

EFL LEARNERS' PREFERENCES AND PERSPECTIVES ON LEARNING STYLES

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Abstract

Learning styles have become a growing issue in the pedagogical area and have been explored by many studies in recent years. The concepts and theories of learning styles could have significant implications for designing teaching instruction. Thus, this study aims to identify students' learning styles preferences and their perspectives on learning styles in the English learning context. Particularly, it investigates students' choices of learning styles and how they perceive their learning styles in learning practice. It was conducted in the survey research using *VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire*, followed by some open-ended and close-ended questions to see students' perspectives on Learning Styles involving 44 respondents. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. Results indicate that students' learning styles varied, but the highest percentage, 39 percent of students preferred to learn through visuals. Related to students' perspectives, most of them were quite aware of their learning style, but unfortunately, 45.5 percent of them stated that their English learning was not yet suitable with their learning style; this can be a reflection for all of us. With all these results, this study was expected to give little information and description related to students' learning styles preferences and perspectives.

Keywords: *learning styles; learning styles preferences; students' perspectives on their learning styles*

1. Introduction

In recent years, many researchers and scholars have discussed various factors that influence students' success in learning, one of those factors is learning styles. Learning styles are students' preferred ways of acquiring new languages or learning new things. Some empirical studies showed the importance of learning styles in the success of students' learning. Learning styles are found as significant factors to improve students' learning achievements (Yufrizal & Holiday, 2011). Learning styles relate to the students' academic achievement or success (Gohar & Sadeghi, 2015; Goklap, 2013; Vaishnav, 2013). Some significant relationships appeared between high- and low-proficient learners and their perceptual learning style preferences (Derakhshan & Shakki, 2018). Furthermore, learning styles affect the effectiveness of classroom teaching (Yin et al., 2020). Therefore, considering individual learning styles in teaching is an effective way to facilitate and increase students' motivation and learning success (Bostrom & Lassen, 2006).

Learning styles are still gaining special attention in the educational field from researchers, educators, and practitioners. It entails an individual's style or method of learning. In the Neuro-Linguistics Programming model (NLP), students learn through what they see (visual), from what they hear (auditory), and based on what they feel or experience (kinesthetic). Harmer (2007: 16) explains that students who have good visuals can remember things better when they see them. Students who are good at auditory can respond very well to things that they hear. Other students might learn better if the lesson involves physical activity. Although all students respond and use all of these senses, some students have better visuals than others which can make them learn better through that sense. It happens with other students who are more dominant with their auditory and kinesthetic.

Some researchers found that people from certain cultures favor different learning modalities (Reid, 1987). Students from Asian cultures were considered more visual whereas Koreans were being the most visual. Hispanic students were frequently auditory, while kinesthetic and tactile appeared in varied cultures. Since Indonesia is one of the Asian countries, it can be assumed that students have more visual learning styles. Other studies showed that many students prefer a visual learning style. Saylağ (2011) discovered that the majority of participants, 60 percent, possessed a visual learning style. Pourhossein, (2012) found that 50 percent of university students preferred the visual learning style, 35 percent for auditory, and 15 percent for kinesthetics. Karthigeyan and Nirmala (2013) found that visuals became the most dominant preferred learning style. Asadipiran (2016) revealed that the visual learning style was chosen more by the students. Yuliani (2019) also found that 47 percent of students preferred a visual learning style.

Learning styles are important for both students and teachers. However, not many studies provided information related to students' learning style preferences, especially in Indonesia. Moreover, it is rare to find out a study that investigates students' perspectives on learning styles, specifically related to English teaching and learning practice. This information will give so much knowledge for the teachers to improve their teaching practices and as a reflective action for teachers' professional development. For those reasons, this study aims to identify students' learning styles preferences and their perspectives on the implementation of learning styles in the English learning context. Two specific questions were addressed in this study:

- 1) What is English language learners' predominant learning style preference?
- 2) What are students' perspectives about learning styles in English learning practice?

In addition, the results of this research can be used for the improvement of educational practices and teaching materials development. For teachers, it will help them to plan the lesson plan effectively. For syllabus makers, it will provide the information for designing teaching materials that should be considering students' different learning styles so then varied teaching techniques and media can be applied. Last, students, it is expected to make students conscious of their learning style preferences, so then they can comprehend the lesson better.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Students' Learning Styles

Learning styles are defined as students' methods to concentrate and obtain information, knowledge, and experience (Fleming & Baume, 2006), which refer to students' different ways of comprehending the information and creating form principles and meaning.

Since childhood, every student has through various stages of learning styles. Most children are kinesthetic learners, they learn by imitating their surroundings. As they grow older, their visual and auditory learning preferences develop. Some students could probably have a strong learning preference, while others commonly have a mixture or a combination of two or three styles. When students know their learning preferences, they will be able to choose the best learning method that suits them.

2.2 VAK Learning Style Model

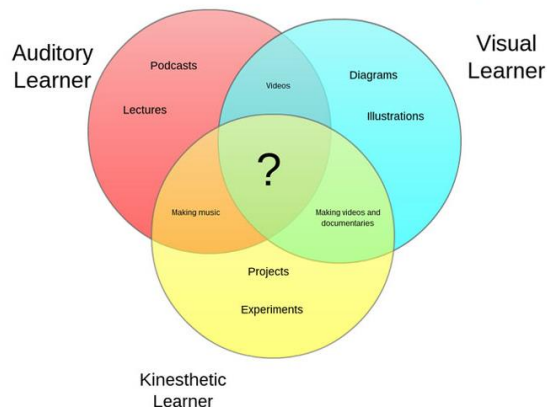
VAK Learning Style Model is designed and developed by Fleming and Baume (2006). Fleming believes that receiving information is essential in the learning process. It informs us about how students learn and acquire knowledge. It can be the catalyst for the development of teaching strategies. Fleming, et al. (1958) explain the ideas of learning styles as our modal learning preferences which influence our behavior, learning patterns, and habits. They can change but are quite stable in such a time. They could be reliably identified and comprehended by the examples used in modality learning preferences. They should be matched with learning strategies because some learning strategies are better used and aligned to some learning modes than others. The knowledge that is obtained using strategies that are aligned with students' learning styles is easier to be understood by students. It leads to the persistence of learning tasks, a more meaningful learning approach, and active, engaging, and effective metacognition.

In the VAK Learning Style model, students learn through what they see (visual), what they hear (auditory), and what they experience (kinesthetics). Sreenidhi and Tay Chinyi (2017) mention that visual learners tend to learn the language by writing down the vocabulary in their notebooks, jotting down the key points or important words on small cards then displaying them around the house, taking notes from teachers' explanations, making lists, watching videos, using flashcards, highlighters, underlining, etc. They prefer to sit near the front of the classroom in order to see the teacher clearly; they will copy what's on the board, create visual reminders or use mind maps to summarize the information and concepts.

In contrast with visual learners, auditory learners could struggle in understanding the chapter that they read, but they could get a better understanding when they listen to the class lecture. In classroom practice, auditory learners usually get a lot of benefits from the traditional teaching style. They mostly could perform better in oral communication and presentation. They usually learn effectively by listening to teachers' explanations, lectures, speeches, and question-and-answer sessions. They enjoy sharing information with others in the group and learning from others within the discussion. Listening to the class recording, using audiotapes, discussing, and having a conversation with natives could help auditory learners in learning English.

Kinesthetic learners absorb knowledge by experiencing, doing, touching, feeling, moving, and being active in the learning process. According to Fleming's learning style theory, kinesthetic learners are natural discovery learners. They tend to explore the concept by doing experiments and practical activities. In learning the language, they need teachers to provide the model or demonstrate what they are expected to do; simulations, drama, role-play, acting, and making things in procedure text might be suitable learning activities for them.

VAK Learning Style



Source: <https://lapaas.com/vak-learning-style/>
Picture 1. VAK Learning Style

2.3 Students' Learning Styles in Teaching Practice

In learning a new language, students normally use all their senses to receive information and learn a new skill. They combine all the modalities to process the information and data to become accepted knowledge. However, according to VAK theories and concepts, students usually have one dominant learning preference. Yuliani (2019: 44) identifies that most visual learners have poor auditory skills. When they hear the sound of the language, teachers should provide them with the written words, so they can visualize the language. Vocabulary could be introduced using pictures and language patterns should be displayed and explained in the visual media. When they know the words and how to pronounce them, it will be easier for them to remember the vocabulary, apply them in the context, and use them in daily practice.

Auditory learners could directly learn the language by hearing the sound. They could comprehend and get the details of the information during the lectures and conversations. In classroom practice, teachers should provide more opportunities for them to practice the language. They usually have better articulation and pronunciation among language learners. When they hear the sound and learn some English expressions or sentences, they need to repeat and produce them in the dialogues, daily conversations, or discussions. Speeches, oral reports, presentations, or story-telling could be suitable for them.

Kinesthetic learners need the involvement of physical activities. Listening and paying attention to teachers' explanations throughout the lesson could be very boring for them. Teachers should combine teaching materials with engaging learning activities such as games, simulations, or role-play. Students need to practice the language, feel, and experience it. A study conducted by Yuliani (2019) revealed one of the kinesthetic learners' perspectives, which mentions that learning by doing is much better than getting an explanation without practicing the concepts or skills, especially since we realize that English is a skill and it requires more practice.

2.4 Teachers' Understanding of Learning Styles

Teachers' understanding of students' learning styles could increase teachers' awareness in improving their teaching quality. Designing learning activities and

implementing the appropriate teaching media which consider students' learning styles are some teachers' efforts to create effective teaching. It is a part of the teachers' responsibilities and role as the ones who carry out the lesson. Hinkelman and Pysock (1992) mention that all students have at least some learning activities that appeal to them or they are comfortable with, and it is based on their learning styles. Teachers can adapt their teaching styles in order to match their students' learning styles; it might help them to increase students' motivation, interests, and participation in learning the language. Teachers' ignorance of considering students' learning styles when developing teaching materials and activities could lead to ineffective teaching results. Learning styles could create some teaching methods wonderful for some and terrible for others (Dunn & Griggs, 1988: 3). Regarding this issue, teachers have to understand this concept and then create different and varied teaching activities which can cater to individual differences and needs.

3. Research Method

3.1 Sample and Procedures

This was survey research, one of the quantitative research types (Hamied, 2017: 60). Cohen (1988) mentions that survey research could be used to gather information at a particular point of time with the intention to describe the nature of existing conditions. A longitudinal design was applied in this study as it allows the researcher to gather data over an extended time (Hamied, 2017: 61)). *VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire* which was developed by Chislett and Chapman (2005) was used to collect the data. It consisted of thirty behavioral statements with three available choices which represented visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. The questionnaire covers multiple variables, including gender, age, and major field (Reid, 1987). Demographic items, such as gender, city, and school were included in the survey. The participants were students from one of the Senior High Schools in Pelaihari and university students from one of the private English Institutions in Pangkalan Bun. Senior High School students and university students were considered adult learners that had a better understanding and awareness of how they learn something. This survey was completely anonymous and voluntary. To enrich the data, the researcher provided some related open-ended and close-ended questions to find out their perceptions of learning styles in the English learning context. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis.

After distributing the questionnaire for several days, there were 44 respondents completed the survey. Of 44 respondents, 43 percent were male and 57 were female; 50 percent were between the ages of 16-17; 40 percent were between 18-19; 10 percent were 20 to 21 years old. Respondents were students from one of the senior high schools in Pelaihari and university students from one of the private English Institutions in Pangkalan Bun. They came from some majors, such as English for Business and Administration, English for Tourism and Hotel, Natural Science Program, Social Science Program, and Mechanic Program. They also came from various cities, but many of them, 66 percent, came from Pelaihari; 16 percent were from Pangkalan Bun; 7 percent were from Banjarmasin, and the rest, 11 percent, came from several different regions, such as Seruyan, Marabahan, Kota Baru, Kuala Jelai, and Sukamara.

No.	Demographic Items		N	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	19	43,18%
		Female	25	56,81%
2.	Age	16	6	13,63%
		17	16	36,36%
		18	9	20,45%
		19	9	20,45%
		20	3	6,81%
		21	1	2,27%
3.	Major	English for Business and Administration (EBA)	7	15,90%
		English for Tourism and Hotel (ETH)	3	6,81%
		Natural Science Program (IPA)	25	56,81%
		Social Science Program (IPS)	8	18,18%
		Mechanic Program	1	2,27%
4.	City	Pelaihari	29	65,90%
		Pangkalan Bun	7	15,90%
		Banjarmasin	3	6,81%
		Others	5	11,36%

Table 1. Distribution of Population

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 Students' Learning Style Preference

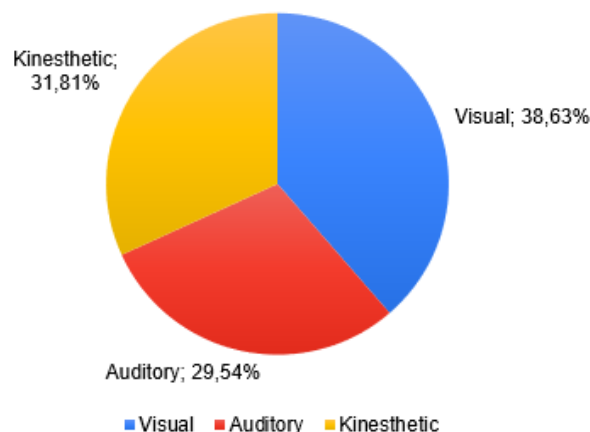
The results revealed that students had varied learning styles, but among those three categories, students preferred more on visual learning style. Based on the percentage analysis, 39 percent of students preferred to learn through visuals. This finding was not much different from some previous studies which found that visual learning style became the most preferred learning style among the students (Asadipiran, 2016; Pourhossein, 2012; Karthigeyan & Nirmala, 2013; Saylağ, 2011; Yuliani, 2019). It was still relevant to what Reid said that Asian cultures were considered more visual (Reid, 1987).

Visual became the predominant learning style followed by Kinesthetic learning style with 32 percent and Auditory learning style with 29 percent. However, the gap among those three learning styles was not that far. It indicated that the diversity of learning styles really exists in the classroom. Teachers should match their teaching styles and strategies with students' varied learning styles in order to increase students' academic performance (Karthigeyan & Nirmala, 2013).

Students' Learning Styles	Number	Percentage
Visual	17	38,63%
Auditory	13	29,54%
Kinesthetic	14	31,81%

Table 2. Students' Learning Styles Preference

Students' Learning Styles



Picture 2. Students' Preference for Learning Styles

4.1.2 Students' Perspectives on Learning Styles

To get a deeper understanding of students' perspectives on learning styles, several questions were given. The questions concerned students' understanding regarding their own learning styles, exploring whether they have been learning according to their learning styles and whether their teachers have accommodated their learning styles or not, also the influence of learning styles, and how important learning styles are in the process of learning English.

a. Students' Understanding of their Learning Styles

The findings showed that most of the students, 82 percent, were aware of their learning styles and 18 percent were not. It indicated that not all students know the best way for them to learn. Some students (S8 & S35) mentioned that they did not really pay attention to their learning styles and they just learned based on what they usually do. These findings suggested that teachers should guide students more to recognize their learning styles. Asadipiran (2016) mentions that learners' understanding of their learning styles could lead and push students toward better, more effective, autonomous, and self-regulated learning.

b. Students' English Learning with their Learning Styles

More than half of all respondents, 54,5 percent, stated that they have learned English based on their learning styles. While 45,5 percent learned English in other ways which did not align with their learning styles. It could be a reflection for all of us to improve our learning English quality by adapting our learning strategies to our learning styles. It could create the most comfortable learning process (Oxford, 1992, p. 42).

In the open-ended follow-up questions of the questionnaire, students freely express how they learn English following their preferred learning styles in daily life. It was then revealed that some students learned English according to their learning styles through videos, movies, and songs when they studied independently at home. People with visual learning styles tend to learn easily by watching English videos or movies, while auditory people can enjoy songs while learning the vocabulary, meaning, and pronunciation of the songs they hear. Kinesthetic learners tend to repeat the words they learn from films and use them in direct communication.

The information above was supported by the previous study conducted by Yuliani (2019) which mentioned that students could learn better and faster by listening and watching movies. The activities improved students' English skills especially in listening and speaking. When they earned new vocabulary and got familiar with various English accents, they would know how to pronounce those words correctly. From students' perspectives, the use of videos, western songs, English movies, social media, picture dictionaries, games, etc. was considered effective to accommodate students' learning differences. Teachers also should let their students learn English independently, whether by taking notes, memorizing while walking, or finding a quiet place to concentrate. Here are several statements from the respondents.

I learn English through videos / western songs which I will later translate into Indonesian (S5)

I learn by memorizing vocabulary, watching English movies, and listening to western songs (S11)

I usually learn indirectly through social media, games, etc. (S27)

I often learn English through videos and often read English books which consist of pictures and writings (S31)

When I am trying to remember English vocabulary or sentences, I tend to take notes and memorize them while moving or walking a lot (S39)

I have to review the lesson I got from school at home in a quiet place (S40)

c. Suitability of Teaching English Practice with Students' Learning Styles

Regarding teaching English, 38,6 percent of students stated that their English teachers have accommodated their learning styles in English learning activities in the classroom. Meanwhile, 61,4 percent could not find their English learning experience suited their learning styles. This finding could be a reflection for us to be more considerate of students' learning styles, especially in creating and designing lesson plans. Educators should advance their teaching by implementing various teaching techniques which must be relevant to students' needs (Zhu et al., 2018). Even though not all teachers taught with the way students learn, some students express that they were still able to adjust and accept the lesson so far. However, it could be done better if both teachers and students were aware of learning styles because it would provide them with the flexibility to modify their learning behavior (Fleming et al., 1958). These were some students' responses regarding the issue.

The teacher's explanation is still understandable to me (S14)

I still can accept the lessons with direct explanations from the teacher (S26)

d. The Influence of Learning Styles According to Students

Some students shared their learning experiences with their teachers, and they were quite comfortable with that kind of teaching way. They mentioned that the suitability of English teaching practice with students' learning preferences greatly affected students' enthusiasm and learning effectiveness. However, they also admitted that some additional

factors could affect the lessons. Some additional factors that were sufficient to bring such an impact were the teacher's personality and his teaching performance. The teacher's personality and his ways to create a positive, engaging, and comfortable learning atmosphere played such important roles in teaching English practice.

My teacher teaches us casually and she can make the materials easier to be understood (S29)

He always explains in detail but is fun. He likes to make jokes (S30)

The teacher provides easy-to-understand explanations and students are required to practice in each lesson. It made me understand more (S40)

Our teachers provide direct practice such as speaking and listening through songs and dramas (S44)

e. The Importance of Learning Styles in the Process of Learning

The last concern was students' perspectives on how important learning styles were in the process of learning English. Almost all of the students agreed that learning styles were important in the English learning process and some students wrote their reasons for this.

I think it is very important, besides being able to make learning English easier, students will also be more comfortable learning and not get bored easily (S5)

Learning style is very important in the process of learning English. Learning that is in accordance with the interests and learning styles of students will increase students' understanding (S31)

It is very important to make it easier for us to learn to accept the lessons given (S44)

These three comments were chosen because they represented the majority of students' opinions. Based on students' perspectives, the researcher could highlight three positive impacts of learning styles. First, it could naturally make students easier to comprehend and accept the lesson. Second, it made students comfortable in learning. The last, it could help to increase students' learning interests and motivation.

Although most of the respondents have positive perspectives on the importance of learning styles, two students thought otherwise. S8 stated that she did not know, while S35 mentioned that learning styles were not very important. He added that as long as the teacher could carry out the lesson well and the materials were not difficult for him, he would be able to understand the lesson in any kind of learning style.

When students were asked further whether they found any difficulties in accepting the lesson, especially when the teachers did not accommodate their learning styles, the researchers received quite diverse responses and opinions from students. Nine students (S1, S17, S18, S29, S32, S34, S36, S37, and S41) mentioned that it was quite difficult for them to accept the lesson; eight students (S3, S4, S8, S12, S20, S21, S24, and S25) said it was difficult for them. In contrast, four students did not find any difficulties (S2, S19, S26, S39); S7

confidently stated that she got no trouble and never thought about it; the other two respondents (S10 and S13) revealed that it was not difficult for them to accept the lesson.

S23 stated that the difficulties were not always found, it depended on the materials; S30 mentioned that the difficulties depended on the teacher; S35 said that it depended on the subject. Other students claimed that the online learning mode also influenced the learning process. She said that she got difficulties due to online learning (S28), S42 added that because she learned during a pandemic like this, so she believed that it was difficult for her teacher to adjust the lesson with learning styles. Meanwhile, the rest of the respondents refused to give their opinions on this issue.

According to the findings above, students typically gave four responses. First, students found it a little challenging if the teacher did not teach by their preferred learning style. Second, students did not find any difficulties even if the teacher's teaching instruction did not fit their preferred learning style. Third, difficulties in learning sometimes did not only come from the suitability of learning styles but also depend on the subject matter, the teacher's teaching ability, and the conditions of learning. Lastly, some students tend not to pay attention to learning styles and do not even care if the learning process accommodates their learning styles or not.

It is normal for students to have different opinions about their learning styles. Students' awareness, ignorance, and differences in their learning styles are influenced by culture, the background of life, learning exposures, characteristics, or even genetics (Gholami, 2014; Ramaniya, 2021; Triananda, 2022). Understanding learning style has been found to support students in learning more effectively, even though other elements like cognition, emotion, and environment may also influence how someone learns better (Umedilloevna, 2021). Learning style is also adaptable and flexible depending on the situation and personal; so some might feel it works better than others (Ku & Chang, 2011, as cited in Jaapar, Yusof, & Ishak, 2021). Another concern was that some students may not find it difficult to learn, even if the teaching did not accommodate their learning style, but we cannot ignore some of them who find it difficult. If the teacher can teach according to his students' learning styles, then the learning process will be more effective and meaningful for students.

4.2 Discussion

The present study investigates EFL learners' preferences and perspectives on learning styles. Through the investigation, the researcher found out that many students (39 percent) preferred the visual learning style. According to some ASEAN studies, the majority of EFL learners favor the visual learning style (Manipuspika, 2020). Living in the digital era is assumed to be one of the reasons why learners can manage virtual learning even more (Jaapar, Yusof, & Ishak, 2021: 117). This claim occurs in line with the use of LCD projectors that are widely utilized in the classroom. The teacher's explanations are strengthened by the use of pictures and PowerPoint presentations which make it easier for visual students to comprehend the teacher's presentation.

The fact that many studies show the dominance of the visual learning style explains why many students lose their learning interest and focus, especially if the lesson only relies on long lectures (Ngatirin & Zainol, 2020). Visual learners need to visualize what they hear since they sometimes struggle with spoken instructions. For that reason, to meet the needs of the three learning styles (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic), students need to visualize what they hear and then practice what they have learned. In other words, teaching

strategies must accommodate all student learning styles to benefit all students equally. It was also supported by the fact that the gap among the three learning styles in this study was not far which indicated that teachers still had to consider the diversity of learning styles and design lessons that could accommodate students' differences and needs.

Our education is always progressing. We could not only rely on traditional teachings like lectures or teachers' explanations of tenses which sometimes only accommodate auditory learners. Teaching often reflects more on teachers' preferred teaching styles (Fleming et al., 1958); it is what missing out from our education. Teachers must combine visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles in teaching. Faisal (2019) proposes the combination of learning methods to create a more balanced attitude to study and learning; it could also lead to higher and better understanding and retention.

Learning styles affect student activeness in learning which relates to three main human sensory powers, namely sight, hearing, and kinesthetics. Through these three main senses, humans gain access to knowledge, skills, experience, meaning, and character education. Although the theory of learning styles proposes that a person has dominant senses which leads to his dominant learning preference, students still combine all these learning styles in acquiring knowledge and forming character (Jaapar, Yusof & Ishak, 2021). It is also supported by Prithishkumar and Michael (2014) that mention students usually have a particular learning style, but in the process of learning, they might need a combination of learning styles at once. A study from Triananda (2022) shows that the multimodal learning style predominates among EFL students. She states that a lot of students prefer multimodal learning styles, which allow them to assimilate knowledge in multiple ways (Triananda, 2022: 128).

This study also found that most students, 82 percent, were quite aware of their learning styles, even though there was a remaining 18 percent of students that could not be ignored. To define our learning style, we can try all learning methods and reflect on ourselves, then choose the best way that can help us best to retain information. Once we know our learning styles, we can modify our studies which fit to our needs (Umedilloevna, 2021). Another concern was 45, 5 percent of students who did not learn English which aligned with their learning styles. Since not all students can properly relate to learning content, the teaching and learning process must be aligned with students' learning preferences (Jaapar, Yusof & Ishak, 2021). Teachers are required to design lessons that can fulfill students' learning styles (El-Bishouty et al., 2019).

Moreover, most students realize the importance of having good knowledge of learning styles. The learning process basically is the interaction between the teacher, students, and teaching materials where the suitable teaching style would support students a lot in the process of experiencing the target language. Learning styles can have a significant impact on learners' language acquisition (Triananda, 2022: 127). Teachers' knowledge of students learning styles helps them to design, plan, and deliver effective teaching (Jaapar, Yusof & Ishak, 2021). Teachers must be aware of their students' learning styles to provide the most effective and suitable teaching strategies (Awang et al., 2017).

Lastly, some critics of learning styles mention that someone's understanding of learning styles does not improve his learning (Fleming et al., 1958). It was also reflected in this study which showed that not all students were aware of or even cared about their learning styles. Students are clueless about their personal learning preferences (Muluk et al., 2020). Indeed, the knowledge of learning styles does not improve someone's language competence; it is like knowing our TOEFL score does not help us to get a better score.

However, this knowledge could be beneficial if we take the next step to do some actions to improve it. Knowing our learning styles could be a part of the reflective and metacognitive process. When we know ourselves better, we would know what to do. When teachers know their students' learning styles, they could find the best way to teach. As teachers, we should realize that teaching is not only about teaching materials and how much we taught but also about how students could receive the lesson and how much they could learn from us.

5. Conclusion

From this study, it can be concluded that every student must have their own ways of learning the language, whether through visually, such as using a picture dictionary, watching movies, reading, and taking notes, or through auditory by listening to English music, talking with others using English and imitating sounds of the language, or through kinesthetics by playing dramas and games. Even though 39 percent of students chose to learn through visuals, the gap among those three learning styles was not much different. So, the integration of three learning styles in English teaching and learning process is still needed. Most of the students were also aware of their learning styles and it was a very good start for them as Jaapar, Yusof, and Ishak (2021) suggest that teachers need to apply various teaching strategies to accommodate students' learning differences and students should be aware of their preferred learning style so then they could enjoy and master the learning material faster. However, there were still a small number of students who were not aware and even did not care about their learning styles, but it cannot become our reason to ignore students' learning styles in the classroom. Students also stated that they did not always learn according to their learning styles and English learning at schools was also not always able to accommodate their learning preferences. This is certainly a reflection for us as teachers. Although learning style is not the only factor that affects the success of learning, the learning process that considers and accommodates students' learning styles has been shown to have a positive impact on the quality of students' learning. It was also supported by the fact that almost all students agreed that learning styles are important in language learning. Considering the results of this study, the researchers would like to invite all English teachers to give more attention to the way we teach and how students learn, acquire knowledge, and improve their language skills. It is started by the teachers; wise and effective English teachers must be able to make their students learn in and out of the classroom. Teachers' good understanding of students' differences in learning could trigger and inspire teachers to create the best lesson for their students.

This study offers some pedagogical implications for teachers and students in the Indonesian EFL context. First, teaching English materials should consider students' learning styles, proficiency levels, and needs. Second, learning experiences should be organized by involving and combining visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. Third, educators must be aware of students' differences in learning and they have to understand how their students learn, gain knowledge, and receive information. Fourth, teachers need to guide and teach students to find and use their learning styles and be involved more in the language learning process effectively. Last, teachers need to pay attention to the development and progress of their students' language learning. We also need to emphasize that the first thing that teachers should do is helping students to enjoy the language-learning process. When students find enjoyment in learning, they would have the willingness to learn English by themselves. They would do anything to achieve language proficiency. During the process, they would find their own effective learning styles and methods. They would also create

their learning system and habit, set the time and make a learning schedule to learn the language every day, and these learning activities would give a big impact on students' language learning process.

This study has educational value to help and guide teachers and students to think about their learning styles. It would give them some learning options that they might never consider before. However, more studies with a greater number of students are still needed since it was conducted with only 44 students as respondents; it was a small number of populations and could not represent all students in general. Furthermore, the results of this research probably would be different if it is conducted in other places with different learning situations and students' needs. In this case, not all teachers and students were familiar with the learning styles concept and it could be one of the factors that influenced the results. In the end, with any limitations of this study, the researcher expects that this study could provide a little description and information regarding students' preferences and perspectives on learning styles. This study might need to be improved and more researches on this issue need to be done, especially in relation to teaching methods and students' achievement.

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Appendix

VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire (Chislett & Chapman, 2005)

Circle or tick the answer that most represents how you generally behave!

1. When I operate new equipment I generally:
 - a) read the instructions first
 - b) listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
 - c) go ahead and have a go, I can figure it out as I use it
2. When I need directions for traveling I usually:
 - a) look at a map
 - b) ask for spoken directions
 - c) follow my nose and maybe use a compass
3. When I cook a new dish, I like to:
 - a) follow a written recipe
 - b) call a friend for an explanation
 - c) follow my instincts, testing as I cook
4. If I am teaching someone something new, I tend to:
 - a) write instructions down for them
 - b) give them a verbal explanation
 - c) demonstrate first and then let them have a go
5. I tend to say:
 - a) watch how I do it
 - b) listen to me explain
 - c) you have a go
6. During my free time I most enjoy:
 - a) going to museums and galleries
 - b) listening to music and talking to my friends
 - c) playing sports or doing DIY
7. When I go shopping for clothes, I tend to:
 - a) imagine what they would look like on
 - b) discuss them with the shop staff
 - c) try them on and test them out
8. When I am choosing a holiday I usually:
 - a) read lots of brochures
 - b) listen to recommendations from friends
 - c) imagine what it would be like to be there
9. If I was buying a new car, I would:
 - a) read reviews in newspapers and magazines
 - b) discuss what I need with my friends
 - c) test-drive lots of different types
10. When I am learning a new skill, I am most comfortable:
 - a) watching what the teacher is doing
 - b) talking through with the teacher exactly what I'm supposed to do
 - c) giving it a try myself and work it out as I go
11. If I am choosing food off a menu, I tend to:

- a) imagine what the food will look like
 - b) talk through the options in my head or with my partner
 - c) imagine what the food will taste like
12. When I listen to a band, I can't help:
- a) watching the band members and other people in the audience
 - b) listening to the lyrics and the beats
 - c) moving in time with the music
13. When I concentrate, I most often:
- a) focus on the words or the pictures in front of me
 - b) discuss the problem and the possible solutions in my head
 - c) move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils, and touch things
14. I choose household furnishings because I like:
- a) their colors and how they look
 - b) the descriptions the sales-people give me
 - c) their textures and what it feels like to touch them
15. My first memory is of:
- a) looking at something
 - b) being spoken to
 - c) doing something
16. When I am anxious, I:
- a) visualize the worst-case scenarios
 - b) talk over in my head what worries me most
 - c) can't sit still, fiddle, and move around constantly
17. I feel especially connected to other people because of:
- a) how they look
 - b) what they say to me
 - c) how they make me feel
18. When I have to revise for an exam, I generally:
- a) write lots of revision notes and diagrams
 - b) talk over my notes, alone or with other people
 - c) imagine making the movement or creating the formula
19. If I am explaining to someone I tend to:
- a) show them what I mean
 - b) explain to them in different ways until they understand
 - c) encourage them to try and talk them through my idea as they do it
20. I really love:
- a) watching films, photography, looking at art or people watching
 - b) listening to music, the radio, or talking to friends
 - c) taking part in sporting activities, eating fine foods and wines, or dancing
21. Most of my free time is spent:
- a) watching television
 - b) talking to friends
 - c) doing physical activity or making things
22. When I first contact a new person, I usually:
- a) arrange a face-to-face meeting
 - b) talk to them on the telephone
 - c) try to get together whilst doing something else, such as an activity or a meal

23. I first notice how people:
 - a) look and dress
 - b) sound and speak
 - c) stand and move
24. If I am angry, I tend to:
 - a) keep replaying in my mind what it is that has upset me
 - b) raise my voice and tell people how I feel
 - c) stamp about, slam doors, and physically demonstrate my anger
25. I find it easiest to remember:
 - a) faces
 - b) names
 - c) things I have done
26. I think that you can tell if someone is lying if:
 - a) they avoid looking at you
 - b) their voices changes
 - c) they give me funny vibes
27. When I meet an old friend:
 - a) I say —it's great to see you!
 - b) I say —it's great to hear from you!
 - c) I give them a hug or a handshake
28. I remember things best by:
 - a) writing notes or keeping printed details
 - b) saying them aloud or repeating words and key points in my head
 - c) doing and practicing the activity or imagining it being done
29. If I have to complain about faulty goods, I am most comfortable:
 - a) writing a letter
 - b) complaining over the phone
 - c) taking the item back to the store or posting it to the head office
30. I tend to say:
 - a) I see what you mean
 - b) I hear what you are saying
 - c) I know how you feel

Questionnaire of Students' Understanding of Their Learning Styles in English Learning Context

1. Do you know your learning style? (Yes/No)
If you are aware of it, what is your learning style?
2. Do you learn English based on your learning style?
If you said yes, can you tell me how your learning style helps you to learn the language?
3. Do your English teachers accommodate your learning styles in English learning activities in the classroom?
If you said yes, can you tell me the best learning English experience with your teacher?
If you said no, do you find it difficult to accept the lesson?
4. In your opinion, how important is a learning style in the process of learning English?