

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS' BELIEFS  
ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING, LEARNING STYLES, AND  
LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES TOWARD THE ENGLISH  
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF STATE  
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN SINGARAJA**

by  
**L. Angelianawati**

Language Education Study Program of Postgraduate Program  
Ganesha University of Education  
Singaraja

**Abstract**

This study was a correlational study, which was aimed at investigating whether or not there was a significant contribution of beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies on students' English achievement. The research was done toward the eleventh grade students of state senior high schools in Singaraja Semester 1, in the academic year 2011/2012. The number of population was 798 students; and the sample was 160, which were determined through proportional random sampling technique. The data of beliefs about language learning were collected through BALLI (Horwitz, 1987) which was adapted from Artini (2006), learning styles through PLSPQ (Reid, 1984), language learning strategies through SILL (Oxford, 1990), and English achievement from documentations, namely from students' school report books. The data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics was used to describe the obtained variable data and the inferential statistics was used to analyze the requirement testing and hypothesis testing. The research results showed that there were significant contributions of each predictor, i.e. beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies, to the students' English achievement ( $\rho < 0.05$ ), namely 3.6% with  $r = 0.190$ , 5% with  $r = 0.224$ , and 2.9% with  $r = 0.172$ , correspondingly. There was also a positive and significant contribution of the beliefs about language learning, learning styles and language learning strategies simultaneously to their English achievement, with  $r = 0.257$ ,  $\rho < 0.05$ , and the coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ) = 0.066 or 6.6%, in which the effective contribution of each from the strongest to the weakest were learning styles 3.51%, beliefs about language learning 1.71%, and language learning strategies 1.38% respectively.

*Key terms* : beliefs about language learning, learning styles, language learning strategies, English achievement

## **Introduction**

Language is important for people to be learnt. The most significance is that it is a tool for communication. It is considered important for students to learn languages, namely foreign languages, e.g. English. Students are expected to be able to use English. Students who are not English speakers have to learn the language in order to be able to communicate in English, since English is a language that is generally used in academic, professional and personal domains. English becomes more and more important in the world. Most students in Asia have to learn English for the reason that they can communicate with foreigners by using it. Moreover, the recent curriculum has inserted foreign languages to be the subjects taught and assessed. English as a foreign language has been taught since elementary level to tertiary level in order to make the students competent in English. It means that paying considerable attention toward English language learning is necessarily conducted.

There are many studies, which have been conducted in the field of foreign language learning namely English as well as what factors influence the success of the language learning itself, for the purpose of supporting the success of the students within their language learning. As the output, it is expected that the language learning process could make the students master the language and obtain higher achievements.

Additionally, in the recent curriculum, the students' achievements in the language learning processes are seen from their competencies related to the subject of the study. A competency is an ability to behave, to think, and to act consistently as the embodiment of knowledge, attitudes, and skills possessed by learners (Direktorat Pembinaan SMA, 2010). And, in the context of English language learning, it involves four language skills.

Government Regulation (PP) No. 19 of 2005 Article 25 paragraph 4 states that competency includes the attitudes, knowledge, and skills. This means that language learning and assessment of learners should develop competencies related to the affective domain (attitudes), cognitive (knowledge) and psychomotor

(skills) of the learners themselves. However, the question is what factors are influential toward the success of the language learners in mastering the language itself and how much they contribute to it.

It is recognized that in order to make the language learning successful, there are many things that should be put into consideration, one of them is the language learners themselves. It is in line with what is stated by Sardiman (as cited in Tjandra, 2009: 4) that the learning achievement of an individual is an interaction among many factors. Factors that affect learning are generally grouped into two main factors; those are internal factors and external factors. Internal factors involve physical factors, psychology, and fatigue –both physical and mental fatigue; meanwhile the external factors include family factors, school factors, and community factors (Slameto, 2010: 54-72).

Therefore, in order to make the learners to be successful it is important to consider about their characteristics as they are brought to the learning task (Johnson, 2001: 117). It is in accordance with Madrid (1995: 62) that the learners' individual characteristics can help to explain his/her individual outcomes. The roles played by male and female students, their social contexts, beliefs and experiences, age, motivation, aptitude, cognitive styles, learning styles or strategies, their affective states and personal characteristics may help to understand their learning processes and the final results they obtain.

Nowadays, English teachers are mostly concerned with the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, as it is expected by the curriculum. However, there are some other factors influencing the process of language learning that must be considered as well, which are not yet explored optimally by most of the teachers, such as: what underlined beliefs, styles, and learning strategies used by their students in order to achieve the goals of the English instruction and become successful language learners. It is accepted that those factors are influential for language learners in their language learning.

According to Oxford (2001), language learning styles and strategies are among the main factors that help determine how and how well students learn a second and a foreign language. Learning styles are the manners in which students

perceive and process information in acquiring a new language whether by using one or more senses as well as functioning individually or group in language learning (Reid, 1984). Meanwhile, Learning strategies are steps or actions taken by language learners to enhance any aspect of their language learning (Oxford, 1990). Besides, the students' beliefs about language learning also determine the learners' success in language learning. Beliefs about language learning are assumptions or ideas about various factors in language learning that students hold and bring into language learning (Horwitz, 1987). Breen (as cited in Bernat, E. & Gvozdenko, 2005) stated that in the classroom context, the language learning beliefs, and other characteristics that students bring with them to the learning situation have been recognized as significant contributory factors in the learning process and ultimate success.

There were some researches conducted to investigate the relationship of students' beliefs about language learning, learning style and language learning strategies toward students' achievement, namely English achievement. However, most of the researches done have no concern with the simultaneous contribution of those aspects toward students English achievement, especially in secondary level. Furthermore, there are only few studies on the contribution of language learning belief, learning styles, and language learning strategies toward the English achievement of senior high school students in Indonesia, mainly Singaraja, Bali. Most of the researches done are conducted in different subject matters and/ or with different aspects of learning.

Lan (2012) had conducted a study on the roles of anxiety and beliefs about language learning on the English achievement of 7<sup>th</sup> graders of Taiwanese. The study showed that beliefs had a correlation on students' achievement. In terms of learning styles, Tjandra (2009) found out that learning styles had a significant contribution toward students' achievement on social science of S1 students of the Primary School Teacher Education, Faculty of Education, UNDIKSHA Singaraja. Moreover, Surianingsih (2011) stated that students' learning style has strong contribution toward the English writing competency of the seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 4 Mendoyo. Additionally, Tao (2011) also had conducted a

prediction study toward the English achievement of Chinese students studied English seen from their learning styles, and found out that students' learning styles could become significant predictors of English achievement.

In the context of learners' learning strategies, Winasari (2010) has carried out a correlational study on the contribution of language learning anxiety and language learning strategies on students English proficiency of second year students of senior high schools in Mengwi, and discovered that language learning strategies gave significant contribution on English proficiency. Besides, Sioson (2011) had also conducted a prediction study in relation to language learning strategies, students' beliefs, and students' oral performance. It was found that students' beliefs had significant contribution on the oral performance of the participant.

Seen from the researches done in different subject matters above, such as sciences, and language skills/ proficiencies, beliefs about language learning, learning styles and language learning strategies were discovered to have a relationship with the students' achievement (Tjandra, 2009; Surianingsih, 2011; Winasari, 2010; Sioson, 2011, Lan, 2012). It was recognized that there were possibilities those beliefs about language learning, language learning strategies, and learning styles gave significant contribution toward the success of learning. Therefore, this research was aimed at investigating how senior high schools students' beliefs about English language learning, their learning styles, and language learning strategies contributed to their English achievement.

## **Research Methods**

This study was a correlation research by using predictive analysis. Correlation research is a research that investigates the possible relationship among variables without trying to influence those variables. It can not determine the causes but can suggest them for future studies (Freankel and Wallen, 1993:286). Furthermore, Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009: 196) state that "correlational research involves collecting data to determine whether and to what degree, a

relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables.” In the present study, the predictive analysis was utilized. It was used to find out which of a number of variables (predictors) are most highly related to the criterion variable (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2009: 203).

The objectives of the study were: 1) investigating the contribution of beliefs about language learning on the eleventh grade students’ English achievement of state senior high schools in Singaraja, 2) investigating the contribution of learning styles on the eleventh grade students’ English achievement of state senior high schools in Singaraja, 3) investigating the contribution of language learning strategies on the eleventh grade students’ English achievement of state senior high schools in Singaraja, and 4). investigating the contribution of beliefs about language learning, learning styles and language learning strategies on the eleventh grade students’ English achievement of state senior high schools in Singaraja.

This study was limited on investigating the contribution of the beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies towards the English achievement of the eleventh grade students of State Senior High Schools in Singaraja in the academic year 2011/2012, Semester 1. The beliefs about language learning was limited on types of beliefs proposed by Horwitz (1987) including foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations. The learning styles used in this study referred to the learning styles proposed by Reid (1984), which concerned about major learning style preferences including visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile, group and individual learning styles. Furthermore, the language learning strategies used referred to the learning strategies proposed by Oxford (1990), which included memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. In terms of English achievement, the students’ achievements were quoted from the students’ English scores in the school report books, mainly semester I, in the academic years 2011/2012. The scores used were the scores of the cognitive and psychomotor domains presented in the school report books.

The number of population was 798 students. For the present study, 20% of the population was taken as the sample, around 160 respondents. The variables which became the predictors in this study were beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies; meanwhile the dependant variable (criterion) was English achievement. The data were collected from inventories, questionnaires, and documentations. There were two inventories used in the present study. The first was Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory adapted from Horwitz's (BALLI, ESL version, Horwitz, 1987), which is used to know the students' beliefs about language learning. Another inventory used was adapted from Oxford's (1990) 50-items Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (version 7.0), which was used to know learners' learning strategies. It was special version used for speakers of other languages learning English (ESL/EFL). The third instrument was a questionnaire adopted from Reid's Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (1984) in five-point Likert scale. At last, in order to obtain data about the students' English achievement, the English scored achieved by students in their school report books were used. It was based on the consideration that students' achievements were reported at the end of the semester in the form of school report books.

The collected data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential analysis. Data description was used to describe the characteristics of each variable so that it was easy to understand the data for the next steps of the analysis. The inferential analyses were done to test the hypotheses. The prerequisite tests of hypothesis testing were checked first. Afterwards, Pearson product moment correlations were utilized to determine the relationships and contributions between language learning beliefs, learning styles, and language learning strategies toward the students' English achievement. At last, multiple regression analysis was used to determine the strength of the contribution between the combination of the predictor variables and the criterion variable.

## Research Findings and Discussion

The result of descriptive analysis showed that the tendency of the beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies of eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri in Singaraja was high seen from their means scores as following, 120.5 from 165, 106 from 150, and 158 from 250 respectively. It was also recognized that the mean score of students' English achievement was 165.9 from 200. It means that the English achievement of eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri in Singaraja, namely including cognitive and psychomotor were high.

All of data had fulfilled the requirements to be analyzed further. The data were normally distributed and linear. There were no multicollinearity, autocorrelation, and heterocedasticity. It means that the analysis could be continued to hypothesis testing by using product moment correlation, linear regression, and multiple regression analysis.

The product moment correlation, linear regression and multiple regression analysis showed the results, as below:

1. There was a correlation between beliefs about language learning and English achievement; the correlation value was 0.190. Referred to the comparison to  $r_{cv}$ , the counted  $r$  was higher than  $r_{cv}$  ( $0.19 > 0.16$ ). It means that the correlation between beliefs about language learning and English achievement was significant. It was found that  $r^2 = 0.036$ . It means that beliefs about language learning had contribution on English achievement 3.6%. In which its regression equation was  $Y=146.365 + 0.162X_1$ . It indicated that the higher the beliefs of the students were, the higher the students' English achievements would be, and vice versa.
2. The value of correlation coefficient of learning styles and English achievement was 0.224. When it was compared to  $r_{cv} = 0.16$  ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), it could be seen that the coefficient correlation was higher, which indicated the correlation was significant. The contribution of learning styles to English achievement was seen from the determination coefficient ( $r^2$ ). It was 0.050 or



5%. Its regression equation was  $Y=141.472+ 0.231X_2$ . It signified that the more the learning styles were utilized by the students, the higher the students' English achievement would be, and the other way round.

3. The value of correlation coefficient of language learning strategies and English achievement was 0.172. When it was compared to  $r_{cv} = 0.16$  ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), it could be seen that the coefficient correlation was higher. It signified that the correlation was significant. The contribution of language learning strategies to English achievement was seen from the determination coefficient ( $r^2$ ), which the value was 0.029 or 2.9%. It means that students' English achievement was determined by 2.9% of language learning strategies, in which the regression equation was  $Y=156.090+0.062X_3$ . It indicated that the more frequent the language learning strategies were utilized by the students, the higher the students' English achievement would be, and vice versa.
4. The correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of beliefs about language learning, learning, styles, and language learning strategies on the students' English achievement was 0.257; and the determination coefficient ( $r^2$ ) was 0.066 or 6.6%. The percentage indicated that beliefs about language learning, learning, styles, and language learning strategies could simultaneously determine the students' English achievement 6.6%. Additionally, based on F test it was found out that counted F were 3.668, which was higher than  $F_{table}$  ( $F > 2.66$ ). It signified that the contribution of beliefs about language learning, learning, styles, and language learning strategies on the students' English achievement was significant.

Based on the regression analysis, the multiple regression equation of the contribution of the beliefs about language learning [ $X_1$ ], learning styles [ $X_2$ ], and language learning strategies [ $X_3$ ] towards students' English achievement [ $Y$ ] could be formulated as  $Y = 135.042 + 0.076 X_1 + 0.161 X_2 + 0.029 X_3$ . Moreover, referring to the calculated data, namely the effective contribution of each predictor, there was signified that the learning styles became the strongest predictor of all predictors, since its contribution was 3.51% from 6.60%. Later,

beliefs about language learning (1.71%) and language learning strategies (1.38%) followed behind.

Furthermore, seen from the hypothesis testing above, it was found that all of the alternative hypotheses were fulfilled. There was a significant positive contribution of each predictor (beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies) to the dependant variable or criterion, namely English achievement, which the values of correlation coefficients were 0.172, 0.224, and 0.190 sequentially. In addition, all of the predictors gave a significant positive contribution to students' English achievement simultaneously, the coefficient of the contribution was 0.257, with the determinant coefficient  $r^2 = 0.066$  or 6.6%. It signified that those predictors contributed to students' English achievement only 6.6%, and the rest was influenced by other factors. Regardless of the small percentage of contribution from the predictors to the English achievement, it appeared that the optimization of positive beliefs about language learning, students' learning styles, and language learning strategies were still needed, in order to make better language learning which then resulted on a higher English achievement. It is because beliefs about language learning, students' learning styles, and language learning strategies are some factors involved in the language learning.

Considering what had been mentioned previously that beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies, were influential and gave a significant and positive contribution on the students' achievement in English subject. It implies that it is important for EFL teachers to be aware and give more concerns on the students' beliefs, learning styles and strategies. While teaching English, the teachers may optimize the positive beliefs of the students and make them utilize their styles and strategies of language learning based on their own preferences and needs. It probably helps them get optimal results from the language learning itself. It is a great challenge for the teachers when they have to be more knowledgeable, creative, and smart in designing the instructions that can support, encourage, as well as make the

students utilize their styles and strategies of learning, and have strong beliefs, which can promote their success in English language learning.

Derived from the current study, it was found that not all students had optimized their beliefs, learning styles, and language learning strategies, to support their English language learning. It signifies that the EFL teachers need to make the students be aware of their potentialities, their styles, and their best strategies, and their promoting beliefs, as well as optimize and utilize theirs, in order to make them get better results in learning English. The teachers certainly need to design instructions which may cultivate the students' potentialities and language skills as well as be aware of them during teaching and learning activities.

Additionally, the results of the study showed that the students' beliefs, learning styles, and language learning strategies, which they have brought into the process of language learning have given a significant contribution in learning English. However, it appears that the contribution was only 6.6%. It means that there remain many other factors which determine the success of students in language learning. It implies that it is the EFL teachers' tasks to think about and consider all factors that may give contributions to students' EFL learning and how to optimize it within the teaching and learning processes.

At last, this study also gives implication to the research field. In this study it was found out that the contribution of the students' beliefs, learning styles, and language learning strategies toward their English achievement was significant but low. It signifies that other researches still need to be conducted in this main topic; and explorations toward all of the components including the theories, methodologies, instruments, and the variables are essential to be done, since theoretically and empirically it was said that all predictors were influential and contributory toward English achievement. It appears that having better methodologies, instruments, as well as investigating different populations may result on better outcome.

It is recognized that this study needs to be explored further. In terms of methodology, this study may have had more detail information about students'

beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies, if it is conducted qualitatively through survey, interview, observation, etc. The study even may present better results if it utilizes mixed methods by combining both qualitative and quantitative methods. Moreover, in terms of instruments used, it seems important to examine deeper whether the instruments used are appropriate to be used and are quite representative to reflect the students' beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies quantitatively. In addition, it is also considered essential to reconsider the existing theories about the relationship among the variables in order to produce better researches.

Furthermore, it appears that there are still many factors which relate and contribute to the students' achievement in English language learning, beside students' beliefs, learning styles, and language learning strategies. However, those factors probably are not explored and investigated yet. Henceforth, it seems important to conduct further studies about the variables or factors which are contributory and influence the students' success in learning English, in order to promote and help the students to get the best results in their language learning.

## **Conclusion**

Concerning the result of previous data analysis and discussion, it was concluded that:

1. There was a significant positive contribution of beliefs about language learning on the eleventh grade students' English achievement of the state senior high schools in Singaraja. The contribution was categorized as a low contribution, but it still indicated that the higher the beliefs of the students were, the higher the students' English achievement would be, and vice versa.
2. There was a significant positive contribution of learning styles on the eleventh grade students' English achievement of the state senior high schools in Singaraja. The more the learning styles were utilized by the students, the higher the students' English achievement would be, and vice versa.

3. There was a significant positive contribution of language learning strategies on the eleventh grade students' English achievement of the state senior high schools in Singaraja. The more frequent the language learning strategies were utilized by the students, the higher the students' English achievement would be, and vice versa.
4. There was a significant positive contribution of beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies simultaneously on the eleventh grade students' English achievement of the state senior high schools in Singaraja. If the students' beliefs about language learning, learning styles, and language learning strategies were high, the students' English achievements were also high. Besides, from the small percentage of the contribution, it was noted that there remained other factors, which were more contributory and influential toward the students' English achievement to be concerned.

## References

- Bernat, E. and Gvozdenko, I. 2005. Beliefs about Language Learning: Current Knowledge, Pedagogical Implications, and New Research Directions, *TESL-EJ*, 9(1). Retrieved from: <http://tesl-ej.org/ej33/a1.html>
- Direktorat Pembinaan SMA. 2010. "Juknis Penyusunan Perangkat Penilaian Afektif di SMA", *Buku V*. Jakarta: Direktorat Pembinaan SMA
- Fraenkel, J. R. and Wallen, N. E. 1993. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., and Airasian, P. 2009. *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications* (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.
- Horwitz, E.K. 1987. Surveying Student Beliefs about Language Learning. In Wenden, A. & Rubin, J. (Eds.). *Learner strategies in language learning*, (pp. 119-129). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
- Johnson, K. 2001. *An introduction to foreign language learning and teaching*. England: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Lan, Y.J. 2010. *A Study of Taiwanese 7<sup>th</sup> Graders' Foreign Language Anxiety, Beliefs about Language Learning and Its Relationship with Their English*

- Achievement*. (Unpublished Master Thesis). Taipei: Department of Applied English, Ming Chuan University. Retrieved from: <http://ethesys.lib.mcu.edu.tw/ETD-db/ETD-search/getfile?URN=etd-0720110-163215&filename=etd-0720110-163215.pdf>
- Madrid, D. 1995. *Internal and External Factors in Language Teaching and Learning*. University of Granada. Retrieved from: <http://www.ugr.es/~dmadrid/Publicaciones/Individual%20differences.pdf>
- Oxford, R.L. 1990. *Language Learning Strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Oxford, R.L. 2001. Language Learning Styles and Strategies. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 359 - 366). USA: Heinle & Heinle
- Peraturan Pemerintah No. 19 Tahun 2005 Tentang Standar Pendidikan Nasional. Jakarta: Kementerian Hukum dan Hak Azasi Manusia
- Reid, J. 1984. *Perceptual Learning-Style Preference Questionnaire*. Retrieved from: <http://lookingahead.heinle.com/filing/l-styles.htm>
- Sioson, I.C., 2011. Language Learning Strategies, Beliefs, and Anxiety in Academic Speaking Task. *Philippine ESL Journal*, 7. pp. 3 – 27. Retrieved from: [www.philippine-esl-journal.com/V7-A1.pdf](http://www.philippine-esl-journal.com/V7-A1.pdf)
- Slameto. 2010. *Belajar dan Faktor-Faktor yang Mempengaruhi*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.
- Surianingsih, N.K. 2011. *The Effect of Guided Writing and Learning Styles toward Writing Competency of the Seventh Grade Students at SMP Negeri 4 Mendoyo*. (Unpublished Master Thesis). Singaraja: Language Education Postgraduate Program, Ganesha University of Education (UNDIKSHA).
- Tao, L. 2011. Learning Styles: Predictors of Foreign Language Proficiency? *Philippine ESL Journal*, 7. Retrieved from: [www.philippine-esl-journal.com/V7-A3.pdf](http://www.philippine-esl-journal.com/V7-A3.pdf)
- Tjandra, M. 2009. *Kontribusi Belajar, Motivasi Berprestasi, dan Gaya Belajar terhadap Hasil Belajar Konsep Dasar IPS Mahasiswa S1 PGSD FIP Undiksha*. (Unpublished Master Thesis) Singaraja: Primary School Education Program, Faculty of Education, Ganesha University of Education (UNDIKSHA).
- Winasari, N. L. P. 2012. *The Contribution of Language Learning Anxiety and Language Learning Strategies on Students' English Proficiency of Second Year Students of Senior High Schools in Mengwi*. (Unpublished Master Thesis). Singaraja: Language Education Postgraduate Program, Ganesha University of Education (UNDIKSHA).