

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents several theories related to this study. It describes about learning style which includes the definition of learning, learning style, types of learning style, perceptual learning styles that consists of visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile leaning styles, and the learning style and English proficiency.

A. Definition of Learning

Learning is a process to know anything or to acquire the knowledge in this world. Heather Fry, Steve Ketteridge and Stephanie Marshall define that learning is a process about how to perceive and understand the world.⁶ Furthermore, learning is a relatively permanent process to change the behavioral preference and is the result of the process that is forced. In order to understand more about the definition of learning, Alan Pritchard makes list of the definition of learning from many researchers as follows:⁷

Table 1: Definitions of Learning.

Definitions of learning

A change in behavior as a result of experience or practice.

The acquisition of knowledge.

Knowledge gained through study.

To gain knowledge of, or skill in, something through study, teaching, instruction or experience.

To process of gaining knowledge.

A process by which behavior is changed, shaped or controlled.

⁶ Heather Fry, Steve Ketteridge and Stephanie Marshall, *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (New York : Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2009), 8.

⁷ Alan Pritchard, *Ways of learning; Learning Theories and learning Styles in the Classroom Second Edition* (New York : Routledge Taylor & france Group, 2008), 2.

The individual process of constructing understanding based on experience from a wide range of sources.

Learning is an important part in our daily life that we take it for granted. It is one of part in our life, where we try to acquire and understand about something new that we do not know before. It happens naturally without enforcement from the others. Every people ever experience learning in way of their life certainty. The curiosity of someone about something can motivate that someone to learn. So, the process that want to know about something new from quite do not know become know is called learning.

Learning is begun from long time before school and continued for even longer after school. It happens rapidly. It will happen for long time. The process of learning is not only on formal environment as like in school, college, but also is in informal environment such as at home, in society, etc.

Learning is not a single thing; it may involve many aspects that related to the process.⁸ Besides, learning has many concepts. The concepts of learning can give way to a number of subfields, for example in psychology. In psychology, those concepts are acquisition process, perception, memory (storage) systems, recall, conscious and subconscious learning styles and strategies, theories of forgetting, reinforcement, the role of practice.

⁸ H. Douglas Brown, *Principle of Language Learning and Teaching* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1987), 7.

B. The Nature of Learning Style

Learning style is a process to obtain information or knowledge that based on the individuals' ways. It is related with an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred ways.⁹ Furthermore, according to Oxford, learning styles is one of the main factors that can help determine how well students learn a language.¹⁰ So, a good learning style is appropriate with an individuals' background and can increase their academic achievement and proficiency. The concept of learning styles is a value-neutral approach for understanding individual differences among linguistically and culturally diverse students.

Learning style has some basic concepts.¹¹ First, learning style has a physiological basis and is fairly fixed for the individual. Second, learning style operates without individual awareness. Next, learning style implies a higher degree of stability falling midway between ability and strategy. The last, learning style is stable and has a cross-situational impact sounds convincing.

Learning styles related with personality. It means that learning style of each individual based on their personality. It refers to the psychology of individual.¹² It is also represented as a profile of the individual's approach to learning. This profile can be seen to comprise two fundamental levels of functioning. The first is cognitive. It refers to a stable and internalized

⁹ Reid, *Learning Styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom*, viii.

¹⁰ Rebecca. L. Oxford, *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language Third Edition* (USA: Heinle & Heinle Thomson Learning Inc., 2001), 359.

¹¹ Zoltan Dornyei, *The Psychology of The Language Learner* (London : Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2005), 122.

¹² Gass and Selinker, *Second Language Acquisition An Introductory Course.*, 432.

dimension related to the way a person thinks or processes information. The second is level of learning activity. The personality dimensions have cognitive style correlation.

The core of a learning style is the cognitive style. It can be seen as a partially biologically determined and pervasive way of responding to information and situation. When the cognitive styles are specifically related to an educational context and are intermingled with number of affective, physiological, and behavioral factors, they are usually more generally referred to as learning styles. The cognitive style is concerned with the learning styles and second language acquisition (SLA).¹³ It refers to the way in which the learners' process information.

The students' personality and cognitive style result in a general preference to learn in particular ways rather than others. But the students' previous learning experience can also affect their learning style. It causes them to expect and even require similar experiences in new situation.

Learning style are influenced by the differences the left-brain and the right-brain.¹⁴ The left-brain is for analytical learning and the right-brain is for concrete learning. There are several characteristics between left-brain and right-brain as follow:

¹³ Rod Ellis, *Second Language Acquisition and Language Pedagogy* (Great Britain : Cromwell Press, 1993), 163.

¹⁴ Farinaz Shirani Bidabadi & Hamidah Yamat, "The Relationship Between English Listening Proficiency Levels and Learning Styles", in *GEMA OnlineTM Journal of Language Studies*, Volume 12, Nomor 4, November 2012, pp.1042.

Table 2 : Characteristics of Left-Brain and Right-Brain.

Left-Brain Characteristics	Right-Brain Characteristics
Rational	Intuitive
Planned and Structured	Fluid and spontaneous
Theoretical	Experiential
Analyzes	Synthesizes
Prefers established, certain information	Prefer elusive, uncertain information
Favors logical problem solving	Favors intuitive problem solving
Makes objective judgments, conclusions	Makes subjective judgments, conclusions
Focuses on differences	Focuses on similarities
Sees cause and effect	Sees correspondences
Observes details	Observes overall design form
Relies on language in thinking and remembering	Relies on image in thinking and remembering
Remembers names and labels	Remembers faces and images
Tend toward visual, analytic, reflective, self-reliant learning	Tend toward auditory, global/relational, impulsive, interactive learning.

Each student has their own learning styles. That is used to do a specific task. It is because they learn in different ways. For example, some of them tend to learn by seeing, the others tend to learn by hearing, some of them want to learn on their own, and the others prefer to learn by interacting with their peers or their friends. The students vary in the way in which they view the language learning task.

Understanding students' learning styles is important for them. It can help them to understand themselves and others. It also can help them to become more effective in their own educational pursuits.¹⁵ In the other hand, the way students' learns has great influence for the others, especially in formal learning as like in school, college, and so on. For example, if there is a

¹⁵ Tim Tutton, *Learning Styles and Sunday School Kids* (Sinclair : Baptist Youth Mission, 2013), 5.

student who has a problem with his or her learning in the class, it can influence the other students and the situation in the class.

The students are able to use different learning style in different context.¹⁶ They can use one or more learning style to do the tasks. That learning style should match with that those tasks beside it matches with their background. The ability to adopt any particular learning style has potential to support ourselves to learn effectively.

C. Types of Learning Styles

According to Reid, Learning style divided into three major categories. These are cognitive learning styles, sensory learning styles, and personality learning styles.¹⁷ Every category is also divided into some learning styles as follow:

1. Cognitive learning styles

Cognitive learning styles refer to how people learn rather than what people learn.¹⁸ It can be broken down into four styles. Those are Field-independent / field-dependent, analytic / global, reflective / impulsive, Kolb experimental learning styles.

Field-independent and field-dependent learning styles influence with several factors. Those are the ways students learn, how teacher teach, how students and teachers interact, and so on. Field-independent is a one of learning styles that learner learns more effectively with step by step

¹⁶ Pritchard, *Ways of learning.*, 42.

¹⁷ Reid, *Learning Styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom.*, viii.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

that begins with analyzing facts and proceeding to ideas. Besides, field-dependent is a learning style in which learner learns more effectively in context and likes to interaction with the other people.

Analytic learning style is one of cognitive learning styles which learner likes to learn individually. The analytic learners prefer setting their own goals of learning and responds to sequential presentations of the materials. Analytic learner is also called field-independent learner.¹⁹ In the other hand, global learning style is a learning style that the learner absorbs the information through concrete experience by interaction with the other people.

Reflective learning style is a style of learner to learn effectively with considering first the option before responding it. Then, impulsive learning style is a way the learner to learn in which he or she can respond immediately and take the risk. Impulsive learner does not think first before respond something or become hasty to take the decision.

Kolb experimental learning model is a combination between how people perceive and process the information. This learning model based on Kolb's research. Kolb divided his learning model into four categories: diverger, assimilation, converger and accommodator.²⁰

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 56.

2. Sensory learning styles

Sensory learning styles refer to physical, human sense, perceptual learning channels which it used comfortably by the learner.²¹ It consists of two kinds of learning styles. They are perceptual learning styles and environmental learning styles.

There are five learning styles that included perceptual learning styles. They are visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, and haptic. The further explanation of the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, and haptic can be seen on next subchapter. Furthermore, environmental learning styles consist of physical and sociological learning styles. Environmental learning style is defined as a learning style that considered some factors, such as classroom or study arrangement, time, temperature, etc. those factors related with the physic of the learner. Then, sociological learning style is the way learner learns which considers the social situation in the classroom, such as group, individual, pair and team work, and so on.

3. Personality learning styles

Personality learning styles is a learning style that constructs based on work of learner's psychologist.²² It consists of Myers-Briggs temperament styles, tolerance of ambiguity styles, and right / left-hemisphere learners.

Myers-Briggs temperament styles are learning styles in which based on the individual's characteristics that affect his or her mood. It is

²¹ Oxford, *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* .,360.

²² Ibid.

divided into eight styles, as like extraversion, introversion, sensing, perception, thinking, feeling, judging, and perceiving learning style. Then, it is tolerance of ambiguity style. It means that the tendency of individual to perceive the ambiguous information as source of threat. The ambiguous information is as like as novel, poetry, and so on. The next is right-left hemisphere learner. It is tendency of individuals to obtain the information using their right or left hemisphere of brain. The right hemisphere learner tends to auditory, global or relational, impulsive, interactive learning. In the other hand, left hemisphere learner usually tends to visual, analytic, reflective, dependent learning.

Learning styles have three major categories that every category can be broken down into several learning styles. Because the learning styles has many styles, so in this study the researcher only focuses to analyze the perceptual learning styles that they are sensory learning styles.

D. Perceptual Learning Styles

In this study, the researcher analyses the learning styles based on sensory learning styles. Those sensory learning styles are perceptual learning styles. Perceptual learning styles define as a preference of individual to perceive and retain the information using one of the human senses that is called sensory modalities; visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile with the physical environment.²³ It is based on the concept of sensory modalities.

²³ Razawi et.al, *Students' Diverse Learning Styles*, 180.

Modality is any of the sensory channels through in which an individual receives and retains the information. There are four modalities as like as mentioning above that usually affect the learning process. Those sensory modalities represent of five human senses as sight, sound, touch except taste and smell because they are not irrelevant with learning information, especially in a school context.²⁴

Every people have sensory modality dominance. The sensory modality dominance model of most people is balanced with all of the functioning sensory modalities which are equal, but some individuals have very strong dominance in a particular sensory modality.²⁵ The individual who has dominance sensory modality is easy to process the information through that modality. The sensory modality dominance can influence the development of perceptual learning styles.

The perceptual learning styles consist of visual learning style, auditory learning style, kinesthetic learning style, tactile learning style, and haptic learning style. In this study, the researcher only investigates four perceptual learning styles. Those are called VAKT (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, and Tactile). The further explanation of those learning styles can look at these paragraphs below.

²⁴ Albi Odendaal, "Perceptual Learning Styles as an Influence on the Practicing of Instrument Students in Higher Music Education" (Dissertation Doctor, University of the Arts Helsinki, South Africa, 2013), 14.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

1. Visual (Seeing)

Visual is a learning style that the individual takes the information or knowledge visually. Visual learners outnumber all the other groups of learning style. They can take information most effectively when they are provided the visual channel. They tend to prefer reading texts and often use highlight with various color to make certain information visually more prominent.

According to Reid, the students who are visual learners have some characteristics. Those characteristics are the visual learners relates to such words as see, look, observe, read; like to read book or magazine regularly because is their pleasure; enjoy watching television and movie in which presents visual and verbal information concurrently; prefer to read what an expert has written on a subject rather than listen to teacher or discussion; rewrite notes or taking notes during class lectures and discussions using color coding or other visual organizational schema to review later; feel frustrated when teachers give oral instruction, etc.²⁶ In conclusion, the visual learners is also called seeing learners.

2. Auditory (Hearing)

Auditory is one of learning style in which the individual obtains the information or knowledge auditorily. It can be through listening and interpreting the information. The students who have this learning style are called auditory learners. Auditory learners utilize most effectively

²⁶ Reid, *Learning Styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom.*, 226.

auditory input like as lecture or audiotape. They like to talk and share the information or material through discussion and group work.

The auditory learners have some characteristics. Reid defines the characteristics of auditory as like auditory learners absorb the information by listening, then repeating or discussing with others; like to discuss to share ideas and work collaboratively in a small group; prefer to have someone to explain the material rather than look over written material; feel frustrated when teacher give written instruction than give it orally; remember names and lyrics of popular song after listening them once or only a few times; and so on. It can look from those characteristics above; the auditory learners refer to hearing learners.

3. Kinesthetic (Whole-body movement)

Kinesthetic is a learning style in which the individual are better when the whole body is involved. The students who have this learning style are called kinesthetic learners. Kinesthetic learner is moving when try to memorize or understand the information. They often like to walking around while trying to memorize the information or material.

As like as visual and auditory learners, kinesthetic learners also have characteristics. Those characteristics are the kinesthetic learners prefer to learn by doing something; like to variety in classroom activity such as role-play; active participate in discussion; like to use physical movement while reading or composing written assignment; and so on.

According to the characteristics above, kinesthetic learners are also called whole-body movement learners.

4. Tactile (Hands-on)

Tactile is a learning style that prefers to do hand work, such as taking notes or handling material. The students who have this learning style are called tactile learners. Tactile learners are likely to take notes when they study or listen to the teachers' explanation. They also like to create various forms of artwork, such as making posters, collages, and so on.

The tactile learners and kinesthetic learners are often difficult to differentiate. It is because they are almost the same. To make it easy to differentiate between them, there are some characteristics of tactile learners such as: tactile learners focus well during hands-on projects and activities; they enjoy working with their hands as in writing, drawing, building a model, etc; use direct hands-on activities to improve their motivation, interest and memory; etc. From those characteristics, tactile learners are called hands-on learners.

Kinesthetic and tactile learning styles are often grouped together by some researchers. It is called haptic learning style. This learning style is a combination of kinesthetic and tactile learning styles. These learning styles are combined because they are related but not identical. A haptic learner can learn more effectively through touch and whole-body involvement.

The sensory channels are through which each individual best absorbs and retains new information and skills have become known as "modality

strengths". The modality strengths are auditory (hearing), visual (seeing), tactile (hands-on), and kinesthetic (whole-body movement). Students vary considerably with respect to their modality strengths; modality strength may occur in a single channel, for example, visual, or be mixed, involved two or more channels, for example, kinesthetic, tactile, and auditory. Most students beyond early elementary age can learn through several sensory channels; learning merely is easier through one channel than through another. As students grow older, in terms of academic achievement, those with mixed modality strengths have a decidedly better chance of success than do those with single modality strength because they can process information in whatever way it was presented.

According to Reid, the students who have preference perceptual learning styles are found major learning styles preference, minor learning styles preference, and negligible learning styles preference. Those categories are based on the score of the students' questionnaire. The questionnaire is Reid's questionnaire which is known as Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ). Major learning styles preference is a situation in which the students can learn best using their preference perceptual learning styles. The students who get score 38 to 50 in their questionnaire are major learning styles preference learners. Besides, minor learning styles preference is a situation which the students can function well their preference perceptual learning styles as a learner. It means that their perceptual learning style is not dominant. The students who are minor learning styles preference learner get

score 25-37 in their questionnaire. Then, negligible learning styles preference is a condition in which the students may have difficulty learning with their learning ways. The students who are negligible learning styles preference can be seen from their score of questionnaire that indicates 0 to 24.

E. Learning Style and English Proficiency

Learning style and English proficiency are important factors within learning English.²⁷ These are related each other. Learning styles that are had by students can give influence to their English proficiency. Students especially EFL students as like STAIN students that are from different background and English proficiency may have vary learning style preference with the others. In addition, the differences of learning styles and English proficiency levels need to be considered for planning of learning process and activity in the class because these would have impact on the learning process. So, these can determine the successfulness of the learning process.

There are many factors that determine the successfulness of language teaching and learning process. For example, the language teaching and learning process will success if the students are able to follow their own preferred learning styles.²⁸ They will do better during that process. Then, it will be success when the teacher's instruction matches with the students' learning styles.²⁹

²⁷ Bidabadi & Yamat, "The Relationship Between English Listening Proficiency Levels and Learning Styles", pp.1042.

²⁸ Ellis, *Second Language Acquisition*, 176.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 177.

The level of proficiency is determined by the several factors, one of them is learning styles. The way of students learning in their daily influences their proficiency. Learning styles that has encountered at levels from kindergarten to graduate school has great influence in the levels of proficiency.³⁰ That great influence occurs continuously. For example, if the students especially EFL students learn English using their learning styles that are appropriate with their background from that level, it can enhance their English proficiency.

Learning style can enhance English proficiency of students. Identifying and understanding the types of learning of students and their potential in enhancing English proficiency is very important for them. If they understand their learning style and their potential in enhancing their English proficiency, they will learn more effectively and their English proficiency will grow up too.

³⁰ Harold Pashler et.al., "Learning Styles Concepts and Evidence", *A Journal of the Association for Psychological Science*, Volume 9, Nomor 3, 2009, pp. 105.