AN ANALYSIS OF READING LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS, UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

THESIS

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ABSTRAK

Raudatul, Jannah. 2015. "An Analysis of Reading Learning Strategies Used by English Department Students, Universitas Negeri Padang". *Skripsi*. Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris. FBS Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif yang menggambarkan tentang strategi belajar membaca dalam bahasa Inggris yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa BP 2011 Jurusan Bahasa Inggris FBS Universitas Negeri Padang. Ada 36 mahasiswa bahasa Inggris yang sudah mengambil mata kuliah *Extensive Reading* yang dipilih sebagai sampel dalam penelitian ini. Mereka diminta untuk mengerjakan soal *reading* dari sebuah simulasi TOEFL oleh Barron Education Series Inc. yang ditulis oleh Pamela J. Sharpe, Ph.D. Siswa juga diminta untuk mengisi angket SILLR yang dikembangkan oleh Rebecca L. Oxford. Selanjutnya, secara *stratified random sampling* 6 mahasiswa dipilih untuk menjadi narasumber wawancara dalam rangka mengetahui cara mahasiswa tersebut menggunakan strategi belajar membaca tertentu. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tingkat penggunaan strategi belajar mahasiswa secara keseluruhan berada pada indeks 3,26 (medium), dengan rincian strategi kognitif pada tingkat 3,46 (medium), strategi kompensasi pada tingkat 3,44 (medium), strategi afektif pada tingkat indeks 3,43 (medium), strategi metakognitif pada 3,37 (medium), strategi memori pada tingkat 3,00 (medium), dan strategi sosial pada indeks 2,66 (medium). Mereka menggunakan strategi tersebut secara sadar dan tekun. Dari data tersebut diperoleh kesimpulan bahwa mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris masih perlu untuk membekali proses belajar mereka dengan pengetahuan dan aplikasi tentang strategi belajar membaca dalam Bahasa Inggris yang efektif sehingga bisa membantu meningkatkan kemampuan mereka.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Every language learner is unique and different; therefore, each of them may reach different level in learning achievement. Besides, it is a signal that individual learner variables can influence learning outcomes. This have been identified and clarified by several experts as the part of learner variables. Many experts agree that learning strategies are one of learning process and mechanism variable that could affect and be affected learning outcomes. In addition, they are used on every language learning level.

Ellis (1994: 339) mentions that there are three factors that build learning process and mechanism. The first factor is individual learner differences which are constructed of learner's belief about language learning, affective states and general factors. Next is learner strategies and the third is language learning outcomes which are considered cover learner's proficiency, achievement and rate of acquisition. They can influence each other, yet each can have effects on others. For instance, affective state, which belongs to one of individual learner differences, can influence students' learning strategy use, as an example is when a student needs to finish a reading test and she finds many unfamiliar words of English that delivers herself into anxiety; then she could employ and choose one of the affective strategies that can work best for her situation. She can pay attention to signals given by her body. In addition, she can write down or speak

up positive statement for herself, like "*I can do it. I can do my best. This is just a test. It does not reflect me as a person, it just checks my understanding*." Therefore, her anxiety becomes lower that she will have no problem about self-confidence even if she gets low score after the test. The choice of strategies, which reflect student's strategy use pattern, can be controlled by individual learner differences. As the result, this impact on student's affective states that her emotion become calmer and her affective state is managed well.

The framework of this mechanism can be seen in the following figure:

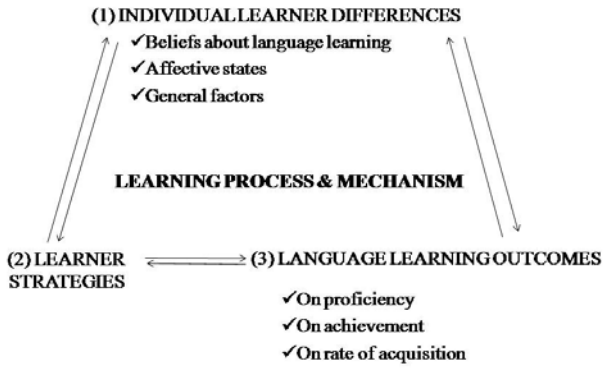

Figure 1: Learning Process and Mechanism by Ellis

Therefore, the interrelation between learning strategies and learning outcomes is acceptably reciprocal. Students' strategy use can be affected by their English proficiency as one of the indicators in language learning outcomes. It also affects student's foreign language proficiency level. For example, students who have English proficiency level may select compensation strategy 'using linguistic and other clues', instead of 'translating to mother language' when they found difficulty in reading. The choice of the first strategy mentioned shows that it requires better understanding in English linguistic constructions, which clearly influenced by their high level of English proficiency. This is all together with the

effect of the strategy use toward their English proficiency level, such the increasing of English proficiency level as the result of practice.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that learning language strategies do affect foreign language learning outcomes. There are many researchers present explanation about it. Griffiths (Wahyuni, 2013: 4) states that it is good to consider accommodating all of the accounts. It tells that learning strategy can be seen as activities which are chosen intentionally by pupils in order to adjust their own language learning.

This study focuses its investigation on reading skill comprehension for some reasons. Firstly, the position of reading that becomes the secondary in human's communication, while actually when they start becoming a learner academically, they are required to deal more with written form. Therefore, reading comprehension is considered to have important position for students to help them access the language learning easier. Secondly, reading comprehension should be concerned because the reading proficiency of Indonesian students is still in low level. Barnard and Quinn (in Huang, 2003: 126) state that Indonesian and Indian students who learned English as a foreign language only acquired 1000 to 2000 words after five years of English learning. The additional information comes from Nurweni and Read (in Huang, 2003: 126) who present that Indonesian college students' vocabulary acquisitions are smaller than 3000 words. This means that when their vocabulary acquisition is limited, their reading comprehension will be affected. As the result, students will not be able to comprehend reading material as well as they have to be. However, when a learner

reaches college level, they have to read more, especially when it comes to learn English as a foreign language. Concerning to the explanations above, reading comprehension should be taken into an account to be investigated so that there will be a pathway to improvement.

As a consideration, many students of English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang still found problems in reading comprehensions. Based on interview done to 10 students in the academic year of 2011 in August 2013, there were 5 students who reported that they could not maintain problems they found in reading courses. Therefore, it is assumed that there are some factors that cause students' problems in reading comprehension. The following are categorized into personal problem. Firstly, students may have the lack of neccessary general and specific skills in reading. Secondly, they also might have the lack or limited background knowledge that will fullfill their reading comprehension. As the result, students would consider that the amount of assigned reading may be unrealistic. Next, students may feel there is no benefit after keeping up reading. Therefore, many students just read because they are asked to do, or in the other words that they are not willing to do so by their own intention. Fourth, this could happen because of inappropriate reading learning strategies which are not perfectly practiced or understood by students.

In this regard, the high attention should be paid on students as the actor of their own learning. This is because the students' reading learning strategies is very crucial in order to reach the goal of reading comprehension. By identifying and knowing how students' reading learning strategies, this will help to support

less successful students to achieve success and master the target language. Therefore, a research on the reading learning strategies employed by English Department students is conducted. The study would investigate the reading learning strategies students apply and the ways students use them in a particular way. By doing this research, it is hoped that students can get better improvement in reading as well in the future. This also could be beneficial for reading lecturers and the department to help the students find their passion on learning English and optimizing their ability on it.

B. Identification of the Problem

There are some problems identified in this research regarding to the students' reading learning strategies. First, it is about students' understanding of reading learning strategies; in other word, it is related to the students' knowledge about reading learning strategies. Secondly, it is about the factors that affect students' reading learning strategies preferences. The next, problem can relate to the types of reading learning strategies that are used by students that might not be appropriate for them, which means that the students did not recognized the types of strategies that can be used to improve their reading learning. Third, there might be a possibility about the student's way in applying reading learning strategies. Some students used reading learning strategies, but unfortunately in an organized manner.

C. Limitation of the Problem

From the identification above, this research is limited on the analysis of reading learning strategies types and ways used by English Department students

in reading course. There are two good reasons for focusing in reading. Firstly, it is because reading has an important role for students' literacy that is useful for their language study (Foster, 2008: 53). Besides, by considering the facts about Indonesian students' ability as stated in the background of the problem above, it can be concluded that students' reading abilities should be concerned. This study focuses on the third year university students in 2013-2014 academic years in English Department, Faculty of Language and Art, Universitas Negeri Padang.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this research is formulated as follow:

"What reading learning strategies are used by students of English Department, Universitas Negeri Padang and how do the students use them?"

E. Research Questions

The problem of research is elaborated into the following questions:

1. What are reading learning strategies used by English Department students, Universitas Negeri Padang?
2. How do English Department students use reading learning strategies?

F. Purposes of the Research

This study is conducted in order to:

1. identify the strategies which are used by English Department students, Universitas Negeri Padang.
2. describe the way of reading learning strategies which are used by English Department students, Universitas Negeri Padang.

G. Significance of the Research

This research is done in order to give a significant contribution for reading teaching and learning processes through knowing language learning strategies used by English Department students in reading course. It is hoped that this will help the lecturers to know the current strategies used by his students so that they can make and evaluate their teaching. Oxford cited in Clouston (1997: 3) states that the understanding of instructor about language learning strategies is crucial if they want to help their students to build up their communicative competence and become better language learners. He adds that language strategies can be referred as tools for active and self-directed improvement that will be very useful for learners' independence. Besides, the students will also get benefits by knowing types of learning commonly used in English language learning. The last one, the future researcher also can continue to study about other types of language learning strategy so that there will be a better improvement for our language learning.

H. Definition of Key Terms

1. Reading : The receptive skills that delivers meaning through words and sentences.
2. Learning strategies : The steps which are done mentally and physically by a learner in order to support his skills.
3. Reading learning strategies : Steps which are done by learners during learning reading in order to help them understand, learn and comprehend better.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

Based on the research findings and data analysis, there are some conclusions to be pointed out:

1. The students applied strategies in medium use frequency based on Oxford's reading learning strategy classification, which are totally 55 reading learning strategies composed of sub-strategies of 9 memory sub-strategies, 16 cognitive, 4 compensation, 9 metacognitive, 12 affective and 5 social.
2. The students' ways in using reading learning strategies are consciously and persistently.
3. There must be a caution about labeling students 'higher' or 'lower' levels as 'bad' and 'good' because there are many reasons why students acquire certain level, such as the length of studying English, the influence of mother tongue and etc that could be used for the next researcher.

B. Suggestions

Based on the research findings, there are some suggestions were proposed in order to accomplish the betterment of English learning, especially for English reading. Firstly, the result of reading test simulation does not reflect students' achievement in general; because there were possible other factors that affect this, like the room temperature, students' physical and psychological condition, and so

on. Secondly, it can be a good time for English Department to help students improving their language ability by providing strategy training. The introduction to the students about how to use and choose the strategies effectively can help them to become proficient English learners, as well as it help the lecturers not to putting extra effort when they deal with students who have learning difficulty. Lastly, the next researcher need to conduct deeper research related to Indonesian students' English learning strategy in different aspects so that there will be more attention and helpful inputs for students and instructors.

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