

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents introduction of the study consisting background of study, problems of the study, objectives of the study, hypothesis, and definitions of key terms.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Language is an important tool for communication. Without language, communication will not run well. In this modern era many people use English as their tools to communicate to each other and to make them able to communicate with other people from other country, because English is the most popular language and it is an International language.

Nowadays, English is not only used for communication but also becomes one of subjects in National Examination that all students have to pass. But in reality, not all students can understand English easily so it causes them fail in their exam. Moreover, Indonesia is in expanded circle which does not use English as national language. It practices English as foreign language. Therefore, it is rather difficult to learn English rather than Bahasa Indonesia. It has many differences in vocabulary, pronunciation, rules, and also tenses. It causes the difficulty of learning English for Indonesian. For example, in English one verb has three forms, that are simple present, simple past, and past participle. The usage of them based on the time when the event happens. If we want to express

the event happens in the past time we use past tense. If we want to express the event happens in the future we use present tense. It means adverb of time contribute the changing of verb. In contrast, Bahasa Indonesia only practices one form of verb.

Based on the phenomenon above the writer think that it needs good learning strategy to make easier in learning English because good strategy will produce good result and makes the learner smarter. According to Oxford (1990, p. 1) "appropriate language learning strategies result in improving proficiency and greater self-confidence". Learning strategy can also make learner independent. Little (1991 cited in Oxford, 2003 p.9) states " learning strategies can also enable students to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learners". Independent learner usually success in learning because they have great intention to learn and they also try to do by their own self thus they know what strategy appropriate for them in order to increase their proficiency.

Then, since proficiency is important and might be the ultimate goal in language learning, the writer is interested to relate the learning strategy and the proficiency. The writer wants to investigate the relationship between learning strategy and learner's English proficiency. MacIntyre (1994,cited in Zhao 2009) further emphasizes that strategy uses results from and leads to increase proficiency. Strategies are the causes and the outcomes of improved language proficiency. If the learners use good and appropriate strategy it will increase their English proficiency. Naiman et al, 1978; Rubin 1975; Stern, 1975 (cited in Griffiths 2003 p.7) research is aimed to discover how learners employ strategies

to learn more effectively. Therefore, if the learners learn effectively of course it will increase their fluency. From the statement above it is known that language learning strategy is very important to increase learners' English proficiency. In this study the researcher measured the learning strategy by Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and English score.

Many experts classified learning strategy into many parts. But in this case the writer uses Oxford theory to conduct this research, because Oxford's (1990) theory as the most comprehensive and detailed categorization one as the basic theory. She divides learning strategy into two parts, direct and indirect strategy. The strategy directly in dealing with new language are called direct strategies. Three groups that belong to direct strategies are memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. The indirect strategies are used for general management of learning. The three groups belonging to this category are metacognitive, affective and social strategy.

This study uses Oxford's SILL questionnaire as a survey tool based on her classification system. SILL questionnaire has already been recognized as the most comprehensive and widely used instrument for identifying strategy preferences of language learner throughout the world and it has been extensively checked for reliability and validity in multiple ways as stated by Bremner (1999), Foong and Goh (1997) and Green and Oxford (2000) (cited in Nisbet et al. 2005, p.101). Ellis (1994, p.539 cited in Aslan, 2009 p.67) stated that perhaps the most comprehensive classification of learning strategies to date.

Previously, there are numerous studies in language learning strategies such as Nisbet (2005) investigated the relationship between language learning strategies (LLS) and English proficiency among Chinese University students.

Zhao (2009) investigated the use of language learning strategies by undergraduate students: the extent of use of language learning strategy categories in the Oxford

Taxonomy, and the relationship between the use of language learning strategies and English proficiency. Then, Nuril (2012) investigated language learning strategies used by students of International Undergraduate Program of Faculty of Economics and Business University of Brawijaya and relates them with English proficiency.

Since most of the subjects of the study in language learning strategy are university students, there are still few studies investigating Islamic Boarding School students which actually use English for their daily conversation. This

study is investigating Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku students. It is one of Modern Islamic Boarding Schools in Trenggalek East Java. This Islamic Boarding School combine three curriculum that are department of religious affairs curriculum including Madrasah Tsanawiyah and Madrasah Aliyah Plus Raden Paku, Modern Islamic Boarding School curriculum which applied in language teaching, discipline, and organization, and the last is *salafiyah* curriculum as the

basic of *Aqidah* and also *Nahwu* and *Sorof*. The students of Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku use English for their daily conversation. English has the important role in this school. Students use English in a week and Arabic in a week and so on. Here is the example of communication by using English. When the

students queue, and one of the them want to que then he or she will say "whose turn after this?". Besides for daily conversation, English is also used for delivering some materials in the class. It is also used for speech. Every student has to be able to deliver speech in English. It is held three times in a week, Tuesday for Arabic speech, Thursday for English speech, and Saturday for Indonesian speech.

Pondok Pesantren students are students who have great challenge and also motivated students to learn English. Oxford (1990, p.13) states "highly motivated learners use a significantly greater range of appropriate strategies than do less motivated learners". The statement above means the motivation in language learning has influenced in determining the use of language learning strategies. So that the writer is curious to conduct the research in Pondok Pesantren Modern students, the writer wants to investigate how their learning strategy while they have great challenges to learn English. This study may encourage the language learners' awareness to apply and develop the application of language learning strategies in their learning process. It also gives good addition to the teachers of this Pondok Pesantren Modern to improve the material given and also the way of teaching.

## 1.2 Problems of study

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

1. What are the language learning strategies applied by Islamic Junior High School students of Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku?
2. How is the relationship between six categories of language learning strategies applied by Islamic Junior High School students of Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku and their English proficiency?

### 1.3 Objectives of study

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

1. to investigate the language learning strategies applied by Islamic Junior High School students of Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku.
2. to examine the relationship between six categories of language learning strategies and English proficiency applied by Islamic Junior High School students of Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku.

### 1.4 Hypothesis

Muijs (2004, p.8) define hypothesis as “a tentative explanation that accounts for a set of facts and can be tested by further investigation”. Based on the research problems, the hypotheses of this study are formulated as follows:

1. Islamic Junior High School Students of Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku will apply affective and social strategy more than other strategies.
2. There is a relationship between six categories of language learning strategies and English proficiency applied by Islamic Junior High School Students of Pondok Pesantren Modern Raden Paku.

### 1.5 Definitions of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation, the writer defines the most important term in this study as follows:

1. **Language Learning Strategies:** specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations. (Oxford, 1990, p.8).

2. **Language Proficiency:** the degree of skill with which a person can use a language, such as how well a person can read, write, speak, or understand language (Platt and Platt (1992) cited in Gharbavi and Mousavi, 2012, p.113)

3. **Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL):** a structured survey tool based on the strategy system proposed by Oxford to evaluate specific language learning strategies within the learning context (Oxford, 1990, p.199).

4. **Modern Islamic Boarding School** is kind of school with the dormitory for student which is Islamic based. Modern refers to the design of school which is bilingual-based.

5. **Islamic Junior High School** is a Junior High School under department of religious affairs.