

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains background of the study, problems of the study, objectives of the study, hypothesis, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

The most important means of communication for human being is language because it is used to express ideas, sense, thoughts, information, etc. The main function of language is to communicate with others. A good communication can be achieved if the speaker and the hearer are able to use the language perfectly.

Otherwise, if the language they are using is not understood by the listeners, of course, the communication cannot reach the goals. In the process of teaching and learning, language plays an important role. Teaching and learning process needs language to make students easy to understand the material given by teachers.

There are many languages in this world such as English, Chinese, Dutch, Arabic, Japanese, French, etc. English is one of the international languages. It is very important for us to learn English because it is mainly used in international forums. Because of its importance, many other countries demanded to learn English for their existence in worldwide forums such as ASEAN, WHO, etc. So, they apply English as their formal education because English is a foreign language in non-speaking countries including Indonesia. As a consequence, Indonesian government decides to make English as a formal subject in schools and has been

taught from primary school such as elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school to university.

English has been taught as primary subject in high schools in Indonesia.

Students are expected to have basic competences in four skills that are listening, speaking, reading, and writing comprehensively to reach functional literate. Those four English skills are also important for students because they should be well-prepared to continue their study to college and face challenges in academic achievement in larger communities, societies, and outgroups. Oxford (1990) states that gaining a new language necessarily involves developing four modalities in varying degrees and combinations: listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

Not all students can master English easily. As Indonesian language is the native language for Indonesian people, English is still a foreign language. English also has different grammatical structure, stress, and accent with Indonesian language that makes English is not easy to learn. Many students make an attempt to learn English by their own strategies like reading books, having a course, practicing on conversation, writing on diary, using social network, etc. In range of all, strategy is the most important thing. Strategies are important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence (Oxford, 1990). By having good strategy, it helps students to plan their learning and be more independent.

Chamot (2004) states that learning strategy instruction can help students by: showing them techniques for “how to learn”, developing their independence and confidence as learners, increasing their academic motivation by helping them

become more successful in school, and developing their awareness of their own thinking and learning processes. In addition, learning strategy helps students to study easier and raise their proficiency in class. Language learning strategies are important because research suggests that training students to use language learning strategies can help them become better language learners.

A study by O'Malley and Chamot (1990, cited in Clouston, 1997, p.4) suggests that effective second or foreign language learners are aware of the language learning strategies they use and why they use them. Graham's (1997, cited in Clouston, 1997, p.4) work in French further indicates that second or foreign language teachers can help students understand good language learning strategies and should train them to develop and use the strategies. Bialystok (in Hismanoglu, 2000, p.1) also states that language learning strategies are "to improve competence in a second language" which focuses on how to be more proficient learners. So, they need good strategy to learn English because it will produce good result.

Language learning strategies are related to the learners' proficiency. According to Oxford (1990, p.1), "Appropriate language learning strategies result in improving proficiency and greater self-confidence" Thus, the writer decided to investigate the language learning strategies used by students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang for some reasons. First, SMAN 3 Malang is one of Senior High Schools in Malang that holds an "A" accreditation and has been appointed as Center of Cambridge since 2006. They organize international examinations that are LEVEL IGCSE (International General Certificate on

Secondary Education) and ADVANCE LEVEL (A-LEVEL). They also have ESL (English as a Second Language) class for preparing the international test for students who want to study abroad. Of course, it requires the students to have ability in English. Second, the writer chooses 11th grade students because they have studied English for one year by its curriculum.

The scope of this research is language acquisition especially in language learning strategies. This study is limited to language learning strategies of the proficiency learners represented by students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang year 2012/2013. The students are divided into 3 different English proficiency levels. Those are high, intermediate, and low. Students who got English score >85 are classified into high level, while students who got 80 to 85 in English are classified into intermediate level and students who got English score <80 are classified into low level. The writer also limits the category of language learning strategies based on the theory of Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford (1990).

This study can give contributions to students and English teachers. For students, this study can help them to get new ideas of strategies used in learning language and they could try to apply those strategies. Furthermore, this study can help students to learn English more effectively by learning the strategies used by high English proficiency learners. In addition, this study can motivate students to develop their own language learning strategies. For teachers, this study can be useful to motivate the students in developing their students' language learning

strategies, and use that information to create language curriculum or language program development.

1.2 Problems of the Study

1. How are language learning strategies applied by high, intermediate and low English proficiency students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang?
2. How is the correlation between English proficiency and language learning strategy used by students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To describe language learning strategies applied by high, intermediate and low English proficiency students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang.
2. To determine the correlation between English proficiency and language learning strategies used by students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang.

1.4 Hypothesis

A hypothesis in non- experimental studies is to make specific prediction about relationship between variables in the form of hypothesis (Muijs, 2004).

From those statements, the writer makes specific hypothesis as follows:

1. High English proficiency students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang are applying strategies more frequently than intermediate and low English proficiency students.

2. There is a significant correlation between English proficiency and language learning strategies used by students of 11th grade at SMAN 3 Malang.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. **Learning Strategy:** Specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situations (Oxford, 1990)
2. **Language Learning Strategy:** An attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language” (Ellis, 1994)
3. **Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL):** A structured survey based on the strategy system (Oxford, 1990)
4. **State Senior High School 3 Malang (SMAN 3 Malang):** State senior high school which is located at Jl. Sultan Agung Utara no. 7, Malang, East Java – Indonesia.
5. **High Proficiency Learners:** Students who got raport score of English > 85.
6. **Intermediate Proficiency Learners:** Students who got raport score of English between 80 and 85.
7. **Low Proficiency Learners:** Students who got raport score of English < 80.