

# **Indonesian EFL learners' learning style and their impacts on their self-efficacy**

**Heri Alfian, Muhammad Basri, Sultan**

[xtray21@gmail.com](mailto:xtray21@gmail.com)

*State University of Makassar, Indonesia*

## **ABSTRACT**

The objectives of the study were to find out (1) the kinds of learning style of Indonesian EFL learners, (2) the impacts of Indonesian EFL learners' learning style towards their self-efficacy in terms of their stress, and (3) the impacts of Indonesian EFL learners' learning style towards their self-efficacy in terms of their self-confidence.

This study employed a case study design. The participants of this study consisted of 30 students of the second semester of English Department, Unismuh Makassar academic year 2016-2017. The data were obtained through questionnaire, observation, and interview. The data of questionnaire were analyzed, tabulated and dropped into percentage while the data of observation and interview were analyzed based on procedure of data analysis that consisted of the data collection, the data display, data condensation and conclusion: drawing/verification.

The results of the study indicated that among 30 participants, 10 students (33.33%) are visual, 8 students (26.66%) are auditory, 8 students (26.66%) are kinesthetic, 3 students (10%) are visual and kinesthetic, and 1 student (3.33%) is auditory and kinesthetic. Indonesian EFL learners' learning style impacted their self-efficacy through information of self-skill as one of six factors influenced self-efficacy. In terms of stress and self-confidence learning style impacted Indonesian EFL learners' self-efficacy through selection and motivation process, mastery experience, and dimension of strength as the features of self-efficacy. In addition, learners' learning style could not match with every method used by the teacher/lecturer in the class. Also, stress is appeared when the method did not engage the needs of the learners' learning style and learners show their self-confidence when the method used by the teacher/lecturer supports their learning style.

Keywords: Learning style, self-efficacy, stressful, self-confidence

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the most important and essential aspects in people life is language learning. Numerous reason are followed such as studying at an English medium university or living in foreign country. From the early 1970s, some researchers in the field such as Howard Gardner, Marianne Celce-Murcia, Judy Willis and Albert Bandura had been trying to find out teaching method, classroom techniques, and instructional materials what would promote better language instruction. However, in spite of all this an effort there was a growing concern that learners had not progress as much as it just anticipated.

Human had different ways of learning. Some could assimilate in a better way the knowledge receive visually, auditory or learn a certain sense. In this sense, it was necessary to deploy resources to support learning process in a way that it nor only suits the characteristics of a few, but it had adapted to the characteristics of each student. It was relevant with the instructional curriculum program in our country focused on the learners as center of learning process. Identifying the kind of learning characteristics are crucially

important and as the key of educational improvement including the way learners take in and comprehended information (Gardner, 1991).

It could not be argued that learners take in and comprehended information in different manners. Some like to see and others like to hear. Some preferred to hear, some preferred to learn individually, independent of other, while others enjoyed interaction and relationship with their peers. It is widely believe that different ways of how learners take in and process information were collectively referred to learning style or learning preferences (Celce-Murcia, 2001).

In the reality today, as the problem in many educational area are most of learners did not know about their learning style. Even if they know, they only gave a little attention to it without any effort to use and develop it. None of the methods and techniques suited with all learners. Therefore, identification of learning style in the first time will be useful and essential in any academic success. Learning style referred to the variations in learner's ability to accumulate as well as assimilate information (Ldpride.net, 2008).

Willis (2008) stated that the more your child known about the way she or he learns best, the more insight, strategies and self-awareness. She or he would have to use their learning strengths to achieve the greatest potential as joyful learners. Related to strategies and self-awareness, learners' self-efficacy is needed. Self-efficacy refers to individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to manage something and do some actions in order to achieve certain accomplishment (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is not a measure of a skills one has but it is a belief in what one can do under certain conditions with whatever skills one possesses. Those beliefs give influence on some aspects, namely individuals' task orientation, effort and persistence, strategy use, beliefs, and performance.

Bandura (1993) posits that self-efficacy beliefs affect college outcomes by increasing students' motivation and persistence to master challenging academic tasks and by fostering the efficient use of acquired knowledge and skills. Learners with high self-efficacy have high self-confidence that they will be able to achieve their stress and anxiety when they cannot achieve their targets and goals yet.

Therefore, a strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well-being in many ways. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. In contrast, people who are doubt of their capabilities, shy away from difficult tasks which they view as personal threats, have low aspirations and weak commitment to the goals they choose to pursue. To simplify, self-efficacy plays a vital role for students in order to gain best achievement (Bandura, 1997).

Some questions will be appeared; how is the impact of learners' learning style on their self-efficacy? Are they able to manage their stress after identified their learning style? Are they confidence after identified their learning style?

By some questions above this study was going to explore learning style which continuity researching from many years ago. Therefore, the researcher really want to know how learning style in of Indonesian EFL learners impact their self-efficacy as Bandura (1997) stated that there are several factors that affect self-efficacy for individual, they are; culture, gender, task complexity, external incentive, position and role and information of self-skill. Consequently, as academics who concentrated on education, the researcher sees it is important to conduct in-depth study to explore learning style of Indonesian EFL learners towards their self-efficacy.

Based on the previous explanation, the main objectives of this research was:

1. To identify the kinds of learning style of Indonesian EFL learners.
2. To find out the impact of Indonesian EFL learners' learning style towards their self-efficacy in terms of stress.

3. To find out how the Indonesian EFL learners' learning style impact their self-efficacy in terms of stress.
4. To find out the impact of Indonesian EFL learners' learning style towards their self-efficacy in terms of self-confidence.
5. To find out how the Indonesian EFL learners' learning style impact their self-efficacy in terms of self-confidence.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Previous findings**

Brahmakasikara (2013) studied about "Learning Styles and Academic Achievement of English III Students at Assumption University of Thailand. This study identified the learning styles of English III students and how these relate to their academic performance. His conclusion that recognizing the different learning styles of students is crucial if teachers want their students to succeed academically. This will also help teachers develop a variety of teaching strategies and practices that are essential in the learning process. A variety of teaching materials should be incorporated in the language classroom so that students are able to adjust to different learning situations and to avoid any confrontations when exposed to learning styles that do not suit them.

Larkin (2003) in her research said that the adoption of learning style approach in the classroom can increase students interest and motivation to learn, in part, through development of alternative learning strategies designed to accommodate an increasingly diverse population of learners.

Gilakjani and Abbas (2012) conducted a study entitled "Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic Learning Styles and their Impacts on English Language Teaching". This study is an analysis of learning styles for Iranian EFL university students. Over 100 students completed a questionnaire to determine if their learning styles are auditory, visual or kinesthetic. He concluded that discovering the learning style allow the student to determine his or her own personal strengths and weaknesses and learn from them.

Based on the several research findings above, the researcher summarized that students who are able to identify their learning style will have more strength to achieve maximum academic performance. They would be able to determine their personal strength and weaknesses and learn from them. Furthermore this research focused on the impact of learning styles on learners' self-efficacy.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed case study design in an English class of Muhammadiyah University of Makassar in academic year 2016-2017. This study used purposive sampling technique among 291 students. The number of the participants were 30 students. The data of the students learning style were collected by using Perceptual Learning Style Preference (PLSPQ) adapted from Reid. The data of the learning style impacts on students' self-efficacy were collected by using non-participant observation in the class and interview which was analyzed using flow model proposed by Miles and Hubberman.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Findings

#### 1. Learning styles of EFL learners

**Table 1. Students' learning style Classification**

| Learning Style         | Number of Students<br>(N = 30) |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Visual                 | 10                             |
| Auditory               | 8                              |
| Kinesthetic            | 8                              |
| Visual & Kinesthetic   | 3                              |
| Auditory & Kinesthetic | 1                              |
| Total                  | 30                             |

Table 1 shown kinds of learning style used by the students in the class. There were 30 students classified as visual consist of 10 students, auditory consist of 8 students, and kinesthetic consist of 8 students. Furthermore the researcher found out a phenomena that there were several students who had multi learning styles where there were 3 students identified as visual and kinesthetic learners and 1 students identified as auditory and kinesthetic learner.

#### 2. The impact of learning style on self-efficacy

| Impact of learning style on self-efficacy |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Learning Style                            | Stress   | Self-confidence   |
| Auditory learning style                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Felt hard practicing conversation</li><li>• Could not Speak loudly</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decided to listen her friends practicing conversation</li><li>• Reading the script of conversation or text loudly</li><li>• Asking their friend to read the script loudly</li><li>• Attentively listening in QA section</li></ul> |

|                                   |  |   |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| <p>Visual learning style</p>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had no capability in Speaking with hand-gesture</li> <li>• Needed a visual supports in explaining the material</li> <li>• Explaining the material only by reading in discussion</li> <li>• Unable to be focused in listening class</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorizing the expression used in conversation</li> <li>• Read the conversation script over and over</li> <li>• Watch the conversation practice in front of class</li> <li>• Maximize their learning preference to get success in university</li> </ul>                                    |
| <p>Kinesthetic learning style</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not like oral method in lecturing</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directly proposed themselves to be the first in conversation activity</li> <li>• Practicing well with hand-gesture in conversation</li> <li>• Convince to be succeed in academic using their learning style</li> <li>• Explaining material in discussion well with hand-gesture</li> </ul> |

## B. Discussions

### 1. Learning style of EFL learners

Five types of students' learning styles found in this study namely auditory, visual, kinesthetic, visual and kinesthetic and auditory and kinesthetic learners. The findings data presented that 33.33% students were visual, 26.66% students were auditory, 26.66% students were kinesthetic, 10% were visual and kinesthetic and 3.33 were auditory and kinesthetic.

### 2. The impact of learning style on self-efficacy

There are several factors that affect self-efficacy for individual as Bandura (1997) has listed, they are; culture, gender, task complexity, external incentive, position and role and information of self-skill.

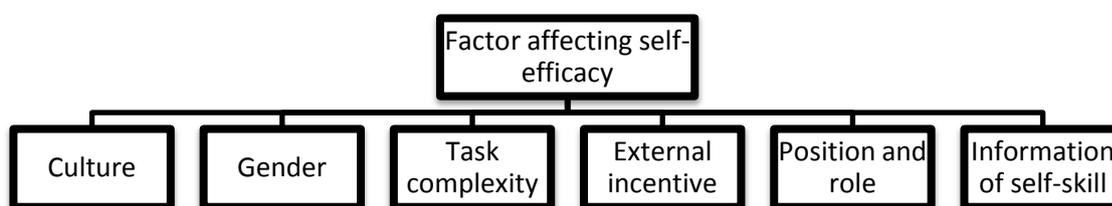


Figure 1. Factors affecting self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997)

The more learner known about the way she or he learns best, the more insight, strategies and self-awareness. She or he will have to use their learning strengths to achieve the greatest potential as joyful learners (Willis & Judy, 2008). Both stress and self-confidence were

indicated through selection and motivation process, mastery experience and dimension of strength.

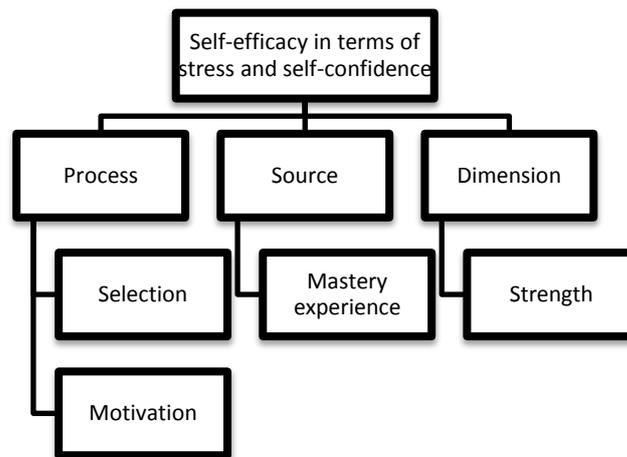


Figure 2. Self-efficacy features (Bandura, 1997)

#### a. The impact of learning style on self-efficacy in terms of stress

Learning style become strength point for learners. Strength is related to the level of strength or conviction and the extensive of behavior where the individual believed on his/her capability (Bandura, 1997). The strength point (learning style) of learner in learning supported the participants in the way they gained information. When the activity did not support the learners' learning style, they felt stress as an auditory students had a lack experience regarding to practice in conversation in front of the class. She was stressed and could not even speak loudly and shown more confidence while hand-gesturing as the kinesthetic learners did. In Pronunciation class where the lecture asking to pronounce the world in loud voice, an auditory learner looked unprepared. She had low efficacy as appeared that she walked slowly to the front of the class. Moreover, she could not even pronounce the word in loud voice. She found herself lacked in practicing the word in pronunciation class. She has no strength to support herself to do well in front of the class. The auditory learners/students in the classroom also seemed to face the phenomena. They did not like to act as presenter in discussion activity.

Moreover, a visual learner needed a visual supports in order to explain the material. She had no capability in speaking with hand-gesture as kinesthetic did. She even read the paper fast which made the material explained ineffectively. It shown that the effect of learning style on the participants' self-efficacy in terms of stress when the class activity did not match with their strength related to learning style. Visual learners feel frustrated when teachers simply give oral instructions for assignments and test instead of also writing the instructions on the board or on a handout (Kinsella, 1993).

Kinesthetic learner felt stressed in Writing class where the lecturer were using an oral method to explain the material, as Ldpride.net (2008) stated that the characteristics of kinesthetic learning style related to such words as: feel, touch, grasp, do and move. They felt hard to sitting only while listening an oral explanation. The participant decided to not to pay attention with the material given by the teacher. Her kinesthetic learning style forced her to ignore the class which was referring to the auditory learner. The participant assumed the external demand as a threat, therefore she decided to do something else than focused to the teaching and learning process. Stress appeared when the method of the lecturer in the way

she/he delivered the material/knowledge in the class did not support their learning preferences.

### **b. The impact of learning style on self-efficacy in terms of self-confidence**

The learners made decision by considering their capability in managing something. They used their strength point in learning style to face the challenge in learning activity (Bandura, 1997). As the auditory learner who decided to choose the best way she learned well. She used her strength in listening, therefore she only decided to listen her friends practicing conversation without disturbing them. Auditory learner chosen different way to gain her confidence before practicing in Pronunciation class. She asked her friend to read the script loudly while listening her friend pronunciation. She chosen to learn by listening her friend the way she/he pronounce the certain words/sentences. Kinsella (1993) stated that the auditory learners master new information by listening, then repeating or discussing with others.

Visual learner supported his learning preference by memorizing the expression would be used in conversation. He put himself read and read the sentence on the paper. Kinsella (1993) stated that to learn as effectively and efficiently as possible, students should identify their perceptual learning preferences, then select study strategies that will help them master new information using their preferences and strength. A visual learner made decision by considering their capability in managing something. They used their strength point in learning style to face the challenge in learning activity. He used reading method to gain his confidence in conversation activity. He read the written sentence on the paper over and over. He also busy watched his friend who was practicing the conversation in front class while trying to speak whispering. In interview section a visual and kinesthetic learning style answered that she loved to learn based on their liked where she used to learn by reading books with pictures and diagram. She also liked to learn outdoor and doing some activities. Another visual learner stated that she liked to watch people around her doing something in order to provide her a visual in learning something. By using her learning preference, she felt confidence to get success in university.

Kinesthetic learners felt confidence in practicing and doing activities. In the class observation of Speaking class specifically when the lecturer asked the students to practice certain conversation, kinesthetic learner directly proposed themselves to be the first volunteer. It proved that both of them had self-confidence regarded to mastery experience as the feature of self-efficacy. Enactive mastery experiences are the most effective source of efficacy information because they directly involve the individually successfully completing a task that provides direct feedback (Bandura, 1997). As the former experience of kinesthetic learner who used to practice and doing activities including in conversation. Kinesthetic learner provided technique or method as a way to gain knowledge in reading activity and listening activities. They avoid to read the text in reading activity, they chosen to directly ask her friend about the main point of the text. Learners used their learning style to change the situation and decrease their stress and anxiety. They also used it as a problem solver in order to gain knowledges presenting in the class. Kinesthetic learner put herself as moderator in discussion activity. Another kinesthetic learner also shown confidence in answering the question of participant. He stood up and got closer to the board and answered the question then. He sometimes put his forefinger on the board in order to give a satisfactory explanation related to the question. It indicated that they had some experiences to play the role. She shown her strength as kinesthetic learner. Bandura (1997) stated that the dimension of strength related to the level of strength or conviction and the extensive behavior where the individual believed on his/her capability.

Former experiences faced by the learners had an important role on their performances. By having such experience they were able to empower their strength in learning process in order to gain information. As the conclusion, learners shown their self-confidence when the method used by the lecturer supporting their learning style.

## CONCLUSION

The researcher found that among 30 participants, 10 students (33.33%) are visual, 8 students (26.66%) are auditory, 8 students (26.6%) are visual, 3 students (10%) are visual and kinesthetic, and 1 student (3.33%) is auditory and kinesthetic. Indonesian EFL learning style impacted their self-efficacy through information of their self-skill as one of factors influenced self-efficacy. The researcher found that in terms of stress and self-confidence learning style impact the Indonesian EFL learners' self-efficacy through selection and motivation process, mastery experience, and dimension of strength as the feature of self-efficacy. Learners' learning style could not match with every method used by the teacher/lecturer in the class. Stress appeared when the method did not engage the need of the learners related to learning style while learners shown their self-confidence when the method was supporting their learning style.

## REFERENCES

- Bandura, A. (1993). *Perceived Self-Efficacy in Cognitive Development and Functioning*: Cambridge University Press
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-Efficacy in Changing Society*: Cambridge University Press.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for Constructing Teacher's Self-Efficacy. *Adolescents and Education: Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Adolescents*, 324-335.
- Brahmakasikara, L. (2013). Learning Styles and Academic Achievement of English III Students at Assumption University of Thailand. *ABAC Journal*, 33(3), 44-52.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (3 ed.). New York: Dewey Publishing Services.
- Gardner, H. (1991). *The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach*. New York.
- Gilakjani, & Abbas, P. (2012). Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic Learning Styles and Their Impacts on English Language Teaching. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 2(1).
- Kinsella, K. (1993). Understanding and Empowering Diverse Students in ESL Classroom. In J. M. Reid (Ed.), *Learning Styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom* (pp. 170-194). New York: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Larkin, L. T. (2003). *Learning Style in the Classroom: A Research-Guided Approach*. Paper presented at the International Conference of Engineering and Computer Education, Sao Paulo, Brazil.  
[http://academic2.american.edu/~tlarkin/pdf\\_files/Larkini/CECE2003.PDF](http://academic2.american.edu/~tlarkin/pdf_files/Larkini/CECE2003.PDF)
- Ldpride.net (2008). Understanding Your Learning Styles. Retrieved May 3, 2017, from <http://www.roe11.k12.il.us/GES%20Stuff/Day%203/Understanding%20Your%20Learning%20Styles.pdf>
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1984). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*. California; SAGE publications Inc.
- Reid, J. M. (1987). The Learning Style Preferences of ESL Students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21(1), 87-111.
- Willis, Judy. (2008). *How Your Child Learns Best*. Naperville: Source Bokks Inc.