

EFL Learners Preference of Learning Style in ESP Class

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ABSTRACT

Understanding students learning style were prior for every teacher and lecturer in order to help student aware of their learning style. It helped student understand how they should learn and empower them to achieve the learning substantives. Moreover, none of the research been conducted learning style to English as Specific Purpose class, that is become the research gap. The aim of this study was to identify students learning styles. The participant were thirty seven students from English as Specific Purpose class, majored shipping management and vessel engineering. The instrument that used for collecting data was Innovative Learning Experience (I.L.E) adapted from Centre for Innovative Teaching Experiences (C.I.T.E.) supported by questionnaires. The Finding illustrated that several students use of multimodal learning styles preferences and also some of them dominant only in one style. Moreover, the dominant of learning style for students in the faculty of shipping management was the Social Group (45%). These students learn best when in a group. In contrast the minor learning styles in this faculty was the Expressive Oral (0%). Thus, the dominant of learning style for students in the faculty of vessel engineering were Kinesthetic Tactile (63%), these students learn better when being involved, and Social Group (63%), these students learn best when in a group. In reverse the minor learning styles in this faculty were the Social Individual (13%), Expressive Oral (13%), and Expressive Written (13%).

Keywords: Learning Styles, EFL Learners, Dominant Learning Styles, ESP Class

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning is a process of gaining knowledge by four possible skills that learners can. Usually the knowledge will be sent by the presentation or speech from their lecturer. This is very common way. Moreover, this era has change, we can learn by any other possible media and it is pretty easy to access it. English Foreign Learner (EFL) specially should able to develop their ability or skill by finding more possible way to learn. That so called learning style. Every learners has different learning style. Some believe that students need to maintain a starting point to think about or understanding how they learn [1-2]. It also believe that it allowing students to be more independent as learners to play an interactive learning by their own learning.

To make university learners gaining epistemological access and succeed in academic by their own habit of disciplines and awareness, learning styles should be promoted. The knowledge of learning styles gives learners information on why they learn differently

compared with other learners. And also the awareness of learning styles will empower learners to be self-directed, independent and active learners.

Learners commonly have a preference for a specific learning style. The preferred learning style shows their capabilities and past learning experiences [3]. In some cases learners may adopt a different learning style, but also maintain a preference for a specific learning style. Especially in English Specific Purpose (ESP) class need learning style to enable learner to acquire problem-solving skills. None of learning style that is dominant to another but learning styles have different attributes. Recognizing the differences way students learn is the first step to raise learners' awareness of their own learning styles. When they are aware of it, they will learn quickly, easily and eventually will succeed in their study. As learners succeed at it, the more possible they take ownership of their learning [4]. Understanding students learning style were prior for every teacher and lecturer in order to help student aware of their learning style. It helped student understand how they should

learn and empower them to achieve the learning substantives. Moreover, none of the research been conducted learning style to English as Specific Purpose class, that is become the research gap. The aim of this study was to identify students learning styles.

Students are very unique, each student has its own characteristics that are different from one another. If the teacher teaches students based on their characteristics, it will enable the students to develop their potential deeper and more to the maximum, because they learn in the way and the environment they like. Students' learning style is one of the factor that will make the students success in their learning.

Learning style is broadly defined as the beliefs, habits, and preferences that affect how an individual navigates the learning environment [5]. It means every students has their own preference for how material is presented by the teacher, for instance, visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic presentation and so on. It is also possible that one students will engage into more than one learning style. Learning style also involves other aspects of learning, such as, emotional, including social, and physiological factors. It is may be relatively stable over time and individuals may adapt to their learning style according to a specific learning cases or scenario.

Learning styles that based on education, usually targeting auditory and visual learners, is a common practice from kindergarten until varsity level of education. Notice to a premise of learning styles is that teaching to a student's preferred style are resulting the optimal learning and development of the students. For instance, it is hypothesized that students which classified as visual learning style will recall or remember more material when the content is presented in a visual form. In contrast, students classified as auditory learning style will recall and remember more when the content is presented in an audio form. It is also the same with the other learning style, in this study there are nine learning style that will be identify to the students, they are, kinesthetic style, social individual, social group, visual language, expressive oral, expressive written, visual numerical, auditory language, and auditory numerical. The table below describe the learning style and the explanation.

Table 1. Learning Style Type

Learning Styles	Explanation
Kinesthetic Tactile	This learning style indicate that students learn best from when they involved to the scenario or learning process.
Social Individual	This learning style indicate that students learn best by being alone or study alone.
Social Group	This learning style indicate that

	students learn best by study in group
Visual Language	This learning style indicate that students learn best by seeing the material or information when it is presented to them.
Expressive Oral	This learning style indicate that students learn best from when they can express themselves orally
Expressive Written	This learning style indicate that students learn best from when they can express themselves in written form
Visual Numerical	This learning style indicate that students learn best from seeing number when it is presented to them.
Auditory Language	This learning style indicate that students learn best from hearing the material when it is presented to them.
Auditory Numerical	This learning style indicate that students learn best from hearing number when it is presented to them.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) class is a term for a subset of English as a second or foreign language that usually refers to teach the English language to students with reference to the particular vocabulary as they need. This day people more aware that general English curriculums did not meet learners' needs. As English continues to dominate as the lingua franca of media, business, technology, education and so on, the need for ESP is increasing so fast. English for specific purposes (ESP) is a term that refers to teaching or studying English for a particular profession (for instance, Maritime Law, Computers, and Business). ESP is a type of English language teaching or goal oriented language learning [6]. It means that there is a specific reason why English is learned. Refers to the learner has a certain goal that is want to be reached. Thus, those specific goals are closely linked with learners' interest and in various disciplines too. So, students learn English not only because they are interested in English language but because they have to accomplish something in English. This paper will discuss about understanding students learning style in

English Specific Purpose Class. The aim of this study was to identify students learning styles.

2. METHOD

This study was conducted by qualitative research design. Qualitative is conducted through an intense and or prolonged contact with a field or life situation [7]. Based on that this study describes and explain the condition of the research based on the phenomena under observation or investigation that is presented systematically and accurately about the current of study. The instrument that used for collecting data was Innovative Learning Experience (I.L.E) adapted from Centre for Innovative Teaching Experiences (C.I.T.E.) supported by questionnaires. The participants were thirty seven college from English as Specific Purpose class, majored shipping management and vessel engineering. The participants are from AkademikMaritim Medan, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia. The 37 participants included 27 men and 10 women, ranged in age from 18 to 24 years old. The process of collecting data directly is by giving out questionnaires to the participants and ask them to fill out the paper.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will giving summary of student scores on learning styles assessment questionnaire. The findings of scores from the learning styles assessment questionnaire shows the different learning styles among students. The scores is valid because it confirm since the participants ability and able to measure their learning styles and, as a result it assess their styles. There are 2 table that will be discuss in this chapter. The researcher got the complete data from all the participants. The researcher had analyzed the data systematically and accurately. The data was analyzed in order to draw conclusion about the objective of the study. Tables 4.1 below contain summaries of learners' scores on the learning styles assessment instrument from faculty of engineering maritime, as follow:

Table 2. Faculty of Engineering of Maritime Scores on the Learning Styles Assessment Instrument

Learning Styles	Frequency	Percentage of Student (%)
Kinesthetic Tactile	5	63
Social Individual	1	13
Social Group	5	63
Visual Language	2	26
Expressive Oral	1	13

Expressive Written	1	14
Visual Numerical	2	26
Auditory Language	3	38
Auditory Numerical	2	26

The dominant learning style for students in the faculty of engineering of maritime was the kinaesthetic tactile with 5 frequency and 63 percentage and with 5 frequency and 63 percentage. Kinaesthetic tactile learns best when they are involved precisely and understand the work much better when they are being an active participants. Comment from the students "Being involve in a certain project make me understand it better". Social group learns best when in a group. They gain the knowledge when they study with friends to share or communicate their intelligence each other. Comment from the students "What so good from being learn with friend is that I can ask my friends directly when I don't know the answer".

There are three minor learning styles in this faculty, they were the social individual with 1 frequency and 13 percentage, the expressive oral with 1 frequency and 13 percentage, lastly the expressive written with 1 frequency and 13 percentage. Social Individual learns like to study by their selves or alone, they more focus when they don't get any distraction from their environment. Comment from the students "I don't really enjoy learn when I hear some voice around me, it really stressed me out, I never able to do my homework in class, my friends also know that I always do my part of group discussion at home". Expressive oral learns best when they can express themselves orally and feel ease when talking about their ideas to others. Comment from the students "I like to use my body language too when I talk, it is easier when I speak and talk with my hands moving around". Expressive written is the contradict side of expressive oral, here, they like to express themselves in written form like in paper based. Comment from the students "I like to take a note and make my note tidy with some colorful pen".

Table 3. Faculty of Shipping Management Scores on the Learning Styles Assessment Instrument.

Learning Styles	Frequency	Percentage of Student (%)
Kinesthetic Tactile	7	24
Social Individual	8	28
Social Group	13	45
Visual Language	6	21
Expressive Oral	0	0
Expressive Written	5	17
Visual Numerical	3	10
Auditory Language	4	14
Auditory Numerical	1	3

The dominant learning style for students in the faculty of shipping management was the social group with 13 frequency and 45 percentage. Social group learns best when in a group. They gain the knowledge when they study with friends to share or communicate their intelligence each other. Comment from the students “The more the merrier; I enjoy learn in crowded place and with friends”. Follow by the social individual with 8 frequency and 28 percentage. Social individual like to study by their selves or alone, they more focus when they don’t get any distraction from their environment. The minor style found from this faculty is Expressive Oral with 0 frequency and 0 percentage. Followed by auditory numerical with 1 frequency and 3 percentage. Auditory numerical learn best from hearing numbers.

4. CONCLUSION

This research of learning styles assessment gives insight to every individual whether major or minor learning styles. From both of the learning styles questionnaire and the writing exercise for the comment, it showed that learners in both faculties have dominant learning styles that they employ in preference to others. In general, the Finding illustrated that several students use of multimodal learning styles preferences and also some of them dominant only in one style. Moreover, the dominant of learning style for students in the faculty of shipping management was the Social Group (45%). These students learn best when in a group. In contrast the minor learning styles in this faculty was the Expressive Oral (0%). Thus, the dominant of learning style for students in the faculty of vessel engineering were Kinesthetic Tactile (63%), these students learn

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