

## AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE IN SPEAKING SKILL AT SMAN 1 TEMBILAHAN HULU

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### ABSTRACT

Learning style is an important factor in the process of language acquisition, especially in speaking skills that require understanding and confidence. This study examines the dominant learning styles of grade XI students of SMAN 1 Tembilaan Hulu in learning to speak English. With a quantitative descriptive approach and an instrument in the form of a questionnaire, data were obtained from 100 respondents. The results of the analysis showed that auditory learning style is the most dominant learning style, with the highest average score (296), compared to visual and kinesthetic learning styles. This shows that students find it easier to develop their speaking skills through listening activities and imitating pronunciation. These findings are the basis for teachers and educational institutions to adjust teaching methods to align with students' learning styles.

**Keywords:** *Learning styles, speaking skills, auditory, English learning,*

### INTRODUCTION

One of the languages spoken by a large number of people worldwide and in various spheres of daily life is English. Consequently, the simplest approach to converse with individuals from other countries is to use English. This indicates how vital English is to us. English is a foreign language in Indonesia. Every level of education, from kindergarten to university, includes English instruction. It was only recently learned in an incongruous moment. Teachers of English must investigate efficient methods, strategies, and approaches. Additionally, the instructor has to help the students be creative in the classroom. Teaching and learning will not be successful if an approach is not suited to the circumstances in the classroom.

One of the many skills that must be learned when learning a language is

speaking. Speaking is the primary means of communication. According to Brown and Yuke in Rao (2019), "the skill that students will be evaluated on the most in real life situations is speaking." The importance of speaking skills in life and also speaking skills is one of the most effective communication and the easiest communication to understand, and also Speaking is one of the most challenging skills that language learners must master, according to Bueno, Madrid, and McLaren in Rao (2019). Speaking is recognized as the most crucial of the four English language skills.

Even the learners learn the language for so many years; they find it difficult to speak in real time situations when it is demanded. So that speaking skills are the most essential skills for all the learners who wish to learn English to enhance their career, improve business, build confidence levels, get better job opportunities, make public speeches, attend interviews, participate in debates and group discussions, give presentations and so on. Rao, (2019).

Speaking is the act of verbally expressing one's thoughts and feelings. People almost instinctively take note of the speaker's voice when they hear them talk and they base decisions on what they hear. According to Hyble in Adistya (2016), Speaking is any procedure by which individuals communicate thoughts, feelings, and information. It includes all mannerisms, styles, and body language that give a message meaning. Furthermore, Rokos supports this view in Adistya (2016) by stating that speaking is the most rich and adaptable form of communication. He claims that speaking is a skills that people use on a regular basis, whether they are communicating at school or outside.

Students' habits of learning, including the most effective and straight forward ways to acquire a particular subject, are referred to as their learning styles. According to Pritchard in Adistya (2016), learning styles are routine mental actions, habits, or techniques related to learning, especially intentional, educational learning that a person exhibits. Not only that but also learning styles and strategies appear to be among the most important variables influencing performance in a second language acquisition. Recent research suggests that learning style has a significant influence on students' choice of learning strategies

and that both styles and strategies affect learning outcomes Oxford in Adistya (2016).

Based on such declaration, there is a correlation and mutual influence between learning styles and strategies. When learning a subject, students who are aware of their style of learning will identify certain learning strategy and apply them effectively to enhance their academic results. And according to Oxford in Widharyanto & Binawan (2020) “learning styles and learning strategies are two major variables that help determine how and how well students master their second or foreign language.

To get a good learning style or easy to understand, students must first know what kind of learning style they prefer, because there are many kinds of learning styles. According to Suaib (2017) Stated that Every individual learns in a special style. These three most popular approaches make it easy for students to understand the content: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

Based on the above statement, especially the 3 learning styles have their respective roles in the learning process. from the experience of many researchers during school many students do not have a learning style, so they find it difficult to understand what has been learned, especially in English speaking skills. Therefore, why the researcher took the title “An analysis of students' Learning style in Learning English speaking skills” because the researcher wants to know what kind of learning style is preferred by 11th grade students of SMAN 1 Tembilahan Hulu.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Learning style**

The general way of acquiring knowledge, skills, or attitudes through learning or experience is known as learning style. In Fitri 2024, Sadler-Smith (1996) mentioned. Moreover, (Pritchard in Harnita 2023) Explained that the preferred method of learning and studying is called learning style. Everyone can absorb material obtained from seeing, hearing or doing it directly by using their own learning style. Learning styles can be identified through the diverse mental

routines, approaches or practices related to learning especially deliberate educational learning that a person exhibits. The world of education and psychology has extensively discussed learning styles, emphasizing their importance in relation to students' learning processes v To achieve academic success, students must utilize these styles to effectively understand concepts during learning (Keefe & Ferrell, 1990, in Fitri, 2024).

Kolb (1984) in Shamsuddin & Kaur (2020) emphasizes that a student's academic success is not determined by intellectual capacity alone but is significantly influenced by their distinct learning styles. This is supported by the opinions of MacDonald et al. (2017) in Rogowsky et al. (2020) stated that "Individuals tend to learn more effectively when information is presented in a way that aligns with their preferred learning style, such as auditory, visual, or kinesthetic methods".

### **Speaking Skill**

Speaking is a complex language skill that requires the integration of several components, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. Harahap, Antoni, and Rasyidah (2015) in Siregar (2024) emphasize that effective speaking involves a combination of understanding, accurate pronunciation, grammatical correctness, fluency, and a strong vocabulary. Vocabulary is essential in speaking, as it allows individuals to select the right words according to context and express ideas clearly. A broad vocabulary contributes significantly to the clarity and effectiveness of spoken communication.

Grammar plays a vital role in constructing meaningful and coherent sentences, facilitating better understanding among listeners. Fluency, on the other hand, enables speakers to convey ideas smoothly and confidently without hesitation, which enhances the listener's comprehension. Pronunciation ensures that words are spoken correctly to avoid misunderstandings, especially considering the similarity of sounds in English. Comprehension, as described by Duke and Cartwright (2020), involves interpreting and synthesizing information, which is crucial for understanding and responding appropriately in conversations.

In addition to these core aspects, there are several characteristics and challenges in mastering speaking skills. According to Mazouzi (2013) in Leong & Ahmadi (2017), classroom activities should balance fluency and accuracy, as both are central to effective communication. Hughes (2002) defines fluency as the ability to speak smoothly in a way that maintains listener engagement, while accuracy involves correct use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Thornbury (2005) adds that pronunciation, although often overlooked by learners, is essential for clarity and should include knowledge of phonological rules, stress, pitch, and intonation.

However, students often face difficulties in speaking. Jisda (2014) in Mauliyana (2021) in Siregar (2024) outlines challenges such as difficulty in producing words fluently, fear of negative feedback, limited grammatical knowledge, and a lack of opportunities to practice in class. Harmer (1991) in Leong & Ahmadi (2017) also identifies several reasons why students tend to revert to their mother tongue in speaking lessons: lack of topic familiarity, natural inclination to use native language for clarification, and comfort when lecturers use their native language. These barriers can hinder students' motivation and development in speaking English effectively.

To evaluate speaking ability, as in Ilham et al. (2024), Harmer (2007) proposes five key indicators: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. These indicators not only reflect a student's speaking proficiency but also assist educators identify which areas need further support. By focusing on these interconnected elements, both teachers and learners can collaborate to enhance speaking skills in a structured and effective manner.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design to examine students' learning styles visual, auditory, and kinesthetic and analyze their relationship to speaking skill outcomes. According to Sidel et al. in Wiley & Sons (2018), the development of quantitative descriptive analysis (QDA) allows the output from a trained descriptive panel to be quantifiable and statistically

analyzable. This method reflects the scientific background of its developments and emphasizes measurement and quantification in data interpretation.

The research was conducted at SMAN 1 Tembilahan Hulu, located on Saptamarga Street, Tembilahan Hulu, Indragiri Hilir Regency, Riau. The research was carried out from December 2024 to January 2025. The population of the research consisted of 329 students in the eleventh grade (class XI) across ten classes. Class XI 9, consisting of 35 students, was excluded from the primary population and was used instead for the validity and reliability testing of the research instrument. The sample was selected using systematic random sampling, taking 30% of the total population (excluding class XI 9), resulting in a sample size of 100 students. This method is appropriate for relatively homogeneous populations as it ensures each member has an equal chance of selection, reducing selection bias Bhardwaj, (2019) in Noor et al., (2022).

The data collection instrument was a questionnaire developed based on indicators of the three learning styles. According to Sugiyono (2018), a questionnaire is a data collection technique using a set of written questions given to respondents. This study used 16 items based on three categories: visual (items 1–4), auditory (items 5–6), and kinesthetic (items 7–16). Students were given 20–30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire used a Likert scale with four options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The scoring system assigned numerical values from 4 to 1 respectively. The data analysis process employed descriptive statistics using Microsoft Excel 2021. Widyoko's model (2014) in Agusria (2023) was applied to determine the levels of learning styles by calculating the total scores and classifying them based on score intervals.

To analyze the data, the researcher calculated the highest possible score by multiplying the maximum scale value (4) by the number of respondents (100), resulting in 400. The lowest possible score was calculated by multiplying the minimum scale value (1) by the same number of respondents, yielding 100. The interval was then determined by subtracting the lowest score from the highest score and dividing the result by four, resulting in an interval width of 75.

**Table 1: Learning Style Classification Based on Score Intervals**

Score level	Level of learning style
326 – 400	Very Good
251 – 325	Good
176 – 250	Fair
100 – 175	Low

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The results obtained on the survey questions are presented below:

**Table 2: Recapitulation of Questionnaire Results on Students' Learning Styles**

NO	STATEMENT	A 4	A3	A2	D 1	AMOUNT	LEVEL
1	Statement 1	24	159	68	7	258	Good
2	Statement 2	108	102	58	10	278	Good
3	Statement 3	40	126	82	7	255	Good
4	Statement 4	36	168	48	11	263	Good
5	Statement 5	132	117	48	4	301	Good
6	Statement 6	108	141	32	10	291	Good
7	Statement 7	84	129	62	5	280	Good
8	Statement 8	76	156	50	4	286	Good
9	Statement 9	96	141	50	4	291	Good
10	Statement 10	64	147	54	8	273	Good
11	Statement 11	108	150	34	6	298	Good
12	Statement 12	68	144	54	6	276	Good
13	Statement 13	68	150	54	6	278	Good
14	Statement 14	76	132	50	12	270	Good
15	Statement 15	88	93	80	7	268	Good
16	Statement 16	52	138	68	7	265	Good
<b>Total</b>						4431/ 16 = 276.938	<b>Good</b>

Based on the results of the questionnaire distributed to 100 class XI students of SMAN 1 Tembilahan Hulu, it was found that students' learning styles in relation to speaking skills are generally classified as "Good," with an overall average score of 276.938. This score falls within the 251–325 range, according to the classification model developed by Widyoko. To identify the most dominant learning style used in learning speaking skills, two analytical approaches were employed. First, the average scores for each learning style category were calculated adjusted to account for differences in the number of statements: auditory scored highest at 296, followed by kinesthetic at 279, and visual at 264. These results indicate that students tend to learn more effectively through auditory experiences such as listening and imitating pronunciation.

Second, the distribution of statements with high scores ( $\geq 290$ ) was analyzed to assess the strength of students' preferences. The auditory category showed 2 out of 2 statements (100%) achieving high scores, while kinesthetic had 2 out of 10 statements (20%), and visual had none. The top auditory statements included "Hearing native English speakers pronounce words helps me better understand how to pronounce them" and "To improve my speaking, I often imitate the way English words are pronounced." These findings indicate that auditory learning is not only the most preferred but also the most consistently effective in supporting the development of speaking skills. This conclusion is supported by Taherdoost (2020), who emphasized that interpreting questionnaire data should not only rely on the average, but also on the distribution of strong preferences. Thus, the auditory learning style emerged as the most dominant among grade XI students in learning English speaking skills.

This study was conducted to analyze students' learning styles in relation to their English speaking skills at SMAN 1 Tembilahan Hulu, based on the awareness that learning styles play an important role in successful language acquisition, especially in speaking a skill that is considered important but difficult for learners. The background of this study highlights the challenges faced by students in mastering speaking skills due to lack of awareness and use of appropriate learning styles. With the aim of identifying the most dominant visual,

auditory, or kinesthetic learning styles among 11th grade students, this study used a quantitative descriptive method using a questionnaire as the main instrument. The population consisted of 329 students, and 100 of them were selected through random sampling.

This study is based on various learning style theories, which emphasize how each style (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) affects the learning process differently, especially in language learning. The analysis shows that, overall, the students' learning styles are categorized as "Good," with an average score of 277.625. Among the three styles, the auditory learning style emerged as the most dominant, supported by the highest average score and consistently high results in all related questionnaire items. This suggests that students are more likely to improve their speaking skills through auditory listening, imitation, and repetition. This finding is in line with the existing theory that students learn more effectively when instruction matches their preferred learning style.

Furthermore, this study makes significant contributions to teachers by providing insights for more targeted instruction, helping students become more aware of how they learn best, and supporting educational institutions in shaping more effective and inclusive language curricula. In conclusion, recognizing and utilizing students' dominant learning styles especially auditory can play a significant role in improving their English speaking skills and enhancing the overall teaching and learning process.

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