

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

English today is being used in education, business, politics, etc. Furthermore, in order to compete in this globalization era, human being needs to be able to use English both spoken and written. In facing the challenge of globalization, Indonesia has changed and developed national curriculum that introduces English as one of important subject. Currently, English is being taught from elementary level. However, the English Proficiency of Indonesian students can be categorized low. Indonesian students' English proficiency score was 52.91 in 2016 and 52.15 in 2017 (Valentina, 2017). The result of EPI of Indonesian students is lower than EFI of Vietnam.

Several causes make students to have low proficiency in English language. The teaching model, motivation and lack chance of practice English are leading factors of low English proficiency (Alharbi, 2015). This is especially when English is not being used in community such as in Indonesia. Faridi (2010) states that English teachers still use some methods that make students easily get bored and have lack of motivation in participating the learning process. It is because of some conventional techniques that cannot motivate and attract students' attention. As a result, the teaching and learning process cannot runs effectively. Furthermore, communication, learning facilities and appropriate guidance have always impacted students' English proficiency (Mushtaq & Khan, 2012)

However, Prystiananta (2018) argues that curriculum, methods of teaching, teachers' approach in conducting the learning are not merely to be blamed for students' low academic achievement especially in English. The roles of social and learning styles are also determining factor of the success of language learning (Moenikia & Zahed-babelan, 2010). Students have varieties of learning strategies and styles which may influence their achievement and success of learning. This was supported by Gohar and Sadeghi (2015) who state that students' preference learning style is believed to influencing learner's performance and achievement. Besides that, there is a strong correlation between students' preference learning style and their academic achievement (Tabatabaei & Mashayekhi, 2013)

Students in classroom have variety way of receiving, understanding and processing information given by teacher. They have their own style of learning. Many experts have given their opinion regarding the concept of learning style. Brown (2001) defines learning styles the choice of one learning situation or condition over another. MacKeracher, (2004) explains that learning style deals with how individual learn something.

Teachers are required to notify students' preference learning style. Understanding students' preference learning style can help teacher to design teaching courses to maximize learning success (Awang, Samad, Faiz, Roddin, & Kankia, 2017). Tale (2016) supports that EFL teachers are recommended to adapt different teaching strategies and material after identifying students' preference learning style. Therefore, it is very significant for English teacher to identify

students' learning preference to enhance the quality of teaching and learning process.

Studies related with identifying EFL students' type of preference learning style has been conducted. However, in Indonesia there are only few studies regarding this issue. As identified by Prystiananta (2018), Indonesian EFL students mostly prefer visual learning style. They like to learn by looking at the object (picture or image). A study conducted by Manipuspika (2020) related with preferred learning style of EFL students found that more than 50% of students prefer visual learning style. Marzulina, Pitaloka, and Yolanda (2019) identified that 34.0% of EFL students are visual learner, 43% are auditory, and 23% are kinesthetic learner.

Considering the importance of identifying students' preference learning style, this study is interested in exploring students' preference learning style in the context of learning English as a foreign language. Several informal observations were conducted in order to gain preliminary data in SMA Negeri 2 Singaraja. It was found that students' English achievement was also identified very low. Almost 75% of the students could not exceed the passing grade. During the English teaching and learning process, there were a lot of students not motivated in learning English. The teacher used traditional teaching strategy such as grammar translation and drill which can be boring for students. The teacher said that she had used various strategies that were able to support the process of learning English in class.

In choosing a learning strategy, the teacher must be able to identify the characteristics and ways of student learning. Teaching strategies will not be effective if they do not adapt to students' learning styles (Franzoni & Assar,

2009). The teacher has never done the identification of students' preferred learning style. Therefore, this study is important to be conducted in order to give a brief view about the learning styles preferred by the students so the teacher can adjust the teaching method and strategy later.

Looking at the importance of learning style in achievement of learning English, this study investigates the students' preferred learning style and the most preferred learning style in learning English as a foreign language. The study was conducted in SMA Negeri 2 Singaraja. This research was conducted in grade 10 with the assumption that they are newcomers. In addition, school policies in the research process only allow it to be carried out on 10th grade students.

1.2 Problem Identification

Teaching strategies naturally adjust to student learning styles. Teaching strategies that are not in accordance with student learning styles will not be able to achieve learning objectives. Therefore, before determining the teaching strategy, the first thing to do is to identify students' learning styles.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the learning styles of tenth-grade students in SMA Negeri 2 Singaraja?
2. What is the most preferred learning style among tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Singaraja?

1.4 Purposes of the Study

Based on the research question above, the purposes of the study are formulated as follows:

1. To find out the learning style of the 10th grade students in SMA Negeri 2 Singaraja
2. To find out the most preferred learning style among 10th grade students at SMA Negeri 2 Singaraja

1.5 Significances of the Study

This significance theoretically is to enrich educational studies especially about students' learning styles preferences. The objective above hopefully be able to give a significance to the readers especially for those who are interested in learning and analyzing students' learning styles preferences. The significances are simply divided into two types are:

- a. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically the significance of this study can give additional information on educational field and this study is expected to give more knowledge about students' learning styles preferences. This study will show the evidence of students' learning styles preferences in learning EFL context.

- b. Practical Significance

The practical significance is for three types, those are for students, teachers and the other researcher.

1. For English Teacher

The result of this study is expected to give image on students' preference learning style so the teacher can adjust the teaching method, approach and strategy.

2. For researcher

The result of this study is expected to be able to give more references or information about students' learning styles in conducting further study

