

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION BASED ON THEIR LEARNING STYLE AT THE FOURTH SEMESTER OF UNISMA

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Abstract

In fact, Reading comprehension is such a complex skill for several students for some reasons; therefore, every student has their own learning style that will ease them to comprehend a text during reading comprehension process. This fact emerges a matter about students' learning style during reading comprehension process. This case drove the researcher to do an investigation on students' learning style during reading comprehension process researcher by selecting high reading achievers of English department of University of Islam Malang as the participants of this research. The researcher did a qualitative research by adapting two likert scale questionnaires of VAK Learning Style By O'Brien (1985). Based on the investigation findings, mostly high reading achievers are visual learners with 55% dominated while the rest of the participants are kinaesthetic learners 35% and auditory learners 10%. This finding implicates that, the high reading achiever gain high score for their reading comprehension since they implement some characteristics of being visual learners such as re-writing notes, focusing on visual objects, staying focused in a quiet place, using flashcards, coding, numbers, and other symbols to recall something.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, and Learning Style.

INTRODUCTION

In fact, Reading comprehension is such a complex skill for several students for some reasons. It might be happened because of having lack of vocabulary, difficulty in comprehending the text and tend to lose their concentration while reading. Surely, every student has their own learning style that will effect to their reading comprehension. It is accordance with a research that was conducted by Karmila (2018), she found that students' learning style surely give contribution to the students' reading comprehension.

Hence, due to the importance of learning style, more and more empirical studies have been done by the previous researchers such as Pratama (2020) who focused on analyzing the students' reading comprehension based on their learning styles found the students' learning styles are 25% for visual learners, 43.75% for auditory learners and 31.25% for kinesthetic learners and found the students' reading comprehension strategies that most student of eighth grade used visualizing, skimming and scanning strategies in comprehension the text, beside some students used another strategies like activating and using background knowledge, predicting, summarizing, making inferences and generating and asking question to comprehend the text. The grades in the subject can be used to determine a learning performance in learning Reading comprehension Students' knowledge, understanding, and mastery of specific material or talents, as assessed by examinations given to them, is referred to as "achievement." Ellis (2004) stated that individual differences in interest, tendency, identity, intellectual style, learning techniques, and selected learning style affect achievement. It implies that reading, the learners have different levels in their achievement.

From the background mentioned above, the researcher is excited to know the students' learning style during reading comprehension at university level while reading skill is deeply taught since semester 1 – 4. Eventually, the researcher decided to do a research entitled “An analysis of students' reading comprehension based on their learning style at the third semester of UNISMA”.

METHOD

This research employed a descriptive research design in qualitative approach. Gay et al (2006:9) defined a qualitative research as the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual (non- numerical) data in order to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of the interest. Specifically, the researcher wonders VAK learning style dominance in reading comprehension process. To get the data of this qualitative study, the researcher builds concepts by using VAK Learning Style likert scale questionnaires adopted from O'Brien (1985). To

conclude the answers of the research questions then relate those findings with several previous research theories.

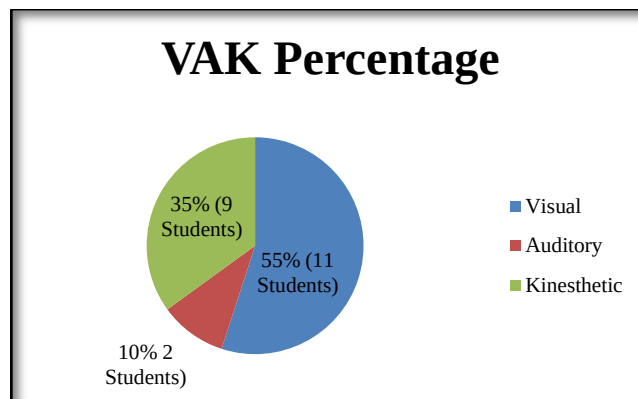
In this study, the researcher purely plays a role as an observer who just provided all the instruments of the study in the form of likert scale questionnaire. Furthermore, this study just focuses on reading skill, the researcher selected and focuses on those high achiever students of reading skill; the researcher just selected those students who achieve grade A (high reading achiever) by accumulating their reading score during 4 semesters of English department of University of Islam Malang. As a result, there are 20 participants of high reading achievers.

To gain the data, the researcher started to spread the questionnaire to the students. Since corona virus became the backstop of face-to-face meetings for any levels of students including university students, the researcher shared the questionnaire virtually in the form of Google form consisting of two kinds likert scales questionnaire about VAK Learning Style consisting of 30 points. Last of all, the researcher analyzed all the incoming data of Google form questionnaire and related all the data gotten to find out what VAK Learning Style are dominant in reading comprehension process.

FINDINGS

Due to the research problem about what learning style is used by high readers of fourth semester of UNISMA to comprehend the text, the researcher started to reduce the data by categorizing the collected data into Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic Learning Style using a pie diagram below:

1.1 VAK Percentage



Based on the diagram above, the highest percentage of VAK learning style is visual with 55% consisting 11 students of reading high achiever, followed by kinesthetic with 35% consisting of 9 reading high achiever students and the last is auditory with 10% consisting 2 reading high achiever students.

After the data is reduced in to 3 categories (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), the result is then displayed that mostly high readers are visual learners. It is attached in appendix 5 that shows high readers are mostly **visual learners** with several categories top select below;

No	Statement	Total of Participants' answer			Total Score (Answer x Total of Participants
		1 Never	2 Sometimes	3 Often	
2	I remember something better if I write it down.	-	4	16	56
6	It helps me to look at the person while listening; it keeps me focused.	1	3	16	54
10	It is better for me to get work done in a quiet place.	-	6	14	54

5	If I am taking a test, I can “see” the textbook page and where the answer is located.	1	5	14	53
8	It’s hard for me to understand what a person is saying when there are people talking or music playing.	-	7	13	53
3	I get lost or am late if someone tells me how to get to a new place, and I don’t write down the directions.	-	14	6	46
4	When trying to remember someone’s telephone number or something new like that, it helps me to get a picture of it in my mind.	4	11	5	41
7	Using flashcards helps me to retain material for tests.	5	9	6	41
1	I enjoy doodling and even my notes have lots of pictures and arrows in them.	7	9	4	37
9	It’s hard for me to understand a joke when someone tells me.	11	7	2	31

Based on the data analyzed and gained, it shows that all high reading achiever respondents of this study are mostly visual learners. This finding implicates that, the high reading achiever gain high score for their reading comprehension since they implement some characteristics of being visual learners such as re-writing notes, focusing on visual objects, staying focused in a quiet place, using flashcards, coding, numbers, and other symbols to recall something.

DISCUSSION

Reading comprehension is not only a process of absorbing new inputs but also understanding what is being read. Snow (2002: 11-15) added that reading comprehension is the process of extracting and producing meaning simultaneously through interaction and involvement

in written form. Underlining the word “written form” which refers to a text that needs to be recalled visually relates with visual learning that functions sight as a medium to learn. Based on the data analysis, the most amount learners of reading high achievers are 55% visual learners with the top arranged characteristic selections stated in appendix 5.1.

Visual characteristics begin with the highest selection “I remember something better if I write it down” and “I get lost or I am late if someone tells me how to get to a new place, and I don’t write down the directions”. This statement suits Nidhi and Helena (2017) theory that visual learners tend to re-write or take note new information either in written or auditory information. Related to reading comprehension theory, Nisa and Safitri (2018) finds out that reading as a receptive skill has big a role and correlation in building up inspiration/ideas, improving critical thinking, enhancing knowledge, and collecting information that can be sources and references for writing as productive skill. This case involves visual learners’ characteristic that they tend to remember something better by rewriting.

Furthermore, “it helps me to look at the person while listening; it keeps me focused” as another characteristic of visual learner shows that they must have visual look when they want to absorb new information. This statement suits with Nidhi and Helena (2017) theory that visual learners like to watch videos and more focus on the visual than the audio. This thing relates to meaning of reading based on Collins English Learners’ Dictionary that reading is a direct eye contact between the readers and the text that entails the use of vision to get the points of the text.

Another aspect of visual learners sounded “It is better for me to get work done in a quiet place” and “it’s hard for me to understand what a person is saying when there are people talking or music playing” which suits Nidhi and Helena (2017) VAK theory that visual learners easily get distract with noisy situation. This means that visual learners need high concentration to comprehend

a reading text since Moree (2015) argued that reading comprehension is a complex process of sinking into the text that requires stored memories or background knowledge to comprehend the text. Udaya (2016) also stated that reading comprehension is the process of connecting between the upcoming information and the prior knowledge. Those statements clearly show that reading comprehension need high concentration to draw conclusion of the text that is being read.

“If I am taking a test, I can “see” the textbook page and where the answer is located” and “when trying to remember someone’s telephone number or something new like that, it helps me to get a picture of it in my mind” are another characteristic of visual learning that is supported by Nidhi and Helena (2017) theory that visual learners tend to use color coding, diagram, symbol, or number to recall information and they are also good in spelling either numbers or alphabet. This character can help the visual learners in reading comprehension activity since there might happen interactive process of making new schema by associating prior knowledge with the reading text (Udaya, 2016).

Next, “using flashcards helps me to retain material for test” is also one of visual learners’ characteristics. This statement is also supported by Nidhi and Helena (2017) that visual learners tend to focus on pictures during reading activity to understand the content of the text

Another statement is “I enjoy doodling and even my notes have lots of pictures and arrows in them” which is in line with Nidhi and Helena (2017) theory about visual learners’ characteristic that they often use highlight and underline during reading activities in order to recall the materials easily.

Additionally, “it’s hard for me to understand a joke when someone tells me” is another characteristic of visual learners. In another word, mostly visual learners are not humorist. Relating to the reading comprehension, mostly readers are recognized as introverted learners and make them have low sense of joke.

In addition, while visual learning style gains 55% of reading high achievers, 45% left is gained by kinesthetic (33%) and auditory learners (10%). Those two learning style learners are also high reading achievers but gain lower quantity compared to the visual learners. This is caused by students' situation in starting their reading skill since semester I in Covid-9 pandemic; thus, they mostly got reading assignments through online in form of soft file reading task that should be comprehended to be their presentation materials.

In another case, kinesthetic learners tend to like practical learning to reading. This theory shows that kinesthetic learners are more expert in pharmacist or other practical fields. Furthermore, Nidhi and Helena (2017) stated that auditory learners prefer to use voice as the sources of new information to written text; they usually record the teachers' explanation in the classroom. This case is contradictory with the components of reading comprehension that includes fluency supported by Point (2004) bringing up about several essential components of reading comprehension that includes fluency. While the auditory learners prefer to use voices as the learning media, they might seldom read learning materials and make them hard to quickly get the points of the text.

Referring to the theoretical frameworks of this study, there are three previous studies that urge the researcher to do this investigation. Firstly, a research from Wahab & Nuraeni (2020) that has the same focus on students' learning style selecting English department students as the participants and found out that visual learners gain the highest percentage. Otherwise, this previous study does not have limit of subject and categories of the participants that becomes gaps for the further researcher. This gap becomes the reasons why the researcher wants to explore about students' learning style and the reading comprehension achievement by selecting the high reading achievers with perfect score. Its result is that visual learners gain the most quantity than other learners. This research result has the same finding with the present research that mostly high reading achievers are visual learners; this result is supported by a lot of theories in the previous

chapter one of which is stated by Gambrell & Bales (1986) steps of visualizing in a process and forming an image which help to recall some abstract ideas.

Next research was brought by Hadi, Izzah, and Hidayat (2021) with the same variables. The difference is the participants of the research; the previous study selected junior high school students as the participants and the present study selected university students as the participants with high reading achiever category. The two studies find out the same results that the visual learners gain more quantities than the rest learners. These same results are supported by a lot of theories one of which is stated by Kanninen (2009) visual learners are good in reading comprehension since they tend to learn through e-books, lecture notes and articles by highlighting Figures, charts, Tables, maps, videos and animations.

The last study was done by Febrianti (2014) with the same variables but different participants; the previous study selected Non-English students as the participants while the present study selected English students specifically high reading achievers. This difference created different result that the previous study found that kinesthetic learners place the most quantity than other learners while the present study find out that visual learners gain the most amount of quantity in reading comprehension. The present finding is supported by a lot of theories in the previous chapters one of which is stated by Maghfiroh (2018) visual learning style tend to understand better when they read the book rather than other kinds of learners.

CONCLUSION

The whole findings of this study conclude that visual learners gain the highest amount compared to kinesthetic and auditory learners. Visual learners gain 55%, kinesthetic 35% and auditory 10% which means that visual learners indicate good readers; this finding may be affected by the students' online learning during the pandemic that they often got literacy assignments by searching for reading references on Google. Additionally, knowing the learning style of high

reading achievers can produce a lot of benefits for the education stakeholders to improve the English learners' reading skill achievement.

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