

**CHAPTER II**  
**AN ANALYSIS ON STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES**  
**TOWARDS LEARNING ENGLISH**

**A. Students' Difficulties in Learning English**

1. Definition of Learning

Learning is a powerful incentive for students to get a great achievement. Learning has a significant impact on individual behavior as it influences abilities, role perceptions and motivation. Along with its role in individual behavior, learning is essential for Knowledge in improve students' learning achievement. According to Abante (2014:3), Learning is the process of gaining understanding that leads to the modification of attitudes and behaviors through acquisition of knowledge, skills and values, through study and experience, causes a change of behavior that is persistent, measurable, and specific or allows an individual to formulate new mental construct or revise a prior construct (conceptual knowledge such as attitudes or values).

Then, Dwarakanath (2009:3) states that Learning is defined as “a relatively permanent change in behavior that occurs as a result of prior experience.” Learning is understood as the modification of behavior through practice, training, or experience. So, it can be conclude that Learning is a process that occurs either intentionally or unintentionally

that have influence in the development of thinking and behavior of the individual.

## 2. Learning English in Curriculum Indonesia

English language is one of the most spoken languages in the world of today. The British were the only people who spoke English as a monolingual language within their domain of influence in time past. According to Crystal cited in Johari (2014:2), the language is now spoken by over two billion people with different accents and competency levels. He observed that the native speakers are now less in number when compared with the non-native speakers because the use of the language has spread beyond the borders of Britain. English language has now become world's language for research, publication, business and commerce. Johari (2014:1) also states that English Language has been seen as a good medium of communication in Indonesia. Apart from the fact that it has been adopted as a teaching language in higher Institution of leaning, it is also being considered as an enhancement for social status. All in all English language has been seen as a standard medium of communication all over the world and Indonesia cannot be left out.

In some way or another, teaching and learning of English Language can be considered to be an integral part of Indonesia educational system for a long time now. As stated by Daloglu (1996) in Johary (2014:2) points out that an important requirement for effective delivery of high quality language education is a proper definition of the

curriculum with clear aim and objectives. Developing a curriculum that clearly spells out how knowledge can be acquired constitutes an important phase towards realizing good quality language dissemination. However, to ensure that the appropriate knowledge is been passed to learners there must be a way of assessing what is been taught in various schools and at various levels.

English teaching in Indonesia has been based on the curriculum designed by the central government throughout provision of curriculum policies. Nunan cited in Johary (2014:2) observes that though there are sometimes many contradictory and diverse opinions regarding the nature of English language and its teaching and learning, is expected by adoption of English language in Indonesia can brought about a tremendous change in the educational policies of the country. Furthermore some pedagogy relating to English language teaching, namely, the methodology, curriculum, and evaluation is given substantial attention so as to improve the competency of its usage in the country. From the explanations above, it can be concluded that based on the evaluation of the Government, through the English language in the curriculum in Indonesia, as the improvement of the English language is intended to make education in Indonesia is getting better than before. Because, in the world using English as the international language of education in Indonesia was further enhanced in order to be balanced and adjusted to the educations in other countries.

## **B. Difficulties towards Learning English**

There are several factors which affect students' performance, for example Robertson cited in Sawir (2005:3) the students manifest a lack of confidence with English, such as they incomplete understanding of teachers' spoken English, and feel unhappy with their oral performances in the presence of classmates, there are also concerns about colloquial language, writing difficulties, and problems of interpretation. Then, Zhu (2012:1) states that in language study, affect is one's attitude, emotion, feeling and mood. The affective factors include motivation, self-confidence, of feelings, attitudes and motivations which will influence the process and result of language learning. Gardner cited in Zhu (2012:1) also state that affective factors have some influence on language acquisition and achievement. Attitude plays an important role in language learning process. A learner's attitude to the learning language will impact the learner outside the classroom. The study done by Burden cited in Zhu (2012:1) showed that a positive attitude would motivate learners to achieve their learning goals.

From the experts' explanation, it can be concluded that the difficulties faced by students is influenced by several factors, such as affective derived from the ability or intelligence of the students itself, in addition to the way teachers in teaching also cause students have difficulties in learning English. The attitudes of the students who consider the English language was difficult to make the students are not motivated to learn



English because the students' attitude has an important role to success in learning English.

### **C. The Factors That Affecting in Learning English**

Some students learn a new language more quickly and easily than others. This simple fact is known by all who have themselves learned a second language or taught those who are using their second language in school. Clearly, some language learners are successful by virtue of their sheer determination, hard work and persistence. However there are other crucial factors influencing success that are largely beyond the control of the learner. These factors can be broadly categorized as internal and external. It is their complex interplay that determines the speed and facility with which the new language is taught (Paul Shoebottom 1996-2016).

#### **1. Internal factors**

Internal factors are those that the individual language learner brings with him or her to the particular learning situation.

- a. Age:* Second language acquisition is influenced by the age of the learner. Children, who already have solid literacy skills in their own language, seem to be in the best position to acquire a new language efficiently. Motivated, older learners can be very successful too, but usually struggle to achieve native-speaker-equivalent pronunciation and intonation.

- b. Personality:* Introverted or anxious learners usually make slower progress, particularly in the development of oral skills. They are less likely to take advantage of opportunities to speak, or to seek out such opportunities. More outgoing students will not worry about the inevitability of making mistakes. They will take risks, and thus will give themselves much more practice. *Personality* is another factor that influences progress in language learning. Therefore, have conducted studies relating to the relation of personality and language learning. The results revealed a clear relationship between personality and second language acquisition. This is because personality determines things that learners feel comfortable with. Consequently, they are able to express themselves better at the given skill. There are a number of personality characteristics that may affect second or foreign language learning. Extrovert language learners are more comfortable in group activities and produce more language output than introvert counterparts. Rubin & Thompson cited in Jindathai (2015:2) conclude that learners who are shy and inhibited are worried about their oral abilities. They tend to show less willingness to participate in the classroom and in daily-life communication. Language learners who are not afraid to make mistakes and are willing to take risk are more successful.
- c. Motivation (intrinsic):* Intrinsic motivation has been found to correlate strongly with educational achievement. Clearly, students

who enjoy language learning and take pride in their progress will do better than those who don't. Extrinsic motivation is also a significant factor. ESL students, for example, who need to learn English in order to take a place at an American university or to communicate with a new English boy/girlfriend are likely to make greater efforts and thus greater progress.

*d. Cognition:* In general, it seems that students with greater cognitive abilities (intelligence) will make the faster progress. Some linguists believe that there is a specific, innate language learning ability that is stronger in some students than in others.

## 2. External factors

External factors are those that characterize the particular language learning situation.

*a. Instruction:* Clearly, some language teachers are better than others at providing appropriate and effective learning experiences for the students in their classrooms. These students will make faster progress. The same applies to mainstream teachers in second language situations. The science teacher, for example, who is aware that she too is responsible for the students' English language development, and makes certain accommodations, will contribute to their linguistic development.

- b. Culture and status:* There is some evidence that students in situations where their own culture has a lower status than that of the culture in which they are learning the language make slower progress.
- c. Motivation (extrinsic):* Students who are given continuing, appropriate encouragement to learn by their teachers and parents will generally fare better than those who aren't. For example, students from families that place little importance on language learning are likely to progress less quickly. Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that to achieve student success in learning English, many factors that must be taken to ensure that this success can be achieved. Among them are internal and external factors. Internal factors such as age, personality and motivation and also external factors such as instruction from the teacher, their culture and statuses and then motivation which can influence them to support the success of students. For that, parents and teachers can pay attention to these factors so that it can be used as reference materials to improve students' learning.

#### **D. The Factors That Impact the Learners to Have Good in English Language Learning**

There are two main factors that may affect the students' learning outcomes are achieved, namely intrinsic and extrinsic factors students. Intrinsic factors namely factor comes from the students with regard to



capabilities holds. In addition there is also the factor of learning motivation, interest and attention, attitudes and habits of learning, perseverance, time available for study, the time it takes students to explain the lesson, the quality of learning, and the ability of the individual.

Tarin cited in Senel (2006:4) said that least five things that must be considered in choosing the material, including choose a theme relevant to the improvement of language skills, are:

1. Factors interest

Teachers know and identify students' interests or main center. Activities are in demand by students that should be used as the theme of the activities in language learning.

2. Environmental factors

Every human being lives in a particular environment. The environment can be a physical environment, social environment, and cultural environments. The most influential social environment essential for students as originally bred there. Ranging from family, neighbors, and neighborhood. Over time, they also pay attention to the physical and cultural environment. Learning activities or activities that are relevant language can be given through the theme of self, family, home, and culture.

### 3. Factors ability

The level of ability of students to the theme of learning activities should be balanced. Elaboration of the theme should be in the form of a simple discourse.

### 4. Factors benefits

Themes that are directly perceived by the students use to improve learning. Instead, the theme of which is not directly internalized their role is definitely reduce the learning activities. The theme of language is first selected or attempted theme that is very useful and it can be felt by the students use. Only later following a theme is also very important, although their usefulness has not been felt by students at this time.

Based on the explanations above, the writer concludes that in addition to the intrinsic factors of students to achieve success in learning English, teachers should also pay attention to relevant themes in the selection of learning materials taking into account factors such as interest, environmental, ability, and benefits to improve the ability to learn English.

## **E. The Factors That Impact the Learners to Have Poor in English Language Learning**

There are several of determinants and problems that effect to the students' learning English as a foreign or second language in a non-native speaking country. Those factors may derive from many components including social environmental issues, the difference of culture, social

economic extension, and etc. These issues cause students to have poor performance in language learning, particularly in the bottom billion countries.

Factors which contributes to students low English language proficiency causes of :

### *1. Weakness in English Language Learning*

This is because of lack of several factors to support the learning and teaching approaches. According to Souvannasy, Masashi, & Yukiko (2008), in Souriyavongsa (2013:5) identify that teaching and learning English implementation still has shortages of textbooks, unqualified English teachers and also substandard curriculum. The poor socioeconomic background is one of factors that creates learners face with the use foreign language.

A study has been conducted by Muhammad cited in Souriyavongsa (2013:5), on the investigation of the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL/EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence it casts on communication in the target language found difficulties of language learning, differences in learners' and target language cultures, the difference in social status of the speakers are the factors that affect to the students' weakness of language learning. In addition, the lack of the target language exposure as spoken by its native speakers, the shortage and weakness of the contribution in their language teaching context, and lack of their personal motivation (Loae cited in Souriyavongsa 2013:5).

Normazidah, Koo, & Hazita ; Trawiński cited in Souriyavongsa (2013:6), presented the factors that impact the EFL learners to have poor performance in English language learning as followings:

- a. English is regarded as a difficult subject to learn
- b. Learners' learning depends on the English teachers as authorities
- c. There is a lack of support to use English in the home environment and the community
- d. Learners have insufficient or lacking of exposure to the language as there is a limited
- e. Opportunity to use English outside the classrooms
- f. Students have a limitation of vocabulary proficiency as well as English reading materials are not always available
- g. Learners have an unwillingness and lack of motivation to learn English as they do not see the immediate need to use the language
- h. Lack of motivation for learning or the negative attitude towards the target language.

Regarding to explanation above, Chang (2010) in Souriyavongsa (2013:6), also indicated that reasons cause students' weakness for English language learning derived from learners' laziness, lack of efficiency of the school, and insufficient of parents' promotions.

Moreover, according to Dembo cited in Souriyavongsa (2013:6), specifies that time management is involved in students' educational achievement; for instance, students with better time-management skills



tend to have higher grade-point average (GPA) than students with poorer time-management skills.

Alderman cited in Souriyavongsa (2013:6), states to the students' poor performance of language learning are affected from a lack of effort, lack of effective learning strategies, whereas a good language learner is a highly motivated students and a successful user of a large number of different strategies (Trawiński cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013:6).

So, teachers have to help them improve the motivational beliefs and language learning strategies in order to find ways that reach to their academic achievement. Therefore, to these key factors, all stakeholders should find ways to solve the problems for learners' academic achievements.

## 2. *Motivation for English Language Learning*

In general, motivation is recognized as one of the most significant factors affecting students' performance of second language (L2) learning (Lei ; Thang et al cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013:7). At present, many numbers of students have failed in their English language learning because of lack of motivation from some elements such as family background, social-environment, physical environment, culture, methods of learning and so forth (Dembo cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013:7).

Motivation can influence students' freedom, attention, attempt, patient, the frequency of using learning strategies, and their learning success (Zhou cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013:7), Learners have pleasure

for a second or foreign language learning when they receive motivation, especially internal motivation because it could be well predicted by perceived second language ability and independence (Wu cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013:6).

### 3. *Learning Strategies*

Learning strategies are the methods that learners use to obtain information; normally high achievers learners use more learning strategies than do lower achieving learners (Dembo cited in Souriyavongsa 2013:7). There were several unsuccessful students in their study because they often failed to apply learning strategies appropriately to the task at hand. The aspects of researchers believe that learning strategies are as significant in second language acquisition (SLA) motivation; it provides the learners tools for gaining achieving the goal. They can facilitate specific aspects of the learner's competency such as communicative, and individual's emotional state that related to the learning process (Trawinski cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013:7). It is very valuable to formulate and adapt learning strategies to complement learner's English language level and then encourage successful participation (Margaret cited in Souriyavongsa, 2013:7). According to Ting cited in Souriyavongsa, (2013:7), students are able to overcome their weakness in some learning styles with suitable strategy training, and learning strategies can influence students' learning achievements. Moreover, learning strategic factors also enhance students to be good

learners as Oxford cited in Souriyavongsa (2013:9) classifies the characteristics of the good learners that s/he:

- 1) is an enthusiastic and accurate guesser;
- 2) has a strong drive to communicate;
- 3) is uninhabited and ready to make mistakes;
- 4) emphasizes on form by looking at patterns and using analysis;
- 5) take improvement of all practice opportunities;
- 6) monitors his or her own speech and that of others;
- 7) pays attention to meaning

However, there are many scholars and researchers describe the difference of definitions of learning strategies as Richards & Lockhart cited in Souriyavongsa, (2013:8), describe that learning strategies are the particular processes students use with individual learning tasks such as reading a chapter of a book or preparing a written summary of a passage as well as the student can select many different ways of completing the task, learners can make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more effective, and more transferable to new situations.

Besides, Jindathai (2015:2) states that there are several factors that lead to a poor. The first is the students' attitude, the second is the students' motivation, next is the students' personality, followed by the level of the students' exposure to English, and finally management in teaching and learning English.

- a. *Attitude* as one of the key factors that influences success or failure for language learners. There is a clear relationship between attitude and achievement in learning a language. A positive attitude will help learners to achieve their goals. Holmes cited in Jindathai (2015:2) concludes in his study that when language learners have a positive attitude towards a target language, they will be successful in acquiring a target language. On the other hand, that the learners with a negative attitude do not put in the effort required to learn the language. Moreover, Littlewood cited in Jindathai (2015:2) concludes that a bad attitude produced a barrier to the learning process. Consequently, they will lose interest in learning. As a result, their communication skills were limited and that they were afraid to speak English.
- b. *Exposure to English*, the amount of time in exposure to a target language in formal and informal linguistic environments influences second language acquisition. In addition, language exposure is related to a proficiency level as a study. Lubega cited in Jindathai (2015:3) concludes that language learning should be in a formal and informal linguistic situation, learners who had only formal exposure will achieve a lower level of language proficiency than those who had both formal and informal exposure.
- c. *Management in teaching and learning English*, this is the last factor which may influence students' difficulties in acquiring communicative skills in language learning. This factor includes teachers' techniques,



classroom activities, extra curriculum activities, and the course syllabus.

The teacher is a very important factor in teaching language learning. A good language teacher depends on two factors: the level of proficiency in the language, and his knowledge and expertise in language teaching techniques. Fun and interesting inside classroom activities are closely related to teachers' skills and techniques in handling the classroom. The last two factors, extra classroom activities and the course syllabus are related to management policy within the department. These factors indirectly affect students' problems in English speaking.

Based on the experts' explanations above, it can be concluded that there are some factor that affect the students low in learning English, are weakness in English language learning like they regarded English as a difficult subject to learn, learners' learning depends on the English teachers as authorities, there is a lack of support to use English in the home environment and the community, learners have insufficient or lacking of exposure to the language as there is a limited, opportunity to use English outside the classrooms, students have a limitation of vocabulary proficiency as well as English reading materials are not always available, learners have an unwillingness and lack of motivation to learn English as they do not see the immediate need to use the language and lack of motivation for learning or the negative attitude towards the target language. Then, the second factor is motivation for English language learning, the third is Learning Strategies,

the fourth is attitude exposure to English and the last is Management in teaching and learning English.

