

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Mastering the English language is an important value for the students to have. By mastering the language the students can improve themselves both in academic and life skills. Gladdol (1997) cited in Saukah's speech (2003) explained many points why English is important. First, English is used by 47 countries as their first language with 375 million speakers. Second, 67 countries that use English as the second language is transforming into the first language. Third, 19 countries that are using English as a foreign language are transforming into the second language. Briefly, people who want to follow the growth of the world should learn English.

Since English is used as an international language, nowadays many people, particularly students, ought to master the English language. Learning English is difficult, in Indonesia, English is naturally difficult to master. Seeing this phenomenon, the Indonesian government has made a regulation that English as the subject has to be taught at Elementary School, Junior High School, and Senior High School. There has been a significant change in the language learning areas from teacher, teaching to learning learners.

Learning English is one of the important things for students to acquire English well. Hilgrad (1984: 4) said learning is the process by which the learning activity originates or is changed through training procedure (whether in the laboratory or the natural environment) as distinguished of change by a factor not attributable to training. This means that the students were still important to learn about English.

According to Reiff (1992) students have individual characteristics related to their learning processes. Indonesian's teachers nowadays teach English by following the methods suggested in curriculum 2013. The method is suggested by the curriculum already tested by experts and adapted to foreign language learning, especially English as the most prioritized foreign language. It means, in general, the English learning materials and methods used by teachers in schools have similarities. Students received the materials and teaching method that is not much different, the material and teaching methods are the same, it means indirectly, the learners have problems with their learning process or used different learning strategies in their learning process.

Once the researcher interviewed with the English teacher and some students at SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan, based on the data on the test result of a class in 2019/2020 shows, all most students passed the Minimum Completeness Criteria Score (KKM) and even very well. The English teacher said the exciting, even though in learning English process students showed a different level of interest in their style, and they still achieved a good score, this fact indicated students have their own way in learning English. The result of the interview with some students showed they

combined some different strategies which some of them referred to motivation, social and memory strategies. A student admitted, she had difficulty in learning English, and take another English class out of the school to help remind the materials. Some students using learning applications, searching from Google and YouTube or asking questions to the English teacher and other students who more understand the materials. A student said her willingness to learn would be better if they saw people on YouTube, speaking English very well. On the other hand, a student said centring in English class, concentration, made some notes while the teacher explaining the materials are the best way to get right. From the explanation above the students refers used direct and indirect strategies in their learning English process (Oxford, 1990).

From the explanation of the interview, even though they are in the same class with the same teacher they have and know how to overcome their difficulties in learning English in different ways and get the best score. Several strategies can be used by the students to help them in their learning process. Strategies in learning English can be a facility to get the higher achievement because the students can use different strategies. However, not all suggested methods can be fitted to all students with a different learning environment that affect their ways of learning. A teacher should recognize the learning factors by the students and the strategies use to improve their achievement. Some factors may affect students' English achievement such as educational practitioners and people around English learning environments: students and parents. Based on Ahmed (2012), some factors influence the success of learning English as a foreign language including learning styles.

Many students in senior high school still have difficulties to find out the best strategy that they have to use to learn English. Rubin (1975) mentioned a good language learner may have some special or using some mixed strategies. Therefore, choosing the best strategies is important when learners learn about English. Language teaching can be successful if there is knowledge which is sufficient towards learner's traits and behavior. In a learning process, there are always learners who are well manage and the learner less successful.

This study involves the second grade of SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan which is one of the best senior high schools in Medan. This school is chosen as the research setting because all classes are regular class and each class has its own high achiever. Once the researcher did The Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) in English subject is 77/100 points. Students at SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan have higher achievement with their different strategies in learning English, where in national standard KKM is expected to touch 75/100 in every subject, while the average score of English in each class already reach more than 75 in the first grade in 2019.

High achievement is defined as a level of performance that is higher than one would expect for students of the same age, grade, or experience. Based on the regulation of the minister of Education and Culture (Kermendikbud) number 14 of 2018 concerning the Admission of New Students (PPDB), the education system in Indonesia has a minimum and maximum age to enter school, it is mean at same grade there are the same ages and there is no significant difference age between students.

Detlef Prozesky (2000) proposes people learn in different ways, some people are receivers: they like to memories what is given to them. Other people are 'detectives': like to investigate what they are learning themselves to get understand. Yet, the others are 'generators': they like to decide what they want learn, and then look for opportunities to learn those things.

Therefore students have to develop their learning strategies, as they are getting older. According to Kemendikdub (2001:8), English learning in school has goals as communication in English, understanding English as a system, understanding culture, and general knowledge. Meanwhile senior high school level is the most important level in improving students' English achievement by considering their learning strategies. It is the phase when students already developed their learning preferences. At this level, the majority of students individually understand their best ways of learning. Some students may prefer to learn by listening to teachers' explanations or by listening to their friends studying. On the other hand, there will be some students, who like to learn by taking notes, reading, focus on teachers' explanations and sit on the first row of class to keep an eye on everything. The point is students have to know the best strategies for themself learning process to get a high achievement.

There must be factors or ways how the students get high achievement where the test score in English subject can reach the maximum score. From their strategies or motivation when they learn about English and, the way the teacher teach English or it could be from society. Jurkovic (2010) examined the effect of two factors on

achievement test scores in English as a foreign language for specific purposes in higher education: preexisting linguistic competence and frequency of use of language learner strategies.

This present research focused on student's strategies in learning English of SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan. Related to the explanation above, this study aimed at finding the learning strategies used by students of higher achievement of senior high school students' in SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan

B. Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem of this study was “What are the learning strategies applied of high achievement students in English of the second grade at SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan?”.

C. Objective of the Study

Concerning the problem, the objective of the study found the learning strategies used by high achievement students of the second grade at SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan.

D. Scope of the Study

The study focused on analyzing learning strategies of high achievement students in English of the second-grade at SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan.

Achievement is regarded as action of completing or attaining by exertion, where score in the national standard (KKM) as the reference to show the high achievement.

E. Significances of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be useful, relevant, and give a contribution, theoretically and practically, like the following:

1. Theoretically, this study can increase knowledge about learning strategies and can be a reference in the future to the other researchers who have the intention to conduct similar research.
2. Practically, this study describes students' learning strategies, it can be a way to the teacher to help students to know the strategies which are suitable to use by students in the learning English process to improve their ability.