

**THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE PREFERRED BY  
BASIC LISTENING CLASSES OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT  
UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG**

**Thesis**

*Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain Bachelor of  
Education in English Language Education Program*



**By**

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### **Abstract**

The variation of students in acquiring and understanding knowledge is influenced by learning styles. But, based on the observation, the students are less aware of their preferences in learning styles. This research was conducted to analyze the learning styles preferred by students in the Basic Listening classes of English Department, Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP). This descriptive research used a quantitative descriptive method. The research instrument was questionnaire. There were 2 questionnaires used in this research. First VARK questionnaire (Version 7.8) designed by Fleming. VARK questionnaire represented visual (V), aural (A), read/write (R), and kinaesthetic (K). The second questionnaire was Index of Learning Styles (ILS) designed by Richard M. Felder and Barbara A. Soloman in 1997. This questionnaire was categorized into four dimensions, namely active or reflective, visual or verbal, sensitivity or intuition, and sequential or global. The population of this research was the students in Basic Listening Classes of English Department. The sample was 65 students from two classes, namely the K3 and K5 basic listening classes by using cluster sampling. The results of this study indicate that students in class K3 and K5 have varied learning styles based on the VARK questionnaire, which means that students in the class can follow the learning process well with methods that lead to visual, auditory, read/write, and kinesthetic. Then, based on the ILS questionnaire, it shows that students in class K3 and K5 tend to use visual learning style, which means that the majority of them enjoy in learning process by the assistance of pictures, charts, and videos because they can comprehend the material better.

Key words: *learning style, basic listening*

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### **Abstrak**

Variasi siswa dalam memperoleh dan memahami pengetahuan dipengaruhi oleh gaya belajar. Namun berdasarkan observasi, siswa kurang mengetahui preferensi mereka sendiri dalam gaya belajar. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk menganalisis gaya belajar yang disukai oleh siswa di kelas menyimak dasar di jurusan bahasa Inggris, Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP). Penelitian deskriptif ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif. Instrumen penelitian ini adalah kuesioner. Ada 2 kuesioner yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Pertama yaitu kuesioner VARK (Versi 7.8) yang dirancang oleh Fleming. Kuesioner VARK mewakili visual (V), aural (A), baca / tulis (R), dan kinestetik (K). Kuesioner kedua adalah Index of Learning Styles (ILS) yang dirancang oleh Richard M. Felder dan Barbara A. Soloman pada tahun 1997. Kuesioner ini dikategorikan ke dalam empat dimensi, yaitu aktif atau reflektif, visual atau verbal, sensitivitas atau intuisi, dan berurutan atau global. Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa Kelas Mendengarkan Dasar Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Sampel penelitian adalah 65 siswa dari dua kelas yaitu kelas menyimak dasar K3 dan K5 dengan menggunakan cluster sampling. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas K3 dan K5 memiliki gaya belajar yang bervariasi berdasarkan angket VARK, artinya siswa di kelas tersebut dapat mengikuti proses pembelajaran dengan baik dengan metode yang mengarah pada visual, auditory, read / write, dan kinestetik. Kemudian berdasarkan angket ILS terlihat bahwa siswa kelas K3 dan K5 cenderung menggunakan gaya belajar visual yang artinya sebagian besar dari mereka paling menikmati proses belajar dengan bantuan gambar, grafik, dan video karena mereka dapat memahami dengan baik. materi lebih baik.

Kata kunci: *gaya belajar, menyimak dasar*

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The Researcher

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Problem**

In English, there are four skills that must be mastered by students, namely listening, reading, writing, and speaking. From those four skills, listening skills are the first step that must be learned and mastered. Before students understand and start to speak, they must hear sounds, voices and words. Listening skill is the skill that is different from other language skills. This skill is very complex because there are mental processes that are not visible. The students must be able to distinguish between sounds, understand the vocabulary and structure of the words, interpret the expected stresses and intentions and try to find the meaning of what the speaker is saying. In other words, it can be said that listening is a challenge for students. They need to have good listening skill because in teaching and learning process, the teacher dominantly uses English to explain material and conduct discussions.

As stated by Nunan (1998) listening is a basic skill in language learning. Without listening skill, the students will never learn to communicate effectively. According to Hinchey (2013, p. 1) listening is the dominant activity (40%) in daily communication, 35 % for speaking, 16 % for reading, and 9 % on writing. In other words, communication will not run well if it is not supported by good ability in listening.

According to Underwood (1990), in the listening process, the students will pay attention and try to get the meaning of something they hear. The students must be able to understand what the speakers mean when they use certain words in certain ways and at certain occasions in order to be successful in the listening process. Furthermore, the listening process is not only providing information to gain knowledge but also the way to understand information that has been conveyed orally. To know how the way the students perceive the information in listening class, it has to be analyzed through the learning style preferences.

Learning style is the way the students perceive, interact with, and respond toward the learning environment based on the cognitive, affective, and psychological traits as stated by Gantasala and Gantasala (2009, p. 170). It has been known that students' learning styles are different for each person because of their biological and psychological differences in understanding their study. Pask (1988) showed more than three-fifths of one's learning styles are biologically imposed. It is related with the term of factors, specifically connected to the characteristics of students stated by Miller (2001). According to Miller (2001, p.3) the characteristics of the students are very varied in terms of age, culture, level of mentality preparedness, intelligence, and psychological conditions, which lead to differences in individual.

Experts assert that in the learning process, most students enjoy the listening process based on their preferred learning style. In the learning process, learning styles

are the important component. Each student has their own unique intelligence and strengths. It means that each student is different from one another in the way they learn. Some students are able to process the information best through viewing or reading charts, diagrams, or written text. In the other sides, some other students are able to process information well through experience or touching, working, and movement. Several recent studies have shown that to help motivating the students in the learning process, there must be a match between learning and teaching styles because learning style is one part of the learning process that helps determine how and how well students learn.

Although learning style is an important thing in the teaching and learning process, most students and lecturers are not aware of the learning style preferences (Honey & Mumford, 1992). Due to the lack of awareness about learning style, it causes the diminution on the interest of the students to learn and affect their learning progress. Therefore, students must know their learning style preferences so that lecturers can choose strategies, methods, teaching techniques, and teaching materials that are appropriate with the variety of student learning styles to achieve learning goals. If the lecturer understands and considers the characteristics and learning styles of students, the quality of teaching and learning process can be improved as stated by Adnan & Marlina (2017, p. 236). The awareness about learning styles will give more positive things that can be obtained such as a pleasant learning environment, students' motivation, and interest in learning.

In connection with the learning style research, there have been many researchers who have done their research related with that. The first research was done by Tai (2011). The aim of this study was to explore what learning styles of adult EFL students (School of Continuing Education) prefer in order to better understand what impact and shape the language learning process and to help determine to design curriculum and instruction for classroom practice for higher achievement and increased motivation for learning. In the same year, Srijongjai (2011) conducted a research about learning styles of Thai English major students in an EFL writing class. The objectives of the study were to identify the learning styles of these students and to see whether there were significant differences of their learning styles based on their achievement levels in their English writing course.

The next research was done by Shi (2012). This research aimed to see the effect of learning styles on learning strategy use by EFL learners. In the same year, Tabatabaieia and Mashayekhib (2012) conducted a research about the relationship between EFL learners' learning styles and their L2 achievement. This research aimed to determine if there are significant differences in learning styles of Iranian pre-university EFL learners across different levels of proficiency, majors and genders.

Two years later, Faridah (2014) had researched about the relationship between students' learning style and their achievement in listening skill. In the next year, a research was done by Tuan (2015). This research was conducted to examine EFL

students' preferred learning styles, and linkages between learning style preferences and individual attributes such as fields of study, length of tertiary study, gender, age, learning language experience, and English proficiency level. In the same year, Ababneh (2015) conducted a research about learning styles and preferences of Jordanian EFL graduate students. Then, there is Nurul (2015). Her research focused on investigating the learning styles the low achiever students use in structure class at English Department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

In the next year, there is a research by Tale (2016). The focus of the study was to systematically uncover the variegated learning styles of a selected group of EFL learners, with the intention to develop effective tools for exceptional teaching and attainment of life-long learning. Then, a research was done by Parnrod, Runnapakb, Khaonoonac, and Intapand (2017). This study aim to investigate the students' learning styles and exploring their learning strategies which were used to succeed in learning language skills, listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. In 2018, there was Prystiananta which investigated about the students' learning styles of Accounting Program of AAK PGRI Jember in learning English as Foreign Language. The last research was done by Wulandari, et.al (2019) which studied about the learning styles used in listening CLASS on 5<sup>th</sup> semester students in English Language Education Program Bengkulu University in academic year 2018/2019. From several previous researches above, there are no any researchers who researched about learning styles in basic listening skills and also the researchers do

not analyze the learning style based on VARK (Version 7.8) and ILS. In this study, researcher found students' learning style preferences using two questionnaires, namely the VARK Questionnaire (Version 7.8) and the Index of Learning Style (ILS).

The reason for choosing students in basic listening class in 2019 is because they are still classified as freshman. Learning English as a second language is a challenge for every student including the English Department students. In their first academic year as a student who studies English as a second language, they must experience a process of adaptation to everything including the learning styles that they preferred. Moreover, the learning and teaching process in high school is very different from the learning and teaching process in college. Therefore, the researcher intended to see the preference of learning style by the students who were taking the basic listening course.

## **B. Identification of the Problem**

Concerning the background of the problem above, each student has a different way in learning process. They have their own strengths and varied intelligence. However, not many students and lecturers are aware of the variations in learning styles. Lack of awareness of learning styles causes lecturers only use one method and strategy during the learning and teaching process. This gives an impact to students who will feel less interested and motivated to keep up in the learning process.

Due to these problems mostly happen in listening class, therefore, the researcher wanted to know the learning style that preferred by the students who took basic listening in class 2019 of English Department especially in English language study program at Universitas Negeri Padang.

### **C. Limitation of the Problem**

Based on the identification of the problems, this research only focused to analyze the learning styles preferred by basic listening class students in 2019 of English Department at Universitas Negeri Padang.

### **D. Formulation of the Problem**

Related to the focus of the research above, the researcher formulated the problem as “In what term does the researcher analyze the way the students learn in basic listening class batch 2019 of English Department at Universitas Negeri Padang?  
“

### **E. Research Questions**

Based on the explanation above, a problem might be analyzed in this research. The research question is specified in the form of a question as stated below:

“What is the type of students learning styles in basic listening class in 2019 of the English Department at Universitas Negeri Padang according to VARK

questionnaire (Version 7.8) and Index of Learning Styles (ILS) Learning Style Questionnaire?”

#### **F. Purpose of the Research**

Related to the research question above, the purpose of this research is to find out the type of students learning styles in basic listening class in 2019 of the English Department at Universitas Negeri Padang.

#### **G. Significance of the Research**

The result of the study are expected to give contribution about learning styles in listening skill. The researcher hopes that it will give positive effect for the students and the lecturer to aware about the learning styles in listening skill. The lecturers are expected to choose several model questionnaires about learning styles to distribute to the students and the students are expected to understand the models of the learning styles

#### **H. Definition of Key Term**

1. Learning style: the way the students perceive, interact with, and respond toward the learning environment based on the cognitive, affective, and psychological traits.
2. Listening: the ability to receive and interpret messages in the communication process.

3. Basic listening: the first step to learn about listening skill. Basic listening course filled with basic language knowledge, such as vocabulary, language structure, pronunciation, and other dialect components.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

#### **A. CONCLUSION**

Learning style is the way the students perceive, interact with, and respond toward the learning environment based on the cognitive, affective, and psychological traits. It has been known that students' learning styles are different for each person because of their biological and psychological differences in understanding their study. In the learning process, learning styles are the important component. Each student has their own unique intelligence and strengths. It means that each student is different from one another in the way they learn. Some students are able to process the information best through viewing or reading charts, diagrams, or written text. In the other sides, some other students are able to process information well through experience or touching, working, and movement. Several recent studies have shown that to help motivating the students in the learning process, there must be a match between learning and teaching styles because learning style is one part of the learning process that helps determine how and how well students learn.

Although learning style is an important thing in the teaching and learning process, most students and lecturers are not aware of the learning style preferences (Honey & Mumford, 1992). Due to the lack of awareness about learning style, it causes the diminution on the interest of the students to learn and affect their learning progress. Therefore, students must know their learning style preferences so that lecturers can

choose strategies, methods, teaching techniques, and teaching materials that are appropriate with the variety of student learning styles to achieve learning goals. If the lecturer understands and considers the characteristics and learning styles of students, the quality of teaching and learning process can be improved. The awareness about learning styles will give more positive things that can be obtained such as a pleasant learning environment, students' motivation, and interest in learning.

## **B. SUGGESTION**

Based on the conclusion and the implication above, there are some points that can be suggested. The first is the students have to know their preferences in learning styles to help themselves to achieve the goals of learning easily. The second is the lecturer must know the learning styles of their students in order to implement the appropriate teaching methods and strategies according to the learning style preferences of the students to achieve more effective way learning. Lastly, it is suggested to the next researchers to conduct the research that discusses about the students' learning styles based on behavior, learning styles based on the ability of students as well as learning styles based on the gender in basic listening class.

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