The Realization of Second Language Learning Strategies in the Newest Revision of 2013 Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

For decades, English teaching and learning in Indonesia have been through a number of changes and revision of curriculum. One of which was widely and extensively used was the 2013 curriculum in which all the aspects of learning has been provided inside of it. Unfortunately, teachers recently have neglected the importance of second language acquisition (SLA) in their activity. In this paper, the researcher investigated the relationship between SLA learning strategies with the newest revision of 2013 curriculum. The focus of the study was the curriculum document in the form of its lesson plan created by a teacher. The document was compared with O'Malley and Chamot's topology of learning strategies (1990). The researcher also had an interview session with the teacher in charged in one of junior high schools in Ambal, Kabupaten Kebumen. The result showed that teacher didn't consider the importance of SLA as the result of overwhelming administration duty. On the other hand, O'Malley and Chamot's learning strategies is dominantly reflected in the curriculum. However, the well-support resources didn't give much contribution to students' achievement. Therefore, there should be evaluation and improvement from both parties involved in language learning.

Keywords: *SLA, language learning, 2013 curriculum, learning strategy topology*

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning English in a non-native country are very challenging. One of factors that makes the learning burdensome is the resources provided doesn't seem fully accommodate the demands. Both teacher and learners share the same burdens as they have lack of choices on how to achieve learning objectives. To make matter worse, both parties involved are reluctant to improve alternatives of learning. Most of the time, students feel that learning a second language, in this case English, is very difficult (Yulia, 2013). Beside English has distinctive grammatical rules and pronunciation, students have challenges on sources and motivation. Undesired internal and external factors often caused this issue which eventually affects students' learning and achievement. Lack of vocabulary is one of the most emerged issues from students from which another bigger issue possibly occurs. As they claim that they do not know what they read or listen, they later become reluctantly practice English. Beside this instance, students' short span of concentration, boredom, and even their low level of discipline awareness has also become another hurdle for both teachers and students

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(Songbatumis, 2017).

On the other hand, English teachers oftentimes have challenges on the practice of English leaning and teaching in the class. Not only do they have difficulties in choosing the appropriate teaching strategies, teachers also often have an issue of language proficiency. Senior teachers are left behind from the novice teachers who have fresh knowledge from the colleges. Yet, novice teachers have confident issue on which make them feel inferior from the experienced teachers (Songbatumis, 2017). Another factor that plays a significant role on the decline of English teaching and learning is the lack of teachers' understanding of the notion of the second language itself. Teachers still neglect the importance of acquisition on their students' outcome. Moreover, most teachers, either experienced or novice teachers, have same opinion about the time allocation for English learning. Teachers only have 160 minutes per week or equal to only 4 meetings per week on each class to give the lesson. This allocation is seemed as unfair due to the demands and pressures they have from the government. This time allocation actually has been patented on the curriculum documents such as a lesson plan or called as *Rencana Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran.*

As a matter of fact, the government has provided a detailed curriculum in which guidance and objectives of learning are available. This was called as 2013 curriculum revision, and it was once implemented throughout the country. The implementation of this curriculum had become a problematic policy for teachers and students. In fact, the curriculum was designed to create an interesting and meaningful teaching-learning process; however, teachers are still in doubt whether the curriculum could actually help them. Therefore, this paper focuses on capturing some issues related to the second language teaching and learning found in a junior high school in Ambal, Kebumen. In conducting this research, the researcher proposed two main research questions to limit the scope of this study. The research problems meant to be solved are as followed:

1. How is teacher's understanding of the notion of second language acquisition?
2. How is the realization of second language acquisition learning strategies in the 2013 Curriculum revision?

Second Language Acquisition

Commonly, people learn a new language, which is different from their native language, for certain purposes such as business or education. The process of gaining this new language is called as second language acquisition. In a broad sense, it is a description of learning a second language. More specifically, second language acquisition (SLA) is the theory of the process of how the learners acquire or obtain a second language. The process of acquisition mainly happens subconsciously (Second language

acquisition (SLA), n.d.). Ellis (2015) defines SLA as the process that people undergo to learn a language other than their native ones, either inside or outside a classroom. Learning language indeed is a flexible process, one doesn't need to attend a language class to master a language. H e or she can simply acquire a language by using it in an informal setting such as in a grocery shop. Selinker and Gass (2008) support this definition as they claim that SLA is acquiring a non-primary language which is beyond the learner's native language. Their study showed that even learners only have limited exposure to the L2, they are still able to create their new language system.

Dulay et al (1982) claimed that second language can be acquired through a process after a learner has the knowledge of his first language as the basics for second language acquisition. Frawley (2003) in fact shared the same claim as he explained that SLA is an acquiring process of a language by a speaker who already has a pre-existed knowledge of another language. This claim is actually quite important. As a learner of a new language, it is essential for ones to have a good basic knowledge of his first language. Although the knowledge may affect the acquisition, it will still be helpful for the learner. This is due to the fact that all language has its own grammatical rules and linguistic devices. If a learner has no knowledge of his first language, it will be a

burden for him to learn a whole new language system.

On other note, Richards, et al. (1985) stated that second language acquisition is a process of development of the speaker's proficiency in a second of foreign language. According to this definition, SLA can be referred as the study of how students learn a second language (L2) in addition to their first language (L1). Even though it is often referred as SLA, based on Richards at al.'s definition, it includes any process of learning of any languages other than speaker's native language, either his the second, third or fourth language. Hence, any other languages apart from the first language is a second language (SL) or often recognized as target language (TL). Regarding the process of SLA, Ellis (1986) added that SLA is a complicated process which involves numerous interrelated factors which simultaneously influence the learners and their learning situation. Khasinah (2014) mentioned several factors affecting the SLA, those are motivation, attitude, age, intelligence, aptitude, cognitive style, and personality. These factors play a significant role in ones' second language acquisition. In conclusion, SLA is a subconscious process which allows a speaker acquires L2 or additional languages beside their pre-existed L1.

Learning Strategies

The development of learning strategies

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began on the 1970s. Date back from decades ago until today, the term "learning strategies" has been defined in many points of views. Brown (2007) provided a modest definition which he defined as processes directly contributing to learning. Brown's definition is actually related to the notion of successful learners as also described by Rubin (1975). Rubin classified strategies based on the direct and indirect effect to the language learning. He also revealed that one learning strategies on a successful learning can be made available for less successful learning.

In the other hand, Oxford (1990) defined learning strategies as the choice made by a learner which aims to make the learning more favorable to learner's situation and condition. These strategies do not only apply for language learning, but also for any other subjects, such mathematics, chemistry, etc. Learning strategies are similar to tactics for a football player employed in a game to win it. Thus, leaners choose and apply a certain learning strategy to help them achieve learning objective successfully.

However, one of the most prominent studies on learning strategies was the one conducted by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). They explored beyond the pre-existed notion learning strategies by providing more focused definition. They declared that leaning strategies are a set of techniques and devices employed by second language learners. They use these techniques and

devices to assist them in remembering and organizing samples of target language. In their research, O'Malley and Chamot distinguished three major types of strategies, namely, Metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategy. This classification was based on the information-processing model. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have listed in details of these three major strategies. In cognitive strategies, there are listed some sub types such as repetition, note-taking, and elaboration. Meanwhile, metacognitive strategies are related to the implementation or the use of knowledge about cognitive processes and make an attempt to organize learning. These strategies include the process of planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Finally, social/affective strategies is related to the course taken by learners to interact with other learners or native speakers.

2013 Curriculum Revision

The practice of education in Indonesia has been conducted and executed in accordance with the law as stated in the 1945 Constitution (*Undang-Undang Dasar 1945*) article 3 section (3). The government is responsible for organizing and implementing a national education system. As the realization of this duty, government has issued the national curriculum called as 2013 curriculum.

Before 2013 curriculum implemented, Indonesia has been through

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several curriculum development processes in which there were adjustments and replacements of curriculums. The 2013 curriculum in deed replaces the previous 2006 curriculum. The 2013 Curriculum is indeed 'a correction' of the 2006 Curriculum, the development of which consists of affective, cognitive, and psychomotor aspects (Public trial of the 2013 curriculum, 2012:4). The 2013 curriculum promotes the notion of the standard of graduate competence (*Standar Kompetensi Lulusan*) to promote four core competences (*Kompetensi Inti*), namely religious, social, knowledge, and knowledge competence (Jaya, 2013). As it is an upgraded version of previous curriculums, the implementation of 2013 curriculum is conducted gradually. By the second semester of 2018 until the second semester 2019 the implementation is targeted to 25% schools for all grades (Puskurbuk, n.d.) and by the 2020 it is expected to reach 100% schools in Indonesia. In the process of the realization of 2013 curriculum, it has also undergone revisions. Tracked back to couple years ago, it has been revised several times in 2014, 2016, and the most recent revision in 2018.

There are several distinctive changes in the 2013 curriculum newest revision. One of them is the teaching methodology. In the original 2013 curriculum, the only teaching methodology is scientific approach, meanwhile in the newest version science approach is not the only approach and it is only the main frame of teaching learning process. If teachers still willingly use this approach, they can use it in casual sequences, which means they can use it in any desired order. The scientific approach actually consists of five steps of learning activities, namely observing, questioning, gathering information or experimenting, reasoning or associating, communicating which can be continued by creating (*Permendikbud* No. 103 year 2014). The basic law of this revision is the *Permendikbud* no.22-year 2016 which replaces the previous *Permendikbud* no. 65 year 2013 about the standard process of elementary and secondary education. The consequence of this issued policy is that teachers are given the freedom to use any approaches and methods they feel the most suitable for their students. However, teacher should note some considerations. They should make sure that they do not use the lecturing model and the memorizing model. In accordance with Permendikbud no.22 to complement the scientific approach there are several approaches suggested, such as problem-based learning, project-based, discovery learning, and genre-based approach. Despite these suggestions, it is still open for any other approaches and methods as long as they are suitable with the basic competence. Somehow, the flexibility of the newest revision of the 2013 curriculum gives huge advantages for teachers.

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RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher applied a qualitative research design. This was employed to investigate in depth about the teacher's knowledge of the notion of SLA and realization of SLA learning strategies in 2013 curriculum revision. An evaluative approach was employed to investigate the SLA learning strategies realized in 2013 Curriculum revision, particularly at SMP Negeri 1 Ambal, Kabupaten Kebumen.

The subject of this research was a senior English teacher in SMP Negeri 1 Ambal and the lesson plan used in the school. Data Collection was conducted through interview and documents examination. In an interview session, the researcher gave some questions regarding with the topic of this study. Meanwhile, in conducting the document examination, the researcher studied the lesson plan composed by the teacher and compared it with the O'Malley and Chamot's topology of learning strategies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Teacher's knowledge of the notion of SLA

In order to find out the answer to the research question one, an interview was conducted with the teacher in charge of the English lesson in grade seven. The subject of this research was a senior English teacher in SMP Negeri 1 Ambal. She is an experienced teacher with 24-year experience of teaching English. After conducting the interview, it can be inferred that the teacher, herself, has less attention to the notion of SLA.

Actually, as a teacher who has completed teaching training typically, she has taken a course in SLA as well. Yet, in reality when a teacher practices the teaching process, soon after graduated, she finds herself busy with lesson plans, grading, and many other tasks (Lessard-Clouston, 2018). This claim has been confirmed by the subject of this study as she said that the burdens from administration duty overwhelms her. The duty of the teacher is not only teaching and making assessment, but also preparing and executing the administration as obliged by the curriculum. The teacher said that making a lesson plan is a never-ending task since the guides of composing lesson plan often changes only in a short of time. This fact really makes the teacher forget and neglect the importance of the notion of SLA. Actually, the subject teacher has sufficient knowledge and experience of teaching English, she has indeed a good class management and control towards materials. Unfortunately, she has forgotten the notion of SLA. She admitted that she heard about SLA but she doesn't know exactly what it is. She also confessed that she has learned about it in the university but she doesn't really acknowledge it when she teaches. The skill of managing both class and material is what

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really matters to her.

As a matter of fact, Lessard-Clouston (2018) has proposed 5 main reasons why SLA is relevant to the practice of language teaching. First, it helps English teachers understand student learning. In teaching English, SLA is an inevitable process of language teaching and learning. By understanding how students acquire and learn language, the teacher will have many sources in exploring their teaching practices. Second, it allows teachers to reflect on their own learning because as a teacher a reflection is always needed. Third, SLA offers pedagogical insights and guidance. Fourth, SLA provides resources of input, output, and interaction. And finally, it helps untangle and focus a complex field.

2. Realization of O'Malley and Chamot's Topology of Learning Strategies in 2013 Curriculum

There are so many learning strategies and models provided. However, O'Malley and Chamot has elaborated a model of learning strategies, namely metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies. Each of these main three aspects has detailed sub-aspects as proposed by O'Malley and Chamot. After careful examination of the lesson plan made by the teacher for grade seven, the document is compared with the topology. The focus of the material in the lesson plan is time. The

lesson plan is composed in accordance with the newest revision of 2013 curriculum. It consists of core competence, basic competence, learning indicators, and learning stages. In examining the lesson plan, the researcher only focusses on the core activity of the learning which is realized on the leaning stages. The stages consist of opening, core, and closing. The core activity follows the guidance from the curriculum which has 5 main stages, namely observing, questioning, exploring, associating, and communicating. The findings can be seen in Table 1.

As the findings on table 1 suggests, most of the part of learning strategy topology has been realized on the current 2013 curriculum. The most frequently phases appeared on the table are associating and communicating. This fact is not surprising as these two phases are the core of learning activity. The 2013 curriculum newest revision emphasizes on the students centered learning which requires the students to actively strive and discover knowledge. In accordance with this finding, O'Malley and Chamot's learning strategies provide extensive choices for both learners and teachers the space for them to explore and gain as much input as possible.

Table 1. Comparison of O'Malley and Chamot Topology and newest revision of 2013 curriculum

Learning strategies	Yes/No	Description of lesson plan
Metacognitive Strategies		
Planning	Yes	Realized on the *opening* and *observing* phase: Teacher builds students' background knowledge, explains the objectives and the scope of learning. On observing phase, the teacher provides the students with real example of clock or object that indicates time.
Directed attention	Yes	Realized on the *opening* phase: Teacher builds students' background knowledge, explains the objectives and the scope of learning in order to limit the material range.
Selective attention	Yes	Realized on the *exploring* phase: Teacher helps the students to work in group or in pairs to practice the language, such as read the clock, relate the time with daily activity, etc.
Self-management	Yes	Realized on the *associating and communicating* phase: In these two phases, students have the opportunity to practice their language.
Self-monitoring	Yes	Realized on the *associating and communicating* phase: Implicitly, teachers are allowed to give feedback when the students come forward to present their works.
Problem identification .	Yes	Realized on the *questioning* phase: Teacher gives opportunity to the students to identify issue, or inquiry regarding to the materials.
Cognitive Strategies		
Self-evaluation	Yes	Realized on the *associating and communicating* phase: Implicitly, teachers are allowed to give feedback when the students come forward to present their works. In addition, the assessment process, teacher can involve her students to make peer-evaluation.
Repetition	Yes	Realized on the *observing* and *exploring* phase: Teacher builds students' background knowledge, explains the objectives and the scope of learning. On observing phase, the teacher provides the students with real example of clock or object that indicates time. Teacher provides as many as example and explaining the example. Teacher can both give the example of language use as well as linguistic features involved in the learning material.
Resourcing	Yes	
Grouping	Yes	
Note taking	Yes	
Deduction/Induction	Yes	Realized on the *associating and communicating* phase: In these two phases, students have the opportunity to practice their language.

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Substitution	No	-
Elaboration	Yes	Realized on the *associating and communicating* phase: In these two phases, students have the opportunity to practice their language.
Summarization	Yes	Realized on the *closing* phase: Both teacher and students make reflection, and evaluation of the learning.
Translation	No	-
Transfer	Yes	Realized on the *associating and communicating* phase: In these two phases, students have the opportunity to practice their language features obtained from *exploring* phase.
Inferencing	No	-
Social and Affective Strategies		
Questioning for clarification	Yes	Realized on the *questioning* phase: Teacher gives opportunity to the students to identify issue, or inquiry regarding to the materials. Teacher is also allowed to elicit the students with the related topic.
Cooperation	Yes	Realized on the *associating and communicating* phase: In these two phases, students have the opportunity to practice their language features obtained from *exploring* phase. Often, in these phases students are working in group or in pairs so that they can collaborate and reduce the anxiety.
Self-talk	No	-
Self-reinforcement	Yes	Realized on the *closing* phase: Both teacher and students make reflection, and evaluation of the learning.

Note: the topology was adopted from *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition* (O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. ,1990, p. 137-139

Nevertheless, based on the teachers claim, this high-praised curriculum doesn't contribute much on learner's achievement. She said that the curriculum was only made perfectly on the paper, but not for the real-life practice. Both parties share the same burden in applying the curriculum due to the lack of resources and time allocation. From the teacher side, the subject teacher revealed that some of her colleagues have difficulties in using the curriculum due to the lack of motivation to learn something new. This claim supported by Songbatumis (2017) as she revealed in her study that teachers, especially senior teachers, has the lack of professional development. The government indeed has provided and conducted teachers training even several times in one semester, yet it will not make a significant change on teachers' ability if they are reluctant to learn.

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From the students' side, they also have low awareness of discipline (Songbatumis, 2017). This fact may be due to the heterogenous group of age and sex of the students, differentiation, parental interference, lack of experience, different native language, and self-motivation (Copland, Garton & Burns, 2014). Whether the teacher realizes or not, the curriculum applied and strategies chosen has significant impact on two main aspects of learning, namely the rate of acquisition and the ultimate level of achievement (Ellis, 2015).

As the implementation of the curriculum is not completely implemented, the teacher only focuses on the ultimate level of students' achievement. She assesses her students by using test and assignment on a piece of paper. She grades them by using numbers. Unfortunately, however, teacher often neglects the acquisition rate of the students. The acquisition rate is in fact, sometime, difficult to assess by using numbers, but it should have been the focus of every language learning. Numbers do not really reflect how far the students have acquired a language. Therefore, a well-drafted curriculum and best learning strategies do not guarantee students' acquisition.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and careful examination of the curriculum document, the researcher concludes that:

1. Teachers have low awareness of the importance of second language acquisition in their teaching-learning process. Teachers have left behind the definition and the role of SLA as they have left college. One of the causes of this fact is the overwhelming administration duty.

2. Indonesia's 2013 curriculum newest revision reflects most of O'Malley and Chamot's learning strategy topology. The curriculum eventually reflects all of metacognitive strategies. While in cognitive strategies, there are two aspects which are not reflected in the curriculum. Finally, in terms of social strategies, only one aspect is not included in the curriculum.

From the conclusion above, it is suggested that teachers need to make improvement in terms of their awareness towards SLA as well as the choice of learning strategies. These two matters are essential to enhance both student's acquisition rate and achievement level. Moreover, teachers should give more attention to the actual goal of language learning that is the students' acquisition rate as the curriculum has accommodated second language acquisition process in the class.

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