

STUDENTS' PREFERENCE OF ENGLISH LEARNING STYLE FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Abstract

All of students have different way or style in learning something, it also occurs in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember because some of the students come from two different regions that created many diversities caused an impact on their English learning styles. The objective of this research were (1)To identify the types of English learning styles of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember and (2)To identify the teacher's strategies in promoting the English learning styles of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember. This research was a type of descriptive with qualitative approach. This research were conducted online through Google Form questionnaire, Whatsapp videocall interview and document review. The participants of this research were 98 students of eighth graders of SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember. The results of this research showed that 40 students were visual learners, 29 students were auditory learners and 29 students were kinesthetic learners. On the other hand, every week the teacher randomly used different various strategies to promote the differences of students' English learning style. Yet, the teacher more often provided simple strategy that were easy to implement because the covid-19 pandemic condition made the teacher had limitations in implementing various learning strategies.

Keywords: English learning style, foreign language learners

1. Introduction

Learning is a process of individual behavior changing through interaction to the all situation around the individual environment. It also called as a process of gaining knowledge or skill by experiencing or practicing. Meanwhile, learning is also defined as a mental, physical, and also spiritual activity which changes the process of people is manner and behavior. It is a process that leads someone to be better, which occurs as a

result of experience and increase the potential of improved performance and future learning. In learning process, students have their own style to receive the information about what they have learned or how to accept the part of information which is called as learning style. Learning style in psychology and education as a concept that used to identify how people learn. Learning style is different methods of learning or understanding new information, the way a person takes in, understands, expresses, and remembers information. Thus, each learner has his own preferred ways in learning. It can be understood that learning styles influence the learning process which also influence students' learning outcomes.

Jensen and Nicholson divide learner types into three part, these are "visual", "auditory" and "kinesthetic". In simple word, visual learners learn through what they see, auditory learners learn based on what they hear, while kinesthetic learners learn through what they touch or do. According to them, visual learners prefer the use of images, maps, and graphic organizers to access and understand new information. Sometimes, visual learner is easy to feel bored if they read a book that contains a lot of text. He will be more comfortable and interested in a book with full of image and a brief illustration. Auditory (Aural) learners learn depend on their hearing to absorb new information. They can accept information easily through listening and speaking in some situations such as lectures and group discussions. However, kinesthetic learners learn based on movement, imitation, experiment, and hands on action tool. They are easy to feel bored and restless when they learn in a sitting position for long time.

Based on the experience of the researcher when doing Internship Program 2 in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember, it can be seen that the school is located on the border between district center and countryside of Jember. Some of the students come from two different regions that create diversities in terms of social family background, past learning experience, learning habit, and environment conditions. The other aspect is some students felt boring during teaching learning process because the teacher did not use various methods in teaching. Probably the method or strategy applied by the teacher is not accordance with the students' English learning styles. So, it is important to know what the types of students' learning styles in order to make the teacher easy to determine a variety of strategies and methods in accordance with the various learning styles of the students.

There were several studies that relevant with this research. The first belongs to Hilyatun Nafis STG with the title "Students' Preference of language Learning Style in English Classroom (A Survey at Senior High School No.1 Seulimeum)". The approach of her research was quantitative with the students at Senior High School No.1 Seulimeum as the object. The second research from Qurnia Wiyasa Nugrahaeni with the title "A

Descriptive Analysis of Students' English Learning Styles (A Case Study at Junior High Students of "HOMESCHOOLING KAK SETO SOLO in Second Semester of Academic Year 2015/2016)". It was a qualitative research and the object of her research was Junior High School students of Homeschooling Kak Seto Solo. The third research from Ayu Nurul Izzati with the title "An Analysis of Students' Learning Style in Speaking Skill at the Second Semester of Madrasah Aliyah Mathla'ul Anwar Labuhan Ratu Bandar Lampung in the Academic Year of 2016/2017". In her research, she used tenth graders students of Madrasah Aliyah Mathla'ul Anwar Labuhan Ratu Bandar Lampung as the object and it was a descriptive qualitative research. The fourth research from Siti Rechal with the title "Students' Awareness and Perception of Their Learning Styles". The approach of her research was quantitative and she focused on the undergraduate students in fifth semester of English Language Department of State Islamic University Ar-Raniry Darussalam–Aceh Besar. The last research was from Wahidah Hasanah with the title "Student's Learning Style in Reading Comprehension at Tenth Graders of Madrasah Aliyah Swasta PAB 2 Helvetia". This research used a qualitative approach and the aim of this research is to find out how to learn visual learning, auditory learning styles and kinesthetic learning styles in reading comprehension of tenth graders MIA in MAS PAB 2 Helvetia.

The five previous researches above had their own ways in analyzing students' English learning style. Each analyzed different kinds of objects with different steps and theories. On the other hand, this current research focused on the research subject that comes from two different regions. They had diversities in terms of social family background, past learning experience, learning habit, and environment conditions caused of the location of this school is on the border between district center and countryside of Jember. This current research was carried out during covid-19 pandemic there were many differences with previous studies in terms of research design, method, application and challenges passed.

The objective of this research was to identify the types of English learning styles of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember and to identify the teacher's strategies in promoting the English learning styles of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember. The result of this research is expected to be able to give beneficial for exploring theories of learning style and be able to give contribution to the English teacher to consider the strengths of learning style to be one of the considerations in determining various learners' needs in English learning process.

2. Method

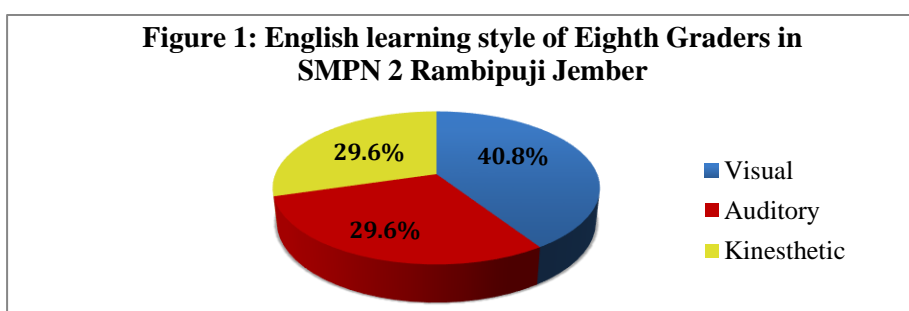
The design of this research was descriptive with a qualitative approach. This research were described about the types of English learning style of eighth graders in

SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember and how the teacher's strategies in promoting the English learning style of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember. The subjects of this research were three classes of eighth graders (A, D and E Class) and the English teacher of SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember. In this research, some techniques used by the researcher to obtain the data such as questionnaire, interview and document review. Google Form questionnaire was distributed to the three classes of eighth graders (A, D and E class). It was applied to facilitate the researcher in identifying the types of students' English learning styles. On the other hand, semi-structured interview also applied by the researcher to the several students and the English teacher by using Whatsapp video call. The purpose of applying interview was to find out more information about the teachers' strategies in promoting the students' English learning styles in the classroom. Besides, the documents such as interview transcript, screenshot of the online English learning process and the other supporting documents also used for completeness the data in this research.

Data analysis technique of Miles and Huberman's was used in this research. There are three major phases of data analysis according to Miles and Huberman such as data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. In this research, the researcher used two types of triangulation such as source triangulation (used to answer the research question about the types of English learning styles of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember and the teacher's strategies in promoting the English learning styles of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember) and technique triangulation (used to answer the research question about the teacher's strategies in promoting the English learning styles of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember).

3. Findings and Discussion

The finding showed that after analyzing the students' questionnaire, the researcher found out three types of students' English learning styles such as: visual learning style, auditory learning style and kinesthetic learning style. It can be seen in figure below:



As can be seen in the figure above, the data showed that the majority of the students of eighth grade in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember had visual learning style and it dominates in each

class. Visual learners were 40 students (40.8%), auditory learners were 29 students (29.6%) and kinesthetic learners were 29 students (29.6%). From the result of the data, almost all of them more understand and prefer to study by watching display picture, remember the instruction when it was written and remember what they see than what they hear. They need some visual clues and color code to make them easy to learn something. They need some lists or make some points, so they can remember and make them easy for what they do next. This explanation is in line with Rebecca Oxford, et. al. (2020) in *Learning Style Survey* that visual learner remember something better if they write down and visualize picture, word or number in their head and use code color to help them learn something. In the other hand, they need to write what their teacher said, so they were able to remember that. The explanation above is in line with Vakos's (2020) statement in *Contrasting Style* that visual learners often do not remember information given orally without being able to see it or make note.

The teacher realized that there were differences among students in the way they are learning. She also knows about learning styles but never check it one by one on the students because of limited time and opportunity. The researcher also found out the teacher's strategies to promoting the students' English learning styles after analyzing the students' and the teachers' interview. It can be seen in the table below:

Table 1: Finding and Sources of The Teachers' Strategies in Promoting The Students' Learning Style

No	Finding	Sources	
	Teachers' Strategies	Student	Teacher
1.	The teacher provided the material with various kinds of interesting pictures to make the students more interested in understanding the lesson	✓	✓
2.	The teacher asked the students to read the written text or e-books then she explained what the students read before	✓	✓
3.	The teacher gave some video learning to the students before asked them to doing assignment	✓	✓
4.	The teacher gave quiz by using google form	✓	✓
5.	The teacher asked the students to make mind-mapping about <i>things around you</i>	✓	✓
6.	The teacher asked the students to doing assignment in their books and then photographing and share to the group whatsapp or their own teacher number	✓	✓
7.	The teacher explained the material by using voice note	✓	✓

She always implemented a different random strategy every week to accommodate the different learning styles of students such as provided the material with various kinds of interesting pictures to make the visual learner more interested in understanding the lesson. It is supported by Dunn and Burke (2005) in *Learning Style: The Clue to You!*. The theory stated that the visual learner learn well when information is presented visually. It means that the more of learner is able to see the information, the easier it may be for that learner to learn the information. The teacher also explained the material by using Whatsapp voice notes, it was to facilitate the auditory learner's needs. A theory elaborated by Porter and Hernaki (2000), they pointed that "auditory learners discover information through listening and interpreting information by the means of pitch, emphasis and speed". On the other hand, the teacher also asked the students to make mind-mapping about *things around you*, gave quiz and etc. Thus strategies were used to promote the kinesthetic learners' needs. It is in line Reid (2007) in "*The Learning Style Preferences of ESL Students*". He stated that "kinesthetic learning style is preferred learning by touching and doing: practicing techniques, drawing maps, creating outlines or making models". Yet, the strategy used for kinesthetic learners tend to be more difficult to apply in online learning. It was caused by pandemic condition that made her difficult to apply a suitable strategy for kinesthetic learners such as games and other physical activities. That's why

the teacher more often used simple strategies that were more suitable for visual learners and auditory learners.

Most of students of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember are visual learners, it may be caused by the natural (innate) or environmental factors because they comes from different social backgrounds. Each individual has its own unique and there is no two people have the exact same life experience. Recognizing students own learning style doesn't necessarily make them smarter. Yet, by identifying the students' learning styles, the teacher will be able to determine how to create the effective learning and how to determine the various suitable strategy and media. Moreover, it can make the class more interesting than before.

4. Conclusion and suggestion

From the research results as pointed out above, several conclusions can be drawn as the followings: 1)The majority of eighth graders in SMPN 2 Rambipuji Jember have visual learning style; 2)The teacher used different various strategies to promoting the differences of each student's English learning style such as: (A)Provided the material with various kinds of interesting pictures to made the visual learners easier to understand the lesson. (B)Gave the explanation of the material by using Whatsapp voice notes to support the auditory learner's needs. (C)Asked the students to make mind-mapping about things around you to make the kinesthetic learners more interested in online learning process. It was implemented alternately every week. Yet, this covid-19 pandemic condition had some negative impact on the implementation of the learning strategies in online learning process. It has made the teacher have limitations in implementing various learning strategies for kinesthetic learners. That's why the teacher more often provided the simple strategy that was easy to implement and had good efficiency. Finally, the researcher suggests that the English teacher use this kind of research as a new element in considering what methods, techniques and media are compatible with the students' needs. Also for other researchers, the researcher suggests to use a better research method and use this research as a reference in doing related research.

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