

# Students' Learning Style and Its Implication on Motivation to Learn English

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**Abstract:** Often times, students learn the English language in a classroom setting which comes with a rigid way to learn the language. Classroom learning is definitely very important, but there's something else that surpasses this method of learning. It is finding the way that students enjoy, hence, their preferred Learning Styles (like watching movies, playing games and doing exercises) and then using that as a catalyst to form their own learning. The purpose of this study is to propose that knowing the students' learning style/styles and using the prescribed online materials and activities are effective for them to make the effort to learn the English language on their own. This study is based on the VAKT model (auditory, visual, kinesthetic and tactile). A questionnaire consisting of 24 questions was adapted and applied. The students were asked to check mark in the column that best matches their preference and add up their score to find out whether they are an auditory, visual or kinesthetic-tactile learner. A number of online materials and activities have been proposed according to their individual Learning Styles to improve their independent learning of the English language. Data were analysed through frequency values (f) and percentage values (%). According to the result, the students found that knowing their learning styles and using the recommended activities according to their learning styles make learning the English language more enjoyable and, thus, help improve their proficiency in the language.

**Keywords:** learning styles; VAKT model; independent learning.



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Students learn English in various ways. Some may learn better by listening to audios given by the teacher. However, there are also students who learn best through visualization and movements. This leads to the term "learning style", defined by Ortega (2009), as the learner's most preferable way of learning in which he/she finds it easy to perceive, remember, and use information or knowledge. It is now proven that different people learn differently (Alqunayeer & Zamir, 2015; Peyman et al., 2014). Students need to explore, identify and recognize their learning style in order to gain the most from their learning. Thus, learning methods and materials that suit the students' learning styles are assumed to result in an effective language learning (Rinekso, 2021).

The concept of learning styles is already widely accepted, especially among teachers and language researchers. The learning style concept is practical to be used in an educational context, that

much is obvious. When students learn in a method that they enjoy, their learning performance is at its best, and greater accomplishment will follow (Rinekso, 2021).

Moreover, the developments in education from teaching centered to learning centered and from teacher centered to student centered set off the practise of focusing on learning characteristics because of how information is accessed and how much individual variances and characteristics matter when it comes to learning (Gencel, 2007). Therefore, it is crucial to identify students' learning styles and cater learning instructions to them in order to promote independent long-term learning.

## 2. METHOD & MATERIAL

The respondents of the study consisted of 80 students who are currently taking the third semester diploma level English in UiTM Kelantan branch. As a means of collecting data, a questionnaire was used to determine which learning styles the students have. It was adapted from Dunn and Dunn's VAKT model which employs the three main sensory receivers: Visual, Auditory, and Kinaesthetic to determine the students' dominant learning style. The model is also known as VAKT (Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Tactile (Coffield et al., 2004). A total of 24 questions were included in the questionnaire. The students were asked to check the column that best matches their preference and add up their scores to find out whether they are an auditory, visual or kinaesthetic-tactile learner. A number of online materials and activities have been proposed according to their individual learning styles to improve their independent learning of the English language. Data were analysed through frequency values (f) and percentage values (%).

## 3. FINDINGS

The analysis was carried out based on 2 major aspects: to determine the students' learning style and whether knowing their learning styles and carry out learning activities appropriate to their learning styles improve their learning of the English language.

### 3.1 Analysis on students' learning styles

**Table 1.** Students' learning style.

<b>Learning Styles</b>	<b>Frequency values (f)</b>	<b>Percentage values (%)</b>
Visual	50	62.5
Auditory	12	15
Kinesthetic-Tactile	18	22.5

Table 1 shows the findings obtained from the survey to determine the students' learning styles. The learning styles were grouped into three groups: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic-tactile. A total of 50 respondents (62.5%) were visual learners, 12 students (15.0%) were auditory learners, and 18 students (22.5%) were kinaesthetic learners.

3.2 Analysis on the effects of learning styles on students' language learning

**Table 2.** Effects of learning styles on students' language learning.

Question	Frequency values (f)	Percentage values (%)
I feel more interested to learn English after knowing which type of learner I am.	62	18
Learning English is easier when I know which type of learner I am.	75	5
I feel more motivated to learn English using online materials.	69	11
Knowing which type of learner I am and doing the appropriate exercises make learning English much more enjoyable for me.	79	1
I will use the recommended online materials on my own to improve my English.	80	0

According to Table 2, 62 (77.5%) respondents agree that they feel more interested to learn English after knowing which type of learner they are and when asked if learning English is easier when they know which type of learner they are, 75 (93.75%) agree. On the other hand, 69 (86.25%) agree that they feel more motivated to learn English using online materials. Almost all of the respondents 79 (98.75%) agree that knowing which type of learner they are and doing the appropriate exercises make learning English much more enjoyable for them. In addition, 75 (93.75%) of the respondents agree that knowing which type of learner they are and doing the appropriate exercises make learning English much more enjoyable for them. Lastly, all 80 (100%) of the respondents agree that they will make use of the recommended online materials on their own to improve their English.

**4. DISCUSSION**

As indicated in Figure 1, visual style was the most favoured learning style among the respondents (62.5%) followed by kinaesthetic-tactile learning style (22.5%), while auditory learning style was the least favoured learning style (15.0%).

This shows that most respondents (62.5%) learn better from seeing words or pictures. They remember information well through reading or taking notes of lectures (Reid, 1995). In addition, the findings revealed that some of the respondents (22.5%) preferred kinaesthetic-tactile learning style. They learn best through touching, exploring the world around them, and experiments. In addition, the findings also revealed that the least preferred learning style is auditory learning style chosen by the least number of respondents (15.0%). They learn best through listening or hearing. According to Reid (1995), they can remember and understand information better if they hear them.

From the study, it was found that most respondents agree that knowing which is their learning style and doing the activities recommended for their learning style have positive effects on learning the English language. They feel that they become more interested to learn English, learning the language becomes much easier, they become more motivated to learn, the exercises become more enjoyable and they will use the recommended activities for their own learning.

**5. CONCLUSION**

The results obtained in this study have shown that it will be very useful to determine what learning style students have by applying similar questionnaires in the classrooms. It will be very useful if the students are given the questionnaire at the start of the semester and use the recommended

activities based on their learning styles. The findings indicate that matching the students' learning styles with the appropriate English language learning activities can have a positive impact on the students' language learning experience. Therefore, educators should identify their students' preferred learning styles to enhance the students' achievement.

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