

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Overview of Language Learning Strategies

The term language learning strategies has been defined in various ways as it has been fine-tuned by many experts over many research and studies. In 1990, Oxford defined language learning strategies as detailed actions by learners to make learning easier, faster, more fun, self-directed, and flexible to new situations. A decade later, Macaro (2006) highlighted that language learning strategies are distinctive approaches and activities students use to understand, learn, or memorise information. Moreover, Oxford (2017) has tried again to refine the definition of language learning strategies, which she defined as several compound and flexible thoughts and actions that are chosen and applied by language learners consciously with the goals of accomplishing language tasks, enhancing language performance and advancing long-term proficiency by managing some aspects including cognitive, affective, and social. It is also stated that language learning strategies can be used according to learners' creativity and flexibility by taking notes that the appropriateness of the strategies depends on personal and contextual factors. Considering that Oxford (2017) has successfully addressed all key features of language learning strategies, the definition is believed to be the most comprehensive (Pawlak, 2021; Thomas & Rose, 2018). Therefore, Oxford's definition of language learning strategies will be utilised in this study.

Language learning strategies consist of several items. They are categorised into two broad, more specific subcategories (Oxford, 1990). This taxonomy is one of the most influential categorisations of language learning strategies. (Alfian, 2021). The categorisation of language learning strategies according to Oxford (1990) are as follows:

- 1) Direct Strategies
 - a) Memory

Memory strategies help students save important information. In this strategy, students create mental connections and use images and sound to review and employ action. According to Kehing and Yunus (2021), by applying this strategy, students can associate visuals and audio in their memory and visualise the new vocabulary. Therefore, memory strategies can help students enrich their vocabulary and strengthen their memory.

b) Cognitive

Students use cognitive strategies to practise, send and receive messages, analyse and reason, and create output. In this strategy, students take notes, translate, imitate speakers, repeat, and practice. Moreover, this strategy has also improved students' vocabulary and helped them speak (Marpaung & Widyantoro, 2020). By enhancing students' language, the cognitive strategy allows students to improve their speaking ability.

c) Compensation

This strategy includes guessing intelligently by using cues and overcoming limitations in speaking. Syafryadin et al. (2020) pointed out that this strategy can solve students' language difficulties. A compensation strategy is proper when students are lost for words. They can use gestures, mime, or synonyms to continue speaking fluently. Those can help students to speak when they experience blankness.

2) Indirect Strategies

a) Metacognitive

In this strategy, students create their learning system by centring, planning, and evaluating their learning. According to Kehing and Yunus (2021), metacognitive strategies can help students become independent learners. These strategies are used when students overview and link the material, set learning goals and language task purposes, and self-evaluate. Thus, students can become independent learners who always self-monitor their learning using this strategy.

b) Affective

Students use affective strategies to lower their language anxiety, encourage themselves, and take their emotional temperature. Some examples of affective strategies are deep breathing, relaxation, meditation, positive self-talk, self-reward, writing a diary, and discussing feelings with others. Students are found to decrease their anxiety when using music and sharing their feelings. (Widhayanti, 2018). Accordingly, students learned to control their anxiety and build a more positive mindset by using affective strategies.

c) Social

Students use this strategy when they ask questions and corrections, cooperate with peers and advanced language users, and empathise with others. According to Wael et al. (2018), students usually ask for clarification from people they trust when practising speaking. Consequently, students can improve their speaking ability by collaborating and asking for corrections.

Language learning strategies offer many benefits for English language learners. According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies can create a learning process that is more enjoyable, effective, efficient, self-directed, and flexible. In addition, learners also become more independent when they utilise language learning strategies. (Teng, 2023). As Oflaz (2019) mentioned, students who utilise language learning strategies tend to have higher academic achievements. Especially in speaking, language learning strategies help lessen speaking anxiety, and students are encouraged to apply them (Citra & Zainil, 2021; Widhayanti, 2018). Therefore, it is recommended that students utilise language learning strategies, considering their numerous benefits.

2.1.2 Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety is generally defined as emotional factors that can influence students' speaking performance. As mentioned by Hussain et al. (2021), anxiety itself is a negative feeling experienced by a person in an uncomfortable situation where that makes one feel nervous, worried, and scared. In an EFL environment, students are more likely to experience speaking anxiety. It is stated by Rachmawati

and Jurianto (2020) that EFL students have some limitations in using foreign languages as their exposure to the language is low, and there are few opportunities to speak English. Consequently, speaking anxiety can be a barrier for learners to have the ability to speak and communicate effectively using the foreign language that is being learned (Christy & Mukhaiyar, 2021). Moreover, speaking anxiety can influence students' learning process. It can distract students and cause them to worry and be scared (Zuhri et al., 2022). On that account, speaking anxiety needs to be solved as it is detrimental to students' learning and performance.

In experiencing speaking anxiety, students are influenced by some factors that lead to the symptoms or characteristics of speaking anxiety. Syahfutra and Wibowo (2021) mentioned that several factors, such as fear of making mistakes, low self-esteem, proficiency, and preparation, are found to be the sources that contribute to the presence of students' speaking anxiety. Meanwhile, the characteristics and symptoms of speaking anxiety were shown by the students when they were facing speaking anxiety (Wardani, 2018). Rajitha and Alamelu (2020) mentioned several symptoms of speaking anxiety, such as shaking hands, trembling, sweating, heart beating faster, squeaky voice, and blankness. Hence, some factors and symptoms may be the signs of students when experiencing speaking anxiety.

2.2 Studies of Relevant Research

In light of language learning strategies, countless studies have been conducted. Lestari and Wahyudin (2020) and Wael et al. (2018) conducted studies investigating the type of language learning strategies students apply. It was found that students use five types of language learning strategies (in frequency order), including metacognitive, social, compensation strategies, cognitive, memory, and affective strategies (Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020). Besides, Wael et al. (2018) pointed out that students mostly used memory, metacognitive, social, affective, compensation, and cognitive strategies. The order of the language learning strategies students primarily utilise differs from the research above, as students

from different contexts and situations may have different needs for strategies to support their learning.

Furthermore, Pertiwi and Hidayanti (2022) and Widhayanti (2018) explored students' language learning strategies to help them reduce their speaking anxiety. The study conducted by Pertiwi and Hidayanti (2022) showed that students felt unconfident and experienced speaking anxiety in some situations, which led them to apply language learning strategies, which were primarily practical. Moreover, students are experiencing speaking anxiety affected by some factors (Widhayanti, 2018). In overcoming speaking anxiety, they utilised language learning strategies, including memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Hence, the problem of speaking anxiety can be facilitated through the utilisation of language learning strategies.

Despite the immense amount of research on language learning strategies, there are still limited studies that explore more deeply a student's story in dealing with speaking anxiety using language learning strategies. For instance, studies conducted by Pertiwi and Hidayanti (2022) and Widhayanti (2018) used quantitative research as the methodology and provided more general results. Therefore, in portraying students' language learning strategies, this study will focus on the detailed story of an English department student.