

A Novice Teacher's Learning Styles and Student-teacher Development

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Abstract: This paper sets out to describe the practical classroom ideas and the theories novice teachers are remarkably require to successfully dealwith their classes particularly the question of styles of learning. The material gathered to inform the current paper has been taken from observing the behavior beginner teachers while imparting knowledge to their students. Some of the disciplines they actually need are essential knowledge of grammar, vocabulary phonetics and phonology to help with pronunciation. The needs of teachers who work with young learners are of course different from those who work with adults. There are of course intersecting areas required with equivalent degree of urgency for both. These areas are linked with planning and preparation. Beginner teachers should work actively to become acquainted with teaching technical terms such as peer teaching, pair work and cooperative learning. Teaching a reading comprehension passage is of course not the same as teaching dialogues. This is an area novice teachers have to pay special attention to.

Keywords: novice, practical imparting intersecting, cooperative learning, styles of learning

1. INTRODUCTION

The process of learning is viewed differently by different people. In that they opt for the best way that suits their personalities and socio cultural backgrounds. This approach to learning is generally known as the learning style. A beginner teacher has to know something about the different learning styles as this will help them approach their classes effectively. The term 'learning style' however extends over such wide area of investigation covers a widerange of approaches, models, theories and methods which are outside the scope of this paper. An important point to note is that learning styles –their validity and usefulness is much disputed and has no scientific basis. However, in this paper we explore ways for helping teachersto take learner differences into consideration when planning classroom tasks and activities. An appreciation of learning styles will help to ensure that teachers include a range of activitiesand vary techniques in their lessons to ensure all learners are engaged.



It is generally believed that almost all students learning styles can be thought of as falling in one of three categories: **Visual Learners, Auditory Learners and Kinesthetic Learners**. Neil Fleming, an educational theorist developed a model of students learning styles which comes to be known as Neil

Fleming's VARK model of Student Learning. The range of theories intended to describe individuals' learning are referred to as learning styles. Despite the fact that there is substantial proof those individuals express their preferences over the question of their learning the thing which prompted many educators to articulate dissatisfaction with the validity of learning styles in education.

Though numerous theories do agree that students can be categorized according to their style of learning they do differ over the issue of classifying, defining and assessing the styles. Hence, the widely acceptable concept is that different students learn differently.

The issue of personal learning styles which became renowned in 1970s has to a great extent influenced education though harshly been criticized by a number of researchers. Those who dwell with the theory as acceptable proposed that tutors have to conduct a kind of needs analysis to determine the learning styles of their students and hence adjust their classroom techniques and methods in the manner that suits best each student's learning style.

In education, as early as 2012, learning styles have repeatedly been referred to as a "neuromyth". It was proved that there are empirical as well as pedagogical hurdles linked with introducing learning tasks to "correspond to differences in a one-to-one fashion". In that rigorous research oppose the "meshing hypothesis" students are likely to learn best if taught through the principles of a method probably suitable to their learning styles. Nevertheless, the majority of educators across the globe in an interview in 2020 would still believe the validity of the "meshing hypothesis".

Research proved that teachers are not in a position due to number of factors to evaluate the learning styles of their students precisely. An experiment was conducted where numerous students took part. They were asked to take an inventory of their learning styles. It was revealed that 70% of the students failed to use the study habits that matched their preferred learning method. The very same study demonstrated that even those who managed to use study methods that matched their preferred learning styles did not excel over their peers who already failed to use their proper study habits.

2. SYNOPSIS OF MODELS

Though there are quite a number of learning models only a few will be considered here for lack of space. The first one to be handled is that of David Kolb which is greatly based on his experiential learning. In his book experiential learning, Kolb demonstrates that there are two closely connected approaches one has to be aware of to come to grips with understanding experience: **Concrete experience** and **abstract conceptualization**. He further mentions two related approaches to transform experience namely **reflective observation** and **active experimentation**. To arrive at ideal learning point the four approaches have to be incorporated in the process of learning. Learners' attempts to use all four approaches can become very powerful in one experience-grasping and experience-transforming approach with the effect that they can prefer one of the following four learning styles:

Table 1. Kolb's Theory, Characteristics of Various Learners and Best Delivery Methods:

Learning Style	Characteristics	Training Delivery Mode
Converger	They are abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. Thus they will be able to make practical application of ideas by deductive reasoning. They are also good problem solvers.	Small- group discussion and classroom participation dislike lectures. They are not risk takers. Thus they prefer data-based programs and prefer computer based learning.
Diverger	They are good at concrete experience and reflective observation. Therefore they tend to be imaginative and provide innovative ideas.	Traditional classroom based delivery that comprises of brainstorming sessions, reflective activities, lectures and rhetorical questions (Blackmore, 1996 & Hodgson, 1998).
Assimilator	This group uses abstract conceptualization and reflective observation. They are good at using inductive reasoning. They are	Prefer print-based delivery (Delahaya, 2005)

	“private learners”.	
Accommodator	This group of learners tends to use concrete experience and active experimentation. They are good at actually doing the things.	Like experiment. So could use hands on computer-based simulation games, online group works, role play games and observations. They prefer computer based delivery mode. [O’Conner, 1998, Mooter-Hodgson,1998, & McCarthy, 1985]

One of the merits to be accredited to Kolb’s model is that it gave rise to what is known as learning style inventory which is an assessment method seeks to pinpoint an individual’s learning style. Consequently, individuals may show preference to one of the four styles: Accommodating, converging, Diverging and assimilating as regards Kolb’s experiential learning model.

3. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

The chief objective of the present research is to examine through analysis the diverse learning style with special reference to Kolb’s model of third year undergraduate students of.....College with the intention of adopting the suitable learning style for each student. To realize the basic aims of the study the researcher has to opt for the appropriate theory for her students. The researcher looked into a number of models and eventually dwelt with VARK model learning style. The VARK questionnaire has particularly proved useful and stimulating for students to determine their learning styles. It also helps the researcher to interpret and reflect over her students choices and hence determine their learning style. As many as a 100 questionnaire was distributed to students in Saudi Arabia 87 out of which were complete and utilizable.

4. PREVIOUS RELATED WORKS

It goes without saying that learning styles were principally developed by researchers to help classify learners on the grounds of their preferences of learning styles their approach of perceiving and processing information (Buch & Bartley, 2002). According to Campbell a learning style is “specific behavioral pattern an individual displays in learning”. Dunn provides a no less similar definition to that of Campbell as a new way how new information is acquired by individual to develop new skills (1975 & 1989). As it is already stated here that Kolb (1984) defined it as a process where an

individual retain new information and skills. Kolb’s theory of learning styles states that knowledge is created through transformation of experiences. Technology-aided instruction has helped to develop customized learning tools to make the most of the accrued benefit. O’Conner (1998) confirmed that it is indispensable to examine learning styles and a range of delivery modes. A number of scholars have examined and analyzed the learning styles and have even developed diverse learning styles but were not as popular as that of Kolb or Campbell. Their popularity is limited by the prospect of their little applicability. The notably most used and researched models were those developed by Kolb (1984),Honey and Mumford (1986), Gregorc (1985)and Fleming (1995). Kolb (1984) developedhis model of Learning Style Inventory based on the Experiential Learning Theory where he delineated two related approaches toward perfectly getting hold of experience.

Buch and Bartely (2002) have drawn so extensively on Kolb model inhis research where they launched a studyin a large financial services institution in theSoutheast USA. 337 employees were selected and a questionnaire was distributed.165 had participated in answering the questionnaire that included 5 delivery modes: computer based,TV based, print based, audio based andclassroom based. The result shown that25% were accommodators 29% were assimilators, 22% wereconvergers and 24%were divergers. This proved that there are diverse styles of learning demonstrated in anadult population. The divergersopted for traditional mode of delivery andaccommodators preferred computer basedlearning. Hence, the outcomeissimilar to the several research findings that adhere to Kolb’s theoryof Learning Style Inventory.

Another more powerful and interesting study was carried out by Lum et al (2011) in which Kolb’s model was employed to bridge professional education programmes in three institutions among the three difference professionals inOntario, Canada. All three professionals foundto be differing in their choice. Thus they prefer to observethan participate or act. The authors suggeststhat the relevant authority should consideroffering more courses by considering theirlearning style.

Yet in a separate and challenging case Honey and Mumford (1986) considered Kolb’s model through devising their own program targeting middle or senior managers in business. Two variables were introduced to the original model to tackle the business environment. Right at the outset, the authors renamed the stages as having an experience, reviewing the experience, concluding from the experience, planning the next steps.

Next, as regards the stages to be adopted here, they also renamed their learning style as: activist, reflector, theorist and pragmatist. On basis of diverse learning styles (Honey & Mumford 1986) devised their own learning style questionnaire which is intended to be used as a self-development tool. Going through the question will help the managers to concentrate on escalating the hardly exploited styles with the aim of improving everyday gained learning experience. Individuals’ characteristics as based on learning styles questionnaire are revealed below on table 2.

Honey and Mumford Learning Style	Characteristics	Activities
Activist	Learn by doing and participation	<input type="checkbox"/> brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> puzzles <input type="checkbox"/> competitions <input type="checkbox"/> role-play
Reflector	Learn by watching others and think before act	<input type="checkbox"/> models <input type="checkbox"/> statistics <input type="checkbox"/> stories <input type="checkbox"/> quotes <input type="checkbox"/> background information <input type="checkbox"/> applying theories
Theorist	Learn by understanding theory very clearly	<input type="checkbox"/> time to think about how to apply learning in reality <input type="checkbox"/> case studies <input type="checkbox"/> problem solving <input type="checkbox"/> discussion (Rose, 1987)
Pragmatist	Learn through practical tips and techniques from experienced person	<input type="checkbox"/> paired discussions <input type="checkbox"/> self analysis questionnaires <input type="checkbox"/> personality questionnaires <input type="checkbox"/> time out <input type="checkbox"/> observing activities <input type="checkbox"/> feedback from others <input type="checkbox"/> coaching <input type="checkbox"/> interviews (Cano-Garcia & Hughes, 2000)

Obviously, the four learning styles are not so inflexible that one individual can be found to have preference for all the styles or some or two. They vary that different students opt for different learning styles. Auditory learners would definitely have sharp and sensitive auditory gift as they largely depend on audible range to get along with their learning tasks. Perceptible learners, on the other hand, would prefer have tangible treatment to objects to an extent of feeling them to examine their reality or truthfulness.

Likewise, the degree of focusing and remembering diverge quite noticeably. To some faces are easily recognizable while names are not, yet there are those who remember names but not faces.

5. EXPERIMENT

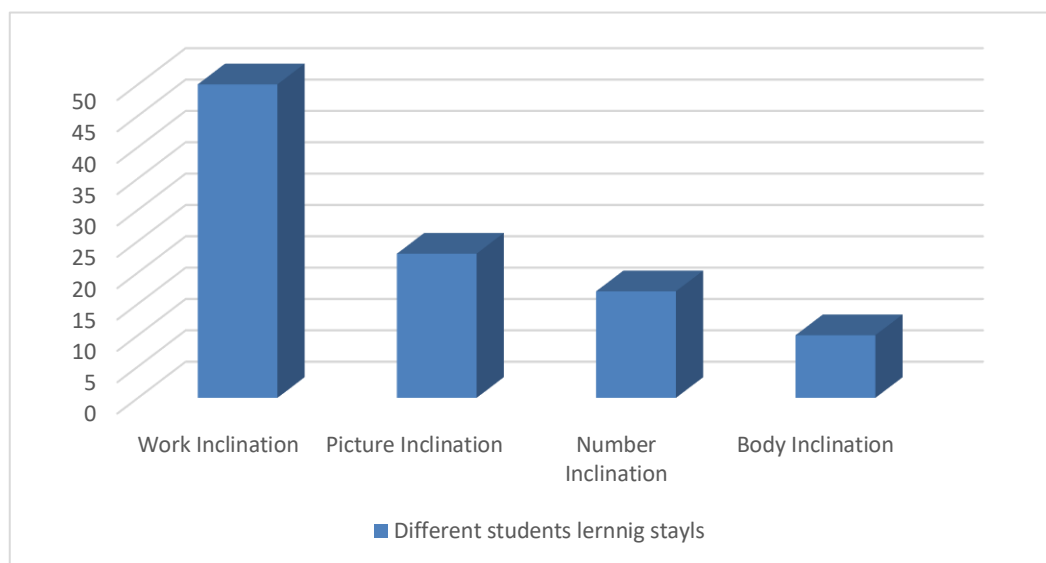
In the present study the researcher (2023) has drawn on Honey and Mumford’s Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) to examine the learning style of students. The researcher adopted four categories that seemed to describe her students’ learning style, namely **Auditory**, **Visual**, **Read** (including writing) and **Kinesthetic**. The finding shows that students displayed greater tendencies toward certain sensory modalities as expressed above. Hence, the questionnaire helped individual learners identify their appropriate learning styles. This further helps the tutor to plan the appropriate teaching strategies.

The researcher in the present study renamed her learning style as: word inclination, picture inclination, number inclination and body inclination. As many as 200 students in *Saudi university*, College of Languages were chosen to populate this study as released in Table 3 below.

Researcher’ Learning Style	Modified	Characteristics and Activities
Word inclination		Learners are inclined to express themselves via verbalCommunication skills and they learn by reading andwriting.
Picture inclination		These are types of learners who learn faster when information is provided tothem utilizing visual communication skills.
Number inclination		They are very good in presenting logical arguments and have good mathematical skills.
Body inclination		They prefer “Hands-on” experience.They learn by doing

6. ANALYSIS

Despite the fact that the answers of the students were closely monitored there are those who were found to have preference or liking to more than two categories. Word inclination category recorded the highest percentage 50%. This indicates that students like verbal communication and learn by reading and writing, too. The second category which scored 23% is that of those who are inclined towards visual mode of learning techniques and the subject matter is delivered in traditional lecture format. The third category 17 % is auditory while the fourth 10% are those who learn by doing “hands-on” experience.



7. CONCLUSION

Ever since their emergence and development in the 19th century the learning styles have been well received and incorporated into the educational systems and business sectors of numerous countries across the world. This situation was brought about to the fact that understanding learning styles helps tutors deliver their classes effectively and educators and syllabus designers to produce the required relevant teaching and learning materials. Learners were motivated and showed great interest in learning as they are practicing what they learned quite adequately. Diverse learning styles have started to appear ever since as devised by different researchers to go well with different students learning styles.

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