

THE INFLUENCE OF LEARNING STYLES ON READING
ACHIEVEMENT OF ENGINEERING FACULTY
STUDENTS AND ECONOMICS FACULTY STUDENTS
OF SURABAYA UNIVERSITY

A THESIS

By :

ENY KUSUMAWATI

NIM : 8212701018



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**THE INFLUENCE OF LEARNING STYLE ON
READING ACHIEVEMENT OF ENGINEERING
FACULTY STUDENTS AND ECONOMICS FACULTY
STUDENTS OF SURABAYA UNIVERSITY**

A THESIS

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In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

By

Eny Kusumawati

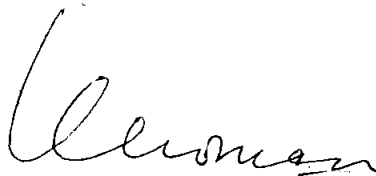
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This Thesis entitled: **THE INFLUENCE OF LEARNING STYLES ON READING ACHIEVEMENT OF ENGINEERING FACULTY STUDENTS AND ECONOMICS FACULTY STUDENTS OF SURABAYA UNIVERSITY.**

Prepared and submitted by Eny Kusumawati (8212701018)

It has been approved to be examined by the board examiners for acquiring the Master's degree in Teaching English as Foreign Language by the following thesis advisor:



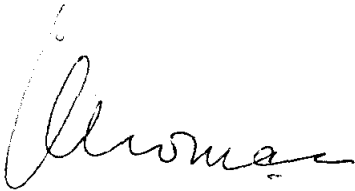
Prof. Dr. Veronica L. Diptoadi, M.Sc

This thesis entitled: **THE INFLUENCE OF LEARNING STYLES ON READING ACHIEVEMENT OF ENGINEERING FACULTY STUDENTS AND ECONOMICS FACULTY STUDENTS OF SURABAYA UNIVERSITY** prepared and submitted by Eny Kusumawati (8212701018) was examined by the following board of examiners on oral examination with the grade of ____ on August 11 2004.



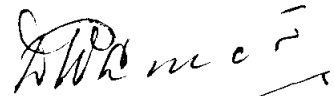
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Chairman



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

Member



Dr. D. Wagiman, M.A

Member



Prof. E. Sadtono, Ph.D.

Director of the Master's Degree Program

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A B S T R A C T

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Prof. DR. Veronica L. Diptoadi, M.Sc.

Key Words: Reading Comprehension, Schema or Schemata, Cognitive Learning Style

Reading as one of the four language skills in teaching English as a foreign language has the biggest portion in the teaching learning activities in Surabaya University. Students would find various kinds of reading materials such as reports, journal articles, essays, advertisements, and editorials. Therefore, the skill of reading in university does not only consist of an ability to understand the written text, but it also requires the capabilities to understand the unwritten ideas to infer the meaning, to judge or evaluate opinions, and also to solve the stated problems. The majority of students who learn English as a foreign language may never speak English, but most of them may still have to read English.

The success of reading can be achieved by having the ability to understand and comprehend the reading text. Reading a variety of such materials then demands more skills of students. It does not only consist of understanding and comprehending, but also (includes) prediction of upcoming ideas, generations of ideas, evaluations, judgments, and problem solution.

Based on the students' achievement in reading tests, the writer is of the opinion that the learning style of each student is different. This conclusion is arrived

at after the writer conducted a study on reading. To conduct this study, the writer divided the students into two groups having different learning styles: students with field dependent learning style and those with field independent learning style. Field dependent (Field sensitivity) is the lesser ability to separate details from the background easily and the greater tendency toward forming global impressions. Field dependent people tend to be more sensitive to the social context, are perceived as more outgoing and more considerate than their field independent peers, who perform well with less structure in their learning. Field dependent individuals typically like auditory learning that involves social interaction.

In conducting this study, the writer took 200 students who were considered as the subjects in this study. Those students were the third semester students of Surabaya University in the academic year 2003-2004. Two instruments were used in this study, they were the GEFT (Group Embedded Figured Test) to identify their cognitive learning styles and the reading test to measure their reading ability.

From the data given, it was found that learners with field independent learning style have higher reading ability than those with field dependent learning style. Both field independent learning style and field dependent learning style student are proved to have ability to read and comprehend texts. The Cognitive Learning Style of Economics Faculty students was found to be Field Dependent. It is based on the result of SPSS Mean Test, which is 4,53. The GEFT scored result indicates that some students tend to score to a certain level, in this term those who scored 0 – 6 belong to Field Dependent Cognitive learning style.

The Cognitive Learning Style of Engineering Faculty students are Field Independent, based on the result of SPSS Mean Test, which is 13,97. The GEFT scored result showed that some students in this field who scored 12 – 18 belong to Field Independent Learning Style.

Based on the phenomenon above, the writer tried to prove that the majority of students' learning style of each faculty is different in Surabaya University. And their learning style is influencing the way they try to solve the problems and conduct activities.

In addition, the result of the test showed that the learning style of Economics faculty students of Surabaya University is field dependent learning style. Besides, the result also showed that the learning style of the majority of engineering faculty students is field independent learning style.

After showing the tendency and majority of learning styles on the two faculties, there are some suggestions the writer would make for the learners and the teachers involved in teaching-learning English as a foreign language in the non-English department, especially for teaching reading skills.

For the learners of English as a foreign language at the non English Faculty who are taking this subject as a compulsory subject in their faculties, the writer would like to remind them to start realising that their individual learning styles are unique and different from others. By trying to realize their own character, which they get from the characteristics of their own field, they can choose the suitable ways or strategies for their learning. Knowing their own learning styles, they can then

improve their reading achievement. In addition, learners can use them to improve their reading achievement, learners can use certain approaches that are beneficial for their own comprehension in the reading text. By realizing their own characteristics, learners can learn from others who have different learning styles from them but perform better in learning. Those learners can apply similar reading strategies applied by the other learners. And, by realizing their own learning style and also learning from others, learners who face difficulties in understanding a text can find a way-out to solve their learning problems.

Besides recognising the students' learning style and helping learners to improve their reading strategies, teachers of English who teach English in Non English Faculty, should also provide various reading tests for all learners. The more learners get used to read various types of reading texts, the more they can broaden their horizon of the world knowledge. This of course will help them in reading and understanding texts more quickly. In other words, teachers in the classroom do not only have a role as facilitators or guides in learning but also as innovators and motivators for their learners. Teachers have to introduce various reading strategies to learners and motivate them to apply the strategies in order to improve their reading ability.

*This study is dedicated to my beloved little
one, Vicky.*

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