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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

English learning achievement is one of important parts in terms of learning second or foreign language. By knowing students' learning achievement, both teachers and students are able to see their progress in teaching and learning. Learning achievement can be defined as successful completion, through effort, of the acquisition of academic contents and skills. In line with the statement above, Syah (2011) stated that learning achievement is the level of students' success in learning the subject matter in schools that are expressed in the scores obtained from the result of test on a particular subject matter.

It is known that students could adopt information or lesson deeply because the way of learning offered to them relevant to their expectation or the ways of students learn. It is also known that students learn on their own unique learning style, so it is important for teachers to be more aware about the learning differences among their students. Pertaining with the ideas above, (Clay, 2001) stated that all teachers whether they are ESL, bilingual, or mainstream, need to be aware of the learning style of their students.

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Learning style theories have been cited as an effective means of helping teachers recognize the incredibly diverse needs learners bring into the classroom, as well as helping the learners discover how they learn best for optimum academic achievement. In line with the statements above, Oxford (2003) pointed out that language learning styles and strategies are among the main factors that help determine how—and how well students learn a second or foreign language. Besides, Dunn in Brown (2000) believed that the low and average achievers will get higher achievement when they are taught by using some ways that are matched with their learning style.

Learning style refers to the variations in students' ability to accumulate as well as assimilate information. Briefly, learning style is the learners' ways to acquire the knowledge, skills, or attitudes through studying or experiencing in specific habitual manners. In line with the statements above, Dornyei (2005) defined learning style as an individual preferred or habitual ways of processing and transferring knowledge.

There are many categories in learning style that have been presented by the experts. Reid (1987) claimed that there are three major categories of learning styles that are widely recognized and relevant to the field of foreign language learning: sensory or perceptual learning styles, cognitive learning styles and affective learning styles. Sensory or perceptual learning style has to do with the physical environment in which students learn, and involves using their senses in order to perceive data

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while cognitive styles relate to thinking, problem solving abilities and the ability to organize information. On the other hand, affective learning style takes students' emotions, values and feelings into consideration.

Learning style which is based on the sensory preferences is VAK learning styles; visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (Dornyei, 2005). By knowing students' learning styles based on their sensory preferences allows teachers to take into account aspects of several well-recognized learning-style theories by synthesizing their important characteristics into an approach that is based on behaviors and/or actions that can be easily perceived in a classroom situation.

In conclusion, every learner has their own differences in the process of perceiving and understanding information based on their sensory preferences whether they are more visual, auditory, or even kinesthetic.

State Junior High School 5 Tapung is one of the formal schools in Tapung sub district. As a formal educational institution, this school is also offering English as one of their subjects. The English subject for seventh grade is scheduled twice a week with the time allocation is 2 x 45 minutes. The curriculum used in this school is School-based Curriculum. Based on School Based Curriculum (SBC), several basic competences in English for seventh grade students are such as understand the meaning of simple functional text related to immediate environment, and express the meaning of simple functional text related to immediate environment.

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Dealing with preliminary observation of the researcher that is done in 12th December 2016 at State Junior High School 5 Tapung, it was found that there are some efforts done by the teachers in order to enhance the students' English learning achievement. The efforts are such as giving them textbooks and giving them homework by the end of every chapter, but in fact some of students still had low scores in their English learning achievement. The researcher also found that there were students who spoke with his friend or busy with his own activities. There were also students who feel sleepy in the process of learning. When the teacher divided them into groups, there were several groups that did not bring the equipment, some groups only watched another group while some others just did nothing.

The environments above are illustrated that students were bored and could not concentrate in the process of teaching and learning. The researcher assumed that the causes of the environments from the students who did not use their dominant learning styles in the process of learning and also the mismatch between students learning style and teacher teaching style. As Felder (1995) pointed out that when the learning styles of most students in class and the teaching style of the teacher are seriously mismatches, the students are likely to become uncomfortable, bored and inattentive in class, do poorly on test, get discouraged about the courses, the curriculum, and in some cases a changing of curriculum and dropping out of school.

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In relation to the problems that the researcher mentioned above, the researcher is intended in investigating the problems above into a research project entitled "**The Correlation between Learning Styles and English Learning Achievement at Seventh Grade Students of State Junior High School 5 Tapung**".

B. Problem**1. Identification of the Problem**

Based on the preliminary study of the researcher at State Junior High School 5 Tapung, it is clear that most of students are still getting difficulties in learning English because of they learn with the same learning style even though their learning style could be different one and another. To make the problem of this research clearer, the problem of this research will be identified as follows:

- a. Why did some of students have low scores in English subject?
- b. Why did some students feel bored in the process of teaching and learning?
- c. Why did some students have a difficulty to concentrate in the process of teaching and learning?

2. Limitation of the Problem

In reference to the identification of the problem stated above, thus, the researcher needs to limit the problem of this research. The

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researcher limits this research on the learning styles based on the students' sensory ways to absorb the information, and their ways to organize and use the information. Based on the limitation of the learning style above, the researcher investigated the students' sensory learning styles into three categories; Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic and whether these styles correlate to their achievement in English.

3. Formulation of the Problem

- a. Is there any significant correlation between learning styles and English learning achievement at seventh grade students of State Junior High School 5 Tapung?
- b. How is the students' learning style at seventh grade students of State Junior High School 5 Tapung?
- c. How is the students' English learning achievement at seventh grade students of State Junior High School 5 Tapung?

C. Objective and Significance of the Research**1. Objectives of the Research**

- a. To find out if there is a correlation between learning styles and students' English learning achievement at State Junior High School 5 Tapung.
- b. To find out the students' learning styles at State Junior High School 5 Tapung.
- c. To find out the students' English learning achievement at State Junior High School 5 Tapung.

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2. Significance of the Research

Related to the objectives of the research above, the significances of the researches are as follows:

- a. Hopefully this research is able to benefit the writer as a novice researcher in learning how to conduct a research
- b. These research findings are also expected useful and valuable for both teachers and students of State Junior High School 5 Tapung to be the focus of future following teaching and learning process.
- c. Besides, these research findings are also expected to be positive and valuable information for those who are concerned in the world of teaching English as a foreign or second language.
- d. Finally, these research findings are expected to be practical and theoretical information to the development of the theories on language teaching in general.

D. Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding to the terms used in this research. Thus, the following terms are necessarily defined as follows:

1. Correlation

Correlation is a statistical test to determine the tendency or pattern for two (or more) variables or two sets of data to vary consistently. In this case of only two variables, it means that two

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variables share common variance, or they co-vary together (Creswell, 2008). Besides, Franked & Wallen (2009) also pointed out that correlational study is when two or more variables are investigated about the relationship one another without any attempt to influence them.

2. Learning Style

The word style refers to general characteristics of intellectual functioning that pertain a student as an individual. Then, learning style is refer to an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred way(s) of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills (Reid in Brown, 2000). From the definition above, the researcher concludes that learning styles are some ways of learning that is different from one student to another.

3. Visual Learners

This term refers to the style of the students who prefer to learn through seeing at visual images such as pictures, chart, diagrams, etc.

4. Auditory Learners

This term is used to identify the style of the students who prefer to learn through hearing something such as audiocassette, lectures, discussions debate and verbal instructions.

5. Kinesthetic Learners

It refers to the style of the students where they learn through physical activities or whole body movement and or real life

experiences such as touching, moving, in order to absorb and retain materials to be learned.

6. Achievement

Achievement is the result of what an individual has learned from some educational experiences. In line with the statement above, Crystal (2008) defined achievement as predicates represent a type of process event which takes place instantaneously. present In other words, learning achievement means the result, the successfulness, the extent or ability, the progress in learning educational experiences that the individual indicate in relation with his/her educational learning.

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