CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the basic idea for conducting the research and it deals with several points: background of the study, statement of the problems, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

It is widely known that English is an international language used by a great number of people in the world. English also has been learnt by both English-speaking countries and non-English speaking countries, including Indonesia. Due to globalization era, it is necessary for Indonesian students to learn English so that they are not left behind.

In learning English, the learners have to learn the four skills of English language, namely, speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Reading is one of four English skills that has to be mastered by the learners. Someone can share any information and ideas from reading. Reading ability will be developed best in association with writing, listening, and speaking activities (Brown, 2001). To gain the advantages from the reading, the reader needs to combine extensive and intensive reading. Harmer (2007) states that one of the fundamental conditions of a successful extensive reading program is that students should be reading material which they can understand. In order to get students to read enthusiastically in the class, the
teacher needs to work to create interest in the topic and tasks (Harmer, 2001).

The ways how to learn English are various. Everybody has different ways in terms of learning English. Learning is something of which people all have an understanding and in which people have all participated (Pitchard, 2009). Usually, people are comfortable doing certain activities and people get more out these activities because they match our learning styles. Learning style itself is defined as a preferred way of learning and studying, for example, working in groups as opposed to working alone, or learning in a structured rather than an unstructured manner (Pitchard, 2009). It is, therefore, those who learn English also have varying styles, and each style is considered as unique way.

Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic are the particular learning styles that have been identified. Visual learners prefer to learn by seeing. They have good visual recall and prefer information to be presented visually, in the form of diagrams, graphs, maps, posters, and displays, for example (Pitchard, 2009: 44). Therefore, the learners can convey their ideas and information to the public with any pictures. Auditory learners prefer to learn by listening. They have good auditory and benefit from discussion, lectures, interviewing, hearing stories, and audio tapes, for example (Pitchard, 2009: 44). Thus, the learners can learn about the material from listening. Kinesthetic learners prefer to learn by doing. They are good at recalling events and associate feelings or physical experiences with memory (Pitchard, 2009: 45). The learners who always carry out as kinesthetic
learners are the learners who always carrying out physical activities in learning process.

There are some studies related to learning style in English. Karmi (2005) who studied about learning style of the third semester students of the English department of UMM found that the most dominant learning style employed the students was visual and the fewest was kinesthetic learning styles. Meanwhile, Kurniawati (2008) who studied about learning style in learning English for students at SMA NEGERI 1 Kawedanan Magetan found that the most dominant learning style employed by the students was the auditory learning style. The conclusion of this study is that the students employed different learning style in learning English. It shows that the students learn English based on their own preference. In addition, the students could employ learning styles. This is because they could employ all the kinds of learning styles in learning English. On the other hand, Nurul (2014) who studied about learning styles used by the low achiever students in structure found that the students possessed three styles in learning structure namely visual style, auditory style, and kinesthetic style. In other words, the low achievers in structure class commonly learn by relying on seeing, hearing, and some of them will rely heavily on doing practice.

The researcher found three previous studies that concern about learning styles. First, Karmi (2005) focused on students learning style of the English department. Second, Kurniawati (2008) focused on learning style used by the senior high school students. The last, Nurul (2014) focused on learning style used by the low achiever students in structure class.
Therefore, the researcher is interested in investigating learning styles for low achiever students’ in reading subject which is somewhat different from those previous studies because of the fact that the researcher wants to know the learning styles used by the low achiever students’ to decrease the students’ difficulties in learning reading and the number of this research is limited.

Therefore, the researcher wants to do the research under the title “An Analysis of Low Achiever Students’ Learning Style of the Second Semester in Reading Class at University of Muhammadiyah Malang”.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the writer formulates the statements of the problems as follows:

1. What learning styles do low achiever students use in reading class at English department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang?
2. What are the problems that faced by the low achiever students in applying their learning style in reading class at English department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang?
3. How do low achiever students solve their problems in applying their learning styles in reading class at English department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study attempts to answer the statements of the problems, which are:
1. To identify the learning styles that are used by the low achiever students in reading class at English department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

2. To identify the problems that are faced by the low achiever students in applying their learning style in reading class at English department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

3. To explore the student’s solutions to solve their problems in adjusting their learning style in reading class at English department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The research is expected to give some advantages for the teachers, the students, and other researchers. For the teachers, by knowing the learning styles of their students who have low achievement in reading skill, they will be able to elect the most precise and best strategies for the teaching and learning process in reading skill. As a result, the teachers can assist the low achiever students’ in learning process. The students can increase their reading ability by understanding their learning styles. Furthermore, this research will be beneficial for academic reference particularly for another researchers.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study is focused on the analysis of learning styles, the low achiever students’ problems and the solutions to solve the problems
in applying the low achiever students’ learning styles in reading class at English department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang. However, it is limited to the students of second semester in reading class.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

1. Learning : a relatively permanent influence on behavior, knowledge, and thinking skills that comes about through experience. (Santrock, 2011)

2. Learning Styles : a particular way in which an individual learns. (Pitchard, 2009)

3. Low Achievers : are those pupils who have limited abilities due to different reasons in the education process. Sometimes it is due to their life background, illiterate parents, environment, being avoided by the parents in early childhood, and inadequate teachers. (Bakr, 2011)