



اَوْتِيُوْ رَسِيْئِيْوِيْ تِيْكَوْ لُوْ كِيْ مَارَا  
UNIVERSITI  
TEKNOLOGI  
MARA

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**INVESTIGATING THE LANGUAGE LEARNING STYLES  
OF MALAYSIAN ESL LEARNERS: ARE THE  
LECTURERS AWARE OF THESE PREFERENCES?**

**NURUL BAZILAH BINTI ABD. HAMID**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of

**Master of Education (TESL)**

**Faculty of Education**

**April 2011**

## DECLARATION

**“I hereby declare that the work of this dissertation is produced on my own. The resources that are used to complete this dissertation are fully acknowledged in quotations and referred to in references”.**

14 / 4 / 2011

**DATE**

Nurul Bazilah

**NURUL BAZILAH BINTI ABD. HAMID**

**2009650872**

## PENGAKUAN

**“Saya akui bahawa karya ini adalah karya saya sendiri, kecuali nukilan dan ringkasan yang setiap satunya telah saya nyatakan sumbernya”.**

14 / 4 / 2011

**TARIKH**

Nurul Bazilah

**NURUL BAZILAH BINTI ABD. HAMID**

**2009650872**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful”

I wish to express ‘Syukur Alhamdulillah’, with the patience and determination given by Allah the Almighty, I am able to complete this dissertation. Without His blessing, I would not have been able to find the strength to achieve what I have in such a short period of time.

First and foremost, I would like to convey my sincerest appreciation to my supervisor, Madam Roslind Xavier Thambusamy, who has provided me with the necessary guidance and assistance to ensure that I complete this dissertation on time. Her knowledge and wisdom have helped me tremendously in perfecting my written work. It will never be possible for me to repay the time and energy that Madam Roslind has spent throughout this whole process, as without her help, this research would definitely be impossible to complete

I would also like to express my never-ending gratitude to my parents and siblings for having to put up the nuisances that I have caused throughout the completion of this study. I owe a special debt to them for their constant financial, emotional and spiritual supports.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the learners and lecturers from the American Degree Foundation Program in INTEC who have allocated their time to assist me in this research. Their opinions and feedbacks have been nothing but valuable. Thank you very much to all.

## **ABSTRACT**

This research aimed to investigate the preferred language learning styles of pre-university ESL learners in Malaysia, as well as the extent to which the lecturers are aware of these preferences. A total of 136 learners were involved in this study, along with six language lecturers. A 13-item language learning preference questionnaire adopted from Brindley's (1984) research was employed to elicit information from the respondents. The results obtained from the questionnaire revealed that an overwhelming number of learners preferred a more communicative type of learning, and appreciated being given the freedom to learn by listening and interacting with their fellow peers. They could also be categorized as being both auditory and visual learners. Moreover, the findings indicated that the lecturers were positively aware of the learners' learning preferences in most instances. Therefore, it is highlighted that cooperation from lecturers and learners in identifying the latter's preferred learning styles is imperative to ensure more beneficial learning outcomes.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Background of the Study**

The recent movement that is taking place in the language teaching and learning world; from practicing the teacher-centered approach to a more student-centered one, calls for the crucial need for educators to understand the ways in which their learners prefer to learn. It is now essentially important for them to realize that their learners are each their own individual, who have different preferences when acquiring a particular language. It is without a doubt that learners learn and comprehend knowledge in various ways. Some might prefer learning on their own, while others might enjoy studying in groups and getting themselves involved in discussions. Some learners might also like to merely listen to class lectures more than they do carrying out hands-on activities or experimentations. These different methods of gaining knowledge and information are better referred to as learning preferences or learning styles.

To be considered as an effective teacher, one should always be able to provide teaching activities and interventions that suit the needs of their learners, whether it is in the learning of languages or any other subjects for that matter. There is an extremely