

THE ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' ENGLISH LEARNING STRATEGIES AT THE THIRD GRADE OF SMA NEGERI 3 GUNUNGSITOLI

Oleh
Adieli Laoli*

Abstract. English Learning Strategies merupakan alat yang digunakan oleh siswa untuk menolongnya dalam memiliki keterampilan berbahasa Inggris. English Learning Strategies terdiri dari cognitive strategy, metacognitive strategy and social strategy. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui apa saja English Learning Strategis yang dilakukan oleh siswa kelas III SMA Negeri 3 Gunungsitoli tahun 2009/2010.

Key words: Learning strategies
cognitive strategy,
metacognitive strategy,
social strategy.

INTRODUCTION

All students should have learning strategy when they are learning English. The learning strategy is a device in guiding the learners to

* Adieli Laoli, S.Pd., M.Pd. Adalah Dosen Tetap IKIP Gunungsitoli

accelerate their knowledge to master what contents they will learn. The learning strategy also helps the learners understand the specific information from the subject they learn besides it can focus their attention on the target they want to achieve. The learning strategy does not come automatically in the students' mind, but it must be studied and trained well. Also, it needs a serious attention to select the learning strategy based on the goal they want to reach. It can be also said that learning strategy plays a very important role to get the content of the subject the students read. Because of the importance, this paper will talk about the effectiveness of students' English learning strategy.

The students who want to learn English well should realize that the learning strategy is a part of their need. Reiss (2005) says, all students need to use the learning strategies because the learning strategies overcome the challenge of learning a new language while trying to use the language to learn the context. In other words, to learn English as a foreign language, the students get some challenges or difficulties to use the language in their daily life therefore, the learning strategy is used to help them overcome the difficulties.

Related to the statement above, Chamot (1999) explains that learners who are aware of their own learning process, strategies, and preferences are able to regulate their learning endeavors to meet their own goals. It means that, they become increasingly independent and self-regulated learners. This statement emphasizes that the students have advantage if they are aware of their

own learning strategy and apply it when they learn. The advantage can make the students are easier to meet their target independently than the students who do not apply it. It means that the students who do not care to apply the learning strategy when they learn English, they might fail to understand what content they are learning.

The students are expected that the learning strategy constitutes as a part of their English learning activity because it is a prerequisite which must be owned by the students. They are also expected that the students use a wider range of strategies in a greater number of situations. For example, when the students read their reading text and they want to get the general information from the text, they can apply skimming. If the students want to get the specific information, they can apply scanning. To comprehend the content they can apply SQ3R.

Many issues we know from the field that most of the students do not get a satisfactory result when they are learning English because of learning strategy problems, or most of the students are not aware of the learning strategies they use that might be most helpful to use. For example: first, the students can not understand the foreigner's expression because they are rare to listen to the foreigner's sounds. Second, the students can not speak because they do not have a braveness to speak, they are afraid to make mistake to pronounce the word. The third, the students can not comprehend their English reading text because they do not know the strategy of reading

comprehension, and the last, the students can not write their ideas because they do not know the process of writing. Shortly, the students find difficulties to master the four skills of the language.

As long as the writer's experience, the writer does not find yet a research done by English teachers in Nias District related to English learning strategy which should be used by the students when they are learning English. That's way the writer wants to find the solution of the problems above by doing this research with the title "The Analyzing of the Students' English Learning Strategies at the third grade of SMA Negeri 3 Gunungsitoli."

Review of the Related Literature

Definition of English Learning Strategy

English learning strategy constitutes an effort from learners to make them easier understand, remember and more enjoyable their English subject. The English learning strategy can guide the students to differ and to select the important information from the less one. In other words, the effort enables the students acquire the content of their subject more easily. The English learning strategy also accelerates the learners' understanding from the sequences of material they will learn until they are able to activate their background knowledge from the topic they learn.

Related to the topic, English learning strategy can not be separated to the definition of learning strategies. Therefore, the researcher cited the definition of learning strategy. There are some experts define the learning strategy which is

commonly used. Oxford (1990), "Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations". Then, Weinstein and Mayer in Witrock (1986), "Learning strategies as behaviors and thought that a learner engages during learning and that are intended to influence the learner's encoding process". Furthermore, Wenden and Rubin (1987:23) say that learning strategies are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly.

It can be concluded that the learning strategies are activities from the learners which make them aware of necessity in learning and they apply the learning strategies systematically to make them to be easier in acquiring their learning result. The result of their learning can change their attitudes or point of view to face the difficulties or challenge in their learning until the students are able to get their goals as well as independent learners. Thus, English learning strategy is a specific action from the learners to figure out the English subject and enable them to master the content they will learn until they get into the habit of doing the effort in their English learning without getting the difficulties.

The successful English learners are ones who have discovered and developed techniques of learning that work best for them. They have available to them a repertoire of learning strategies and know which to select to meet their immediate

learning needs. Therefore, the English learners should master the type of the English learning strategies.

The Type of English Learning Strategy

According to Oxford (1990) in Murcia (2001:363), English learning strategies consist of six main categories:

1. Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies enable the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways, for example: through reasoning, analysis, note taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger schema (knowledge structures), practicing in naturalistic settings, and practicing structures and sounds formally.

2. Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies like identifying one's own learning style preferences and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy. All those strategies are employed overall.

3. Memory-related strategies

Memory-related strategies help learners link one L2 item or concept with another, but do not necessarily involve deep understanding. Various memory-related strategies are acronyms, rhyming, images, combination of sound images, total physical response, and flashcards.

4. Compensatory strategies.
Compensatory strategies consist of guessing from context in listening and reading, using synonyms and talking around the missing word to aid speaking and writing, using gestures or pause words. They help the learner make up missing knowledge.
5. Affective strategies
Affective strategies such as identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive self talk, have been shown to be significantly related to L2 proficiency
6. Social strategies
Social strategies such as asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms. They help the learner work with others and understand the target culture as well as the language

This opinion tells that the category of the English learning strategies involve cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, memory related strategies, compensatory strategies, affective strategies, social strategies. Those strategies can be applied if the learners want to learn the language. For example, when the learners want to practice their English, they can use social strategies by looking for their partners and get

social interaction, it may be with the native speakers or non native speakers.

Furthermore, Chamot (1999:15) elaborates the type of metacognitive learning strategies of learners namely: Planning strategies, Monitoring strategies, Problem sloving strategies, Evaluating strategies, Remembering strategies.

Planning Strategies

1. Set goals.
Goal setting involves understanding the task and deciding what you should get out of it.
2. Directed attention
Directed attention involves making a conscious decision to focus all of your attention on the task at hand by ignoring mental, physical, and environmental distractions
3. Activate background knowledge
Activate background knowledge helps bring to mind information that you know about the topic, the word, and the language to help you do the task
4. Predict
Predicting involves thinking of the kinds of words, phrases, and information that you can expect to encounter based on your background knowledge and/or on information you encounter during the task
5. Organizational planning
Organizational planning involves planning how you can accomplish the learning task, generating content in sequence, and brainstorming words, phrases, and information to use in the task

6. Self-management

Self-management involves seeking or arranging the conditions that help you learn and focusing on what you, including language structures, topics, and personal experiences.

Monitoring Strategies

1. Ask if make sense

This strategy involves checking your understanding by asking yourself. “Is this making sense to me?” or checking your clarity by asking yourself, “Am I making sense?.”

2. Selectively attend

Selective attention involves choosing to focus on specific aspects of language or situational details that will help you perform the task.

3. Deduction/ induction

Deduction and Induction involve your applying or figuring out rules about language, including grammar, phonology, and morphology

4. Personalize/Contextualize

Personalizing or contextualizing involves comparing the message to your background knowledge to see if it makes sense.

5. Take Notes

Taking notes involves your writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic, or numerical form.

6. Use Imagery

Using imagery involves creating an image that helps you represent information

7. Manipulate/Act out

This strategy involves your manipulating tangible objects, role-playing, or pantomiming the situation to contextualize language.

8. **Talk Yourself Through It (Self-Talk)**
Self-talk involves making positive statements such as “I can do it” to help yourself get through challenging tasks.
9. **Cooperate**
Cooperation involves your working with classmates to complete tasks and/or to give and receiving feedback.

Problem Solving Strategies

1. **Inference**
Inferencing involves guessing the meaning of unfamiliar language based on what you know, the content, the language, and other contextual clues (for example, nonverbal cues and pictures).
2. **Substitute**
This strategy involves substituting known words or phrases when you do not know or can not remember a specific word or phrase.
3. **Ask Question to Clarify**
Clarifying involves your asking for explanation, verification, rephrasing, or examples.
4. **Use Resources**
This strategy involves your using reference materials such as dictionaries, textbooks, computer programs, CD-ROMs, and the Internet.

Evaluating Strategies

1. Verify, Predictions and Guesses
This strategy involves checking whether your predictions and expectations were met while you carried out the task.
2. Summarize
Summarizing involves your creating a mental, oral, or written summary of information
3. Check Goals
This strategy involves deciding whether you met your goal for the task.
4. Evaluate Yourself
Evaluating yourself involves checking how well you understood or used the language in the task.
5. Evaluate Your Strategies
Evaluating your strategy involves judging how well you applied the strategies to the task, judging how effective and appropriate your strategies were for that particular task, identifying why a strategy was helpful or not-so-helpful for the task, comparing the usefulness of various strategies on the same task, and thinking about better strategies you could have used.

Strategies for Remembering Vocabulary and Other Information

1. Imagine with the keyword
 - Think of a “keyword” that sound like new word, and imagine it as a picture
 - Think of picture that describes the meaning of the new word or imagination
 - Link the pictures together mentally. Crazy-linking pictures are easy to remember.

2. Group/Classify

Grouping involves your creating categories by relating or classifying words according to attributes.

3. Transfer/Cognates

This strategy involves using what you already know about language (prefixes, suffixes, and roots; verbs, nouns) to help you recognize and remember new words. It also involves recognizing words in the target language that are similar to words in English or other languages that you know and thinking about how the meanings are related.

According to Rubin (1987) in Hismanoglu (?), there are three types of strategies used by the learners that contribute directly or indirectly to language learning. These are Learning Strategies, Communication Strategies and Social Strategies.

Learning Strategies

They are two main types of the strategies contribute directly to the development of language system constructed by learner: Cognitive Learning Strategies and Metacognitive Learning Strategies.

Cognitive Learning Strategies.

The cognitive Learning Strategies refer to the steps or operations used in learning or problem solving that require direct analysis, transformation, or synthesis of learning material. Rubin identified 6 main cognitive learning strategies contributing directly to language learning:

clarification/verification, guessing/inductive

inferencing, deductive reasoning, practice, memorization, monitoring.

Metacognitive Learning Strategies

Metacognitive Learning Strategies are used to oversee, regulate or self-direct language learning. They involve various processes as planning, prioritizing, setting goals, and self-management.

Communication Strategies

These strategies are less directly related to language learning since their focus is on the process of participating in a conversation and getting meaning across or clarifying what the speaker intended. They are used by the speakers when faced with some difficulty due to the fact that their communication ends outrun their communication means or when confronted with misunderstanding by a co-speaker.

Social Strategies

Social strategies are those activities learners engage in which afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. Although these strategies provide exposure to the target language, they contribute indirectly to learning since they do not lead directly to obtaining storing, retrieving, and using of language.

Another idea is proposed by Ghani (?), group of strategies are associated with particular language skills. For example, L2 writing, like L1 writing, benefits from the learning strategies of planning, self-monitoring, deduction, and substitution. On the other hand L2 speaking demands strategies such as

risk-taking, paraphrasing, circumlocution, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. L2 listening comprehension is facilitated by strategies of elaboration, inferencing, selective attention, and self-monitoring, while reading comprehension uses strategies like reading aloud, guessing, deduction, and summarizing.

Reiss (2005:32) explains, the type of English learning strategies are: metacognitive, cognitive, memory, social, and compensation strategy.

Metacognitive strategies are those that involve thinking about learning. These can be divided into two subtypes of techniques: those that deal with organizing and planning for learning, and those that deal with self-monitoring and evaluating learning. Examples of Metacognitive strategies dealing with organizing and planning for learning:

- Using a homework notebook to write down all assignments
- Keeping a calendar/organizer to write down long term assignments
- Dividing long-term assignments into shorter segments and tasks
- Setting deadlines for completion of each segment or task
- Determining the most appropriate and efficient strategies to learn specific content
- Planning how to study for a test

Examples of metacognitive strategies dealing with self-monitoring and self-evaluating learning

- Recognizing your own knowledge gaps or weakness

- Discovering strategies that work best for you (and those that don't)
- Checking up on yourself by frequently responding to the little voice inside your head that asks, "How am I doing?"

Cognitive strategies are those that involve any type of practice activity. They are techniques that promote deeper understanding, better retention, and/or increased ability to apply new knowledge. The example of cognitive strategies

- Making specific connections between new learning and old
- Making connections between English and the student's native language
- Highlighting important information while reading
- Dividing a large body of information into smaller units
- Note taking (even in student's native language)
- Condensing notes to study for the test
- Making and using flash cards to test yourself
- Making visual associations to aid in retention
- Creating graphic organizers, map, charts, diagrams, time lines, and flow charts to organize information
- Making categories and classifications

Memory strategies consist of any technique that aids rote recitation of learned material. Memory strategies such as poems, songs, acronyms, and word patterns are very effective in triggering the recall of a much larger body of information that has been learned through cognitive approaches.

Social strategies are those in which learner works with one or more other students or simply learns from the environment. The example of social strategies

- Working in class in pairs or small groups to clarify content, solve problems, and complete projects
- Playing teacher-made or professionally designed games to sharpen skills.
- Asking questions and making requests
- Doing homework with a friend
- Studying with a partner for a test
- Watching select television programs
- Observing peers to learn more about culture and language

Compensation strategies are techniques used to make up for something that isn't known or immediately accessible from memory.

Examples of compensation strategies

- Stalling for time while we think of an appropriate response
- Making an educated guess that extends and generalizes what we know to what we don't know
- Using circumlocution - using a substitute phrase that "talks around" the word we don't know or "writes around" the word we can't spell.

Research Method

This research was held by descriptive research refers to survey. A survey is a carefully prescribed procedure to gather information from a group of individual in order to determine their

English learning strategies (Wiseman 1999:129). The location of this research is SMA Negeri 3 Gunungsitoli. This school is very cooperative to get the data of this research. The method that the researcher used to collect the data was questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two types, the open ended items and the closed ended items. Each student gets a questionnaire to fill in. The participants constitute the representatives from eight classes. The researcher took three persons from each class and they are 24 students. The students' ability as a consideration from the researcher at least they are able to express their daily activities in English in their classroom. The students' ability was got from the English teacher and the result of the researcher's interview.

Problem and Discussion

There are some problems related to the English learning strategies mentioned on the previous part, in this paper the researcher wants to find the answer of the problem, "what strategies do the students usually apply when they are learning English as a foreign language?"

The instrument used in this paper was questionnaire. The question consisted of opened ended items and closed ended items. The opened ended items is 1 (one) question provided and for closed ended items are 25 questions provided by using Guttman scale (Yes, No). The writer gave the score 1 for "yes answer" and 0 for "no" answer.

Closed Ended Items

The indicator the researcher used to collect the data, proposed by Oxford in Murcia (2001) namely:

- a. Cognitive strategies relate to manipulate the language material for example: through reasoning, analysis, note taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing, activating schemata, and practicing.
- b. Metacognitive strategies involve the identifying the students learning style and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, evaluating task success.
- c. Memory-related strategies for example acronyms, rhyming, images, combination of sound images, total physical response and flashcards.
- d. Compensatory strategies, for example guessing meaning from context, using synonyms, filling the missing words, and using gestures.
- e. Affective strategies such as identifying the students' mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding the students for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive self-talk.
- f. Social strategies such as asking questions to get verification, clarify something, asking for help in doing language task, talking with native speakers, exploring cultural and social norms.

Each learning strategy was changed in statement in order that the students understand how to apply them in their English learning. The result shows that 80 % applied cognitive strategies,

91 % applied metacognitive strategies, 54 % applied memory-related strategies, 70,8 % compensatory strategies, 66,3 % applied affective strategies and 91,6 % applied social strategies.

Questionnaire in Open Ended Items

The question that the writer used in opened ended items namely, “what strategies do you use when you are learning English until you are able to speak English in your daily activities?” The students’ answers have a tendency in memorizing and practicing. It is around 95,3%. However, it is 65 % the students’ answers tend to take a risk and open dictionary. Other students proposed the other answers that they are able to speak English by following the English course after studying from school.

The result of the data mentioned that the students are able to apply the English learning strategies when they are learning English. The success of the students to learn English as a foreign language can not be separated from their effort to interpret the strategies they need. Chamot (1999:159) emphasizes that using appropriate strategies can help build self-efficacy by creating success expression and by giving students the tools for future success.

Some of the English learning strategies were not applied by the students for example: analysis, summarizing, synthesizing, activating schemata, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging study space and a schedule, evaluating task success, synonym, and acronym.

The researcher assumed that those strategies were not familiar with the students.

CONCLUSION

The using of learning strategies in appropriate situation can encourage the students to be successful in learning English. It can be seen from the result of the analyzing the leaning strategies applied by the students of the third grade of SMA Negeri 3 Gunungsitoli. The students are free to choose the learning strategies appropriate with their condition. The more learning strategies could be understood by the students the better they got.

The researcher encourages the students and English teachers to find out and apply the English learning strategies when they are learning English. By applying the English learning strategies correctly the students and English teacher will be more successful in English subject.

REFERENCES

- Chamot, Anna Uhl., Sarah Barnhardt, et al. 1999. The Learning Strategies. Hand Book: New York: by Addison Wesley Longman. Inc.
- Orlich, Donald C., Robert J. Harder. Richard C. Callahan, et al. 1985. Teaching Strategies. Toronto: by D.C. Heath and Company.
- Reiss, Jodi. 2005. Teaching Content to English Language Learners. Strategies for Secondary

School Success. New York: by Pearson
Education. Inc.

Weden, Anita., Joan Rubin. 1987. Learner
Strategies in Language Learning. New York:
Prentice-Hall International (UK) Ltd.

Wiseman, Douglas. 1999. Research Strategies for
Education. London: Wadsworth Publishing
Company.