

**THE STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE AT THE FIRST GRADE  
STUDENTS  
OF SMA NEGERI 1 BANTAENG**

**(A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY)**



**A THESIS**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Makassar  
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of education in English department*

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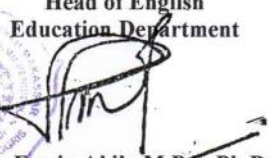
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## ABSTRACT

**AndiFifiAlfira. 2009.** The Students Learning Style at the first grade Students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng (A Descriptive Study) in the Academic Year 2015/2016. Under the thesis of English Education Department the Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Makassar Muhammadiyah University Under supervisor Erwin Akib and Nunung Anugrawati

The objective of this research was to find out the learning style preference of the students in SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng .

The research applied descriptive study to see the learning style preference of students in SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng . In this research, the writer used a single instrument, namely learning style inventories. The population of the research was the students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng in 2015/2016 academic year. The sample of the students consistd of 64 students. The data were analyzed descriptively by using scoring procedures of learning style inventory and percentage.

The result of the research showed that the students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng have various learning style preferences, namely visual learning style (26.56%), auditory learning style (23.43%), tactile learning style (4.68%), visual and auditory learning style (32.81%), visual and tactile learning style (3.12%), visual, auditory, and tactile learning style (9.37%).Students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng strongly prefer visual and auditory learning style preference (32.81%)

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Background**

Language learning is one of the most challenging activities one has to deal with. Such lifelong learning process, obviously, involves the professional and educational guidance as well as personal systematic, conscious and attentive engagements in an the second Language. Therefore, the personal reflection on how one learns a language is regarded as a key to an academic mastery of the native language, and the learning of thesecond or foreign language. The teacher should know that everyone has his/her own innate strengths andabilities. That is, s/he performs well in some specific fields.(Stevenson and Dunn: 2001)

Learning style is a method of Personal choice to perceive and process information. In this sense, learning style is on one hand, sensory hand, and other hand, mental. The level of learning achieved by a leaner is one of the most important factors which indicate the success of a learning environment, in literature there exist numerous learning style and learning style models (Felder, 1995)

Garcia (2007: 249) Some students can still learn simple knowledge even when their learning styles and the learning materialor resources are mismatched, but they can do more effectively and rapidly when the learning materialisin line with their learning style strength. Therefore, the individual differences toward learning have beenregarded as an important issue by more and more educators and

researchers. There are several reasons for the language teacher to understand the logic of studying learning style everyone is a learning style. Our style of learning, if accommodated, can result in improved attitudes toward learning and an increase in productivity, academic achievement, and creativity. (Griggs, 1991) In fact, to reveal the relation between learning style and achievement in language learning might be of great benefit for the learners, teachers, researchers and syllabus designers.

From the early 1970s on some researchers in the field have been trying to find out teaching methods, classroom techniques, and instructional materials that will promote better language instruction. However, in spite of all these efforts there has been a growing concern that learners have not progressed as much as it was anticipated. Because there are considerable individual differences in language learning such as gender, age, social status, motivation, attitude, aptitude, culture, etc.; what works for one learner might not work for another. Therefore, none of the methods and techniques has proved that they can work all the time, in all classes, with all students. As a result, it might be appropriate to comply with Grenfell and Harris statement that "Methodology alone can never be a solution to language learning. Rather it is an aid and suggestion". (Harris, 1999)

Green(1995) states that the learning styles of students should influence the assessment and the teaching of students. Assessment works as a continuum. Aiding students with their individual interests and ways of thinking lies at one end

of the learning chain. At the other end of the learning chain lies the more standardized ways of knowing and doing things that society has deemed as important. In the middle of the chain are individualized ways of understanding and expressing knowledge (Grenfell, 1999). At every level of educational attainment, learning styles of students are apparent. Adapting the idea that individuals receive and process information differently should be a controlling factor in the way we teach. Student achievement affects their academic placement in enrichment or remediation programs while in school and also affects their acceptance or rejection by institutions of higher learning.

Based on the interview with the English Teacher in SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng, the researchers found that most of their students did not have any successful English learning experiences or they had an extreme fear of learning English when they were in Junior High School. In fact, the predictive power of learning styles in the prediction of academic success needs to be replicated, across different contexts, among different participants, and through different instruments..

Based on the previous description, the researcher interested in carrying out a research entitled “The Students Learning Style at the first grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng.”

## **B. Problem Statements**

To make a systematic approach in solving the problem, the researcher formulates the research question as follows;

“What learning styles are mostly used by the students at the first grade of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng?”

### **C. Objectives of the Research**

Based on the problem statements above, the purposes of the study is to find out;

“To know what kinds of learning style are mostly used by the students at the first grade of SMA 1 Bantaeng.”

### **D. Significance of the Research**

This study might prove useful to both language teachers and learners because it might raise teachers' awareness concerning their own learning and teaching styles. It is known that most teachers tend to teach in the way they were taught or in the way they preferred to learn.

### **E. Scope of the Research.**

This research is limited on learning style and focus in visual, auditory and tactile at the first grades of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng in academic year 2015/2016.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **A. Some Previous Research Findings**

Rosalind (2001) in her research on “Study of Correlations Between Learning Styles Of Students And Their Mathematics Scores On The Texas Assessment Of Academic Skills Test” conclude that a correlation does exist between fifth grade students learning styles and their standardized math test scores for all students with the learning style preference of a high level of persistence to complete difficult learning task or assignment and their math achievement scores

Cohen (1996) in his research on “Can Learning Styles Predict Turkish University Prep Class Students’ Achievement in Foreign Language” he found that auditory learning style directly predicts the achievement in foreign language learning. However, auditory learning style affects the achievement in foreign language learning negatively. It is therefore suggested that while getting prepared for the lesson the teachers should present more repetitions and assignments for the students with auditory learning style and keep an eye on these students during and after classes by checking their language tasks frequently.

Mumtaz. (2013:7) in his research on “The Relationship between Students’ Learning Style and Academic Performance in Mara Professional College, Malaysia”, conclude that students differ by preferring more or less structure. Students who prefer structure want the teacher to give details about how to complete the assignment. They need clear directions before completing an

assignment. Students who prefer less structure want the teacher to give assignments in which the students can choose the topic and organize the material on their own

From the research findings above the researcher concludes that further consideration should be given to finding if correlations exist between student's learning styles and their standardized math test scores when teacher's learning styles are matched with their students.

The researcher hopes that the findings of this study will be used to improve the teaching practice and the performance of students. In view of the results of this study, it may prove beneficial to consider learning style preferences when designing and teaching courses to maximize learning success. As mentioned earlier, it is quite difficult to determine individual learning styles of the students, dividing them into classes based on their learning styles, and teaching them accordingly.

## **B. Some Pertinent Ideas**

### **1. Concepts of Learning style**

The first part starts with the definition of learning styles and it deals with the various dimensions of learning styles. Then, literature pertinent to learning styles is presented.

#### **a. Definition of Learning Style**

As it was the case with language learning strategies, the definition of learning styles is also a major concern among the scholars in the field.

Dunn(2003)defines that learning styles as “a term that describes the variationsamong learners in using one or more senses to understand, organize, and retainexperience” Ehrman(1989) define the term as referring to alearner’s “consistent way of responding and using stimuli in the context of learning”.

Green (1995) learning styles are “cognitive, affective, andphysiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive,interact with, and respond to the learning environment”. Dun (1989) assert that learning styles include variables such as“individual responses to sound, light, temperature, design, perception, intake,chronobiological highs and lows, mobility needs, and persistence, ...motivation,responsibility (conformity) and need for structure...” .

As it can be seen the definitions provided above vary in terms of scope anddepth. The definition provided by Grenfell(1999) besides taking into account thedifference between learning styles and cognitive styles, it also includes the threedimensions of behaviour: cognitive, affective, and physiological. The last definition,particularly, is the broadest and deepest since it seems to be composed of environmental (light, sound, temperature), emotional (motivation, responsibility,persistence) and sociological (pairs, groups) stimuli. The involvement of such widerepertoire of dimensions while defining learning styles leads to confusion because itis difficult to control and focus on all of them at the same time. Therefore, in thisstudy, the definition provided by Dunn and Dunn (1979, as cited in Reid, 1987) willbe taken as a basis.

According to Dunn and Dunn (2003) defines that learning styles as “a term that describes the variations among learners in using one or more senses to understand, organize, and retain experience”.

There are various instruments used to determine a student's learning style. We could start with neuro0linguistic programming (NLP). It was begun in the mid seventies by a linguist (Grinder) and a mathematician (Bandler) who had strong interests in (a) successful people, (b) psychology, (c) language and (d) computer programming. NLP claims to help people change by teaching them to program their brains. NLP claims that each of us has a Primary Representational System (PRS), a tendency to think in specific modes: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. “I think the more you want to become more and more creative you have to not only elicit other peoples' strategies and replicate them yourself, but also modify others' strategies and have a strategy that creates new creativity strategies based on as many wonderful states as you can design for yourself. Therefore, in away, the entire field of NLP is a creative tool, because I wanted to create something new. (Cheng, 1998)

#### **b. Fundamentals of Learning Styles**

Reid (1995) asserts that learning styles have some fundamental characteristics, on which they are based. These are:

- 1) Every person, student and teacher alike, has a learning style and learning strengths and weaknesses;
- 2) Learning styles exist on wide continuums; although they are described as opposites;



- 3) Learning styles are value-neutral; that is, no one style is better than others (although clearly some students with some learning styles function better in a US school system that values some learning styles over others);
- 4) students must be encouraged to “stretch” their learning styles so that they will be more empowered in a variety of learning situations;
- 5) Often, students’ strategies are linked to their learning styles; teachers should allow their students to become aware of their learning strengths and weaknesses. (Reid, 1995: 21)

### c. Types of Learning Style

- 1) Visual (**spatial**) : You prefer using pictures, images, and spatial understanding.
- 2) Aural (**auditory-musical**): You prefer using sound and music.
- 3) Verbal (**linguistic**): You prefer using words, both in speech and writing
- 4) Physical (**tactile**): You prefer using your body, hands and sense of touch.
- 5) Logical (**mathematical**): You prefer using logic, reasoning and systems.
- 6) Social (**interpersonal**): You prefer to learn in groups or with other people.
- 7) Solitary (**intrapersonal**): You prefer to work alone and use self-study.

#### d. Learning Style Dimensions

As it was mentioned earlier nearly twenty different dimensions of learning styles have been identified so far. Table 1 provides a summary of the various dimensions identified so far together with their brief definitions. When the table is analyzed carefully, it can be seen that though some of the dimensions are given separately, they actually overlap. An example of such an overlap is the field independent – field dependent versus analytic and global learning styles. Reid (1998: 10)

**Table 1:** Overview of Some Learning Styles (Reid, 1998: 10)

No	The Seven Multiple Intelligences	
1	Verbal/Linguistic	Ability with and sensitivity to oral and written words
2	Musical	Sensitivity to rhythm, pitch, and melody
3	Mathematical	Ability to use numbers effectively and to reason well
4	Visual	Sensitivity to form, space, color, line, and shape
5	Kinesthetic	Ability to use the body to express ideas and feelings
6	Interpersonal	Ability to understand another person's moods and intentions
7	Intrapersonal	Ability to understand oneself: one's own strengths and weaknesses

Table 2: The Seven Multiple Intelligences (Reid, 1998: 17)

No	Perceptual Learning Styles	
1	Visual	Learns more effectively through the eyes (seeing)
2	Auditory	Learns more effectively through the ear (hearing)
3	Tactile	Learns more effectively through touch (hands-on)
4	Group	Learns more effectively through working with others
5	Individual	Learns more effectively through working alone

Table 3: Field Independent and Field Dependent (Sensitive) Learning Styles (Reid, 1998: 20)

No	Field Independent and Field Dependent (Sensitive) Learning Styles	
1	Field Independent	Learns more effectively sequentially, analysing facts
2	Field Dependent	Learns more effectively in context (holistically) and insensitive to human relationships

Table 4: Reflective and Impulsive Learning Styles (Reid, 1998: 22)

No	Reflective and Impulsive Learning Styles	
1	Analytic	Learns more effectively when given time to consider options
2	Global	Learns more effectively when able to respond immediately

**Table 5: Kolb Experiential Learning Model** (Reid, 1998: 24)

No	Kolb Experiential Learning Model	
1	Converger	Learns more effectively when able to perceive abstractly and to process actively
2	Diverger	Learns more effectively when able to perceive concretely and to process reflectively
3	Assimilator	Learns more effectively when able to perceive abstractly and to process reflectively
4	Accommodator	Learns more effectively when able to perceive concretely and to process actively

**Table 6: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** (Reid, 1998: 26)

No	Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)	
1	Extraverted	Learns more effectively through concrete experience, contacts with and relationships with others
2	Introverted	Learns more effectively in individual, independent learning situations
3	Sensing	Learns more effectively from reports of observable facts
4	Intuition	Learns more effectively from meaningful experiences
5	Thinking	Learns more effectively from

		impersonal and logical circumstances
6	Feeling	Learns more effectively from personalized circumstances
7	Judging	Learns more effectively by reflection, deduction, analysis, and process that involve closure
8	Perceiving	Learns more effectively through negotiation, feeling, and inductive processes that postpone closure

**Table 7:** Right – and Left brained Learning Style (Reid, 1998: 22)

No	Right – and Left brained Learning Style	
1	Right-Brained	Learns more effectively through visual analytic, reflective, self-reliant learning
2	Left-Brained	Learns more effectively through auditory, global, impulsive, interactive learning

The scope and depth of learning styles vary because it seems impossible to limit a person's learning style only with a certain dimension, that is, it cannot be said that a person is only visual, audio or kinesthetic. Ehrman and Oxford (1995) assert "Naturally, not everyone fits neatly into one or another of these categories to the exclusion of the other, parallel categories (e.g. visual, auditory, tactile)" (p. 69). This view is also supported by Ellis (1989) who asserts that "At any period in the history of methodological fashions, there is usually the covert assumption of one particular learning style as basic. [However,] what makes the current interest in learning styles new is that several different ways of learning are now held to

equally valid” (p. 6). Kroonenberg (1995) adds another point why there is so much interest in learning styles currently by stating that all students ought to be given extensive opportunities to learn through their preferred style, but “they also need to open the idea of ‘style flex’ – that is students should be encouraged to diversify their style preferences”.

Willis (1989) provides a diagram of the basic structure of the suppositions that underlie the representation of learning styles (see Figure I). As it can be seen, the diagram consists of the three phases of the learning context: perceiving, processing, and using. The very first stage is the “receiving” phase, when the language input is received through all the senses, that is, through kinesthetic, visual, auditory or tactile sensory preferences. What the diagram emphasizes is that the reception of information will be accomplished through the sensory modality that is more relied on in a person’s general learning behavior

#### **e. Studies Pertaining to Learning Styles**

Because learning styles have a wide range of dimensions and since a lot of variables affect them, there are several problems proposed by Felder (1988) encountered while identifying learning styles. The first one is that learning styles are complex in nature and it might be difficult to analyze the overall learning profile of a learner. Another problem is that learners might tend to use different learning styles in various learning contexts. The third problem proposed is that the methodology used in the transfer of information can be biased. That is, it might be in favour of one kind of learner (analytic) over another (global). Yet, the researchers have worked on and identified the learning styles of learners in relation

to some variables such as age,sex, length of time in the target culture, field of study, level of education, and culture.

Reid (1987) conducted a research with respect to the learning style preferences of ESL learners. The overall results of the research indicated that ESL learners strongly preferred kinesthetic and tactile learning styles when compared to audio and visual. In addition, most groups showed a negative preference for group learning. The general findings offered by Reid (1987) are as the following:

- 1) The perceptual learning style preferences of ESL learners differed significantly in several ways from native speakers of English. For instance, native speakers of English were less tactile in their learning style preferences than all nonnative speakers and were significantly less kinesthetic than Arabic, Chinese, Korean and Spanish speakers.
- 2) The learning style preferences of ESL learners from different language, different educational and cultural backgrounds sometimes differed significantly from each other. For instance, the Korean students were found to be the most visual in their learning style preferences. They were significantly more visual than the US and Japanese learners. Japanese learners, on the other hand, appeared to be the least auditory of all learners and were significantly less auditory than Arabic and Chinese learners.
- 3) When some other factors such as sex, length of time spent in the United States, major field, and level of education were analyzed, the

results indicated that there were significant differences in their relationships to various learning style preferences. In the analysis of results with respect to level of education and gender, it was found that graduate students showed a significantly greater preference for visual and tactile learning than the undergraduates. The undergraduates were significantly more auditory oriented than graduates. Both groups strongly preferred tactile and tactile learning. Males preferred visual and tactile learning significantly more often than females.

- 4) The data obtained from the study also indicated that as ESL learners adapt to the US academic environment, some changes and extensions of learning styles might take place. To illustrate, the longer the students had lived in the United States, the more auditory their preference became. Learners who had been in the US more than three years were significantly more auditory in their learning style preference than those who had been in the US for shorter periods of time. This finding indicates that learners adapt their learning style preferences to the learning environment they are involved.

Ehrman (1990) replicated Reid's (1987) study in order to obtain more information about the similarities and differences in learning styles between ESL learners and Native English Speakers (NESs). Stebbins lists the areas in which the results paralleled with Reid's results.

- a) Tactile learning styles were strongly preferred by ESL students when compared to NESs.



- b) Group learning was again chosen as the least preferred mode by most NESs and ESL students; the only sample group in the current study to indicate a preference for the group learning mode were those ESL students with low (300-349) TOEFL scores.
- c) Spanish speakers repeated their strong preference for kinesthetic mode. Arabic and Korean students showed stability in their choice of multiple learning styles. Japanese students again did not strongly identify any style preferences. (Stebbins, 1995: 110)

Garcia (2007) conducted a research with respect to the learning styles in adult migrant education. To serve the purposes of the survey a new questionnaire was developed because the already existing ones had some deficiencies such as having a too narrow focus or being complex in their format and wording. The questionnaire consisted of thirty items on the first page, the second page included fifteen learning strategies, and the third page included items regarding individual biographical results. 517 learners, from over thirty ethnic groups participated the study, but only five of the ethnic groups (Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic speakers, South Americans, and Polish/Czech speakers) were large enough for statistical analysis.

Regarding the analysis of the results Claxton (1978) stated that it was impossible to make “statistically valid cross-comparisons relating a question to more than one biographical variable at a time” for this reason, the individual characteristics of the participants were considered separately. The results indicated that there are cultural differences with respect to the learning style

preferences of the learners. Though the mean of the item “I like to study grammar” was lower than expected, all learners from the distinct cultures reflected that they liked studying grammar. However, the Arabic learners were the ones who preferred grammar the most because 65 % of them ranked this item as the “best”. The item related to the use of cassettes at home revealed that the Vietnamese were the only learners who preferred this method. Chinese, in contrast, seemed to “have little confidence in it” (Willing, 1988:130). When the same question was considered with respect to the length of residence in Australia it was revealed that the variation was not big enough to be statistically meaningful. The results with regard to sex indicated that males tend to write everything in their notebooks more than females. In addition, though moderately both visual and kinesthetic modalities were female preferences

#### **f. Differences Between Language Learning Strategies and Styles**

Providing a wide range of definitions of LLS proposed by experts in the field does not solve the problem of understanding what LLS are because LLS have usually been confused with learning styles. Reid (1998) draws a distinction between learning styles and learning strategies by focusing in what way they are distinct from each other. She refers to learning styles as “*internally* based characteristics, often not perceived or consciously used by learners, for the intake and comprehension of new information” (p. ix), whereas learning strategies are defined as “*external* skills often used consciously by students to improve their learning” (p. ix). What we can infer from these two definitions is that since learning styles are ‘internally based characteristics,’ they explain a learner’s

preference to a learning situation. In addition, it can be said that they are relatively stable and not likely to change over time. This view is also supported by Oxford (1990) who states that some learner characteristics such as “learning styles and personality traits are difficult to change” Yet, as it will be discussed later, some studies such as Ellis’ (1989) revealed that learners abandoned their own learning styles and they adjusted themselves according to the teaching style they were exposed to.

The learning strategies, on the other hand, are said to be ‘external skills’, which indicates they are more problem oriented and conscious. This also implies that they are more liable to change over time and depending on the task and materials used in the learning environment. Oxford (1990) claims that “learning strategies are easier to teach and modify” (p. 12) through strategy training..

#### **g. Aspect of Learning Style**

Aspects of learning styles are divided into three categories – cognitive, affective and physiological. The cognitive aspect includes the process of decoding, encoding, processing, storage and retrieval of information. It must also be noted that how these aspects are performed must be a consideration. Performance can be randomly, sequentially, concretely or abstractly, or between these two poles, which result in a continuum. John Dewey notes “an individual is no longer just a particular, a part without meaning save in an inclusive whole, but is a subject, self, a distinctive centre of desire, thinking and aspiration”. Wiersma (1995: 216).

The complex structure of learning allows for the emergence of individual, unique styles of learning. Even though learning is continual and developmental, no two individuals grasp reality in the same manner. This is due to the variety of experiences of the individual, the way they are influenced by environmental stimuli and the way they program themselves.

The learning process is conceived as environmental, emotional, sociological and physiological. The major premise of how individuals learn, not the skills used in learning, is the foundation for the Learning Style Inventory. It is a comprehensive approach to the identification of how individuals prefer to learn during educational activities in the following areas:

- 1) Environmental Learning Styles
  - a) Sound
  - b) Light
  - c) Temperature
  - d) Design
- 2) Emotionality Learning Styles
  - a) Motivation
  - b) Persistent
  - c) Responsibility
  - d) Structure
- 3) Sociological Learning Styles
  - a) Learning Alone/Peer Oriented
  - b) Learning with Authority Figure Present

- c) Learning in Several Ways
- 4) Physiological Learning Styles
  - a) Perceptual Preferences
  - b) Auditory
  - c) Visual
  - d) Tactile
  - e) Intake

Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) of Dunn, Dunn and Price was designed to get an individual's personal preferences for different elements in twenty-two areas. These are grouped according to the four quadrants mentioned above. Questions concerning each of the quadrants are presented and selected responses tend to reveal highly personalized characteristics that, when combined, represent the way in which an individual learns. The twenty-two areas include the following:

- 1) Noise Level – Quiet or Sound. Some students need quiet when they are learning, while others notice neither noise nor movement once they begin to concentrate.
- 2) Light – Low or Bright. Some students work best under very bright lights, while others need dim, indirect or low light to concentrate.  
Temperature – Cool or Warm. Some students concentrate best when the temperature of the learning environment is warm while others prefer a cool environment
- 3) Design – Informal or Formal. Many students concentrate best in a formal environment seated on wooden, steel, or plastic chairs resembling

those found in conventional classrooms or kitchens; while other students concentrate best in an informal environment – on a bed, lounge chair, floor or carpeting.

- 4) Motivation – Unmotivated/Self-Motivated. Self-motivation is the desire to achieve academically to please oneself. Persistence – Not Persistent/Persistent. This element involves a student's desire either to complete tasks that are begun or to take intermittent "breaks" and to return to the learning assignment or activity later.
- 5) Responsibility – Not Responsible/Responsible. This element involves student's desire to do what they think they ought to do.
- 6) Structure – Does Not Want Structure/Wants Structure. Many students prefer specific directions/guidance and parameters prior to completing an assignment versus the student's preference for doing an assignment his or her way without explanations, directions, guidance or set parameters.
- 7) Learning Alone/Peer Oriented – Some students prefer studying alone while others prefer to study with a peer. In the latter situation, discussion and interaction facilitate learning. Some students prefer to study alone but in close proximity to others. It is important to note that the factor analysis of this test does not differentiate among those students who prefer learning with one or with several individuals. Authority Figures Present – Some students feel more comfortable when someone with authority is present.
- 8) Prefers Learning in Several Ways – This element has alternate meanings. This suggests that students may learn as easily alone as with other people

present (peers, authority or combination) or that the students need variety as opposed to routine.

#### **h. Learning Style Modalities**

Sensory preferences influence the ways in which students learn. Perceptual preferences affect more than 70 percent of school-age youngsters" (Dunn, Beaudry, & Klavas, 1989, p. 52).

There are three Learning Modalities adapted from Barbe and Swassing (writers of the book, teaching through modality strengths: concept and practices):

1. Visual

2. Auditory

3. Tactile

*Table.1 Descriptions of Learning Modalities*

<b>Visual</b>	<b>Tactile</b>	<b>Auditory</b>
Picture	Gestures	Listening
Drawings	Touching	Sounds Patterns
Shape	Body Movements	Rhythms
Sculpture	Object Manipulation	Tone
Paintings	Positioning	Chants

Learning modalities have the ability of occurring independently or in combination, changing over time, and becoming integrated with age.

### **i. Learning styles in the classroom**

Various researchers have attempted to hypothesize ways in which learning style theory can be used in the classroom. Two such scholars are Dr. Rita Dunn and Dr. Kenneth Dunn, who follow a VARK approach.

Although learning styles will inevitably differ among students in the classroom, Dunn and Dunn say that teachers should try to make changes in their classroom that will be beneficial to every learning style. Some of these changes include room redesign, the development of small-group techniques, and the development of Contract Activity Packages. Redesigning the classroom involves locating dividers that can be used to arrange the room creatively (such as having different learning stations and instructional areas), clearing the floor area, and incorporating student thoughts and ideas into the design of the classroom. (Chamot. 1999)

Another scholar who believes that learning styles should have an effect on the classroom is Marilee Sprenger in *Differentiation through Learning Styles and Memory*. Sprenger bases her work on three premises: 1) Teachers can be learners, and learners teachers. We are all both. 2) Everyone can learn under the right circumstances. 3) Learning is fun! Make it appealing. She details various ways of teaching, visual, auditory, or tactile/kinesthetic. Methods for visual learners include ensuring that students can see words written, using pictures, and drawing time lines for events. Methods for auditory learners include repeating words aloud, small-group discussion, debates, listening to books on tape, oral reports, and oral



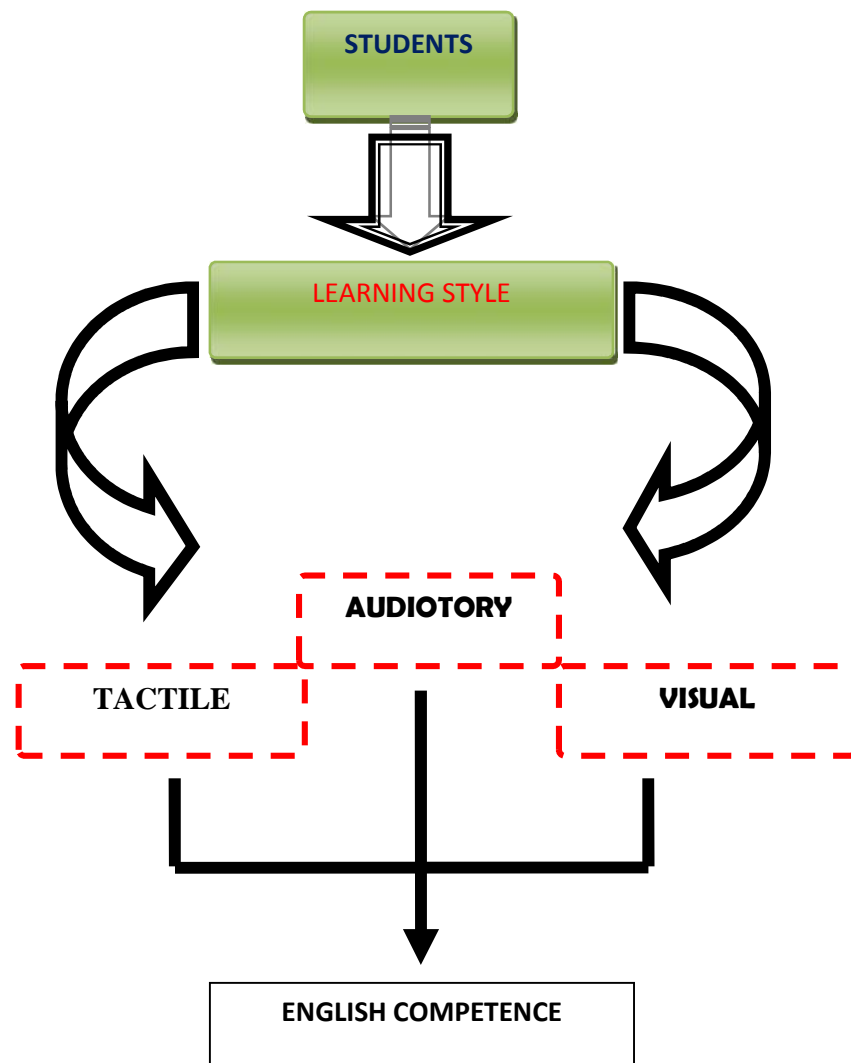
interpretation. Methods for tactile/kinesthetic learners include hands-on activities (experiments, etc.), projects, frequent breaks to allow movement, visual aids, role play, and field trips. By using a variety of teaching methods from each of these categories, teachers cater to different learning styles at once, and improve learning by challenging students to learn in different ways.

Anderson (1991) states that have incorporated learning style assessment as a basic component in their "Personalized Instruction" model of schooling. Six basic elements constitute the culture and context of personalized instruction. The cultural components - - teacher role, student learning characteristics, and collegial relationships - - establish the foundation of personalization and ensure that the school prizes a caring and collaborative environment. The contextual factors—interactivity, flexible scheduling, and authentic assessment—establish the structure of personalization. These six elements constitute the state of the art in personalized instruction. Cognitive and learning style analysis have a special role in the process of personalizing instruction. Style elements are relatively persistent qualities in the behavior of individual learners. They reflect genetic coding, personality, development, motivation, and environmental adaptation. Second only to the more flexible teacher role, the assessment of student learning style, more than any other element, establishes the foundation for a personalized approach to schooling: for student advisement and placement, for appropriate retraining of student cognitive skills, for adaptive instructional strategy, and for the authentic evaluation of learning. Some learners respond best in instructional

environments based on an analysis of their perceptual and environmental style preferences. Most individualized and personalized teaching methods reflect this point of view. Other learners, however, need help to function successfully in any learning environment. If a youngster cannot cope under conventional instruction, enhancing his cognitive skills may make successful achievement possible. Many of the student learning problems that learning style diagnosis attempts to solve relate directly to elements of the human information processing system. Processes such as attention, perception and memory, and operations such as integration and retrieval of information are internal to the system. Any hope for improving student learning necessarily involves an understanding and application of information processing theory. Learning style assessment is an important window to understanding and managing this process.

Some research evaluating teaching styles and learning styles, however, has found that congruent groups have no significant differences in achievement from incongruent groups (Spoon & Schell, 1998). Furthermore, learning style in this study varied by demography, specifically by age, suggesting a change in learning style as one gets older and acquires more experience. While significant age differences did occur, as well as no experimental manipulation of classroom assignment, the findings do call into question the aim of congruent teaching-learning styles in the classroom.

### j. Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework underlying this research is given in the following diagram. This framework started from the Students learning style that is focused in three kinds of learning style, they are visual, auditor and tactile. It means that the researcher measures the students learning style that is they choose in learning process.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH OF METHODOLOGY**

#### **A. Research Design**

This research used descriptive qualitative method to collect and describe the data and to find out the learning style that was applied by students' learning style and the first semester students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng.

#### **B. Research Variable**

The variables of this research are the students learning styles used in learning process.

#### **C. Population and Sample**

##### **1. Population**

The population of this research is the second year students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng that divided into 6 classes, and the researcher took XI.B class as a sample that consists of 32 Students.

##### **2. Sample**

This research applied cluster random sampling technique to find out learning styles preference of students in SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng. The researcher chose sample randomly. After choosing randomly, the researcher determined students of the tenth and the eleventh class in SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng. The eleventh class

consisted of 6 classes, the number of students was 192 and the twelfth class consisted of 6 classes too, the number of students was 192. Then the writer determined the two classes, one from tenth class namely x6 where the number of students was 32 and the eleventh IPA 2, the number of students was 32. So, the total number of sample was 64.

Where;

$$n = d * N$$

n = Sample

N = Population

d = Persistence (Arikunto; 2002)

#### **D. Research Instrument**

There were two kinds of instrument was used in this research to collect the data, namely observation and questionnaire.

The questionnaires consisted of 24 items divided into two sections, the items based on three learning style types. The items of the questionnaire for learning style was not in one group. In other words, they were randomly arranged.

#### **E. Technique of Data collecting**

To collect data from class, two of the three main strategies which was suggested by Gay, et al (2006:413-423) is applied, namely: (1) observation, and (2) Questionnaire.

The first instrument that is used in the current study is the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) developed by Reid (1987). It is a self-reporting questionnaire developed on the basis of existing learning style instruments with some changes suggested by non-native speaker informants and US consultants in the field of linguistics. The questionnaire, which was designed and validated for non-native speakers, consists of five statements on each of the six learning style preferences to be measured: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group learning, and individual learning. The first four categories constitute the perceptual learning style categories and the remaining two make up the social category. The participants responded on the basis of a five point Likert scale, ranging from often, sometimes and seldom.

## **F. Technique Data Analysis**

### **1. Questionnaire**

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed in following steps:

- a. Scoring the data obtained from questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three kinds of language learning style. It are tabulated to pick which of those three language learning style that mostly appeared. The most frequently would be converted into percentage. The most appear style are considered as style applied by the students.

- b. The data collected through the questionnaire analysed by using scoring procedures of Likert scale learning style inventory, namely:

Scoring procedures:

Often :5 points

Sometimes :3 points

Seldom :1 point

Place the point value on the line next to its corresponding item number and add the points to obtain learning style preference scores under each heading.

VISUAL		AUDITORY		TACTILE	
NO	PTS	NO	PTS	NO	PTS
2		1		4	
3		5		6	
7		8		9	
10		11		12	
14		13		15	
16		18		17	
19		21		20	
22		24		23	
VPS:		APS:		KPS	
VPS (visual Preference)		APS (auditory Preference)		KPS :Tactile Preference	

**VPS = Visual Preferences Score**

**APS = Auditory Preferenc Score**

**TPS = Tactile Preferences Score**

The last, the data was anallyzed descriptively by using :



$$P = F/N \times 100\%$$

Where

P = Percentage

F = Frequency

N = Total sample

(Sudjana,1992: 73)

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Findings

The data analysis shows that the learning style of the students at the first grades of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng were six types of learning styles namely (1) Visual Learners, (2) Auditory Learners, (3) Tactile Learners,(4) Visual and auditory Learners, (5) Visual and tactile learners, and (6) visual, auditory, and tactile learners. They can be showed in the table below:

No	Learning Style Preference	Frequency			Amount	Percentage
		O	St	S		
1	Visual	3	7	7	17	26.56%
2	Auditory	-	7	8	15	23.43%
3	Tactile	-	1	2	3	4.68%
4	Visual and auditory	-	7	14	21	32.81%
5	Visual and tactile	-	1	1	2	3.12%
6	Visual, auditory, and tactile	-	1	5	6	9.37%
	Total				64	100%

It is shown on the table above that from 64 (sixty four) students, (a) 17 students have visual learning style (26.56%); 3 of them are often visual, 7 of them are sometimes visual, and 7 of them are seldom visual. (b) 15 students have auditory learning style (23.43%); none of them is often auditory, 7 of them are sometimes auditory, and 8 of them are seldom auditory (c) 3 students have tactile learning style (4.68%); none of them is often tactile, 1 of them is sometimes tactile, and 2 of them are seldom tactile, (d) 21 students have visual and auditory learning style (32.81%); none of them is often visual and auditory, 7 of them are sometimes visual and auditory, 14 of them are seldom visual and auditory. (e) 2 students have visual and tactile learning style (3.12%); none of them is often visual and tactile, 1 of them is sometimes visual and tactile, and 1 of them is seldom visual and tactile (f) 6 students have visual, auditory, and tactile learning style (9.37%); none of them is often visual, auditory, and tactile, 1 of them is sometimes visual, auditory, and tactile, 5 of them are seldom visual, auditory, and tactile. This result also shows

that students at the first grades of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng not only have single learning style (visual, auditory, tactile) but also combination learning style (visual and auditory; visual and tactile; visual, auditory, and tactile learning style). In addition, students of SMA.Negeri 1 Bantaeng strongly have visual and auditory learning style. It is signed in the data above; the highest percentage is in visual and auditory learning style (32.81%)'

#### B. Discussion

Based on the data, the students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng prefer combining their learning style namely visual and auditory learning style. The students with the combination learning styles are the students who have combination characteristics style in learning (De Potter: 2010). They have a tendency to have more than one learning styles, so that their characteristics are the combination of the single learning style. Every student has an access to those

three learning styles (visual, auditory or tactile) and prefers to one modality of learning style which contributes to student's learning process and communication. Otherwise, person not only disposes to be a single learning style learner, but also the combination of them which gives particular talent and lack. Because in this research, the students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng strongly prefer visual and auditory learning style, it can be interpreted that the first, students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng not only need visual presentation but also audio presentation in their learning process especially in English learning process. As we know that there are four skills in English, namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The research interpret that in listening, students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng tend to use their auditory learning style. In reading and writing, students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng tend to use their visual learning style. While in speaking they tend to use both their visual and auditory learning style.

Furthermore, the students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng prefer learning English by exploring visual and auditory learning style because their teachers have visual and auditory teaching style. As well R.asyid (1992) stated that the formation of students' learning style is strongly influenced by the teacher's teaching style in teaching and learning process through various classroom interactions.

In order to get better achievement in learning, the students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng should use visual and audio equipments in their learning process and the teachers of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng should use visual and audio presentation in their teaching process.

The students who are sometimes visual and auditory learning style more have ability to understand visual and audio material than the students who are seldom visual and auditory learning style.

Although, the students of SMA Negeri. 1 Bantaeng strongly prefer visual and

auditory learning style but another learning styles were still preferred by the students namely visual learning style; auditory learning style; tactile learning style; visual and tactile learning style; and visual, auditory, and tactile learning style.

These findings indicated that these possessed some learning style characteristics. As the visual learners, (a) follow written directions better than oral directions, (b) like to write things down or take notes for a visual review, (c) require explanations of diagrams, graphs or visual directions, (d) can understand and follow map direction, (e) prefer to read news thorough article in newspaper or magazine than listen news through radio , (f) the best way to remember is having picture or description in mind, (g) hold exact things during the lesson taking place, and (h) obtain information on an interesting subject by reading relevant materials.

The students who are often and sometimes visual are interpreted that they totally have characteristics of visual learner mentioned above and they totally get easiness to understand material if the material is presented in visual form. While the students who are seldom visual are interpreted that although they are visual learners but they don't totally get easiness to understand material if the material is presented in visual form. It can be conclude that the ability of often and sometimes visual learners is higher than the ability of seldom visual to understand material.

The auditory learners are (a) can remember more about a subject through listening than reading, (b) need oral instruction to understand map direction, (c) can tell if sounds match when presented with pairs of sounds, (d) learn well by listening teacher explanation or tape, (e) learn to spell better by repeating the letters out loud than by writing the word on paper, (f) would rather listen to a good lecture or speech than read about the same material in a book, (g) prefer to listen news in radio than read about it in a newspaper, and (h) follow oral directions better than written ones. In this research, the

sometimes auditory students are interpreted that they strongly can understand material if the material is presented in audio form. While the students who are seldom auditory are interpreted that they are auditory learner but they don't have strongly ability to understand material if material is presented in audio form. In sum, the sometimes auditory students have higher ability to understand material than the seldom auditory students.

The tactile learners are the students who have some characteristics such as (a) bear down extremely hard with a pen or pencil when writing, (b) enjoy working with tools, (c) play with coins or keys in pocket, (d) chew gum, smoke or snack during studies, (e) learning spelling by "finger spelling" the words, (f) are good at solving and working on jigsaw puzzles and mazes, (g) grip objects in hands during learning period, and (h) feel very comfortable touching others, hugging, handshaking, etc. In this research, there are some students who are sometimes tactile and a few students are seldom tactile. The sometimes tactile students are interpreted as the students who strongly can understand material if they study while do movement or touching. While for the seldom tactile students, although they are tactile students but their ability to understand material is different with the sometimes tactile students. To conclude, the Seldom students have lower ability to understand material than the sometimes tactile students.

Visual and tactile learner can be interpreted that their characteristics are the combination of Visual and tactile characteristics. While visual, auditory, and tactile learners can be interpreted that their characteristics are combination of visual, auditory, and tactile characteristics.

The present study reaches some conclusions about the inter-relationship between perceptual learning styles, learning strategies and learners' spoken English proficiency. Firstly, tactile is the most preferred perceptual learning styles and the least preferred one

is group style. The order of perceptual learning styles from the most preferred to the least preferred is tactile, auditory, visual, individual and group styles. Secondly, there are relationships between perceptual learning styles and language learning strategies. Learning styles directly affect the choice and use of learning strategies. Thirdly, most perceptual learning styles bear no relationship with spoken English proficiency except group styles and individual styles. Fourthly, most learning strategies directly and strongly make differences in learners' spoken English proficiency except memory strategy.

Relationship between students' language learning style preferences and affect in English competence which were statistically significant are hereby reported and deliberated

- a. Visual and auditory styles, being the most favored learning styles with means of 26.56 and 23.43 respectively. Visual learners learn well from seeing words in books, on the chalkboards and in workbooks. They remember and understand information and instructions better if they read them.
  - b. Tactile styles, are also preferred by subjects, indicate that students could learn best by experience, by being involved physically in classroom experiences. They remember information well when they actively participate in activities, field trips, and role-plays in the classroom. Because these two styles allow learners to experience language totally, ESL learners prefer those most.
  - c. While for auditory learners, they mainly learn from hearing works spoken and from oral explanation. They may remember information by reading aloud or moving their lips as they read, especially when they are learning new materials. They benefit from hearing audiotapes, lectures and classroom discussions. Teaching others and conversing with others could also enhance their study.
- Individual and group styles are the least preferred by the subjects. Individual

learners learn best when they work alone, think well when they think alone and remember best when they learn alone; while group learners learn best when learning through cooperation, working for the common benefits. In a group they can support each other, not elevating above others.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part presents some conclusions based on the data analyses and findings in the previous chapter. The second part presents some suggestions based on the findings and conclusions of this research.

#### A. Conclusions

Based on the result of data analyses and findings in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the students the first grade of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng sometimesly prefer visual, auditory learning style. So, learning style preference of the students in SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng is visual, auditory learning style.

#### B. Suggestions

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the writer gives the following suggestion:

1. Teachers have to have knowledge about learning style preferences of their students because it has important role in learning process. It can help students to reach better achievement.
2. It does not fair if teachers give same treatment to their students because every student has learning style preference. So it will be better if teachers aware about it so they will not force their students to follow their teaching
3. For my teachers in SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng, especially my English teacher, the results of this study can be taken as reference so they will not only teach by asking students to answer exercises in LKS but also teach by using variety methods which can cover learning style preferences of their students. And then, for students of SMA Negeri 1 Bantaeng, they have to know their learning style early so when they conduct their learning independently, they can use learning strategy based on their learning style. It can help them to get successful in studying.

4. The writer is aware that this study has not been perfect yet. Therefore, the writer needs suggestion from the reader.

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# **A P P E N D I C E S**

## INSTRUMENT OF QUESTIONNAIRE

To better understand how you prefer to learn and process information, place a check in the appropriate space after each statement below, then use the scoring directions at the bottom of the page to evaluate your responses. Use what you learn from your scores to better develop learning strategies that are best suited to your particular learning style. This 24- item survey is not timed. Respond to each statement as honestly as you can.

Item No.	Statements	Often	Sometimes	Seldom
1	I can remember best about a subject by listening to a lecture that includes information, explanations and discussions			
2	I prefer to see information written on a chalkboard and supplemented by visual aids and			
3	I like to write things down or to take notes for visual review			
4	I prefer to use posters, models, or actual practice and other activities in class			
5	I require explanations of diagrams, graphs, or visual directions			
6	I enjoy working with my hands or making things.			
7	I am skillful with and enjoy developing and making graphs and charts.			
8	can tell if sounds match when presented with pairs of sounds			

9	I can remember best by writing things down			
10	10. I can easily understand and follow directions on a map			
11	I do best in academic subjects by listening to lectures and tapes.			
12	I play with coins or keys in my pocket.			
13	I learn to spell better by repeating words out loud than by writing the words on paper.			
14	I can understand a news article better by reading about it in a newspaper than by listening to a report about it on the radio.			
15	I chew gum, smoke or snack while studying			
16	I think the best way to remember something is to picture it in your head			
17	learn the spelling of words by “finger spelling” them			
18	I would rather listen to a good lecture or speech than read about the same material in a textbook.			
19	I am good at working and solving jigsaw puzzles and mazes			
20	I grip objects in my hands during learning periods.			
21	I prefer listening to the news on the radio rather than reading the paper			

22	I prefer obtaining information about an interesting subject by reading about it.			
23	I feel very comfortable touching others, hugging, handshaking, etc.			
24	I follow oral directions better than written ones.			

Reid (1987)

### SCORING PROCEDURES

Directions: Place the point value on the line next to the corresponding item below. Add the points in each column to obtain the preference score under each heading.

**OFTEN = 5 points SOMETIMES= 3 points SELDOM = 1 points**

### SCORING PROCEDURES

Directions: Place the point value on the line next to the corresponding item below. Add the points in each column to obtain the preference score under each heading.

**OFTEN = 5 points SOMETIMES = 3 points SELDOM = 1 points**

VISUAL		AUDITORY		KINESTHETIC	
NO	PTS	NO	PTS	NO	PTS
2		1		4	
3		5		6	
7		8		9	
10		11		12	
14		13		15	
16		18		17	
19		21		20	
22		24		23	
VPS:		APS:		KPS	
VPS (visual Preference)		APS (auditory Preference)		KPS :Kinesthetic Preference	





