**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consits of of background, problem statements, objectives, significance and scope of the research.

1. Background

Reading is one of the language skills that cannot be separated from other language skills because the students’ ability in one aspect will support their ability in mastering the others. It is an important educational goal, as without reading, one's language would not improve.

The ability of students in reading is important because by having the ability to read, they will be able to improve general language skills in English; reading can enlarge the students’ English vocabulary and it can help to improve the students’ writing or speaking abilities. So, it can be concluded that reading is one of the keys to success for everyone who wants to be an educated person. Similarly with the students of UKI Toraja, reading is very important not only for understanding the skill and languages elements such vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation but also for real life communication outside of teaching learning process in classroom.

According to Bruder and Henderson (1998), the ability to read can be affected by some factors, such as linguistic aspect, prior knowledge, and reading technique. Dealing with the linguistic aspects, mastering relevant vocabularies and structures become a basis for which a students decodes meaning from the text, and in turn, incorporates with what he or she already knows. Another factor is prior knowledge that students bring into reading. When students are reading the text, they are not passive; instead, they bring their prior knowledge to incoporate with new information within a text. Meanwhile, the use of technique bring about some benefits for which the students might adjust their purpose for reading and as well become aware of what they are reading.

According to Nation (2009: 49), “reading is a source of learning and a source of enjoyment”. Reading enlarges the students’ knowledge. It can be a goal in its own right and a way of reaching other goals. As a source of learning, reading can establish previously learned vocabulary and grammar, it can help the learners learn new vocabulary and grammar, and through success in language use it can encourage learners to learn more and continue with their language study. As a goal in its own right, reading can be a source of enjoyment and a way of gaining knowledge of the world. As learners gain skill and fluency in reading, their enjoyment can increase. By reading, the readers can go around the world although they just stay at home. They can broaden their knowledge of economy, science, technology, culture, or reading to get the pleasure. Not only that, the readers also get the message that the writer had expressed. It can be said that reading is a bridge which connects between the writer and the readers. Moreover, at UKI Toraja has several courses that are taught involving reading course. The wight of reading comprehension is 2 SKS (University Credit Unit), reading course is taught in the first and second semester. Reading course is important to investigate because when I taught reading there were severals students who encountered the problems such; confusing on the new vocabularies, difficulty in determining the main idea and found the specifict information in the text.

In the reality today,the problem in teaching learning process is the most of teachers or lectures who have important roles in the class still do not know about learning style differences of their students. Even if they know, they only gave little attention to it. We can see that some teachers or lectures tough the material trough one method or one technique for all students in the classroom. Therefore, none of the methods and techniques suited in all classes with all students. Learning style is the way and technique that the students use to learn and acquire new information and knowledge.Teaching students based on their learning style is important thing in learning activities. It would helps students learn more fast and easier in acquire knowledge (De Porter, 1999: 111 - 112).

Based on the problem above, the researcher focuses on learning style of the students as one of the some dimensions to be considered as determinant to the students’ reading ability. According to Ellis (1985: 99) “language learners vary on a number of dimensions to do with personality, learning style, motivation, aptitude and also age”. These dimensions are assumed to be significant contributors that determine the success or failure in acquiring English language learning.

Wang (2007: 409) defines “learning style as an individual’s preferred or habitual ways of processing the knowledge and transforming the knowledge into personal knowledge”. It is an educational condition under which a student is most likely to learn. In teaching learning process, the importance of learning style study are: first, teacher can help student to identify their persoal learning styles. This knowledge will help student to build self-confidence and to learn learn to manage their own learning. Second, students’ learning styles influence how teacher teaching and teacher needs to know just what style is and how it compares to the students’. Knowledge of learning styles should also help students to be aware of other styles and how to use other styles when in the teaching environment. And the last using varoius learning styles will help strengthen learning experiences.

Milad Chavosh & Mohammad Davoudi (2016) in their reasearch said the tactile learning style was the best predictor of L2 reading comprehension performance and teachers should try to accommodate different learning styles in teaching reading comprehension. If the educational settings become compatible with the learners’ personal orientations, learners may be able to engage in educational activities more and will thus gain an advantage in learning. Nabiollah Sadeghi (2012) in her research said that there is a relationship between personality types and/or traits of the learners, the way they establish their learning styles and their academic success in school and university both at an undergraduate and postgraduate level. Therefore, learners depending on the type of their personality resort to different learning styles or preferences which-in turn- affect their learning performance. However, there are no studies – either theoretical or empirical – examining exclusively the role of personality and learning styles on reading comprehension performance. Judy Williams (2010) in his reasearch said that the there were significant relationships between subjects’ sensory learning styles and reading comprehension levels. While there are many factors involved in reading comprehension, this study suggests that being aware of students’ learning styles and adapting lessons to include activities in all learning styles may be beneficial to help students in reading.

Based on the reasearcher above, the objective study is to find out students’ learning style and their effect on students’ reading comprehension. In order to understand what student reading, student are doing something that works for them. Maybe they are reading out loud. Or “hearing” teachers’ voice in their head as they read silently. Perhaps they are making pictures on paper. Maybe they are reading as they are walking. They might be reading in an orderly way, making a kind of outline in their head as teacher go along. Student are more comfortable in learning when they are using their own style because they are understanding more. And when they are comfortable , they are more receptive.

By considering the problem, the researcher is interested to conduct a research under the title: Students’ Learning Styles towards Reading Comprehension: A Descriptive Study at UKI Toraja.

1. Problem Statement

In relation to the explanation above, the researcher formulates the problem statements as follows:

1. What are the learning styles of the second year students of English Department at FKIP UKI Toraja?
2. Do the students’ learning styles have a significant effect on learning reading comprehension?
3. Objective of the Research

Referring to the problem statements, the significance of this research are as follows:

1. To identify the learning styles used by the second year students of English Department at FKIP UKI Toraja.
2. To find out whether or not students’ learning styles have significant effects on learning reading comprehension.
3. Significance of the Research

It is expected that the findings of the research are great valuable information and contribution to the readers in general and especially to the teachers of English and to the students to know the students’ learning styles and their effects on students’ reading comprehension. It is also hoped to be useful information for further researchers to get ideas on this research.

1. Scope of the Research

This research was conducted at the second year students of English Department at FKIP UKI Toraja. It is under the discipline of linguistic. The content covers about the students’ learning style and their effect on learning reading comprehension.