

Learning Styles and Academic Performance of Students in English 3

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ABSTRACT

“Learning Styles and Academic Performance of Students in English 3” aimed at determining the relationship between learning styles of second year Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) students and their academic performance in English 3 (Speech and Oral Communication). In the attainment of this primary purpose, this study utilized descriptive-correlational research method. However, in describing the degree of association between two variables such as learning styles and academic performance, it used Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (RS). Meanwhile, in gathering data on learning styles, it employed Student Learning Styles Scales-Grasha –Reichmann (2008). The result revealed that the dominant learning styles of students were participant and collaborative; the least was independent. Meanwhile, as regards their academic performance, it showed that the majority of them were developing; the least was capable. Ultimately, it revealed negative correlation between academic performance and

learning styles specifically, independent, collaborative, dependent, and participant, except for avoidant and competitive. Avoidant and competitive learning styles were correlated to academic performance. In conclusion, avoidant and competitive learning modes of students affected their academic performance. The other dimensions such as, independent, collaborative, dependent, and participant modes of learning had no bearing on academic performance.

Keywords: *Education, Learning Styles, Academic Performance, Descriptive-Correlational Method, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Student's academic performance in school is seemingly determined by his or her learning styles or modes of learning. In the global setting, Felder and Brent (2005) discovered that the poor test performance of their student respondents is affected by their learning styles which are, unfortunately, incompatible with their teachers' modes of teaching. Added to this consequence is their shifting to other courses or dropping out of school.

In the Philippines, Lapinig (August 2006) found that the low satisfaction or poor academic performance of students is not necessarily attributable to either the difficulty or

Uninteresting topics of the subject or the students' lack of knowledge or ability. She concluded that many underachieving students fall behind because their learning styles are mismatched with the approaches used by their teachers to teach them.

In view of this, the researchers attempted to determine further whether or not the learning styles of the students have a bearing on their academic performance in English 3.

FRAMEWORK

There are a few selected theories that can support this study. The first theory is Dunn and Dunn Learning Styles Models (Dunn and Burke, 2002). This theory states the following beliefs: that learning style is a biological and developmental set of personal characteristics that makes the identical instructional environments, methods, and resources effective for some learners and ineffective for others; that most people have learning-style preferences and that these preferences differ significantly from individual to individual; that individual instructional preferences exist, and the impact accommodating these preferences can be measured accurately; that the stronger the preference, the more important it

is to provide compatible instructional strategies; that accommodating individual learning-style preferences through complementary educational, instructional, teaching, and counseling interventions results in increased academic achievement and improved student attitudes toward learning; that given environments, resources, and approaches, people attain statistically higher achievement and attitude test scores in congruent (matched) rather than dissonant (mismatched) treatments; that most teachers can learn to use learning styles as a cornerstone of their instructional programs; that most individuals can learn to capitalize on their learning-style strengths when concentrating on new or difficult academic material; and that the lesser successful the individual is academically, the more important it is to accommodate learning-style preferences.

Another theory is the Triarchic Theory of Intelligence by Robert Sternberg. This describes the three aspects of intelligence. Analytic intelligence comprises of the mental processes through which intelligence is expressed (Theories of Intelligence, 2009). In addition, it is a skill in reasoning, processing information, and solving problems. It involves the ability to analyze, evaluate, judge, and compare. It draws on basic cognitive processes or components (Detterman, 2007).

Creative intelligence is necessary when an individual is confronted with a challenge that is nearly, but not entirely, novel or when an individual is engaged in automatizing the performance of a task (Theories of Intelligence, 2009). Likewise, it is skill in using past experiences to achieve the insight and deal with new situations. People high in creative intelligence are good at combining seemingly unrelated facts to form new ideas. According to Sternberg as cited by Detterman, traditional intelligence tests do not measure creative intelligence, because it is possible to score high on an IQ test yet have trouble dealing with new situations.

Practical intelligence is bound in a sociocultural milieu and involves adaptation to, selection of, and shaping of the environment to maximize fit in the context (Theories of Intelligence, 2009). Also, it relates to people's ability to adapt to, select, and shape their real-world environment. It involves skill in everyday living ("street smarts") and in adapting to life demands, and reflects a person's ability to succeed in real-world settings. An example given by Sternberg of practical intelligence is of an employee who loved his job but hated his boss (Detterman, 2007).

Conceptual Framework

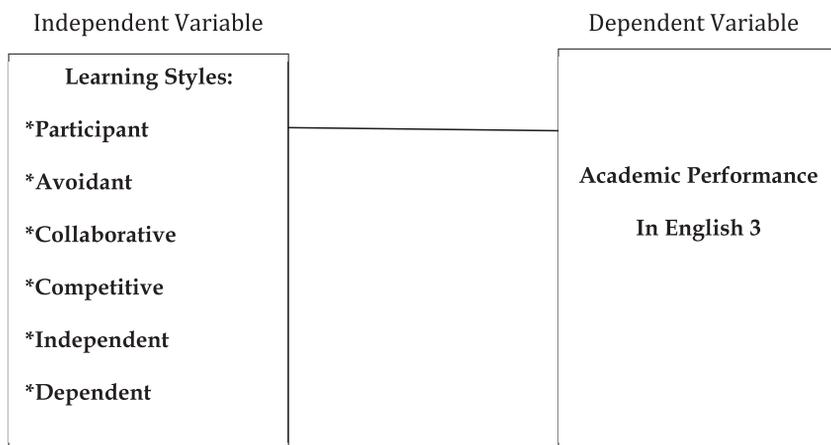


Figure 1: Schematic Diagram Showing the Relationship between the Learning Styles of Students and their Academic Performance in English3

Figure 1 illustrates the framework of the study. It shows the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

The independent variable constitutes the learning styles of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) students majoring Technology and Livelihood Education at Agusan del Sur State College of Agriculture and Technology. These learning styles include the varied facets of a learner such as: participant, avoidant, collaborative, competitive, independent, and dependent.

The dependent variable constitutes students' academic performance in English 3 during the first semester of school the year 2016-2017.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study primarily aimed to find the relationship between the learning styles of the second year TLE students and their academic performance in English 3 during the first semester of school year 2016-2017. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following objectives: (1) to determine the learning styles of student respondents; (2) to determine the academic performance of the respondents in English 3; and, (3) to find the significant relationship between the TLE students' learning styles and their academic performance in English 3.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive correlational survey research method was utilized in this study. But, to appropriately describe the degree of association between the two variables such as learning styles and academic performance of TLE second year students in English 3 or among the nominal quantitative variables such as learning styles and academic performance, Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (RS) was the procedure used. Using the complete enumeration sampling technique, 100% of the 53 second year TLE students who were taking up English 3 under the tutorship of one of the researchers during the first semester of the school year 2016-2017 were involved.

The instrument used in the study was of Grasha and Riechmann (2008). It was a standardized questionnaire which has been made available on the internet for public consumption. So, its validity and reliability were highly guaranteed.

Statistical tools were used to treat the data. Frequency was used to determine the responses of the respondents in the learning styles and academic performance. Percentage was used to determine the magnitude of the respondents' learning styles and academic performance in English 3. Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (RS) was used to determine the significant relationship between the respondents' learning styles and academic performance in English 3.

As a guide to determine the relationship between variables, the guide is given below:

r	Meaning
0.0 - 0.19	Very low correlation
0.20 – 0.39	Low correlation
0.40 – 0.69	Moderate correlation
0.70 – 0.89	High correlation
0.90 – 1.00	Very high correlation

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learning Styles

Table 1 presents the students' learning styles. The data show that among their learning styles, the dominant ones are participant with a coefficient value of 0.36 and collaborative with a coefficient value of 0.3162. The least one is independent learning style as indicated by the coefficient value of 0.01. This finding discloses that the majority of the students in THE TLE program are both participant and collaborative in their learning styles. Meaning, as A participant, they

manifest excitement or enjoyment in learning a subject when their teacher does not only provide lectures, but also clearly discusses with them a lesson or subject matter (Montgomery and Groat, 2004). As collaborative, they like working with their classmates and enjoy cooperative learning (Riechmann, 2008). On the other hand, the least of their learning styles are independent.

This finding suggests that most of the students find a difficulty of studying or working on the tasks alone. They are rather inclined to depend on what their teacher feeds them (Montgomery and Groat, 2004).

Table 1. Learning Styles of TLE Students

Dimensions	LEVEL				
	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
Participant	0.2202	0.36	0.3486	0.0567	0.0135
Avoidant	0.006	0.1432	0.3783	0.2648	0.0166
Collaborative	0.2513	0.3162	0.3027	0.0608	0.0189
Competitive	0.0175	0.2513	0.3	0.1675	0.0837
Independent	0.1635	0.3378	0.39	0.1256	0.01
Dependent	0.1756	0.3081	0.39	0.1013	0.0297

Academic Performance

Table 2 presents the TLE students' academic performance in English 3. The data disclose that the academic performance in English 1 of the respondents varies in range. Out of 74 respondents, 25 or 62% of them have developing performance as they obtain a range of 75-84 in the final grading period while 5 or 7% are capable as they get a range of 90-94. Unfortunately, 9 or 12% need improvements as they get a failing grade. The finding discloses that as regards their academic performance, majority of them have developing performance in English 3 subject. Only, a least of them are capable.

Table 2. TLE Students' Academic Performance in English 3

Academic Performance in English 3	Verbal Description	f	Percent
100-95	Proficient		
94-90	Capable	5	7%
89-85	Satisfactory	14	19%
84-75	Developing	25	62%
74-F	Needs Improvement	9	12%

Learning Styles and Academic Performance

Table 3 presents the relationship between the TLE students' learning styles and academic performance in English 3. Generally, the coefficient values of -0.1 and -0.3 indicate negative correlation between the learning styles such as, independent, collaborative, dependent, and participant and academic performance. It suggests that these specified learning style preferences of the respondents have no bearing on their academic performance in English 3. But, between avoidant learning style and academic performance, there is a high correlation as indicated by the coefficient value of 0.9. Likewise, between competitive learning style and academic performance, there is low correlation. Meaning, the academic performance of the avoidant learners who do not want to learn the English 3 subject matters as well as that of the competitive learners is very much affected. Buendicho (2003) points to some factors that affect the students' academic performance. According to him, students may be responsive to learn a subject matter when their teacher used appropriate methods and approaches which are compatible with their learning style strengths. She, in fact, suggests that a teacher should vary his techniques to facilitate maximum learning.

Table 3. Relationship between the Students' Learning Styles and Academic Performance in English 3

	Learning Styles					
	Indep	Avoid	Collab	Depen	Comp	Partic
Academic Performance	-0.1	0.9	-0.3	-0.1	0.3	-0.3

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the conclusions are drawn. At first, majority of the TLE second year students are participant and collaborative in learning styles; whereas, the least is independent.

Second, most of the TLE students have developing academic performance in English 3 while the least of them have capable performance.

Finally, students' learning styles such as, independent, collaborative, dependent, and participant have no bearing on their academic performance in English 3, except for those who are avoidant and competitive. Their learning modes are significantly related to their academic performance.

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