

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will describe the background of the research, statement of the problems, objective of the research, significance of the research, scope of the research, and operational definition.

1.1. Background of the Research

There are some factors that can affect language learning, one of those factors is learning strategy. So, in teaching English, teachers are required to be able to teach with the right method, by using appropriate learning strategies in order to make students understand well the lessons to be learned. But, in fact, most of the teachers do not know about it. Because based on the researcher's experience, when she joined teachers internship in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus got the data that students still lacking in understanding English lessons from the teacher.

Learning strategies play a crucial role for students to achieve educational goals. Appropriate learning strategies help explains the performance of good learners, and inappropriate learning strategies would add the misunderstanding for the poor learning. Learning strategies are parts of a larger system that is included in the process of learning and mastering second or foreign language. Oxford (1990:8) states that, "language learning strategies are specific actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situation". These definition shows that the use of these strategies are influenced by variety of factors such as degree of awareness, stage of learning task requirements, teacher expectation, age, sex, nationality, general learning style, personality traits, motivation level, and purpose for learning the language.

One single learning strategy cannot be used by all students even though the learning strategies are considered effective or efficient. Problems may be due to personal problems and other factors, including gender differences. Park and French (2011, p. 117), for example, state that studies investigating gender

differences in learning strategy research is crucial because men and women are considered to be different in educational and occupational outcomes in general. An example of study was conducted by Puteh, Zin, and Ismail (2016), which confirmed that gender differences need to be given attention since the difference between the girls and boys has been attribute to reading engagement among the students (p. 118). Therefore gender difference is assumed to influence the choices of those learning strategies (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford, 1990; Gurian, 2001; Severiens & Dam, 2005; Zhenhui, 2005; Logan & Jhonston, 2009; Yilmaz, 2010; Park & French, 2011; Roohani & Zarei, 2013; Tam, 2013; Viriya & Sapsirin, 2014).

Based on curriculum 2013 that is applied in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus exactly for the tenth graders, the students should be active and critical in thinking during the learning process because the curriculum emphasizes the scientific approach (observing, questioning, experimenting, associating, and communicating).

When the researcher joined teacher internship, the English Teacher of the tenth graders in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus in the Academic Year 2018/2019 said that finding difficulties in choosing and applying the appropriate learning strategies during learning English is the most common thing for the students. It is supported with Cohen's opinion.

“Language learning will be easier if the students become more aware of possible strategies that can be selected during learning and using language. He also believed that the students' language skill can be improved by themselves when they become more aware” Cohen (1998:66).

Therefore, learning strategies are needed to find out the strategies used by students when studying in the class, both male and female. From the interesting phenomena of learning strategies, the researcher will investigate the learning strategies used by the students. In the end of the researcher made a study entitled “Learning Strategies Used by Male and Female Students of the Tenth Grade in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus”.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

From the background of the research above, many problems arise. Some problems that can be identified are as follows:

1. What are the learning strategies used by male and female students of the tenth grade in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus in the academic year 2018/2019?
2. How are the learning strategies used by male and female students of the tenth grade in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus seen from their English achievement?

1.3. Objectives of the Research

Based on the statements of the problems above, the objective of the research are:

1. To know the learning strategies used by male and female students of tenth grade in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus in the academic year 2018/2019.
2. To know the learning strategies used by male and female students of tenth grade in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus seen from their English achievement.

1.4. Significance of the Research

The researcher hopes that this research can give advantages in English teaching and learning process. The significances can be required from this research are as follows:

1. Theoretically

This research hopefully can be reference for the next researcher which constructs similar studies in teaching and learning process.

2. Practically

1. The writer

The result of this research will be one of the sources for the writer to get the new information about the students' learning strategies in learning English.

2. Teachers

It would give them information about the students' learning strategies in learning English.

3. Students

The students of Senior High School should be able to choose and apply the learning strategies.

1.5. Scope of the Research

This research focused on the learning strategies used by male and female in learning English in the class. Scope of this research is to describe the students' learning strategies by Rebecca L. Oxford Version 7.0 (1989). The participants are English for male and female students of tenth grade in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus in academic year 2018/2019.

1.6. Operational Definition

To achieve the purpose of the research, the researcher tries to define some terms that are correlated to the title as follows:

1. Learning strategies are the learners' action that they take in order to help their learning be easier and enjoyable in receiving the information.
2. Male and female students of tenth grade in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus are students who have been studying in tenth graders in SMA Muhammadiyah Kudus that are currently registered in teaching and learning process on the academic year 2018/2019.