STUDENTS' PREFERENCES OF LANGUAGE LEARNING STYLE IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM BASED ON GENDER

Dwi Rosalia & Alan Jaelani

English Education Program
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
Universitas Ibn Khaldun, Bogor
dwirosalia.dr@gmail.com; alan.jaelani@uika-bogor.ac.id

ABSTRAK

Dalam tulisan ini, peneliti menemukan perbedaan gaya belajar bahasa antara siswa laki-laki dan perempuan. Penelitian ini mencoba mendeskripsikan gaya belajar bahasa yang disukai oleh siswa sekolah menengah. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan penelitian Kualitatif. Penulis menggunakan kuesioner dari VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire versi yang telah dimodifikasi oleh Swinburne University of Technology dan telah diterjemahkan ke dalam Bahasa Indonesia oleh penulis. Dan menggunakan formula rumus dari (Hasan, 2003, hlm. 231). Hasilnya 46% dari populasi adalah pembelajar visual. Dan pembelajaran bahasa antara siswa laki-laki dan perempuan berbeda. Sebagian besar siswa laki-laki adalah pembelajar visual; bagi siswa perempuan, pembelajar visual adalah minoritas. Kebanyakan siswa perempuan pembelajar audio , untuk laki-laki minoritas pembelajaran audio. Gaya belajar yang menempati urutan kedua adalah kinestetik pembelajar.

Kata kunci: *preferensi gaya belajar bahasa siswa, perbedaan gaya belajar bahasa, jenis kelamin*

ABSTRACT

In this paper, the researcher fined the differences language learning style between male and female students. This study tries to describe language learning style preferred by students of secondary school. This research was conducted by using Qualitative research. The writer adopted a questionnaire from VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire version which had been modified by Swinburne University of Technology and had been translated into Bahasa Indonesia by the writer. And using form as follows (Hasan, 2003, p. 231). The result 46% of population is visual learner. And the language learning between male and female's students were different. Most of male students are visual learner; for female students, visual learner are monirity. Most female auditory, for male auditory minority. Learning style which took the second place was kinesthetic learner.

Keywords:language learning style preference students, differences of language learning style, gender

INTRODUCTION

Learning style has been the topic of discussions for a long time. Many researchers have been trying to find possible factors that affect learning style. One of the factors that caught the attention is gender differences. Males and females learn differently from each other (Ebel, 1999; Cavanaugh, 2002, as cited in Tatarinceva, 2009). Males tend to be more visual; more peers motivated and learn less by listening than females. In contrast, females tend to be auditory and learn well when it is quiet (Marcus, 1999; Pizzo, 2000, as cited in Tatarinceva, 2009). Tannen (1992) suggests that male students prefer doing learning tasks which involve the talk in public settings more because they feel compelled to establish or maintain their position in the group. On the other hand, female students prefer talking more in private settings because they see conversation as an important way of maintaining relationships. Furthermore, females are better than males at language learning tasks relating to remembering verbal information, faces, names, and object locations. As for males, they do better with the travel directions tasks (Colley, 2001; Ong, 1999; Larrabee & Crook, 1993 as cited in Tatarinceva, 2009). Also, Kraft and Nichel (1995) proved that females were better at verbal fluency, vocabulary and quality of speech, but male students were better at writing. Still, despite many studies, inconclusive evidence on the influence of gender differences has been found (see Oxford and Nyikos, 1989 or Taguchi, 2002).

Learning is an interactive process and the product of student and teacher activities within a specific learning environment. This activities which are the central elements of the learning process, show a wide variation in pattern, style, and quality. Learning problems may not be frequently related to the difficulty of the subject matter but rather to the type and level of cognitive processes required to learn the content Keefe (1988).

Learning styles have been defined as the manner in which and the conditions under which learners perceive, store, process, and recall information. This field is complex, with over 70 models which are the result of numerous assumptions. One assumption has received in depth attention and evoked two perspectives. The first contends that there are differences between male and female brains; females do better than males at multitasking and at easily making quick transitions. Regarding males, it is only the left hemisphere that reacts. The second perspective argues that there are anatomical differences between females' and males' eyes and ears. Females acquire through binocular vision: males use either their eyes or ears: rarely both. The all-important question then is: do males and females have distinct ways of learning?

In the Indonesia education English language is taught in all primary, junior high school, senior high school and university to enable them to use the language to further their studies in the tertiary level and for work purposes. The reason for this is that the Indonesia Government recognizes that the English language is a global language and if Indonesia is to be effective as global players, obviously they need to proficient in this language The Sun (2009). They too, have to be able to read, write, listen, and speak to, for different purposes in different contexts. With more information and knowledge they will be able to move ahead as more employees would prefer graduates who are able to speak well in English. In short, the students need to be prepared by the education system by all means to master the language.

A primary are of concern for nearly every teacher is the difference in learning strategies they observe between male and female students. Past studies have shown that there is immense overlap between the gender that each child is an inherently sacrosanct individual not be limited by a gender stereotype, but to many, they know that boys and girls learn differently Gurian (2001).

It of the present research is to investigate the influence of the Gender Factors to the learning styles of the secondary students in the process of language learning.

And one of the major problems in the field is the limited number of female researchers. From educational point of view, the less a problem is understood or the more complex the problem is, the harder it is to act upon gender differences and learning styles. Object research is the gender-based secondary students learning style.

Learning Style
A brief description about history of learning style is based on the book of Joe Chandler (2012) entitled "History of Learning Style".

French psychologist, Alfred Binet (1904) produced the first intelligence test commonly believed that is the first IQ test refused an interest learning styles. Shortly in 1907, Dr. Maria Montessori developed the Montessori method of education, a "hands-on" approach to learning. Then next big leap came in 1956 from an American Educational Psychologist, Benjamin Bloom who created Bloom's Taxonomy, which regard to be the foundation of the education. Bloom's Taxonomy is a developmental model which enables the students to improve beyond knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

In 1962 mother-daughter team of Isabel Myers-Briggs, an American Psychological theorist, and her mother, Katherine Briggs who became a self-taught expert on people and developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which commonly referred to as MBTI, and which seeks to measure psychological preferences for types of learning. In 1976, the Dunn and Dunn Learning Style Model became the first teaching model to introduce diagnostic testing for evaluation purposes. In 1983, American Developmental Psychologist Howard Gardner declared Gardner's Seven Knowledge Types. This theory divided human learning into different classification including: Logical-Mathematical Intelligence, Linguistic Intelligence, Spatial Intelligence, Musical Intelligence, Kinesthetic Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, and Intrapersonal Intelligence (Chandler, 2009, p. 7).

In 1984, Social Psychologist David A. Kolb established his experience-based learning

model. Dr. Kolb's work in the 80s and 90s was the most influential aspect for creating emphasis that teachers elect teaching style to accommodate students learning style. In 1995, Professor Mark Tennant categorized types of learning into three categories: (A)ttitude, (S)kills, and (K)nowledge with his ASK design, which has been innumerably copied, modified and utilized among a variety of for-profit programs (Chandler, 2009, p. 9).

Meaning of Learning Style

Individuals have different learning styles, that is, they differ in their 'natural, habitual, and preferred way(s) of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills. A learning style is not in itself in ability but rather a preferred way of using one's abilities. Leaver,Ehrman and Shekhtman (2005, p. 66) defined learning styles as convenient shortcuts for talking about patterns of what an individual is likely to prefer as a learner. Each student should have an opportunity to select his/her own ways of language learning at his/her own pace. Also Watson Todd (2000, p. 69) recommended, "Please remember that there are no correct ways of learning English and there are no wrong ways of learning English. Any ways of learning English that helps you is good." Zacharias felt concluded that the learning process will be most successful when learning styles are considered and accommodated in the classroom (2006, p. 35). Neil Fleming's VARK model expanded upon earlier notion of sensory modalities such as the VAK model Barbe and Colleagues.

METHOD

The qualitative method was employed in this study. Edmond (2017) claimeds that Qualitative method represent a form of data collection and analysis, with a focus on understanding and emphasis on meaning. This method often used to explore the 'how' and 'why' of systems and human behavior and what governs these behaviors. Specifically, it is a method for examining phenomena, predominantly using 'words' for data. The writer chooses qualitative method because it is compatible with this research where data are in form of words.

The participants of this research will be the 7 grade of MTs Cendekia Muslim. The reasons of choosing school were. I see the opportunity to do a research in language learning style to know what the differences language learning style.

Questionnaire is one of popular techniques to collect data since they "can be objectively scored and analysed" (Oxford, 1990, p. 199). Questionnaire is held by giving some written questions or statements to the object or respondent of research.

Questionnaire is efficient to collect data when the writer surely knows the measured variable and well known what respondent hopes. The writer used the questionnaire are to its efficiency for collecting data.

The writer adopted a questionnaire from VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire version which had been modified by Swinburne University of Technology and had been translated into Bahasa Indonesia by the writer.

VAK Learning Style Self-Assessment Questionnaire is now a favorite of the accelerated learning community because its principles and benefits extend to all types of learning and development, far beyond its early applications. This questionnaire is also easier to understand than Kolb's Learning Style Inventory questionnaire and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) questionnaire.

After collecting data, the writer will analyze those data based on student's questionnaire by using simple formula as follows (Hasan, 2003, p. 231):

$P = \boldsymbol{fn}$ x 100%

P = Percentage

f = Frequency

n = Number of sample

100% = Constant value

Percentage's form above is to find out the average of student's learning style in English classroom. Then in the end, the results from students' questionnaire will be calculated in SPSS using the function above. The writer used SPSS 20, and analyzed the data by used "frequencies" option. Next the writer will differentiate both of result from students' questionnaire based on students' gender in English class.

Table 1. Frequency of Visual Learner

		frequency	percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative Percentage
valid	10	13	18.8	18.8	18.8
	11	15	21.7	21.7	40.6
	12	5	7.2	7.2	47.8
	13	6	8.7	8.7	56.5
	14	3	4.3	4.3	60.9
	15	2	2.9	2.9	63.8
	16	3	4.3	4.3	68.1
	17	2	2.9	2.9	71.0
	18	1	1.4	1.4	72.5
	6	1	1.4	1.4	73.9
	7	7	10.1	10.1	84.1
	8	5	7.2	7.2	91.3
	9	6	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 2. Frequency of Auditory Learner

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	1	1.4	1.4	1.4
	6	5	7.2	7.2	8.7
	7	10	14.5	14.5	23.2
	8	10	14.5	14.5	37.7
	9	10	14.5	14.5	52.2
	10	9	13.0	13.0	65.2
	11	8	11.6	11.6	76.8
	12	7	10.1	10.1	87.0
	13	3	4.3	4.3	91.3
	14	4	5.8	5.8	97.1
	15	2	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 3. Frequency of Kinesthetic Learner

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	2	2.9	2.9	2.9
	5	8	11.6	11.6	14.5
	6	3	4.3	4.3	18.8
	7	4	5.8	5.8	24.6
	8	4	5.8	5.8	30.4
	9	11	15.9	15.9	46.4
	10	13	18.8	18.8	65.2
	11	9	13.0	13.0	78.3
	12	6	8.7	8.7	87.0
	13	6	8.7	8.7	95.7
	15	1	1.4	1.4	97.1
	17	1	1.4	1.4	98.6
	19	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

Table 1, 2, and 3 show the frequency of language learning styles student preferred.

Based on those tables, there is a slight different amount of number among visual, auditory and

kinesthetic learner. Visual learners had the highest number among another learning style (28%) as 15 students chosen 11 question with

A's answers from 30 questions. The writer also gained that some students are kinesthetic learners.

Table 4. The Percentage of Students' Language Learning Style from All Students

Total Sample	Learning Style		
	Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
69 students	46%	30%	31%

From the table 4 above, the writer tried to conclude and display the data in a simple way. The writer found that 46% of 69 students are visual learners. The visual learners who love to learn by observing things like pictures, diagrams, films, displays and demonstrations are dominated the samples. Then kinesthetic learners came as second place with 31% from 69 students. The kinesthetic learners are slightly more than the auditory learners. The kinesthetic

learners are the type of person who never look at instruction first and love to do an experiment. The teacher should prepare many teaching media for kinesthetic learners. In the end, 30% of the learners are the auditory type. The auditory learners love to listen and pay attention during teaching learning process. For auditory learners, a teacher should be skillful in way of delivering the material.

Table 5 The Research Participants based on Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	43	62.3	62.3	62.3
	Male	26	37.7	37.7	100.0
	Total	69	100.0	100.0	

In the research field, the writer found that there is no equality number between male and female students, as drawn in the table 5 above. Actually, this case is not significantly affects the

final results. The comparison students' language learning style based on students' gender will be explained briefly in table 6.

Table 6. Differences of Students' Language Learning Style between Male and Female Students

Gender	Total	Visual		Auditory		Kinesthetic	
	N	n	%	N	%	N	%
Male	26	16	62%	4	15%	8	31%
Female	43	15	35%	16	37%	14	33%

In the table 6 above, the writer found that the largest number of language learning style preferred by male students are visual (16 students). On the other hand, the auditory learners are dominated by female students (37%). For the male students, auditory type is minority (15%); minority learners from female students are kinesthetic type (32%).

Based on the results of this research, the writer found that whatever students learning style, they have their own way to learn in the class. Language learning style also did not affect students' class level, because learning style did not change but develop all the time.

The results of this study have similarity with some previous studies. First, language learning styles cannot be use as a standard to measure students' achievement. Next, gender has no effect on students' language learning style in teaching learning process but learning style is able to increase students' performance in the class.

CONCLUSION

This study founds that 46% of population is visual learners. Even visual learners were majority, the writer also discovered that students were able to receive the information when the teacher delivered the information in

auditory or kinesthetic way. The writers found that language learning style between male and female's students were different. Most of male students are visual learners; for female students, visual learners are minority. Most of female students are auditory learners; for male students, auditory learners are minority. Language learning style which took the second place was kinesthetic learners for male students and visual learners for female students. Learning style did not affect students' achievement in English class, but learning style affects their skill in English speaking. In this case, the teacher needs to help students when they feel hard to understand. The teacher should also create the best appropriate teaching method to fulfill students' language learning style during English class. Then learning style is not only how the students can reach or receive the knowledge but also how they can represent what just they got during teaching learning process.

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