

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE AND THEIR LISTENING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract:

This research aimed to find a correlation between students' learning style and their achievement in listening comprehension. The method employed in this study was a quantitative method through correlational research design. The data were gathered by distributing learning style questionnaire through Google Forms and testing a listening comprehension for 80 students of twelfth grade of SMAN 7 Palembang. The data were analyzed by Spearman Rank-Order. Based on the data analyses, for analytical learner, the rho-obtained (.161) was lower than the r-table (0.320); for communicative learner, the rho-obtained (.500) was lower than the r-table (0.997); for authority-oriented learner, the

rho-obtained (.229) was lower than r-table (0.432); and the last, for mixed-type learner style, the rho-obtained was (-.393) was lower than r-table (0.482). It means that the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that there was no significant correlation between students' learning style and their listening comprehension achievement.

Keywords:

Achievement;
Learning style;
Listening comprehension.

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INTRODUCTION

English has been a global language that is spoken by the majority of people worldwide. As an international language, English has been extensively used to communicate among people from various backgrounds such as economics, entertainment, politics, and education (Rao, 2019; Reddy, 2016). In educational context, it has become an integral aspect of teaching and learning process. Mappiasse and Sihes (2014), in their study, asserted that the language has long been regarded as a vital part of the educational system of Indonesia. Consequently, the students are required to possess the competency to achieve success in learning. As Sulistiyo (2015) claimed, English is a compulsory subject at all levels of education that requires teachers to demonstrate four competencies, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each of these skills is crucial in language learning. Among those skills, listening is widely acknowledged as the key ability required for language acquisition (Nunan, 1998, as cited in Sadighi & Zare, 2006). Learners are able to comprehend and process the spoken information by listening in the first place. In line with that, Oxford (1990) stated that listening skills can aid in the development of other linguistic skills. Therefore, developing listening skills is essential for both teachers and students in learning English.

Despite the importance, listening is considered neglected by some teachers and students as well. As claimed by Osada (2004), listening is not given attention by both teachers and learners. They are more into enhancing other skills. Besides, Öztürk (2018) reported that most teachers believe students' listening skill is developed naturally by themselves so that there is no need to teach listening. Hence, problems in listening comprehension are experienced by many EFL learners.

In language learning, there are several factors affecting students' language achievement. Language learners, according to Ellis (2008), differ on a number of dimensions, which are assumed to affect language learning outcomes, including personality, motivation, learning style, aptitude, and age. Among those mentioned factors, learning style needs to be considered, in which, according to Mulyadi et al. (2017), by understanding students' learning styles, educators may assist students with appropriate strategies.

According to Naning and Hayati (2011), some students benefit from watching and observing, while others learn better by listening to lectures, and physically moving. Knowing and understanding students' learning style can be beneficial for learners and educators. Chiya (2003) as cited in Jowkar (2012) believed that considering students' preferential way of learning and enhancing learning strategies for their successful learning is a must for the teachers. When there is awareness of the students' learning styles, educators

will be able to provide an excellent map to their students. Moreover, each learning style requires different treatment, material, and the way the teacher delivers the lesson. As mentioned by Magfirah (2018), when a teacher employs inadequate instructional methods, students become disengaged and unmotivated. Therefore, an educator who acknowledges students' learning styles is assumed to develop a teaching strategy that is appropriate for the students' needs.

A preliminary study was done by conducting an interview with an English teacher of SMAN 7 Palembang. She stated that learning style is one of the important factors teachers must acknowledge, since students might vary in the way of learning, for instance, in order to obtain the knowledge; one prefers to read; the other one prefers to listen. Therefore, she often provides various activities to assist the students to get the best results in English subject, particularly in listening. Some previous related studies also had been reviewed. Firstly, a study by Bidabadi and Yamat (2011) on Iranian EFL students showed that listening skills of the learners were shown to be positively correlated with their learning styles. Another study by Nurkhofifah (2021) on the tenth grade of SMAN 1 Kepohbaru showed that the students' learning style positively correlated with their English skill achievement. However, a study by Faridah (2014) on the students of SMAN 1 Pamijahan Bogor showed no significant association between students' learning styles and their listening achievement. The other study by Afriani (2017) also indicated that learning styles do not affect listening comprehension of the students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning Style

Many experts have defined what learning style is. According to Fleming (2012), learning style is a typical, consistent method of obtaining information, abilities, or attitudes through studying or experiencing. In line with that, Brown (2007) defined learning style as a method to taking in and processing the lesson in a classroom environment that differentiate an individual from someone else. Celce-Murcia (2001) stated that learning style is the general approach students adopted in learning a new language or other objects. Moreover, it is also described as the manners or certain methods that deal with perception, engagement, and reaction towards the stimuli in the learning circumstances (Gilakjani, 2012). In short, learning style is a term for a specific approach a learner applies in learning and organizing the new knowledge.

Dimensions of Learning Style

Learning style classification reviewed in this study was developed by Willing (1988), since it was made for language learning purpose. However, it indicated four distinct types of learning styles.

(1) Concrete Style

Concrete style represents kinesthetically oriented learners. This type of learner prefers to acquire information by means of physical approaches and concrete methods. In other words, they favor learning through games, acting out, and utilizing English outside the classroom.

(2) Analytical Style

Analytical style deals with cognitive strategies. As mentioned by Bidabadi and Yamat (2012), this type of learner not only thoroughly analyzes structures and has a tremendous enthusiasm in them, but also works independently on challenges.

(3) Communicative Style

Communicative style stands for communicative approaches in language learning. This type of learner tends to learn new words by hearing them and actively participating in communicating activities, such as watching English content, conversing in English with friends and paying attention to native speakers.

(4) Authority-Oriented Style

Authority-oriented style describes equally as dependable approaches in learning. In this type, Wong and Nunan (2011) mentioned that the learner actively acquires and organizes information with the help of a teacher. As an example, the learner would like their teacher to explain everything to them. Additionally, this type of learner tends to have their own textbooks and to take notes of the information in a notebook.

Listening Comprehension

In language learning, when learners comprehend the spoken information, there is enough input for them to set up speaking. Thus, many researchers defined listening as an active process. According to Goh and Vandergrift (2021), listening is a cognitive process that occurs in the listener's mind. As stated in Celce-Murcia (2001), it occurs when sounds are detected, patterns in spoken language are identified, and meaning is created. It is known as the ability of receiving and decoding the spoken language. In line with that, Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) emphasized listening comprehension as the different progress in language acquisition, which involves recognizing utterances, lexical items, and meaning construction based on contextual information and prior knowledge. Moreover, according to Tyagi (2013), listening involves an active process of reaching the speaker's intention and

being emotionally attached to the speaker, fostering empathy and connection of the human relation.

Aspects of Listening

Types of Listening

In classroom settings, listening may vary depending on the aim of the listening. Rost (2011) proposed an overview of six dimensions of listening. They are (1) intensive listening, in which a learner listens attentively to expressions in order to decipher and analyze them; (2) selective listening, which refers to paying attention of utterances in order to obtain certain facts to complete assignments; (3) interactive listening, whereas learners actively participate in the process of understanding by providing feedback, questions, and encouragement; (4) extensive listening, which refers to listening and remaining in the input for long-term purposes of learning the subject; (5) responsive listening, whereas the objective is to elicit a reaction from the audience; (6) autonomous listening, which deals with no guidance of an instructor that the learners are charged with selecting the resources, completing the assignments, and assessment.

The Importance of Listening

In general, the ability to listen carefully, according to Tyagi (2013), will allow an individual to: (1) comprehend assignments attentively and find what is expected from him; (2) develop relationship with co-workers; (3) express encouragement; (4) manage a teamwork setting more effectively; (5) attempt to find a solution together; (6) answer questions; and (7) decipher underlying meanings of others' statements.

Listening Strategies

In listening, there are methods that can assist the development of the skill. Rost (2011) classified them into two categories. First, top-down strategies, where the listeners use prior knowledge of the topic, the situation or context, to help in interpreting what is heard and anticipating what will follow. Second, bottom-up strategies, where the listeners are completely reliant on what they hear, including the pronunciation, lexical items, and structures to generate interpretation.

Listening Achievement

In learning listening, students are demanded to get achievement as the measurement of their success in listening. Listening achievement, according to Faridah (2014), refers to students' mastery of listening skills measured by the a test score. In the present study, listening achievement represents the students' academic results yielded from a listening test as the measurement.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative method through correlational research design. In this method, a statistical correlation test measures and describes the degree of association of variables (Creswell, 2012). Hence, the researcher investigated the possibility of correlation between students' learning style as the independent variable and their English achievement in listening comprehension as the dependent variable of the study.

Population and Sampling

The twelfth grade of SMAN 7 Palembang was drawn as the population of the present study. Based on the data, in the 12th grade of SMAN 7 Palembang, there were nine classes that consisted of six science classes and three social classes, with 40 students in each class. To draw the sample, cluster random sampling was applied, by which a lottery was employed to determine the chosen classes to be studied. Therefore, the sample of the study consisted of two classes with 40 students each class.

Data Collection and Analysis

In collecting the data, Willing's learning style questionnaire was applied to find out the preferences of the students in learning. It was originally contained 30 questions. However, since it was adopted from Kamiluddin (2015), which had been modified purposely, it consisted of 24 items of four-point likert-scale eventually. Meanwhile TOEFL Junior listening test was conducted to measure students' achievement in listening. There were 42 items that represented some listening subskills. In addition, the questionnaire was distributed to students through Google Forms, whereas the listening test was performed directly in the classroom.

After the validity, the learning style of the students was measured using the 19 items of likert-scale questionnaire range from 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree. The data of learning style then were estimated by performing calculation and assigning the highest score of the style as the learning style of a student. Besides, the listening comprehension data were converted into scaled scores ranged from 0 to 100.

Prerequisite Analysis

Normality Test

Kolmogorov-Smirnov was applied to find out the normality. The data are considered to be normally distributed if the p-value is greater than 0.05. The results of the test displayed in the table below shows that the coefficients

from each variable were .001 for Analytical, .001 for Communicative, and .000 for Concrete, as well as Authority-oriented. They were lower than 0.05, so the datasets are considered not normally distributed. It is assumed to be happened for the outliers in the data set. In contrast, the result for students' listening comprehension scores shows that the significant value was .184, which is higher than 0.05. Thus, the dataset of listening comprehension achievement is considered normally distributed.

Table 1
The Results of Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov Test	Learning Style				List. Achieve.
	A	Com	Con	AO	
N	80	80	80	80	80
Asymp. Sig (2-tailed)	.001	.001	.000	.000	.184

Linearity Test

One-way Anova was performed to see the deviation from linearity. The results of the test indicated that the deviation from linearity between learning style in total and listening achievement was .283, which was higher than 0.05. To conclude, the datasets had linear relationship.

Table 2
The Results of Linearity Test

ANOVA Table		Sig.
Listening Achievement *	Deviation from Linearity	.283
Learning Styles		

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The Results of Students' Learning Style

The results of the questionnaire revealed that, 38 out of 80 students (48%), were analytical learners, 22 students (28%) were identified as authority-oriented learners, three students (4%) were the communicative ones, and 17 of them (21%) were the mixed-type students. It showed that almost half of the students were analytical learners.

Table 3
The Distribution of Learning Style

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Learning Style	Analytical	38	48%
	Communicative	3	4%
	Concrete	0	0
	Teacher-oriented	22	28%
	Mixed-type	17	21%
Total		80	100%

The Results of Students' Listening Comprehension Achievement

The results obtained from the listening test showed that there were fifteen students who could manage to be having good score category (19%), most of them (61%) got the average level in their listening achievement, while the rests were on the lower category.

Table 4
The Distribution of Listening Comprehension Achievement

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Listening Comp. Achievement	Very Good	0	0
	Good	15	19%
	Average	49	61%
	Poor	13	16%
	Very Poor	3	4%
Total		80	100%

The Correlation between Students' Learning Style and their Listening Comprehension Achievement

Spearman Rank-Order Correlation was performed to find out the correlation among variables. To answer the first research problem, the researcher correlated the students' learning style in each type and their listening scores. The results are displayed in the following table.

Table 5
Correlation between Learning Styles and Listening Achievement

Spearman-Rank Order Correlation	Learning Style * List. Achievement			
	A	Com	AO	Mixed
Correlation Coefficient	.161	.500	.229	-.393
Sig.	.335	.667	.305	.119
N	38	3	22	17

The results of the test revealed that the correlation between learning styles, analytical; communicative; authority-oriented, and mixed-type, and listening comprehension achievement were .161 (<0.320), .500 (<0.997), .229 (<0.432), and $-.393$ (<0.482) respectively. The rhos-obtained were lower than the r-table. In other words, there was no significant correlation between students' learning style and their listening comprehension achievement.

The Contribution of Students' Learning Style to their Listening Comprehension Achievement

For the data of correlational analyses above showed no significant correlation between variables, further analysis was no longer needed to be performed. Accordingly, the second research question was eliminated.

Interpretations

The interpretations were written to explain the findings of the research. The data collected from both learning style questionnaire and listening test were all in the form of multiple choice. First, the results of the Learning Style questionnaires represented the way of language learners in learning English. The student who scored high in one style was possible to have the lowest score in other styles, or it could be the same score for each style. In this case, the students could be categorized as the mixed-type learners.

The result of learning style indicated that 48% of the students were identified as analytical learners. It means that they tend to like grammar, also to be logical, independent, and work with great details. 28% of the students were authority-oriented learners, which means that they tend to learn best in traditional classrooms, whereas the teacher acts as the source of authority. They are dependable, which prefer the teacher explains everything. They write the materials on notebooks and dislike discussions. 4% of the students were the communicative learners, which means that they prefer to have group discussion and social interaction rather than language analysis in language learning. However, 21% of them were classified as the mixed-type learners. This type of students have the same level of two or more types.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the finding, it was concluded that there was no significant correlation between students' learning style and their listening comprehension achievement. In other words, the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted and the alternative one (H_a) was rejected. It could be said that the students' learning style had no dominant influence on listening achievement. There might be other potential factors that affected their achievement, such as motivation, interest, personality, and instructional strategy. It also means that the students,

who were well-aware of their learning style and applied it efficiently, did not certify to have good listening achievement and, in the same way, the students, with bad understanding of it, did not certify to have bad listening achievement. The fact that learning style was not the main factor influenced students' listening comprehension achievement, means both teachers and students have to be more aware of the learning style and make a good use of it. If possible, teachers also have to identify other appropriate influences that could improve students' learning achievement, especially the listening comprehension. In relation to listening achievement, since English is a foreign language, it is important for teachers to motivate their students to practice listening more frequently by providing them a considerable amount of various listening activities. Second, the researcher would like to suggest the future researchers to develop a more sufficient and clearer language learning questionnaire, that could really measure the language learners' way in learning English. They could also extend the study with other variables, such as motivation, interest, personality, and strategy, in order to reveal other prospective aspects that affect and enhance the quality of listening skill.

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