

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of The Study

Learning is something of which we all have an understanding and in which we have all participated as stated by Pritchard (2009: 1). In order to achieve the ultimate goal of student learning it is important to use a combination of teaching methods and to make the classroom environment as stimulating and interactive as possible. Students learn in many different ways.

Davis (1993) as cited in Fleming (2012) states that the term learning styles refers to individuals' characteristics and preferred ways of gathering, organizing, and thinking about information. Brown (2000) defines learning styles as the manner in which individuals perceive and process information in learning situations. He argues that learning style preference is one aspect of learning style, and refers to the choice of one learning situation or condition over another.

There are three main learning styles; visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. The students use all of their senses to take in formation, they seem to have preferences in how they learn best. In order to help students learn, teachers need to teach as many of these preferences as possible. Teachers can incorporate these learning styles in their curriculum activities

so that students are able to succeed in their classes. Students learn in many different ways. Visual learners learn visually by means of charts, graphs and pictures. Auditory learners learn by listening to lectures and reading. Kinesthetic learners learn by doing. Students can prefer one, two, or three learning styles. Because of these different learning styles, it is important for teachers to incorporate in their curriculum activities related to each of these learning styles so that all students are able to succeed in their classes.

Reading is a fundamental skill in learning English for students especially as foreign language. With strengthened students in reading skill; it will help students in making progress in the lesson because reading is the basis in learning every subject for students. Gilakjani (2012: 105) states that students learn best by seeing the value and importance of the information presented in the classroom. If the students are not interested in the material presented, they will not learn it. In order to achieve the ultimate goal of student learning it is important to use a combination of teaching methods and to make the classroom environment as stimulating and interactive as possible. Westwood (2008: 31) states that reading comprehension can be defined as an active thinking process through which a reader intentionally constructs meaning to form a deeper understanding of concepts and information presented in a text. To comprehend, readers must use information they already possess to filter, interpret, organize and reflect upon the incoming information from the page.

Based on the observation in SMA Swasta Dharmawangsa Medan, the data showed that the lack of ability of the tenth grade students in SMA Swasta Dharmawangsa Medan in reading English is influenced by several factors. First, students have difficulty in understanding English word, phrase and sentence in English. Second, the students have difficulty in finding the main idea of the text they read. Third, Students are not accustomed to practice reading in the classroom and everyday life. Last, teachers do not identify their students' learning styles. It is same with Fani (2016: 4) when she did the observation at the tenth grade students in SMA Swasta Teladan Medan, it was found that the teacher just asked the students to read whole of the text and asked the students to found the main idea of the text, after students finished it the teacher asked one student to collect it without explain what is exactly the text about.

From the problem above it is necessary to identify the learning styles at the tenth grade students in SMA Swasta Dharmawangsa Medan based on visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles, especially in reading. VAK model is chosen to analyze the students' tendency toward in learning something. VAK model is one the simplest models, that includes vision, hearing, and feeling. Vision learning style prefer to learn by seeing, auditory prefer to learn by hearing, and kinesthetic prefer to learn by doing. Therefore, it is necessary to do research on students' learning style in reading

comprehension at the tenth grade students at SMA Swasta Dharmawangsa Medan.

B. The Problems of The Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of the study are formulated as follows:

1. What is the most dominant learning style in reading comprehension at the tenth grade students at SMA Swasta Dharmawangsa Medan?
2. How the teacher should conduct teaching and learning activity based on the most dominant learning styles of students?

C. The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are formulated as follows:

1. To find out the most dominant learning styles at the tenth grade students at SMA Swasta Dharmawangsa Medan.
2. To describe how does the English teacher conduct reading activity based on the most learning styles of students.

D. The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study will be focused on students learning styles. This study will analyze the most dominant learning styles and to describe the teacher in teaching reading comprehension of descriptive text based on the

students learning styles at the tenth grade students at SMA Swasta Dharmawangsa Medan.

E. The Significance of the Study

The findings of the research are expected to be beneficial and be able to give contribution to the improvement of the effective English teaching and learning process theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically: It is useful to improve the teaching learning process, especially in learning reading comprehension and can be used a reference for those who want to conduct a research about learning reading comprehension.
2. Practically: It is useful to give information about students' learning styles that can be applied by teachers as a reference to improve his/her teaching and learning process and to choose the most appropriate teaching method based on his students' learning styles.