

**GRAMMAR LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY  
ENGLISH GOOD ACHIEVERS: A CASE STUDY AT  
SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP N 4 SURAKARTA**



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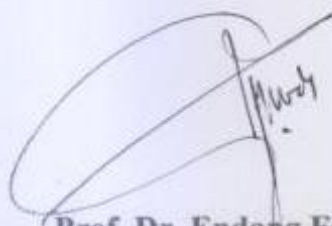
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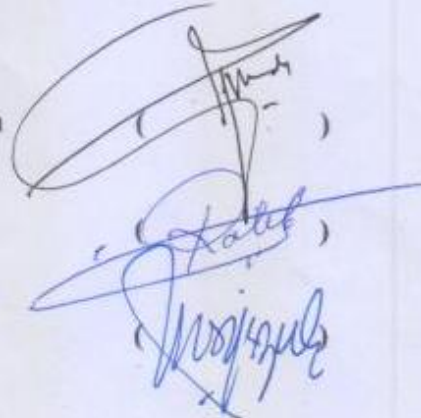
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Surakarta, July 15<sup>th</sup> 2019

The Researcher  
  
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# **GRAMMAR LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY ENGLISH GOOD ACHIEVERS: A CASE STUDY AT SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP N 4 SURAKARTA**

## **Abstrak**

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menggambarkan strategi pembelajaran tata bahasa metakognitif, strategi pembelajaran tata bahasa kognitif, dan strategi pembelajaran tata bahasa sosioafektif yang digunakan oleh siswa berprestasi di sekolah menengah pertama. Penelitian ini mencoba mengeksplorasi bagaimana realisasi strategi yang digunakan dalam praktik. Penelitian ini merupakan studi kasus dengan metode kualitatif. Data dalam penelitian ini berupa informasi tentang strategi pembelajaran yang diperoleh dari enam siswa berprestasi di kelas tujuh SMP N 4 Surakarta. Penelitian ini menggunakan kuesioner terbuka dan wawancara mendalam untuk mengumpulkan data. Untuk menganalisis data, peneliti menggunakan beberapa teknik yaitu reduksi data, tampilan data, penarikan kesimpulan, dan verifikasi. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa hampir semua strategi oleh O'Malley digunakan oleh subjek. Lebih jauh, strategi metakognitif adalah yang paling sering digunakan oleh orang yang berprestasi. Ini menunjukkan bahwa orang yang berprestasi baik cenderung menggunakan berbagai strategi saat belajar.

**Kata kunci:** strategi pembelajaran, pencapai Bahasa Inggris yang baik, metakognitif, kognitif, sosial-afektif

## **Abstract**

The aim of this research was to describe the metacognitive grammar learning strategies, cognitive grammar learning strategies, and socioaffective grammar learning strategies used by good achievers of junior high school. This research tried to explore how the realization of the strategies used in practice. This study was a case study with a qualitative method. The data in this study were in the form of information about learning strategies obtained from six good achievers at the seventh grade of SMP N 4 Surakarta. This research used the open ended questionnaire and in-depth interview to collect the data. To analyze the data, the researcher used some techniques i.e. data reduction, data display, drawing conclusion and verification. The results of this study designated that almost all strategies by O'Malley were used by the subjects. Furthermore, metacognitive strategy is the most frequently used by the good achevers. It showed that good achievers tend to use various strategies when learning.

**Keywords:** learning strategy, good English achievers, metacognitive, cognitive, socioaffective

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

English is a tool for interacting orally and verbally. The capability to communicate in a full sense is the capability to speak, namely the capability to understand or produce oral or written texts which are manifested in four language skills, namely listening, writing, speaking, and reading. These four skills must be understood because they are very important to use in social life. Thus, English subjects are focused at developing these skills so that graduates are capable to interact and communicate in English at a definite level of literacy.

English learning in SMP / MTs is directed so that learners can extend the functional level of interacting verbally and orally to complete everyday difficulties. So far the government has made a kind of national education standard that has the aim of guaranteeing and controlling the quality of education in accordance with the National Education Standards (PP 19: 2005). One of the national education standards is the Content Standard (SI). SI is a material and minimum level of competence to achieve minimum learning mastery standard. SI in junior high school for English subjects has been designed based on the level of literacy of junior high school students, namely functional. In learning English, all learning activities are student-centered and still integrate 4 language skills. The implementation of learning English through two types of cycles, namely, the oral cycle (listening and speaking) and the written cycle (reading and writing) because English is very important and learning strategy is the big success factor of this study, so the researcher does the research about learning strategy.

The researcher is interested in doing the research about learning strategy because she wants her study to be used as a reference in increasing the readers' knowledge and give a positive contribution to teaching and learning grammar activity. Moreover, the researcher is expected to give the significant information for all people who need this, especially for students of English Department and English teachers. Oxford describes learning strategies (1990: 8) as particular movements taken by students to make learning faster, easier, more transferable, and more enjoyable to new circumstances.

Learning strategy is important for students to improve their ability in mastering English. Learning strategy is a solution for students to cope with the students' difficulties and as a way to become an independent learner. Knowing the learning strategy is also an effective way to study. O'Malley et al. (1985:582-584) split language learning strategies into three main subcategories, consisting of metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and socio-affective strategies. Then the result of the research by Supakorn (2018) indicated that the higher achievers practiced all of the strategies categories significantly more often than the lower achievers.

There have been previous studies on learning strategies (showed on research paper page 12-16), there were from Tilfarlioglu (2005), Gurata (2008), Ararso (2012), Chen (2016), Abri (2017), Zhou (2017), and Supakorn (2018). The differences between this research and the previous studies are in the subject of the research, the type of research, and the data collection technique. The subject of this research focuses on good achievers of English at SMP N 4 Surakarta while on the previous research by Ararso (2012) the subjects is high ranking and low ranking students of tenth grade students of Jiren Middle School. The type of this research is qualitative, while on the research by Gurata used quantitative. On this research used questionnaire and interview to collect the data, while the research by Supakorn (2018) used grammar proficiency test and questionnaire to collect the data. The researcher hopes this research can be developed by the future researchers because so far there has never been researched on learning strategy at SMP N 4 Surakarta.

The aim of this research was to analyze the metacognitive grammar learning strategies, cognitive grammar learning strategies, and socio-affective grammar learning strategies used by good achievers of junior high school and how the strategies realize in practice.

## **2. METHODS**

The type of this research is a case study. A case study is an empirical investigation that examines present phenomena in depth and in real life contexts, especially when the limitations among phenomena and contexts are not clearly defined (Yin 2009:

18). Case study research deals with a single or several study investigation units, using data collection methods such as interviews or surveys.

This research was a case study with a qualitative method. The data in this study were in the form of information about learning strategies obtained from six good achievers at the seventh grade of SMP N 4 Surakarta. The data of this research were information taken from open-ended questionnaire and the answer to the in-depth interview with the students. In the interview, the researcher asked more deeply related to the answers to their questionnaire. Some of the questions asked about the strategies that form what activities they have done before, during, and after learning. Then to analyze the data, the researcher used three steps included data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification. The researcher used descriptive analysis to analyze the data she got from questionnaire and interview she did started from January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and the data collected had been analyzed using the theory by O'Malley.

### **3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 Finding**

##### **3.1.1 Metacognitive Strategies used and the Realization in Practice**

###### **3.1.1.1 Advance Organizers**

Advance organizers are planning the concepts or identifying task objectives and organizing principles in additional learning activities. The result of this research showed that four of six good achievers observed by researcher using this strategy. The four good achievers who used this strategy were: S1, S2, S3, S4. S1 used advance organizer strategy. The student made a preview or summary of the concept before starting to study. Preview or summary could make S1 faster and easier to memorize the form of grammar (OEQ 1). S1 presented her statement from the in-depth interview, as follows:

“the grammar was summarized or grouped so that it could be easy to interpret, for example, made a table about the use of subject ‘she’, ‘he’, ‘it’” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).



S4 used advance organizer strategy. He arranged the summary or scheme which he wanted (OEQ 4). S4 presented his statement from the in-depth interview, as follows:

“so that's before learning grammar I usually make a summary by arranging the first words and making a plot” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.1.2 Directed Attention

Directed attention is deciding in advance to focus on a particular task and ignore disturbance. All of the good achievers involved in this research using this strategy. S2 applied directed attention strategy in learning grammar because she tried to focus and concentrate, it needed to do a good exercise (OEQ2). S2 told her statement on the in-depth interview, as follows:

“Yes sis, if I had a good concentration, it made me focus. Usually, I turned off the mobile phone and television when I study” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.1.3 Selective Attention

Selective attention is deciding in advance to pay attention to certain aspects of input language or details situation that will indicate the memory of language input. All of the students observed by the researcher using this strategy. S1 payed attention about grammar in a sentence to get the meaning of that sentence clearly (OEQ1). Then she said clearly on the in-depth interview as follows:

“When writing a sentence, I payed attention to the specific grammar, for example, the use of “is”, “are””. (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

S2 used selective attention strategy because she payed attention the used of specific grammar because if she did not care the used of grammar it could make mistakes in writing totally (OEQ 2). Then on the in-depth interview, she said clearly, as follows:

“I noticed the use of specific grammar, for example, the use of pronoun like “he”, “him””. (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.1.4 Self-Management

Self-management is regulated conditions that help a person learn; know yourself and plan how to learn. The researcher revealed that all of the good achievers using this

strategy. The researcher found S1 had a special situation to study. The situation that she used for studying and did homework was calm (not in a hurry) and quiet so she could concentrate (OEQ 1). Based on the the in-depth interview she said clearly, as follows:

“I always in a particular place to study because if I lied down in the bed I would be sleepy. I usually back from school, take a shower then start to study because I feel fresh” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

S2 also applied the strategy of self-management. She had a special condition to study that was quiet, if the room was crowded, she would not get a full concentration (OEQ 2). Then she said clearly on the in-depth interview as follows:

“Must be quiet, if it was not quite I couldn’t catch the material that I read or learned, I usually study in the evening”. (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.1.5 Functional Planning

Functional planning is a plan and trains the language components needed to carry out language assignments in the future. All of the good achievers involved in this research using this strategy. S3 always planned the thing to make her study orderly (OEQ 3). So from her statement, I concluded that she used functional planning strategy. Then, she told clearly on the in-depth interview, as follows:

“I made a plan before starting to study, for example, if there were social science examination and Indonesian examination tomorrow, I studied Indonesian first then social science, because if social science in first meeting so I could remember the material” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.1.6 Self monitoring

Self monitoring is correcting one’s speech for accuracy for appropriateness related to the setting or people who are present. Five from six students researched by researcher using this strategy; they were: S1, S2, S3, S4, S5. S1 prepared her learning needs by herself; it could be concluded that she used self monitoring strategy. She told on the the in-depth interview, as follows:

“I prepared my own study materials, if I felt confused, I would ask my parents help” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> 2019).

#### 3.1.1.7 Delayed production

Delayed production is a way of thinking before studying, it can be called as learning the other subject before studying a certain subject. For example, learning listening before learning speaking. Four from six students researched by researcher using this strategy; they were: S2,S3,S4,S6. If S2 did not read English learning resources, she would find it difficult to translate to Bahasa (OEQ 2). Then she told clearly on the in-depth interview like this:

“I usually watch western movie that has an Indonesian translation first”  
(Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.1.8 Self evaluation

Self evaluation is to be able to check the appropriateness of him which is the preparation at the finishing. All of good achievers using this strategy. S2 always check the result of her work after writing a sentence, so if there was something wrong she could change with alphabet or the right sentence (OEQ 2).

#### 3.1.2 Cognitive Strategies used and the Realization in Practice

Based on the open-ended questionnaire and the in-depth interview, the students used cognitive strategies. They were repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, keyword, contextualization, transfer, and inferencing.

##### 3.1.2.1 Repetition

Repetition is repeating the learning including all aspects. Almost all of the good achievers involved in this research using this strategy; they were: S1, S2, S3, S4, S5.

S1 used repetition strategy because sometimes the materials which she got repeated the previous materials, so she learned that materials (OEQ 1).

##### 3.1.2.2 Resourcing

Resourcing is a way to use the other references materials or textbook of the target language. There were five from six students using this strategy; they were S1, S2, S3, S4, S6. S1 used another study source from school to increase the knowledge because she joined in course, so in her course she got another material from school although the content was almost similar with the material in the school (OEQ 1). Then she said on the in-depth interview, as follows:

“I have a book from the course because I go to an English Course called Kumon” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.2.3 Translation

Translation is a way to use the first language before producing the second language. Four from six good achievers who got involved in this research using the strategy of translation; they were S3, S4, S5, S6. The first language of the students is Indonesian and the second language is English. S6 used Indonesian first and then translated it into English when he wrote. Then he made an example “*saya bermain sepak bola*” becomes “I am playing football “ in English (OEQ 6).

#### 3.1.2.4 Grouping

Grouping is a way to classify the materials on common attributes. There were only two good achievers using this strategy; they were S3 and S4. S3 always makes groups of grammar first to make it easy to understand like grouping the use of to be (OEQ 3). Before using grammar S4 will group them first like grouping verbs that can be added -ed endings and cannot (OEQ 4).

#### 3.1.2.5 Note taking

Note taking is a way to write the central idea or points and also a summary of information. There were three good achievers using note-taking strategy; they were S1, S3, and S4. S1 wrote grammar formulas with her own memorization, so it made her easier to remember when studying (OEQ 1). It showed that she used note taking strategy. She said on the in-depth interview section, as follows:

“yes, I usually take notes grammar formulas like to be” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

S3 always takes notes about grammar to make it easy to understand and easy remember, for example, the adding of -s/-es endings” (OEQ 3).

#### 3.1.2.6 Deduction

Deduction is a way to apply the regulation that creates a second language. There were three good achievers using this strategy. They were S1, S2, S3. S3 used grammar formulas to produce writing or text because sometimes to produce text she was confused about what to write so she made a design first (OEQ 3). She said her statement in the in-depth interview, as follows:

“yes, I used grammar formulas, for example, things more than is certainly one use -s/-es endings” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>,2019).

#### 3.1.2.7 Recombination

Recombination is a way to build up a valuable sentence or a better language order by combining the known elements in a new process. Only two from six good achievers got involved in this research using this strategy. They were: S1 and S4. S4 used the strategy of recombination because he arranged his own words to make it faster on memorizing grammar (OEQ 4). For example a sentence which the subjects are “they”, “we”, “I”, “you” didn’t need to add -s/-es endings in the verb after the subject, so we could memorize with. Then he made example verb that isn't added s/es: they, we, I, you, so we could memorize with dewi ayu does not like ice.

#### 3.1.2.8 Imagery

Imagery is related to the visual concept of new information in memory by familiarizing. It would be easy to get visualizations, phrases, or locations. Almost all students using this strategy; they were S1, S2, S3, S4, S6. S2 imagined the word that she had known before in her daily life (OEQ 2). It showed that she used imagery strategy. She gave an example in the in-depth interview section, as follows:

“For example, the word “bottle” translated to Indonesian and has a meaning *boto!*” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>,2019).

#### 3.1.2.9 Keyword

Keyword is a way to remember a new word in the second language by identifying a familiar word in the first language that sounds like or otherwise resembles the new word and generating easily recalled images of some relationship between the new word and familiar word.

All of the good achievers involved in this research using this strategy. S1 used a keyword to understand grammar or sentence form, with her own tricks she had a keyword or their way to understand the grammar (OEQ 1). She said clearly on the in-depth interview section, as follows:

“yes, there are some use –s ending and there are some not use -s ending in their verb”. (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.2.10 Contextualization

Contextualization is a way to put a word or phrase in a valuable language order. There were three of six students using the strategy of contextualization. They were S1, S3, and S4. S1 could understand grammar by looking at the context of the sentence immediately (OEQ 1). It was because she understood the characteristics of grammar. So, the researcher concluded that she used contextualization strategy.

#### 3.1.2.11 Elaboration

Elaboration is the connection of a new information to another draft in a memory. There were no good achievers who used this strategy.

#### 3.1.2.12 Transfer

Transfer is a way to use the previous linguistic and/or conceptual information which is obtained to simplify a new language task of learning. Three of six students using this strategy. They were S2, S4, S6. S2 translated word by word in English; she translated English to Indonesia first because her first language is Indonesian. She translated word by word which was one of the words came from the sentence that was understood by her (OEQ 2). It showed that S2 used transfer strategy.

#### 3.1.2.13 Inferencing

Inferencing is a way to use existing information to predict the result, guess the meaning of new matters, or fill in missing material. There were three of six good achievers using inferencing strategy; they were S1, S3, S4. S3 marked a form of grammar because if she didn't give a mark, she would be confused or did not understand (OEQ 3). It showed that she used the inferencing strategy.

“for example, I marked in a text contained present tense or past tense”  
(Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

### 3.1.3 Socio Affective Strategies and the Realization in Practice

Based on the open-ended questionnaire and the in-depth interview, the subcategories that the students used in socio-affective strategies were cooperation and question for clarification.

#### 3.1.3.1 Cooperation

Cooperation is a way to work in a group discussion to obtain feedback and information. There were four from six students using this strategy; they were S2, S3,

S4, S5. S2 already in groups when studying English because her teacher divided into groups during her English class (OEQ 2). It showed that she used the cooperation strategy because S2 was always in a group and liked to study in group. The reason why she liked it much was stated by her when doing the in-depth interview, as follows:

“because as a group we could work together, for example, I asked this then they answered so if there were words that didn’t understand, we could do a mutual discussion, and asked questions one another” (Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019).

#### 3.1.3.2 Question for clarification

Question for clarification is a way to ask the teacher or her friend for making sure some of the material. All of the good achievers involved in this research using this strategy.

Sometimes S1 found it difficult after trying many times but still could not do it, she would ask the teacher or friend so she could cope with the problems in learning English (OEQ 1). It signified that she used question for clarification strategy.

### 3.2 Discussion

In this part, the researcher discussed the current research findings which were compared with the result of the previous research. The result of this research provides evidence that the good achievers used three strategies. They were metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies. This finding corresponded to the finding of Zhou (2017) that also used that same three strategies. This study found that most of the subjects of the research used more than one learning strategy, that were metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategy (70.28%). This finding was in line with the findings of Tilfarlioglu (2005) which most of the students used grammar learning strategies that consisted of cognitive, metacognitive and socio-affective strategy (70.20%).

The finding revealed that the percentage of metacognitive strategy was 89.6%, cognitive strategy was 56.3%, and socio affective strategy was 83.5%. This

was supported by the previous research from Abri (2017) that the tenth grade students of Omani used metacognitive strategies more often than cognitive and socio-affective strategies. His research also revealed that advanced students used metacognitive strategies more often than the students who had a lower proficiency. However, there was slightly different in the term of frequency between the previous research by Gurata (2008) and Zhou (2017). The four types of grammar learning strategies appeared among the general strategies, yet cognitive strategies were used more often. Then, the finding of Zhou (2017) also stated that the cognitive strategy was regularly used, followed by the meta-cognitive strategy, and social/affective strategy. While, in the current research, the metacognitive strategies were employed more often.

In his research, the researcher found that good achievers tend to use strategies for learning. This finding was in line with the research findings of Ararso (2012) and Supakorn (2018) that High-ranking students trained various strategies than low-ranking students in a whole classification except in social strategies (Ararso: 2012). While Supakorn (2018) stated that the higher achievers practiced all strategies significantly more often than the lower achievers.

Meanwhile, in socio-affective strategy the most of the students used the cooperation strategy. This corresponded to the findings of Tilfarlioglu (2005) which nearly half of the students prefer to group work than individual work. However, there did not correspond to the findings of Ararso (2012) that the high ranking students preferred to work alone, but if there were active students in their group, they would like to work together. A similar case found on the metacognitive strategy; the current research found that all of the students attended to a specific grammar to write a text or sentences. This was in line with the findings of Gurata (2008) and Ararso (2012). Gurata (2008) stated that upper-intermediate level students payed attention to grammar rules when speaking or writing while Ararso (2012) found that high ranking students replied that they recognized English grammar rules when they read any text; moreover, they said that they were careful when they spoke and wrote so as not to make mistakes.



#### **4. CONCLUSION**

There are brief findings which reflected to the research finding and discussion. Firstly, good achievers used various learning strategies; there was only one strategy that was not used at all by six good achievers. The strategy was elaboration because the students have the difficulty to connect one grammar to another. From those strategies, the students have a tendency to use metacognitive strategy because metacognitive strategy is about doing preparation before studying. The percentage of use metacognitive strategies is 89.6%, while cognitive strategies is 56.3%, and socio-affective strategies is 83.5%. Metacognitive strategies help students to confirm and organize learning objectives, choose the learning approach and technique, evaluate and provide feedback on learning outcomes. Good achievers usually have more preparation, self-management and self-monitoring skills that allow them to practice more meta-cognitive strategies (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). In short, good achievers are well prepared.

The researcher hopes teacher should help students to use the appropriate learning strategy to them. The writer suggests to the students to choose the best strategies, because it can make them easier in learning especially English language. The writer suggests the next researcher can do research with the low and middle students also

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