THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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Abstract

The independent learning strategies of foreign language learners who have different backgrounds have been an important issue for instructors and educators for decades. The same interest occurs across curriculum because independent learners, or autonomous learners, are the ultimate goal not only in the field of language learning but also in other fields of study. This is because knowledge in the information technology era is so extensive and changeable that no one can be explicitly taught it all. This in turn creates an urgent need for people with the capacity to learn by themselves throughout their life. By using appropriate students' language learning strategies, the students will be able to overcome their language barrier and try to find their success in language learning especially in writing descriptive text.

Key : terms – language learning strategies, writing descriptive text

1. Introduction

This research deals with the analysis of students' language learning strategies in writing descriptive text on the grade tenth students of SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran. This research is conducted for some reason as the following;

Firstly, based on the 2013 Senior High School Curriculum, the students should be able to write a short functional text, dialogue and monologue text in the form of Narrative, Recount, News Items, Descriptive, Report, Exposition, Explanation, and Discussion. The work of writing presented in the form of text types, usually known as genres, which are closely related to the purpose of each type. In writing descriptive text, the grade tenth students are expected to be able to write a simple descriptive text correctly. They should be able

to make sentences in the form of present tense and develop main idea into short descriptive text.

Secondly, it is inevitable that learners face many difficulties in learning a foreign language. This research needs to be held in facing the fact which reveal out the situation of the writing result of learning English in SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran. The students' achievements in writing were varieties. Start from the higher score to lower score. These varieties can be caused by some factors. One of the main factors is even though writing is an important skill, Mukminatien (1991:130) states, "Most English foreign language students are not interested in writing and performance on writing is unsatisfactory." Ricard and Renandya, (2002: 303) and Widodo (2007: 116) also say, "The students regard that writing is the most difficult language skill to master. The difficulty in writing also happens among Indonesian students." Especially at a senior high school, it is not as easy for them to express what on their mind because English is not our own language.

There are many reasons why writing is regarded difficult. Simpson (1998: 34) says, "The difficulty is due to the fact that a writer needs to have enough language and general intellectual skill to generate and organize ideas and put those ideas into coherent, logically ordered, intelligible sentences, paragraphs and essays." Besides, Richard and Renandya (2002: 303) says, "The difficulty lies on how to generate and organize ideas using an appropriate choice of vocabulary, sentence and paragraph organization, and translate these ideas into a readable text."

Thirdly, to overcome these language barriers, the students need to utilize learning strategies. A good language learner tries to find ways to use these strategies to succeed in language learning. These strategies usually make learning more successful if they make use of learning strategies while learning a foreign language. Otherwise, many learners fail to learn a foreign language as they are not self-directed learners or they are used to being spoon-fed learners

Over time, students develop their own learning strategies - which include the ways in which they learn and remember information, how they study for tests and how they make the best use of their learning strengths. Many students may not even be aware that they are using their strategies as it may have become a natural and automatic process for them. Rebecca Oxford (1990:8) says, "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 situation."

By considering the description above, the researcher was interested to carry out the research about the analysis of students' language learning strategies in writing descriptive text on the grade tenth students of SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran and to find out:

(1) To find out the language learning strategies used by the students in the classroom in writing descriptive text.

(2) To find out the students' attitude on the benefits of students' language learning strategies.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Definition of Language Learning Strategies

Wenden and Rubin (1987:19) say, "Learning strategies as any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information." Richards and Platt (1992:209) state, "Learning strategies are intentional behavior and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information. According to Stern (1992:261), "The concept of learning strategy is dependent on the assumption that learners consciously engage in activities to achieve certain goals and learning strategies can be regarded as broadly conceived intentional directions and learning techniques." All language learners use language learning strategies either consciously or unconsciously when processing new information and performing tasks in the language classroom. Since language classroom is like a

problem-solving environment in which language learners are likely to face new input and difficult tasks given by their instructors, learners' attempts to find the quickest or easiest way to do what is required, that is, using language learning strategies is inescapable.

Andrew D. Cohen, Susan J. Weaver, and Tao-Yuan Li (1996:3) say, "Language learning strategies are used with the explicit goal of helping learners improve their knowledge and understanding of a target language." They are the conscious thoughts and behaviors used by students to facilitate language learning tasks and to personalize the language learning process.

According to www.wikipedia.org, "Language learning strategies is a term referring to the processes and actions that are consciously deployed by language learners to help them to learn or use a language more effectively." They have also been defined as 'thoughts and actions, consciously chosen and operationalized by language learners, to assist them in carrying out a multiplicity of tasks from the very outset of learning to the most advanced levels of target language performance'. The term language *learner* strategies, which incorporates strategies used for language learning and language use, is sometimes used, although the line between the two is ill-defined as moments of second language use can also provide opportunities for learning.

O'Malley & Chamot (1990: 1) say, "Learning strategies are described as the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information. and Oxford (1990: ix) says, "Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more transferable to a new situation." Slightly more specific definitions are offered which accountants for the need to understand new information in order to learn.

Based on those theories, learning strategies have been defined as:

(1) Mental and/or communicative processes;
(2) Subconscious or conscious actions and techniques for learning: they assist with storing information, forming language rules, and understanding; making learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, and more transferable to new situations;
(3) Applicable to both simple and complex tasks;
(4) Teachable;
(5) Helpful in developing appropriate attitudes toward the learning situation, increasing learner independence and autonomy.

2.2 Classification of Language Learning Strategies

A. *Rebecca L. Oxford*

Oxford's (1990:17) taxonomy of language learning strategies is shown in the following :

Table 1
Oxford's Taxonomy of Language Learning Strategies

DIRECT STRATEGIES	INDIRECT STRATEGIES
Memory	**Metacognitive**
Creating mental linkage	*Centering your learning*
Grouping	Overviewing and linking with already known material
Associating/elaborating	Paying attention
Placing new words into a context	Delaying speech to focus on listening
Applying images and sounds	*Arranging and planning your learning*

Using	Finding out about language learning
Semantic mapping	Organizing
Using keywords	Setting goals and objectives
Representing sounds in memory	Identifying the purpose of a language task
Reviewing well	Planning for a language task
Structured reviewing	Seeking practice opportunities
Employing action	*Evaluating your learning*
Using physical response or sensation	Self-monitoring
Using mechanical techniques	Self-evaluating
Cognitive	**Affective**
Practicing	*Lowering your anxiety*
Repeating	Using progressive relaxation, deep breathing
Formally practicing with sound and writing system	or meditation
Recognizing and using formulas and patterns	Using music
Recombining	Using laughter

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Practicing naturalistically	*Encouraging yourself*
Receiving and sending messages strategies	Making positive statements
Getting the idea quickly	Taking risks wisely
Using resources for receiving and sending message	Rewarding yourself
Analyzing and reasoning	*Taking your emotional temperature*
Reasoning deductive	Listening to your body
Analyzing expressions	Using a checklist
Analyzing contrastively (across language)	Writing a language learning diary
Transferring	Discussing your feelings with someone else
Translating	**Social strategies**
Creating structure for input and output	*Asking question*
Taking notes	Asking for clarification and verification
Summarizing	Asking for correction
Highlighting	*Cooperating with others*
Compensation strategies	Cooperating with peers

Guessing intelligently	Cooperating with proficient users of the new language
Using linguistic clues	*Empathizing with others*
Using other clues	Developing cultural understanding
Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing	Becoming aware of others' thoughts and feelings
Switching to the mother tongue	
Getting help	
Using mime or gesture	
Avoid communication partially or totally	
Selecting the topic	
Adjusting or approximating the message	
Coining words	
Using a circumlocution or synonym	

B. Anita Wenden

Table 2
Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies in Writing
Proposed by Wenden (1991)

Metacognitive Strategies	Cognitive Strategies	
	Clarification	Self-question Hypothesizing Defining terms Comparing
Planning	Retrieval written	Re-reading aloud or silently what had been writing in lead-in word or expression
Monitoring	Resourcing	Self-questioning Writing till the ideas would come
Evaluating	Deferral Avoidance Verification	Summarizing what had just been written (in terms of content of rhetoric) Thinking in one's native language Ask researcher Refer to dictionary

C. J. Michael O'Malley

O'Malley et al. (1985:582-584) divide language learning strategies into three main subcategories:

a. Metacognitive Strategies

It can be stated that metacognitive is a term to express executive function, strategies which require planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Among the main metacognitive strategies, it is possible to include advance organizers, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, functional planning, self-monitoring, delayed production, self-evaluation.

b. Cognitive Strategies
    Cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks
    and they involve more direct manipulation of the learning
    material itself. Repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping,
    note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory
    representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration,
    transfer, inferencing are among the most important cognitive
    strategies.
c. Socio-affective Strategies
    As to the socio-affective strategies, it can be stated that they are
    related with social-mediating activity and transacting with
    others. Brown (1987:93-94) says, "Cooperation and question for
    clarification are the main socio-affective strategies."

D. Joan Rubin

Rubin (1987) in Murat Hismanoglu TESL Journal, Vol. VI,
No. 8, (August 2000:2-3) says, "The pioneer of the field, categorizes
language learner strategies into three major kinds of strategies,
namely Learning, Communication, and Social based on the criteria
of whether the strategy contributes directly or indirectly to
learning."
a. Learning Strategies
    They are of two main types, being the strategies contributing
    directly to the development of the language system constructed
    by the learner:
    • Cognitive Learning Strategies
       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
  These strategies are used to oversee, regulate or self-direct language learning. They involve various processes as planning, prioritising, setting goals, and self-management.

b. Communication Strategies

They 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. Communication strategies are used by 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.

c. Social Strategies

"Rubin and Wenden 1987:23-27) says, "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 the obtaining, storing, retrieving, and using of language.

E.   Hans Heinrich Stern

According to Stern (1992:262-266), there are five main language learning strategies. These are as follows:

a. Management and Planning Strategies
  -   decide what commitment to make to language learning
  -   set himself reasonable goals
  -   decide on an appropriate methodology, select appropriate resources, and monitor progress,
  -   evaluate his achievement in the light of previously determined goals and expectations.

b. Cognitive Strategies

- Clarification / Verification
- Guessing / Inductive Inferencing
- Deductive Reasoning
- Practice
- Memorization
- Monitoring

c. Communicative - Experiential Strategies

Communication strategies, such as circumlocution, gesturing, paraphrase, or asking for repetition and explanation are techniques used by learners so as to keep a conversation going. The purpose of using these techniques is to avoid interrupting the flow of communication.

d. Interpersonal Strategies

They should monitor their own development and evaluate their own performance. Learners should contact with native speakers and cooperate with them. Learners must become acquainted with the target culture

e. Affective Strategies

It is evident that good language learners employ distinct affective strategies. Language learning can be frustrating in some cases. In some cases, the feeling of strangeness can be evoked by the foreign language. In some other cases, L2 learners may have negative feelings about native speakers of L2.

2.3 The Benefits of Students' Language Learning Strategies

Strategies are most often conscious and goal-driven, especially in the beginning stages of talking an unfamiliar language task and less successful language learners. A particular learning strategy can help a learner in certain context achieve learning goals that the learner deems important where as other learning strategies may not useful for that learning goal. Differences in strategy use also vary according to proficiency level. The learner's goals, the context of learning situation, and the cultural values of the learner's

society also influence choice and acceptability of language learning strategies.

Cohen (2002:8) says, "The goal of this kind of instruction is to help foreign language students become more aware of the ways in which they learn most effectively, ways in which they can enhance their own comprehension and production of the target language, and ways in which they can continue to learn on their own and communicate in the target language after they leave the language classroom"

Oxford (1990:19) explains eleven fundamental features of language learning strategies:
1. They contribute to the main goal, communicative competence.
2. Allow students to become more self-directed.
3. Expand the role of teachers.
4. Are problem oriented.
5. They are specific actions taken by the students.
6. Involve many aspects of the student, not just cognitive.
7. Support learning, both directly and indirectly.
8. Are not always conscious.
9. Can be taught.
10. Are flexible.
11. Are influenced by a variety of factors.

In order to make the questionnaire more accurately, most of the statement in the questionnaire was quoted from the experts' opinion about the benefit from language learning strategies. The reasons of using Likert's Scale in the questionnaire are to know how far language learning strategies take a greater part in process of learning and teaching and how is the important of language learning strategies for students while completing their task.

The use of appropriate language learning strategies often results in improved proficiency or overall achievement in specific skill area (Thompson and Rubin, 1996; Oxford et al., 1993). Oxford (1990b: 1) states that language learning strategies are "especially important for language learning because they are tools for active,

self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence." Oxford (Oxford, 1990b: 9) also says, "LLS allow learners to become more self-directed. They are a desire for control and autonomy of learning on the part of the learner. " These statements were the basic review for the second statement in the questionnaire.

Thornbury (2002: 25) defines mnemonics as,"[...] tricks to help retrieve items or rules that are stored in memory and that are not yet automatically retrievable." Langer & Applebee (1986) in Carol Booth Olson and Robert land (2007:274) say, "It is the teacher's responsibility to make visible for students what it is that experienced readers and writers do when they compose; to introduce the cognitive strategies that underlie reading and writing in meaningful contexts; and to provide enough sustained, guided practice that students can internalize these strategies and perform complex tasks independently." Howard (1983:6) notes, the "essence of the cognitive approach" is that "the individual is viewed as being active, constructive, and planful"

Oxford (1990: 47) they "[...] enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge." Purpura (1999: 61) in Oxfords' article (2003:12) says, "Metacognitive strategy use has an executive function over cognitive strategy use in task completion." This statement was the basic review for eighth statement in the questionnaire. Cohen (2002: 3) describes affective strategies as those that "[...] serve to regulate emotions, motivation, and attitudes (e.g., strategies for reduction of anxiety and for self-encouragement)." This statement was the basic review for ninth statement in the questionnaire.

Ellis (1997: 77) defines social strategies together with affective ones as those concerning "[...] ways in which learners choose to interact with other speakers." (Čáp, 2001:190) says, "it is important for forming interpersonal relationships and building relationship with"

3. Methodology

The research design of this study was a descriptive qualitative approach. It was descriptive qualitative because it attempts to explain what students do in the classroom language learning realities. Research and case studies have told us many things about how were the grade tenth students' language learning strategies in writing descriptive text in SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran. Descriptive analysis was used as a problem solving procedure on the served things by describing the research object when the research was done based on the facts found. The participant in this research was tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran.

Donald Ary, Lucy Cheser Jacobs, Asghar Razavieh and Christine K. Sorensen (2010:425) states, "The data collected are the participant experiences and perspectives; the qualitative researcher attempts to arrive at a rich description of the people, objects, events, places, conversations, and so on." Ary Donal et.all (2010:452) also say, "Qualitative research studies behavior as it occurs naturally in a classroom." For this reason, the researcher conducted a video recording to see the classroom activities, in order to observe what kinds of students' language learning strategies while doing their writing descriptive text. After conducting the recording, the researcher watched the video repeatedly while she was doing a deep observation of students' behavior in the classroom. From the video recording, the researcher got some data to support the research findings such as:

1. Capturing some photos from the video recording
2. Find out the action and short conversation among student or teacher.
3. Analyzing the students' test result.
4. Identify what do strategies do by the students in the classroom

5. Identify which strategies are major used by students in the classroom by seeing the frequently data.
6. Find out the benefits of the students' language learning strategies by giving questionnaires.

4. Data Analysis

To get the authentic data, the researcher conducted observation by record the classroom activity while doing the writing descriptive text. In conducting the research, the teacher and researcher allowed the student to use their own learning strategies. Teacher or researcher did not limit the students' movement. They were free to move and use their language learning strategy as they wish and do the learning strategies naturally. The students did not know they were recorded for a research. The recording and test for writing descriptive text took naturally in order to get the real students' language learning strategies when overcoming their writing task.

4.1 The language learning strategies used by the students in the classroom in writing descriptive text.

4.1.1   Cognitive Strategies

a. Repeating

Repeating strategies as part of cognitive strategies Repeating strategy deals with doing something several times in order to make it automatic or clearer. Oxford (1990) as well as Ellis and Sinclair (1989b) in Marcela Kozmonova's diploma thesis (2008:19) say, "emphasize writing drafts as a useful strategy based on the strategy of repeating." The students wrote a draft of her task on a paper for several times before she presented her final writing result on the paper test.

b. Using Resources for Receiving and Sending Messages (Cognitive Strategy)

The students used their dictionary as one of resource to get the information in doing his writing descriptive text. Using resources for receiving and sending messages is explained by

Oxford in her book. In her book Oxford (1990:18) says, "[…] involves using resource to finding out the meaning of what is heard or read in the new language, or to produce messages in the new language".

c. Recombining

The strategy of recombining is described by Oxford (1990: 45) as "combining known elements in new ways to produce a longer sequence, as in linking one phrase with another in a whole sentence." The easiest example can be joining two pieces of information (words, phrases, sentences) by inserting a suitable conjunction to create a meaningful context. The students were able to recombining adjective words by inserting comma (,) and conjunction "and" to create a meaningful context.

d. Transferring

Oxford (1990: 47) defines transferring strategy as "directly applying knowledge of words, concepts, or structures from one language to another in order to understand or produce an expression in the new language."

The grade tenth students of SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran know that the concepts of making adjective word in a sentence must add to be after the subject. But most of them forgot to put –s/-es to verbs if it was the third person subject.

4.1.2   Compensation Strategies

a. Getting Help

Getting help is the most one of compensation strategies to overcoming limitations in speaking and writing by getting help from teacher.

b. Coining Words

The strategy of coining words is based on a word-formation process called coinage. Yule (1998: 64) describes coining words as, "[...] the invention of totally new terms." Thus, this strategy involves creating new words by learners who need to

communicate but do not know the right expressions. Very often compound words are coined by learners when they come across a vocabulary barrier. Deal with this strategy as well naming it word coinage Ellis and Sinclair (1989b: 154) describe it as "inventing a new word based on knowledge of either L1 or L2". This student created new words to express her feeling on what she was going to wrote without considered whether her sentences in the right expressions.

c. Selecting The Topic

The strategy of selecting the topic is connected with the previous strategy. Learners who have particular limitations in the areas of vocabulary, topic, or grammar are advised to avoid communication involving the mentioned areas. Furthermore, they should try to direct their conversation at the topic which requires areas they are already familiar with. This strategy concerns both speaking and writing and teachers are supposed to implement speaking and writing tasks based on topics which correspond to learners´ knowledge and interests.

4.1.3   Affective Strategies

a. Using laughter

Using laughter is a factor of creating a positive mood as well and is a natural part of everyday life. Therefore, learners should be offered tasks which are enjoyable for them and which support creating a pleasant atmosphere in classroom without any stress and anxiety. Picture 6 shows Fachry and Sopiyan laughed to their teacher because they kept laughing and making joke each other while their task was not completing.

b. Encouraging yourself

There was a student (Fachry) tried to encourage his-self to try his best in English learning. He encouraged his-self to speak English even when he was afraid of making a mistake. O'Malley & Chammot (1990:8) say, "Affective strategies represented in the exercise of "self-talk," the redirecting of

negative thoughts about one's capability to perform a task with assurance that the task performance is within reach."

c. Discussing Your Feeling With Someone Else

In limitation or confusing about something, sometimes discussing your feeling with someone else will overcome the problem. Some students tried to share or discuss their confusing about how to write their task well with their friends. It refers to sharing learners´ feelings with teachers, parents, or friends. This strategy can be implemented in classroom activities thanks to them teachers can easily find out how learners feel and what they need. Ellis and Sinclair (1989b: 152) term this strategy as negotiating and define it as "discussing and reaching agreement with other learners and teachers"

4.1.4 Social Strategies

a. Asking questions

Another important advantage of social strategies concerning asking questions is that while working in pairs or small groups with peers, the students do not feel so anxious to ask or to admit that they do not understand something, as it often happens in frontal teaching. In fact, Norman (1986:12) says, "Learning under stress is often ineffective and can even be of negative value. So, pair work and groups work are recommended to reduce the stress. Briefly, the student's feelings may lower the barriers to language acquisition.

b. Cooperating With Peers (Social Strategy)

There were group of students were cooperating together while doing the task. Cooperating with other was kind of social strategies. Cooperating comes from the mutual interaction between people and their collective living, when one participant influences the other and the other person's reaction influences the former one again. This social interaction, or information exchange between students, enables students to coordinate their work and to cooperate their tasks.

4.2 The Benefit of Language Learning Strategies

From first statement, most of the students are strongly agree that the benefit of language learning strategies is helping students in developing appropriate attitudes toward the learning situation. There are 60,6% chose for strongly agree, 33,3% chose for agree and 6,1 % chose not sure for this statement.

From second statement, most of the students are strongly agree that the benefit of language learning strategies is increasing learners' independence and autonomy. There are 51,5% chose for strongly agree, 42,5 % chose for agree, 3% chose for not sure and 3% student chooses for disagree for this statement.

From the third statement, most of the students are strongly agree that the benefit of language learning strategies is enabling the students to take responsibility for their own learning. There are 51,5 % chose for strongly agree, 39,4% chose for agree and 9,1% chose for not sure for this statement.

From for fourth statement, most of the students are agree that the benefit of language learning strategies is helping students in developing appropriate attitudes toward the learning situation. There are 33,3% chose for strongly agree, 48,5% chose for agree and 18,2% chose not sure for this statement.

From fifth statement, most of the students are agree that the benefit of memory strategies as a help with better storing and retrieving required vocabulary. Although in this research, the researcher cannot find the memory strategies user. There are 21,2% chose for strongly agree, 72,8% chose for agree and 6% chose for not sure for this statement.

From the sixth statement, most of the students are agree that the benefit of cognitive strategies help an individual achieve a particular goal (understanding a text). There are 39,4% chose for strongly agree, 57,6% chose for agree and 3% chose for not sure for this statement.

From the seventh statement, most of the students are agree that the benefit of compensation strategies help to overcome students' limitation. There are 39,4% chose for strongly agree, 57,6% chose for agree and 3% chose for not sure for this statement.

From the eighth statement, most of the students are agree that the benefit of metacognitive strategies help students to ensure that the goal has been reach. These strategies did not find in this research because when using this strategies, teacher or learners must plan the material they are going to teach or learn first. Learner should set and find out the source relates to the material before the material present to the learners. But there are 27,3% chose for strongly agree, 66,7% students chose for agree and 6% chose for not sure for this statement.

From the ninth statement, most of the students are agree that the benefit of affective strategies help the students to control their feelings. There are 36,4% chose for strongly agree, 60,6% chose for agree and 3% chose for not sure for this statement.

From the tenth statement, most of the students are agree that the benefit of social strategies enable students to coordinate their work while cooperating with others. There are 42,5% chose for strongly agree, 54,5% chose for agree and 3% chose for not sure for this statement.

4.3 Research Findings

There are six language learning strategies based on oxford's taxonomy can be used by the students, they are memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. But after analyzed the data, there are only four language learning strategies they applied in the classroom. The four language learning strategies were cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. The researcher did not find any students used memory strategies and metacognitive strategies in doing their task.

While researcher was conducting the observation by watching the video recording repeatedly and checking the students' written test results. On this occasion, the researcher saw the most students used more than one strategy in the classroom, and the cognitive strategies were the major strategies used in the classroom.

The researcher also found there were some students could not find their own language learning strategies. They kept passive and did not do anything except did small talking with his seatmate. The result of his writing test was nothing.

After conducting the research, the researcher found the benefits of students' language learning based on the questionnaire results which is answer by teacher and students. The benefits are:

a. Helpful in developing appropriate attitudes toward the learning situation.
b. Increasing learner independence and autonomy
c. Enabling the students to take responsibility for their own learning
d. Raise student awareness about how they are learning and, as a result, help them to find more effective ways of working, so that they can continue working efficiently and useful even when away from their teacher and the classroom.
e. Cognitive strategies help an individual achieve a particular goal (understanding a text).
f. Compensation strategies help to overcome students' limitation.
g. Affective strategies help the students to control their feelings
h. Social Strategies enable students to coordinate their work and to cooperate

4.4 Research Discussion

Language learning strategies are a current issue concerning ways of making language learning easier for learners and thus it should not be ignored by teachers. According to Stern (1983:405), "In our view strategy is best reserved for general tendencies or

overall characteristics of the approach employed by the language learner, leaving learning techniques as the term to refer to particular forms of observable learning behaviour, more or less consciously employed by the learner."

4.4.1 The Students' Language Learning Strategies in The Classroom

By seeing the finding above, from the six language learning strategies from oxford's taxonomy only four strategies were used by the students in the classroom while doing their writing descriptive text. The four language learning strategies were cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. The researcher did not find any students used memory strategies and metacognitive strategies in doing their task.

As the name itself suggests, cognitive strategies refer to cognition, which is used by learners to complete a certain task. Ellis (1997: 77) perceives cognitive strategies as "[...] those that are involved in the analysis, synthesis, or transformation of learning materials." This group of strategies is generally considered to be very important for language learning. In this case, most of the student used repeating, using resources for receiving and sending message strategy, recombining strategy and transferring strategy as part of cognitive strategies.

The second strategies were compensation strategies. As the term suggests, compensation strategies deal with the issue of compensations. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000: 246) defines compensations as "things that make a bad situation better." In this case, the students intended getting help in every word they couldn't find in the dictionary or as a short way to get the information quickly. Other strategies from compensation strategies was coining words and selecting the topic that was easy for them to compose.

The third strategies were affective strategies. Learning process is naturally connected with learners´ feelings which appear

in particular situations, e.g., feelings of happiness when a task was fulfilled successfully, or on the other hand, feelings of nervousness before writing a test and others. In this case, the students used to using laughter, encouraging their selves and discussing their feelings with someone else (friend or teacher).

The fourth strategies were social strategies. Social strategies are indirect strategies which refer to communication. Communicative competencies are ones of the target competences of language education and their realization cannot be achieved without involving other people. Ellis (1997: 77) defines social strategies together with affective ones as those concerning "[...] ways in which learners choose to interact with other speakers."

In this case, the students used asking question and cooperating with peers as their learning strategies to support their learning process in writing descriptive text.

4.4.2 The Benefit of Language Learning Strategies

One of the most recent trends in foreign language teaching is the learner centeredness. In other words, student becomes the initiator of the teaching process and the teaching approach is directed according to the student's appropriate learning strategies. It has been described by many researchers how to facilitate the student's learning and the use of absorbed information the language learning strategies. In fact, these strategies are used by students consciously or unconsciously, when they are processing new information or accomplishing tasks in the language lesson.

Many other linguists and methodologists agree with this idea, which was, however, not always considered so in the past. Allen (1983: 1-2) say, "During much of the twentieth century vocabulary was neglected in programs for teachers, however, in the 1950s, many people began to notice that vocabulary learning is not a simple matter." For advance learner, they should have a greater vocabulary on their mind. Their task is how to collect and arrange those vocabularies to be important information. These strategies

did not use by the grade tenth students of SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran in writing descriptive text because they preferred to open their dictionary or getting help when they found an obstacle in transferring their words to English rather than use the memory strategy.

As the name itself suggests, cognitive strategies refer to cognition, which is used by learners to complete a certain task. Ellis (1997: 77) perceives cognitive strategies as"[...] those that are involved in the analysis, synthesis, or transformation of learning materials." In the case of writing descriptive text, grade tenth students of SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Kisaran use these strategies mostly than other strategies. This group of strategies is generally considered to be very important for language learning, so that these strategies used to help an individual achieve a particular goal (understanding a text).

In this case, there are compensation strategies, who serve for language learners as elimination of gaps in language and according to Oxford (1990: 47) they "[...] enable learners to use the new language for either comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge."

Cohen (2002: 3) describes affective strategies as those that "[...] serve to regulate emotions, motivation, and attitudes (e.g., strategies for reduction of anxiety and for self-encouragement)." Oxford (1990) emphasizes an important role of teachers in creating an influence over the emotional atmosphere of the classroom and presents three ways how to achieve it – among the others teaching learners to use affective strategies.

Ellis (1997: 77) defines social strategies together with affective ones as those concerning "[...] ways in which learners choose to interact with other speakers." Cohen (2002: 3) describes social strategies as "the actions which learners choose to take in order to interact with other learners and with native speakers."

In this case, Vygotsky *says "What children can do together today, they can do alone tomorrow."* This social interaction, or

information exchange between people, enables people to coordinate their work and to cooperate. In addition (Čáp, 2001:190) says, "it is important for forming interpersonal relationships and building relationship with"

5. Conclusions

The conclusion of this research is drawn based on the data analysis, findings and the conclusion as the following.

1. There are six language learning strategies based on oxford's taxonomy can used by student, but only four language learning strategies they applied in the classroom. The four language learning strategies were cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. The researcher did not find any students used memory strategies in doing their task.

2. The most students use more than one strategies in the classroom

3. There were some students could not find their own language learning strategies. They kept passive and did not do anything except did small talking with his seatmate. The result of his writing test was nothing.

4. The benefit of students' language learning are:
   a. Helpful in developing appropriate attitudes toward the learning situation.
   b. Increasing learner independence and autonomy
   c. Enabling the students to take responsibility for their own learning
   d. Raise student awareness about how they are learning and, as a result, help them to find more effective ways of working, so that they can continue working efficiently and useful even when away from their teacher and the classroom.
   e. Cognitive strategies help an individual achieve a particular goal (understanding a text).

f. Compensation strategies help to overcome students' limitation.
g. Metacognitive strategies help students to ensure that the goal has been reach.
h. Affective strategies help the students to control their feelings
i. Social Strategies enable students to coordinate their work and to cooperate

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