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## Decoding Teaching Styles of Language Lecturers

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### Abstract

Teaching styles refer to approaches an educator uses to impart knowledge to students. There are various teaching styles educators can use either as a single style or a combination of more than one. Different styles are used to ensure different students' needs can be catered. This depends on the nature of subject matter, the goals of the lesson and the needs of the students. Even though teaching styles have been discussed for many years, little attention has been given to teaching styles among language lecturers at higher learning. This research aims to identify the different teaching styles among language lecturers, and which of the teaching styles is the most dominant for each lecturer. The instrument was adapted from the Grasha-Riechmann Teaching Styles Questionnaire (1996), which measures five teaching styles such as Personal Model Teaching Style, Expert Teaching Style, Formal Authority Teaching Style, Delegator Teaching Style, and Facilitator Teaching Style. Findings showed that there is a significant difference between genders only for formal teaching style and the most dominant teaching style is facilitator. These findings have brought up a better understanding of teaching styles among language lecturers.

**Keywords:** Teaching Styles, Language Lecturers, Grasha-Riechmann Teaching Style.

### Introduction

Changes have inevitably appeared in educational environments very rampantly these days. Educators need to address this issue to ensure they can keep up with the changes. Many scholars agree that the quality of teaching and training has a great impact on enhancing the motivation, vitality, innovation, and efficiency of a teacher (Mahmoodabad et al., 2010). It is understood that there is no single perfect teaching style. However, those who are aware of their practical style can take full advantage of what it offers while at the same time taking precautions on its disadvantages. Therefore, transitioning from standardized learning environments to environments that consider the different learning needs of students has become a significant issue in today's educational establishments.

The teaching style is the way a teacher teaches with distinctive mannerisms, complemented by choices of teaching behaviours and strategies. This can change, intentionally or unintentionally, as a result of the change that occurs to the teacher in different areas (Kellough & Roberts, 1994). Some of the changes are due to teachers trying to adapt to new demands in the teaching profession.

The Japanese have followed the motto of “Adopt, Adapt and Adept” to localize and improve certain aspects of life. The history goes back to the idea that they send their people to other developed countries, have them learn the best practices and bring back the knowledge to their country. This is how they contribute to the efficiency of their nation. This concept is similar when it comes to education, especially in the teaching styles. Teachers must be ready to understand the new needs of the education and later decide whether to adopt, adapt, adept or even a mix of these concepts into their teaching so that they will not be left behind and students’ needs can be catered.

This research adapted the Grasha (1994, 2002) teaching style which describes different ways teachers approach their roles in the classroom and interact with students. There are five different styles suggested by Grasha which are expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, and delegator. Each of these has its own characteristics which shape how a lecturer delivers his or her teaching.

### **Problem Statement**

In educational institutions, emphasis is laid on training teachers for many reasons, for example, effective classroom management as well as effective content delivery. Despite frequent personal development training of teachers, teachers are unaware of what teaching styles they have been using in class. When teachers are aware of their own teaching style (or styles), it can help them improve their teaching methods, by designing the course to increase student engagement and, ultimately, enhance student outcomes. This can be done once the teachers understand the advantages and disadvantages of the teaching style they uphold. Later on, they can also explore other teaching styles of their preference to broaden their teaching delivery.

This research is conducted as very few studies have addressed language educators’ individual teaching styles. Past literature showed research on teaching styles involves educators from other faculties, not language. Moreover, previous literature indicates that teaching styles can make an important difference to students’ learning performance (Centra & Potter, 1980; McDaniel, 1981; Wentzel, 2002). Thus, it is apparent that this research is significant to be conducted.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- 1) To identify the different teaching styles among language lecturers
- 2) To identify the dominant teaching styles among language lecturers

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the teaching styles applied by language lecturers?
2. Which of the following teaching styles is the dominant style of teaching?

### **Literature Review**

There are many teaching styles that can be used in language teaching, depending on the needs of the instructors and learners, as well as the context and demand of the learning environment. The teaching styles are the pattern of belief, knowledge, performance and behavior of teachers when they are teaching. Hurriyetoglu and Kilicoglu (2020) referred

teaching styles to the attitudes and behaviors that teachers exhibit in the teaching process constitute the style of the teacher.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, teaching refers to how a person imparts knowledge to or instructs (someone) as to how to do something. Style on the other hand refers to a particular procedure by which something is done, a manner or way. Teaching styles, also sometimes referred to teaching approaches, are described as the general principles, educational, and management strategies for classroom instruction (Tharanky, 2015). Teaching style is a phrase sometimes used to describe different things. Although some authors use it as if it is synonymous with teaching method or technique, most researchers who have defined teaching style refer to style as a predilection toward teaching behavior and the congruence between an educator's teaching behaviors and teaching beliefs (Heimlich & Norland, 1994, 2002). Therefore, teaching style can be defined as how a person imparts knowledge in a particular manner or way. Blazar (2016) believes that any style used by teachers in presenting their lessons is vital as it can result in the students liking the lessons or not.

There are many previous studies discussing different teaching styles among educators from different fields. One study by Shaari et al (2014) at University of Malaya showed that teachers often use personal model and expert styles, and delegator style was the least used. Another study by Razeghinejad et al (2010) demonstrated a different finding that the teaching style of the faculty of Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences mostly employed expert and delegator styles and followed by personal model and facilitator styles.

A study by Azizi et al (2014) at Urmia Medical University showed that teaching styles are related to the social adjustment of students. This is in line with Zhou (2011) who believes how much a student can learn is determined by not only their learning styles but also the teacher's teaching style. Even though many studies have been conducted on teaching styles, not that many focus on language teachers or instructors. It is then crucial to delve into this matter as it has been discovered that the success of a lesson can be determined by these two factors.

Grasha and Hicks (2000) believe that to guarantee the effectiveness of teaching and learning, teaching styles need to be considered as an important element in a lesson. Tharanky (2015) agrees with this idea as she sums up previous research (Felder, 1996; Hsueh-Yu Cheng & Banya, 1998; Reid, 1987) that found evidence of a mismatch between teaching styles of teacher and students' learning preferences may lead to detrimental effects on students' learning interest.

It is generally understood that a positive teaching environment will result in better knowledge acquisition by the students (Soloman & Felder, 2005). Therefore, due to the importance of teaching style, it is necessary to conduct research to raise awareness of the individuality of the teaching styles posed by language lecturers to ensure they understand the advantages and disadvantages of each style when used in the classroom.

Grasha teaching style survey is a self-assessment tool designed to help teachers identify their teaching styles employed in class. There are five dimensions of teaching styles which are the expert style, formal authority style, personal model style, delegator style and facilitator style. Each teaching style offers advantages and disadvantages, highlighting the importance of considering the context and students' needs when choosing an appropriate approach. The diagram below summarizes the five teaching styles with their advantages and disadvantages.

Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The teacher possesses knowledge and expertise, ensuring students are well prepared.</li> <li>•However, their display of knowledge can intimidate inexperienced students at all times.</li> </ul>
Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The teacher establishes clear expectations and guidelines, emphasizing standard ways of doing things.</li> <li>•However, this style can lead to rigid management and limit student autonomy.</li> </ul>
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The teacher sets an example for thinking and behavior, providing hands-on guidance.</li> <li>•However, some students may feel inadequate if they can't meet the teacher's expectations.</li> </ul>
Facilitator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The teacher guides students through questioning, exploration, and support, focusing on students' needs and encouraging independent thinking.</li> <li>•However, this style can be time consuming and may not be effective in all situations.</li> </ul>
Delegator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The teacher fosters autonomy by allowing independent work and providing support.</li> <li>•However, misjudging students' readiness for independence can causing anxiety in some students are potential drawbacks.</li> </ul>

Adapted from Grasha (1994)

### Methodology

The quantitative research approach includes the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe and generalize conditions, investigate relationships, and study the cause-effect of phenomena. Demographic information of the participants such as age and years of service were obtained through self-developed demographics questions. The population of this research is 40 language lecturers from Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Cawangan Terengganu. These lecturers teach different language courses from English, Arabic, French and Mandarin. The sample for this study was 39 out of 40 lecturers under Academy of Language Studies using convenience sampling where each participant voluntarily wanted to be part of the research. To investigate the teaching styles of these language lecturers, Grasha–Riechmann Teaching Style Survey culturally adapted and distributed to the lecturers via Google Forms. The questionnaire items were revised and modified to investigate the teaching styles when conducting a language class. None of the 40 questionnaire items was rejected and the items of the are broken into five sections that include the questions of Expert method, Formal authority (8 items), Personal model (8 items), Facilitator (8 items) and Delegator (8 items). Likert scales statements are used to range lecturers' preferences of an item in the questionnaire in that the scales range from completely agree to completely disagree. The questions are ranked from 1 (extremely disagree) to 5 (extremely agree). The total score of each segment was partitioned to 8 as per the questionnaire index in each teaching method.

**Result and Discussion****Demographic Profiles**

Demographic profile	N	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	26	66.67
Male	13	33.33
<b>Years of Experience</b>		
Less than 5 years	11	28.2
5 - 10 years	5	12.8
10 - 15 years	9	23.1
15 - 20 years	5	12.8
More than 20 years	9	23.1
<b>Academic Qualification</b>		
Bachelor Degree	9	23.1
Master's Degree	28	71.8
PhD	2	5.1

Table 1 illustrates the demography of the respondents for this research. From a total of 39 language lecturers teaching different language courses identified, 26 of them are females while the rest are males. Majority of the respondents (11) have less than 5 years of teaching experience. The highest academic degree the respondents pose is master's degree.

**RO 1:** To identify the different teaching styles among language lecturers according to genders

Gender difference

T-Test was used to identify if there is any significant difference between the genders of the respondents in regards to their teaching styles.

**Group Statistics**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
EXPERT	Female	26	4.2452	.25856	.05071
	Male	13	4.3750	.40182	.11144
FORMAL	Female	26	3.7692	.37029	.07262
	Male	13	4.1250	.48143	.13352
PERSONAL	Female	26	4.3173	.32448	.06364
	Male	13	4.4712	.41819	.11598
FASILITATOR	Female	26	3.9471	.44746	.08775
	Male	13	4.0288	.48988	.13587
DELEGATOR	Female	26	3.9471	.44746	.08775
	Male	13	4.0288	.48988	.13587

**Independent Samples Test**

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper

EXPERT	Equal variances assumed	3.129	.085	-1.224	37	.229	-.12981	.10608	-.34476	.08514
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.060	17.130	.304	-.12981	.12244	-.38798	.12836
FORMAL	Equal variances assumed	.510	.480	-2.557	37	.015	-.35577	.13915	-.63772	-.07382
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.341	19.337	.030	-.35577	.15199	-.67352	-.03802
PERSONAL	Equal variances assumed	2.158	.150	-1.267	37	.213	-.15385	.12146	-.39995	.09226
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.163	19.465	.259	-.15385	.13229	-.43029	.12260
FASILITATOR	Equal variances assumed	.108	.744	-.521	37	.605	-.08173	.15681	-.39946	.23600
	Equal variances not assumed			-.505	22.242	.618	-.08173	.16174	-.41695	.25349



DELEGATOR	Equal variances assumed	.108	.744	-.521	37	.605	-.08173	.15681	-.39946	.23600
	Equal variances not assumed			-.505	22.242	.618	-.08173	.16174	-.41695	.25349

There is a significant difference in formal teaching style among gender. The Sig. (2-Tailed) value in the table is 0.015 and this value is less than .05. Because of this, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean number of formal teaching styles for male lecturers and female lecturers. Since the statistics table revealed that the mean for males was greater (4.1250) than the mean for females (3.6792), this finding can conclude that participants from most male lecturers significantly employed a formal teaching style than female lecturers. This finding is similar to Faruji (2012) where it was found that more males teaching English employed a similar teaching style.

**RO 2:** To identify the dominant teaching styles among language lecturers

Table 2

*Dominant Teaching Style*

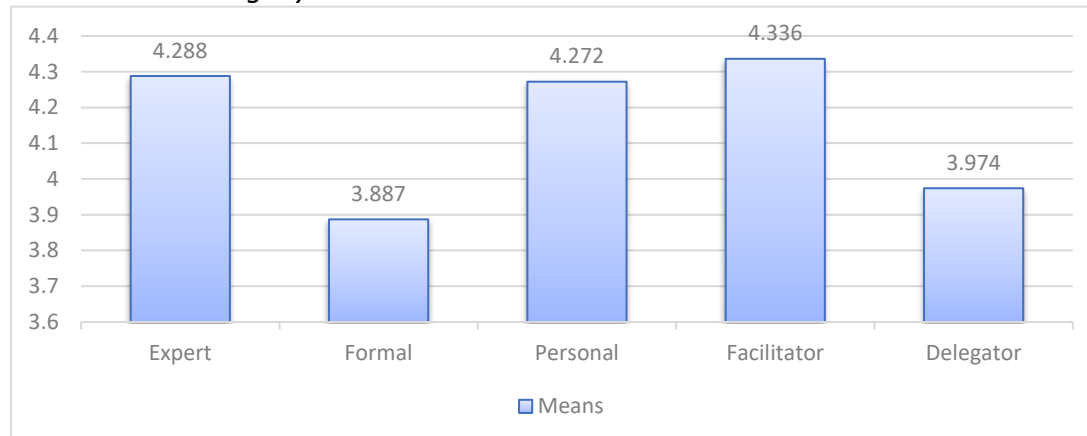


Table 2 above shows the most dominant teaching style among respondents are Facilitator with mean score 4.336 followed by Expert (4.288) and Personal (4.727). Whereby the least dominant teaching styles are Formal and Delegator with each mean scores are 3.887 and 3.974 respectively. The full analysis of each item is placed in Appendix 1. One study by Durmus and Given (2020) indicated that most English teaching staff at Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages (AUSFL), Turkey employ a facilitator teaching style, followed by personal. It is difficult to compare with other findings as not many studies were conducted to identify teaching styles specifically among language educators.

**Conclusion**

Among all five teaching styles, there is only one significant teaching style between male and female lecturers which is Formal Authority Style. The finding concluded that the former

applies more to the teaching style. Nonetheless, both genders showed no significant differences for the other four teaching styles and a study done by Norzila et al. (2007) showed that students preferred Formal Authority Style the least among ESP lecturers. Even though the study was done to investigate the students' preferences on ESP lecturers, the finding of this current study should be taken into consideration because some of the male respondents are teaching English courses, and this could affect the students' attention and interest as well as their motivation in the language class.

However, the dominant lecturers' practised teaching style is Facilitator followed by Expert and Personal. This finding is similar to the study by Norzila et al (2007) whereby the students' most preferred teaching style is Facilitator. This shows that the current practice by the language lecturers in the Academy of Language Studies of UiTMCT suits the students' preferences.

Regardless of the findings, the study acknowledges the lecturers in identifying areas for improvement and provides insights into how they can adjust their teaching style to better meet the needs of their students. Inayat and Ali (2020) also highlight the importance of realizing and being aware that teaching style is crucial in ensuring student engagement in a lesson. "If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn". As sensible as this statement by Ignacio Estrada sounds, it is infrequently put into action.

Therefore, it is suggested that for future study to focus on the relationship between the teaching style and students' preferences. This could offer more understanding in improvising the teaching method and leveraging the teaching and learning engagement between lecturers and students.

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**Appendix 1**

Language lecturer teaching styles analysis according to items. 7

<b>DOMAINS AND ITEMS</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>MINIMUM</b>	<b>MAXIMUM</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>STD. DEV.</b>
<b>EXPERT</b>					
1. Facts, concepts, and principles are the most important things that students should acquire in the subject I am teaching.	39	3.00	5.00	4.4615	.60027
6. It is very important to me to share my knowledge and expertise on the subjects that I am teaching with the students.	39	4.00	5.00	4.8462	.36552
11. What I have to say about a topic is important for students to acquire a broader perspective on the issues of the subject being taught.	39	4.00	5.00	4.3846	.49286
16. I want students to believe that this course will make them well prepared for future language courses.	39	3.00	5.00	4.6410	.53740
21. Lecturing is a significant part of how I teach each of the class sessions.	39	1.00	5.00	4.1795	1.12090
26. My expertise is typically used to resolve any issues in the subject that I am teaching.	39	4.00	5.00	4.5128	.50637
31. Students might describe me as a "storehouse of knowledge" who dispenses the fact, principles, and concepts they need regarding the subject taught.	39	2.00	5.00	3.7436	.84970
36. There is more material in the subjects that I am teaching than I have time available to cover it.	39	1.00	5.00	3.5385	.96916
Valid N (listwise)	39			4.288	
<b>2. FORMAL</b>					
2. I set high standards for students in my class to ensure they meet the objectives I set.	39	2.00	5.00	3.8974	.96777

7. I give students negative feedback(s) when their performance in the subject that I am teaching is unsatisfactory.	39	1.00	5.00	2.5897	1.40896
12. Students would describe my standards and expectations on the subject taught as somewhat strict and rigid.	39	1.00	5.00	2.8718	1.17383
17. It is my responsibility to define what students must learn in the subject I am teaching and how they should learn it.	39	2.00	5.00	4.1538	1.06471
22. I provide very clear guidelines for how I want tasks completed for the subject that I am teaching.	39	4.00	5.00	4.5897	.49831
27. The subjects I am teaching have very specific goals and objectives that I want to accomplish.	39	3.00	5.00	4.3846	.63310
32. My expectations for what I want students to do in my classes are clearly defined in the syllabus.	39	2.00	5.00	4.3846	.67338
37. My standards and expectations help students develop the discipline they need to learn.	39	3.00	5.00	4.2308	.53614
Valid N (listwise)	39			3.887	
<b>3. PERSONAL</b>					
3. What I say and do model appropriate ways for students to think about issues in the content of the subject I am teaching.	39	3.00	5.00	4.3590	.53740
8. Activities that I conduct in the class encourage students to develop their own ideas about issues of the subject taught.	39	3.00	5.00	4.3333	.62126
13. I typically show students how and what to do in order to master the course content of the subject I am teaching.	39	1.00	5.00	4.5128	.79046

18. Examples from my personal experiences often are used to illustrate points about the subject I am teaching .	39	2.00	5.00	4.3077	.76619
23. I often show students how they can understand the various principles and concepts in the subject they are learning.	39	2.00	5.00	4.4359	.64051
28. Students from my classes receive frequent verbal and/or written comments on their performance.	39	3.00	5.00	4.3846	.59007
33. Eventually, many students begin to think like me when it comes to the course content of the subject taught.	39	2.00	5.00	3.6923	.83205
38. Students might describe me as a "coach" who works closely with someone to correct problems in how they think and behave regarding the subject that I am teaching.	39	2.00	5.00	4.1538	.70854
Valid N (listwise)	39			4.272	
<b>4. FACILITATOR</b>					
4. My teaching goals and methods address a variety of student learning styles.	39	2.00	5.00	4.4615	.68234
9. I spend time consulting with students on how to improve their work on individual and/or group projects.	39	3.00	5.00	4.6410	.53740
14. Small group discussions are employed to help students develop their ability to think critically in the subject I am teaching.	39	3.00	5.00	4.5128	.60139
19. I guide students' work on projects of the subject I am teaching by asking questions, exploring options, and suggesting alternative ways to do things.	39	3.00	5.00	4.5641	.55226
24. Activities that I conduct in class encourage students to take initiative and responsibility for their learning.	39	3.00	5.00	4.3846	.63310

29. I solicit students' advice about how and what to teach in the subjects assigned to me.	39	2.00	5.00	3.8718	.92280
34. Students can make choices among activities I bring to the class in order to complete course requirements.	39	1.00	5.00	3.7179	.94448
39. I give students a lot of personal support and encouragement to do well in the subject that I am teaching.	39	2.00	5.00	4.5385	.64262
Valid N (listwise)	39			4.336	
<b>5. DELEGATOR</b>					
5. Students typically work on course projects or assignments with little supervision from me.	39	1.00	5.00	3.0513	1.27628
10. Activities that I conducted in this class encourage students to develop their own ideas about the content issues in the subject that they are learning.	39	3.00	5.00	4.4103	.63734
15. Students are able to design self-directed learning experiences in the subject I am teaching.	39	1.00	5.00	4.0769	1.01007
20. Developing the ability of students to think and work independently in the subject I am teaching is an important goal.	39	3.00	5.00	4.5385	.60027
25. Students can take responsibility for teaching part of the class sessions.	39	2.00	5.00	4.0000	.88852
30. Students set their own pace for completing independent and/or group projects.	39	1.00	5.00	3.7436	1.04423
35. My approach to teaching is similar to a manager of a work group who delegates tasks and responsibilities to subordinates.	39	1.00	5.00	3.5128	1.18925

<b>40. I assume the role of a resource person who is available to students whenever they need help on the subject that they are learning with me.</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>4.4615</b>	<b>.82226</b>
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>	<b>39</b>			<b>3.974</b>	