

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON PREFERRED LEARNING STYLE BETWEEN AUDITORY AND KINESTHETIC LEARNERS ON READING ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

Students would vary on how successful they were in learning foreign language since they were affected by their individual differences. Learning styles as one category of individual differences was investigated and this study determined two kinds of learning styles namely auditory and kinesthetic. This study intended to compare between auditory and kinesthetic learners on reading achievement. Conducted on even semester 2019/2020 academic year in SMA Islam NU Pujon, Malang. The outcome of the analysis showed that the t -score = -608, $p = .549$ was the result of an independent t -test and the results indicated that the reading achievement between auditory and kinesthetic learners was not significantly different ($p = .549 > 0.05$). It could be concluded that the preferred learning style did not influence their reading comprehension for there might be other factors such as cognitive process. However, the teacher should know the students' learning styles as the consideration in determining the teaching strategies that would suitable for all learning styles. In addition, learning styles might influence other skills, namely speaking, writing or listening. Thus, these topics might be a further discussion beyond leaning styles that would be investigated by other researchers.

Keywords: learning style, auditory, kinesthetic, reading achievement

INTRODUCTION

Since English is a foreign language and is only taught in the classroom, learners can differ based on how successful they are in learning it. The variance of students in their language learning performance is influenced by their individual differences. In terms of their speed of language acquisition, their learning motivation or their learning methods, they will be different. These individual differences would certainly assist the teacher to consider the capacity of the students to learn languages.

Individual differences in L2 (second language) learning reported by Ellis (in Davies (2004) fall into four categories: abilities (intelligence, language capacity, and memory), propensities (learning style, motivation, anxiety, attitude, willingness to communicate), cognitions of learners (learner beliefs) and learning behavior (learning strategies).

This research took one subcategory of propensities from those categories, which is a learning style to be investigated. It was because the learning style has cognitive and affective aspects and hence expresses the entirety of psychological functioning

(Willingness in Davies, 2004 In other words, students can assist themselves in the progress of language learning by understanding the learning style.

One of the most accepted understandings of learning styles, Fleming (2006) said, is that student styles of learning fall into three categories: visual learners, auditory learners and kinesthetic learners. Then, as an acronym that refers to the four forms of learning styles, Fleming (2006) introduced the word 'VARK': visual, auditory, reading/writing preference, and kinesthetic. It can be assumed that the learning style terms refer to visual, auditory, preference for reading/writing and kinesthetic. Thus, one or even more styles of learning would be available for students. It depends on how they learn from the sources of information (teacher, media or other references).

English has been taught in Indonesia as local content in elementary schools and as a compulsory subject in high schools. Students are required to master English skills both receptively and productively when learning English. The purpose of learning English, therefore, is to master the four fundamental abilities, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing. Therefore, learners are taught how to speak fluently using English and also how to read English texts well.

There are a number of texts studied by students in the High Schools Curriculum 2013, such as: descriptive, recount, narrative, analytical exposition, explanation, caption, news item and procedure. Students are supposed to be able to comprehend social function, text structure and grammatical features of the texts for reading skills.

The students will have their own learning style in reading which will certainly be different from the others. Depending on their approach, they will differ in how they interpret the messages. Some students prefer to read aloud, listen to music, read notes, or draw pictures.

Theoretically, this study may contribute for educational research, particularly in the field of second language acquisition. Learning style is one of exploring individual differences in second language learning. Practically, there are many advantages of this research. First, teachers can easily determine appropriate learning methods and resources for learning. In addition, the learning process of teaching can run efficiently. Then, through considering their learning styles, by the use of relevant learning sources, students would be able to develop their English skills. Next, it can be used as one of the sources for further researchers in the conduct of further study. They could explore more about the influence of learning styles on developing English skills or compare the learning styles of other students.

Learning styles can be attributed to different methods of generating understanding and interpreting information from cognitive point as to present concepts and values (Fleming & Baume 2006). The type of individual learning can be presumed to refer to the style or methods of learning used in the learning process.

Furthermore, Drago and Wagner (2004) suggested that types of learning should have at least four general dimensions:

- A. Cognitive - the manner in which people gain information by seeing, thinking, remembering, solving problems, and relating data to others.
- B. Affective - a definition of personality such as concentration, emotion, excitement, desire, sluggishness, irritation and nervousness.

- C. Physiological - an understanding of learning in terms of biological features such senses (auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic).
- D. Psychological - an interpretation of learning based on inner strength and the character of one.

The learning style of a person refers to the preferential way in which data can be acquired, interpreted, comprehended and remembered by the learner. In addition, inventories of learning styles are data processing models that attempt to classify a student's desired intellectual approach to data assimilation and processing, (Othman and Amirudin, 2010) in the Procedia-Social and Behavioral Science journal.

Fleming (2006) introduced the word 'VARK' as an acronym which refers to the four types of learning styles: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing Preference and Kinesthetic as the introduction of his theory in 1995.

The following is a brief description of VARK (Visual, Aural, Reading/writing, and Kinesthetic) which stated by Drago and Warner (2004):

1. Visual: Visual learners prefer to learn something that can be illustrated by illustration. To keep up with their feelings and to consolidate their thoughts, they like to make notes. They may easily forget someone's name but acknowledge their faces. Visual learners are disturbed by motion or action, but they are not usually disrupted by noise.
2. Aural: by listening, auditory learners can learn best. It could be assumed that they are auditory learners.
They'll understand the aural instructions easily. Aural debates and dialogs are preferred, and by talking, they want to solve problems. For aural learners, noise can be a great distractor.
3. Read/write: Learners who read/write like to make notes to understand themselves. During a learning process, or reading difficult materials, learners can take notes to help them understand the content. Drawing objects may allow them to bring back to mind new ideas or concepts. With projects or activities which are hands-on, they will do their best.
4. Kinesthetic: by doing, kinesthetic learners can understand best. Instead of listening to the materials, they tend to do hands-on practice. In spirit, they are always high and like touching, moving and communicating with their world. Kinesthetic learners don't like watching or listening, so in the classroom they are not usually involved. This implies that kinesthetic learners in the classroom are not generally involved.

The word VARK is used to identify learning types based on their ability to watch, listen, read / write or do experiments. Each learner may have more than one style, but one style of learning must dominate their understanding of the new concept, knowledge or facts.

Table1 The tendency in learning process based on VARK mode

Mode	Tendency in learning process
Visual	Learning by watching images, graphs, or videos. Not taking full notes during learning process.
Aural / Auditory	Receiving information by listening, voice, music, conversation or discussion.
Read/Write	Words and texts are favored as a way of receiving information. They like presentation, by writing or text.
Kinesthetic	More likely to be experiencing something while studying the aspect of physical movement, such touch, feel, hold and move. They enjoy realistic project and real-life experiences.

Aural mode (auditory) learners, based on Fleming (1995), tend to speak and listen to acquire information. Auditory students will also continue to pay more detailed attention to the sentences or explanations of the teachers. When the teachers make it clear, they will understand it easily. Such learners also tend to be more attentive and will ask more questions during the teaching learning process to enhance their learning than others. Additionally, to clarify their perception, they prefer to address the meaning of the instructor with their peers.

Furthermore, Saeed et al., (2015) observed that to understand the knowledge they are trying to master, auditory learners need to hear the words clearly spoken in different tones. They tend to listen to notes of lesson writing.

Leaver and Shekhtman (2009) argued that through sound, auditory learners can acquire current information; they hear grammatical endings and associate new sounds that they already recognize. In gaining this benefit, it would enable auditory learners to learn quickly, particularly in learning new languages.

According to Fleming (1995), kinesthetic shifts more for the approval of behavioral activity such touch, sound and listening. It implies that kinesthetic learners prefer to combine their sight, sound, feeling, smell and touch with each other. In real life, they prefer hands-on instruction, realistic execution, model use and experience. Moreover, Fleming (1995) added that they can quickly learn logical and abstract materials through the application of learning theory while learning through doing suits their needs. This may be one of the advantages for students with kinesthetics.

In addition, Othman and Amirudin (2010) reported in the journal *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* that kinesthetic learners, including experiential learning, tend to apply contact, movement, and interaction to their learning environment. Moreover, even in an intense setting of pictures, they simply dislike listening; kinesthetic learners are usually passive in the classroom.

Gilakjani (2012) said that with the "hands on" approach, kinesthetic individuals are active and learn best. Those learners prefer to communicate, in other words, with the physical world.

In Saeed et.al., Clark (2000) mentioned that kinesthetic learning is greatly different from the types of auditory and visual learning because it requires the movement of the body to recall information and is different from hearing or seeing information. Thus, kinesthetic learners should take physical action to gain the best knowledge or idea.

Both learning styles, auditory and kinesthetic should have different way in reading comprehension.

Grellet (1992: 7) said that reading is an active ability that needs to guess, estimate, and challenge oneself continuously. It can be assumed that anyone is going to do things that include their thought process and contribute to an appreciation of what they are reading.

Silberstein (1997: 12) also believes that reading is a process of interaction between the reader and the text. It is considered a dynamic skill in the processing of knowledge. Based on the skill he/she has, the reader processes the information he/she obtains. It can be inferred that there would be different ways for everybody to interpret the text they are reading.

Furthermore, Grabe (2009, p.14) used ten adjectives to describe reading comprehension as a "complex process combination": a quick, effective, detailed, interactive, strategic, versatile, purposeful, evaluative, learning and linguistic process that shows what texts are processed by fluent readers. Comprehending requires not only reading, but also interpreting the texts through a process.

The relationships among reading methods, learning styles and reading perception have been examined by Alharbi (2015). The results showed that, overall, the different reading methods (silent or oral reading) did not result in any statistically significant variations in reading comprehension. The findings showed no substantial differences between the two reading groups.

The finding is consistent with McCallum, Sharp, Bell, and George (2004), which did not find a substantial difference between oral and silent readers. It can be argued that the same reading comprehension skill is available to both audible and silent readers. In other words, two different styles did not influence their reading comprehension.

Conversely, if previous studies primarily claimed that there was no correlation between learning styles and perception of reading, there were different results in the following analysis. Fithrotunnisa (2015), who performed a second-grade comparative study in junior high school, stated that there was a major impact between the students' learning style and the reading achievement. The result showed r value = 0.549, which indicates that the learning style contributes about 54.9 percent to the reading achievement of the students. Therefore, there may be a possibility regarding the effect of learning style on reading comprehension or reading achievement.

In addition, Harida, Siregar and Rina (2017) got hypothesis testing to determine the correlation between learning style and reading comprehension for SMAN 1 TAMBANGAN students in grade XI by using product moment formula. Their findings indicated the acceptance of the H_a hypothesis while H_o was rejected. It meant there was significant correlation between learning style and reading comprehension.

Based on the results of some previous studies, the writer decided to prove the hypothesis about a substantial difference on their reading output between auditory learners and kinesthetic learners. Based on findings of some previous studies, the impact of learning styles on certain English skills, including speaking, reading, writing and listening, has been different. Mostly, learning styles did not influence their ability to read, although there was a statement that their reading progress was less affected. The writer therefore conducted the analysis in order to know whether such types of learning would influence the reading achievement of the students. Most of the researchers addressed visual and auditory learning types, but in this study the writer would address different styles of learning, namely auditory and kinesthetic.

METHOD

This research was part of quantitative research because at the end of the study, the writer used statistical analysis on parameter values. Particularly, the writer used ex-post facto research methodology in this report. It means that variables cannot be monitored in advance of the experiment or during the experiment, the data being already in existence before the experiment has begun. The writer disclosed either what happened or what happens without interference, depending on the real situation.

The research aimed to explore the cause-and-effect relationship between two independent variables, the learning styles of the students, namely auditory and kinesthetic and dependent variable, reading achievement.

The research population was ten graders of SMA Islam NU Pujon-Malang, which consisted of five classes: two science classes and three social classes. Each Classes consisted of around 30 – 35 students. The total number of populations was 159 consisted of 71 male students and 88 female students.

The sampling method used by the writer is a non-probability sample namely purposive sampling. It meant that this technique of sampling did not give opportunity for all members in population to be chosen. Since, the study would represent particular variable that is required for the research. Moreover, the researcher gave the students' questionnaire as the introduction for the main research. It was purposive because there was also consideration such as the English teacher's recommendation and X MIPA 2 was chosen.

Reid's perceptual learning style questionnaire (1984) was offered for students to get to know their preferred style of learning. The students must complete the questionnaire by choosing choices according to their views on the claims. It consists of 30 questions. Each question has 5 options, namely: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. There are 5 item numbers which represent learning styles.

Table 2 Learning Style Indicator

NO	INDICATOR	ITEM NUMBER
1	Visual Learning Style	6, 10, 12, 24, 29
2	Auditory Learning Style	1, 7, 9, 17, 20
3	Kinesthetic Learning Style	2, 8, 15, 19, 26
4	Tactile Learning Style	11, 14, 16, 22, 25
5	Group Learning Style	3, 4, 5, 21, 23
6	Individual Learning Style	13, 18, 27, 28, 30

Each response given has the following score:

- 'Strongly Agree' has a score of 5 for the given response.
- "Agree" has 4 scores for a given response.
- "Undecided" has 3 score for a given response.
- "Disagree" has 2 score for a given response.
- "Strongly Disagree" has 1 score for a given response.

After students answered all items, they could do self-scoring by reading the instructions given on the questionnaire. After the self-scoring had been done, the students or teachers could read the explanation of each result of the scoring. Then the students would know their major learning style preference.

Documentation was the second instrument for collecting the research data. The study aims dealt with the achievement of reading comprehension. The researcher then asked the English teacher for the outcome of the reading comprehension test score.

Data from questionnaire was selected based on the categories of learning style. Then the results showed the learning style preferences. Next, reading score from the English teacher was used to analyze if there was cause and effect relationship between learning style and reading achievement. Their score was analyzed by using statistical instrument (SPSS) especially using Independent T-Test at SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The students' scores in learning styles (variable X) were taken from the given questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 30 items and was given to 35 students from X MIPA 2 at SMA Islam NU Pujon-Malang. Then, the writer got the reading comprehension score (variable Y) from the test given by the English teacher. In this study the researcher did not do the reading test but she merely got the score of reading comprehension test from the English teacher.

There was various score for students' learning style. The data obtained from self-scoring which analyzed each items of learning style. In this questionnaire there were six learning styles namely visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual. Since the writer used VARK learning style in this study, other learning styles (tactile, group and individual) are negligible.

From the result of questionnaire, it was concluded that the major learning styles was 5 visual learners, 17 auditory learners, 11 kinesthetic learners and 2 tactile learners. It could be said that the two preferred learning styles were auditory and kinesthetic learners. Thus, these two learning styles became the focus on the study.

Based on the summary, it was shown that 14% from 35 students were visual learners, 49% from 35 students were auditory learners, 31% from 25 students were kinesthetic learners and 6% from 35 students were tactile learners.

Students' reading comprehension test is the score of daily tests. After finishing the material of based competency, the teacher gave the students daily test. The material given is narrative text about folktale. The student was given a text and the questions related to the text. The minimum score for ten grades is 68. If the students get score below 68, they have remedial test. The writer got the score without remedial test. The writer wanted to know the correlation between the preferred learning styles: auditory and kinesthetic learners toward reading achievement. Therefore, the score that presented was only the score of both learners.

The score of the reading comprehension was analyzed by using SPSS to confirm whether the hypothesis was accepted or rejected.

The students were given a reading comprehension test on the theme of folktale and the title is the 'The legend of Nyi Loro Kidul Story. Every student which has been already divided into auditory and kinesthetic followed the same test.

The following was the result of the statistical description from the data.

Table 3 Means and Standard Deviation for Reading Achievement
Group Statistics

Learning style		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reading_achievement	Auditory Learners	17	77.647	4.3724	1.0605
	Kinesthetic Learners	11	78.636	3.9312	1.1853

Note. N: Number of subjects

From table 3, the number of auditory learners were 17 students and that of kinesthetic learners were 11 students. Meanwhile, the mean from the reading score of auditory learners was 77.647 and for kinesthetic learners was 78.623. It was concluded that there was a difference between reading achievement from auditory and kinesthetic learners. The kinesthetic learners got higher score on Reading Comprehension (R/C) than the auditory learners. However, we needed to know the significance from those two learning styles on the students' reading achievement by using t-test.

Table 4 T-test for Reading Achievement

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-Test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Reading_achievement	Equal variances assumed	.255	.618	-.608	26	.549	-.9893	1.6284	-4.3365	2.3579
	Equal variances not assumed			-.622	23.147	.540	-.9893	1.5904	-4.2782	2.2996

From the table 4 it was known that Sig. of Levene's Test is $.618 > 0.05$. Therefore, the data variances between auditory and kinesthetic were homogeneous. Then, the assumption output table of independent samples test was based on table 'Equal variances assumed'.

From the result of the t- test, the t-value = -608 , $p = .549$ and the results indicated that the reading achievement between auditory and kinesthetic learners was not significantly different ($p = .549 > 0.05$). Based on the calculation, the hypothesis that stated 'there is a significant difference between auditory and kinesthetic learners on their reading achievement' was rejected. Although from the average score of reading achievement from the students showed that kinesthetic got higher score than auditory learners, but they have more or less the same achievement in reading comprehension.

Based on the research in X MIPA 2 at SMA Islam NU Pujon, all students had different learning styles. They were grouped into visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile learners. However, there were only two learning styles that became the major in learning style preference. The preferred learning style in X MIPA 2 were auditory and kinesthetic. According to the questionnaire score from 35 students as the sample, there were 17 auditory learners and 11 kinesthetic learners. The study was held in order to know if there was a significant difference between auditory and kinesthetic students on their reading achievement.

Based on the research finding in the present study, it was found that the statistic computation from the independent t-test did not support the hypothesis. It indicated that there were no effective learning styles which support the reading achievement or students' learning style did not affect their reading achievement. This result of the study had the same idea with the study by Rachma, Surarsyah and Rizal (2015). They found that there was no significant effect of learning style on students' reading achievement. However, they found that kinesthetic tend to be the best learning style in reading achievement among others.

Furthermore, Dewi and Hasanah (2020) compared between visual and kinesthetic learners in reading comprehension at the eleventh-grade students of SMA Negeri 2 Pamekasan. They stated that the achievement of reading comprehension of visual students was same as kinesthetic learners. It meant that there was no difference between visual and kinesthetic students in reading comprehension.

Some previous research on learning styles have mainly found that there is no relationship between learning styles and comprehension of reading. Meanwhile, for

other studies learning styles will affect learning strategies. Then, by understanding learning styles and give appropriate learning materials would give contribution in improving English skills.

Asri and Wahab (2018) confirmed that the outcome of the study indicates that the implementation of the VAK learning style activity influences the learning achievements of the students, and it could create their confidence in learning a language, especially speaking skills. This research concluded that in addition to the use of the VAK learning style activity in the classroom, there was a substantial increase in the speaking abilities of the students. Thus, learning styles might be beneficial for another learning situation. Therefore, the VAK style of learning may be considered as the preliminary technique for determining the learning capacity of students.

Reading English texts are considered difficult for students. Some of the students claimed that comprehending reading text is as difficult as comprehending a spoken text. Thus, the students may be different in understanding English texts. Therefore, learning style may be the factor affecting reading comprehension. For example, students who have a visual learning style seem to understand more. In fact, sometimes although they are visual learners but they also have difficulty in comprehending English texts.

The term comprehension defines as the process of obtaining and making sense through information sharing in written language (RAND, 2002). In other words, the process of reading comprehension should combine many activities which are included as learning styles.

The findings showed that there were no effective learning styles either auditory or kinesthetic that affect the students' reading achievement. Whereas, learning styles are models of information processing which aim to identify the preferred intellectual approach of student in assimilating and processing the information (Othman and Amirudin, 2010). Thus, the finding was different with that statement. There must be some factors which influence that conditions. Perhaps, the students did not know how to maximize their styles so that they did not understand the best approach in helping them while reading.

In addition, Flemming and Baume (2006) claimed that learning style as cognitive perspective that related to various methods of creating perception and processing information in order to present concept and principles. It means that the students with different learning styles should gain their best reading achievement. However, that correlation was not proved by the outcome of the findings of this study.

Furthermore, Dunn & Dunn (1978) stated that the style of learning is how students begin to concentrate on processing, internalizing and remembering new, difficult academic information. In line with this, the students by their learning style should maximize their ability in comprehending texts. Conversely, the result of this study did not reflect this statement.

The result of this study portrayed the condition in which learning styles both auditory and kinesthetic did not influence their reading achievement. It meant that the reading skills were not influenced by the learning styles but perhaps another factors. It could be said the way students prefer to learn was not the main factor in reading achievement.

Reading is one skill that reflects students learning style by visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile. However, from the findings, the learning styles both auditory and kinesthetic learners did not help the students gain the best achievement in reading.

This study finding confirmed the result of the previous research by Rachma, Sutarsyah and Yufrizal (2015). They concluded that the learning style had no significant impact on the achievement of reading comprehension by students. However, another study (Fithrotunnisa, 2015) conducting a second grade comparative analysis of junior high school showed that there was a significant influence between the learning style of the students and the achievement of reading, although they give about 54.9 % to the achievement of reading of the students.

From those two previous studies, the level of the students might be one of the factors that made learning styles of the students become important in reading achievement. In addition, there might be also another factor such as intelligence or their cognitive competence that support reading achievement for English as foreign language.

However, teachers are supposed to be aware of the learning style of the students to determine the teaching strategies to be applied in the classroom. Keefe in Brown (2000) mentioned that the learning styles are cognitive, affective, and physiological characteristics as reasonably stable indicators of how learners perceive, engage with, and respond to the learning environment. It is apparent that the teacher should take into account the learning style of the students to create a meaningful learning environment. Besides, the teacher should aware that in classroom there must be different groups that need to be considered while giving them treatment in teaching learning process. It is also useful to understand various needs of students by using a range of teaching approaches. Since some students will be able to follow the class while others have difficulty because they have different styles in learning.

Flemming and Baume (2006) stated that a learning style is an inventory that allows a learner to think about the way he or she learns is a helpful step towards understanding and thereby enhancing learning. In short, if the students understand their learning style, they will know how to improve their learning. Since, they may have preferences in receiving the information.

The result of the study, these learning styles might have no influence on students' reading achievement. It does not mean that learning styles do not influence another skill. That's why it can be a further discussion beyond leaning styles that can be investigated by other researchers.

CONCLUSION

From the result of independent t- test, the t-value = -608, $p = .549$ and the results indicated that the reading achievement between auditory and kinesthetic learners was not significantly different ($p = .549 > 0.05$). The outcome highlighted that there was no substantial difference in their reading output between auditory and kinesthetic learners. Therefore, it could not be said that one of learning style whether auditory or kinesthetic was more effective than the other. It was concluded that the preferred learning style did not influence their reading comprehension for there might be another factor. Then, the students in this causal comparative research had no different achievement on their reading comprehension.

As described by Guthrie (1973), understanding reading is a cognitive process that requires a method of thought. This may be of the reasons that students' learning style did not influence the reading achievement of the students. Thus, individuals' reading achievement will differ according to their ability to read.

However, by recognizing the learning style of students, this will contribute to improve the achievement of the students. This situation will arise if the teacher chooses the material suitable for all style of learning. Therefore, learning style for preparing the teaching methods would be significant. As it cannot be denied that, the learning process will take different forms for each person. This will give all students the ability to enter the class by incorporating all forms of learning styles. Thus, they will think that everyone is getting involved in the classroom.

This study only got the data about learning styles from questionnaire and the reading score from the teacher. However, instead of giving the questionnaire, there must be a classroom observation for reading comprehension class for different learning styles. Moreover, the use of reading strategies will be one of other sources for knowing the effectiveness of learning styles. Therefore, for future researcher, there might be another consideration in doing further research dealing with learning style in different skills or different level of students.

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