

**THE STUDENTS' STYLES AND STRATEGIES IN LEARNING  
RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR SPEAKING SKILLS**

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

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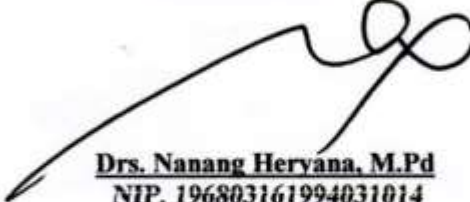
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## **The Students' Styles and Strategies in Learning Relationship to Their Speaking Skills**

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**Abstract:** This research discusses two major concerns. First, to find out students' learning style in learning to improve speaking skills, they are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Second, to find out strategies used by students who have visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles in improving their speaking English skills. The method used in this research was Qualitative Research in the form of Case Study. The tools used in this research were questionnaire and interview. The result showed that the visual learner was 1 student (20 %), auditory learners were 3 students (60 %) and kinesthetic learner was 1 student (20%). As a result, auditory learners were more dominant than kinesthetic and visual learners. Based on the interview conducted to the participants which were 1 visual learner, 3 auditory learners, and 1 kinesthetic learner it was found that visual learner often do not remember information given orally without being able to see it. They memorize using visual clues. Auditory learners need to remember most easily if saying something repeatedly. Auditory learners were able to say something without paying close attention to the person. Kinesthetic learners learn best by moving their bodies, activating their large or small muscles as they learn. They are learners who actually concentrate better and learn more easily when body movement is involved.

**Keywords:** Learning Style, Learning Strategies, English Speaking Skills

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini membahas mengenai dua hal. Pertama, untuk menentukan gaya pembelajaran siswa dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara, yaitu visual, audio, dan kinestetik. Kedua, yaitu untuk menentukan strategi yang digunakan siswa yang memiliki gaya visual, audio dan kinestetik dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris. Metode yang digunakan adalah Kualitatif dalam Studi Kasus. Alat pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah kuesioner dan interview. Hasil menunjukkan ada 1 pelajar visual (20%), 3 pelajar audio (60%) dan 1 pelajar kinestetik (20%). Kesimpulan yaitu pelajar audio lebih dominan dibandingkan dengan pelajar kinestetik dan visual. Dari interview yang dilakukan kepada siswa ditemukan bahwa pelajar visual cenderung tidak dapat mengingat dengan baik dan melihatnya. Mereka menghafal menggunakan petunjuk visual. Pelajar audio perlu untuk mengingat hal-hal jika mereka mengulang sendiri. Mereka dapat mengatakan sesuatu tanpa memperhatikan dengan seksama. Pelajar kinestetik dapat belajar dengan baik jika menggunakan gerakan tubuh. Mereka dapat belajar dan mengingat sesuatu dengan baik di mana gerak fisik dilibatkan.

**Kata Kunci:** Gaya Pembelajaran, Strategi Pembelajaran, Kemampuan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris

Learning is the activity or process in gaining knowledge or skill by studying, practicing, or experiencing. Someone's capabilities will not be disappearing but will keep continue to keep developing even more when someone continues keep practicing.

There are two factors that influence students' learning namely internal and external factors. Internal factor is the factors which come from students themselves. Meanwhile, external factor is the factor which is outside of students. The examples of internal factors are the physical condition, skill, interest, intelligent and learning style. Meanwhile, the examples of external factors are learning strategy, family, friends, school, and environment.

The dominant factor that influences students' learning is learning style. Some students can have a preferred learning style, but it may be also combination of two or three learning styles. For example, a student who is learning English can combine auditory learning style to learn the spelling of words and kinesthetic learning style to practice using the words. According to Dunn and Dunn in *Dr. Lauren Bradway's article entitled "How Boys and Girls Differ in the Way They Learn"* that they have spent nearly 25 years in the study of learning styles. They identify the most common learning styles as *Auditory, Visual and Kinesthetic*.

Learning style is one of dominant factors because learning style is influenced by our brain because it is a complex organ and has great capacity to learn. It is the way how to deal with information more enjoyably and comfort during learning certain subject. Some of people have brains that are able to deal with a lot of information at once, but some are only capable of absorbing and processing of information gradually. Some are able to store and retrieve information in the brain quickly while others do so slowly. This also occurs in learning a language.

The characteristics of learning style differs one learner from another, such as visual auditory and kinesthetic. It will help learner to determine their strategies in learning. Strategies are general characteristics that differentiate one individual one individual from another. It helps learner to solve their problem in learning. Both learning style and strategies have strong influence in learning. For example a visual learner can use the best strategies when he or she wants to intake information in learning. Visual learner can use underlining, highlighting, using flow charts or graphics when having explanation from a teacher. It is because auditory learners can gain information easily from what they see or observe.

Based on the explanation above, learning style and strategies have correlation and influence by each other. Students, who understand their learning style, will find certain strategies in learning certain subject and use it in effective way. It helps them to improve their achievement. Moreover, learning styles can help teachers in teaching activities. Teachers who had already known students' learning styles can use strategies which are suitable with the learning styles in teaching the students.

Difficulties that arise in this study during teaching and learning process are the way how a teacher teaches English is different with learners' learning styles. It is not only because they have different learning styles, but also most of the students do not recognize their own learning styles and strategies. As a result, they get poor achievement.

The goal in teaching speaking is to have improvement of students in communicative skill. Hence, some of them are afraid of having mistakes when they speak English in the class. This can be tackled if the students can have suitable learning strategies for their learning styles.

That is why the researcher was interested in doing research on this study. Learning styles and strategies are part of one's personality and everyone is different. The reason of choosing fourth semester students in Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Tanjungpura University is because they are still in the process of study of English.

The researcher focused on the students who have GPA above 3.5. This is because the researcher wanted to determine the learning styles that they are applying so they can achieve good grades on their English study. From those situations, the researcher concerned about "The Students' Styles and Strategies and the Relationship to Their Speaking Skills."

Speaking is a matter of transferring one's idea and to express the feeling orally. When people hear someone speak, they pay attention to what the speaker sounds like almost automatically. On the basis of what they hear, they make some tentative and possibly subconscious judgment about the speaker's personality, attitudes, home region and native-or non native speakers'.

According to Hyble (2001:45), speaking is any process in which people share information, ideas and feeling. It involves all of body language mannerism and style, anything that adds meaning to message. Moreover, Roskos (2009:8) also supports this idea, by saying that speaking is the richest and most versatile means of communication, according to him, speaking is a skill used by someone daily life communication whether at school or outside.

Adding the explanations above, Brown in Nation (2009:122) states that speaking is a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed. Those observations are invariably collared by the accuracy and fluency. While, he also states that speaking is the product or creative construction of linguistic string, the speakers make choices of lexicon, structure, and discourse.

Having speaking ability is an important thing in the process of a language. A large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking. By speaking, people can socialize each other. They can ask and help something to other people, they can response someone's statements, they can express their feeling or opinion and exchange information and so on. Therefore, mastering speaking skill is important.

From those explanations above, speaking is such fundamental human behavior which consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. By speaking, people can socialize each other. They can ask and help something to other people, they can response someone's statements, they can express their feeling or opinion and exchange information and so on. It is an essential means of communication.

Speaking skills is an ability that allows the speaker to deliver an oral form as a meaningful language, comprehension and fluency, and to mentally interact with the oral. In every subject in school, student learning activities involve speaking.

Develop a speaking activity requires good interaction between speaker and listener are shaped by their prior knowledge, experience, attitudes, and language.

Learning styles are students' habit in learning, included in how the best and easiest way in learning about certain subject. As Pritchard (2009:216) stated that learning styles are habit, strategies, or regular mental behaviors concerning learning, particularly deliberate, educational learning that an individual display.

Furthermore, Cassidy (2004: 420) states that: "One concept in particular perception of academic control and achievement motivation which has been provided some valuable insights into learning in both academic and other settings is learning styles."

Visual learners prefer to learn by seeing. They have good visual recall and prefer information learners to be presented visually in the form of diagrams, graphs, maps, posters and displays, for example they often use hand movement when describing or recalling events or objects and have a tendency to look upward when thinking or recalling information, make a lot of symbols and images in their records.

Auditory learners prefer to learn by listening. They have good auditory memory and benefit from discussion, lectures, interviewing, hearing stories and audio tapes for example. They like sequence, repetition and summary, and when recalling memories tend to tilt their head and use level eye movements. Auditory learners prefer to record on tape because they like to listen to repetitive information.

Kinesthetic / tactile learners prefer to learn by doing. They are good at recalling events and associate feelings or physical experience with memory. They enjoy physical activity, field trips, manipulating objects and other practical first hand experiences. They often find it difficult to keep still and need regular breaks in classroom activities. Kinesthetic learners prefer to learn through movement and are best to memorize the information by linking the movement. This modality of accessing all types of motion and emotion are created and kept in mind.

Learning strategies are specific behaviors or thought processes that students use to enhance their learning. A strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is thoroughly considered.

Furthermore, Oxford implies that there is not too much or little input of foreign language studied, so that students do not get immersed in it. It is in the context in which is necessary to use some methods and technique, like Learning Strategies to make the learning process workable. Since strategies are conscious, students actively participate in their selection and use.

Strategies are not isolated actions but a process in which many actions are included such as learners' learning style in order to achieve a learning goal. When learning a foreign language, it is essential that learning strategies work altogether with students learning style for "learning styles have a significant influence on students' choice of learning strategies and both affect learning outcomes" (Oxford: 2003, 18).

Learning styles and strategies appear to be among the most important variables influencing performance in a second language acquisition. Recent research suggests that learning style has a significant influence on students'

choice of learning strategies and that both styles and strategies affect learning outcomes (Oxford 2003: 16).

Based on that statement, learning styles and strategies have correlation and influence by each one to another. Students, who understand their learning styles, will find certain strategies in learning certain subject and use it in effective way. It helps them to improve their achievement.

The strategies that students use to learn a second language depends on greatly on their individual learning style. Some students are outgoing and will experiment freely and frequently while learning a new language. As stated in Reiff (1992: 49) "Once a teacher has determined why a student responds in a certain way, then they can make more intelligent decisions about instruction methods." Besides, teacher can help their students by designing instructions that meet the needs of individuals with different stylistic preferences and by teaching students how to improve their learning strategies.

## **METHOD**

In investigating the students' learning styles and strategies to improve speaking skills, the writer decided to apply a case study. A case study is a research approach in which one or a few instances of a phenomenon research are studied in depth (Given 2008:68). In addition, a case study is a single instance of some bound system, which can range from one individual to a class, a school, or an entire community. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) maintain that a case study has the following distinctive features. It is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case. It provides a chronological narrative of events with the analysis of them. It focuses on individual actors or groups of actors and seeks to understand their perceptions events. It highlights specific events that are relevant to the case.

This research was conducted at Tanjungpura University, Teacher Training and Education Faculty Campus, Pontianak. The participants were five students of English Education Study Program, academic year 2015/2016. Most of the data were gathered in campus or in the library during working hours or break time.

The researcher used the purposive sampling method by establishing some criteria to choose the participants. The researcher considered the GPA of the students which was more than 3.5. Besides that, the criteria was also based the Speaking Subject Grade which was B. The researcher limited the students to 5 students. This was because the researcher was interested in finding out the learning styles and strategies of students who had better speaking skills than the other students. The researcher involved these five students who were genuinely willing to participate in this research as Shenton (2004) explained that to ensure the informants give honest responses, a researcher should involved those who are genuinely willing to participate and give data freely.

In this research, the researcher used qualitative research in the term of case study. It primarily and inductive process of organizing data into categorize and identifying patterns. It is also used to collect data about students' learning styles and students' learning strategies. It also described the phenomena that occur in the

field. The researcher used questionnaire to collect the data, meanwhile interview was instrument to know students' strategies in learning English speaking skills.

Questionnaire is set of written question which used to asked individuals to get statistically useful information about a given topic. According to Brown (2001:6) Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react by writing out their answer or selecting from among existing answer.

In this research, behavioral questions were used as the type of data about the respondent. It was because the researcher wanted to analyze what the respondents are doing or have done in the past. It was also to analyze students' actions, life-style, habits, and personal history toward some cases in order to determine the learning style of the students.

For the types of the questionnaire, the researcher used closed-ended questionnaire. There were three options for each question that the students needed to choose. The students answered them based on their actions, habits and personal history. It was to determine the types learning styles whether the students had visual, auditory or kinesthetic learning style.

The type of interview used in this research was semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interview used because this type of interview provides more detailed data of what the participants had experienced in learning English and especially their strategies in improving their Speaking ability in English language. The participants also would feel free to express their feelings or experiences in answering the interview questions.

After collecting all of the data, the researcher analyzed the data. The steps are follows: The type of questionnaire is close-ended questionnaire. There was no right or wrong answers. The point was that there were types of learning that were right for their own preferred leaning style. There were three options of the answers (A, B or C). It was to identify the learning style that the students used in speaking.

The researcher analyzed the data about the learning style first, then classified the data into three mainly categorize of learning style. They are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. If the students chose mostly A's, then they had a Visual learning style. If the students chose mostly B's, then they had an Auditory learning style. If the students chose mostly C's, then they had a Kinesthetic learning style.

After that, the researcher conducted the interview to the students. It was used to collect the data and support the questionnaire. The questions of interview are about strategies that used by interviewee in learning English speaking skill. Strategies are used by students is based on their learning style. The researcher analyzed it by using Miles and Huberman Model.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Research Findings**

The first research in this study is the researcher distributed students' learning style questionnaire. It was done on May 16, 2016. In this section, the researcher distributed learning style questionnaire to the 5 students as sample of this research. There were three parts of questionnaire that the researcher gave to the



students (see appendix). The first was the background information questionnaire to know the background of the students. The second was the questionnaire of speaking style itself. It contained of 20 questions (see appendix). Students chose an answer by circling the option that they preferred. One question only has one answer and there was no right or wrong answer.

The researcher analyzed the data about the learning style, then classified the data into three mainly categorize of learning style. They are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. If the students chose mostly A's, then they had a Visual learning style. If the students chose mostly B's, then they had an Auditory learning style. If the students chose mostly C's, then they had a Kinesthetic learning style.

In this section of questionnaire, the researcher provided five questions for students to answer. The questions were about the students' background information. The questions were about the data of the students, the period of learning English, the English proficiency and the interest in speaking English.

The first student was ZsalZsabila. She is 20 years old. This female student has been studying English for 4 years and 3 months. She stated that she only learned English on her Senior High School. She rated her overall English proficiency as good. She stated she also enjoyed in speaking English. Her frequency was a few times a week in speaking English.

Resi was the second student. She is in the same age with ZsalZsabila. She has been studying English for 7 years and 7 months. She rated his English proficiency as good in overall. She also enjoyed in speaking English.

She has been studying English for 8 years. Now, she is 18 years old. She rated her overall English proficiency as fair. She enjoyed speaking English. She said that she speaks English every day.

The fourth student was NadyaArisca. She is 19 years old. She had been studying English for 11 years and 11 months. She rated her English as very good in her overall English proficiency. She enjoyed when she was speaking English. She speaks English every day.

She is 19 years old and has been studying English for 13 years and 5 months. She rated her English proficiency overall as good. She enjoyed speaking English. She speaks English every day.

The second questionnaire was about the students' learning styles. The researcher provided 20 questions for the students to answer. The students chose the answers based on the consideration of how they generally behave of the questions provided. Here it was to identify whether the students were Visual, Auditory or Kinesthetic learner. If the answers were mostly A, then they had a visual learning style. If the answers were mostly B, then they had a auditory learning style. If the answers were mostly C, then they had a kinesthetic learning style.

From the result of the questionnaire, the researcher found that 1 student had visual learning style, 3 students had auditory learning style and 1 student that had kinesthetic learning style. In detail the student that had visual learning style was Resi; the students that had auditory learning style were ZsalZsabila, NadyaArisca and MustikaKhairani meanwhile the student that had kinesthetic learning style was KartikaArdhillaSaputri.

From the result above, the researcher found that the type of visual learner was 1 student (20%), auditory learners were 3 students (60%) and kinesthetic learner was 1 student (20%). As a result, the auditory learners were more dominant than kinesthetic and auditory learner.

## **Discussion**

The focus of this research covers two topics: the learning styles of the students in speaking English and the learning strategies that the students are using in speaking English. The first topic is about the learning styles of the students in speaking English. It is about to analyze whether the students are visual, auditory or kinesthetic learners. The second focus is about what are the strategies that the students are using in speaking English.

The researcher categorized the students' learning styles based on their answers of the questions for each question. Visual learners answered mostly A, Auditory learners answered mostly B, and Kinesthetic learners answered mostly C. From the findings above, it can be concluded that Auditory learners are dominant among the five participants of this research. The percentage was about 60 % meanwhile Visual and Kinesthetic were in 20% for each.

Students commonly have a main preferred learning style, but this will be part of a blend of all three. Some students have a very strong preference; other students have a more even mixture of two or less commonly three styles.

When the students know their preferred learning styles, they will understand the type of learning that best suits them. This enables them to choose the types of learning that work best for them.

Someone with a visual learning style has a preference for seen or observed things; including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, flip-charts, etc. These people will use phrases such as “show me” or “let’s have a look at that” and will be best able to perform a new task after reading the instructions or watching someone else do it first. This is accordance with the statement of Alan Chapman in *Ethical Learning and Development Resource* (2011). These are the people who work from lists and written directions and instructions.

Someone with an auditory learning style has a preference for the transfer of information through listening; to the spoken word, of self or others, of sounds and noises. These people will use phrases such as “tell me” or “let’s talk it over” and will be best able to perform a new task after listening to instructions from an expert. This is accordance with the statement of Alan Chapman in *Ethical Learning and Development Resource* (2011). These are the people who are happy being given spoken instruction over the telephone, and can remember all the words to songs that they hear.

Someone with a kinesthetic learning style has a preference for physical experience – touching, feeling, holding, doing, and practical hands-on experiences. These people will use phrases such as “let me try” or “how do you feel?” and will be best able to perform a new task by going ahead and trying it out, learning as they go. This is accordance with the statement of Alan Chapman

in *Ethical Learning and Development Resource* (2011). These are the people who like to experiment, hands-on, and never look at the instruction first.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

After having the entire process of the research, the researcher would like to point out some conclusions. The conclusions consist of the general findings are as follow: Students' learning styles used in improving their speaking ability were Visual, Auditory and Kinesthetic.

1. 1 student (20 % from the participants) had visual learning style; 3 students (60 % from the participants) had auditory learning style and 1 student (20 % from the participants) had kinesthetic learning style.
2. Visual learners need to illustrate and visualize thing or place (learn by seeing).
3. Auditory learners need to hear attentively, say something repeatedly and aloud, so they can remember and understand information (learn by listening).
4. Kinesthetic learners. They need to move their body to make them easy and understand what their friends talk to them (learn by doing).

### **Suggestion**

The researcher would like to provide some constructive suggestions as follows:

1. To lecturers to guide the students in the recognition and develop of the students' learning styles. It can be done by observing the students' action in expressing themselves so they can understand the students' personalities and learning dimension which is influenced by the actions showed by the students.
2. To students to know their learning styles in order to improve their ability in English speaking. Taking the learning styles questionnaire can be used to determine the learning styles by themselves. After that they can explore their strategies based on their learning styles. Since learning styles and strategies of students are determined by all aspects of personality, it is suggested to the students to rise awareness of their individual acquires and integrates skills. This is for the purpose of finding the suitable learning strategies based on the learning styles from their own personalities.

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