

Middle School Students' Learning Styles: Implications for Language Learning

Dr. Jaswinder Kaur¹ Ms. Amritpal Kaur²

¹Guru Gobind Singh College of Education

²University College of Education

¹²Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify middle school students' learning styles and to develop ways to improve the way the course, activities, and projects are delivered, with a focus on the consequences for language learning. The three learning modes are distributed as follows in the general population: 65 percent visual, 30 percent auditory, and 5% kinaesthetic. Yet, middle school students represent a special category, because of the nature and quantity of information they have to accumulate over the years of study and because of the fact that this is an important age, which requires both skill and ability to associate with others. During the studies, the school student should acquire theoretical knowledge, to learn practical skills and techniques of dialogue and communication. Since the quantity of information is considerable and the language learning is wide-ranging, it is useful for these students to facilitate the access to information according to how they are more likely to absorb it. Knowing in which category they belong is of considerable importance in the implementation of learning and teaching methods. Hence the study deals with three learning styles and their influence on students' performance. The way information is presented is more than helpful for school students, but this can only be done once the teachers know how their students are most receptive (visual, auditory or kinaesthetic).

Key words: Assessment, Auditory, Curriculum, kinaesthetic, learning style, Visual.

I. INTRODUCTION

A learning style refers to the means in which a child acquires information best. Every student in the class has a different preferred learning style, which can make it difficult for a teacher to be the most effective tool. There are many internal and external factors that influence how each student learn a language. One way to be truly successful in the classroom is to know the particular style each individual adopts. Realization of how our brain functions can help solve problems with monotony and low grades in class.

Different learning styles require varied methods to keep children motivated and successful in the classroom. When a youngster recognises the value of learning a language and can see how it pertains to their daily lives, they learn more quickly. A theme-based, contextualised curriculum can assist pupils become more enthusiastic about language learning. They begin to take chances to produce language when they are motivated in learning a language and see important connections to their life. This allows them to absorb the language faster.

Learning-type assessment proponents argue that the best training includes determining an individual's learning style and adapting instruction to that style. Assessments of learning style typically ask people to evaluate what sort of information presentation they prefer (e.g., words versus pictures versus speech) and/or what kind of mental

activity they find most engaging or friendly (e.g., examination versus listening), although assessment instruments are extremely diverse.[1]

II. TYPES OF LEARNING STYLES

It is important to remember that every individual learns differently and thus has a unique learning style. "Approximately 20 to 30 percent of the school-aged population remembers what they hear; 40% recalls well what they see or read visually; many must write or manipulate their fingers in some way to help them remember basic facts; others cannot internalise information or skills unless they use them in real-life activities such as actually writing a letter to learn the correct format."

A child's learning style develops in the same way as his personality and style do. There are three main types of learning styles, that is, three types of learners: For some, auditory input is most valuable; others rely upon a visual style. Still others learn through kinaesthetic means, or a combination of the three. Every person has one primary learning mode. Once that mode is identified, we can learn to maximize it and enhance child's education. Let's learn a little more about each of the three learning styles. [2, 4]

2.1. Auditory learners

Traditional teaching methods are most beneficial to auditory learners. A person with an Auditory learning style prefers to transfer information through listening to the spoken word, whether it is their own or others', as well as sounds and noises. These people will use phrases such as 'tell me', 'let's talk it over' and will be best able to perform a new task after listening to instructions from an expert. These are the people who enjoy being told what to do over the phone and who can recall every word to every song they hear! Many teachers adopt a lecture approach in which they impart knowledge to their pupils by talking to them. All students can retain interest and attention by controlling their voice tone, inflection, and body language. When directions are read aloud, speeches are required, or information is offered and requested vocally, auditory learners succeed.

2.2. Visual learners

Some students rely upon a visual learning style: someone with a Visual learning style has a preference for seen or observed things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, flip-chart, etc. These people will use phrases such as 'show me', 'let's have a look at that' and will be best able to perform a new task after reading the instructions or watching someone else do it first. These are the individuals who will work from lists and written instructions." Diagrams, charts, photographs, films, and textual directions help visual learners. To-do lists, assignment logs, and written notes will be valuable to these kids. Many of these strategies, on the other hand, are beneficial to kinaesthetic learners as well.

2.3. Kinaesthetic learners

An individual with a Kinaesthetic learning style has a preference for physical experience - touching, feeling, holding, doing, and practical hands-on experiences. These folks will say things like "let me try" and "how do you feel?" and will be best able to do a new task by trying it out and learning as they go. These are the people that enjoy doing things by hand and never read the directions first! The majority of students achieve in school by using kinaesthetic methods such as touching, feeling, and experiencing the information. Kindergarteners are kinaesthetic and tactile learners who move and touch everything they learn. By second or third grade, some students have become visual learners. Some kids, mostly girls, become auditory learners in late elementary school. Despite this, many adults, particularly men, retain kinaesthetic and tactile abilities throughout their lives." (Allyn and Bacon,

1993; Rita Stafford and Kenneth J. Dunn, Teaching Secondary Students Through Their Individual Learning Styles) (3), (4).

Kinaesthetic learners are most successful when totally engaged with the learning activity. When they participate in a science experiment, theatrical presentation, skit, field trip, dance, or other active activity, they learn the most. Because of the large number of kinaesthetic learners, education is evolving toward a more hands-on approach; manipulatives and other "props" are used in practically every subject in school, from physical education to language arts. Hands-on teaching strategies are gaining popularity because they cater to the unique demands of kinaesthetic learners as well as auditory and visual learners.

Once students understand their learning styles, they can better adapt to their learning environment. When a child identifies his or her unique learning style, teacher can begin to build upon it. Understanding learning styles is only a first step in maximizing potential and overcoming learning differences.

III. DISCUSSION

For this study to find its utility the teachers should change the way of presenting the information during their course of language learning. Given that most students learn concepts better through visual means, it is critical that the subject be presented to them by demonstration, PowerPoint presentation, and several photos, diagrams, or drawings. Viewing a film in the target language and writing and performing skits in the target language, for example, appeal to a variety of learning methods. Offering an immersion experience helps students connect the language learning to their everyday lives, but rote vocabulary memorization and grammar drills create 'meaningless' language lessons.

The easiest, these things can be implemented in understanding, reading, listening, speaking and writing etc., where certain grammatical aspects can be presented as pictures or videos. Students who prefer an aural learning approach, on the other hand, must not be overlooked. For them it is necessary that each visual presentation must be accompanied by a coherent dialogue, in which important elements are highlighted with tonal fluctuations. A well-designed course is one that perfectly balances the two communication channels: visual and audio. In reality most of the courses in school are presented in this manner, satisfying the needs of about 71% of students. And for those who prefer the combinations auditory – kinaesthetic and visual – kinaesthetic, approximately 10% of students, this way of teaching is useful.

Problems arise for the students whose predominant style of learning is kinaesthetic (14%) because they have a particular way of knowledge. During the role plays and language games, these students feel a lot better. Because of their constant need for movement or action, those pupils may be deemed disruptive components in classes where they are required to sit for tens of minutes at a desk and concentrate on content delivered via aural or visual means. These kids may be at a disadvantage if the teacher is unaware of the typology. All students rely on teachers to teach them how to acquire abilities, but some pupils rely on their teachers even more. The teachers should take this into account when setting the behaviour during their schooling. [4]

Let's take the example of seventh standard students in a school to analyze how each of the three categories of student learns easier depending on their learning style. The teacher will present new words orally step by step and, at the same time, or later he can show how it is pronounced practically to the whole group. Thus 76% of students have learned the technique. There remains the 14% of kinaesthetic students who need to make this procedure with their own doing at least once; which means that a kinaesthetic student can take part in dialogue, role play or

language games where he can repeat the tactic through action and expression. Therefore it is extremely important that this environment is provided in the faculty and it is necessary that during the activities they will be allowed, and even more, encouraged to perform these techniques.

As a general rule, the instructor should consider the following while delivering a language item to ensure that each student gets the most out of it: Organizing the information by writing a brief synopsis of the course content and, if possible, putting the names of the chapters and subchapters on the front page. The writing should not be too long, but it should be full of evocative visuals. Also, it is not a good idea to use dozens of photographs without any explanation. A few images coupled by an emotive discourse, with the teacher highlighting the key phrases and words, is sometimes all that is required. The usage of pointers is a fantastic approach to hold pupils' attention while also orienting them. Without highlighting the essential terms described there, the teacher should avoid employing visuals. [3]

Another aid could be resuming the content of the course at the end of it. Because a teacher cannot know how each student prefers to learn, and because this study found no significant differences in the distribution of learning styles among school pupils, it is critical to use all three channels in both teaching and assessing students. While some students may be required to respond orally to inquiries, others will be asked to identify or create sentences using a variety of linguistic objects.

Describing the pictures, debates or book reviews may appeal means of instruction. It involves a role play in which students will assume different roles, and present their ideas in dialogue and action. During this activity, students will get out in front of other classmates and will start the role-play, assuring the role of a teacher, journalist, politician, doctor, engineer etc. followed by student- teacher discussion. The politician-student will make available to fellow students all data necessary for his speech on making new India. Subsequently, the student-journalist will make an evaluation strategy of the schemes implemented. The data obtained from this examination will be provided either by the teacher or even by the student who played the role of the teacher. The remaining pupils can now intervene to make modifications or ask for clarifications. The advantage of this strategy is that the student who plays the politician learns assessment techniques, while the student who plays the engineer gets to practise and appraise his knowledge. Because the visual learners can watch the play and the auditory learners can hear the replicas exchange, this is an exercise that benefits both visual and auditory learners. Even the kinaesthetic can benefit from this activity in the educational – instructional process since they may actively engage, which is not possible in a course that presents the same classroom scenario. This strategy is best suited for strengthening communication skills in middle school. The method's disadvantage is that it is time intensive, which lowers student-teacher contact during school training, however this is a small negative. [1, 2, 3]

In respect of the assessment of students there must be made some specifications. The purpose of an evaluation is not to highlight the things that the student doesn't know, but rather the way they use the terms accrued up to that point. If visual learners prefer textual assessments, such as summaries or test grids, auditory learners prefer oral tests, especially when the teacher asks questions and the student responds. Most assessments of the middle school students merged the two methods. For the kinaesthetic students, a new stage in the evaluation should be considered – the practical examination. It has to be more than a set of questions and answers based on real-world experience. Experiments, projects, arguments, and reviews should all be included.

IV. CONCLUSION

The concept of learning style originated in the idea that they could facilitate the accumulation of information. The extent to which the teaching learning style improves results is not yet definite. Different learning styles require varied methods to keep students motivated and successful in the classroom. Generally, students tend to favour one learning style more than another, but most people are a mix of two or maybe even three different styles. Good students, however, can come from any predominant learning style. So, teachers need to create a classroom that can engage any type of learner and students.

Students in middle school, unlike other students, depend highly in the teacher's guidance for good communication skills. Teachers are the students' model. In this situation it is all the more necessary that the way in which language is presented is transmitted to be consistent with the way in which students gain them. Among the middle school students who have completed the questionnaire it is showed that predominate learning style is the visual style 33%, followed closely by the auditory style - 26%. In a smaller percentage students prefer the kinaesthetic style - 14% or combination of these.

The significance of this research is that it can provide insight into how professors should present their courses. The most important aspect is that visual and auditory learning styles are the most prevalent, so school information should be structured and transmitted using both sensory channels equally. The most effective way to attract and keep the attention of both types of students is to merge images with a coherent discourse. Training must focus widely on practice, connecting with the daily usage of words. It's difficult to avoid instances in which practical instruction takes the form of questioning, with lecturers highlighting what their students have or haven't read from the previous course. When it comes to the language lab, students should be encouraged to practise as much as they can within the time allotted.

It's also worth noting that teachers and parents frequently teach their children in the manner in which adults learn best. An auditory learner-parent, for example, may discuss an idea until they are depressed while assisting their teen with homework, believing that this is the greatest way for the child to grasp. Instead the teen gets out bits and pieces and builds the concept with blocks or paper and a pencil quickly grasping the concept. For teachers, it is a bit more difficult because they will have a wide range of learning styles and mixes within their classroom. Being sure to include an activity that stimulates the visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learners will be essential to concept comprehension. Having learning stations that focus on each style can also is very helpful. [4, 5] . Many of the students may learn differently from each other, and it is important for a teacher to identify how each student learns best. Understanding the characteristics of learning modalities - visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic - can help a teacher to reach students more effectively.

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