



SNAP TO READ

## INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE BY USING VAK MODEL

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### **Abstract:**

*This study was aimed to investigate students learning style of the second semester students of English Department of IAIN Batusangkar in 2017/2018 academic year. The design of this research was descriptive quantitative. In collecting the data, the researcher used questionnaires which was constructed according to the indicators gotten from the theories. Meanwhile, to see the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it was tried out to some selected respondents. In analysing the data, the researcher used SPSS 21 for descriptive analysis. Based on the data analysis, it was found two students tend to have visual learning style or 3,5%. Meanwhile, 39 students have auditory learning style 68,42% and 16 students have a tendency kineesthetic learning style 28,7%. It is also can be seen that most of students, 68,42%, have auditory learning style as the dominant learning style.*

**Keywords:** *Learning style, Visual, Kineesthetic, Auditory.*

Teaching and learning process whether at schools or universities aim to enable the students to absorb the lesson well. However, many students are still unsuccessful to study because they do not recognize their learning style. Learning style could be very supportive and essential to students to

become more focused on learning and as a result it can improve the process of learning. Identifying students learning style will enable students to determine their strengths and weaknesses and learn from them. Teachers or lecturers can integrate their teaching by identifying the learning styles of students, combining teaching style to learning style in doing difficult tasks, strengthening weaker learning styles through easier tasks and drill, and this will create more enjoyment for students in learning. Adopting visual-auditory-kinesthetic (VAK) learning style can provide a medium for self-knowledge and exploring opportunities in classrooms. It has been widely known that students possess different learning styles. Teachers or lecturers should be able to teach in the class and deliver the materials based on students learning style. Every student is unique and has his/her own learning style. By identifying students' learning style, the teachers can organize classroom to respond to their individual needs for quiet or sound, warm or cool temperatures, seating arrangement. On the other hand they can recognize the patterns in which people tend to concentrate best alone, with others, and so forth. In addition, the teacher becomes aware of the senses through which people remember difficult information most easily by speaking, hearing, seeing, manipulating, writing, or note taking or experiencing.

Learning style is a biologically and developmentally imposed set of personal characteristics that make the same teaching method effective for some students and ineffective for others. No learning style is either better or worse than another, since each style has similar intelligence ranges. Most students can master the same learning process; how they master it is determined by their individual style.

Based on the observation in the class, it was found that many students of English department in the second semester did not know their learning style. It was proven when the researcher's asked whether or not they recognize their learning style and most of them answered they did not know. According to Biggs (2001) if students recognize their learning style, they will be easy to catch the lessons and as a result will make them successful. In addition,

by knowing their style in learning, it will help them to be able to cope with their own problem. Therefore, to help students learning needs, the teacher need to teach many strategies as possible since the learning styles provide not only the students' comprehension of the learning process but also provide the students' own personality, including their strength and weakness. Considering students learning styles will improve students' overall learning results and motivation which will make them build positive attitude toward the language that they learned. The aims of using learning styles is to seek the best ways for both students to learn effectively and teachers to teach efficiently.

### **The Notion of Learning Style**

Learning style is the way and technique that the students use to learn and process information and knowledge. It helps students learn more faster and easier by selecting and using the appropriate learning style. Learning styles refer to the variations of students ability to accumulate as well as assimilate information. Basically, learning style is the method that best allows them to gather and use knowledge in a specific manner. Most experts agree that there are three basic learning styles. Each individual may possess a single style or could possess a combination of different learning styles. Moreover, DePorter and Hernacki (1992) state that a person's learning style is a combination of how he absorbs information and then organize and process the information. Learning styles shows how an individual in information processing with the aim to learn and apply. Vermunt (1992) uses the term learning style as a whole of the three domains, namely the process of cognition and affection of the material, mental models of learning and learning orientation.

Learning styles determine how to learn the easiest and find the right strategy to achieve the learning objectives have been determined. Thus, the learning style as one of the characteristics of learners theoretically influence on learning outcomes. Rassool GH & Rawaf S (2008) explains that to understand the learning styles of learners with good will can help teachers understand the shortcomings that occur in learners. Therefore, when

teachers know their students learning style, will make it easier for him to implement appropriate learning strategies. Brown (2000) claims that learning style as the manner in which individuals perceive and process information in learning situations. He then argues that learning style preference is one aspect of learning style, and refers to the choice of one learning situation or condition over another. Moreover, Murcia (2001) states that learning styles is an approach for helping students in acquiring a new language in learning process. To sum, Learning style is the way and technique that the students use to learn and process information and knowledge. It helps students learn more enjoyable and easier with selecting and using the appropriate learning style.

### **VAK Learning Style**

VAK learning style theories was firstly developed by Neil Fleming in 1987. Jensen and Nickelsen (2011) state that basically, learning styles are divided into three part (visual, auditory, kinesthetic). First is visual learners think in pictures and learn best in visual images. They depend on the teachers or facilitator's non-verbal cues such as body language to help with understanding. Sometimes, visual learners favour sitting in the front of the classroom Individuals who fall into this category typically learn through what they are able to see with their own eyes. Visual learners have a tendency to describe everything that they see in terms of appearances. These learners love visual aids such as photos, diagrams, maps and graphs. Visual learners frequently are good writers and will commonly perform quite well on written assignments. Second is auditory learner. The students with this style discover information through listening and interpret in information by the means of pitch, emphasis and speed. These individuals gain knowledge from reading out loud in the classroom and may not have a full understanding of information that is written. Auditory style (auditory learner) is learning style where learner or students are very good in listening. They tend to absorb information in a more efficient manner through sounds, music, discussions, teachings, etc. These individuals will be more likely to record lectures so that they can replay them at a later time for study purposes. The third is

kinesesthetic Learner. Students with this style 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 experience. They often find it difficult to keep still and need regular breaks in classroom activities. Kinesesthetic learner' prefers to learn through movement and is best to memorize the information by linking the movement.

### **Importance of Identifying Learning style in Learning**

Learning style has an important place in the lives of individuals. According to Biggs (2001) once students know their learning style, they will integrate it in the process of learning and finally they will be able to learn more easily and fastly. Another benefits of recognizing students learning style is that it will help the student to become an effective problem solver. The more successful the individual is at solving the problems s/he faces, the more control s/he will take over his/her own life.

It is essential that individuals receive education in areas suitable for their learning styles. A person educated in an area having no relationship to his/her learning style may lack of confidence and s/he may be less successful; s/he may as a result become frustrated. Knowledge of learning style also provides information to the student as to why s/he has learnt in a different way than others. It helps to control the process of learning. It is vital because one of the most important signals in learning is to learn to be autonomous, that is, for the individual to take responsibility for his/her own learning. Because of this, s/he should know what learning style is. This has to be part of the learning process to enable the individual to obtain knowledge, which constantly shifts and changes, without any help from others. Briefly, confidence in learning will consistently rise when learners know how to learn.

### **METHOD**

The design of this research is descriptive quantitative. Gay (2000) states that descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer

questions concerning with the current status of object study. Dealing with the theory above, this research was conducted to answer the question concerning with students learning style (A study of the second semester students of English Department of IAIN Batusangkar in 2017/2018 Academic Year). The population the population of this research is the students of the second semester students of English department of IAIN Batusangkar. The total population in this research were 80 students. They were divided into 4 classes. Meanwhile, the sample of this research was taken by applying stratified proportional random sampling because the students have different ability in Speaking II subject. The researcher classified the sample into three groups. They were high, average, and low groups. These groups were classified based on the mean score (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) of their semester test score in the Speaking II subject.

In determining the sample size of the sample, the researcher used Slovin's formula as follows:

$$n = N/1 + N(e)^2$$

Where;

n = Sample

N = Population

e = Level of trust (0,05)

Table 3: The clasification of students mark

Class	M	SD	Classifying		
			High	Average	Low
TBI A	67,10	20,84	>87,94	87,94 – 46,26	<46,26
TBI B	76,97	6,86	>83,83	83,83 – 70,11	<70,11
TBI C	73,01	15,90	>88,91	88,91 – 57,11	<57,11
TBI D	41,37	29,83	>71,2	71,2 – 11,54	<11,54

Table 4: Research Sample

Class	Number of Students	Population			Technique of the sample
		H	A	L	
					Proportional Stratified Random Sampling
A	19	-	18	1	
B	24	4	14	6	
C	24	-	23	1	
D	13	2	8	3	
Total	80	80			

$$\begin{aligned}
 n &= \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \\
 &= \frac{80}{1 + 80(0.05)^2} = \frac{80}{1 + 0,2} = \frac{80}{1,2} \\
 &= 66,66 = 67
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the table above, it was gotten that the sample of the research was 67 and 13 as tried out respondents. In collecting the data, the researcher used questionnaire as an instrument to know students' learning style. Gay (1987:195) states that questionnaire is much more efficient to get data because it does not spend much time, can be done by anyone, and it can be revised if there is a mistake. The items of questionnaire was develop based on the theory it was constructed in Bahasa Indonesia in order to help the respondent to comprehend the items. To construct the questionnaire, the researcher used steps as suggested by Arikunto (2005:135) as follow: identifying the variable of the problem, elaborating the variable into sub variable, finding out indicator of each variable, ranging desription from each indicator, formulating the description into questionnaire items, the questionnaire by giving direction and instruction. The grid of the questionnaire items include variable, sub-variable, indicators, sub-indicator and number of items. In measuring the instrument,

the researcher used Likert Scale as basic type to measure questionnaire. Gay and Airasian (2000:156) state that Likert Scale is aimed to ask individual to respond to a series of statements. The scale are divided into four categories. They are Always (SL) ,often (SR) Seldom (JR) , Never (TP). The score given based on the type of each item. If the item positive, the score arranges as follows: SL=4, SR=3, JR=2, and TP=1. In contrast, for negative items, the score arranges as follow: SL=1, SR=2, JR=3, TP=4. In analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive analysis. The data was analyzed by using several steps namely collecting the questionnaire from the respondents, checking and calculating frequency of students' answer for each option, finding high Score and low Score, class interval, frequency, and percentage from the data, drawing the conclusion based on the result of the percentage and mean score.

## **FINDINGS**

This chapter discusses the data description, data analysis aboutt investigating students' learning style of the second semester students of English department of IAIN Batusangkar in 2017/2018 Academic Year. The population of the research was 80 students. There were 67 students taken as research sample by using Slovin's formula to determine the sample size. The rest of them were taken as tried out. The data were collected by using questionnaire. After getting the data of students' learning style, the researcher analyzed it by using SPSS 21. Based on the data, it can be seen that students' learning style were various. However, the most dominated learning style was auditory style which have 39 students or 68,42% and the mean score was 43,62. Meanwhile, from visual learning style, it can bee seen that the were only two students or 3,5% have a tendency of this kind of learning style. In addition, it is also can be seen that the highest score gotten from the questionnaire is 56 and the lowest is 36. Jensen and Nickelsen (2011:35) state that visual learners think in pictures and learn best in visual images. They depend on the teachers or facilitator's non-verbal cues such as body language to help with understanding. Sometimes, visual learners



favour sitting in the front of the classroom individuals who fall into this category typically learn through what they are able to see with their own eyes. Next, from auditory learning style, it can be seen that many students have this kind of learning style. it is proved from the data gotten that there are 39 students have a tendency to this learning style or 68,42%. Finally, from kinesthetic learning style can be seen that there are 16 students have this kind of learning style or 28.7%. in Auditory style the learner or students are very good in listening. They tend to absorb information in a more efficient manner through sounds, music, discussions, teachings, etc. These individuals will be more likely to record lectures so that they can replay them at a later time for study purposes. Auditory learners appreciate books on tape and may find that reading aloud will help them to retain information. Rather than written reports, auditory learners tend to do better on oral presentations and reports. The best ways for auditory learner to process the information by Telling the information loudly, Listening the voice recording, Discussing with friends or learning group, recording an argument or statement, doing interview, teaching someone or people, and debating with others. Based on the elaboration above, the total score of students learning style in visual aspect is 2354 and the mean is 41.30. Then, the percentage of students' learning style of the second semester students of English department of IAIN Batusangkar can be seen in the table below:

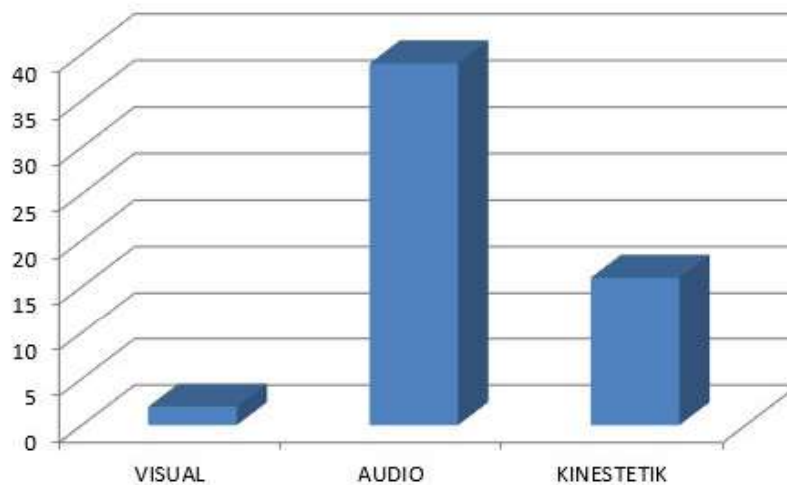
Table 1: The Frequencies of Students Learning Style

No.	Learning Style	Frequency	Percentage
1	Visual	2	3.5%
2	Auditory	39	68.4%
3	Kinesthetic	16	28.1%
Total		57	100%

Based on the table and diagram above, it can be seen that the students who have visual style in learning was 3.5%, the students who used audio style in learning was 68.42%, and the students who used kinestetik style in learning was 28.07 %. Therefore, It can be concluded that most of students

used auditory style in learning. To be obvious, the students' learning style of the second semester students of English department of IAIN Batusangkar in 2017/2018 Academic Year can be seen in this following histogram :

Figure I : Histogram of Students Learning Style



## CONCLUSION

Learning style has an important place in the lives of individuals. According to Biggs (2001). When the individual knows his/her learning style, s/he will integrate it in the process of learning so s/he will learn more easily and fast and will be successful. Learning style is important for many reasons; however, there are three vital ones. First of all, people's learning styles will vary because everyone is different from one another naturally. Secondly, it offers the opportunity to teach by using a wide range of methods in an effective way. Based on the research finding, it can be concluded that students' learning style on second grade students of English department of IAIN Batusangkar from visual learners were 2 students (3,5%), then, auditory learners were 39 students (68,42%) and kinesthetic learner were 16 students (28,7%). As a result, the auditory learners more dominated of second grade students of English department of IAIN Batusangkar. Visual learners need to illustrate and visualize thing or place. Besides, they also use color coding to

help them learn something and make them easy to remember something. They feel distracted if they listen to someone who give too much explanation, so they need to make some notes and pay close attention to someone' non verbal communication. As a result, they need some lists or make some important points about what they do next. Meanwhile, auditory learners need to hear attentively, say something repeatedly and aloud, so they can remember and understand information. They feel distracted if they see too many pictures and activities that need physical movement, so usually they need to discuss first or ask their friends about activity. The last were kineesthetic learners. They need to move their body, to make them easy and understand what their friend asked to them. They feel distracted if they see too many pictures and listen too many explanations, so usually they need space to do something, such as doodle in their note, although without any meaning, in order to they easy to understand by picture or explanation.

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