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Organizing the classes considering the students' learning styles.

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Abstract: The article highlights the information about the learning styles that the students employ in their learning process and their types. As individuals are different from each other in their character they have different learning styles one of which dominates the other. Identifying their learning style and using it will help them to acquire the subject without much effort. In the article some techniques are suggested for the teachers and students within 4 learning styles and they will be helpful to organize their teaching and learning routines.

Key words: learning styles, visual, auditory, kinesthetic, gesture, postures, socratic seminar, speech, debate.

In every human being, a person already had his/her characteristic; this kind of personality makes he/she differs from each other. Some experts define those things as individual differences (Ellis, 1989; Skehan, 1991; Ortega, 2013). Those differences have their impact on education, which is they will learn something in a different way and will affect how well they will gain knowledge.

Two factors affected the learning achievement, which are the external factors and internal factors (Lightbown et al., 1999). External factors refer to those that characterize the particular language learning situation such as curriculum, instruction, access to the native speaker, culture, and status while internal factors are those that the learner brings to the learning situation such as language aptitude, personality, learning styles, motivation, learning strategies, and multi-intelligence.

By discovering and better understanding your students' learning styles, you can employ techniques that will improve the rate and quality of your learning. There has been a big push in education in recent years on how teachers can better meet the needs of the students, and a very effective way to do that is to learn about different learning styles. The more teachers understand their students and the way their brains work, the better they can be at helping them learn

For teachers who already have a lot on their plate, it can seem like a lot to add in adjusting instruction for different learning styles. The great benefit teachers will find though is that once they master ways to appeal to all learners, their lives actually become a lot easier. Catering to different learning styles can improve classroom management, and it makes for happier students in the classroom. The chatty student who is constantly interrupting will finally have a positive place in

the classroom. The quiet girl who knows all the answers but never raises her hand will feel confident in sharing her knowledge.

With so many studies on learning styles, there are a lot of theories about how many learning styles there are and what each one should be called. One of the most influential studies found three learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. This was called the VAK model. Since that study, another dominant style has been identified as reading/writing, and the model was expanded to become VARK.

The VARK Model

The most widely accepted model of learning styles is called the VARK model, which stands for visual, aural/auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic. In brief:

- **Visual** (spacial) learners learn best by seeing
- **Auditory** (aural) learners learn best by hearing
- **Reading/writing** learners learn best by reading and writing
- **Kinesthetic** (physical) learners learn best by moving and doing

According to Neil Fleming and David Baume, it's important for teachers to understand how their students learn, but it's even more important for students to understand how they, themselves learn. By understanding your own process of learning and thinking, you can be more efficient in studying and learning.

It can be really frustrating for students to sit in a classroom and not understand why they just don't get it. It can also be frustrating to be able to learn perfectly well from one teacher, but struggle to learn from another. Once your students understand how and why they learn the way you do, their education can vastly improve. They can stop feeling dumb and getting frustrated, and they can start to advocate for themselves and their education.

When it is about visual learners they can remember and learn what they see the most. This could include videos and pictures, but it doesn't have to. Visual learners do well with spatial reasoning, charts, graphs, etc. Often, visual learners "see" words as pictures or other objects in their head, and they often use their right brain to process information.

One of the many benefits of being a visual learner is that the human brain processes visual information much faster than plain text. As a visual learner, the students can take in and retain a lot of information really quickly because they prefer this processing method that humans are already very good at.

When studying and learning, visual learners prefer the use of maps, outlines, diagrams, charts, graphs, designs, and patterns. When taking notes, these students are more likely to organize their notes into visual patterns. They might use charts or diagrams; they might separate their page of notes into different sections. Many visual learners also do well with color coding their notes with different colored pens or highlighters.

It's also easy for visual learners to get overwhelmed by a lot of visual input. If the classroom setting is chaotic with a lot of students moving around, it might be too much for them to take in. The design of your classroom is also very important to visual learners. If there is a lot of clutter or too many posters adorning the walls, this can overwhelm the mind and processing of a visual learner.

For some visual learners, it also could actually be helpful for them to pay careful attention to your movements. They might remember the silly hand motion you made or the way you pointed to a country on the map. Keeping that in mind when delivering your lessons can be very helpful.

Lesson ideas to help visual learners

- **Use colors.** Just like these learners tend to color code things themselves, it can be really helpful for them if you color code your notes as you write them or post them. As a homework or in class assignment, you could have students annotate/read actively, and use different colors for different things you want them to look for. For example, they could highlight dates in blue and names in yellow.
- **Draw reasoning.** In math, teach students how to draw out their reasoning (rather than verbally explaining).
- **Use gestures.** As you're teaching, be aware of your body language. If you include gestures and hand motions when you speak, it will help your visual learners pay attention and make connections.
- **Posters.** As a project or class assignment, students can make posters illustrating key concepts. Once finished, they could even present their posters to the class, which would appeal to auditory learners. You can also hang these posters on the wall when students are done as decorations and to help drive home important topics. Just remember to cover them up or take them down during assessments if they give away too much information.
- **Charts and graphs.** Use technology to help students visually see information by creating charts and graphs. This is often used in a math and science setting, but can be used in other disciplines as well. For example, in gym class, students could keep track of how many push ups, sit ups, etc. they can do and then you can create a class chart or graph with the data.
- **Draw the text.** In the language arts classroom, pick out a portion of the text with especially vivid imagery. Instruct students to draw a picture of what the

writing describes. This helps students with close reading and understanding of the text.

Auditory Learners

Auditory learners learn best by hearing and carefully listening. This can include hearing things from external sources, as well as hearing themselves talk. They are very likely to volunteer to answer questions and to actively participate in classroom discussions.

Auditory learners have a great advantage in the classroom because they're not afraid to speak their mind and get answers to their questions. While reading/writing learners might not even realize they have a question until they've had time to go back and process their notes, auditory learners learn by listening and speaking, so they process through information very easily right there in the classroom.

These students might also tend to get chatty during class. This can be great when you're trying to get a lively class discussion or debate going, but not so great when you need the class to listen intently to you. Instead of getting frustrated and angry, remember that this is how their brain works and how they learn. As much as you can and as much as is practical for your subject matter, try to facilitate discussions and play into this rather than squashing it.

- **Audiobook.** Give students the option to listen to an audiobook- this can be effective with novels as well as textbooks.
- **Socratic Seminar.** This is a type of discussion where the students lead the discussion. The teacher provides some topics to talk about, and then the students take over. By sitting in a circle and having a more laid back atmosphere, more students are likely to join in the conversation. Often auditory learners tend to lead these discussions, and it gives them a chance to shine and be rewarded for their talking that can get them in trouble in other situations.
- **Speeches.** The often hated, but necessary, school assignment that many students dread is actually often a favorite of auditory learners. This type of assignment is where auditory learners feel in their element. Speeches can be short and impromptu or long and planned, and they can be done in any subject.
- **Record notes.** You can either record yourself speaking or give your students permission to record during your lectures so that they can go back and listen. You can also encourage students to record themselves reading their own notes.
- **Text to speech.** This is something students can do on their own, but they might need your prompting or feel better about doing it if you give them permission. When writing essays, students can use speech to text to capture their thoughts. It can also be beneficial to then use text to speech to proofread and catch errors.
- **Debate.** A structured debate is a really beneficial way for auditory learners to get their ideas across. This can be done at all grade levels and in all disciplines.

Reading/Writing Learners

Reading/writing learners learn best by, well, reading and writing. They often relate to the famous Flannery O'Connor quote "I write because I don't know what I think until I read what I say." Verbal input can often go in one ear and out the other for these types of learners. For them, seeing notes on the board or on a PowerPoint is really important, as is taking their own notes.

These students learn best from books, lists, notes, journals, dictionaries, etc. Some things these students might do to intuitively help themselves learn are rewriting their notes, using flash cards, adding notes to pictures or diagrams, choosing a physical book over an audiobook, and using closed captions on videos.

Every teacher has had that student who needs more time before you move on to the next slide, even though you're done explaining and all the other students are ready to move on. A reading/writing learner is most likely that student, and when you understand their learning style it's easier to cut them a little slack. Sometimes they struggle to get all their notes down because they are trying to write down every single thing you say. You can really help them by working with them to pull out the most important parts of your lecture and to paraphrase what they hear.

Lesson ideas to help reading/writing learners

- **Handouts.** No matter what your lesson is about, one of the best things you can do to help reading/writing learners is provide handouts highlighting the most important information. It's also important to give these learners enough time to write detailed notes. Providing handouts or guided notes can help these learners have enough time to get down all the information.
- **Essays and reading assignments.** These simple, traditional assignments often work best for reading/writing learners. This is why this learning style often thrives in the traditional classroom setting.
- **Vocabulary stories.** Have students create stories or plays to make their vocabulary words more fun and interesting. This can be done in any subject area that has vocabulary words. You can give students a topic or let them be creative, but all they have to do is write a story containing x number of their vocabulary words. You can also extend this activity to help kinesthetic learners by having students act out their stories for the class.
- **Think, pair, share.** Reading/writing learners often struggle with sharing their thoughts out loud. Those students who ace every test but freeze when you call on them in class are likely reading/writing learners. Think, pair, share can really help give them confidence to verbalize their thoughts. This, again, can be done with any age group and in any subject area. First, ask students an open ended question and give them time to silently think and write their answers. Then, have students pair up in small groups to share their answers. Finally, open the discussion to the whole class. Often when you just ask a question and want

students to respond right away, you'll only get answers from the auditory learners because they are the quickest at verbal processing. This method though gives the reading/writing learners time to process in their own way and gives them time and confidence to construct a verbal response.

Kinesthetic learners

How to recognize kinesthetic learners in your class: Kinesthetic learners, sometimes called tactile learners, learn through experiencing or doing things. They like to get involved by acting out events or using their hands to touch and handle in order to understand concepts. These types of learners might struggle to sit still and often excel at sports or like to dance. They may need to take more frequent breaks when studying.

How to cater to kinesthetic learners: The best way teachers can help these students learn is by getting them moving. Instruct students to act out a certain scene from a book or a lesson you're teaching. Also try encouraging these students by incorporating movement into lessons: pacing to help memorize, learning games that involve moving around the classroom or having students write on the whiteboard as part of an activity.

Once kinesthetic learners can physically sense what they're studying, abstract ideas and difficult concepts become easier to understand.

In conclusion to promote equity in the classroom, it is the responsibility as teachers and learning facilitators to reach every child regardless of ability and learning preference. Using various teaching strategies that accommodate the different learning styles have proven effective in both achievement and behavior (Searson & Dunn, 2001). Embracing the fact that all children learn differently and applying this knowledge might produce better teachers and students with higher order thinking skills. So the class should cover different activities that appeal to each learning style to meet their needs and maintain the students' learning.

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