

The Differences in English Proficiency of Students with Different Learning Style

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Abstract

This research investigated the significant differences in English proficiency of students with different learning style on the 5th semester students at University of Islam Malang. In this research, the researcher focused on 3 types of learning styles, they were auditory, kinesthetic, and visual. The researcher wants to prove that the students whose auditory learning styles has good ability in listening; the students whose visual learning styles has good ability in reading; and the students whose kinesthetic learning styles has good ability in structure, because some of researchers believed in it.

The research was in the form of Ex-Post facto design. The population of this research was the fifth-grade of English department in University of Islam Malang. From the population, the researcher took the sample which consist of 48 students. This research used cluster sampling classified as the process of taking sample. The data were gained by using learning style questionnaire and TOEFL test. The data were analyzed by one-way ANOVA on IBM SPSS Statistic 25. The researcher also provides a nonparametric test, Kruskal-Wallis test.

The results showed that 1) The calculation from One-Way ANOVA listening test described that there was no significant difference in listening mastery among students whose learning styles are visual, auditory and kinesthetic ($F=0.868$, $p<0.427$); 2) The calculation from One-Way ANOVA structure test described that there was no significant difference in structure mastery among students whose learning styles are visual, auditory and kinesthetic ($F=0.245$, $p < 0.777$); and 3) The calculation from Kruskal-Wallis test the significant value of reading comprehension test is $p < 0.416$. It is clearly stated that the result is not significant. It was concluded that there were no significant differences about students' English proficiency among students whose learning styles are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. The researcher hoped that the future researcher can use other learning style which more specific and more detail.

Keywords: Difference, Learning style, English proficiency

INTRODUCTION

In the educational system, the learning style is a common term. This can be closely related to how well students capable of absorbing information and also the knowledge delivered by the teacher or the atmosphere. Learning style which students use in the classroom is highly essential to be noticed by the teacher to determine what approach is going to be used to deliver material within the learning process.

Learning style means the students' natural way in knowledge acquisition by an easy and attractive way. Everyone has a characteristic inclination for the manner by which prefer to get, process, and grant information. According to Arin (2013) Easiness in processing new information either easy or difficult, first step can be influenced by learning style that students use. Refers to Haar (2002) processing, submission, and perceptions in getting information individual are different, depends on their learning style tendency which often they use in the learning process

In accordance with Stewart (1992) define learning styles as the most likely environment by students to learn. In short, from the explanation above, learning style is how students learn to get information in learning process attractively and easily.

Throughout the years a few speculations and sorts of learning style models have been developed. Since individuals have favored methods for adapting, many researches has gone into finding the various styles. A few models depend on character types, while others depend on the brain dominance types of learning style models according to The Peak Performance Center (2020) include VAK, Kolb, 4MAT, Felder-Silverman, Gregorc, and Herrmann's Brain Dominance.

In summary, this research focuses to use VAK Learning style because the learner categories are suitable with the research problems; Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic.

It is mentioned that learning style in VAK model has 3 types, visual, auditory and kinesthetic Sarasin (1998) each individual has their own unique style. The first one is Visual learner. Students whose visual learning style understand everything around by reading and viewing. The characteristics are remembering detail of what they saw and using graphic or picture. The second one is auditory learner. Auditory define students that more understand the learning information by listening than reading or body movement clue. They usually learn by doing discussion, conversation, and group work. The last one is kinesthetic learner. Kinesthetic means a learning style which use students' physical involvement such as field visits, dramatizing, and pantomime. They learn a lot by moving their part of body.

Table 1. VAK Learning Style

Learning Style	Characteristics
Visual	Watching, reading
Auditory	Listening, speaking
Kinesthetic	Touching, doing

Each student has different stage of performance, speed learning, and learning style. This distinction of learning style shows the simplest way for students to acquire the information for learning. In keeping with Huliselan (2016), a lecturer in teaching should consider students' learning style. This can be due to the teaching effectiveness depends on the manner or students' style learning, besides the nature of lecturer's personality and intellectual ability.

The Peak Performance Center (2020) explained more detail about eight type of learners of this learning style preferences briefly.

Table 2. Learning Style Preferences

Type Learner	of Preferences
Sensing	Concrete thinking, practical, they are interested in facts and procedures
Intuitive	Conceptual thinking, innovative, interested in theories and meanings

Visual	Interested in visual representations such as pictures, diagrams, and flow charts
Verbal	More enjoy written and spoken explanations
Active	Interested in trying things out and group working
Reflective	More enjoy thinking things, working alone or with familiar one
Sequential	More interested learning in linear thinking, orderly, and step by step
Global	More interested learning in holistic thinking, system thinkers, and large leaps

Mostly it is believed that different students learning style has different English proficiency in each skill. For instance, students whose auditory learning style have good ability in listening skill (Kartika, Sukirlan, & Suka, 2014). It is also applied for a visual learner with reading comprehension Helena (2017) and kinesthetic learner with a structure mastery. In this research, the researcher use Odessa learning style inventory to know the different learning style among students.

Some reasons conducting this research are caused by some studies mention that students' proficiency in each skill depend on their learning style such as the research entitled *Correlation between Students Learning Styles and Their Learning Achievement* (Aboe, 2018). Aboe (2018) mentioned that the finding was significant correlation (16%) between student learning styles toward their academic achievement. It could be confirmed that learning style had positive influence for learning instruction.

On the other hand, there are also some researches mention that whatever student's learning style, there is no significant different in their English proficiency such as on the research entitled *Learning Style and University Students' Language Proficiency in Indonesia* (Yufrizal, 2011). In this study, the result was although statistical analysis proves that there was no significant influence of learning styles on students' scores on TOEFL. However, there is a proper place of learning styles in the second and foreign language, for example, it could help

teachers prepare learning topic that suited to students' learning style preference. It could be used to guide teachers in deciding what kind of teaching approach that must use to teach students whose different learning style.

English proficiency is the degree of ability using a language. According to Caromawati (2017) English proficiency is measured with a test, TOEFL PBT. Manoj (2018) stated that the paper-based TOEFL measures listening, structure and written expression, and reading comprehension. English proficiency skill that are tested in TOEFL Paper-Based Test are listening, structure and written expression, and reading comprehension.

Another research is "*Learning Styles and English Proficiency of Undergraduate EFL Students at One State Islamic University in Sumatera*, (Marzulina, 2019). The result of the study showed that this study did not provide significant correlation among auditory and kinesthetic learning style toward English proficiency of EFL students. Furthermore, there is significant correlation between visual learning style students on their English proficiency (18.5%).

However, this research must be conducted is caused the studies that stated above was only scoring students' proficiency by only taking TOEFL final score. TOEFL is the most often test to measure the ability a person in use and understand English as a language introductory in the process at higher levels of education.

Lobo (2016) stated that there are two kinds of TOEFL. Those are TOEFL PBT and TOEFL iBT. The first kind measures listening, structure and written expression, and reading comprehension. While another test is similar to IELTS. It is only different in score scales. The scores range is from 0 to 30 for each section and 0 to 120 for the total test. The total test score is the sum of the four sections.

There are related previous studies to verify the authenticity of this research. Here, the researcher sums some previous studies which can be the guidelines for the researcher in

administering the current one and revealing the way this study is modified from the previous ones.

First study was conducted by Roswita M. Aboe from Khairun University in 2018 entitled *Correlation between Students Learning Styles and Their Learning Achievement*. The research was conducted in Khairun University with 75 participants, the findings were there is significant correlation between student learning styles toward their academic achievement. It could be confirmed that learning style had positive influence for learning instruction.

Second study has been written by Lloyd Holiday and Hery Yufrizal from Lampung University, Indonesia in 2011 entitled "*Learning Style and University Students' Language Proficiency in Indonesia*". This study was conducted in Lampung University in Indonesia. Participants consisted of 136 students using a cross-sectional study. Although statistical analysis proves that there was no significant influence of learning styles on students' scores on TOEFL, there is a proper place of learning styles in the second and foreign language, for example, it can help teachers prepare learning topic that suited to students' learning style preference.

The last study is entitled "*Learning Styles and English Proficiency of Undergraduate EFL Students at One State Islamic University in Sumatera, Indonesia*" conducted by Lenny Marzulina, Nova Lingga Pitaloka, and Aren Dwi Yolanda (2019), the two first students are students of State Islamic University of Raden Fatah, Palembang and the last one is an English private Teacher at Palembang South Sumatera 2019. The result of the study showed the study did not provide significant correlation between kinesthetic learning style and English proficiency of EFL students. Besides, there was also a significant influence of visual learning style on English proficiency with 18.5% contributions.

Those previous studies are used as references and supported a lot to conduct this study. This study will be discussing about revealing the differential to the learning style and students'

English proficiency. Some differences appear between this study and the previous ones were obviously the method, kind of variables, and grade of the participants. However, they have several nearly similar problems and clarifications to solve the issues.

This research was conducted by breaking down students' proficiency score in more detail, such as listening mastery score, reading comprehension score, and structure mastery score to make it easier correlated with the students' learning styles. It hopefully gives different result on this research.

METHOD

In this paper quantitative research is used with Ex-Post Facto Design. According to Widarto (2013) the design is a research conducted after an event that happens. Ex-Post Facto research aims to figure out the reason that allows the behavioral, symptoms or phenomenon change caused by an event, behavior or something that cause the independent variables changes as a whole has happened. It has similarity to experimental research that asses the hypothesis, but the design in this research does not give special treatments since the variable cannot be manipulated.

The population of this research the fifth-grade of English department in University of Islam Malang in participating the research. From the population, the researcher took the sample from a certain population, there is process called sampling. This research used cluster sampling classified as the process of taking sample. Thus, in this research, the sample were the 5C and 5D Class year of 2017 which consists of 48 students at University of Islam Malang.

In this paper, there are independent and dependent variable. The independent variable is Learning Style (X) that break down into three types: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. The dependent variables are Listening (Y^1), Structure (Y^2), and Reading Comprehension (Y^3) skills in TOEFL PBT.

Table 3. Variables used in This Study

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Learning Style (X)	Listening (Y ¹)
	Structure (Y ²)
	Reading Comprehension (Y ³)

The research instruments in this research are learning style questionnaire and TOEFL PBT that was used. Learning style questionnaire that is used adapting from Odessa College Students Success Center to divide students' learning style as independent variable (X). It is translated into Bahasa Indonesia in order to avoid misunderstanding the content of learning style questionnaire when conducting the collecting data in the class. The questionnaire consists of 24 statements to identify students learning style preference, 8 items for each Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic learning styles. Each item has three choice scales; often, sometimes, and seldom. Often choice has 5 points, sometimes has 3 points, and seldom only has 1 point. The point in each statement is added to obtain the total score that define what students' learning style preference.

English Proficiency was the students' competence in English Proficiency which was measured by using English Proficiency Level of the students was measured by using Diagnostic Pretest. The data were collected from TOEFL PBT. It consisted of 140 questions. Students' result of TOEFL divided into 3 sections: first section was listening consisting of 50 questions, second section was structure consisting of 40 questions, and the last section was reading section consisting of 50 questions. The allotment time is about 2 hours for completing the test.

Odesa Learning Style Questionnaire is validated through a survey diagnostic tool, *Gizmo Knight* (2016) confirming whether valid and reliable the learning style questionnaire which is utilized is one of step to know the suitable of a questionnaire for the study. The researcher selected the Odessa Learning Style as learning styles instrument and also

translated into Bahasa Indonesia, not in original language, English. For this reason, the researcher had to check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Since, according to Griffe (2001) stated that the instrument which is translated into other languages has to recheck and retest the validity and reliability. The validity test technique utilized *Bivariate Pearson*. This technique is also stated as Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

Table 4. Result of Visual Items Validity Test

Item	2	3	7	10	14	16	19	22	
Visual	Pearson Correlation	.449**	.427**	.516**	.446**	.404**	.379**	.505**	.499**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.002	.000	.001	.004	.008	.000	.000
	N	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48

Table 5. Result of Auditory Items Validity Test

Item	1	5	8	11	13	18	21	24	
Auditory	Pearson Correlation	.399**	.404**	.548**	.326*	.437**	.671**	.585**	.535**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.004	.000	.024	.002	.000	.000	.000
	N	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48

Table 6. Result of Kinesthetic Items Validity Test

Item	4	6	9	12	15	17	20	23	
Kinesthetic	Pearson Correlation	.339*	.474**	.471**	.605**	.484**	.518**	.537**	.456**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	.001	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001
	N	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	48

**

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Validity of each items is showed in Pearson Correlation columns. Based on *r*-table, the minimum of Pearson Correlation score is 0.284 involve 48 participants (N) with significance level 0.05. It is marked by * or ** in each Pearson Correlation column. Based on validity tables above, it stated that the questionnaire is valid.

Table 7. Result of Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.633	24

Based on *Reliability Statistics* output above, it is reported that the score of *Cronbach's Alpha* is 0.633. If the result follows Widiyanto's rule, the score is compared with *r*-table that involve 48 participants (N) on significance level 0.05. It is found the *r*-table is 0.284. It means that the questionnaire is reliable. If the result follows Sujarweni's pattern, since the score of *Cronbach's Alpha* >0.60, the questionnaire is also reliable to use.

The researcher chose 2 classes from the fifth semester for the sample. After getting lecturer permission who handled 2 classes stated before, a room of P2BA was booked for conducting data collection for 2 classes in a day. The first class is 5C which consist of 25 students. It is administered at 8.00 am - 10.05 am. While second one was 5D which consist of 23 students, administering at 10.20 am - 12.25 pm.

The first step was filling the questionnaire. While students are done it, the researcher explained the items of questionnaire statement one by one to make sure that the participant understand the meaning well. Another step was giving Test of English Foreigner Language (TOEFL) Paper Based Test to the students with divided time allotment: 35 minutes for Listening Section, 25 minutes for Structure and Written Expression Section, and 55 minutes for Reading Section.

The data of questionnaire was calculated manually to get scores that would be as a reference to determine students' learning styles. Based on Odessa Learning Style scoring, students who get high score in Visual items, it means the students' learning style is Visual. It is also valid for Auditory and Kinesthetic items.

The data of English Proficiency test were calculated manually by TOEFL's scoring to know the students' score of each skill: Listening, Structure mastery, and Reading. The data were analyzed by comparing the students' mean's score of learning style preference and each skills of English proficiency scores based on the learning style questionnaire and TOEFL. The data defined whether the significant differences happened in the result of test. Analyzing the data utilized one-way ANOVA on IBM SPSS Statistic 25. The researcher also provided a nonparametric test which was Kruskal-Wallis Test. It was used as alternative way because the assumptions of one-way ANOVA were not met Ghoojani (2016)

RESULTS

Students' Learning Style Questionnaire Result

The result of the shared questionnaire was Visual learner are 28 students, auditory learner are 15 students, and Kinesthetic learner are 5 students. The table version was made to make easy drawing the result as follows:

Table 8. The Result of Students Learning Style Questionnaire

Learning Style	Total
Visual	28
Auditory	15
Kinesthetic	5

Description of the Data

Table 9. The Result of Descriptive

		Descriptives	
		N	Mean
LISTENING	VISUAL	28	47.61
	AUDITORY	15	45.40
	KINESTHETIC	5	47.40
	Total	48	46.90
STRUCTURE	VISUAL	28	47.29
	AUDITORY	15	47.13
	KINESTHETIC	5	44.60
	Total	48	46.96

	VISUAL	28	43.46
READING COMPREHENSION	AUDITORY	15	43.13
	KINESTHETIC	5	43.20
	Total	48	43.33

From the table 9, it showed that students who have visual learning style has mean score 47.61 in Listening; 47.29 in Structure; and 43.46 in Reading Comprehension. Auditory learning style students has mean score 45.40 in Listening; 47.13 in Structure; and 43.13 in Reading Comprehension. The last learning style students, Kinesthetic, has mean score 47.40 in Listening; 44.60 in Structure; and 43.20 in Reading Comprehension.

Observing the mean of the variables did not lead the researcher to conclude whether the result was significant. It was needed analyzing the result based on the data and testing the hypothesis so that the researcher could knew the exact result. The data analyzed by one-way ANOVA when the assumptions were met. While nonparametric test, Kruskal-Wallis, used when the data was not distributed normal and homogenous. Therefore, the researcher needed to do the normality and homogeneity test on the data.

Result of Homogeneity Test

Table 10. The Result of Listening Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances		
		Sig.
LISTENING	Based on trimmed mean	.088

According to the table above, the result of variances homogeneity test revealed that among of variances are same (sig-value = listening is 0.088) so that one-way ANOVA test is valid to continue the test for finding out the F and significant value.

Table 11. The Result of Structure Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances		
		Sig.
STRUCTURE	Based on trimmed mean	.052

According to the table above, the result of variances homogeneity test revealed that among of variances are same (sig-value = Structure is 0.052). So one-way ANOVA test was valid to continue the test for finding out the F and significant value.

Table 12. The Result of Reading Comprehension Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances		
		Sig.
READING COMPREHENSION	Based on trimmed mean	.720

According to the table above, the result of variances homogeneity test revealed that among of variances are same (sig-value = Reading Comprehension is 0.720). In spite of homogenous data, one-way ANOVA test could not be continued since the data was not normal distributed. So that a nonparametric test, Kruskal-Wallis for this problem was used.

Result of One-Way ANOVA Test

Table 13. One-Way ANOVA Listening Test

ANOVA					
LISTENING					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	49.001	2	24.500	.868	.427
Within Groups	1269.479	45	28.211		
Total	1318.479	47			

Based on the table 13, the calculation from one-way ANOVA analysis to compare mean score of English Proficiency and students' learning style preference. Listening mean score from between groups obtains F-Value 0.868 and sig. Value 0.427. The significant value according to between groups is 0.427 which is more than 0.05 means the null hypothesis is accepted. It is clearly stated that the result is not significant.

Table 14. One-Way ANOVA Structure Test

ANOVA					
STRUCTURE					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

Between Groups	31.269	2	15.635	.254	.777
Within Groups	2774.648	45	61.659		
Total	2805.917	47			

Based on the table 14, the calculation from one-way ANOVA analysis to compare mean score of English Proficiency and students' learning style preference. Structure mean score from between groups obtains F-Value 0.245 and sig. Value 0.777. The significant value according to structure between groups is 0.777s which is more than 0.05 means the null hypothesis is accepted. It is clearly stated that the result is not significant.

Result of Kruskal-Wallis Test

Table 15. Kruskal-Wallis Reading Comprehension Test

Hypothesis Test Summary			
Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1 The distribution of Reading Comprehension is the same across categories of LEARNING STYLE	Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test	.416	Retain the null hypothesis

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The Significance level is .05.

Based on the table 15, the calculation from Kruskal-Wallis Test, the significant value according to reading comprehension is 0.416 which is more than 0.05 means the null hypothesis is accepted. It is clearly stated that the result is not significant.

DISCUSSION

The research findings which had been analyzed by using one-way ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis test leads the researcher to acknowledge that there is no significant difference between students' learning style and difference in English Proficiency. It means that the research problem has found the answer, that students' difference in listening, structure mastery, and reading comprehension are not distinguished by students whose learning styles are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. It is concluded that there is no significant difference between students' English Proficiency and their learning style.

Holiday and Yufrizal (2011) stated that the result is learners' learning styles did not have any significant correlations with their mastery of the language components and skills. In this case the researcher measures students' learning style only with three types of them and statistical analyses revealed that the different English proficiency mastery is not differentiated significantly by different learning style preference. The researchers stated there are other factors that more influenced to learning style and English proficiency mastery such as attitude, motivation, and environment. This study supports the researcher's finding that there is no significant difference in the result.

Furthermore, the findings of this study also supported by Marzulina, Pitaloka, and Yolanda (2019) as their study conducted shows that some of learning style preference do not have significant difference toward students English Proficiency mastery. In this study, the researchers stated that students are most interested learning by their own learning style. But the result showed there is no significant difference between learning style and their English Proficiency mastery. Fortunately, this study administered by Marzulina, Pitaloka, and Yolanda supported the recent study of the researcher, however; different students' learning style does not have significant difference on their English Proficiency mastery, because the score shows there is no significant difference between them.

Besides, the finding of this research is contradiction with the result of Aboe's study (2018). She stated that there is significant correlation of 16% between student learning styles toward their academic achievement. Visual and Auditory type have significant effect, 44% of influence for visual type and 40% of influence for auditory type. While the effect of kinesthetic type only 1% of influence towards students' achievement. From this data, the teacher can integrate their method in learning. It could be confirmed that learning style had positive influence for learning instruction

Based on two previous studies that has same result with this finding research, it is mentioned that learning style is not one and only factor influenced students' English proficiency. There is attitude, motivation, and environment. Those factors might be the reason the result is not significant.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and the results of the studies, some conclusions could be drawn; (1) there was no significant difference in listening mastery among students whose learning styles are visual, auditory and kinesthetic, (2) there was no significant difference in structure mastery among students whose learning styles are visual, auditory and kinesthetic, (3) there was no significant difference in reading comprehension among students whose learning styles are visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

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