



***THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCES AND INTEREST IN
YOUTUBE FOR LEARNING ENGLISH AT UNIVERSITAS RIAU KEPULAUAN***

**HUBUNGAN ANTARA PREFERENSI GAYA BELAJAR DAN MINAT TERHADAP
YOUTUBE UNTUK BELAJAR BAHASA INGGRIS DI UNIVERSITAS RIAU
KEPULAUAN**

Annisa Melfida Chairiah¹, Nursyahidah Suci Ramadhani², Dhiya Veeza Aqilla³, Muryadi Aguspriawan⁴,
Sayyida Navisa⁵, Farah Dieba Nashwa Syahrila⁶, Desi Surlitasari Dewi⁷, Sri Langgeng Ratnasari⁸,
Ciptono⁹, Triyanda Desma Niko¹⁰

¹⁻⁷(Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Riau
Kepulauan, Indonesia)

⁸(Prodi Magister Manajemen, Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia)

⁹(Prodi Magister Hukum, Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia)

¹⁰(Prodi Ilmu Hukum, Fakultas Hukum, Universitas Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia)

e-mail: annisamelfida5@gmail.com¹, sucirdhni63@gmail.com²,
dhivaveezaaqillaasmoro@gmail.com³

Abstrak

Kemajuan teknologi digital di abad ke-21 telah mengubah cara siswa mengakses dan berinteraksi dengan materi pembelajaran, terutama melalui platform seperti YouTube. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara preferensi gaya belajar siswa—berdasarkan model VARK (Visual, Aural, Read/Write, Kinesthetic)—dan minat mereka dalam menggunakan YouTube sebagai media pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Desain penelitian menggunakan pendekatan korelasional kuantitatif yang diterapkan pada sampel 20 mahasiswa semester enam dari Universitas Kepulauan Riau. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner VARK dan instrumen skala Likert yang diadaptasi dari penelitian tervalidasi untuk mengukur minat dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris berbantuan YouTube. Hasil uji normalitas menunjukkan bahwa data untuk variabel yang diminati terdistribusi normal ($p = 0,148$). Namun, karena sifat kategoris dari variabel gaya belajar, Korelasi Peringkat Spearman digunakan. Temuan menunjukkan korelasi negatif yang lemah dan tidak signifikan ($p = -0,266$, $p > 0,05$) antara preferensi gaya belajar dan minat siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris berbasis YouTube. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa YouTube, sebagai platform pembelajaran multimoda, dapat menarik beragam pelajar, terlepas dari gaya belajar yang mereka sukai. Studi ini merekomendasikan integrasi YouTube ke dalam praktik pengajaran dan melakukan penelitian lebih lanjut dengan variabel yang lebih luas dan sampel yang lebih besar.

Kata Kunci: Gaya Belajar; VARK; YouTube; Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris; Minat Belajar; Pendidikan Digital

Abstract

Advances in digital technology in the 21st century have changed the way students access and interact with learning materials, particularly through platforms like YouTube. This study aims to



examine the relationship between students' learning style preferences—based on the VARK (Visual, Aural, Read/Write, Kinesthetic) model—and their interest in using YouTube as an English language learning medium. The research design employed a quantitative correlational approach applied to a sample of 20 sixth-semester students from the University of Kepulauan Riau. Data were collected using the VARK questionnaire and a Likert scale instrument adapted from validated research to measure interest in YouTube-assisted English language learning. The results of the normality test indicated that the data for the variables of interest were normally distributed ($p = 0.148$). However, due to the categorical nature of the learning style variables, Spearman's Rank Correlation was used. The findings revealed a weak and insignificant negative correlation ($\rho = -0.266$, $p > 0.05$) between learning style preferences and students' interest in YouTube-based English language learning. This suggests that YouTube, as a multimodal learning platform, can attract a diverse range of learners, regardless of their preferred learning styles. This study recommends integrating YouTube into teaching practices and conducting further research with broader variables and larger samples.

Keywords: *Learning Styles; VARK; YouTube; English Learning; Student Interest; Digital Education*

INTRODUCTION

Rapid advances in digital technology have fundamentally changed the way students learn in the 21st century. Modern students are now more independent and flexible in their learning process, utilizing digital platforms as alternative resources that are not only easily accessible but also engaging (Kumar et al., 2021). One of the most widely used platforms in language education is YouTube, which provides a variety of audiovisual materials designed to support learners in improving their vocabulary, grammar, speaking, and writing skills.

The development of digital technology has changed the way students learn in the modern era and has also opened up greater opportunities for them to study more flexibly and independently. Students today are increasingly active in using digital platforms as alternative learning resources that are seen as more accessible and engaging. One of the most frequently used digital platforms in language learning is YouTube which offers a variety of visually and audibly appealing educational content. According to Felanie (2021), the use of YouTube videos has proven effective in helping students improve their writing skills, especially descriptive texts. Videos that combine sound and image elements are considered capable of enriching vocabulary and increasing learning motivation, especially due to direct exposure to authentic English from native speakers.

Recent studies have confirmed YouTube's role in supporting English language learning. For example, Roellisa (2024) found that students showed a strong interest in using YouTube to improve their speaking skills, primarily due to the presence of native speakers and the use of real-life phrases. Similarly, Suci et al. (2022) highlighted the motivational effect of YouTube content on student engagement in learning, as it offers a flexible and interactive format that accommodates individual learning rhythms.

However, the effectiveness of using YouTube as a learning medium is also highly dependent on individual characteristics, such as learning style. One theory that is often used to categorize



learning styles is the VARK model, which includes four main types: visual, aural, read/write and kinesthetic. Although this model is widely used, research shows that there is not always a significant relationship between a particular learning style and academic achievement. For example, a study by Mozaffari et al., (2020) on dental students showed that although most students had certain learning preferences, it was not directly related to their academic achievement.

Given the dynamics of this study aims to investigate the correlation between students' learning style preferences (based on the VARK model) and their interest in using YouTube as an English learning medium, focusing on students of the University of Riau Islands (UNRIKA) especially semester 6. The aim is to provide data that can inform the design of a more personalized and technology-integrated learning approach in higher education. Based on this explanation, this study aims to examine whether there is a relationship between students' learning styles and their interest in using YouTube as an English learning media. It is hoped that the results of this study can contribute to the development of more personalized and technology based learning methods, in the digital age.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning Style Preferences in Higher Education

Every student has their own unique way of absorbing information, known as a learning style. One of the most widely recognized models in education is the VARK model developed by Fleming. This model categorizes learning preferences into four main types: Visual, Aural, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic. Although originally developed in the 1990s, this model remains highly relevant in today's educational environment. In practice, many students exhibit more than one learning style, a concept known as multimodal learning (Khanal et al., 2014).

Understanding students' learning styles is crucial, especially for instructors, because teaching methods that align with these preferences can significantly improve learning outcomes. For example, Subagja and Rubini (2023) found that students tend to perform better when teaching methods align with their dominant learning style, such as hands-on activities for kinesthetic learners. Understanding students' learning styles is crucial, especially for instructors, as teaching methods that align with these preferences can significantly improve learning outcomes. For example, Subagja and Rubini (2023) found that students tend to perform better when instructional methods match their dominant learning styles such as hands-on activities for kinesthetic learners.

Additionally, Alharbi and Paul (2020) found that implementing learning style-based strategies in university-level teaching can improve student satisfaction and performance, particularly in blended and online learning environments. These findings support the implementation of adaptive instructional designs that consider individual learning style differences.

The Role of Learning Styles in Language Acquisition

In English language learning, recognizing students' learning styles becomes increasingly important. For example, students with an auditory learning style are likely to grasp pronunciation and intonation more effectively through listening. Meanwhile, visual learners benefit from diagrams or other visual aids when studying sentence structure. Learning styles not only influence how students receive content, but also affect the overall success of the learning process (Othman & Amiruddin, 2010). When instructors use strategies that reflect students' learning preferences, English classes can become more engaging and effective. This is especially important because



language learning involves a combination of skills that are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each of which may be supported by different learning methods.

Because language learning encompasses integrated skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—it's important to vary teaching methods to suit each student. A mismatch between teaching strategies and student preferences can lead to a lack of engagement or ineffective learning outcomes in the classroom.

Youtube as a Medium for English Language Learning

In recent years, YouTube has become one of the most widely used platforms for independent English learning, especially among university students. YouTube offers a wide variety of engaging content, including grammar tutorials, native-speaker conversation videos, educational animations, and interactive learning simulations. This diversity allows students to choose materials that align with their individual learning preferences, thus supporting differentiated learning (Roellisa, 2024). Roellisa (2024) highlights that students often use YouTube to improve their speaking abilities, as it allows them to hear authentic pronunciation and everyday expressions. Suci et al., (2022) also observed that university students show strong interest in using YouTube for learning, mainly due to its on-demand access and engaging presentation. In addition, YouTube's flexible nature makes it particularly appealing to today's tech-savvy students.

In the context of digital learning, YouTube serves not only as a content source but also as a motivational tool. Its accessibility and familiarity make it an ideal complement to traditional learning methods. However, students' learning outcomes on YouTube can vary depending on how well the content matches their learning styles and preferences. This reinforces the need to examine how tools like YouTube function in relation to learners' internal characteristics, such as style-based engagement.

Digital Learning Preferences and Media Selection

Digital Learning Preferences and Media Selection (Paraphrase Natural & Human-like)
The selection of learning platforms by students is often shaped by several considerations, such as ease of access, content attractiveness, and alignment with personal learning needs. According to Mohamed and Shoufan (2022), students frequently decide which YouTube videos to watch based on how appealing or popular the content appears, rather than whether it supports their individual learning preferences. This suggests that students do not always choose materials that are best suited to help them learn effectively.

In a related study, Dabamona and Yunus (2022) found that YouTube, as a commonly used audiovisual platform, is able to support flexible self-directed learning, especially for learners with visual and auditory learning styles. Their results show that when digital media is tailored to each student's learning characteristics, it not only increases motivation, but also strengthens the effectiveness of the language learning process. Therefore, selecting digital media such as YouTube that matches students' learning preferences can create a more meaningful and engaging learning experience.

Connecting Learning Styles with Youtube Engagement

In the learning process, each student typically has their own unique way of understanding material. These differences are known as learning styles. When students access learning materials through YouTube, their learning style preferences often manifest in the types of videos they choose. For example, visual learners typically prefer videos rich in images, diagrams, animations,



and colorful presentations. Meanwhile, kinesthetic learners are more attracted to videos that show hands-on activities, real-world experiments, or physical simulations. Meanwhile, students with kinesthetic learning styles may find videos that involve hands-on practice or simulations more helpful. Recent research has shown that the various methods used on YouTube-such as conversational videos, storytelling, and tutorial videos-can be tailored to students' learning characteristics (Rufino, 2024). This means that YouTube is not just an entertainment platform, but can also be an effective learning medium if tailored to the needs of each individual. The use of YouTube has been shown to encourage learning enthusiasm and improve student learning outcomes, especially if the videos are presented in an interesting and accessible way. In today's digital age, most students are very familiar with screen-based and interactive learning formats. Therefore, the integration of technology especially video-based media must consider students' internal characteristics, not just external content delivery.

This is important as most students are now more familiar with visual and digital based ways of learning. Likewise, Ilter (2015) reveals that technology such as YouTube has a huge impact on language learning, even from an early age. If it is used appropriately and in accordance with the way students learn, the learning outcomes will be optimized. Although students at the University of Riau Kepulauan (UNRIKA) are already using YouTube to learn English, there is no research that specifically looks at whether their interest in learning videos on YouTube is related to their individual learning styles.

Therefore, this study was conducted to explore this relationship, so that digital learning can be more directed and according to the needs of students. Based on the reviewed literature, although YouTube has been widely used for language learning, and learning styles are known to influence learning success, few studies have examined the relationship between the two. Therefore, this study examines whether students' learning style preferences are significantly related to their in using YouTube as a medium for English learning.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative correlational design, aiming to investigate the relationship between students' learning style preferences and their interest in using YouTube to learn English. According to Sugiyono, quantitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of positivism, which involves studying a specific population or sample, using research tools to collect data, and establishing and validating predetermined hypotheses. This correlational method is highly appropriate because it allows researchers to measure the degree and direction of the relationship between two variables without manipulating them (Widiatmika, 2015).

The population of this study was sixth-semester undergraduate students from two classes, 6A and 6B, of the English Language Education Department at the University of the Riau Islands, in the 2024/2025 academic year. Purposive sampling was used to select students who actively participated in English learning content on YouTube. The total sample size was 20 students, sufficient for correlational analysis in small-scale educational research.

Two main instruments were used for data collection in this study. The first instrument is the VARK questionnaire Learning Style used in this study is an established and validated instrument by (Fleming et al., 2011), which consists of 16 items that identify four types of learning preferences: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic which is widely adopted in

learning styles research. The second instrument used is a Likert scale questionnaire adapted from previous research (Khilda Sophia, Dara Sabila, and Purnawati, 'Students' Interest in Learning English through YouTube (A Case Study in Senior High School of Sekolah Alam Cikeas Bogor)) to assess students' interest in using YouTube to learn English. Based on the research of Shopia, Sabila, & Purnawati (2022), the indicators in this questionnaire to measure Students' Interest in Learning English through YouTube are grouped into several aspects, which reflect three main dimensions: feeling-related valence (emotion), value-related valence (cognition), and knowledge-seeking/attention using a 5-point scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree".

The validity and reliability of this instrument (questionnaire) were adopted directly from previous research and there were no modifications to its content, so that validity and reliability tests were not carried out again in this research. To assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire in this context, a pilot test was conducted. Item validity was measured using Pearson Product Moment, and internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. All items had r values > 0.30 and $\alpha = 0.88$, indicating the instrument is valid and reliable.

Data was collected online. VARK results were sent via screenshots to each respondent, while interest questionnaires were distributed via Google Forms. Responses were collected in Microsoft Excel, then processed and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistic version 29.0.2.0. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the respondents' profiles and scores. Prior to the correlation analysis, a normality test (Shapiro-Wilk) was conducted on the interest in YouTube variable. Since the learning style variable (VARK) is categorical, no normality test was applied to it. Therefore, Spearman Rank Correlation was used as a non-parametric method. The results showed ($p = 0.148$ ($p > 0.05$)), indicating that the data were normally distributed. However, because the learning style variable is categorical (nominal), a non-parametric test was still applied.

The data were analyzed using Spearman's Rank Correlation to determine the relationship between students' learning styles and their interest in YouTube-assisted learning. This test was chosen because the independent variables are nominal. The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

Based on the results, the Pearson Product-Moment correlation was used for normally distributed data, while the Spearman Rank correlation was used for non-normal data. The correlation strength was interpreted based on Sugiyono's (2019) criteria: very weak (0.00–0.199), weak (0.20–0.399), moderate (0.40–0.599), strong (0.60–0.799), and very strong (0.80–1.00).

The hypotheses tested in this study were:

H_0 : There is no significant relationship between learning style preferences and interest in YouTube for learning English.

H_1 : There is a significant relationship between learning style preferences and interest in YouTube for learning English.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Learning Style Preferences (X1)

The X variable in this study is student learning style Preferences, which are measured using the VARK (Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, Kinesthetic) instrument. This model groups learning styles into four main categories based on how a person receives and processes information. The data generated from this instrument is categorical, indicating

2. Learning English Through Youtube (X2)

Variable Y refers to students' interest in using YouTube as a tool for learning English. This variable was measured using a Likert-scale questionnaire that included indicators such as their frequency of use, their perception of its effectiveness, and their comfort level while learning through YouTube. This scale is numeric (interval) and can be analyzed.

Uji Validitas

There were two instruments used in this study. First, the VARK learning style questionnaire, consisting of 16 statements, was developed based on the model proposed by Fleming and Mills (1992). This instrument divides respondents' learning styles into four categories: Visual, Aural, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic. Because this instrument is a standard, internationally validated instrument and has not undergone any modifications, validity and reliability tests were not conducted again.

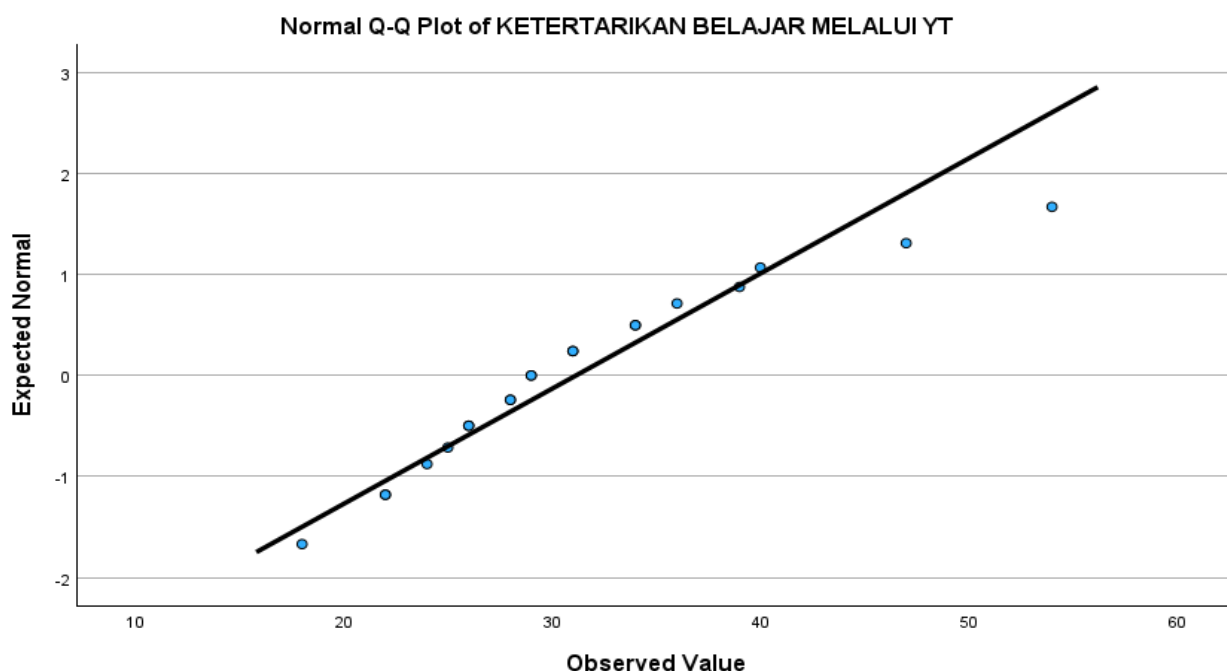
The second instrument was a questionnaire on learning interest through YouTube, developed by adopting indicators from research by Sophia et al. (2022). This questionnaire consisted of 15 items with a Likert scale of 1–5 (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree) that measured aspects of interest reflecting three main dimensions: feeling-related valence (emotion), value-related valence (cognition), and knowledge seeking/attention. Similar to the first instrument, because this questionnaire was adopted directly from previous research and there were no modifications to its content, validity and reliability tests were not conducted in this study.

Tests of Normality

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases		Missing		Total	
	Valid N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
KETERTARIKAN BELAJAR MELALUI YT	20	100.0%	0	0.0%	20	100.0%
Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
KETERTARIKAN BELAJAR MELALUI YT	.157	20	.200*	.929	20	.148

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction



Correlataion Test

Correlation tests are conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between the two variables and how strong the relationship is. The correlation between students' learning style preferences and their interest in YouTube-based English learning was tested using Spearman's rho. The results are shown in the following table:

Nonparametric Correlations

Correlations			
		GAYA BELAJAR	KETERTARIKAN BELAJAR MELALUI YT
Spearman's rho	GAYA BELAJAR		
	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.266
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.258
	N	20	20
	KETERTARIKAN BELAJAR MELALUI YT		
	Correlation Coefficient	-.266	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.258	.
	N	20	20



CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study aims to examine the relationship between students' learning style preferences (VARK) and their interest in using YouTube for English learning at the University of Riau Kepulauan. Based on the research conducted, it can be concluded that:

1. The data for the interest variable is normally distributed, while the learning style variable is categorical.
2. A Spearman Rank Correlation test showed a weak negative correlation ($\rho = -0.266$) between the two variables, with a significance value of $p = 0.258$, which is greater than 0.05.
3. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between students' learning style preferences and their interest in learning English through YouTube.

These results suggest that students' interest in using YouTube as a learning tool may not be significantly influenced by their preferred learning style. YouTube's multimodal nature can provide a flexible environment that accommodates a wide range of learners, regardless of their learning style.

SUGGESTION

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are provided:

1. For Teachers: Teachers should consider utilizing YouTube as a learning resource for all students, as its various content formats (visual, auditory, text, and interactive) can support diverse learning preferences simultaneously.
2. For Students: Students are encouraged to explore YouTube as a supplementary learning platform, regardless of their primary learning style, as the site offers accessible and engaging materials to enhance English language learning.
3. For Future Researchers: It is recommended to conduct similar research with a larger and more diverse sample, possibly incorporating other variables such as digital literacy, learning motivation, or language proficiency to better understand the factors influencing YouTube use in education.
4. Instrument Development: Future research could refine or expand the YouTube interest questionnaire by adding behavioral indicators (e.g., frequency of use, duration, type of content accessed) for more comprehensive analysis.

These suggestions suggest that learning through platforms like YouTube can be further utilized in English learning, despite the varying learning styles of each student. YouTube itself offers not only images/visuals but also audio, making it a multi-functional learning tool.

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