RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY PEKANBARU SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR ETHNICITY FACTOR

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to identify the use of language learning strategies by the students of different ethnicity. An additional objective was to look at the differences language learning strategies used based on ethnicity. The respondents of the study were 400 Senior high school students in Pekanbaru. Data was collected using Strategy Inventory Language Learning (SILL) by Oxford (1990a). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data, the research findings revealed that there are significant differences between ethnicity with language learning strategies used. The implication of the study is that although students are aware of some language learning strategies, they may need to be explicitly taught to use them.

INTRODUCTION

English instruction in Indonesian context has been in line with the existence of this country. In the phase of 1945 until 1984 (almost forty years), the main target of learning English was to understand the reading passages with a strong support from vocabulary items terms and sentence structure. Grammar translation method (GTM) has dominated the teaching approach. Consequently, the teachers and the students concentrated to the pattern of the sentence (sentence formula) in order to acknowledge the existing ideas in the written text. In this era, it was really rare of the students to be able to speak and to in English.

Then, in the early of 1980's, the English instruction was totally\ evaluated. Brian Tomlinson (1990) summarized the English instruction setting was that after six years of learning English, most of the learners could not achieve it for communication. To cope these huge permanent problems, the national curriculum team recommended to switch the English instruction from pre-communicative activities to communicative active activities (William Littlewood 1980). In other words, the students should be able to use what they have got in the package of the knowledge of the language (listening, reading, structure, listening, vocabulary) in speaking and writing in the classroom or whenever possible (Garis-Garis Besar Program Pengajaran (GBPP)-Teaching and Learning Guideline 1984).Under the framework of the 1984 GBPP, through structured trained teachers on communicative approach, teaching and language learning strategies were introduced. One of them was that English was gradually used as main of medium of instruction in English subject and daily language between English teachers and the students out side the classroom. The highlighted language learning strategy at this period was to use the language expression, ideas, and vocabulary in the suggested texts and authentic materials to do speaking and writing activities. This mechanism occurred over the years and until the recent practice of English instruction (GBPP 2006). In this context, the teacher centered was switched to the students centered (a shift of pedagogical focus fromlanguage teachers to language learners). Learners and their language learning processes have been the concern of educators in many parts of the world (Ramirez 1986; Kouaogo 1993; Hasyim & Syarifah 1994; Pickard 1996).

The language learners -as the so-called the senior high school students- concentrate to two important language learning targets : a) the use of English and b) the score of the final national examination(GBPP 2004). Referring to the building of the ability of using the language, the recent curriculum provides a framework to follow. They have to obey the genre of the text-descriptive, narrative, procedure, explanation, discussion, exposition, review, news item, etc., before they practice speaking and writing (GBPP 2006). In addition, they are also required to master the materials offered in the final national examination (reading for

35 items and listening for 15 items). Achieving both targets, the students employ certain language learning strategies in the classroom, out of the class, and in the final national examination.

GOALS OF ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING

Dealing with the report from Brian Tomlinson (1990), just a few senior high school leavers (commonly between 10 % to 15 % of class of 40 students) could use English orally and even very small number of them could write good English. On the other hand, bigger number of the students (96 % out of 4.000 senior high school students in Pekanbaru municipality) could pass in the English final national examination (see the report of local government of Riau Province 2005/2006). In other words, the students are implicitly requested to get through with the knowledge of the language rather than the uses of English. Even, four months before the final examination, the schools design and implement a breakthrough program in order to enhance the students' ability to comprehend the test materials (reading and listening). As a result, the implemented the breakthrough programmed enables the students to choose the correct answer in the test.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to identify language learning strategies used by the Pekanbaru senior high school students in learning English. Then, the study also determines whether there are significant differences among ethnicities (Riau Malay, Minangkabau, Java, Batak, and China) in language learning strategies use.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS (RQ)

Is there any significant difference among ethnicities (Riau Malay, Minangkabau, Java, Batak, and China) and language learning strategies use?

HYPOTHESES

There are significant differences among Riau Malay, Minangkabau, Java, Batak, and China and language learning strategies use.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study gains its significance from its subject, aims, and questions which deal with the Pekanbaru senior high school students to learn English as a foreign language. At this stage, the students should prepare themselves with a very strong foundation of knowledge including English for their further education. In line with it, the students should achieve a minimum passing rate in the final national examination as big as 5.00 out 10.00 (see the decree of the ministry of education no. 45 2007). In addition, they should also obtain 6.00 from the school examination syndicate.

Further, after secondary school, English is still a very crucial subject to take in higher education (institute, colleges, and universities) where English continues to be a compulsory subject. For instance, if they continue their studies to University of Riau (one of the state universities in Riau province-Indonesia), they should take certain credits/loads of English. At the end of the courses, they students should have at least 450 TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score-as one of the requirements to pursue the university certificate (see the decree of no.   from rector of the University of Riau). In similar, if they enrol to English Department of the same university, they should obtain higher score (at least 500) for the same purpose
(see the decree no. 1453, the dean of Faculty of Education of University of Riau 2006).

Furthermore, the students will be mature and self-directed learners by which they realize the importance of determining the suitable language learning strategies in learning English at secondary stage as

well as in the higher stage. In turn, they could be independent learners or autonomous learners in planning, implementing, and evaluating their learning progress interacts in complicated way to influence proficiency in second language.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Because of the focus of the study to investigate the language learning strategies used by the senior high school students in Pekanbaru; this study is limited to English language learning, not any kind of learning, so its results can not be generalized to the learning of Bahasa Indonesia, Social Science subjects, Natural Science subjects, Religion, Sport, etc.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The needed data to prove and to test the hypotheses in chapter one have been put into the consideration in determining the research methods. This chapter aims at presenting the research methods which are used to investigate the language learning strategies used by the secondary school students and factors affecting the choice of the language learning strategies. Collecting the data of language learning strategies, questionnaires and interviews were conducted to the students. The questionnaire as the so called –Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)- was used to collect the data of how the students learn English (Oxford : 1990). The data about the factors affecting the choice of language learning strategies: social factors, economic factors, situational factors, and academic factors were collected through a certain form to fill in by the respondents.

POPULATION

The population of this study is all third students of Pekanbaru Senior High School/upper secondary level. Those students have learned English for six academic years (three years in lower secondary level and other three years in upper secondary level). The total number of the population are 5.895 students of state general schools, private general schools, state vocational schools (engineering and entrepreneurship) and private vocational schools (engineering and entrepreneurship). The population have numerous characters like social background (gender and ethnics) situational schools, academic background, and economic background. The profile of the population characters are as the following:

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

To analyze the collected data, several procedures have been followed. First of all, scoring the response of the respondents in the given questionnaires, and interviews. Afterwards, showing the differences between male and female and language learning strategies use (RQ 1), ethnicities (Riau Malay, Minangkabau, Java, Batak and China) and language learning strategies use. The questionnaire use is Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The SILL is produced by Oxford 1990. Each statement has five choices : 1. Never or almost never true of me; 2. Generally not true of me; 3. Somewhat true of me; 4. Generally true of me; and 5. Always or almost always true of me. The answer of the respondent has been scored as the following. The choice 1 is scored 1, 2 is 2, 3 is 3, 4 is 4, and 5 is 5. The SILL consists of 6 parts (Part A, Part B, Part C, Part D, Part E, and Part E) with 50 statements. The sum of the whole parts is divided 50 in order to get the average of the respondent's response. The descriptive statistics has been used in order to get the central tendency (mean, median, and mode) of the response of the respondents in using the category of language learning strategies constructed in RQ 1 (memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies) (Oxford 1990). The same statistics has also been used in analyzing the respondents' response in interviews.

Data Analysis and Findings

Distributions of Respondents by Ethnicity

No	Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
1.	Riau Malay People	169	42.3
2.	Minangkabaunese	147	36.8
3.	Javanese	36	9.0
4.	Bataknese	28	7.0
5.	Chinese	20	5.0
	Total	400	100.0

The findings displayed in Table 4.1 showed that there are 5 ethnicities involved in this research, they are: Riau Malay 169 students (42.3%), Minangkabau147 students (36.8%), Javanese 36 students (9.0%), Bataknese 20 students (7.0%), and Chinese 20 students (5.0). The total sample in this research is 400 students (100.0%).

MEAN SCORE FOR ITEMS IN EACH STRATEGY CATEGORY

The purpose of using the Strategy Inventory for Learning Strategies was to identify the language learning strategy preferences of the students who participated in this study. The items of the questionnaire are categorized into six categories of language learning strategies following the categorization proposed by Oxford (1990a). However, in the presentation in the questionnaire, all the items have been separated and not grouped according to category. For the purpose of the analysis the items are grouped by category and analyzed separately. All of respondents of this research are 400 senior high school students in Pekanbaru consist of 200 Male and 200 Female students. The questionnaires consisted of 50 items, which identified the strategy preferences of the respondents.

Mean Score for Items in Memory Strategies Category

No	Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation	Categories
1.	I think of the relationship between what I already know and new things I learn in English.	3.71	.691	High
2.	I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.	3.94	.700	High
3.	I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the new word to help me remember the word.	4.21	.778	High
4.	I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.	3.99	.724	High
5.	I use rhymes to remember new English words.	3.88	.700	High
6.	I use flashcards to remember new English words.	3.57	.584	High
7.	I physically act out English words.	3.89	.730	High
8.	I review English lessons often.	3.76	.715	High
9.	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign.	4.17	725	High
	Total	3.9022	0.0521	High

The findings displayed in table 4.2 showed that the highest mean among the items is "I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the new word to help me remember the word "(item no 3) with mean 4.21 and followed by "I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board, or on a street sign" (item no 9) with mean 4.17. From the table also we know that most of students are prefer to remember the word by image/ picture. Total mean of memory strategy is 3. 90, it means that social strategy is in high categories. In another words we also can say that most of students use memory strategy in their study.

Mean Score for Items in Cognitive Strategies Category

No	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Categories
10.	I say or write new English words several times.	4.17	.852	High
11.	I try to talk like native speakers.	3.76	.571	High
12.	I practice the sounds of English.	3.99	.725	High
13.	I use the English words I know in different ways.	3.86	.670	High
14.	I start conversations in English.	3.74	.700	High
15.	I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.	3.95	.711	High
16.	I read for pleasure in English.	3.83	.753	High
17.	I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English.	3.79	.579	High
18.	I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.	3.74	.695	High
19.	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.	3.79	.722	High
20.	I try to find patterns in English.	3.86	.717	High
21.	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.	3.61	.670	High
22.	I try not to translate word-for-word.	3.96	.789	High
23.	I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.	4.16	.699	High
	Total	3.8709	0.0728	High

The findings displayed in table 4.4 and figure 4.4 showed that "I say or write new English words several times" (item no 10) with mean 4.17 I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English (item no 23) with mean mean 4.16 cognitive strategies3. 56, and then "I practice the sounds of English with mean 3.99.Total mean score of cognitive strategies is 3.8709 and standard deviation is 0.0728. We can conclude that most of the students use this strategy in their study and we know that this strategy is in high level.

Mean Score for Items in Metacognitive strategy

No		Mean	Standard Deviation	Categories
	To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.	3.92	.857	High
	When I cannot think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.	3.88	.695	High
	I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.	3.89	.710	High
	I read English without looking up every new word.	3.83	.693	High
	I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.	4.05	.801	High
	If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.	3.78	.674	High
	Total	3.8888	0.0733	High

The findings displayed in table 4.5 and figure 4.5 showed that "I try to guess what the other person will say next in English" (item no 24) with mean 4.05 and followed by "To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses" (item no 24) with mean 3.92. From total mean score Metacognitive strategy was the second rank with mean score was 3. 72, it means that Metacognitive strategy is still in high categories. We also can say that most of students in this research use this strategy in this study, so it gets the high categories/ frequency.

Mean Score for Items in Compensation Strategies Category

No		Mean	Standard Deviation	Categories
30.	I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	3.87	.685	High
31.	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	4.01	.731	High
32.	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	3.98	.796	High
33.	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	4.03	.650	High
34.	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	3.58	.721	High
35.	I look for people I can talk to in English.	3.89	.674	High
36.	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	3.98	.833	High
37.	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	4.43	.718	High
38.	I think about my progress in learning English.	4.24	.712	High
	Total	4.0008	0.0579	High

From The findings displayed in table 4.6 and figure 4.6 showed that that the total mean score of Compensation strategy was 3. 57, it means that Compensation strategy is in high categories. We can see that

item no 38 " I have clear goals for improving my English skill" with mean 4.43 and followed by item no 38 " I think about my progress in learning English" with mean 4.24 and then item no 33 "I try to find out how to be a better learner of English" with mean 4.03 then followed by item no 32 "I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better". In another way, total mean score of compensation strategies is 4.008 and standard deviation 0.0579, so we can say that most of the students use this strategy in their study, that's why this strategy is in high categories/ frequency.

Mean Score for Items in Affective Strategies Category

No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Categories
39.	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.	4.09	.662	High
40.	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.	4.24	.694	High
41.	I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.	3.95	.731	High
42.	I notice if I am ense or nervous when I am studying or using English.	4.25	.712	High
43.	I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.	4.12	.703	High
44.	I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.	3.90	.712	High
Total		4.0921	0.0233	High

The findings displayed in table 4.7 and figure 4.7 showed that the mean of Affective strategy was the highest strategy among the other strategy with the mean score was 3.75, it means that Affective strategy is in high categories. In this case we also can say that most of the students use this strategy, so it can get high categories/ frequency. From the displayed table we can see that item no 42 "I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake" with mean 4.24 and followed by item no 42 "I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English" with mean 4.25. After that item no 43 "I write down my feelings in a language learning diary " with mean 4.12 and followed by item no 39 "I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English" with mean 4.09.

Mean score for items in Social Strategies Category

No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Categories
45.	If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or to say it again.	3.94	.738	High
46.	I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.	4.04	.741	High
47.	I practice English with other students.	3.80	.703	High
48.	I ask for help from English speakers.	4.02	.711	High
49.	I ask questions in English.	3.92	.731	High
50.	I try to learn about the culture of the English speakers.	3.89	.753	High
	Total	3.9346	0.0188	High

The findings displayed in table 4.8 and figure 4.8 showed that that the mean of Social strategy was 3. 68 and ranked as the third, it means that social strategy is in high categories. In another words we can say that most of the students are used this strategy, so it can get high categories/ frequency. We can see item no 45 "If I do not understand something in English, I ask the other person to slow down or to say it again" with mean 3.94 followed by item no 48 "I ask for help from English speakers" with mean 4.02 and then followed by item no 46 "I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk" with mean 4.04.

From all the tables and graphics we can conclude that most of the students are used the strategy, from 5 kinds of strategy, 4 strategies are in high categories, they are memory strategy is 3. 41, Compensation strategy was 3. 57, Metacognitive strategy was 3. 72, Affective strategy was 3. 75, Social strategy was 3. 68, and only one strategy in medium categories, it is memory strategy with mean 3.41.

Language Learning Strategies Used based on Ethnicity

Strategy Categories	Mean Score					Total
	Malay	Minang	Javanese	Bataknese	Chinese	
Memory	3.8981	3.8859	3.9599	3.9405	3.9000	3.9022
Cognitive	3.8677	3.8581	3.9048	3.9133	3.8714	3.8709
Compensation	3.9063	3.8639	3.9630	3.8690	3.8167	3.8888
Metacognitive	3.9974	4.0174	4.0463	4.0000	3.8278	4.0008
Affective	4.0819	4.0986	4.1157	4.1012	4.0750	4.0921
Social	3.9566	3.9229	3.8287	3.9762	3.9667	3.9346
Mean Score	3.9375	3.9291	3.9633	3.9586	3.8980	3.9362

The displayed findings show that in Memory stratgey Malay students got mean score 3.8981 followed by Minang students who got means score 3.8859 then Javanese students got mean score 3.9599 followed by Bataknese students with mean score 3.9405 then followed by Chinese students with mean score 3.9000. In Cognitive strategy Malay students with mean score 3.8677 followed by Minang students with mean score 3.8581 and Javanese students with mean score 3.9048 followed by Bataknese students with mean score 3.9133 and Chinese students with mean score 3.8714. In Compensation strategy Malay students with mean score 3.9063 followed by Minang students with mean score 3.8639 and Javanese students with mean score 3.9630 then Bataknese students with mean score 3.8690 and followed by Chinese students with mean score 3.8167.

In Metacognitive strategy Malay students with mean score 3.9974 followed Minang score 4.0174 then Javanese students with mean score 4.0463 followed by Bataknese students with mean score 4.0000 and Chinese students with mean score 3.8278. In Affective strategy Malay students with mean score 4.0819 then followed by Minang students with mean score 4.0980 then Javanese students with mean score 4.1157 followed by Bataknese students with mean score 4.1012 and Chinese students with mean score 4.0750. Then in social strategy Malay students with mean score 3.9566 followed by Minang students with mean score 3.9229 then Javanese students with mean score 3.8287 followed by Bataknese students with mean score 3.9762 and Chinese students with mean score 3.9667.

From total data Malay students with mean score 3.9375 followed by Minang students with mean score 3.9291 and Javanese students with mean score 3.9633 followed by Bataknese students with mean score 3.9586 Chinese students with mean score 3.8980. So from the data we can rank the ethnicity such as Javanese students then followed by bataknese, malay, minang, and Chinese students.

Variation of Language Learning Strategy Use by Categories based on Ethnicity

The third independent variable, which is English language proficiency, presents another set of interesting results. The ANOVA scores for the three strategy categories show significant differences based on English language proficiency, namely Memory, Cognitive and Metacognitive strategies. These strategies showed positive variation in which more high proficiency level students use these strategies. Goh and Kwah (1997) found that Memory strategies show positive variation, while Green and Oxford (1995) found these two together with Affective and Social strategies showing a positive variation. Mohamed Amin Embi (2000) also found that good learners use almost all of the suggested strategies, especially those related to strategies for using media.

Table 4.21 Language Learning Strategies based on Ethnicity

Ethnicity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Riau Malay	169	3.9375	.17441	.01342	3.9110	3.9640
Minang Kabau	147	3.9291	.17140	.01414	3.9012	3.9571
Java	36	3.9633	.19923	.03320	3.8959	4.0307
Batak	28	3.9586	.19221	.03632	3.8840	4.0331
China	20	3.8980	.14595	.03264	3.8297	3.9663
Total	400	3.9363	.17535	.00877	3.9190	3.9535

Based on the results of this study, it was found that Memory, Cognitive, and Metacognitive strategies with alpha value at the significance levels (0.000, 0.0030, 0.0033) showed positive variation. More high proficiency level students use the strategies than the other two proficiency levels (medium and low). It can be concluded that all three strategies (Memory, Cognitive, and Metacognitive) reported were found to have significant differences, and contributed to the grades that the students have obtained in the course. These results support the finding of Green and Oxford (1995). In their study, it was found that the majority of the strategies used more frequently by more successful learners involved active language use. They further noted that a vital role in L2 learning appears to be played by strategies that involved active use of the target language.

CONCLUSION

The results obtained show that strategies that are related to self-directed learning such as Metacognitive, Cognitive and Affective strategies are more frequently used. Even though more students use or know these strategies in order to improve on their English, but only a handful would actually use these strategies to learn English in the classroom. The ANOVA results show that there is significant difference between the independent variable ethnicity status and the dependent variable overall strategy use. From the findings, it can be concluded that there is significant differences language learning strategies based on ethnicity.

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