

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, hypothesis, the limitation of the study, and the definition of the key terms.

### A. Background of the Study

Learning style and learning strategy have been the topic of discussion for a long time. Many researchers have been trying to find possible factors that affect learning style and strategy. One of the factors that caught the attention is gender differences. Males and females are differently from each other.<sup>1</sup>

The distinction between “sex” and “gender” is a frequent topic for debates within feminist research. A common use of the term “sex” is to restrict it to referring to biological distinctions between males and females, while reserving the term “gender” to refer to the psychological features or attributes associated with these categories. The use of gender is more accurate for the connection to “the gender system” identified by feminist researchers, since it marks the cultural and structural dimension. Most of studies are concerned with gender differences in classroom interaction.

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<sup>1</sup> Ebel R, *Encyclopedia of Educational Research* (Toronto: Engros, 1999), 77.

This problem is of obvious scientific and pedagogical interest since one goal for education is to provide equal opportunities for males and females.<sup>2</sup>

In recent years, people have paid more and more attention to gender differences. Under the background of new curriculum reform, the attention to students' individual differences becomes one of the most important subjects of education theory and practice, and the gender differences are the necessary link.<sup>3</sup>

Investigations of gender differences in learning style and learning strategy have a long history. In the complex education world, which aims a successful in its practice, it makes all of the education components try harder to gain the success. Teachers as facilitators have big influence in order to reach the high quality of education. Besides, it makes the English learning process can run successfully.

Learning fully and usefully means that students are thinking about what is they learn, apply it in real situations or toward further learning, and it continues to learn independently.<sup>4</sup> It means that by learning the students can think about what they learn and apply it in real situation and continue to learn it independently.

Gender Differences in learning strategies are ways for learners to store and process information. According to the information processing theory, the linguist Mott divided strategies into three categories: metacognitive strategies,

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<sup>2</sup> Anna Tatarintseva, *The influence of the gender factor to the learning styles of secondary students in the process of language learning* (Latvia: Latvian University, 2002), 63.

<sup>3</sup> Qian Wang, *A study of the influence of gender differences on English learning of senior high school students* (Canada: CSCanada, 2015), 66.

<sup>4</sup> Endang Fauziyati, *Teaching English as a Foreign Language* (Surakarta: Era Pustaka Utama, 2010), 89.

cognitive strategies and social/affective strategies.<sup>5</sup> With the right strategy, learners can check whether or not learning behaviors in second language acquisition at any time, making more self-learning guidance, and higher efficiency is correct. According to our daily teaching observation, it can be easily found that girls' English strategy is more conscious than that of boys. Their learning strategies include the plan and the reflection.<sup>6</sup>

Learning strategy is 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 settings."<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the quotation means that learning strategy is someone's way in organizing and using a certain skill and ability approach to complete a task in school as well as in non-academic settings.

Skilled teachers, therefore, can teach the students how to learn, make them aware of learning strategy and able to use them to enhance their own learning. Since the amount of the information processed by the students is high in classroom, the students use different learning strategy in performing the tasks and processing the new input, that have a good indicators of how the students approach tasks or problems encountered during the teaching learning process.

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<sup>5</sup> O'Malley J. M. & Chamot A. U., *Learning strategies in second language acquisition* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> Qian Wang, *A study of the influence of gender differences on English learning of senior high school students* (Canada: CSCanada, 2015), 68.

<sup>7</sup> Endang Fauziyati, *Introduction Methods and Approaches in Second or Foreign Language Teaching* (Surakarta: Era Pustaka Utama, 2009), 56.

The teachers who have intention to certain students in using learning strategy should learn about the students, their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn the learning strategy already used by the students by observing their behavior in class. Besides, the teachers can also use a short questionnaire to fill in at the beginning of a course to describe themselves and their learning. The teacher also can have adequate information about the students, their goals, motivations, and learning.

From those many teachers acknowledge the need to understand the ways in which learners differ in terms of needs and preferences, they may not consult learners in conducting activities. The basis for such reluctance to cooperate may be that learners are not generally regarded capable of expressing what they want or need to learn and how they want to learn it. Besides, it is argued by many teachers, quite rightly, that in some societies, social roles of teachers and learners are so rigidly drawn that expecting learners to participate in decision-making in the classroom may not be viewed as appropriate.<sup>8</sup>

According to Reid, learning style is an 'internally based characteristics, often not perceived or consciously used by learners, for the intake and comprehension of new information'. Then, Reid reiterates that there are six

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<sup>8</sup>Erdogan Bada and Zuhul Okan, *Students' Language Learning Preferences* (Turkey: Cukurova University, 2015).



major learning style preferences, covering visual, auditory kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual.<sup>9</sup>

Learning style and strategy is very important to the students because it makes students know about their interest, it make students enjoy and interest to practice English, the students can use efficient and effective learning and it can make the students easily to learn because they have known their own learning style and strategy well.

Based on the problem above the writer tries to study about “**Learning Style and Strategy Preferences of Male and Female Students of MAN 3 Kediri**”.

#### **B. Problems of the Study**

Based on the previous background of the study that is described above, the researcher formulates the problems as follow:

1. What are the differences between male and female students' learning style?
2. What are the differences between male and female students' learning strategy?
3. What are the most dominant learning style and strategies used by male and female students?

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<sup>9</sup> Reid J. M, *Understanding learning styles in the second language classroom* (United States of America: Prentice Hall Regents, 1998). 78.

### **C. Objectives of the Study**

The purpose to be reached in this research is:

1. To know the differences between male and female students' learning style at MAN 3 Kediri.
2. To know the differences between male and female students' learning strategy at MAN 3 Kediri.
3. To know the most dominant learning style and strategies used by male and female students at MAN 3 Kediri.

### **D. Significances of the Study**

The significances of the study are for the readers, the teachers, the students, and the next researcher.

1. For the teacher

For this part, the researcher would like to suggest that teachers should not focus on some activities that are appropriate to only one learning style but they should integrate them all in the class, so that learners with different leaning style and strategy preferences can learn best. Before the class, teachers should do a survey in order to know the learners' preferences for the benefits of learners. Once teachers know the results, teachers can arrange the teaching style that matches the learners' needs.

2. For the readers

The researcher expects to get much knowledge especially for assigning learning style and learning strategy in teaching learning process. Besides that, for the reader who wants to do analyze the learning style and learning strategy, they are not afraid to choose the same topic as this thesis.

3. For the students

The researcher provide some information for the students on their language learning style and strategy that would facilitate the process of mastering English. With the information at hand, students will be able to identify the most appropriate learning strategy to enhance their learning and to obtain best learning style and strategy in order to achieve their language learning performance.

4. For the next researcher

This study is one of the important and interesting one to observe and do research about learning style and learning strategy. The result of the research.

### **E. Scope and Limitation**

This study attempts to describe the gender differences in learning style and learning strategy at MAN 3 Kediri, the analysis is focused to know what are learning style and learning strategy used by the students and the most dominant learning style and strategies used by male and female students.

This limitation of problem is very important to avoid misunderstanding, this also help the researcher to focus on specific problem. The study is limited

to the students' learning style and strategy. The researcher carried out two classes which consist of male and female students to be observed.

#### **F. Definition of the Key Term**

To avoid misunderstanding on the part of readers, it is essential to give clarification about the term used in this study as follow:

1. Gender: a fact of being male or female, or grouping of nouns and pronouns into masculine or feminine.<sup>10</sup>
2. Learning style: an internally based characteristics, often not perceived or consciously used by learners, for the intake and comprehension of new information.
3. Learning strategy: an internally based plan intended to achieve a particular purpose used by learners.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Oxford Dictionary, *Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press Fourth Edition, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Reid J. M., *Understanding learning styles in the second language classroom* (United States of America: Prentice Hall Regents, 1998).