CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English is an international language which gains popularity and mostly used in several countries including Indonesia. English becomes important because many branches of science are written in English and students should learn English to get information from them. We will be the people who can master the information all over world if we have mastered the language well. So, language is the important thing that should not be ignored.

In Indonesia itself, English not only used as a means of communication and keeping in touch with another nation but also as a subject that is taught and learned at school. The students are hoped to be able to master science and technology needed by studying English. As we know, studying English continues to occupy an important place in our education. It is regarded as an additional subject at secondary school.

Many things can be the factors of success in learning not only English but also other foreign language. According to Cohen and Dornyei (2004) success of mastering a foreign language is influenced by several factors such as the time and frequency of learning, the teachers' abilities and personalities, the suitable method, the textbook's value, capacity number of students in group, the natural teaching-learning practice opportunity's amount and the language learners' characteristic (as cited in Fauziati, 2010: 132).

Understanding the students' characteristic is very important in teaching English because it determines how well or how fast the students are probably to master the English language.

According to Fauziati (2010: 132) the characteristics of the language learner can be differentiated into two, they are: first, which are beyond the teacher's control such as age, gender, and aptitude and then the others are factors that teachers can actively address to increase the effectiveness of instruction such as motivation, learner strategies and learning style.

Dunn and Griggs (2000) describe learning style as the way an individual begins to concentrate on, process, internalize, and remember new information and skills (as cited in University of Washington, 2014). Each learner has their own preferences in studying something, which is what we call as learning style.

Learning style appears because of the potential or ability to boost dominant on them. Learning style often affects the student's understanding the material because it is ways that tend to be used continuously. In the other side, every student has their own style or totally different one student with other.

The differences student's learning style is influenced by the way of thinking that is usually used or frequently termed as cognitive style. According to Zhang and Sternberg (2006) cognitive style is the way it is constantly used by students in perceiving, remembering, solving problems, and making decisions (as cited in Seifert & Sutton, 2009: 67).

Knowing their own learning style will help the students in learning some material because it helps them to have more maximum preparation. It is also useful for the teacher to know their learning style in delivering the information in the class.

According to Bobby de Potter (2008), knowing their different learning styles can help the teacher to convey all the students by using different models to deliver the information. Thus, every person knows their own learning style, how he can work most effectively, and how the environment he needs to be creative.

SMA MTA is an educational institute that wants to contribute to the development of the next generation through education and English is being one of important subject in this school. In learning English subject, the teacher needs to be creative and innovative because this school uses National Curriculum 2013. Because of this case, it is important for the teacher to know the learning style of their students.

Besides that, the students also need to know about it in order to help them master and understand the English subject because only few people can study or work in a way that is best for them and the way their brains work. They should know what their dominant way in learning is and how to handle if they have any difficulties. It will be their strength if they pay attention about it.

When someone understands his own learning style, he knows how the best way to learn for him is, and he can organize incoming information to

create a direct input to the brain. He can quickly master new knowledge because he put them into place in the form which is easily accepted by his brain. His understanding rises when he adjusts to the information activities of the most dominant learning styles.

Considering the problem above, the writer is interested in observing this case to know what kind of learning styles used by the students in SMA MTA Surakarta, how is the way they study English subject and understand it. Based on the reasons, the writer decides to conduct a research proposal entitled *Students ' Profile Based on Their Learning Style and Its Implication in English Teaching: a Study at SMA MTA Surakarta.*

B. Limitation of the Study

This study is focused on the first grade student of SMA MTA Surakarta, X MIA 6, academic year 2013/2014 in their learning style and focus on sensory learning style that are visual, aural, reading and kinesthetic. The data will be analyzed using questionnaire based on sensory learning style theory (VARK theory) by Neil Fleming (2010).

C. Problem Statement

Based on the research background, the writer formulates the problem statement as follow:

What are the profiles of the students of SMA MTA Surakarta based on their learning style?

Based on the problem, the writer raises research questions:

1. What are the students' types of learning style?

2. What are the major types of learning style used by the students?

3. What are their preferences in learning English?

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem statement, the objectives of the study in this research are:

1. To describe the profiles of the students of SMA MTA Surakarta based on their learning style.

2. To identify the types of their learning style.

3. To identify the major types of learning style that used by the students.

4. To identify their preferences learning style in learning English.

5. To purpose teaching technique that suitable for the students' learning style.

E. Significance of the Study

There are some expected benefits that could be acquired from this study. Such significance as following can be perceived:

1. Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to the sciences of applied linguistics especially English Language teaching (TEFL), especially about Learning Style and its implicative in the learning process.

2. Practical Significance

There are some practical benefits namely; this study might be useful for the teacher to improve their ways in teaching English as a second language and give the new concept in teaching learning process. The result of this study will help the English teachers and the learners to solve their problems in teaching and learning English.

F. Research Paper Organization

In this research the writer constructs the research paper into five chapters.

Chapter I is introduction, which consists of background of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, benefit of the study and research paper organization.

Chapter II is previous study and underlying theory that relates to theoretical review that consists of the relation between learning style and Second Language Acquisition, the notion of learning style, learning style classification that consist of Reid's concept, Kolb's concept, Dunn and Dunn's concept and Fleming's concept.

Chapter III is research method that deals with type of research, subject of the study, object of the study, data and data sources, method of collecting data and technique for analyzing data.

Chapter IV is research finding and discussion where the writer described type of learning style, the major type of learning that is used by the students, and their preferences learning style that used in learning English.

Chapter V is conclusion, pedagogical implication and suggestion.