

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Study

Language has a big role in the communication process. Language is one of basic need for human which cannot be separated from their life. Language is used not only in expressing thoughts and emotions, but also it is used for communication. The importance of language is also mentioned in the Holy Quran Al-Hujurat verse 13 as follow :

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ

أَتْقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ۝ ١٣﴾

In this verse explained that God creates male and female and made you into nation and tribes that so you know each other. Like God made many languages so that every human in the world can communicate each other to exchange the information in their everyday life.

English is widely regarded as the most important language in the world. It is the most widely used international communication language. It enables people from all over the world to communicate and understand one another. According to Crystal (2003), English is the universal language that is used in a variety of fields such as business, education, communication, and entertainment. As a result, there

is a growing demand for English as a second and foreign language. Furthermore, the demand for English speakers with high proficiency is increasing dramatically in every country.

Language proficiency, in general, refers to one's ability to use language for a variety of communicative purposes. Proficient users are said to have a good command of the language, which means they can understand it without difficulty, express a variety of ideas clearly in speech and writing, and interact comfortably with other speakers. Language proficiency is typically measured using five performance indicators: accuracy, fluency, complexity, appropriacy, and capacity (Richards, 2018).

Based on the English Proficiency Index (EPI) report by EF (Education First) in 2021, Indonesia is in the 80th rank out of 112 countries surveyed, which is 6 places compared to the previous year.

At UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, there are several English learning that can be used to measure the level of language proficiency. UPB, or the Language Development Unit, is one of the language courses at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin that all students take. Arabic and English are the two languages that UIN Antasari wants its students to learn. In the UPB program, there is a classification in the learning system where students are first placed in a placement test to measure their abilities and then grouped with other students in a class that has nearly or possibly equivalent language skills based on their abilities.

Every semester at UPB, there are two levels of students learning: lower and upper. Lower students are in grades 1-40, while upper students are in grades 40 and above. UPB is carried out every day from senin to sabtu on pagi hari, which has been reduced to three days for each language program. However, there is one group of students who do not participate in UPB, and that is PKU (Excellent program of Scholar). Whereas they are students from the *Ushuluddin* and Humanities faculties with specific qualifications to participate in the targeted program.

The prospective students of the excellent program of scholar (PKU) at the beginning of the program's establishment were all male and graduated from Madrasah Aliyah and Islamic Boarding Schools. This is considered based on the objectives of the Special Program for Ulama, which is to produce young ulama, who have a strong basic knowledge of religion and have good Arabic language skills. Then in the following year the registration for the Special Program for Ulama for Women was also opened.

To realize the vision and mission of the Ulama Special Program, in addition to studying in lectures, students of the Ulama special program also take part in additional activities in dormitories such as *Halaqoh*, Language Tutorials, Tahsin and also Tahfidz Al-Quran.

PKU's students do not participate in UPB during their college years because they have a routine program called *Halaqoh* that they do after every morning prayer, which also coincides with UPB, which is held every morning. They did not follow

UPB due to program policies, and instead replaced it with their special learning for PKU students, which was carried out every Saturday.

Learning English with Learning Strategies is one method for achieving a high level of English proficiency. Bialystok (1978) at (Wu, 2008), defines Language learning strategies are optional means for exploiting available information to improve competence in a second language . According to Bialystok's explanation of the definition of learning strategies, it is an optional way to improve EFL competence. Competence in this context can be defined as a Proficiency level for someone who has studied English.

One strategy can be appropriate or not appropriate to another. Therefore, students have to find their appropriate learning strategies. Al Qur'an since long ago provided a number of ways in acquiring knowledge faster, better, and more enjoyable. One of the strategies is waking up at mid night praying and reading the holy Qur'an as mentioned in the Holy Quran Al-Muzzamil verse 6:

﴿إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ۖ ٦﴾

This verse explains that waking up in the night for doing tahajud and reading Qur'an will be more impressed than other times. It can be interpreted also as another example of learning strategies which is about reading in the night after sleeping will make someone more understand about the lesson. Some learners may study at the night because of their confidence's area in which a person's feel the fresh air and quietly situation. It should be noticed that learning strategy is individualistic.

There is a policy that requires PKU students to write their final lectures or thesis in English or Arabic, most of them write their thesis in the English language and because of that the writer interest to make the research about Learning strategies and proficiency level of PKU students.

### **B. Research Question**

1. What kind of English Learning Strategies that PKU Students' used in learning English?
2. How does English proficiency level of PKU's Students?

### **C. Objectives of Study**

1. To find out English Learning Strategies that PKU's Students used in learning English.
2. To identify the proficiency level of PKU's Students.

### **D. Significance of Study**

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this research gives information about the correlation between Learning Strategies with Proficiency Level of Students

2. Practical Significance

- a) For Students, the results of this this research can be used as a guidance in Learning English inside and outside the classroom
- b) For Teachers, the results of this research can be used in adding more information about model or strategies that is suitable with the proficiency level of the students or to achieve the proficiency that they want.

- c) For Further Researcher, this research hopefully can be used as a reference in developing better research.

## **E. Definition of Key Terms**

### **1. Learning Strategies**

In this study the writer will uses the definition of learning strategies by Bialystok (1978), he defines Language learning strategies are optional means for exploiting available information to improve competence in a second language.

### **2. Proficiency Level**

This term refers to the ability of an individual to speak or perform in target language. The ability itself is elaborated into four skills; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

### **3. UPB (Language Development Unit)**

It is a program that UIN Antasari has to develop their students' ability of language, there are two languages that thought at UPB there are Arabic and English Language.

### **4. PKU (Excellent Program of Scholar)**

Program Khusus Ulama in English is an Excellent Special Program for scholars of a program at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin. It is program of scholars aims to become a quality ulama (Theologian) and scholar of Ushuluddin with extensive knowledge in the field of faith, shari'a and morality/