



**INVESTIGATING THE PREFERRED LEARNING
STYLES OF MALE STUDENTS IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS AT SMK METHODIST
(ACS) MELAKA**

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ABSTRACT

Research and studies in the area of learning styles provide significant insights and suggestions to teachers and curriculum designers in improving the language learning environment and performance of the students. The study was conducted to investigate the preferred learning styles of the male learners, and also the use of preferred learning styles of male learners across age levels. This study thus adopted the Index of Learning Styles (ILS) questionnaire developed by Felder and Soloman in 1991. The findings of the study indicated that the male students preferred Active, Sensing, Visual and Sequential learning styles over Reflective, Intuitive, Verbal and Global learning styles. This shows that the male students prefer to learn through active experimentation and physical activities, drills, visual representations and by focusing on the details. The study also found that the male students' use of learning styles varied across age levels and across dimensions. This implies that the male students develop their preferred learning styles either because they are accustomed to the repeated use of the teachers' teaching styles, or because they find the teaching styles of the teacher as uninteresting. This study implicates that it is important for teachers to recognize the preferred learning styles of the male learners, and match their teaching style with the learning styles to help improve the male learners' competence in the English language classrooms.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Learning styles have a great effect on language learning, as studies on the learning styles can bring explore the various factors significant to language learning (Brown, 2007, p. 120). Ebel, (1999), Milgram and Price (2003), Cavanaugh (2002) and Grebb (1999) stated that the learning styles adopted by language learners vary across gender, age, achievement level and culture in language learning (cited in Tatarinceva and Blumenau, 2007, p. 573). Female students are found to be more linguistic and musical compared to male students who prefer natural, kinesthetic and spatial approach to learning (Noorzalina Mohd. Noor, 2007, p. 83). Besides that, female students are found to be collective learners, and also are slightly inclined towards individual learning, whereas the male students generally learn collectively (Mohd. Haniff and Norsafinas, 2006, p. 138).

Looking into the Malaysian context, English language has become a challenge for teachers to teach and students to master in a language learning classroom. Given that English has become the globalised language and is used as the medium for instruction and learning in Malaysia, there is a growing concern over student performance in English. Albar (2000), Kim (2003) and Samuel and Bakar (2006) affirm that Malaysia supports the use of English language as the communication language in international