THE LEARNING STYLE OF HIGH ACHIEVER STUDENTS OF **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF IAIN SAMARINDA**

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Abstract: Learning style is the method of a person to get solutions from problem-solving in process of learning. In this case, students' learning styles have closely relation to their achievement. In this research, the researchers focus on the the type of learning styles of high achiever students of the English department at IAIN Samarinda. This is a survey research where the researchers collected by usig the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire. The subject of this research is the high achiever students of the English Department at IAIN Samarinda that consists of twenty-two students from fifth and seventh semester students. This research found that all of learning styles exist in this research results where visual learning style become the highest percentage among others. Students' learning habits in everyday life also play important role in determining their learning style. Research discussion and suggestion are provided further in this study.

INTRODUCTION

Learning style can be used by students to learn a language, including English. It can be described as the set of factors behavior and attitudes facilities learning for an individual in a given situation. Learners can perceive and process information in a learning situation (Amelia, 2018). In this case, the dominant factor that influences students' learning is learning style. It is a factor that dominant the success of learning in order to understand that every individual has a unique style of learning whether visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, they are different from each other (Gunawan, 2012a; 2012b).

Moreover, learning style is one dominant factor because learning style is influenced by our brain (Winardi, 2010). It is the combination between brain domination of how people manage and deal with information and the modality of the easiest way how people deal with information (Deporter & Hernacki, 2005). The learning style is influenced by human brain because it has a big capacity to save memories or experiences of learning. Some people have a different brain Learning style is both a characteristic that

capacity to receive and understand things through the brain. Additionally, human brain has a different capacity in the process of accumulating and managing information, while some of the human brains are capable of receiving and managing information quickly, some of the brains that process information slowly.

Learning style is happened naturally and goes by quite unnoticed in many cases. In psychology, the term learning styles refers to learner's preferred general approach to learning, which includes the process of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information. In the process of second language acquisition, the term language learning style refers to language learners' preferred approach to language acquisition. It is internally based characteristic often not perceived or used consciously, that are the basis for the intake and understanding of new information (Reid, 1995; 1998; 1987).

Learning style has been defined as a consistent way of functioning that reflects the underlying causes of the learning behavior (Keefe, 1987).

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indicates how a student learns and likes to learn, as well as instructional strategy informing the cognition, context and content of learning. To go further, learning style has some characteristic on which they are based. The first is that every person, student, and teacher alike has a learning style, learning strength, and weakness. Teachers can use students' learning style as a tool to develop their student learning. Teachers can help students by understanding or knowing their students' preferred learning style (Deporter & Hernacki, 2005). In other words, a successful learning place teacher to boost students' strength and build their capacity to learn in a range of to have style. Thus, teachers need an understanding for different learning style within the class.

Moreover, learning style is characterized by the degree to which the learner emphasizes abstractness over concreteness in perceiving information and the degree to which he or she emphasizes action over reflection in processing information in a learning situation (Kob et al., 2018). Additionally, learning style is a term that describes the variation among learners in using one or more senses to understand, organize, and retain experience (Dunn & Dunn, 1998). Then, it is also a learner's consistent way of responding and using stimuli in the context of learning (Claxton & Ralston, 1978).

The characteristic of learning style differs on learner from another, such as visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Based on Reid (1995; 1998; 1987), there are six fundamental characteristics of learning styles including 1) every person, student, and teacher alike, has a learning style and learning strengths and weaknesses; 2) learning styles exist on wide continuums, although they are described as opposites; 3) learning styles are value-neutral, that is, no one's styles are better than others; 4) students must be encouraged to 'stretch' their learning styles so that they will be more empowered in a variety of learning situations; 5) often students' learning strategies are linked to their learning styles; 6) teachers should allow their students to become aware of their learning strengths and weakness.

Furthermore, learning style is connected to learning strategies. In this case, direct learning strategies are useful to help students store and recover information (Oxford, 1990). Additionally, learning strategies can influence students' success in learning. It means that learning strategies can help learners to produce language even when

there is a knowledge gap, it can also help them to understand and use new language.

Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (Oxford, 1990). In this case, learning strategies have twelve key features i.e 1) contribute to the main goal that is communicative competence; 2) allow learners to become more self-directed; 3) expand the role of teachers; 4) problem-oriented; 5) specific action was taken by the learner; 6) involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive; 7) support learning both directly and indirectly; 8) not always observable; 9) often conscious 10) can be taught; 11) flexible; and 12) influenced by a variety of factors (Oxford, 1990). Learning strategies can assist students in facilitating everything in the learning process such as making it easier for students to complete assignments in their way without having to follow the directions given. It means students have different skills in answering and completing their assignments with the learning styles they have.

Identifying learning styles and strategies could be very beneficial both for students and for teachers. Many specialists suggest to teachers of foreign languages not deal only with teaching a language but pay attention to learning strategies (Amelia, 2018). Concerning with high achievers students, they have different reasons in applying learning strategies when they get problems. Therefore, there are several criteria of high achievers i.e high achiever students develop their own effective and efficient strategies that suit themselves in their learning process (Mubarok et al., 2016), and high achievers who interested in learning and enjoying school (Kingore, 2004).

Moreover, regarding with learning style, some experts said that there are three types of common learning styles i.e visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Yong (2010) said that visual learning style refers to a preference for learning through vision and visual learners rely on their sight to take the information. Additonally, Sadker & Sadker (2005) stated that students learn the best seeing, students will find the information when it is explained by the aids of textbooks, charts, picture, course outlines, and graphics and visual learners like to keep their on the teacher by sitting in front of the class and watching the teacher closely. Moreover, Deporter & Hernacki (2005) were covering that characteristic of visual learner are tidy and order, talk active, a good planner and manager, detail and attentive, good performing in

appearance and presentation, good speller, good at remembering what they see, good at memorizing using visual association, not easy to be disturbed by noisy, bad in memorizing verbal instruction, good in reading speed and diligent, good in learning by reading than listening to someone, need whole vision and objective, good in taking notes during in phone cell.

Different with visual learning style, auditory learning style is learning through hearing lectures audiotapes (Daiek & Anter, 2004). or Additonally, Daiek & Anter (2004) elaborate features of auditory learners are listening to tapes, watching documentaries, speaking about the subject, sounding out words, using rhymes, having discussions, explaining notes, using word links, taping-recording studying, using oral direction, talking, and listening with a partner, using rhythmic sounds, listening carefully, talking to own selves and reading aloud. Student can accurately remember details of information heard in conversation or lectures. According to Deporter & Hernacki (2005), they pointed that auditory learners talking to own self when working, getting easy to be disturbed by noise, speaking in a good rhythm, used to be a fluent speaker, listening to music rather than art, learning by listening and remembering what they discussed rather than seeing, speaking, discuss and telling a story completely, having a job problem which commits to visualization, spelling loudly rather than to write, making a joke than to read comic.

Regarding with the next learning style, kinesthetic learners will show a preference for demonstration and physical activity involving bodily movement (Brown, 2007). This type of learner learns best by doing. They will catch the idea easily when it is explained by instructional aids of skits and role-play (Brown, 2007). Students learn best by using their hands "handson learning" or by full-body movement. Deporter & Hernacki (2005) claimed the characteristic of learners speaking kinesthetic are slowly, responding to physical gesture, touching people for getting their attention, standing closer when talking with someone else, orienting to physics and much made moving, learning through manipulation and practice, memorizing by walking while seeing, using fingers to point when reading, using body language intensively, never staying quiet for a long time, bad to remember geography, excluding if they have ever visited the place, using much action verbs, reading a book which oriented to the plot, having an untidy

characteristic, tending to do everything, playing games much.

Everyone has a different learning style, but everyone has uniqueness (Felder & Silverman, 1988). If lecturers or instructors do not adjust teaching to students' learning styles, it will create discomfort and lack of attention from students (Felder & Silverman, 1988). Students' learning styles may be influenced by their reactions to personal life experiences and approaches to learning as well as their previous learning habits. Additionally, students' learning style is influenced by students' personality, habits, and behaviour (Kolb & Kolb, 2013). In fact, people usually have just one dominant style (Deporter, 1992). In other words, everyone has a different learning style from the others, but one of those styles will be dominant.

Researches concerning with students' learning 2013: style (Amchosihi, Amelia. 2018; Pramongkit, 2019; Tabatabaei & Mashayekhi, 2013; Phantharakphong, 2012), learning strategies (Mubarok et al., 2016), learning achievers (Kob et al., 2018; Salikin et al., 2017), as well as relationship between learning styles used by high, mid, and low achievers (Samperio, 2019; Kamarulzaman, 2012; Violita, 2014; Jahanbakhsh, 2012; Khasanah, 2014), connectivity between teaching methods and learning styles to students' achievement (Munir et al., 2019) seems very fascinating and connected to each other.

Considering the importance of the topic chosen by the researchers, it is obvious that learning style which related to students' achievement in English learning becomes very important. Therefore, the researchers are intended to investigate the learning styles of high achiever students in learning English particularly in the context of higher education at IAIN Samarinda, Indonesia.

METHOD

This research is a survey study (Creswell, 2012b) where the intention of the researchers is to investiagte the learning style of high achiever students at English Department at IAIN Samarinda, Indonesia. In terms of choosing the subject, the researchers relied on purposive sampling technique (Bhatti & Sundram, 2015; Allen & Yen, 1979) in order for the researchers to get apropriate subject who are suitable for this research. Purposive sampling technique was done by seting up the criteria of high achiever students i.e those who got "A" grade for speaking course

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and have atleast 3.5 for the GPA. Thus, from three order to figure out the high achiever students' classes from fifth semester and two classes from seventh semester, the total number of subject selected was twenty-two students.

Moreover, the data in this research is divided into two types of data i.e primary and secondary data. In order to gain the primary data, the researchers used close-ended questionnaire (Creswell, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2000) in the form of statements referring to learning styles **RESULTS & DISCUSSION** so that the students can choose whetehr to strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. In this case, the questionnaire analysed by using Likert-scale (Creswell, 2014) in

types of learning styles. Meanwhile, the secondary data were obtained from semistructured interview (Cresswell, 2005; Bernard, 2002; Dörnyei, 2007) to those students which conducted online. The secondary data contained learning devices and habits of high achiever students in learning English.

Findings Data gained from questionnaire *Types of learning style*

Table 1. Types of learning style of high achiever students									
Indicators	Stro ngly Agre e	%	Agree	%	Unde cided	%	Disa gree	%	Stro ngly Disa gree
Learning Better By Reading When The Teacher Writes On The Whiteboard	0	0%	17	77%	2	9%	3	14%	0
Remember Better When Reading The Instructions	4	18%	11	50%	6	27 %	1	5%	0
Understand Better When Reading The Instructions	2	9%	17	77%	2	9%	1	5%	0
Learn Better By Reading Than By Listening	4	18%	7	32%	6	27 %	5	23%	0
Learning More By Reading Textbooks Than Listening Lecture	2	9%	7	32%	9	41 %	4	18%	0
Understand Better When The Teacher Tells The Instructions	4	18%	14	64%	2	9%	2	9%	0
Learning Better When Someone Told Something	2	9%	13	59%	6	27 %	1	5%	0
Remember Things By Learning, Heard Is Better Than Reading	2	9%	14	64%	5	23 %	1	5%	0
Learning Better When The Teacher Gives A Lecture	0	0%	14	64%	7	32 %	1	5%	0
Learning Better In Class When Listening To Someone	1	5%	14	64%	4	18 %	3	14%	0
Prefer To Learn By Doing Something In Class	2	9%	10	45%	6	27 %	3	14%	1
Do Something In Class, Learning Make Better	2	9%	12	55%	5	23 %	3	14%	0
Enjoy Learning In Class By Doing An Experiment	6	27%	12	55%	4	18 %	0	0%	0
Understand Things Better In Class When Participating In Role- Playing	4	18%	12	55%	6	27 %	0	0%	0
Learning Best In Class When Can Participate In Related Activities	5	23%	12	55%	5	23 %	0	0%	0

Table 1. Types of learning style of high achiever student	Table 1.	Types	of learning	style o	of high	achiever	students
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The most dominant learning style

Table 2. Table of the most dominant learning style

Item	Frequency	Percentage
I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the whiteboard	17	77,3%

When I read instruction, I remember them better	11	50%
I understand better when I read instructions	17	77,3%
I learn better by reading than by listening to someone	7	31,8%
I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to lectures	9	40,9%
When the teacher tells me the instruction I understand better	14	63,6%
When someone tells me how to do something in class, I learn it better	13	59,1%
I remember things I have heard in class better than things I have read	14	63,6%
I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture	14	63,6%
I learn better in class when I listen to someone	14	63,6%
I prefer to learn by doing something in class	10	45,5%
When I do things in class, I learn better	12	54,5%
I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments	12	54,5%
I understand things better in class when I participate in role-playing	12	54,5%
I learn best in class when I can participate in related	12	54,5%

Data gained from interview

This part of research findings, the researchers found high achiever students in terms of learning devices used as well as habits of learning style they used to do in daily life. In terms of communication, high achiever students actively use English in their daily lives e.g WhatsApp application for long-range comunication by sending messages both in terms of chatting and voice call. Other than that, in terms of using Smartphones, all of them use English as the language used on their Smartphone setting.

The next fact showed that high achiever students often listen to English music and watch YouTube on their Smartphones. Specifically, they use English music to learn English vocabulary and pronunciation through listening to the English songs as well as reading and pronouncing the lyrics provided online. In terms of the use of YouTube, they often watch English movies with English subtitle, video of English songs, and English learning content from famous YouTubers. Other than that, some other social media also used as devices for learning English by the high achiever students i.e Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. In this case, they use those three platforms of social media to share their daily activities, thought, and feeling by using English. Additionally, they use those social media to make a friend with foreign citizens so that they can practice to speak and write in English. Moreover, the high achiever students also learn vocabulary through English quotes shared on the social media.

Not only regarding with English learning habits in daily life as well as devices they use in learning English. Another fact showed that the high achiever students have certificate of merit from prestigious English competitions e.g English poetry and speech competitions. In this case, they said that by joining such English competitions, they can have memorable and reputable achievements in English. Additionally, they can percentage of learning style of the high achiever

develop as well as invent their talent in English language area as well as training their mentality to perform in front of public.

Discussion

From the research findings above, all of the three types of learning styles used by the high achiever students. In this case, major findings in this research is that most of high achiever students are considered as visual learners. It is indicated by the result where 77,3% students mentioned that they learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the whiteboard. Additinally, 77,3% students noted that they have better understanding when they read instruction given by lecturers. It is supported by the result found from interview where most of the students use social media to read English quotes and information e.g from WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. This result is similar to the previous study conducted by Pramongkit (2019) where visual learners are more dominant than the auditory and kinesthetic learners in class. This research also supported by Kob et al. (2018) where visual is the highest percentage of students' learning style among others.

The second place of learning style used by high achiever students is auditory style. Specifically, 63,6% students said that they remember lessons they heard better than what they see. In addition, 63.6% students pointed out that they understand better when they listen to lecturers' explanation as well as when lecturers giving oral instruction. In this case, high achiever students who are considered as auditory students use social media for listening to English songs such as the use of Spotify, Joox, Sound Cloud, Resso, and YouTube. Similar with this research, a research from Phantharakphong (2012) found that auditory became the second learning style of the students.

Finally, kinesthetic becomes the lowest

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students. Particularly, 45,5% students understand better when they are learning by doing such as having classroom experiments and role-playing. In this case, this type of students love watching English movies. In a research from Phantharakphong (2012),it showed that kinesthetic is the most learning style having by students in learning. Meanwhile, visual learning is the lowest percentage of learning of the students. It is also similar to a research from Amchosihi (2013) where kinesthetic learning style became students' learning style preference.

The findings from this research indicate that none of the three learning styles whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic always become the highest learning style. Surely there is an influence from learning behavior and students' personality (Kolb & Kolb, 2013). Therefore, the students' daily activity on learning and the way they use various types of learning devices contribute to the shaping of the students' learning style.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research drive to two major results. The first is that all of the types of learning styles whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic do exist in learning styles of English Department students at IAIN Samarinda. The second main result in this research is that from those three learning styles, it is found that most of the high achiever students of English Department at IAIN Samarinda is visual learning style. Specifically, they have better understanding when they read instruction given by lecturers as well as see and read the display of explanation from the lecturers. The learning style of the high achiever students have closely relation to the learning habits in their daily lives. Particularly in this research, the high achiever students use different platforms of social media to learn English e.g YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and some others to search and share information in English. In conclusion, none of those learning styles become the most popular or better than others, but it really depends on the students' personality and habits in learning. Therefore, it is suggested to further researchers to dig deeper to EFL students' learning styles in relation to students' behaviour and attitude that shape their learning styles.

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