LEARNING STYLE USED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH: A CASE STUDY AT SMP BAITUL QUR’AN BOARDING SCHOOL SRAGEN

Submitted to the Department of Language Studies, Graduate School of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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The board of examiners certifies that the thesis is eligible for submission.

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ABSTRACT

This research is aims at describing types of learning style used by male and female students in learning English at the seventh grade students in SMP Baitul Qur’an Boarding School Sragen in 2017/2018 academic year. The research used qualitative research type of case study. There were 30 male and 31 female students as the participants of the research. In this case, the researcher collected the data by using observation, PLSP questionnaire, interview, and documentation. The data were analyzed by reducing the data, displaying the data, and verifying the data. The result of the research are : (1) the male and female students used all types of learning style in learning English in different frequency. The male students used multi-sensory learning style (matching between visual and auditory learning style). Meanwhile, the female students used auditory learning style in learning English. (2) There are advantages of learning style prefer used by the students in learning English. They get advantages in academic and personal. In academic, the students find out how to study in an ideal way and gain good grade. In personal, their preferred learning style can increase their self-confidence and learn how to make learning more enjoyable.

Keywords: learning style, learning English, case study

ABSTRAK

Dalam segi personal, gaya belajar yang lebih disukai bisa meningkatkan rasa percaya diri dan belajar bagaimana cara membuat pembelajaran lebih menyenangkan.

*Kata Kunci: gaya belajar, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, studi kasus*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a part of culture and it is also part of human behavior. Language has important role because it is a tool for communication in daily activities, especially English. As an international language, English can be useful for us. So, learning English is very important. Language learning style is the combination of the students’ way to use their ability in teaching learning process. Every student has preference ways to understand the materials and achieve in English subject. Usually every student has dominant in learning style. The teachers can learn learning style used by their students in teaching learning process so that they can use preference technique or method to make learning process more fun and interesting. Learning style is students’ preference way in receiving information in teaching learning process. It is usually unobservable but some associated with an observable behavior.

The researcher chooses the school with some reasons. The first, the researcher interviewed with the teachers in some schools at Karanganyar and Sragen regency and she found that female students are more active in teaching learning process, the majority of their female students are higher in academic achievement than male students. Meanwhile, at SMP Baitul Qur’an Boarding School male students are higher than female students in academic achievement. The second, it is a very good Islamic boarding school in teaching learning process and quality. It has become number two in last national examination in Sragen regency even though it is a new boarding school. The third, the researcher is interested in conducting the research in Islamic boarding school because the researcher has assumption that the students in Islamic boarding school have different styles in learning process to understand and achieve the materials. The fourth, it combines science and religion (Islamic) in teaching learning process.
There are some definitions according to expert about learning style. Brown (2000) defines learning styles as the manner in which individuals perceived and process information in learning situations. Learning style is a person’s general approach to learning and problem solving (Reid, 1996). So, it can be concluded that learning style as the variations manner used by the learners to understand, organize, and retain the experience in teaching learning process. In other words, learning style is preference of style in learning process used by the learners. Every student has different style to achieve and understand the materials or teaching learning process. They can use cognitive learning style, sensory learning style, personality learning style, or combine another.

Reid (1999:6) in Fauziati (2015: 12) classifies sensory learning style into four, namely: auditory, visual, kinesthetic/tactile, and multi-sensory learning style. (1) Auditory learning style means the learners prefer learn through hearing or listening something. Nilson (2003) states that they learn best when they can hear themselves express an idea. Filppula (2006) states that auditory prefer in learning by using sound. There are some characteristics in auditory learners such as: they have strong language skills, have a well-developed vocabulary, the ability to follow spoken direction well, they like to read to self out loud, they also not afraid to speak in class, they like oral reports and good in explaining, they able to remember names and can enjoy acting or being on stage. Students in auditory learning style also good in study group and lectures. They might need to use are cooperative learning where information is discussed within a group. (2) Visual learning style means usually the learners easier understand the lesson by using some media such as the pictures, diagrams, demonstration, films, and handouts. Besides, the learners in visual learning styles also can fully understand the lesson by seeing the teacher’s face expression and body language. There are some characteristics in learners used visual learning style such as: they will focus better and learn faster in quiet study environment, they can take a lot of benefit from things such as color-coded notes, using drawings to illustrate, outlining information, and using mind maps and flash cards. It means that they may prefer to study the materials listed and use a colored marker as a highlighter on page in a book to highlight the important information. According to Mortensen (2008:3) in
Fuaziati (2015:16) there are some learning activities that suitable for visual learners as follows: Drawing a map of events in history or draw scientific process, making outlines of everything, copying what’s on the board, taking notes, making lists, watching videos, underlining, etc. (3) Kinesthetic learning style means that the learners prefer learn through moving, doing, and touching. There are some characteristic in kinesthetic learners such as: they cannot sit still for long, they are not great at spelling and handwriting, they can study with loud music on, and they take breaks when studying. (4) Multi-sensory learning style best when visual, auditory, and tactile or kinesthetic presentation methods are all employed to learn a particular concept. It means that the more the learner is able to see, hear, touch, manipulate the materials used to present the information, and use his or her body movements, the easier it may be for that learner to learn the information. We will find the learners include a multi-sensory when their scored almost the same in either two or three of these learning style categories.

There are many advantages we get when we can identify the students’ learning style. Ldpride(n.d) states there are three advantages of identifying learning style such as in academic learning style, personal learning style, and professional learning style.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In accordance with the problem of the research, the appropriate form used in this research is qualitative research type case study. It is a way to find out the answer types of learning style used by male and female students in learning English and the reason why do they prefer that style in learning English. According to Dawson in Putra (2012: 126) stated qualitative research explores attitudes, behavior, and experiences through such methods as interviews or focus groups. It attempts to get an in-depth opinion from participant. Meanwhile, according to Referring Borg (2002:436) a case study is done to shed on a phenomenon, which is the process, events, persons, or things of interest to the researcher. In short, a case study is related with the phenomena.
The participant of this research was at the seventh grade students of SMP Baitul Qur’an Boarding School Sragen in 2017/2018 academic year which consists of 30 male and 31 female students.

To make it more valid, clear, and credible the researcher uses technique such as questionnaire, interview, and observation then they are analyzed.

To analyze the collected data, the researcher used the interactive model proposed by Milles and Hubberman. They are data reduction, data display, drawing conclusion, and verification.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Types of learning style used by male and female students in learning English

The researcher used Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSP) by Reid to gets more information about the type of learning style used by male and female students in learning English at the seventh grade students of SMP Baitul Qur’an Boarding School Sragen in 2017/2018 academic year. Based on Reid (1984) classification of learning style scoring sheet, 38-50 is major learning style preference, 25-37 is minor learning style preference, and 0-24 is negligible. Major is a preferred learning style, minor is one in which learners can still function well, and negligible is the one that can do learning the learning process more difficult.
Table 1: Learning Style Preference Categorize by Reid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Learning Style Preference Categorize</th>
<th>Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Major Learning Style Preference</td>
<td>38-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>0-24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Actually, the male and female students use all types in learning style but the frequency is used by male and female students in learning style is not same. Learning style used by male students in learning English is auditory learning style (37.23), followed by visual learning style (36.85), and kinesthetic learning style (31.14). In other words, male students used multi-sensory learning style (matching between visual and auditory learning styles) in learning English, followed by kinesthetic ones. Meanwhile, learning style used by female students in learning English is auditory learning style (41.69), followed by kinesthetic learning style (38.38), and visual learning style (35.15).

Table 2: Distribution of Participants’ Learning Style Preference (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Learning Style</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mean (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Students</td>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>36.85</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>37.23</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>31.14</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Students</td>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>35.15</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>41.69</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kinesthetic</td>
<td>38.38</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the male and female students used all types of learning style in learning English, but in different frequency. The male students used multi-sensory learning style (matching between visual and auditory learning styles), followed by kinesthetic learning style. Meanwhile, the female students used auditory learning style preference, followed by kinesthetic, and visual learning style.
3.2 The advantages of learning style prefer used by the students in learning English

Learning style is preferred manner used by the learners to understand the lesson in learning process. There are advantages of learning style prefer used by the students in learning English. However, learning style has a natural characteristic and it depends on the students’ need and purpose. Learning style comes and proceeds naturally.

They get advantages in (1) academic advantages such as: they would be better and easier to understand the lesson in learning English, their preferred learning style make knowledge easy to learn and help them to facilitate when they examined (2) personal advantages such as: learning process focus but still relax, more fun, not bored, good mood, and pleasant.

According to Ldpride(n.d), identifying learning style have some advantages such as alleviating frustration and level of stress and enhancing students learning ability. Furthermore, Ldpride(n.d) states that students in their preference learning style get some advantages such as findings out how to study in an ideal way to gain good grades on test and exams. It is line with the students’ reason that by using preference style in learning, they more focus, would be easier and understand the lesson. Biggs (2001) states that identify the students’ learning style will help the students to become an effective problem solver. The students also felt by using their preference learning style, it can make knowledge easy to learn and it’s very helps them when they examined. The students in their preference learning style able to gets score higher on test and have better attitude (Dunn & Dunn: 1978). Briefly, confidence in learning process will consistently rise when the students know how to learn.

In personal, by using their preference learning style, the students felt fun and more comfortable in learning English. They felt not bored during teaching learning process. Moreover, students preferred learning style are able to increase their motivation for learning. It can be seen from the students utterance that by using their preferred style in learning, they more fun and felt not bored. According to Elliot (2000:332), motivation is an important in learning process and performance. Motivation can help someone or the
learners to get the purpose. However, Ldpride(n.d) states that identifying learning style in personal, the students can learn how to make learning more enjoyable. It is important to make learning more enjoyable because learning style may lack confidence may as a result become frustrated.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data findings and discussion of the research, the conclusions of this research are: (1) The male and female students used all types of learning style in learning English in different frequency. The male students prefer used multi-sensory learning style (matching visual and auditory learning style), followed by kinesthetic learning style. Meanwhile, the female students prefer used auditory learning style, followed by kinesthetic, then visual learning style. (2) There are two advantages of learning style prefer used by the students in learning English. First, the male and female students get advantages in academic by using that preferred style. Second, they get advantages in personal by using that preferred style in learning English. Based on the facts found, the researcher would like to give some suggestions; it is suggested to the teacher to create and improve her or his learning strategy through interest and appropriate technique or methods in learning process. It is also suggested to the school that the education institution should provide facilities and media which can support the learning process. For the future researcher, the researcher suggests to the future researcher to conduct a research qualitatively in form of case study which focuses to investigate the cognitive learning style used by male and female students in learning English. The researcher also suggests the future researcher to investigate the types of personality learning style used by male and female students in learning English.

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