

**THE EFFECTS OF COGNITIVE LEARNING STYLES ON
THE READING ABILITY OF
THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS**

A THESIS

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By:

EMILIA TJANDRA
8212701009



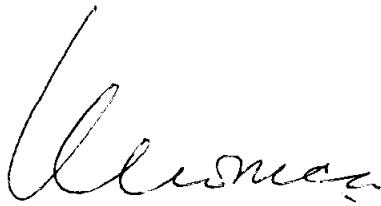
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APPROVAL SHEET (1)

This thesis entitled **The Effects of Cognitive Learning Styles on the Reading Ability of the English Department Students.**

prepared and submitted by Emilia Tjandra (8212701009)
has been approved to be examined by the Board of examiners for acquiring the Master's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language by the following advisor.



PROF. DR. VERONICA L. DIPTOADI, M.SC.

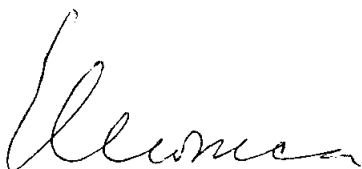
Thesis Advisor

APPROVAL SHEET (2)

This thesis entitled **The Effects of Cognitive Learning Styles on the Reading Ability of the English Department Students** prepared and submitted by Emilia Tjandra (8212701009) was examined by the following Board of Examiners on oral examination with the grade of _____ on November 8th 2003.



Dr. Agustinus Ngadiman
Chairman



Prof. Dr. Veronica L. Diptoadi, M.Sc.
Member



Dr. Ignatius Harjanto
Member



Prof. E. Sadtono, Ph. D.
Director of the Master's Degree Program

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ABSTRACT

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Key Words : Reading Ability, Cognitive Learning Styles (Field Independence and Field Dependence), Reading Strategies.

In the teaching of English as a foreign language in Indonesia, reading has the biggest portion in the learning activities. The idea of placing reading as the major skill in education has been supported by Wood (1980) who says that reading is the most important skill to teach since the majority of students who learn English as a foreign language may never speak English, but most of them still have to read English. The success of reading can be achieved by having the ability to understand and comprehend the reading text thoroughly. In understanding a text fully, a mature and successful reader should have an awareness to make use of his/her metacognition abilities. This means that he/she is aware of having conscious control to know and to manage his cognition by recognizing the texts, tasks, strategies and his characteristics in order to achieve the understanding of the text. A similar opinion was also stated by Spolsky (1988:386) who said that the non-linguistic capabilities of language learners such as learning aptitude, learning style and learning strategies are factors that are mostly overlooked by language teachers but play an important role on their success. In fact, the writer realizes that not all students are successful and get good grades in their reading. Therefore the writer conducted a study to see whether different Cognitive Learning Styles enable students to have different Reading Ability. In another point, the writer was also eager to find out the types of Reading Strategies used by different types of learner in their reading activity.

In conducting this study, the writer took 70 students who were considered as the subjects of this study. Those students were the fourth semester English Department students in the academic year 2003/2004. There are three instruments that were used in this study, they were a GEFT (Group Embedded Figure Test), a Reading Test, and a Structured Self-Report Survey. The validity and the reliability of the three types of instruments above had been measured and they had shown reliable results. As the subjects of this study, the students were given the GEFT test to identify their Cognitive Learning Styles, the Reading Test to measure their Reading Ability, and the Structured self-report survey to know their Reading Strategies.

From the data given, it had been found out that learners with Field Independent (FI) learning style have higher reading ability than learners with Field Dependent (FD) learning styles. There are also results on the way every learner answers the reading questions (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation). Both FI and FD learners are proved to have similar ability to answer the questions in knowledge level, comprehension level, and application level. However they were proved to be significantly different in giving answers in analysis, synthesis and evaluation questions in which FI learners were better than FD learners. For the learners' Reading Strategies, it had been found out that learners with different Cognitive Learning Styles use different Reading Strategies in their reading activities. FI learners tend to use strategies that involve analytical power or ability of organizing structures such as Imagery 2, Deduction 1, Deduction 2, Inferencing 1, and Transferring strategies. While FD learners prefer using strategies that use contextual understanding such as Imagery 1, Inferencing 2 and Inferencing 3 strategies. From the various types of strategies proposed, there are only some of them that are similarly used by both learners, such as Resourcing, Elaboration, Note Taking, and Key Word Method 2.

From the results of this study, the writer would like to recommend other researchers to have further studies about Cognitive Learning Styles and Learning Strategies in other language skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. Since both Cognitive Learning Styles and Learning Strategies are factors that play an important role in the success of learning.

ABSTRAK

Tjandra, Emilia. 2004. **The Effects of Cognitive Learning Styles on the Reading Ability of the English Department Students**. Tesis. Program Pascasarjana. Magister Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Universitas Katolik Widya Mandala. Surabaya.

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Kata Kunci : kemampuan membaca, gaya belajar kognitif (gaya belajar mandiri /FI dan gaya belajar tergantung/FD), strategi membaca.

Dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing di Indonesia, pelajaran membaca memperoleh porsi terbesar dalam kegiatan belajar. Ide penempatan pelajaran membaca sebagai ketrampilan utama di bidang pendidikan telah didukung oleh Wood (1980) yang mengatakan bahwa membaca adalah ketrampilan yang paling penting untuk diajarkan karena mayoritas siswa yang belajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing jarang berbicara bahasa Inggris, tetapi mereka lebih sering membaca bacaan dalam bahasa Inggris. Kesuksesan membaca dapat dicapai dengan memperoleh kemampuan untuk mengerti dan memahami bacaan secara menyeluruh. Dalam memahami bacaan secara menyeluruh, seorang pembaca yang dewasa dan sukses memiliki kesadaran untuk memanfaatkan kemampuan-kemampuan metakognitif-nya. Hal ini berarti bahwa dia sadar dalam mengontrol kemampuannya untuk mengetahui dan mengatur kemampuan kognitifnya dengan mengenal bacaan, tugas-tugas, strategi dan sifat-sifatnya agar dapat mencapai pemahaman bacaan. Pendapat yang sama juga diutarakan oleh Spolsky (1988:286) yang mengatakan bahwa kemampuan non-linguistik dari pembelajar bahasa seperti ; sikap belajar, gaya belajar, dan strategi belajar adalah faktor-faktor yang sering terlewatkan bagi guru-guru bahasa walaupun sebenarnya mereka memiliki peranan yang penting pada kesuksesannya. Pada kenyataannya, penulis menyadari bahwa tidak semua siswa berhasil dan memperoleh nilai-nilai yang bagus pada pelajaran membacanya. Oleh karena itu, penulis melakukan penelitian untuk melihat apakah siswa-siswa yang memiliki gaya belajar kognitif berbeda memiliki kemampuan membaca yang berbeda. Selain itu, penulis juga ingin melihat jenis-jenis strategi membaca apa yang dipakai oleh siswa-siswa tersebut dalam kegiatan membacanya.

Dalam melakukan penelitian ini, penulis mengambil 70 siswa sebagai subjek penelitiannya. Siswa-siswa tersebut adalah siswa-siswa semester empat dari Fakultas Keguruan Bahasa Inggris di Widya Mandala dengan tahun akademik 2003/2004. Ada tiga instrumen penelitian yang dipakai dalam studi ini, mereka adalah tes bergambar untuk kelompok (GEFT), tes membaca, dan angket laporan yang terstruktur (The Structured Self-Report Survey). Validitas dan reliabilitas dari ketiga tes tersebut telah diukur dan telah menunjukkan hasil yang dapat dipercaya. Sebagai subjek penelitian, siswa-siswa tersebut diberi GEFT untuk

mengidentifikasi gaya belajar kognitif mereka, tes membaca untuk mengetahui kemampuan membaca mereka, dan angket laporan yang terstruktur untuk mengetahui strategi membaca mereka.

Dari data yang dihasilkan, telah ditemukan bahwa pembelajar dengan gaya belajar mandiri (FI) memiliki kemampuan membaca yang lebih tinggi daripada pembelajar dengan gaya belajar tergantung (FD). Hasil-hasil dari penelitian ini, juga menunjukkan cara-cara dari setiap pembelajar tersebut dalam menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan bacaan (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation). Baik pembelajar FI dan FD, mereka terbukti memiliki kemampuan yang sama dalam menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan bacaan di level knowledge, level comprehension, dan level application. Namun mereka juga terbukti berbeda secara signifikan dalam memberi jawaban pada pertanyaan-pertanyaan di level analysis, level synthesis dan level evaluation, dimana pembelajar FI terbukti lebih baik daripada pembelajar FD. Pada pemakaian strategi membaca, telah ditemukan bahwa pembelajar dengan gaya belajar kognitif yang berbeda menggunakan strategi membaca yang berbeda dalam kegiatan membacanya. Pembelajar FI cenderung menggunakan strategi yang melibatkan kemampuan analitis dan kemampuan dalam mengorganisasi suatu struktur seperti strategi Imagery 2, Deduction 1, Deduction 2, Inferencing 1, dan Transferring. Dari jenis-jenis strategi membaca yang diusulkan, hanya ada beberapa strategi yang sama-sama digunakan oleh kedua jenis pembelajar tersebut seperti strategi Resourcing, Elaboration, Note-Taking, dan Key-Word Method 2.

Dari hasil penelitian tersebut, penulis berkeinginan untuk menyarankan peneliti-peneliti lain untuk mengadakan penelitian lebih lanjut tentang Gaya Belajar Kognitif dan Strategi-strategi Belajar yang berhubungan dengan ketrampilan berbahasa seperti ketrampilan mendengar, berbicara, dan menulis. Karena baik Gaya Belajar Kognitif maupun Strategi Belajar adalah faktor yang memainkan peranan penting dalam kesuksesan belajar.

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