CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background of the study, statement of the problems, purposes of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Research Background

In today’s context, it is of necessity to have the competency of English for the purpose of international communication as the impact of living in a globalization era (Tsukamoto & Tsujioka, 2013). Moreover, Estilden (2017) stresses that everyone should be able to communicate with people around the world through English. Departing from those notions, it is not surprising if English is studied in every single stage of educational system. Thus, Butler (2017) says that English has been introduced from the early level of education since it is considered an international language. Even Nugroho (2008) says that English in Indonesia has been the prioritized foreign language to be learned in secondary schools for several years.

Reddy (2016) mentions that there are several reasons why learning English is of urgency in today’s context. Firstly, English is of necessity for the purpose of business. It becomes important since English is internationally utilized in business community all over the world. Secondly, English is also used for the education needs. Many resources in various subjects are written in English. Let alone, English
has become the medium of instruction in many universities and higher educational institutions. Thirdly, it is good for the future career. English is urgently needed for those who want to work for international companies. Having a good English skill guarantees a good position and salary. Fourthly, it is the key for easier access to information since English is the medium language for IT and internet. Fifthly, the needs of English for Media and Entertainment are crucial since many products of them such as films, games, and news are delivered internationally in English. Sixthly, English has been utilized widely as the official communication. Mostly people only know English and their original language. Lastly, it is the language for international relation. When it comes to diplomacy, politics, negotiations, conferences, or meetings, the language that comes first is English. Thus, learning English is no doubt crucial in today’s era.

However, Eltayef & Hussein (2017) find that students especially in university level face some difficulties in learning English. Moreover, Kunasaraphan (2015) states that the success in English learning has not been fulfilled yet. There are several factors that influence the emergence of the difficulties in English learning such as less time for English teaching, low motivation and interest in learning English from the students, low concentration in class, unequal level of learners, teachers’ low English proficiency, and less English exposure (Khajloo, 2013). In a nutshell, the success in English learning is not yet completed although the urgency of English learning has been considered.

To overcome the difficulties in English learning, proper learning strategies are needed. It is supported by the studies which reveal the big role of language
learning strategies in determining the success of language acquisition (Chamot, 2004, Gardner, 2007). It is also strengthened by Oxford (2002) who states that learning strategies are tools for active, engaging, and confident learners. Therefore, finding proper strategies will lead the learners to a better learning outcomes. Better learning outcomes means better competency, especially when it comes to English proficiency.

Previous studies related to English learning strategies have been conducted by (Park, 1997, Namwong, 2012, and Kunasaraphan, 2015) with different focuses. Park (2017) focuses on the relation between language learning strategies and L2 proficiency. Namwong (2012) focuses on the English learning strategies of high achiever students and low achiever students. Kunasaraphan (2015) focuses on the use of English learning strategies by first year students. This current research is rarely found in Indonesia especially in English Language Education Department (ELED) University of Muhammadiyah Malang. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a research related to English learning strategies.

1.2 Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, the research problems are stated as follows:

1. a. What learning strategies do the ELED undergraduate students use in learning English?
   b. How is the usage frequency of the English learning strategies?
2. What problems do the ELED undergraduate students face in applying English learning strategies?

3. What are the solutions for the existing problems in applying English learning strategies?

1.3 Research Objectives

The purpose of study are stated as follows:

1. To find out the English learning strategies used by ELED undergraduate students and their usage frequency.

2. To reveal the problems that the ELED undergraduate students face in learning English.

3. To find out the solutions for the existing problems in applying English learning strategies.

1.4 Research Significance

Firstly, the researcher expects that this research will be useful as a reference for students. By reading this research, it is expected that the students will discover the kinds of English learning strategies and their application. Furthermore, they will be able to apply the strategies in their English learning.

Secondly, the researcher does hope that it will be beneficial for English lecturers. They will be able to suggest suitable English learning strategies for their students.

Lastly, the researcher expects to give a valuable contribution to some researches
in the same field. Hopefully, there will be more researches in the same area for the development of English learning.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

The researcher focuses on three aspects. The first is finding out the learning strategies used by ELED undergraduate students in learning English. The second is that the researcher wants to reveal the problems that the ELED undergraduate students face in applying English learning strategies. Lastly, the researcher expects to find out the possible solutions for the existing problems in the application of English learning strategies by ELED undergraduate students. This study will only focus on the undergraduate students of English Language Education Department (ELED) of University of Muhammadiyah Malang. The subjects of this study comprise ELED undergraduate students from academic year of 2016 since they have taken the courses related to English skills such as reading, speaking, listening, and writing.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. **Learning** is an operation that creates consistent alteration in terms of stimulus-response affiliation as the impact of interaction between environment and individual’s sense (Lachman, 1997). In this study, learning is defined as the activity by ELED undergraduate students to achieve a persistent improvement through interacting with the other students and teachers in the class.
2. **Strategy** is the approach to accomplish a goal through delivering and utilizing means (Nickols, 2016). In this study, strategy is considered as the implementation of various styles by ELED undergraduate students to reach a target in learning English.

3. **Learning Strategies** are any kinds of ways which are utilized by students in the process of learning for the sake of gaining improvement. (Oxford, 2002). In this study, learning strategies are defined as the ways of ELED undergraduate students to enhance their capability in English.