

Learning Strategies Used By Male and Female Students In Developing English: A Case Study at Sahid University of Surakarta

^{1*}Dian Muhammad Rifai, ²Musta'an

^{1,2} Sahid University of Surakarta, Indonesia
Corresponding email: anitadianzain@yahoo.co.id

Abstract:

This study is aimed at analyzing the learning strategies used by male and female students in developing English at Sahid University of Surakarta. This study is a qualitative research in the type of case study. Seventh grade students participated as the respondent to fill the questionnaire and ten students (5 male and 5 female) as the respondents of the interview. The qualitative data are obtained from the result of questionnaire, interview and classroom observation and the document. The data collected of interview and observations are presented in the form of tables. Source and technique triangulations are used to get the trustworthiness of this data. Furthermore, Flowchart Model proposed by Miles and Huberman is applied in this study. The result of the study, such as (1) The male and female students use all kind of strategies in the different frequency (1) The female students tend to use all type of the strategies more frequently than the male students.

Keywords:

learning strategies, male and female students, developing english

JEL: A10, A19

INTRODUCTION

In the globalization era when people face a challenge in various field, English becomes the most important language in the world. It is widely used for keeping up with the developing of modern technology and science of various countries. In Indonesia, English has been taught as an important foreign language in order to develop science, technology and art. English as international language has significant role in the process of global communications. English has been used in both orally and written. Communicating in English becomes a main order for the globalization era. People learn English as a foreign language as their needed. Many obstacles occur when the learners learn English intensively. As a target language, learner must be able to transfer their knowledge from their mother tongue into English. The acquisition process of English must be done by learner as the goal of learning target language. Based on the fact, the government has regulated that English become a compulsory subject in the school.

As we know that there are any factors in learning English. Success in learning foreign language, according to Cohen and Dorney in Fauziati (2004:170) depends on variety of factors such as duration and intensity of the course, the characteristics and abilities of the teacher, the appropriateness of the teaching methodology, the quality of the textbook, the size and composition of learner group, the amount of the natural target language practice

opportunities, and the characteristic of the language learner. Besides the factor mentioned above, learning strategy that is applied by a students in the English class also gives a significant role for student in mastering English as the foreign language. Students need strategies to learn English. According to Oxford (1987:78), learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferrable to new situations. Chamot (2005:112) states that strategies are the products making easier to learn something, especially language learning. Oxford (1992:18) state that strategies are tools for self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability. So, learning strategies are students' approach to learn or acquire information. The more strategies are used by students the more the students are easy to understand the material or skill.

Language learning strategy simply refers to an individual's approach to complete a task. This is an individual's way of organizing and using a particular set of skills in order to learn content or accomplish other tasks more effectively and efficiently in school as well as in non academic setting" (Schumaker and Deshler in Fauziati, 1992:56). A strategy is useful for learner if it suits well with the learner's task, fits with the learners' learning style, and links it with another relevant strategy. The teachers who intend to train their students in using language learning strategy should learn about the students, their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn the language learning strategy already used by the students by observing their behavior in class. There are two kinds of students of English class, the male and female students

Nowadays, there are many things that usually occur at school, such as the teaching learning process which doesn't run well, the material which is difficult to teach, the male students' score and the female students' score which are different, and so on. The difference here means that the male students' score is often not as good as the female students'.

Learning strategies are mostly unobservable, though some associated with an observable behavior. Thus, the researcher wants to research the students of the English class from their behavior in learning English as their learning strategies in mastering the English. The researcher chooses the male and female students of Sahid University of Surakarta. The researcher chooses the male and female student grade VII 2017/2018 academic year. The researcher chooses the school because it is a very good school with good quality in teaching learning process. It has become number two in two last national exam in this city. The achievement of majority students is very good especially in English subject.

Based on pre-observation that had been conducted at Sahid University of Surakarta, the writer found the different score between male and female students. It can be looked in the result of report book of the students. Female students always get better score of average and they are more active than male students. In fact, both of them get the same external supporters such as materials, books, process of learning, teacher and other facilities. The phenomenon above make the writer suggests that the different score between male and female is caused by the different learning strategies used by male and female students that has chosen to learn and understand English as a Foreign Language.

The writer uses a qualitative research in this study. The type of qualitative research used in this study is a case study. According to Gall, Meredith, et.al.(2002: 435) One of the main characteristics of qualitative research is its focus on the intensive study of specific instance, that is cases, of a phenomenon. For this reason, qualitative research sometimes is called case study research. Furthermore case study research is done to shed light on a

phenomenon, which is the processes, events, persons, or things of interest to the researcher. A case study is a particular instance of the phenomenon. The research wants to dig the information more about a phenomenon happened in the Sahid University of Surakarta related to the learning strategies used by male and female students there. It needs to focus on specific instances in natural context in that school. Because of the reason the writer uses qualitative research as well as case study in doing this research.

The writer also includes the previous studies related to the topic about addressing term to support the recent study. The first research from Tam's work (2012). The result of the study found that gender, second language proficiency, and socioeconomic status would affect the user's use of LLs. The major finding was males and females had significant difference in using Memory, Compensation, Cognitive, Metacognitive, and Social Strategies to learn English, with females using all of these strategies more frequently than males. A positive correlation was found between compensation, cognitive, and social strategies and the users' second language proficiency. It was also found that socioeconomic status would greatly influence local university students' use of Social Strategies. The findings indicate that female students used LLs more effectively and more frequently than male students. Students with higher English proficiency also showed more and better use of LLs than poorer learners. Students from wealthier families used Social Strategies more successfully than poorer students, which was a possible explanation for their better performance in English learning. These findings provide useful information for teachers to provide LLs training to university students to improve their English learning skills.

The second research is from Samiyan's work (2015). The findings of the research indicated a significant difference between male and female students regarding using the learning strategies in the first place. As it showed, the learning strategies of memory, Cognitive and Meta cognitive are more frequently used by females while social and affective strategies are more in males' favor. Secondly, it was proved that female students are more successful than male students in foreign language learning. Consequently, being aware of this differences between strategies based on different genders will help both teachers and students to achieve more success in learning a foreign language. Therefore, teachers according to the research findings, are recommended to use for their pupils the learning strategies they will need for better achievement.

The third research is from Zhou's work (2010). This study has revealed the general pattern of language learning strategy use by senior high school students and the difference in gender and grades in Chinese context. Chinese senior high school students use compensation strategies most and social strategies least. Female students use strategies more than male students. As for the difference in grades, the higher grade the students are in, the less frequently they use learning strategies. The findings reveal that Chinese senior High School students use compensation strategies most frequently; that significant differences exist between male students and female students with female students using strategies more frequently than males, and that differences also exist in the strategy use among three grades. The reasons for these differences in strategy use by Chinese senior high school students are discussed and implications for the future language learning strategy training and English are put forward.

The fourth research is from Zenali's work (2012). The findings show that there is a significant gender difference in the use of language learning strategies as a whole. Female learners also have tendency to use overall language learning strategies more often than

males. There are important differences between genders in the use of social/affective strategies with females using them more often.

The fifth study is the study from Balam (2015). This study investigated whether gender had an impact on the motivation and learning strategies used by post-graduate students at a southeastern university. No statistically significant difference was found between male and female students in their motivation or learning strategies. However, regardless of gender, graduate students showed differences in extrinsic goal orientation, test anxiety (motivation) and effort regulation and peer learning (learning strategies). Sample size is a limitation of this research, so further studies can investigate the impact of gender with regard to motivation and learning strategies using a bigger sample size. Due to the sampling method of this research, generalization to the population cannot be made.

The sixth study is from Bozinovic's and Sindik's Work (2011). The result has shown that there are statistically significant differences in the frequency of the learning strategy use : memory strategies are most frequently used ones, while cognitive strategies are the least frequently used. However, there are gender differences in the use of learning strategies, where the female sex more frequently use all types of learning strategies, apart from socio affective strategies. The final part of the paper lists the implications for teaching practice and provides guidelines for future research.

The last research is from Shabani and Sarem's work (2013). The results of the chi-square test also indicated that there was not any significant difference in the strategy use for individual items between the two groups except for three items. After that, running the independent t-test showed that the difference between male and female bilinguals' strategy use was statistically significant in favor of male bilinguals. The use of separate t-tests for the six categories of the SILL indicated that the strategy use was again statistically significant in favor of male bilinguals. Then the chi-square test showed that for 12 items on the SILL the difference between the strategy use of male and female bilinguals was statistically significant in favor of males.

This study is different with those researches. This study focuses on the learning strategies used by male and female students Thus, the writer wants to know about the learning strategies used by male and female students in Sahid University of Surakarta. The writer wants to know that there are any differences or not between the strategies used by male and female students in Sahid University of Surakarta, the types of strategies used by the male and female students, and the factor they choose the strategies and the effects after they use such kind of strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used qualitative approach in the type of case study. It was conducted in Sahid University of Surakarta. The participant of this study was The male and female seventh grade students in Sahid University of Surakarta. The data of this study were gathered by questionnaire, interview and observation. The respondent of the questionnaire was all male and female students in seventh grade at Sahid University of Surakarta. The interview was addressed to five male students and five female students as the representative of male and female students in Informatics Engineering Program of Study at Sahid University of Surakarta. The data is got from the questionnaire, interview, and observation. Firstly, the students fill learning strategy questionnaire from SILL Oxford. It is to know the strategy used

by male and female students. The information was also recorded into interview transcript in the form of table. The researcher used semi-structured interview. In other sides, the observation was used to explore the learning strategies used by male and female students at Sahid University of to develop English. The technique was used to crosscheck the result of the interview and questionnaire.. The triangulation of source and technique were used to get the trustworthiness of this study. Furthermore, Flowchart Model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1984) was applied in this study. There were three main stages in the model, namely data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part aims to discuss the research findings explained above. The writer discusses the research findings of the recent research which compared to and the research finding of the previous research. The writer also discusses the theory and the findings of the recent research whether or not both are having similarities or differences. It deals with three main issues; type of learning strategies used by male and female students, Differences between the strategies used by male and female students; and factors of using learning strategies conducted by male and female students in Sahid University of Surakarta.

Type of Learning Strategy used by Male and Female Students.

The findings of type of learning strategies in this research show that the respondents taken from the male and female students of Sahid University of Surakarta applies all six different learning strategies; memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies to develop English as the subject of the study. The difference between the strategy used by male and female students is on the frequency of use of the learning strategy. The female students use almost all the strategy more frequently than the male students. Meanwhile, male and female students use all strategies well so they can easily get the information from the teacher. It can be seen from the achievement of the students in that school in general. It is in line with the theory from Srichart and Magnum (1993: 15) if learners want to get better in learning they must use strategy, students use strategy in learning have the purpose; it must be able to remember newly acquired information so that they can retrieve the information and use it whenever necessary. By knowing the theory we can look that the students use all the strategy proposed by Oxford well so that is why the achievement of the students both male and female always good.

The findings of the type of learning strategies are also correspond to the findings from Tam's work (2013) revealed that male and female subjects used the six groups of LLS with different frequencies. Females used all six categories more frequently than male subjects. The preferences of male and female subject were also different. The greatest differences were in the use of social strategies, which were ranked as the most popular strategies by females but fourth by males. The finding from Tam's work (2013) is in line with recent study, we can know that male and female students used the six groups of LLS with different frequencies. Females also used all six categories more frequently than male students. The difference is on the preference of the using strategies. In the recent study the preference of using the strategy is on metacognitive strategies. On the other hand, in the previous research, the greatest differences were in the use of social strategies, which were ranked as the most popular strategies by females but fourth by males.

According to Nambiar (2009:132) Gender is as one factor how the students use some particular strategies. It will be differences between strategies used by male and female students. The statements above are in line with the findings of this research. In this research found that there are any differences between the learning strategies used by male and female students. The differences are on the frequency of the strategy use. The female students use the strategy more frequently than the strategy used by male student. It is also correspond to Samiyan's work (2015) revealed that there are significant differences between male and female students regarding using the learning strategies in the first place. As it showed, the learning strategies of Memory, Cognitive and Metacognitive are more frequently used by the females while social and affective strategies are more in males' favor.

The teacher needs to know type of learning strategy used by male and female students. According to Oxford (1987:78), learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferrable to new situations. By knowing the type of learning strategy, the teacher will know the way how to teach effectively. If we look from the finding of the recent study, we will able to know what thing that the teacher should give to the students. The teacher will know the most effective way and the most appropriate material to be given for the male and female students. The teacher will know how to treat male and female students in the best way.

The Differences between the Strategy Used by Male and Female Students

Based on the finding of the recent study, the male and female students use all six group of strategies proposed by Oxford (1978). The male and female students have dominant strategies in metacognitive and cognitive strategy. The differences lied on the frequency of the using the strategy. Although metacognitive and cognitive are dominant strategy for male and female students, the female students used the group of strategy more frequently. It is relevant the theory from oxford (1990:234) who said that gender can be as the factor contribute to the choice of learning strategies. By conducting this research, the writer can know the strategies which are used by male and female students and the differences between two gender.

The finding of the recent study is in line with the finding from Zhou's work (2010), the female students also used the strategy more frequently than the male students. The differences lied on the dominant strategy used by the male and female students. The dominant strategy by male and female students is compensation strategy and the least strategy used is social strategy. It is different with the finding of the recent study which reveals that the dominant strategy used by male and female students is metacognitive and cognitive strategy. It proves that different group of people have different character. So the result of the finding will be different. From all previous studies which the writer has got said that male and female students used all six group strategies proposed by oxford. The main difference is on the frequency of the using strategy which is also different. All finding of the previous study said that the female students used the six strategies more frequently than the male students. It is in line with what the writer found in the recent study. In the recent study the female and the male students use all six strategy but in different frequency. The female students use the six strategies more frequently. For the dominant strategies which is used by male and female students in each finding of the previous research and recent research is different. It can happen because the research was conducted in the different place and different subject so the finding will be different because of the different characteristic.

In the recent study the writer finds the dominant strategies which are used by male and female students. As Oxford (1990: 224) mentions that strategies here allow learners to become more self-directed and to develop autonomous learning and take responsibility for their own learning. The strategies are individual action for the students. By knowing the strategies used by the students the teacher will easy to give appropriate way to give the knowledge. It is in line with the finding of the research. The writer consciously look or the differences between the strategies used by male and female students to know their way of learning. If we know the students learning strategies it will be beneficial for the teacher to teach the material.

The female and female students use all six group of strategy in different frequency. If we look the strategy used by the male and female students in detail will be different. In every group of strategy has a lot of kind of strategy. And the strategy used by male and female is different. It is relevant with Schumaker and Dasler (in Fauziati, 2010: 150) which says language learning strategy is an individual's way of organizing and using a particular set of skill in order to learn content or accomplish other task more effectively. In another word learning strategy is an individual action to learn something so every individual has different strategy in developing English because every individual has different characteristics. So the male and female students have different individual characteristic so it is normal if the strategy which is used by the different.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the previous chapter of the research, the writer draws conclusion. Based on the data findings and discussion, the conclusion can be drawn as follow. The types of learning strategies used by male and female students at the seventh grade of Sahid University of Surakarta are almost the same. The male and female students use all six strategies proposed by Oxford in developing English, The six strategies namely: memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy, metacognitive strategy, affective strategy and social strategy. The male and female students used all six strategies proposed by oxford but in different frequency. The male and female students have differences when they are using learning strategies. The male and female students used all strategies in different frequencies. Referring to the finding of the research the female students used all six strategies more frequently than the male students. Although both of male and female students have the same dominant strategy in metacognitive and cognitive strategies, the female students use those kinds of strategy more frequently. In another word the female students are more diligent than the male students in developing English.

REFERENCES

- Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (1999). *Learning a second language through interaction*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Miles, B. & A. Michael, H. (1992). *Analisis Data Kualitatif. Buku Sumber Tentang Metode-Metode Baru. Alih Bahasa Tjetjep Rohendi Rohidi*. Jakarta: UI Press
- Fauziati, E. (2009). *Introduction Methods and Approaches in Second or Foreign Language Teaching*. Surakarta: Era Pustaka Utama.

- Fauziati, E. (2010). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. Surakarta. Era Pustaka Utama.
- Green, JM. & Rebecca, O. (1995). *A closer look at learning strategies, L2 proficiency, and gender*. TESOL Quarterly 29.2:261-297.
- Gall, MD. & Gall, JP. (2003). *Educational Research An Introduction*. Boston: AB Press
- O'Malley, JM, Chamot, AU., Stewner-Manzanares, Glori, Russo, Rocco P., and L. Kupper. (1985). *Learning Strategy Applications with Students of English as a Second Language*. TESOL Quarterly. 19:557-584.
- O'Malley, M. (1990). *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. New York. Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies.: What Every Teacher Should Know*. New York. Newbury House Publishers.
- Oxford, R. (2002). *Language Learning Style and Strategies*. In Celce murci, Marrienne (Ed). 2002. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle Thomson Learning :353-366