

**AN EXPLORATION OF VISUAL LEARNING STYLE OF NON-ENGLISH MAJOR  
COLLEGE STUDENTS: LEARNERS' AND TEACHERS' VOICES**

***SKRIPSI***



by

Maximeliana Masela

81160010

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

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Nama : Maximeliana Masela  
NIM : 81160010  
Program studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Fakultas : Kependidikan dan Humaniora  
Jenis Karya : Skripsi

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(Maximeliana Masela)  
NIM.81160010

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Presented as a partial fulfillment of the requirements

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by

Maximeliana Masela

81160010

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN DUTA WACANA

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2020

## APPROVAL PAGE

The *Skripsi* written by

Name : Maximeliana Masela

NIM : 81160010

Title : An Exploration of Visual Learning Style of Non-English Major College  
Students: Learners' and Teachers' Voices

has been approved for the *Skripsi* Defense

Yogyakarta, 16 June 2020

Advisor,



Adaninggar Septi Subekti, M.Sc

NIDN: 0504098902

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by  
Maximeliana Masela  
81160010

**Defended before the Board of Examiners  
on 14 July 2020  
and Declared Acceptable**

Chairperson : Ignatius Tri Endarto, M.A.



Examiner I : Adaninggar Septi Subekti, M.Sc.

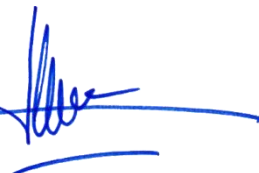


Examiner II : Lemmuella Alvita Kurniawati, M.Hum.



Yogyakarta, 27 July 2020

The Head of English Language Education Department



Lemmuella Alvita Kurniawati, M. Hum

## STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I honestly declare that this *Skripsi* does not contain the parts of work of other people, except those cited in the quotations and the references.

Yogyakarta, 16 June 2020

Author



Maximeliana Masela

81160010

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## **Abstract**

Masela, M. (2020). *An exploration of visual learning style of non-English major college students: Learners' and teachers' voices* (Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis). Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

The purposes of this study were to investigate the level of visual learning style of students of non-English major in a university in Indonesia and the perspectives of the students and teachers on the use of visual aids to improve the students' learning. By applying mixed method, this study was done in two steps. First, the quantitative analysis was done in order to answer the first research question about the students' level of visual learning style. Therefore, the questionnaires were distributed to 127 students of non-English major within a week. Second, the qualitative analysis was conducted to answer the second research question on the perspectives of students and teachers about the use of visual aids to improve learning. Hence, four students and three teachers who taught General English were interviewed. The finding showed that the learners had high level of visual learning style. Furthermore, the use of pictures, videos, boards, and games were found as the visual aids that were used by the teachers in teaching English to the learners. In addition, the future studies were suggested to be conducted in the context of Indonesian Senior High School students as the students also learned English as one of their subjects in the school.

**Keywords:** learning style, visual learning style, visual aids, English learning

### ***Intisari***

Masela, M. (2020). *An exploration of visual learning style of non-English major college students: Learners' and teachers' voices* (Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis). Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui level dari gaya belajar mahasiswa dari program studi non - Bahasa Inggris di sebuah universitas di Indonesia dan perspektif dari para mahasiswa dan para dosen pada penggunaan alat-alat visual untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran mahasiswa. Dengan menggunakan metode campuran, studi ini dilakukan dengan dua langkah. Pertama, analisis kuantitatif dilakukan untuk menjawab pertanyaan riset yang pertama tentang level dari gaya belajar visual mahasiswa. Karena itu, kuesioner didistribusikan kepada 127 mahasiswa yang bukan dari jurusan Bahasa Inggris selama satu minggu. Kedua, analisis kualitatif dilakukan untuk menjawab pertanyaan riset yang kedua tentang perspektif dari para mahasiswa dan dosen pada penggunaan alat-alat visual untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran mahasiswa. Karena itu, empat mahasiswa dan tiga dosen yang mengajar Bahasa Inggris umum diwawancarai. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa para mahasiswa memiliki level gaya belajar visual yang tinggi. Selanjutnya, penggunaan gambar, video, papan tulis, dan permainan ditemukan sebagai alat-alat visual yang dipakai oleh para dosen dalam mengajar Bahasa Inggris kepada para mahasiswa. Selain itu, studi-studi lebih lanjut disarankan untuk dilakukan pada konteks siswa Indonesia di Sekolah Menengah Atas karena Bahasa Inggris merupakan salah satu mata pelajaran di sekolah mereka.

***Kata kunci:*** gaya belajar, gaya belajar visual, *visual aids*, pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research background, research questions, research objectives, and research benefits.

#### **1. Research background**

Learning style is one of the Individual Differences (IDs) factors which has an important role in the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) because it is an approach that is used by the students in their language learning (Dornyei, 2005). Dornyei (2005) further explained that IDs is strongly correlated with the L2 achievement. Furthermore, Aliakbari and Qasemi (2012) stated that learning style becomes a major concern in the field of English as Second Language (ESL). Raising the students' awareness becomes the current trend in language learning as it influences how the students interact and respond to their learning environment and their performance in learning (Ajideh et al., 2018; Dornyei, 2005; Gohar & Sadeghi, 2015; Kia et al., 2009; Moenikia & Babelan, 2010; Sadeghi et al., 2012). The awareness of students' learning style is important because it also affects the teachers' role in teaching (Castro & Peck, 2005; Oxford & Ehrman, 1993). Furthermore, there are three most common learning styles that are adopted by the students in their learning process and one of them is visual learning style (Oluremi, 2015). Visual learning style becomes the students' personal approach in obtaining the information as it is one of the learning style dimensions that is used in language learning (Dornyei, 2005; Kia et al., 2009; Moenikia & Babelan, 2010; Sadeghi et al., 2012). In addition, the students who apply visual learning style are known as visual learners and they prefer to learn better by seeing (Dornyei, 2005; Obralic & Akbarov, 2012). In general, visual learners tend to learn in a classroom setting, they are less interested to the practical, and they are good in reviewing materials (Oluremi, 2015). Moreover, the visual

learners tend to learn using visual sensory channel to make them understand the information (Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2009)

According to Mappiasse and Sihes (2014), English has been applied as a language which is mostly used in the world and it affects the educational field in Indonesia. Choi and Lee (2008) also explained that Indonesia has become one of the countries in Asia which uses English for education. However, Zein (2017) stated that the English proficiency of the graduates of Senior High School is unsatisfying. Macwan (2015) stated that as English is the global language, teaching English is challenging and therefore, the teachers need to provide various teaching techniques to make it interesting. There are some factors which may contribute to students' unsuccessful learning of English. First, the English learning may not accommodate the students' visual learning style. Second, they might lose interest in course materials when the teachers do not provide the visual aids needed in their English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) instructions (Mathew & Alidmat, 2013). Therefore, investigating the visual learning style at Indonesian university level is important.

Several previous studies investigating the visual learning style of university students have been conducted using qualitative method (e.g.: Raymond & Choon, 2017; Wong & Nunan, 2011) and also quantitative method (e.g.: Afshar & Bayat, 2018; Nematipour, 2012; Padidar et al., 2015; Rezaeinejad et al., 2015). Nevertheless, as the study of learning styles has not been conducted yet in Indonesian context, this present study aims to apply mixed method to explore the non-English major college students' and teachers' perspectives about visual learning style to improve learning. Considering that there is no study of visual learning style of Indonesian university students, in this research I used mixed method by combining both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The advantage of applying quantitative method is the result can be generalized to the other contexts in Indonesia, while the advantage of applying qualitative method is to gain in-depth

information about visual learning style in university students' language learning (Cohen et al., 2007; Dornyei, 2007).

## **2. Research questions**

Considering the above-mentioned rationales, this study has two main questions:

1. How is the non-English major college students' level of visual learning style?
2. How are students' and teachers' beliefs in the uses of visual aids to improve learners' learning?

## **3. Research objectives**

This study has two objectives:

1. To explore the level of visual learning style of students of non-English major.
2. To explore the learners' and teachers' voices on visual learning style on the uses of visual aids to improve the learners' learning.

## **4. Research benefits**

Through its findings, this study intends to make a contribution for teachers, students, and researchers:

### **1. Teachers**

This study can be used by teachers to improve their teaching in the classroom by helping students to build their awareness about their visual learning style because knowing the students' learning style is an essential part of teaching as it influences the academic success of the students (Gilakjani, 2012; Mitra et al., 2010; Oluremi, 2015). The teachers can accommodate their students' visual learning by creating appropriate teaching which uses various visual aids such as pictures, videos, and games to accommodate their students' visual learning style because the students with



visual learning style learn better from visual aids (Gilakjani, 2012; Mitra et al., 2010; Oluremi, 2015).

## **2. Students**

Through this study, the General English students can get benefits by knowing their visual learning style. As the students have different ways in obtaining the information, it is important for them to identify and recognize their visual learning style because they will know their strengths and weaknesses in learning and choose the right strategy to improve their learning (Fayombo, 2015; Pritchard, 2009; Wong & Nunan, 2011).

## **3. Researchers**

Considering that the studies about Indonesian university students' visual learning styles have not been conducted yet; hence, this study can be used to improve the instructions in Indonesian universities. The researchers can conduct a study on investigating visual learning style by using mixed method as it combines two methods that have the advantages in research. The researchers can use quantitative method as its advantage is the finding can be generalized to the other context. In addition, the researchers can use the qualitative method because the advantage is to gain in-depth information on visual learning style (Caruth, 2013; Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013; Ponce & Maldonado, 2015).

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **1. Summary**

The finding of this presents study has some important points to be highlighted. From the quantitative analysis, it was found that the level of visual learning style of students of non-English major was high. Furthermore, as seen from several items with striking results, although the students were visual learners, they may did not good at and enjoyed making mind map in their English learning. In addition, the students could understand the learning better when their teachers wrote on the boards to explain the English grammar to them because they got benefits from it in which they could take notes to help them in understanding and memorizing the English grammar better. Besides that, as the students were visual learners, they preferred to the reading activities, so they tended to learn by reading instead of listening to the audio in learning. Moreover, the students preferred to read the English materials through online (reading journal, article, and news) and also through offline (reading book) because by reading, they could obtain the information better and also they could get new vocabulary.

Furthermore, with regard to the students' and teachers' perspectives on the use of various visual aids to improve the learners' learning, there were four main themes. First, the teachers used pictures to engage the students in brainstorming activities in which the pictures were used to lead the students to brainstorm the topic that had to discuss in the meeting. Second, the teachers used videos as the input for further discussions and task. The teachers provided some videos for the students in order to give them input for the learning which gave them additional knowledge about the topic. Third, the teacher wrote on the board to explain grammar. In teaching, the teachers wrote the important things such as pattern of the tenses and the examples to help the students in understanding the materials. Fourth, the

teachers used various visual aids in game to create fun learning. By using games such as *kahoot!* and *quiziz*, the teachers tried to engage the students into the learning and motivate the students to learn.

## **2. Implication and contribution**

Based on the result of this study on the role of visual learning style in English language learning, there was an implication that can be suggested as follow: both students and teachers have the similar perspectives on the use of boards in learning in which the teachers explain the English formula by writing on the boards. However, the students reported that they could understand the materials only when the teachers provided written explanation on the boards and it could help the students also to remember the important information (Ajideh et al., 2018; Dornyei, 2005). In addition, as seen from the teachers' perspectives, one of the teachers provided the written explanation only when she found her students were confused. As Oluremi ( 2015) stated that it may be beneficial for the students when their teachers facilitate their visual learning by providing written explanation on the board because they could take notes and learn from it. Therefore, the teachers probably need to provide the important points of the learning to the students through writing on the board.

Moreover, this study had its contribution to the study about students' visual learning style in the English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia context. By considering that the study on visual learning style in Indonesia context has not been conducted yet, through the results of this study, it could be generalized to the wider population and it provided the students' and teachers' perspectives on the use of visual aids to improve learning

## **3. Limitations**

Despite the implications and contributions, this study also has some limitations. First, there was no informed consent form to the participants due

to the online interview. However, it did not affect the quality of the data. Second, the number of previous studies about visual learning style in Indonesian university context was still limited. Hence, the sources with which to compare the present study were limited.

#### **4. Future studies**

Based on the limitations of this study, there is a suggestion for the future studies. As the studies on visual learning style in Indonesia are rarely, it is important to conduct research on the visual learning style in different education backgrounds. For instance, researchers can investigate the visual learning style of Indonesian Senior High School students as it also emphasized by Zein (2017) that the students' English performance was found as unsatisfying, while they have to learn English as a foreign language and in which it becomes a mandatory subject in the school.

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