

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents several points as the background of study, limitation of the study, problem statement, the objective of study, the benefit of study, and thesis organization.

A. Background of the Study

English is considered the international language because people speak English as the first, second, and foreign language more than other languages in the world. Besides, it is also influenced in every sector of people's work. According to Crystal (2003) states that English is an international language since it can be applied in many sectors namely business, education, policy, tourism, and science. Moreover, English is the most popular language that was taught around the world (Noack and Gamio, 2015). In this era, we can say that the number of people used English worldwide is increasing as same as the demand for teaching and learning English (Dalby, 2002). Since the demand for learning English is increasing, most schools and institutes of higher education all over the world have developed the program and applied English into the curriculum. One country where English was taught as a foreign language is Laos.

Laos is a developing country. The Lao government has seen the importance of English. Thus, the state has a formal policy adding English into the curriculum for learning and teaching in general schools and universities. The aim focuses on the developing human resources of Lao people to be equivalent the regional Asian countries as well as global countries. Therefore, English is the first foreign language that was taught in public schools up to universities. It started from the 1st grade of primary school until the 7th grade of high school which is the compulsory academic subject. In line to the vocational learning in universities, English is the first choice of Lao people who are interested in learning a foreign language.

Since English is the widely popular language in Laos. There are many universities and private colleges that provide English curriculum for conducting learning and teaching. One quality institute is Savannakhet University (SKU), SKU

is the fourth public University of Laos which administered by the Ministry of Education and Sports. SKU has provided many program studies and the English is the dominant program which the most popular among Lao students. To be English students in this institute, the learners have to pass the university examination, it means that students who are studying here are the person who interests and willing to study English purposely. Another reason, selecting to study in this field, the learners might get the influence from the environment they live in or the English spreading (Lingua Franca). Hence all of these are called motivation.

Learning English means the students learn for acquiring the knowledge and master in four integrated skills such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Haycraft (1978) has classified two main skills that students have to master in learning English namely receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (writing and speaking). The students who are not native speaker, they have to motivate themselves to learn English and do it the best progressive. To acquire English mastery of Lao students, they have faced the factors leading them low in English competence. It maybe students have less practicing English (speaking) because English is not spoken in general places as mother tongue. Thus, it might one factor making language competency decline. Hashemi (2011) the cause of making students weak in learning English is depended on the difference of social and culture. It means that the environment students live in is less suitable for applying English. In fact, students practice English when they are in school, they practice English with friends when they have assignments. Some students feel English is a difficult subject. Finally, they get boring. For students who enjoyed learning, it might have strong motivation.

In learning English, students need the motivation to make learning smooth. When students feel upset with their learning performance, score results and get negative feedback from teachers. They always need extra power to drive learning and move forward, whether that power will come in form of inside and outside themselves. Besides, when they received some positive statements, it will be the power stimulated students to keep continue learning. Hence, motivation is concerned with the individual energy directly towards the learning. It is important

factor for students to keep their spirit in doing the tasks and assessments until the success goal (Cole, 1994).

Additionally, motivation helps the students who have no feeling unenthusiastic and hopeless to become an active person and keep continues learning even though they faced difficulties and failures. In the learning process, students get difficulty in some skills which lead them nervous and give up, if they have strong motivation, they would pass these moments since motivation determined the students' effort, diligence and increase students in both learning and do activities.

Ellis (1985) states that motivation makes students interest and desire to learn English. It is a stimulator for students learning English even though they have low language competence (Brown, 2000). Hence, motivation is an individual factor that learners provided the different ways of learning and the way implement knowledge. Besides, the students also apply several learning strategies to help them acquire the knowledge and achieve the goals. Therefore, the learning strategies of each student are different, it depended on the students' motive in learning.

Motivation is such a special and positive energy driving learning achievement, whereas the learning strategies are a vehicle to take the learners reach the goals. Getting English mastery is not easy particularly for students who learn English as a foreign language. They have to devote themselves as long as accomplish and proficient in the skills. According to Brown (1997) states learning is acquiring or getting knowledge from the subject or skills by studying, experience, and instruction. Students have to spend time as much as they can and practice more to achieve the goal. Besides that, Nunan (1991:174) emphasis motivation is important for learning a foreign language.

In the learning process, students cannot avoid applying learning strategies because learning strategies are important and necessary for them. They are one element helping students comprehend the materials. For instance, in case of students do not understand the content, they can ask the teachers directly to obtain the answers, or sometimes students desire to share and exchange the knowledge experiences, they can do without any shyness. Moreover, learning strategies are defined as the technique learners used to help remember information. Students learn

English by using these strategies, they can overcome the problems faced during learning namely when students have serious moments with the teachers less explain the lesson, but students want more information to comprehend; social strategies can help them to overcome this situation. In some cases, students have a problem with using grammar; memory and cognitive strategies can help them to overcome this issue. It can be said that learning strategies are the main step for students to enhance their learning and also one element that helps students achieve learning. (Oxford, 1990:1).

In addition, by applying the strategies into language learning, students will get the benefits from them namely students can get more information and increase comprehension of the material faster. Oxford (2002) states that applying learning strategies help the learners learn English easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable in new situations. When students apply appropriate strategies, they can receive and maintain knowledge as well. Besides, it is also the parameter of measuring the students' master in English.

Furthermore, learning strategies are also determined students learning styles which suitable for each person. According to Fauziati (2013) states that using learning strategies are an individual's approach to complete the task efficiently. Besides that, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) define learning strategies are the special thinking and behaviours learners used to help them comprehend, learn, and retain new information. It can be concluded that learning strategies are the thought system in order to help learners acquire information and also identified students' behaviour and learning style.

Selecting the appropriate strategies are depended on the students' gender. Of cause, the different gender has reflected the difference of using strategies since gender mention to the social, cultural, and psychological difference of individual learners on the biological distinction (Coates, 2004). Some strategies are appropriate for male or female students but some strategies are not. Consequently, male and female students have different on the characteristic in learning the language. Catalan (2003) claims that gender is a significant predictor in education, psychology, and linguistic. Some students understand the content by just listening

to teachers' explanations, but some learners have to apply more techniques to understand the content. Due to male and female students, they have input different characteristics in their learning, the consequence is pretty different.

This research was conducted on English students, Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University. Through the teaching experience and observation found female students received the content and information faster, and better than male students while they are learning the same materials and textbooks. It is proved by the expression through their learning performance. The female students have better confidence, attention, and cooperation more than the male students. Whereas the performance of male students, sometimes they are still less ability and confidence. Moreover, the female students have the results of grading as same as the average scores are higher than male students. From there, it can be concluded that female students are progress in learning rather than male students. These phenomena, the writer can sum up that the different gender may have the difference of learning motivation and using learning strategies. Thus, the researcher is interested to study these issues.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that motivation is the main factor stimulated students in learning English and learning strategies are the ways learners apply to facilitate English learning achievement. Both of them have influenced and important for learning English. Therefore, the researcher is highly interested in analyzing **“The English Learning Motivation and Strategy of the First Year English Students, Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), Academic year 2020-2021”**.

B. Limitation of the Study

The study is only limited to the first year English students, semester two, English Department, Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU). The researcher focuses on the English learning motivation and strategies used by male and female students. So, these conditions lead the writer makes a questionnaire and interview form.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the limitation of the study, the researcher has approximately six problems based on learning motivation and strategy. These problems can provide the state below:

1. What are the factors influencing male and female students' motivation in learning English at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021?
2. What are the dominant factors influencing male and female students' motivation in learning English at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021?
3. Are there any differences between factors influencing male and female students' motivation in learning English at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021?
4. What are the types of learning strategies used by male and female students at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021?
5. What are the dominant types of learning strategies used by male and female students at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021?
6. Are there any difference between learning strategies used by male and female students at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021?

D. Objective of the Study

According to the problem statements above, the researcher has a set of the objective to study at this time below:

1. To find out the factors influencing male and female students' motivation in learning English at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021.
2. To find out the dominant factors influencing male and female students' motivation in learning English at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021.

3. To find out the differences between factors influencing male and female students' motivation in learning English at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021.
4. To find out the types of learning strategies used by male and female students at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021.
5. To find out the dominant types of learning strategies used by male and female students at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021.
6. To find out the differences between learning strategies used by male and female students at the Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), academic year 2020-2021.

E. Benefit of the Study

Based on the entitle of “The English Learning Motivation and Strategy of the First year English Students, Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU), Academic year 2020-2021”. The researcher expects the benefit of this study to two main parts: the theoretical benefit and practical benefit.

1. Theoretical Benefit

This research gives the information, perspective, and useful in studying the learning motivation and strategies. Moreover, this study can define new definitions in the field of learning motivation and strategies in term of male and female students.

2. Practical Benefit

a) For the Students

The result of this research is useful to English students. They can understand on learning motivation and strategies used by male and female students, Faculty of Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU). The information can stimulate students to apply learning strategies correctly.

b) For the Lecturers

The researcher expected this research will give information to the lecturers about learning motivation and strategy of the first year English students, Faculty of

Linguistics and Humanities, Savannakhet University (SKU) academic year 2020-2021. The results can be the information to lecturers for developing and improving technique teaching. Additionally, teachers can create new English materials that suitable for each learning environment.

c) For Future Researchers

This study gives the benefit to the future researchers, all of the information and method of this study provide the knowledge, be a guideline and give direction to the next researchers in terms of learning motivation and learning strategies.

F. Research Paper Organization

To make this research easier to discuss, the study has organized into five chapters as follow:

Chapter I: Introduction. It consists of an introduction that covered the background of the study, the limitation of the study, the problem statement, the objective of the study, the benefit of the research, and research paper organization.

Chapter II: Theoretical Review. It is an explanation about the related theories that consist of previous studies, underlying theories such as the theory of learning motivation, and learning strategies, and last theoretical framework.

Chapter III: Research Method. It consists of the types of research, research object, research subject, data and data source, the technique of data collection, and technique of data analysis.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion, it consists of the research findings and discussion.

Chapter V: Conclusion, Implication, and Suggestions. It presents the conclusive points of the study and the proposed suggestions.