

## Chapter One

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses about the introduction that consists of background of the study, identification and limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study and outline of the study.

#### **Background of the Study**

According to Ahmadi & Gilakjani (2011), students learn best by seeing the value and significance of the information that are presented in the classroom. If they are not interested in the material presented by the lecturers, the students will not learn it. Since the learning inside the classroom has important roles toward the students' success in gaining the academic achievement, the lecturers should understand the learning styles of the students itself. Hence, the lecturers should use the appropriate teaching method even the combination of learning styles are to adjust the students' learning style in order to encourage the students, to achieve their goal, and to acquire the best academic achievement (Marsh, 2009).

Meanwhile, there is a proof to suggest that students differ very extremely in how they are learning (Bargar, Bargar & Cano, 1994). On the other hand, Torres (1993) found that "one of the most important challenges that university lecturers' deal is to be tolerant and perspective enough to admit learning differences among their students. Many lecturers are not aware that the students are different in the process and understanding information" (p. 62). In the process of learning, actually, every student has her/his own learning styles. She/he can

learn in many different ways related to her/his learning styles. Therefore, each student cannot be similarized one and another.

Moreover, different students may have different learning style. Learning style has a significant role in the lives of the students. If the students know their own learning style, certainly they will integrate it in the learning process, after that they will learn more easily, faster and will be successful (Bargar, Bargar & Cano, 1994). In the process of learning, there are a lot of challenges and problems faced by the students. It is important for students to know their own learning style, so that it will help the students to become an effective problem solver (Biggs, 2001). “The more successful the student is at solving the problems he/she face, the more control he/she will take over his/her own life” (Biggs, 2001, p. 276). By becoming an effective problem solver and knowing their learning style, the students will be in charge of their own process of learning so that they will be easy to understand the material and do the assignments given by the lecturers.

Furthermore, in the learning process, there are several factors that will influence the academic achievement. According to Slameto (2010), it is found that “there are two factors that influence the academic achievement, namely internal and external factor. The internal factor comes from inside part of the student while the external factor comes from outside part of the student” (p.54). The Internal factor is related to psychological, spiritual, health, exhaustion, and physical condition. Meanwhile, the external factor is related to social environment, family, learning environment, both in the school and society.

One of the important internal factor is psychological that refers to the learning style. By understanding their own learning style, the students will be easy to learn. For example, some students learn best through seeing the graphic, power point presentation or picture, while the other students learn through hearing the explanation form the lecturers that constitute their own preference ways to gain the new knowledge in learning process. Besides, other students can learn by joining the activity both inside and outside classroom or active “hands-on” approach in order to attain the knowledge and material given by the lecturers (Slameto, 2010).

Learning to learn and absorb knowledge in an appropriate manner will lessen the desirability for a domineering control by lecturers. At this point, lecturers guide the students. The students take responsibility for their learning; they are at the central of the process and everything is in under their control. They will pursuit answers to the problems and advantages from their unique preferences and performances in their learning styles. The students will identify their goals of learning English. They understand what they want to learn and “how”. This awareness will change their perspectives on learning new things (Fidan, 1986). Therefore, they can learn well and will be easy to do the assignments in the process of evaluation and assessment which eventually may result in a good grade in academic achievement (GPA).

In addition, the differences of learning styles occur because of the individual differences on the personality, the psychological character and the characteristics. Because of those differences, the students prefer to use more than

one learning style to learn the material given by the lecturers, so that they will have preference on how they can learn best based on their learning style (Coffield, 2004). Dealing with this preference, the lecturers should understand more about the students' learning style that will influence their academic achievement. Besides, Abidin (2011) found in order to assist students' grade, a lecturer needs to teach to as many of these students preferences as possible.

Therefore, related to the learning styles, this research attempted to discuss whether there is a correlation between students' learning styles (visual-auditory-kinesthetic) and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY or not.

### **Identification and Limitation of the Problem**

Learning style is an important factor in students' academic achievement (Cano & Garton, 1994). Actually, there are a lot of students who only undergo the learning process without paying attention on what factor that can help the students have an expectation in gaining high or good grade of academic achievement (GPA). They are unaware with their own learning style. Therefore it may hamper the students to identify their goals of learning English. Besides, the students will be easy to give up when they do the assignment or task given by the lecturers even though the task is easy. They do not understand what they want to learn and "how". Therefore, this unawareness will not change their perspectives on learning new things, and they will get difficult to acquire new information and material to achieve a good grade in their academic achievement (GPA).

In addition, the researcher concentrated to investigate the correlation between students' learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. Actually, based on the researcher experience, it was found that in English Education Department of UMY there were a lot of learning styles used by the students to achieve their goal in learning English, but in this study, the researcher only focused on three models of learning styles, namely visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Those three learning styles are supported by Reid & Fleming (2001) who found that there are three models of learning styles in general; Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (V-A-K) learning style. It also focused on how to reveal whether there is a correlation between students' learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY or not.

### **Formulation of the Problem**

There are five research questions to be examined in the study:

1. How are students' learning styles (Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic) at English Education Department of UMY?
2. How is the academic achievement of students at English Education Department of UMY?
3. What is the correlation between students who have visual learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY?
4. What is the correlation between students who have auditory learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY?

5. What is the correlation between students who have kinesthetic learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY?

### **Purpose of the Study**

Based on the research questions, the purposes of the study are:

1. To investigate the students' learning styles (Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic) at English Education Department of UMY.
2. To find out the academic achievement of students at English Education Department of UMY.
3. To find out the correlation between students who have visual learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY.
4. To find out the correlation between students who have auditory learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY.
5. To find out the correlation between students who have kinesthetic learning styles and their academic achievement at English Education Department of UMY.

### **Significance of the Study**

Based on the purpose presented above, this research is expected to give the advantages as follows:

**Researcher.** The result of this study will enhance the researcher's knowledge and experience. The result can also help the researcher as a future teacher to understand the students' learning styles and its effect on their academic

achievement. Besides, the result of the research can be used by the researcher as the future teacher to decide the way to teach.

**Lecturers.** This study will encourage the lecturers to provide appropriate methods in order to understand the models of students' learning style and to make the teaching and learning process will be successful.

**Learners.** The study is expected to enhance the students' awareness about their own learning style, therefore they will be easy to learn and able to achieve a high grade of academic achievement (GPA).

**Other Researchers.** The researcher expected that the findings and results of this study will be beneficial as the reference for those future/other researchers who want to conduct the same research in the same field.

### **Outline of the Study**

This study contains of five chapters. Chapter one is introduction that consists of background of the study, identification and limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study and outline of the study.

Chapter two is literature review that consists of the theories about learning styles and their academic achievement that is related to the topic of the study. In this part, the researcher will elaborate and discuss about the theories of learning styles and the academic achievement as the consideration before finding out/investigating the correlation between students' learning styles and their academic achievement. Besides that, the related research, conceptual framework and hypotheses are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter three explains the methodology. This chapter contains of design of the study, variable of the study, setting of the study, instruments of the study, technique of data collection. Moreover, analysis of data also explained in this chapter.

Chapter four contains the finding and discussion of the research. This chapter also presents the result of the research used the descriptive statistic and Pearson's product moment correlation in SPSS 22.0. After that, the result is explained more in discussion related to the theory.

Chapter five consists of two parts. The first part is the conclusion of this research, while the second part is the suggestion for the students, lecturers and other researchers.