnyei 1995,p.56)
- 2. **Compensatory Strategies (CpS)** : A type of communication strategies where speakers do make an attempt to convey the original message by using other words (Bongaerts and Kellerman cited in Varadi 1992, p.438)
- 3. **High Achievers:** The students of public speaking of 2014, who have taken Academic Speaking and Basic Oral and Auditory Skill subjects, get A score on those two courses

4. **Low Achievers:** The students of public speaking of 2014 who have taken Academic Speaking and Basic Oral and Auditory Skill subjects, get score C+ on those two courses.

