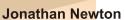
PROCEEDINGS

The 11th FLA International Conference

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF TODAY'S LEARNERS:
NEW APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING
IN TODAY'S CHANGING WORLD







Gillian Lazar



Elisabet Titik Murtisari









Faculty of Language & Arts Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana

The 11th FLA International Conference Proceedings

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF TODAY'S LEARNERS: NEW APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN TODAY'S CHANGING WORLD

Salatiga, 15-16 November 2018

Editor

Listyani Elisabet Titik Murtisari

Reviewers

Dian Toar Sumakul Lany Kristono Listyani Elisabeth Titik Murtisari Gusti Astika



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Proceedings Foreword

The international conference "Meeting the Challenge of Today's Learners: New Approaches to Language Teaching and Learning in Today's Changing World" was organized by the Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana. The theme was selected as a response to significant changes the 21st century has brought into the context of language teaching/learning as the world is increasingly globalized and digitalized. The modern learner is not only faced with the growing need to communicate in expanding contexts, but also the demand to learn the skills to be able to survive and succeed as both a local and global citizen. A whole person education is consequently imperative to equip students with both hard and soft skills, and language teachers and scholars are expected to strive towards more efficient and impactful teaching and learning and promote critical skills for the century to meet the challenge of today's learners.

We were pleased to have Associate Professor Jonathan Newton (Victoria University, New Zealand) and Dr. Gillian Lazar (Middlesex University, London) as keynote speakers (apart from myself), Dr. Itje Chodidjah and Schoology in our special sessions in our conferences. There were also two workshops delivered by Jonathan Moore and Listyani (UKSW) It was attended by 67 participants and 120 students of the English Department who were required to attend all the plenary sessions. As part of our faculty's commitment to work with local teachers in their professional development, the conference was also attended by 20 English teachers from Salatiga and Central Java. We received more than 80 abstracts, and it was difficult for us to select the best 36 for the capacity of our conference. Out of the 12 papers submitted, we have 10 published in this edition of proceedings.

I would express my highest gratitude to the committee, who had worked hard day and night to make sure everything was in place, and all the faculty members of the Faculty of Language and Arts who had assisted us in various way. A special mention goes to Dr. Listyani, Prof. IGGA Astika, Toar Sumakul, M.A., and Lany Kristono, M.Hum., who worked much behind the scenes for the conference's abstract selection or paper publication. It was a great pleasure for us to host this small but stimulating conference and we thank all authors and participants for their contribution.

Elisabet Titik Murtisari

Conference chair

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SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLES: A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CONTEXT

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the most dominant of Senior High School Students' learning styles preferences and to increase the teachers' awareness and understanding of the strength of learning styles in teaching and learning activities. The respondents were administered a set of questionnaire which was adapted from Cohen, Oxford, and Chi's (2001) Learning Style Survey (LSS). The interview was also addressed to a number of respondents. The result of data analysis showed that the most preferences of students' learning styles is auditory, visual and followed by kinesthetic.

Keywords: Learning Style, Learning Style Preference

INTRODUCTION

Learning English in the context of foreign language may consume much time specifically for learners whenever they are not much exposed with the language. However, most of senior high schools' students have learnt English since they are in elementary schools, even for some students in big cities like Jakarta, have learnt English from kindergarten. In the context of language exposure, the students merely use English at schools, not in their daily life context. Therefore, the school English teachers often use two languages to deliver the material. (Male, 2017) argues why the English teachers use Indonesian in their teaching is that to make the students understand easily. This may happen due to a number of reasons; it may be because of the learning and teaching strategies or techniques that may not be well implemented.

A number of researchers have attempted to develop and improve theories regarding the learning styles in the context of EFL. The following studies may show that students in EFL context have different learning style preferences. A number of scholars in their studies found out that there are a number of factors influencing the learning of foreign language. In Asian countries like Korean, the students preferred visual learning style, whereas in China, the students favored K\kinesthetic and tactile styles than the others. (see, Reid, 1987). In Japan, the learners tend to be more auditory and tactile rather than having other styles (see Hyland, 1993). Likewise the study conducted by Peacock who also found out that the students preferred kinesthetic style above others.

Based on the writer's observation, the students also view and acquire the language one another differently. Some students like to have big pictures, charts or graphs stuck on the wall. That's way may help them understand the learning quickly. Some others prefer to listen to the teacher's lecture or listening to music while learning. (see, Montgomery, 1996; Dangwal & Mitra, 1999; Zapalska & Brozik, 2006; Akkoyunlu & Soylu, 2008; Karthigeyan & Nirmala, 2013). The rest would rather have demonstrated it in the class or they would prefer learning when they are fully involved. This is in line with the study conducted by Riazi and Riasati (2007), in their study they found out that the EFL learners preferred to be actively engaged during their study.

Even though those studies aimed to help the students understand their learning style, however, up to now, little attention has not been paid concerning such study in the context of university level in Indonesia. Therefore, the present study can be one of important considerations for the teachers or faculties in providing appropriate strategies or techniques when teaching in the class.

This paper discusses the findings of EFL students' perceptions on their learning style preferences at Pusaka 1 Senior High School, Jakarta.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many aspects influence the teaching and learning (Male, 2017). This is line with Oxford (1990) stating "many factors affect the choice of language learning strategies among which we can name: degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, teacher expectations, age, sex, nationality, general learning styles, personality traits, motivation level, and purpose for learning the language." A number of experts have defined learning style as personal qualities that influence

Grasha (1996, p. 41) has defined learning style as personal qualities that influence a student's ability to acquire information, to interact with peers and the teachers, and otherwise participate in learning experiences. There are four commonly preferred learning styles, i.e. independent, dependant, collaborative, and participant. Independent - learners prefer to work alone on tasks given than with other students. (2) Dependent - learners tend to look at their teachers and friends in which they are as the source of information. (3) Collaborative learners acquire information by sharing and working together with their teacher and friends. (4) Participant learners actively engage in class activities and discussion. (Grasha, 1996) According to Brown (2000) learning styles is as the way in which every learner perceives and processes information in learning circumstances. He argues that learning style preference is one aspect of learning style, and refers to the choice of one learning situation or condition over another. Celcia-Murcia (2001) defines learning styles as the general approaches—for example, global or analytic, auditory or visual—that students use in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject. The manner in which a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment.

In accordance with the experts' explanation, the researcher conclude that some learners have different learning styles and some others may learn best by watching and listening, others by reading, and the others learn by doing and moving hands. Therefore, it is important to take into account the students' learning styles while teaching or developing a course material. As a result, the learners may improve more on their learning achievement whenever they know their learning style. This is in line with Matthew (1996) who stated that students who learn with their preferred learning styles tend to gain more knowledge and skills as well as actively engage when taught and presented with new materials. Likewise, Stebbines (1995) said that students who know their learning style preferences are able to build their self-confidence that can reinforce their willingness to be risk-takers.

Learning Styles Models

In the past few decades, a number of researchers conducted a research with U.S. school children (see, Dunn, 1983, 1984; Reinert, 1976). They found out that learners have four basic perceptual learning channels (or modalities):

- 1. Visual learning: reading, studying charts
- 2. Auditory learning: listening to lectures, audiotapes
- 3. Kinesthetic learning: experiential learning, that is, total physical involvement with a learning situation.
- 4. Tactile learning: "hands-on" learning, such as building models or doing laboratory experiments.

Dunn & Dunn (1989) also proposed the learning style model and they categorized it into five domains: environmental, emotional, sociological, physiological and psychological containing 21 elements in those domains. Likewise Reid (1995) who has also developed learning style model based on how students learn best using their perceptions: visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile preferences and also two social aspects of learning: group and individual preferences. In addition, the most recent study conducted by Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2001) designed a Learning Style Survey (LSS) in which among the number of main aspects, it includes these three aspects, i.e., visual, auditory and kinesthetic. The aim of the LSS is to assess the students' general approach to learning and to see their overall learning style preferences (see, Male, 2017)

In accordance with the definitions from the scholars previously, the present investigation the researcher has adopted Cohen, Oxford and Chi's (2001) Learning Style Survey (LSS) to identify the students learning style preference in the context of English as a Foreign Language.

Learning Styles in Teaching and Learning Process

In the teaching and learning activities, the learners may not be confident and not independent in their study. It is because of their understanding of the learning style may be little or it is due to the lack of information during their study. This is in line with Gilakjani (2012, p. 109) said that "knowledge of learning style also provides information to the student as to why s/he has learnt in a different way than others. It helps to control the process of learning." In relation to the teaching and learning process, the teachers may benefit from having known the students' learning style for example when they design a lesson plan, they can include the material that is more appropriate with their students' need. Another benefit is that the teachers can only facilitate, whereas the students can control their learning activities. (see Gilakjani and Ahmadi, 2011).

Students may learn differently one another; the teachers should then not only prepare the material in a lesson plan well but also provide good approach or strategies but they have to understand the role of learning style This is in line with Csapo and Hayen (2006, p. 129) said that "understanding learning styles and the role of learning styles in the teaching/learning process is a key component in effective teaching."

METHOD

This study was carried out in Pusaka 1 Senior High School on November 2017-March 2018 to find out the students' perception on their learning style preferences. The participants were 86 students of Pusaka 1 SHS, Jakarta. The participants were administered a questionnaire which was adapted from Cohen, Oxford, and Chi's (2001) Learning Style Survey and consisted of 30 items (5-point Likert scale: never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always) was used. The questionnaire was also divided into three main categories – the first category is focusing on Visual Learning Style, the second is for Auditory Learning Style, and the last is for Kinesthetic Learning Style. The time taking for the questionnaire lasted for seventeen minutes.

In order to support the students' perception on learning style, a focus group discussion (group interview) was conducted by inviting eighteen students who were randomly selected. The students were interviewed to obtain a more detailed description of their perceptions on learning style preferences. The interview questions were basically similar to the statements written on the questionnaires and it took about thirty two minutes to complete the interview. All the questionnaires were then scrutinized and transcribed based on the learning styles they belong to.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following discussion covers the findings that the writer classify according to the most dominant order of occurrences namely from the highest rank to the lowest one. The findings showed that the most dominant learning styles preference is auditory, followed by visual, and the last is kinesthetic. To support the data, a number of respondents were also interviewed. The interview result is then included in the study.

The most preference of the respondents' learning style i.e., the auditory, visual, and kinesthetic, it is then presented based on the most dominant one (see Table 1).

Table 1 Respondents' Auditory Learning Style Preference

		Respondents (N=86)				
No.	Auditory	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
1	I remember things better if I discuss them with someone.	2 (2,3)	6 (6,9)	46 (53,4)	24 (27,9)	8 (9,3)
2	I prefer to learn by listening to a lecture rather than reading.	7 (8,1)	16 (18,6)	40 (46,5)	18 (20,9)	5 (5,8)
3	I need oral directions for a task.	1 (1,1)	13 (15,1)	41 (47,6)	29 (33,7)	2 (2,3)
4	Background sound helps me think.	10 (11,6)	15 (17,4)	36 (41,8)	20 (23,2)	5 (5,8)
5	I like to listen to music when I study or work.	7 (8,1)	5 (5,8)	24 (27,9)	29 (33,7)	21 (24,4)
6	I can understand what people say even when I cannot see them.	8 (9,3)	14 (16,2)	36 (41,8)	20 (23,2)	8 (9,3)
7	I remember peoples' names but not their faces.	3 (10,4)	19 (22)	37 (43)	15 (17,4)	6 (6,9)
8	I easily remember jokes that I hear.	3 (3,4)	10 (11,6)	31 (36)	34 (39,5)	8 (9,3)
9	I can identify people by their voices (e.g., on the phone).	7 (8,1)	9 (10,4)	38 (44,1)	25 (29)	7 (8,1)
10	When I turn on the TV, I listen to the sound more than I watch the screen.	9 (10,4)	16 (18,6)	34 (39,5)	20 (23,2)	7 (8,1)
	Total of frequency	63	123	363	234	77

Table 1 indicated that the first learning style preference of the respondents is Auditory. It can be seen in the total of instances that was found in sometimes, 363 occurrences, followed by 234 instances often. Next, it was found in rarely 123 instances, 77 instances were found in always, and the last, it was found in never 63 nstances. The data were also supported by the respondents' interview result as follows:

Question 1. Do you need oral direction for a task?

Yes, I need the teacher to direct if I have to do a task (R5)

Yes, I do. The teacher explanations help me to understand what I do. (R11)

Yes, especially good explanation. I can also do my task better. (R16)

From the result, it is obvious that the students prefer clear direction and explanations from the teacher whenever they want to do a task or execersise.

Question 2. Do you remember things better if you discuss with someone? Yes, it is easy to remember things if I discuss with somone. (R.12) Yes, sometimes I can remember easily when I discuss with my friends. (R9) Yes, certainly, if I discuss it with someone. (R17)

It is clear that the students can remember things better when they discuss it with other people.

Based on the result, a large number of the respondents prefer the auditory learning style and most of them also have their opinion that they like to listen to teacher's explanations more than others.

Table 2 Respondents' Visual Learning Style Preference

	Respondents (N=86)					
No.	Visual	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
		f (%)				
1	I remember something better if I write it down.	2 (2,3)	8 (9,3)	39 (45,3)	23 (26,7)	14 (16,2)
2	I take detailed notes during lectures.	5 (5,8)	6 (6,9)	41 (47,6)	23 (26,7)	11 (12,7)
3	When I listen, I visualize pictures, numbers, or words in my head	12 (5,8)	14 (16,2)	37 (43)	20 (23,2)	10 (11,6)
4	I prefer to learn with TV or video rather than other media.	25 (13,9)	12 (13,9)	37 (43)	14 (16,2)	11 (12,7)
5	I use color-coding to help me as I learn or work.	1 (29)	21 (24,4)	26 (30,2)	12 (13,9)	2 (2,3)
6	I need written directions for tasks.	2 (1,1)	11 (12,7)	39 (45,3)	23 (26,7)	12 (13,9)
7	I have to look at people to understand what they say.	2 (2,3)	17 (19,7)	33 (38,3)	21 (24,4)	13 (15,1)
8	I understand lectures better when professors write on the board.	6 (6,9)	15 (17,4)	33 (38,3)	27 (31,3)	5 (5,8)
9	Charts, diagrams, and maps help me understand what someone says	14 (16,2)	23 (26,7)	34 (39,5)	11 (12,7)	4 (4,6)
10	I remember peoples' faces but not their names.	1 (1,1)	8 (9,3)	30 (34,8)	30 (34,8)	17 (19,7)
	Total of frequency	73	135	349	204	99

Table 2 illustrates that the second majority of the respondents' preferences is visual learning style. It is obviously stated that among the 10 items of visual' learning style preference statements, 349 instances were found in sometimes, followed by 204 often, and 135 frequencies found in rarely, while 99 instances were found in always, and only 73 instances were never. The data were supported by the respondents' interview result.

Regarding the interview result of the visual learning style, a number of respondents also have various answers as follows:

Question 1: Do you remember things better if you write it down? Yes, because it can make me improve my writing (R10)

Yes, of course. I can write very well and I understand more about the material (R18)

Yes, if I write down something, I can learn again later. (R14)

Question 2: Do you need written direction for task?

Yes, I need instructions for the task. That way to help me write well. (R1)

Yes, I need the instruction. Because I can follow to write better. (R4)

Yes, I do. With clear instruction, I can write better. (R7)

It is also clear that a number of respondents prefer to have written direction for their writing skill as well as remembering things better whenever they are directed. In the context of foreign language, The visual learning style preference found in the study also confirms the study carried out by Male (2017) and Reid (1987)

Table 3 Respondents' Kinesthetic Learning Style Preference

		Respondents (N=86)				
No.	Kinestectic	never	rarely	sometimes	often	always
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
1	I prefer to start doing things rather than checking the directions first.	7 (8,1)	20 (23,2)	47 (54,6)	9 (10,4)	3 (3,4)
2	I need frequent breaks when I work or study.	2 (2,3)	15 (17,4)	32 (37,2)	25 (29)	12 (13,9)
3	I need to eat something when I read or study.	5 (5,8)	16 (18,6)	43 (50)	17 (19,7)	5 (5,8)
4	If I have a choice between sitting and standing, I'd rather stand.	14 (16,2)	24 (27,9)	32 (37,2)	13 (15,1)	3 (3,4)
5	I get nervous when I sit still too long.	24 (27,9)	32 (37,2)	21 (24,4)	6 (6,9)	3 (3,4)
6	I think better when I move around (e.g., pacing or tapping my feet).	5 (5,8)	17 (19,7)	25 (29)	30 (34,8)	9 (10,4)
7	I play with or bite on my pens during lectures.	29 (33,7)	13 (15,1)	27 (31,3)	11 (12,7)	6 (6,9)
8	Manipulating objects helps me to remember what someone says.	6 (6,9)	21 (24,4)	42 (48,8)	3 (15,1)	4 (4,6)
9	I move my hands when I speak.	2 (2,3)	9 (10,4)	30 (34,8)	34 (39,5)	11 (12,7)
10	I draw lots of pictures (doodles) in my notebook during lectures.	14 (16,2)	15 (17,4)	29 (33,7)	17 (19,7)	11 (12,7)
	Total of frequency	108	182	328	175	67

Next, Table 3 shows that the last preference of respondents learning style is Kinesthetic. It is clearly seen in the total of occurrences of each frequency found in this study. 328 instances were found in sometimes, followed by 182 instances were found in rarely. Next, 175 instances were found in often. Whereas 108 instances were found in never and 67 instances were found in always. The result also indicated that the respondents tend to frequently prefer learning when kinesthetic style is conducted. The data was supported by the respondents' interview result.

Question 1: Do you prefer to start doing things rather than checking the directions first? Yes, but sometimes I like to do my things directly than checking the directions. (R6) Yes, I often do the things very soon. I don't always notice the directions. (R8) Yes, but not always. I like to do the things. (R2)

Question 2: Do you need frequent breaks when you work or study? (R3) Yes, I prefer to have a break and I need more time to study. (R5) Yes, sometimes I need to have a long break if the class is too long.(R13) *Yes, but not too frequent.(R2)*

Even though kinesthetic style is found to be the last in this study, few number of students stated that they also need breaks and they often do their things very soon than checking their directions. This findings is not similar to previous findings in which the students tend to be directed before doing the tasks. The result of the last findings also confirms the study by Peacock (2001).

To sum up, it is obvious that the majority of the respondents have various learning styles from one another. Therefore, as the teachers, they have to understand the need of the learners. Additionally, it is believed that when the learners are introduced earlier with the learning styles, they may work best in their study during the teaching and learning activities and can absorb the information well. (see Male, 2017)

CONCLUSION

The result of the study has showed that the most preferences SHS students' learning style is Auditory followed by Visual and Kinesthetic. The result may also indicate that the students' learning style vary from one another. Therefore, it is highly suggested the teachers provide learning media to help the learners understand their learning style. Not only the teaching media but also the learning strategies must be accommodated by the teachers. This way is to help the students be aware of their strength and weakness in their study and they can determine what learning style that is more suitable for them in their study. In addition, the students must be involved in the process of teaching and learning activities-focusing on the student-centered learning. By doing so, the teachers can also solve the problem encountered regarding their students' weaknesses in learning the language. Teachers must also combine the styles in the sense that when they are teaching they have to mix the learning style since the students have different learning styles. As a consequence, it is hoped that the students' academic achievement may be well improved.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

It is recommended that a further investigation is then needed. For the future research, the teachers or practitioners should conduct a similar study to find out more the learning style the EFL students may have and also to enrich the knowledge of learning style so that the learning strategies or methods for the students can be well developed for betterment.

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