

**LEARNING STYLES AND ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK FACULTY STUDENTS  
AT LANGUAGE CENTER OF SUSKA ISLAMIC STATE  
UNIVERSITY RIAU**

**THESIS**



**By**

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*This thesis is submitted to fulfill one of the requirements to obtain a degree in  
Master of Education*

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION SECTION  
LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM  
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2014**

## **ABSTRAK**

**Erna Nawir. 2014. Gaya Belajar dan Hasil Belajar Mahasiswa Jurusan Pertanian dan Peternakan di Pusat Bahasa Universitas Islam Negeri SUSKA Riau. Tesis. Program Paska Sarjana. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

Gaya belajar dipercaya berpengaruh terhadap hasil belajar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui gaya belajar yang paling dominan dimiliki dan hasil belajar Bahasa Inggris mahasiswa Fakultas Pertanian dan Peternakan di Pusat Bahasa di Universitas Islam Negeri SUSKA Riau. Berdasarkan teori, perseptual adalah gaya belajar yang umum digunakan dalam pembelajaran bahasa yang terdiri dari visual, auditori, taktil, kinestetik, kelompok, dan individual, yang diidentifikasi untuk dapat memberikan penyelesaian alternatif terhadap masalah yang timbul dari ketidaksesuaian antara gaya belajar mahasiswa dan cara mengajar dosen.

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif dengan melibatkan 29 mahasiswa kelas IIA pada Fakultas Pertanian dan Peternakan tahun akademik 2012/2013 sebagai subjek. Angket dan tes digunakan. Teknik analisa data diawali dengan penghitungan skor dari tiap gaya belajar dari Reid dan hasil belajar Bahasa Inggris mahasiswa. Data analisis kemudian diinterpretasikan, dan menjadi temuan penelitian.

Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat 23 mahasiswa (dari 29) atau 79.3% bergaya belajar kinestetik dengan persentase tertinggi diantara kelima gaya belajar yang lain (auditori, taktil, visual, grup, dan individual secara berurutan). Berdasarkan pencapaian Bahasa Inggris mereka, ditemukan juga bahwa terdapat 3 mahasiswa (dari 4) atau 75% bernilai tinggi bergaya belajar kinestetik dan auditori, 15 mahasiswa (dari 20) atau 75% bernilai sedang memiliki kinestetik dan taktil, dan 5 mahasiswa (dari 5) atau 100% bernilai rendah memiliki kinestetik dan gaya berkelompok. Dengan demikian dapat disimpulkan bahwa mahasiswa fakultas Pertanian dan Peternakan pada Pusat Bahasa di UIN SUSKA Riau, selain bergaya belajar yang sangat dominan pada kinestetik, mereka juga memiliki satu gaya belajar berdampingan dominan yang lain pada tiap kelompok.

## ABSTRACT

**Erna Nawir. 2014. Learning Styles and English Achievement of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty Students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau. Thesis. Graduate Program. State University of Padang.**

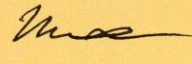
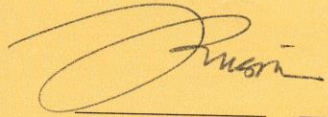
Learning styles are believed to affect learning achievement. This research aims to find out the most preferred learning style and English achievement of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau. Based on the theory, perceptual as the commonly proposed learning style in language learning consists of visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, group, and individual, are identified to propose an alternative solution to the problem of mismatching between students' preferred style and English lecturers' way of teaching.

This research is a descriptive quantitative research which involving 29 students of class IIA at Agriculture and Livestock Faculty in 2012/2013 Academic year as the subject. Questionnaire and test were used. The data were analyzed through Reid's calculation of the score of each style and the score of the English achievement of the students. Data analysis was interpreted, and the research finding was gained.

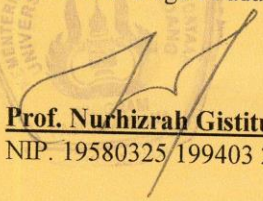
The finding of the research shows that there are 23 students or 79.3% (from 29) mostly prefer kinesthetic learning style as the highest percentage among the other five styles (auditoria, tactile, visual, group, and individual sequentially). It also shows that related to their English achievement, 3 high-scored students or 75% (from 4) possess kinesthetic and auditoria, 15 medium-scored students or 75% (from 20) possess tactile and kinesthetic and 5 low-scored students or 100% (from 5) possess kinesthetic and group style. In conclusion, the students do not only prefer to kinesthetic learning style, but they also have one other dominant contiguous style for each group.

## PERSETUJUAN AKHIR TESIS

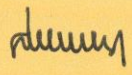
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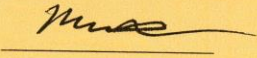
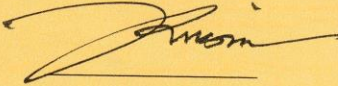
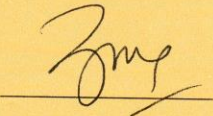

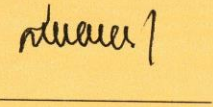
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Saya yang Menyatakan

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The writer

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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

There are many efforts in improving the quality of education. One of the efforts is by paying attention to the students. Paying attention to them means that increasing the quality of their learning. Each student has his own uniqueness in learning. He has his own characteristics that make him different from other students. The characteristics can be in motivation, intelligence, interest, attitude, and even in their way of learning or also called as learning style.

Nowadays, in language learning and teaching especially in foreign language, awareness of personal difference, particularly learning style is the other important factor in second language acquisition beside language skill and language content concerning students' academic success. A well designed teaching plan will not be complete nor effective if the teacher does not attach to the equal importance to umbrella of concept of individual differences in teaching and learning process. The main reason is because learning problem is not actually and frequently related to the difficulty of a subject matter but rather than to the type and level of the cognitive process within individual required to learn the material (Erton, 2010:115).

Eventhough, there are some well-known dimensions of learning style that are caused by the scope and the depths of the way of the theorists formulate the learning style, but for the second language learner, perceptions are the key to the

verbal and visual cues of a new system of communication (Messick in Rossi, 1989:14). This kind of learning style is commonly proposed in English Foreign Language (EFL) learning (Djiwandono, 2010:3; Khamkhien, 2012:63; Vaseghi, 2012:441). The learning style proposed by Reid is also called as Perceptual Learning Style.

Perceptual learning styles refer to the variation exists among learners in using one sense or more to understand, organize and retain new information or knowledge (Reid; 1987:89). The perceptual learning style has six (6) dimensions, namely visual learning style, auditoria learning style, tactile learning style, kinesthetic learning style, group learning style, and individual learning style.

The awareness of student's learning style is very important in learning process since it will influence students' learning achievement. Uno (2008:18) asserts that most of the learning process in class is still held by the assumption that each student is identical. It means that the teacher does not pay attention to the uniqueness of student learning style. This statement supports the fact that the lecturers of Language Center are facing difficulty in choosing the suitable teaching technique for the students.

A learning problem seems to occur in Language Center of Islamic State University SUSKA RIAU where the researcher has been teaching for more than two years. The problem is reflected from the result of the students' English learning achievement. The researcher found from the data of the Language Center of all the students' grade recapitulation, the most significant students who got



more low score on their language learning achievement, especially in English, is the student of Agriculture and Livestock faculty.

In academic year of 2011/2012, the average score of the students in the first semester was 46.1, in the second semester was 59.7, and in the third semester was 31.5. Based on the researcher's interview with the lecturers, she found that the lecturers face difficulty or are confused of choosing the suitable and appropriate teaching method in teaching the students.

The problem is caused by their unawareness of the students' way of learning. The identification of their way of learning is the key of 'best-fit pedagogy' of the design of curriculum and instruction (Rayner in Mortimore, 2007:29). The lecturers who are not aware of the uniqueness of students' learning style will provide uncomfortable learning environment for most of the students and they will make the students frustration in learning. A student who frustates in learning will not be able to achieve maximum learning results, for example in his learning achievement.

Learning style and learning achievement are interrelated. If the learning styles are fixed, the teacher will be able to accomodate the students more easily by tapping into their preference in learning style in a way that is compatible with each student to process information in learning process. Once the students are taught in the elm of their learning style, the learning process will be more effective, both students and teacher, which ultimately determine students' learning achievement.

Therefore, the researcher wanted to find out the learning style of students of Agriculture and Livestock faculty at Language Center and their preference in order to help the lecturers in finding and applying teaching method that matches with the students' need in learning English. And for that reason, the researcher conducted a research entitled "Learning Styles and English Achievement of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty Students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University of RIAU".

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

Teacher's unawareness of students' learning style is one among many factors that effect students' learning achievement. Students' learning style needs to be identified in order to help the students better in their English achievement.

Based on some theories, it is said that students' academic success, including in their learning achievement can be better if their way of learning can be identified. And by indentifying it, the lecturers will be able to find suitable teaching method for the students. This is also the reason for the researcher being interested in identifying the learning style of the students and their learning style related to their English achievement at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University of Riau.

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

Based on the identification above, the researcher limited the problem on the identification of the learning style of the students based on the perceptual

learning style as proposed by Reid and their learning style related to their English achievement in the second semester of academic year 2012/2013 at Language Center at SUSKA Islamic State University of Riau.

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

Based on the background, identification, and limitation of the problem stated above, the statement of the problem of this research is formulated as follows: “How is the learning style of grade of Agriculture and Livestock Students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau?”

#### **E. Research Questions**

In order to make the formulation of the problem more specific, the question above is developed into the following questions:

1. What is the most preferred learning style of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty Students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau?
2. How is the learning style of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty Students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau related to their English achievement ?

#### **F. Purposes of the Research**

The research has purposes as the following:

1. Finding out the most preferred learning style of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty Students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau.
2. Finding out the learning style of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty Students of Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University of Riau related to their English achievement.

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

The findings of this research are expected to give valuable contribution to:

1. Theoretically, it is expected that the findings will be as a contribution to the teaching English related to students' learning style and their achievement in English.
2. Practically, it is expected that the findings will make the lecturers of Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University of Riau to be more aware of the students' differences in the way of learning, and their learning strategy, so that the teaching technique and the instruction that they will apply to the students in learning process will match with the students' need in learning English. For the students, the findings are expected to make them recognize of their way of learning so that they can enhance their identified learning style and will lead them to their academic success.

## **H. Definition of the Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation about the topic of this research, it is necessary for the writer to define the following terms:

1. Learning style means the way of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty Students at Language Center registered in 2012/2013 in the second semester in learning English.
2. English achievement means the students' of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau in the second semester English mastery result.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND SUGGESTION**

#### **A. CONCLUSION**

From the research findings in the previous chapter, the researcher can draw some conclusions as below:

1. The most preferred learning style of Agriculture and Livestock Students at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University of Riau academic year 2012/2013.

This research had identified that there were six kinds of learning styles used by the students of Agriculture and Livestock at Language Center in learning English. They were visual learning style, auditory learning style, kinesthetic learning style, tactile learning style, group learning style and individual learning style.

There were five learning styles that the students used as their strong preferences. They chose kinesthetic learning style, auditoria learning style, tactile learning style, group learning style, and visual learning style. But the most preferred learning style of the students was kinesthetic learning style shown by the highest percentage of the students who preferred this type of learning style from all the rest of the learning styles used by the students.



2. The learning style of the students related to their English achievement of Agriculture and Livestock faculty at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University of Riau.

This research had also shown that, based on their English learning achievement score classification, the students with high, medium, and low possessed not only kinesthetic as their strongest preference, but also other preference for each group. Students with high score also prefer to auditoria learning style, students with medium score also prefer to tactile learning style, and students with low score also prefer to group learning style.

## **B. IMPLICATION**

The result of this research which was done at class II A students' of Agriculture and Livestock Faculty at Language Center of SUSKA Islamic State University Riau in academic year 2012/2013 have some implications dealing with the most preferred learning style of the students and their learning style related to their English achievement.

Firstly, by knowing the students' most preferred learning style, it has a major impact on how the students learn. There are some points that I would like to state concerning to the findings and to address to. The first point is by identifying the students' most preferred learning style, it is expected that Language Center would take some considerations in publishing English learning text book for the students and trying to arrange some provided

activities in the text book which will be more suitable, appropriate for the students based on their majors.

Secondly, the lecturers who are teaching students based on their majors are expected to find more suitable teaching strategies for the students, especially related to task-based, so that there will be no mismatch between the students' learning style and the lecturers' teaching strategies and the students' will be do much better in their academic achievement.

Thirdly, it is important to be put as a consideration that there are other factors that influence the students' English learning achievement such as the characteristics of the students in the term of interest, motivation, emotion, or personality. Those factors need to be noticed by the lecturers in order to have more effective learning process at Language Center.

And last but not least, it is important to give understanding to the students about the aim of learning English in Language Center so that they will be motivated to learn and be able to perform better academically.

### **C. SUGGESTION**

This research contributes some practical suggestions for the English lecturers. The writer first of all suggest that English lecturers, in their class, help identify their students' learning style preferences using Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference Survey (Questionnaire) before deciding which teaching technique they apply and learning strategies they propose. Because the questionnaire is self-scoring and has six categories, it is even

suggested that the lecturer ask the students to fill in, score, and finally identify their learning style preferences. Thus, the students will be aware of their strength of their strength and weaknesses and learning difficulty can be finally overcome.

Most importantly, after identifying the variety students' learning style preferences, whether a strong difference appear or not, teachers have to accept the variety that might occur. They should not judge that certain styles are better than another or best of all. Although significance difference according to gender, study programs and other aspects did not occur in this study, the lecturers are expected to bear in mind that their students learning styles were varied. So they adjust their teaching strategies to the students' styles.

A mismatch between students' learning styles and the lecturer's teaching strategies also is avoided. As explained before, it is not suggested to merely identify their learning style preferences without making further steps that is applying the right of teaching techniques. The researcher suggests that the lecturers apply more various ways of teaching to maintain the students' strength since most students have multiple major learning styles.

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