

RESEARCH LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF FIRST YEAR ECONOMICS STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS – TECHNOLOGY FOR INDUSTRIES, VIETNAM.

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ABSTRACT: *This research involves investigating the learning style preferences and English language proficiency of Economics students as basis for language learning enhancement program. This has been done by descriptive-correlational research method. 162 students at UNETI, Vietnam selected through the use of stratified random sampling answered the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire and a 50-item English proficiency test. Frequency counts and percentages, central tendency, T-test, ANOVA, Pearson correlation were used to analyze the gathered data. Finding revealed that group learning style dominates among the students, followed by other learning styles. In term of English language proficiency, most of the respondents are moderately proficient. There exists a significant relationship between their learning styles and their English language proficiency. On differences in the English language proficiency of the students, significant differences exist in tests. Finally, significant relationship exists between visual, tactile, group, and individual learning styles of the respondents and their English language proficiency.*

KEY WORDS: learning styles, preferences, English Language proficiency, first year Economics students, University, Economics, Technology, Industries, Vietnam.

INTRODUCTION

People do not learn in precisely the same way. All people have a particular approach to learning with which they feel most comfortable. Learning styles have been defined, classified, and identified in many different ways by different scholars. It is described as a set of factors, behaviors, and attitudes that enhance learning in any situation. Taking learning styles seriously is indeed very important to teaching-learning process. Larkin and Bundy (2005:1) confirmed the importance of understanding learning styles that, “*learning style is a biologically and developmentally imposed set of personal characteristics that make the same teaching and learning methods effective for some and ineffective for others*”.

As one factor of learning, the study of learning styles needs to be looked into to better address problems along the way. Studies show that matching teaching styles to learning styles can significantly enhance academic achievements, students’ attitude, and students’ behavior. Indeed, learning style preference is a new concept in Vietnam and not any educational researchers have studied about both students’ learning styles and English language proficiency. In this premise, the researcher was motivated to delve on the learning style preferences and the English proficiency of the first year Economics students at University of Economics – Technology for Industries (UNETI)

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Learning Style

Many explanations about learning styles abound. Kaminska (2014) mentioned in her book that some researchers (e.g. Gringorenko and Sternberg 1995:205) prefer to see styles as interactions of intelligence and personality: *“styles are not abilities, but rather how these abilities (and knowledge acquired through them) are used in day-to-day interactions with the environment. In other words, styles are not how much intelligence we have, but how we use it.”*

According to Wikipedia, learning styles refer to a range of competing and contested theories that aim to account for differences in individuals' learning.

The concept of a learning style is extensive. However, in this study, the researcher agrees with Li et al (2008) in that a learning style is proposed and defined as an individual's preferential focus on different types of information, in the different ways of perceiving the information, and of the understanding of information. A student's performance may be related to learning preferences, or to their styles as learners. In educational psychology literature, learning styles have been extensively discussed and over 30 learning style assessment instruments have been developed in the past three decades. However, in this study, the researcher only focuses on the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire developed by Joy Reid (1984) to assess the learning styles of English Foreign Language students because it generally has a high reliability and validity; and it has been used as the “norm” on non-native speakers. He classified students' learning styles into 6 types: Visual learners, Auditory learners, Kinesthetic learners, Tactile learners, Individual learners, Group learners.

Definitions of Learning Styles

The definition of learning styles is a major concern for many researchers. It has been defined by various scholars. In 2000, Brown defined learning styles as the manner in which individuals perceive and process information in learning situations. Celcia-Murcia, (2001) defined learning styles as the general approaches such as global or analytic, auditory or visual and, students use these approaches in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject.

Ellis (2005) defines learning style as the *“characteristic ways in which individuals orientate to problem-solving”* (p.4).

The term "learning styles" is commonly used throughout various educational fields and therefore, has many connotations. In general, the term “learning styles” can be understood as every student learns differently. It is evident that an individual's learning style refers to the preferential way in which the learners absorb, processes, comprehends and retains information through their senses. The notion of individualized learning styles has gained widespread recognition in education theory and classroom management strategies. Individual learning styles are different because they depend on cognitive, emotional and environmental factors, as well as one's prior experience. In reality, everyone is different. Therefore, it is very important for educators to understand the differences in their students' learning styles to best implement learning activities into their English language

programs to enhance the English language proficiency of students.

Main Characteristics and classification of Learning Styles

There are some common characteristics of learning styles. Firstly, each learner has a preferred way of learning. Secondly, learning styles are concerned with how students prefer to learn not what they learn. Learning styles are the value neutral of each person and it is evident that no one style is better than others. Different styles may complement or co-ordinate with one another instead of competing with one another. Thirdly, it is helpful for students to explore and be aware of their own learning style preferences.

To set a definite category of learning styles is impossible, there are many different classifications. In fact, researchers have conducted research on different aspects of learning styles, on the bases of how different terminologies are labeled, frequently obscuring our understanding. Furthermore, some terminologies and categories overlap which makes learning styles' research more complicated and challenging.

In 1987, Reid developed the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) (see Appendix) in 1984 that was designed specifically for students studying English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL). Based on the learning styles categorization of Dunn (1999), learning styles addressed in this questionnaire included four physical modalities being visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic, and two sociological modalities group and individual. Visual learners prefer to learn through seeing, that is, the visual channel. Auditory learners prefer to learn through the “*oral-aural learning channel*” and to “*engage in discussions, conversations, and group work*” (Oxford, 1995, p. 36). Kinesthetic learners like learning through “*experiential learning, that is, total physical involvement with a learning situation*” (Reid, 1987, p. 90). Tactile learners like learning through hands-on activities. Individual learners prefer to learn through working alone (Reid, 1995). Group learners prefer learning through working with others and joining group work (Reid, 1995).

Learning Language and Learning Styles

There are some researches about the influence of learning styles on language achievement and proficiency. In 1986, Chappell and Robert conducted a research by measuring tolerance of ambiguity, in learners of English as a second language, in Illinois, and they confirmed that learners with a high tolerance for ambiguity were slightly more successful in certain language tasks. In addition, the potential impact of learning styles on language achievements was also verified in the later research carried out by Oxford (1992). In a study with English-speaking learners who are learning French in Toronto, Naimen (1978) concluded that field independence correlates positively and significantly with language success in the classroom. In 1985, Abraham found that second language learners who are field independent perform better in deductive lessons while those with field-dependent styles are more successful in making some inductive lesson designs. Therefore, learning styles have direct influences with learning language. Most researchers try to conduct research about the close relationship between learning styles and language development and there are still some different opinions existing.

METHODOLOGY

Research questions

Generally, this study determined the learning style preferences and English language proficiency of the first year students as basis for English language enhancement program at University of Economic Technical Industry for the school year 2016-2017. Specifically, it sought answer to the following questions:

1. What is the learning style preference of economics students in Vietnam?
2. What is the English language proficiency of economics students in Vietnam?
3. Is there a relationship between their learning style preferences and English language proficiency?

Research Design

This study used the descriptive method of research, employing the survey, comparative and correlation techniques. Descriptive design endeavored to elucidate, illustrate, and interpret situations of the present study. It attempted to explore the learning styles and English language proficiency of students.

Furthermore, the study was descriptive as it described the learning style preferences of the first year Economics students of UNETI, Vietnam.

On the other hand, this study used correlational research design as it determined the presence or absence of relationship between the learning style preferences and the English language proficiency of the students. Likewise, it was comparative because it compared the learning styles and language proficiency of the students.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted at University of Economics – Technology for Industries (UNETI), Vietnam. UNETI focuses on developing training and education to provide human resource training with high quality for society.

Currently, UNETI has a system of multi-disciplines and multi-level training with eight fields and approximately 30.000 students. UNETI includes nine departments: Economics Department, Electric Department, Mechanics Department, Information Technology Department, Textile - Leather Department, Foreign Language Department, Political Theory Department, Basic Sciences Department and Physical Education Department. The mission of Economics Department is to train students majoring in Accountancy, Financial Banking and Business Administration to serve for the economic development of Vietnam society.

At UNETI, English is a compulsory subject as foreign language. UNETI aims to improve students' English proficiency to use in working after they graduate.

Respondents and Sampling Procedures

The respondents of the study were the first year students who came from Economics Department of University of Economics – Technology for Industries (UNETI), Vietnam during the school year 2016-2017. They were divided into two groups. The first one was used for the piloting of the research

instruments. It involved 20 students from the population of the study. These students were chosen randomly according to their names on pieces of papers. The purpose of the pilot study was to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments in the study. The second group is 162 students who were determined by stratified simple random sampling from the population of 273. The number of samples was estimated using the Slovin's formula. Table 1 shows the distribution of the students by course. As indicated, more students were sampled from the group majoring in Accountancy (56), while there were 54 from Financial Banking, and the rest (52) were from Business Administration.

1. *Distribution of the students by course.*

Courses	N	n
Accountancy	95	56
Financial banking	91	54
Business Administration	87	52
Total	273	162

Research Instrument

To collect the data about students, their learning styles, their English language proficiency, different types of instruments were used. The Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) developed by Joy Reid was chosen by the researcher to assess the students' learning styles. This questionnaire has been widely used with university students and it is easy to score. It includes concept of six learning style preferences: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group learning and individual learning. This questionnaire includes 30 statements, which students rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The students marked the item that best applies to their study of English. They were asked to respond to each statement, without thinking about the statements too much and they were asked not to change their responses after they marked them. PLSPQ 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 was designed and validated for non-native speakers.

Furthermore, to determine the English language performance of the students an English Proficiency Test was adopted. The test covers three areas in English language namely: vocabulary and grammar (correct usage and identifying errors), and reading comprehension, with 20, 10, and 20 points, respectively. This test was administrated in a pilot study with 20 first year Economics students at this university to make sure that it was valid and reliable. The piloting of the test also helped to determine the time that would be given to students during the actual administration of the test. Depending on the timing during the piloting, it was decided that 40 minutes were ideal for students to respond to the questions and transfer responses to the answer sheet. According to the students' responses to the test, Cronbach alpha coefficient of internal consistency was applied to assess its reliability. The results indicated reliability index of 0.76, and showed that this English language proficiency test was reliable. Moreover, some experienced teachers teaching at UNETI verified the content

validity of the test and they confirmed that this test is suitable to check the English language proficiency of first year students in general.

Data Gathering Procedures

The questionnaires were floated to the students and the researcher endeavored to discuss the purpose of the study as well as the items presented in the questionnaire. This clarification helped them understand and fully be motivated to answer it honestly. The data were collected in three stages within a two-week period at UNETI. An introductory session with students divided into small groups by native language was held one day prior to administering the questionnaire in order to familiarize them with the terminology and the thinking process involved in specifying learning style preferences. In addition, it helped to ensure that all students understood about the purpose and the way to do questionnaire and English Proficiency Test. All students took the test at the same time within a 40 minute period. Scores were computed on a 0-10 point scale. The students understood that this test was only used for measuring their English language proficiency. Therefore, they were confident in accomplishing this test. They did not feel stressed with the result of the test. Secondly, the respondents answered the students' learning styles questionnaires. Informal interviews were made with selected teachers to determine the validity of the Test for English Language Proficiency. Other informal interviews were made with selected students to determine more about students' learning styles.

Data Analysis

After the administration of the research instruments, the researcher organized and encoded the data ready for data analysis. In analyzing the learning style of the respondents, central tendency was used. T-test and ANOVA were used to determine the difference in the learning style preferences of the respondents. Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between the learning style preferences of the respondents and their English language proficiency.

All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level using the statistical software, SPSS version 20.0.

RESULT AND FINDING

The learning style preferences of economics students.

Table 2 indicates the learning style preferences of students divided into six learning styles (visual learning style, auditory learning style, kinesthetic learning style, tactile learning style, group learning style and individual learning style) according to the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire of Roy Reid (1984). As gleaned from the table, most of students have tactile, auditory, group and kinesthetic learning styles, as revealed by the weighted means of 3.76, 3.85, 3.85 and 3.87, respectively. This finding shows that the students possess mixed learning styles. As observed by the researcher in the classroom, Vietnamese students are more confident when they work in group. They like role play to practice English and do actions to remember English knowledge. To remember new words, they want to touch it and they want to listen to it. These learning styles help them more focus on the content of lessons and remember English easily.

Table 2. Learning styles of the students.

Learning Style Indicator	Weighted Mean	Description
VISUAL		
I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the chalkboard.	3.91	Agree
When I read instructions, I remember them better.	3.72	Agree
I understand better when I read instructions.	3.77	Agree
I learn better by reading than by listening to someone.	2.60	Undecided
I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to lectures.	2.46	Disagree
Category Mean	3.29	Undecided
TACTILE		
I learn more when I can make a model of something.	3.92	Agree
I learn more when I make something for a class	3.75	Agree
I learn better when I make drawings as I study.	3.45	Agree
When I build something, I remember what I have learned better.	3.98	Agree
I enjoy making something for a class project.	3.71	Agree
Category Mean	3.76	Agree
AUDITORY		
When the teacher tells me the instructions I understand better.	4.33	Strongly Agree
When someone tells me how to do something in class, I	3.65	Agree
I remember things I have heard in class better than things I have read.	3.57	Agree
I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture.	4.10	Agree
I learn better in class when I listen to someone.	3.59	Agree
Category Mean	3.85	Agree
GROUP		
I get more work done when I work with others.	3.95	Agree
I learn more when I study with a group.	3.90	Agree
In class, I learn best when I work with others.	3.83	Agree
Learning Style Indicator	Weighted Mean	Description
I enjoy working on an assignment with two or three classmates.	3.78	Agree
I prefer to study with others.	3.81	Agree
Category Mean	3.85	Agree
KINESTHETIC		
I prefer to learn by doing something in class.	3.96	Agree
When I do things in class, I learn better.	3.80	Agree

I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments.	3.82	Agree
I understand things better in class when I participate in role-playing.	3.87	Agree
I learn best in class when I can participate in related activities.	3.89	Agree
Category Mean	3.87	Agree
INDIVIDUAL		
When I study alone, I remember things better.	2.19	Disagree
When I work alone, I learn better.	2.70	Undecided
In class, I work better when I work alone.	2.16	Disagree
I prefer working on projects by myself.	2.43	Disagree
I prefer to work by myself.	2.78	Undecided
Category Mean	2.45	Disagree

Legend:

- 1.00 - 1.79 Strongly Disagree
- 1.80 – 2.59 Disagree
- 2.60 – 3.39 Undecided
- 3.40 – 4.19 Agree
- 4.20 – 5.00 Strongly Agree

The category mean of visual learning style and individual learning style are *undecided*.

It is the fact that group learning style is more effective than individual learning style in learning language. Students have more chances to practice English when they work in group. They are more confident to take part in learning activities and they can get language acquisition. The highest weighted mean belongs to the indicator “*When the teacher tells me the instructions I understand better*” (4.33). It is followed by the statement “*I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture*” (4.10). These statements indicate the important role of English teachers in teaching English in Vietnam. This finding indicates that the students are auditory learners. They tend to learn better when they listen to teachers’ lecture and explanations.

Learning Style Dominance among the Students

Table 3 indicates the learning style that dominates respondents. The dominant learning style among the students is *group learning* style, with 77.8 percent manifesting this major preference. Joy Reid (1984) asserted that in major group learning style, students learn more easily when they study with at least one other student, and they will be more successful completing work well when they work with others. These students value group interaction and class work with others, and they remember information better when they work with two or three classmates. The stimulation they receive from group work helps them learn and understand new information.

After group learning style is *tactile learning style* as indicated by 63.6 percent of the students. This kind of students learns best when they have the opportunity to do “hands-on” experiences with materials. According to Joy Reid (1984), major tactile learning style is characterized with the ability of working on experiments in a laboratory, handling and building models, and touching and working

with materials that provide them with the most successful learning situation. Writing notes or instructions can help these learners remember information, and physical involvement in class related activities may help them understand new information.

On the learning style given minor preference, visual learning style with a frequency of 72.8 percent dominates. In most cases, minor visual learning style indicates areas where they can function well as a learner. Usually a very successful learner can learn in several different ways.

In individual learning style, 69.8 percent demonstrate it. That means most of students do not manifest usually the individual learning style. Often, a negligible score indicates that students may have difficulty learning in that way. Actually, Vietnamese students do not learn well individually because they lack of confidence, especially English as a foreign language. They feel lonely and they cannot concentrate on the lessons.

The findings of the study contradict the result of study conducted by Karthigeyan and Nirmala (2013) in which visual learning style got the highest mean value among the learning style categories, yet it was considered as a minor preference in the present study. Further, Karthigeyan and Nirmala considered individual learning style as one of the preferred learning styles; however, in the present study it was treated as a negligible preference.

Table 3. Learning style dominance among the students.

Learning styles	Negligible (0 – 24)		Minor Preference (25 – 37)		Major Preference (38 – 50)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Visual	12	7.4	118	72.8	32	19.8
Tactile	6	3.7	53	32.7	103	63.6
Auditory	3	1.9	65	40.1	94	58.0
Group	11	6.8	25	15.4	126	77.8
Kinesthetic	9	5.6	67	41.4	86	53.1
Individual	113	69.8	28	17.3	21	13.0

English Language Proficiency of the Students

The English language proficiency of students was assessed in terms of correct usage, identifying errors, and reading comprehension tests. The proficiency was evaluated in five categories: novice, intermediate, moderately proficient, proficient and very proficient. Tables 4 present the results of the analysis. Table 4 indicates the overall performance of the students in the English language proficiency test. The majority (62.3 percent) of the students exhibit *moderately proficient category*, followed by 19.1 percent with *proficient level*, 14.8 percent with *intermediate level*, and 3.7 percent with *novice* ability. No student manifests *very proficient* ability. This finding reflects the real English language proficiency of Vietnamese students, which is generally average. It reflects the problems of Vietnamese learners in learning English language. Although students learn English as a compulsory subject from elementary school, they do not gain mastery of the English language because there is no other subject where they could use it. As there is no other context to use the language, students have

no further exposure to it aside from that in the classroom where it is taught.

Table 4. Over-all performance of the students in the English language proficiency test

Category	Frequency (n = 162)	Percent
Novice (1 – 10)	6	3.7
Intermediate (11 – 20)	24	14.8
Moderately Proficient (21 – 30)	101	62.3
Proficient (31 – 40)	31	19.1
Very proficient (41 – 50)	-	-
Lowest Score: 10 Highest Score: 40 Actual Test Mean Score: 25.83 SD: 5.63 Ideal Test Mean Score:31 (Test moderately difficult) Index of Mastery: 51.65 Coefficient of Variation: 0.28 (Test poorly discriminating)		

A look in the performance of the students in the different skills tested reveals interesting results. Table 5 shows that the students are weak in reading comprehension; index of mastery is 48.56 percent. Their mean score is 7.28 out of 15 items. Students have difficulty understanding what they read. It reflects their inability to getting meaning of words within the context and other related skills to get the meaning of the selection. As earlier cited, there is no other opportunity for the students to read English texts outside the English subject taught as a foreign language.

The students' inability to read with understanding is aggravated by their difficulty to identify correct usage in a sentence. The index of mastery for this skill is 52.44 percent. It means that students do not have mastery of the rules in the English language. Failure to understand the rules of the language results to erroneous sentences which distorts the intended meaning as the student reads. For the above reason, the students find difficulty also in doing the task of identifying errors. The index of mastery for the sub-test is 53.70. Without adequate mastery of the grammatical rules, they are unable to discern errors in the sentences shown to them. On the whole, this handicap of the students contributes to their average proficiency. The fact that they are learning a language as a foreign language, there is a redeeming value of this information. Given more opportunities to use the language in varied contexts, the learners could develop more competence in the English language.

Table 5. The performance of the students in English language proficiency test

Types	Numbers of Items	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Mean	SD	Index of Mastery	Rank
Correct Usage	20	3	18	10.49	3.38	52.44	2
Identifying Errors	15	2	14	8.05	3.82	53.70	1
Reading Comprehension	15	1	14	7.28	2.88	48.56	3

Relationship between the Learning Style Preferences and English Language Proficiency of the Students. The study tested the hypothesis that there is no relationship with the learning styles and the English language proficiency of the students. Table 6 shows that five learning styles (visual, tactile, group, individual, and kinesthetic) have correlation coefficients whose associated probabilities are lower than 0.05. So, the hypothesis that there is no relationship between learning style preferences and language proficiency is rejected. Visual learning style is significantly associated with cores in correct usage ($r = 0.185$; $p = 0.018$). The same trend is noted for the overall language proficiency test scores of the students ($r = 0.165$; $p = 0.036$). It indicates that those who learn best by seeing graphs, illustrations, and read texts tend to be more proficient in correct usage and English language as a whole. Seeing concrete models of the use of language in texts create mental images which the students would retrieve when they encounter tasks related to these images. Tactile learning style is significantly related the English language proficiency of the students, including all its sub-tests. All correlation values have associated probabilities lower than 0.05. These findings mean that students who learn best by manipulating objects are likely to learn English when they write what they hear and read or draw sketches of relationships like sentence patterns they study. Through these hand actions, they retain their learning.

The above trend is similarly observed among group learners. All the correlation values have associated probabilities lower than 0.05. It means that students who learn best by interacting with their fellow students obtained higher scores. Interacting with classmates provide opportunities for the students to ask from more knowledgeable students queries which they may not have the courage to ask from their fellow students. Such opportunities make them clarified about their misconceptions and thus become more proficient in the language. For kinesthetic learning style, only correct usage is found significantly associated ($r = 0.178$; $p = 0.023$). It means that students who are more physically involved with learning a language by engaging in dramatization, role playing, pantomiming, and interviewing are likely to develop more language proficiency. Engaging in these activities provide opportunities for the students to use language in simulated contexts. This engagement allows them to master language rules as they are applied to authentic situations.

Table 6. Relationship between learning styles and English language proficiency of the students

Learning Style	Statistic	Correct Usage	Identifying Errors	Reading Comprehension	Over-all Language Proficiency
Visual	<i>r-value</i> <i>Prob.</i>	0.185* 0.018	0.117 ^{ns} 0.154	0.090 ^{ns} 0.253	0.165* 0.035
Tactile	<i>r-value</i> <i>Prob.</i>	0.002**	0.008**	0.027*	0.001**
Auditory	<i>r-value</i> <i>Prob.</i>	0.213 ^{ns}	0.158 ^{ns}	0.081 ^{ns}	0.069 ^{ns}
Group	<i>r-value</i> <i>Prob.</i>	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**
Kinesthetic	<i>r-value</i> <i>Prob.</i>	0.023*	0.439 ^{ns}	0.339 ^{ns}	0.083 ^{ns}
Individual	<i>r-value</i> <i>Prob.</i>	.000**	.000**	.000**	.000**

ns = not significant

* = significant at 0.05 level

** = significant at 0.01 level

Having an individual learning style significantly relates with the students' English language proficiency. However, as all the correlation coefficients are negative, the findings mean that if the students are more independent in learning, they tend to be less proficient in the English language. Obviously, working alone in studying English language has no advantage to the students. Without somebody to interact with, the students have no opportunity to practice language, no chance to clarify own concerns in learning the language, and no opportunity to learn from each other's learning strategies. The findings of the study imply that the students learn best the English language through manipulative activities (tactile), through working with others and joining group works (group), and through using pictures, graphs, concept maps, grids, matrices and other visual representations of the information to be learned (visual).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the first year Economics students at UNETI follow mixed learning styles with high dominance along group, tactile, auditory and kinesthetic styles. Though their English language proficiency is at moderately proficient levels, it is significantly influenced by their learning styles. Visual, tactile, group, and kinesthetic learners tend to be more proficient in the English language. This study helps us understand more about students' learning styles and we know the relation between students' learning styles and their English language proficiency. From this result, we can give suitable learning activities for students to get best result in studying English language. An English language program may be designed with relevant learning activities to meet students learning styles. The results of this research also help students discover their learning styles and they can find the best way to become active learners. In addition, we can do research more about the relationship between students learning styles and students' profile; the relationship between students' English language proficiency and students' profile. From that we can suggest a suitable English program to enhance English language proficiency of students.

Recommendations

After a thorough analysis of the data in this dissertation, the following recommendations are hereby made:

- Teachers of English should understand the students' learning style preferences and apply suitable learning activities and methodology to motivate students in learning English language.
- English language programs should be designed with relevant learning activities to meet students' learning styles.
- Teachers should raise the students' awareness of their learning style preferences and students must find the best ways to become active learners.
- A parallel study should be conducted in other universities in different regions of Vietnam to compare the learning styles of students and find the suitable learning activities to enhance their English language proficiency.

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APPENDIX

Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire

(Copyright 1984, by Joy Reid. Explanation of learning styles was adapted from the C.I.T.E. Learning Styles Instrument, Murdoch Teacher Center, Wichita, Kansas 67208)

Directions:

People learn in many different ways. For example, some people learn primarily with their eyes (visual learners) or with their ears (auditory learners); some people prefer to learn by experience and /or by “hands-on” tasks (kinesthetic or tactile learners); some people learn better when they work alone while others prefer to learn in groups.

This questionnaire has been designed to help you identify the way(s) you learn best – the way(s) you prefer to learn.

Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement. And then indicate whether you:

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Undecided (U) Disagree (D)

Strongly Disagree (SD)

Read each statement on the following pages. Please respond to the statements AS THEY APPLY TO YOUR STUDY OF ENGLISH. Decide whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

For example, if you strongly agree, mark:

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
X				

Please respond to each statement quickly, without too much thought. Try not to change your responses after you choose them. Please answer all the questions.

PERCEPTUAL LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. When the teacher tells me the instructions I understand better.					
2. I prefer to learn by doing something in class.					
3. I get more work done when I work with others.					
4. I learn more when I study with a group.					
5. In class, I learn best when I work with others					
6. I learn better by reading what the teacher writes on the chalkboard.					
7. When someone tells me how to do something in class, I learn it better.					
8. When I do things in class, I learn better.					
9. I remember things I have heard in class better than things I have read.					
10. When I read instructions, I remember them better.					
11. I learn more when I can make a model of something.					
12. I understand better when I read instructions.					
13. When I study alone, I remember things better.					
14. I learn more when I make something for a class project.					
15. I enjoy learning in class by doing experiments.					
16. I learn better when I make drawings as I study.					
17. I learn better in class when the teacher gives a lecture.					
18. When I work alone, I learn better.					

19. I understand things better in class when I participate in role-playing.					
20. I learn better in class when I listen to someone.					
21. I enjoy working on an assignment with two or three classmates.					
22. When I build something, I remember what I have learned better.					
23. I prefer to study with others.					
24. I learn better by reading than by listening to someone.					
25. I enjoy making something for a class project.					
26. I learn best in class when I can participate in related activities.					
27. In class, I work better when I work alone.					
28. I prefer working on projects by myself.					
29. I learn more by reading textbooks than by listening to lectures.					
30. I prefer to work by myself.					