

## The Correlations among English Learning Motivation, Learning Styles, and English Mastery of Senior High School Students Taking an English Course in Palembang

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to investigate the correlations among English learning motivation, learning styles, and English mastery of senior high school students taking an English course in Palembang. In this correlational study, the data were collected through oral test, written test, and questionnaires. English learning motivation questionnaire, learning styles questionnaire, and English test were administered to 102 senior high school students taking an English course in Palembang. The data were analyzed by using correlational and regression analyses. The results showed that there were no significant correlations between English learning motivation and English mastery, between learning styles and English mastery, and between predictor variables and criterion variable. However, further calculation using multiple regression analysis showed that the contribution of instrumental motivation was 6.4 %. It implied that there was little contribution of English learning motivation to students' English mastery. On the other hand, the results showed that none of the aspects of learning styles significantly contributed to English mastery.

**Keywords:** English learning motivation, learning styles, English mastery

### INTRODUCTION

One of the global languages used worldwide is English. It serves as the most important and influencing language in the world. English is the most dominant worldwide language of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Rao, 2019). Considering the importance of mastering English for the purpose of communication, many countries have decided to adopt English as the first foreign language.

There are many factors influencing the students' mastery in learning a

language. One of the most significant factors in language learning is motivation. Purnama et al., (2019) explained that It is difficult for the low motivated students to learn English as a foreign language. Goyal (2015) defined motivation as the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. Motivation is what causes us to act, whether we drink water to quench our thirst or read a book to learn new things. It involves the psychological, social, biological, and emotional forces that drive behavior. Motivation is

considered as an integral part in the achievement of any goal. It is a crucial aspect that has a positive impact on any educational learning process, particularly language acquisition. Additionally, the students' knowledge, skills and experience of learning are described from the students' achievement level formulated by school curriculum learning objectives (Németh & Long, 2012). Having a good motivation is a key for a successful learning. It influences the students' participation in learning and contributes to the students' achievement.

The motivation of EFL learners is still a problem in Indonesian school context (Salikin et al., 2017). The issue is that many Indonesian students lack motivation to learn English. They attend class to meet their attendance requirements. The majority of them are indifferent to the teaching and learning process; just some will impart in English. They are reluctant to use English.

There is another factor that influences English mastery namely learning style. Their learning style is the complex method and conditions under which students most effectively perceive, process, store, and remember what they are trying to learn (Awla, 2014).

The way a person concentrates, processes, internalizes, and remembers new and challenging academic information or skills is known as their learning style. Due to differences in learning styles, people approach learning differently. A person's perception of, interactions with, and responses to the learning environment are largely influenced by their approach to learning.

Moreover, learning styles and learning motivation had great influence on students' speaking achievement (Novriyanti, 2011). It is also found that there was a significant correlation between students' learning styles and their speaking achievement. It can be concluded that learning style is the main factor that

determines how and how well the students learn a second or foreign language.

According to the previous explanation, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between students' English learning motivation and English mastery, students' learning styles and English mastery, the relationship between the predictor variables (students' English learning motivation and learning styles) and the criterion variable (students' English mastery), and the contribution of the predictor variables (students' English mastery) to the criterion variable.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In this correlational study, the data were collected through oral test, written test, and questionnaires. A questionnaire about English learning motivation, a questionnaire about learning styles, and an English test were given to 102 senior high school students in Palembang who were taking an English course. Correlational and regression analyses were applied to the data for analysis.

The degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables or scores was described and measured using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Regression analysis was also used to determine the correlation coefficient between the criterion variable and the predictor variables, as well as their contribution to the criterion variable.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The correlation coefficient between English learning motivation total and English mastery total was 0.142 with the significance value 0.157. *r-obtained* (0.142) was less than *r-table* (0.197). It means that there was no significant correlation between English learning motivation and English mastery.

In addition, multiple correlation analysis was conducted to see the correlation between each aspect of English learning motivation and English mastery total and its aspects. The results revealed that English learning motivation was significantly correlated with one of the

aspects of English mastery that was reading with the significance value 0.024. English mastery total had a significant correlation with instrumental motivation because the p-value 0.008 was less than 0.05. Moreover, instrumental motivation was also significantly correlated to some aspects of English mastery such as grammar, reading, writing, and speaking. The significance values were 0.037, 0.007, 0.006, and 0.001 respectively. However, English mastery total was not significantly correlated with the integrative motivation because its p-value 0.414 was more than 0.05.

**Table 1**  
**Correlation between English Learning Motivation and English Mastery (Total)**

		Language Learning Motivation	Instrumental Motivation	Integrative Motivation
<b>English Mastery</b>	<i>r</i>	,142	,282**	,188
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,157	,008	,414
	N	100	88	21
<b>Listening</b>	<i>r</i>	-,030	,047	,294
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,765	,662	,195
	N	100	88	21
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<i>r</i>	-,079	-,012	,135

	Sig. (2-tailed)	,434	,914	,559
	N	100	88	21
<b>Grammar</b>	<i>r</i>	,169	,223*	-,042
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,094	,037	,855
	N	100	88	21
<b>Reading</b>	<i>r</i>	,226*	,286**	,199
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,024	,007	,388
	N	100	88	21
<b>Writing</b>	<i>r</i>	,179	,293**	,126
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,074	,006	,587
	N	100	88	21
<b>Speaking</b>	<i>r</i>	,091	,338**	,235
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,369	,001	,304
	N	100	88	21

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficient between learning styles and English mastery ( $r = -0.059$ ) was lower than the *r* table (0.197). This indicates that there was no significant relationship found between English mastery and learning styles. Further correlation was also applied to see the correlation between learning styles total and the aspects of English mastery and between the aspects of learning styles and

the aspects of English mastery. The results revealed that there were no significant correlations among them.

**Table 2**  
**Correlation between Learning Styles and English Mastery (Total) (N=100 )**

		Learning Styles			
		Learnin g	Auditor y	Visu al	Hapti c
<b>English Mastery</b>	r	-,059	-,123	-,102	-,103
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,559	,410	,764	,433
	N	100	47	11	60
<b>Listening</b>	r	,006	-,214	-,136	-,159
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,953	,148	,690	,224
	N	100	47	11	60
<b>Vocab</b>	r	-,015	-,240	-,116	-,072
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,883	,104	,733	,582
	N	100	47	11	60
<b>Grammar</b>	r	-,092	,023	-,052	-,062
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,362	,880	,879	,637
	N	100	47	11	60
<b>Reading</b>	r	-,170	-,051	-,107	-,045
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,092	,735	,753	,731
	N	100	47	11	60
<b>Writing</b>	r	,093	,106	,049	,135
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,355	,480	,885	,306
	N	100	47	11	60
<b>Speaking</b>	r	-,081	-,259	-,152	-,022
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,423	,079	,656	,866
	N	100	47	11	60

Sig. (2-tailed)	,423	,079	,656	,866
N	100	47	11	60

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In order to see the correlation between predictor variables (English learning motivation and learning styles) and criterion variable (English mastery), linear regression analysis was applied. The results showed that the significance value 0.246 was higher than significant level 0.05. It means that there was no significant correlation between the predictor variables and the criterion variable.

**Table 3**  
**Correlation between Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable (N=102)**

Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
Predictor Variabel and Criterion Variable	,169	,028	,008	1,423	,246

a. Dependent Variable: English mastery

b. Predictors: (Constant); Learning styles, Motivation

Further regression analysis was also applied to determine the contribution of English learning motivation aspects and learning styles aspects to the English mastery. The result showed that

instrumental motivation significantly contributed to English mastery. The adjusted R square was 0.064. It means that the contribution of instrumental motivation to the English mastery was 6.4%. The contribution of instrumental motivation to the English mastery was 6.4%.

**Table 4**  
**The Contribution of Aspects of English Learning**  
**Motivation to Criterion Variable**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
1	.274 <sup>a</sup>	.075	.064	7,128	.009

Dependent Variable: English Mastery

a. Predictors: (Constant) Instrumental motivation

Based on the results of the study, most of the students were categorized in high and moderate. No one was in low and very low categories. In other words, the senior high school students who studies in English course were highly motivated. They came and studied because they wanted to do so. It is worth saying that students' coming to the English course is the impact of the government policy which eliminated the time allocation for the English subject in senior high school. Since then, more senior high school

students tried to find out a place where they can study English more. Considering the importance of mastering English, reducing and eliminating time allocation for English subject at school can influence the students' English achievement. Moreover, the amount of time allocated for learning and the way that time is used have shown consistent links to students performance.

Goyal (2015) defined motivation as the process of initiating, directing, and maintaining behavior that is focused on a goal. It is the most important factor that affects learning, particularly language learning.. Students trusted that they need English as a tool to be used for any purposes related to their study and/or job in the future. The students' high motivation was reflected to their English mastery scores. The mean score of English mastery was 91.53. It was found out that the students performed very well in the test. Most of the students were in very good and

good categories and only few of them were in fair category.

Yu and Downing (2012) divides motivation into two, instrumental and integrative. Integrative motivation means studying a language with the purpose of participating in the culture of its people. In contrast, instrumental motivation is language learning with the intention of dealing with occupation or other motives. From the result of the questionnaire, the mean score of instrumental and integrative motivation were 34.85 and 31.17 respectively. It was found that students had dominant instrumental motivation in English learning. Even though the mean score for instrumental motivation was slightly higher than the mean score for integrative motivation, it was impossible to conclude that they only learned from one motivation. Students might have one dominant but the contribution of another motivation cannot be neglected. Briefly, the students might believe that by learning English, it would be easy for them to

participate in the culture of the people and help them in their study or job in the future.

Meanwhile, the result of learning style questionnaire revealed that the mean score for learning styles (total) was 81.65. Most of students were at high category. The results showed out of 102 students, there were 90 students learned with more than one learning style. The more combination of learning styles they used, the more score they would have. According to Kalayar and Kayalar (2017), the auditory learner is a very good listener who enjoys talking, the visual learner is one who sees visual representations like graphs and pictures, and the haptic learner is one who has the sense of touch or grasp. Based on the findings, 28.73% of the students learned well by using haptic learning style. The haptic student loves to sort things out and will find success with assignments that require him/her to control something. Doodling is a common activity for the haptic learner, who also enjoys

creating art, tracing words, and drawing pictures. The haptic learner enjoys hands-on instruction and disassemble anything just to see how it works. The haptic learners are frequently observed tinkering with various objects. They know how the item works now that they have disassembled it, and they can share what they have learned.

Moreover, there were 27.94% students use auditory style in learning a language. This group of students enjoys listening to music and can learn music by relating a song to a phrase they have memorized. The student with this learning style learns well from lectures and can frequently almost perfectly repeat what is being said.

On the other hand, visual learning is preferred by 24.98% of students. The term visual learner refers to the ability to see graphs and other visual representations. Because of their vivid imagination, visual learners prefer media and visual arts. The visual learner has such a strong

imagination that they can imagine images of a form simply by seeing it. If they don't have something to watch, the visual learner will become bored. The visual learner is usually quiet and doesn't feel like they need to talk for long. The visual learner enjoys visual stimuli like pictures, slides, and graphs and gains a lot of benefit from demonstrations. The haptic learners, on the other hand, are referring to the sense of touch or grasp.

The 2013 curriculum recommends that a scientific approach be used in the learning process. With this approach, it is expected that learning outcomes are more internalized to the students because they do it with a fact-based procedure. It can be believed that a scientific approach can bring success because it is done systematically as scientists find out. Scientific approach is done in several stages, ranging from observing, asking, trying, presenting, summarizing, and creating. Related to the demand of the curriculum, the students are required to be



active in learning English. They experienced learning by doing many hand-on activities. This way, students were accustomed to use their body parts more in learning. Seeing the fact that students had dominant haptic learning style was not surprising as becoming active was the demand in Indonesia learning atmosphere.

There were four skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) and two aspects (grammar and vocabulary) examined in the English test. Among those six aspects of English test, students performed best in Speaking. The mean score of speaking skill was 18.48. Vocabulary was in the second best rank. Its mean score was 15.34. In the third place, it was listening skill, the mean score was 15.22. The next was writing. Its mean score was 15.03. The grammar aspect was on the next rank. The mean score for the grammar was 14.79. On the last rank was reading skill. Its mean score was 14.03.

As Iftanti (2012) reported that the EFL students in Indonesia did not have a

good reading habit. Moreover, Mustafa (2012) highlights that Indonesian people are not reading society. Most of them prefer to speak than to read and write. It was also reflected in PISA 2018 result that the students did not performed well and struggled in their reading literacy even in their own national language. From the results of the English test above, the students need to be exposed with the habit of reading. It is hoped in the future that their reading skill can be improved and they can perform better in terms of reading.

The correlation coefficient between total English learning motivation and total English mastery, calculated using the Pearson Product Moment correlation, was 0.142, with a significance level of 0.157. It was discovered that  $H_0$  failed to reject because the significance level of 0.05 was higher than the significance level of 0.157. It could be concluded that there was no significant link between motivation to

learn English and proficiency in the language.

This is in contrast with the finding of study done by Choosri and Intharaksa (2011) which indicated that there was a positive relationship between students' academic achievement and motivation. Students who are motivated are enthusiastic, eager to put in a lot of effort, able to focus on the tasks at hand, do not require constant encouragement, are willing to take on challenges, and may even be able to inspire others, thereby facilitating collaborative learning.

In addition, a more in-depth examination of the correlations between variables and their aspects was carried out. With a significance value of .024, there was a significant correlation between English learning motivation and reading mastery. Even though there was no significant correlation between the total of English learning motivation and the total of English mastery, instrumental motivation—a component of English

learning motivation—had a significant correlation with the total of English mastery, with a significance level of 0.008. Moreover, instrumental motivation was also correlated to some aspects of English mastery such as grammar, reading, writing, and speaking.

Speaking, writing, and reading were significantly correlated to instrumental motivation. Speaking and reading contributed 10 % and 3.4 % respectively. It might be because of the students were exposed more to those skills when they were learning at the English course. Even though the teachers and students speak in English, the students also need more exposure to the native speakers. That is why when they were in listening test, they did not do well because they did not accustom with the accent and the speed of the native speakers. Moreover, they did not have rich vocabulary. It made them misunderstand what was being conveyed by the native speaker.

This result was in line with the demand of the world globally. Nowadays, communication is a basic need to keep up with the development of the world. Without good skill in communication, people cannot compete with other people from all over the world. In this case, English handles an important role in communication. It is the most dominant language of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The senior high school students in Indonesia generally learn English to get a good job, do the assignments, pass examination, further their education, and etc.

The need for a successful exam and instrumental reasons regarding career opportunities dominated the students' motivation. The students' high integrative and instrumental motivation to learn English was demonstrated by statistical analyses. Although their instrumental motivation was found to be slightly more prominent, their integrative and instrumental motivational levels were fairly comparable. These results could be

attributed to students' awareness of the significance of English as a career tool and their belief that language proficiency would assist them in securing the ideal job in the future. Understudies apparent well that realizing English would improve their insight when they looked for data on the web or when they attempted further investigations. This demonstrates that English proficiency is a crucial factor in employment in this nation. English has been in high demand in the labor market as a result of Indonesia's rapid economic development in recent years and foreign investments. Those who have completed their education in a field that requires a high level of English proficiency, such as business, education, or science and technology, may have an easier time finding employment than those whose English language skills are illiterate. Students may find this to be an important factor in their desire to learn.

The correlation analysis between total English mastery and learning styles

revealed a significance level of 0.559 that was greater than 0.05. Therefore, the findings demonstrated that  $H_0$  failed to reject, indicating that there was no significant relationship between English mastery and learning styles. In addition, correlation revealed that none of the learning styles had a significant correlation with English mastery.

The coefficient correlation between learning styles and English mastery was -0.059. The result showed a negative correlation between learning styles and English mastery. It could be concluded that both of the variables did not have direct relationship. When the value of learning styles rises, the value of English mastery goes down and applied vice versa. The study also reveals that the participants used different learning styles or preferences for learning and there was no right or wrong classifications as everyone used the appropriate learning style that brought some degree of learning as an outcome at the end. Further correlation was

also applied to see the correlation between learning styles total and the aspects of English mastery and between the aspects of learning styles and the aspects of English mastery. The results revealed that there were no significant correlations among them.

In general, people are tempted to suggest that someone might be good at listening if they have an auditory learning style. In addition, if a student's learning style is primarily visual, he or she is probably good at reading. A dictum states that correlation does not necessarily indicate causation. As a result, no causal relationship between variables can be established using correlation. The existence of relationships between variables in the correlation of the underlying aspects may be unknown or indirect. As a result, establishing a correlation with the investigated variables will not provide sufficient conditions for establishing causal relationships between them. However, this does not preclude the

use of correlation as evidence of causality between variables. Correlation can be used to show that there is a possibility of a causal relationship, but it can't tell you what a causal relationship is unless it occurs with the variables being studied. In conclusion, students' English proficiency was influenced by a variety of factors, not just their learning styles.

Linear regression analyses were used to examine the relationship between the criterion variable (English mastery) and the predictor variables (English learning motivation and learning styles). The outcome revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.169 and a significance level of 0.246 between the total of the predictor variables and the total of the criterion variables. This indicates that  $H_0$  failed a rejection. To put it succinctly, there was not a significant correlation between the criterion variable and the predictor variables. It suggested that the students' English mastery would not be significantly affected by their motivation or learning styles.

According to the findings of Yufrizal et al., (2015) study on the relationship between motivation and learning styles and students' English achievement, there is no significant interaction between the two. This indicates that the combination of motivation and learning styles cannot differentiate between students with high and low achievement levels. English proficiency did not differ between students with different motivations or learning styles.

Although there was no significant correlation between English learning motivation and English mastery, English learning styles, and English mastery, predictor variables, or criterion variables, additional regression analysis was still required to determine the contribution of English learning motivation aspects to English mastery and the contribution of English learning styles aspects to English mastery. It was discovered that English proficiency was significantly aided by one aspect of learning motivation. The

contribution of instrumental motivation to English mastery was 6.4%. However, the outcome demonstrated that none of the learning styles significantly influenced English mastery.

It can be deduced that students can better acquire English mastery when their instrumental motivation increases, resulting in higher English mastery. However, as their instrumental motivation dwindled, so did their English proficiency. Thus, students' proficiency in English was aided by integrative motivations.

## CONCLUSION

Some conclusions can be drawn from the result of the study. First, there was no significant correlation between English learning motivation and English mastery of senior high school students taking an English course in Palembang. However, one of aspects of English learning motivation, instrumental motivation, was significantly correlated to English mastery and some aspects of it. Second, there was no significant correlation between learning

styles and English mastery of senior high school students taking an English course in Palembang. Third, there was no significant correlation between predictor variables (English learning motivation and learning style) and criterion variable (English mastery). Fourth, predictor variables did not significantly contributed to the criterion variable. However, instrumental motivation significantly contributed to the English mastery.

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