

## STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE AND READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT: A CORRELATIONAL ANALYSIS

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aimed at finding out whether there was significant correlation between students' learning style and reading comprehension achievement. It utilized correlational research method. The eleventh-graders of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang in academic year 2020/2021 were the population of the study. The sample was 107 students selected by using purposive sampling technique. Students' learning style questionnaire and reading comprehension test were the instruments for collecting data. Both instruments were validated before they were distributed to the sample. The data were analyzed using Pearson product moment. The finding revealed that there was no significant correlation between students' learning style and reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh graders of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang since the p-value (0.845) was lower than 0.05. The  $r_{\text{value}}$  was 0,024, which showed that there was low correlation between students' learning style and reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh-grade students of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang. Based on the finding, it can be concluded that the students' learning style did not give dominant effect to reading comprehension achievement. It is shown that there was no significant correlation between students' learning style and their reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh graders of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang.

**Keywords:** *learning style, reading comprehension, correlational analysis*

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## GAYA BELAJAR SISWA DAN PEMAHAMAN MEMBACA: ANALISIS KORELASI

**ABSTRAK:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan apakah ada korelasi yang signifikan antara gaya belajar siswa dan pemahaman membaca, Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian korelasional. Siswa kelas XI Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang tahun akademik 2020/2021 adalah populasi pada penelitian ini. 107 siswa dari XI MIA 3, XI MIA 4 and XI MIA 5 dipilih menggunakan teknik pengambilan sampel secara purposif. Angket gaya belajar dan tes pemahaman membaca merupakan instrument dalam pengumpulan data. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan pearson product moment. Penemuan menunjukkan bahwa tidak ada hubungan korelasi yang signifikan antara gaya belajar siswa dan kemampuan membaca pada siswa kelas sebelas di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang, diketahui p-value 0.845 lebih rendah dari 0.05. Hal ini menunjukkan adanya korelasi rendah antara gaya belajar siswa dan pemahaman membaca pada siswa kelas sebelas di madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang. Berdasarkan hasil temuan penelitian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa gaya belajar siswa tidak memberikan dampak yang dominan terhadap peningkatan pemahaman membaca. Ditemukan tidak ada korelasi yang signifikan antara gaya belajar siswa dan pemahaman membaca mereka pada siswa kelas sebelas di Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang.

**Kata Kunci:** *gaya belajar siswa, pemahaman membaca, analisis korelasi*

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## INTRODUCTION

As an international language, Asian and non-speaking English-countries apply English into the lives of their communities since a few years ago, and Indonesia is one of them. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language. English has been taught since elementary school to university level. Every group of people in the world has their own languages. These languages are the instrument for communication between one group and another. Basically, language is not only used to communicate but also to share ideas, opinions, and feelings. English also takes part as a means of communication in the country which is used as the first, the second or foreign language. According to Sharifian (2005, p.159), English is used by millions of people around the world which means that it is used as global communication for many activities, including politics, economy, science, technology, culture, education, and entertainment.

Basically, there are four skills required in English teaching and learning program, they are listening, reading, speaking and writing. Those skills are important in teaching and learning English including reading skill, as one of the four language skills. Reading is the process of looking at the series of writing and getting meaning from them. To make students get reading skill easily, teachers have to employ appropriate strategies. The appropriate strategies in teaching reading can be decided based on understanding students' learning style. In fact, there are many teachers who do not pay attention to learning styles of their students. Moreover, many students also do not pay attention to their own learning style whereas knowing it can help them to learn reading easily. Wang (2007, p. 216) defined learning style as an individual's preferred or habitual ways of processing the knowledge and transforming the knowledge into personal knowledge, this is the educational condition most experienced by a student tend to learn.

Naning and Hayati (2011) mentioned that learning styles are the characteristic ways in which an individual acquires, perceives, and process information. Hence, learning styles had an important role in the learning process and influence students' reading achievement because of learning style had relation with students' way to acquire and comprehend information. Further, Deborah (2000) said that people differ in how they view the world, how they take in information, and how they take action based on their perceptions. Appreciation and use of your learning style affects your ability to study efficiently and to achieve success.

Learning style refers to individuals' fastest and best way to learn. Every student absolutely has different way in learning. They have their own way in receiving information from the outside. Some students learn best by seeing, some students learn best by hearing and listening, and others learn best by touching and moving. Learning style is one of the main factors that help determine how and how well the students learn a second language or foreign language which can influence their comprehension both in reading, writing, listening and speaking. It means that learning styles have relationship through English skills comprehension. Some researches on learning styles and language learning performance show that there is a relationship between learning styles of the students and the success of the students in language learning. Language learning includes English language comprehension such reading, and listening. Thus, some of main factors which help to determine how and how well students learn a second language or foreign language which influence their comprehension in reading are learning styles.

According to Tadesse (2017. p.218), Reading skill refers to the ability to understand written text. It is advisable to develop this skill at early age of school. When

students comprehend or understand written text, and combine their understanding with prior knowledge. Reading is defined as a cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to arrive at meaning.

Further, Reading is a language skill that cannot be separated from other skills, because students' abilities in one aspect will support their abilities in understand other skills. By having the ability to read they will be able to improve their general language skills. Reading can increase students' vocabulary and can help improve students' writing or speaking skill. There it can be concluded that reading is one of the keys of success for anyone who wants to be educated person. One element of reading skill is reading comprehension, reading comprehension not just read text but read with the purpose of obtaining a deep understanding and thought. According to Parera (2005. p.347) said that understanding is paying attention to a written text with the intention of understanding its contents. This process is done with the eyes still or reading silently. The result of understanding is called reading comprehension. This way of reading is called reading comprehension.

For many students reading is a difficult skill to improve because in reading students have to focus on the text, they have to concentrate and sometimes feel bored and asleep. It also needs a quiet situation without any noise to do because when there are lot of noise, reading in English will be hard to do. Unfortunately, however it is all too common for students to pay little attention to their own approaches to reading, that is how they read and how they can improve the effectiveness and achievement of their reading skill.

According to the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2019, students in Indonesia scored low than the OECD average in reading, mathematics and science. As for category of reading ability, Indonesia is ranked 6th from the bottom or 74th rank. Indonesia average score is 371 which has average score of 377, while the first rank is occupied by China with an average score is 555.

Reading involves skill of the visual recognition of word that is a kind of activity to comprehend the writers' ideas or writers' way to communicate with the readers by using written texts. Students who had good ability in reading, they would have better chance succeeding in their study in reading comprehension. Duke & Pearson (2001, p. 423), explained that reading comprehension is a process in which the reader constructs meaning using as the building materials the information on the printed page and the knowledge stored in the readers' head, it involves intentional thinking, during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader.

It means that reading comprehension is the ability of the reader to understand and gain meaning from what has been read in written texts. Students should comprehend the text in order to understand and interpret text. Students who have good ability in reading will have better understanding in comprehending text than they have not. Moreover, it is better for students to train themselves to read well and have high comprehension in reading. Nevertheless, each student has different ways to perceive the information from learning situation especially in reading activity. For example, some students get better information when they read text by music in the background. Others prefer to read the text by pictures. Then, some students prefer silent reading. They believe that when they use this way, they will catch the information of the text easily. Furthermore, students who are very active in the class, they prefer to read the text by moving from one place to another place. They found the comfortable place to read the text because it will help them

conveying the meaning of the text. Besides, some other prefer to read the text by coloring of the written text. They will remember what the author's ideas when they mark the sentence or word.

The researchers did the research at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang. Based on the researchers' understanding, the students tended to have quite similar average score on English achievement. Their reading comprehension achievement was quite good. Dealing with their learning style, some students learn best by seeing visual explanation, some others learn best by hearing and listening audio, and others learn best by touching and moving. Therefore, the researchers initiated to conduct research in order to investigate whether there was significant correlation between students' learning style and reading comprehension achievement at the eleventh graders of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang.

### Learning Style

Learning styles are found to affect the students' learning behaviors. Students who have different learning style preferences would behave differently in the way they perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment. Since the learners differ in their preferences to the certain learning styles, it will be important for an educator to know the variations of students on the features of their learning styles because the information about students' learning style preference can help the teachers or lecturers become aware to the students' differences bring to the classroom Wang (2007, p. 410).

Hence, it can be concluded that learning styles had an important role in the learning process and influence students' reading comprehension achievement because of learning style had relation with students' way to acquire and comprehend information. In other words, students tend to learn easily through their own learning style.

### Type of Learning Style

Dunn and Griggs (2010, p.221) stated that learning style such as visual (verbal/nonverbal learner), auditory learner, and kinesthetic learner. (1) Visual/non-verbal learner is the learner that relies primarily on his sight to intake his data, which are things he sees such as written information and images. (2) Auditory learner is the learner who learned through listening. (3) Kinesthetic learner is the learner who used a finger and hands. Students remember more easily when he/she writes or moves his/her finger. Furthermore, students' behavior with one of those types of learning style is explained as follow.

#### a) Visual Learning Style Students

Visual learning style means that with visual learning style like to learn by seeing and observing things. It includes seeing and observing books, pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, and flip-chart. Visual students are also neat and disciplinary. They have neat handwriting and they usually learn with orderly books and pens. This type of students cannot bear if their room is in chaos with things. They also usually give attention to their appearance both in and outside school. Visual students usually have problem in remembering verbal instruction. They usually forget to convey verbal message and feel hard to choose words when they want to reveal something. Therefore, visual students prefer to demonstrate something than to present it. Mostly,

students with visual learning style understand well about position, shape, numeral, and color. These students remember thing visually. These students can exactly remember a picture of an object although the position of it is changed.

b) Auditory Learning Style

Students with auditory style prefer to learn by hearing and listening. They are easy to understand and comprehend lesson or information by listening to the lectures, discussions, or recording. Therefore, they will feel disturbed when there is noise around them. This type of students also have problem with visual works. They are hard to read small characters and easily tired to read. They are also usually wrong to read. Moreover, they have sensitivity through music. They can repeat and imitate tone, rhythm, and sound of voice. These students also like to listen to music. Usually, these students prefer to spend their holiday by listening to music than to play with their friends. They also can remember lyric easily. Furthermore, this type of students likes oral reports. They like to speak, discuss, and explain things. They prefer to get oral test or assignment than to get written test or assignment. In discussing activity, they are usually become vocalist and they usually master the conversation.

c) Kinesthetic Learning Style

In kinesthetic style, students have orientation to do trial-error activity. They are brave to take a risk. In answering question, they prefer to just answer than to read the instruction before. They also learn practically and learn through manipulation. These students always have orientation to physic and movement. They cannot stand still for a long time. Because of that these students need more time to do anything. In class, these students prefer to learn by playing games that incite themselves. In explaining information or talking, they usually gesticulate. Mostly, the students with kinesthetic learning style Learning through physical activity. When they are reading a book, usually they point toward words that they read. Usually, they also understand and comprehend lesson easily by rewriting the material that they have learnt. They also give response to physical attention and touch people to get their attention. Because of that, to get people's attention they usually touch and stand near the people whom they talk to. Moreover, these students are also sensitive to the people's expression.

### Reading Comprehension

Reading is one of the language skills that cannot be separated from other language skills because the students' ability in one aspect will support their ability in mastering the others. It is an important educational goal, as without reading, one's language would not improve.

Pang (2003, p.6) stated that reading is about understanding written text. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes such as word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension refersto the understanding what is being said or read. When it comes to reading, it is an active process that should be developed if a learner to become a proficient reader.

## METHODOLOGY

The method of this study was correlational research. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2012, p.77), correlational research is sometimes referred to form of quantitative research because it describes an existing relationship. In addition, Aliaga and Gunderson (2002, p. 81) said that, quantitative research is explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysis using mathematically based method. Meanwhile, the method of this research is correlation research. Correlation research involves collecting data to determine whether, and to what degree, a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables. Furthermore, correlation design is quantitative research in which investigator measure the degree of relation between two or more variables using the statistical procedure of correlation analysis. According to Creswell (2012, p. 338), investigators use the correlation test to describe and measure the degree of association between two or more variables or sets of scores.

In this study, there were two kinds of variables, they were independent and dependent variables. According to Cohen (2007) dependent variable is an attribute or characteristic that is influenced by independent variable. On the other hand, independent variable is an attribute or characteristic that influences or affects to dependent variable. In this study, the independent variable is learning style and the dependent variable was the students' reading comprehension achievement. The research design describes variable to examine the relationship between variables. The population of this study was the eleventh-grade students of MAN 2 Palembang in academic year 2020/2021. The researchers chose the sample using purposive sampling technique by considering that the classes were taught by the same teacher and they had quite similar achievement in English. The sample consisted of 107 students from XI MIA 3, XI MIA 4 and XI MIA 5. The researchers used reading comprehension test and learning style questionnaire to collect the data in this study. The researchers gave students questions in the form of multiple choice which consisting of 36 valid questions reading comprehension test and 28 valid items for questionnaire. The researchers used corrected item total correlation to measure the validity and reliability of the instruments. Then, percentage analysis was used in analyzing the data.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Normality Test

The researchers measured the normality of learning style and reading comprehension test of sample by using One Sample Kolmogrov-smirnov test. Based on the result of normality test, the data was normal. The p-value of reading comprehension was 0.157. While, the p-value of reading attitude was 0.023. It means both of results were normally distributed.

### 2. Correlational analysis

Based on the table below, it was found that r-value was 0.024 with significance coefficient (p-value) was 0.845 which was lower than alpha value 0.05. It could be concluded that there was a significant correlation between students' reading attitude and reading comprehension. Furthermore, the Pearson correlation was 0.024. It indicated that the correlation between students reading attitude and reading comprehension was in low

category. The result of correlation analysis is displayed in the Table 1.

Table 1. Result of Correlation Analysis

		Learning style	Reading comprehension
<b>Learning style</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.845**	.845**
	N	71	71
<b>Reading comprehension</b>	Pearson Correlation	.024	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.845**	.845**
	N	71	71

From the results of the data of student's learning style and their reading comprehension, it was found that p-value (0.845) was lower than 0.05. The  $r_{\text{value}}$  was 0,024, which showed that there was low correlation between learning style and reading comprehension of the eleventh-grade students of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang.

Though, most of the students had good score in reading comprehension, but the finding contradicted and refused the theory that learning style is influential through achievement. The insignificance finding learning style was not the only factor that effects students' achievement both in reading comprehension and in other subjects. In addition, research done by Faridah related to the correlation between learning style and listening skill achievement (2014) found that no correlation between learning style and listening skill achievement. She further said there were some other factors affecting listening skill such as motivation, attitude, cognitive ability, interest, and weather. The researchers believed that those factors gave dominant effect to listening skill achievement.

Based on the finding, it can be concluded that the students' learning style did not give dominant effect to reading comprehension achievement. In this case, other factors might give more dominant effect to it. It also means that the students with good understanding and using their learning style effectively did not certify that they also had good achievement in reading comprehension. Then, students with bad understanding and using their learning style ineffectively did not certify that they had bad achievement in reading comprehension.

## CONCLUSION

As it has been stated previously, students' learning style is one of the factors that affects students' achievement in any subjects and skills such as in listening, writing, reading and others. It is really important for the students to understand their own learning style well in order to get maximum result in learning. To prove that assumption and to get the empirical evidence whether or not there is a significant relationship between students' learning style and their reading comprehension achievement, therefore the researcher conducted the research focused on the topic.

Based on the finding and interpretation of this study, it could be summarized that the problem of this study was answered. There was no significant correlation between learning style and reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh-grade students of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang since the p-value (0.845) was lower than 0.05. The  $r_{\text{value}}$  was 0,024, which showed that there was low correlation between learning style and

reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh-grade students of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Palembang. It can be concluded that the students' learning style did not give dominant effect to reading comprehension achievement.

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