

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background**

Learning strategies or known as the way of individuals' learning is important in learning language both of second or foreign language. Oxford, et al. (1989) revealed that learning strategies are specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task used by students to enhance their own learning (as cited in Hardan, 2013). Additionally, O'Malley & Chamot (1990) added that learning strategies are the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information. Specifically, in learning English pronunciation, students also need their own learning strategies. Moreover, learning strategies could empower them in learning pronunciation (Sardegna, 2011). For this reason, the uses of learning strategies make them easier in learning English pronunciation.

The term learning strategies especially in learning pronunciation closely related with Social Cognitive Learning Theory/ SCLT. This theory is concerned about how individuals learn with their cognitive, experiences, and social interactions. Furthermore, individuals learn both behaviors and cognitive strategies by observing the behavior of others, and these acquisitions can be learned without being directly reinforced (Bandura, 1999; Nabavi, 2012). Simply, SCLT considers the three main factors related to how

individuals learn, those are cognitive/personal factors (knowledge, expectations, attitudes), behavioral (skills, practice, self-efficacy), and environmental (social interactions, access in the community). Dealing with this learning theory, learning strategies used by an EFL learner in learning English pronunciation will be investigated. The participant who takes part in this study likes to learn English since she was five years old, and usually practices to pronounce English words clearly when she was at school and home. Moreover, she not only concerns on how to speak fluently but also how to have good English pronunciation. In grade eleventh, she has an occasion to become a member of English Club in one of the Senior High Schools in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. This leads her to do more social interactions with other members in practicing and developing her communicative competence particularly in English pronunciation. For this reason, SCLT could be used as the foundation in investigating learning strategies that she used in learning English pronunciation.

The previous studies about learning strategies have mostly concerned on language learning strategies in general (Tang & Tian, 2014; Griffiths & Oxford, 2014; Shi, 2017). The other studies investigate the way/strategy in learning and improving English pronunciation through mobile assisted language learning (Saran, Seferoglu & Cagiltay, 2009), and pronunciation learning strategies in University students using Pronunciation Strategies questionnaire based on Oxford's learning strategy taxonomies (Akyol, 2012). However, there is lack of empirical evidence, particularly in Indonesian context focusing

on learning strategies in English pronunciation of Senior High School level. With all those gaps, this present study will investigate English pronunciation learning strategies used by an Indonesian learner dealing with Social Cognitive Learning Theory (Bandura, 1999).

## **B. Formulation of the Problem**

The problem of this study is formulated as: “What are the strategies used by an EFL student in learning English pronunciation?”

## **C. Operational Definitions**

To avoid misunderstanding of this study, the researcher provides some definitions related to this study, as follows:

1. Learning Strategies : It is step, behaviour, and technique taken by learners to help them in control their own learning by enhancing learners’ independent and autonomous learning.
2. English Pronunciation : It is the way of producing sounds of speech, including articulation, stress, and intonation clearly.
3. Social Cognitive Learning Theory : It is a learning theory concerned about how

individuals learn with their cognitive, behavior and environment factors.

#### **D. Aim of the Research**

The present study aims to give a contribution in helping students to succeed and improve their pronunciation skill in learning and developing their communicative competence in order to gain self-directed involvement and self-confidence. Hence, teachers were expected to know how students learn in order to help them to be successful English language learners.

#### **E. Significances of the Research**

1. Theoretical Use : this study contributes for the readers about the importance of learning strategies in order to help the students in learning English pronunciation.
2. Empirical Use : this study provides empirical understandings into how learning strategies supports an Indonesian student in learning English pronunciation.
3. Practical Use : this study provides the reader about the potential of English pronunciation learning strategies in order to succeed in learning and developing their communicative competency.