CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The English language as an international language has an important role in global communication around the world. In Indonesia, English is taught in every level of schools, starting from the primary school. The schools compete to equip students with adequate English skills like improving the learning media to the latest one. But, there are complaints from the teachers that most students tend to be passive in the class. The students do not pay enough attention to the materials given by their English teacher.

There are many factors influencing the learning process. The factors can be divided into four major factors: school, family, society, and individual. Schools as a place for the students to learn guided by teachers, influence the students' learning by the class condition and the school learning facilities like book collections in the library and learning laboratories in order to help the students to achieve the competences stated in the curriculum. Maccoby (1993) stresses that family attachment also influences the students' learning process. He states further "children who enjoy a secure attachment relationship with their parents and caregivers use this relationship as a support to venture out and explore their environment". Society, as the students' cultural place to grow up, also influence the learning process. Students who live in rural areas tend to spend their spare

time to play with their peers or do other activities rather than learning in the afternoon. Language learners who live in big cities have better access to more facilities than those who live in remote villages because the students in the big cities get more chances to interact and use the foreign language in their daily activities. The students in the big cities can use their English language and have more English exposure in playing their electronic handheld games, watching movies in cinemas, and playing online games. Individual factors also take part in the learning process as the students use certain learning styles in studying.

Students' learning style, in many cases plays an important role in the individual learning process. Dunn, Beaudry and Klavas (1989) assert that through voluminous studies, it has been indicated that both low and average achievers earn higher scores on standardized achievement and aptitude tests when they are taught within the realm of their learning styles. There are three learning styles according to Oxford in Reid (1995): visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Visual learning style is a style of learning that tends to learn through the visual channel (Oxford in Reid. 1995). Auditory learning style is a style of learning that tends to learn through their hearing sense (Oxford in Reid. 1995). Kinesthetic learning style is a style of learning that tends to learn through a hands-on approach (Oxford in Reid. 1995). Those learning styles influence students' comprehension of the materials because the students will be more enthusiastic to follow the lesson when the materials are presented in the way they learn.

The teaching strategies used by the teacher should support the different learning styles students may have. Students will comprehend the materials more quickly when it is presented according to their learning style

(Dunn & Dunn. 1978; Schmek.1988; Felder & Silverman. 1988). In fact, a teacher usually uses one up to three techniques which only support one or two learning styles and it can be the cause of the students' poor academic achievement when the students cannot follow the lesson. In a class where such a mismatch occurs, the students tend to be bored and inattentive, do poorly on tests, get discouraged about the course, and may conclude that they are not good at the subjects of the course and give up (Oxford et al. 1991). Teachers ought to use various teaching techniques to support different learning styles and help the students in the process of learning.

From the writer's experience when the writer was conducting the teaching practice, the writer observed that some students were active and some students were not. The writer used different techniques in his teaching and it seemed that some students were enthusiastic and some students were not. The writer is curious to know what the reasons are for those who were not willing to be active. Some possible reasons might be that the language of the teacher could not be easily understood by the students or the teaching techniques which were used did not match the students' learning styles. In this case, the writer wants to observe and analyze the link between the teacher's teaching strategies and the students learning styles. The writer believes that the teacher should employ teaching techniques and activities which can support different learning styles and help the students to reach their best academic achievement. The writer conducts this research to find out the kinds of teaching strategies used by the teacher in class and which teaching strategies can accommodate the students' learning styles.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

   In line with the background of the study above, the writer formulated these problems to be answered in this study. They are:

1.2.1 What are the percentages of the students who are categorized as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners in each class?

1.2.2 What kinds of teaching strategies are conducted by the teachers in the classroom?

1.2.3 Do the teaching strategies of those teachers accommodate the students' learning styles?

1.3 Objective of the Study

   This study is designed to find out whether the teaching strategies that are conducted by the teacher accommodated the students' learning styles or not. The writer sets these objectives in his research for answering the statements of the problems. Thus, in this study the writer would like to find out:

1.3.1 the percentages of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles in the classroom.

1.3.2 the kinds of teaching strategies that the teacher uses in the classroom.

1.3.3 whether the teaching strategies accommodate the students' learning styles.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

   This research is based on the theory that matching teaching strategies and students' learning styles can significantly enhance academic

achievement at the primary and secondary school levels (Giordano & Rochford. 2005). From that the theory, knowing the student learning styles in the class can help the teacher to develop teaching strategies which can enhanced the students' academic achievement to its best result.

1.5 Significance of the study

The writer hopes this research can give useful inputs to the English teachers to evaluate their own teaching strategies. The teachers can be more aware about their students' learning styles in the class and can choose appropriate teaching strategies to teach the students and help the students to achieve their highest potential in learning process based on the students' learning styles.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this research are the English teaching activities in a junior high school and the writer limits the observational research only for English language teacher in grade 8th and the teaching activities that are conducted in the class.

1.7 Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation, the writer gives the definitions of key terms that are used in this research.

Learning style: a term used to describe an individual's way of perceiving, conceptualizing, organizing and recalling information in more or less consistent way (Ellis. 1985).

Visual learning style: a learning style which the learner is learning best through visual channel (Oxford in Reid. 1995).

Auditory learning style: a learning style which the learner is learning best through oral – aural channel (Oxford in Reid. 1995)

Kinesthetic learning style: a learning style which the learner is learning best through hands–on approach or needs to move and manipulate the objects (Oxford in Reid. 1995).

Multimodality learning style: a learning style which the learner could absorb and process materials best using more than one sensory channels (Kinsella in Reid. 1995)

Teaching strategies: the structure, system, methods, techniques, procedures and   processes that a teacher uses during instruction (Wandberg et. al. 2010).

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters.

Chapter I deals with introduction of the research, containing (a) the background of the problem, (b) statement of the problem, (c) objective of the study, (d) theoretical Framework, (e) significance of the study, (f) scope and limitation of the study, (g) definition of the key terms,

Chapter II defines about learning style theories, teaching strategies and the review of the previous study.

Chapter III presents the research methodology which consists of (a) research design, (b) subjects of the study, (c) instruments, (d) procedure of collecting data and (e) technique of data analysis.

Chapter IV contains the findings of the student learning styles and the teacher teaching's strategies. The writer also discusses the gathered data in order to answer the statement of the problems.

Chapter V contains conclusion and suggestion for the teacher based on the research result and recommendations for further study.