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Teaching Language Skills to the Learners of Varied Learning Styles: A Challenge in ELT

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Abstract

Varied students have varied learning styles, with some preferring to learn visually, others auditorily, others analytically, and still others primarily visually. Teaching strategies, too, need to be flexible. The extent to which a student learns is also affected by how well his or her preferred learning style combines with the instructor's preferred method of instruction. Teachers should take the time to learn about their student's preferred learning styles to better tailor their instruction and assign relevant and engaging activities and tasks at each learning stage. A teacher of English should encourage his students to become fluent in the language and develop their communication skills because these are in high demand. Learners in today's classrooms are taking the initiative to improve their English skills and are engaged in all aspects of instruction. They try to become practical English students with little help from the teacher.

The focus of language instruction and learners recently has shifted from the instructor to the student. When a topic is being taught, students are more likely to ask questions and offer solutions. The instructor chooses engaging material by focusing on areas of personal interest. This strategy shifted gradually towards one that prioritizes the needs and interests of individual students. Foreign language students develop their approaches to study based on their learning styles. They pick the methods that work best with their learning styles. The present article focuses on the various approaches to language learning by both teachers and the students.

Students' lack of command of English grammar is a major barrier to learning the language. This is especially true when it comes to sentence structure and the selection of lexical and grammatical elements that are appropriate for the context. When quizzed on them, students might recall every grammatical rule in the English language and give correct answers.

However, most students struggle with effective oral and written communication skills. Another reality of the classroom is that lecturing, question and

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answer sessions, and homework are the mainstays of the teaching and learning process, leaving students unengaged and unmotivated. Because of this, kids may lose interest in classroom activities. The results of students' education are affected by this.

For the teaching and learning process to be successful, the instructor must be cognizant of their students' individual preferences in how they absorb information. In addition, every student has their own unique approach to learning. Consequently, they use dissimilar methods to master a new tongue. Some students, for instance, would rather listen to lectures on the language than write it down or read it. It is possible that some students would rather read than write or speak. However, individuals need to work on the four fundamental LSRW skills in order to master English language. They use a variety of educational tools, including audiovisual aids, online resources, and so on, to accomplish this goal.

Learning Styles

Learning Style is comprised of distinctive behaviours that serve as indicators of how an individual learns and adapts to the environment. It also provides insight into how a person's intellect functions. Each individual's learning approach reflects their biological and experiential makeup. Inducing traits that either promote or impede achievement. The concepts of learning style appear contradictory at first glance. The concept of learning style implies distinct variations.

According to Reid (1987:89), a person's learning style is a pervasive quality in his or her learning strategies or learning behaviour. An essential premise underlying the evolution of learning style instruments is that each individual is unique. Learning style instruments are intended to differentiate between various types of learners. If all students learnt in the same way, there would be no need for learning style inventories. Teachers of foreign languages should be aware of various learning styles. Learning style is one of the variables that can influence the second language acquisition process. A single educator cannot ignore the role that a student's physical environment plays in shaping their learning style. A person's preferred method of learning a second language could lean more towards hearing, seeing, touching, or a mix of these. Taking into account students' varying perceptual learning methods, the ESL (English as a Second Language) programme appears to be on the correct route. Learning how one learns best requires first understanding one's individual learning style. It is reasonable to expect students to learn how to study a new language effectively, or to develop the ability to learn together.

All the language skills Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing are equally important and are interdependent for the linguistic competence of a learner. A teacher teaching the importance of these skills working with a diverse group of students at varying skill levels must pay close attention to the specific instructional approaches taken by each student. With practice, these methods lay the groundwork for autonomous, self-directed study. Many ESL educators have reported student pushback when introducing a new classroom activity. Some students voice a

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desire for a more communicatively-focused approach, which would allow for more opportunity for unstructured discussions. On the other hand, other people favour a more grammatical focus in the classroom. A teacher should consider the variety of their students while planning language-learning activities.

Students' individual learning methods significantly impact their schooling. The divide between teachers and students, as well as between classroom instruction and student retention, is growing at today's universities. The learning process as a whole suffers, and teachers all too often mistake the new students' normal variations in how they learn for flaws. Therefore, there may be an underlying mismatch between teachers' and students' preferred pedagogical approaches. This is a topic that should consistently be covered in the classroom. Educators put in extensive effort to hone their craft, updating students on new approaches for improving their grammatical skills such as vocabulary, reading comprehension, and other skills. Unfortunately, they overlook the most crucial consideration: themselves. It is unlikely that students will adopt and use the strategy proposed by the teacher. Therefore, educators are tasked with identifying each student's preferred learning style and adapting lessons accordingly.

One must first define learning style before the notion of learning styles may be successfully applied to the teaching and study of English. Learning takes place when there is a noticeable shift in conduct as a result of the experiences the learner has had. Similarly, a student's learning style can

only be inferred from his overt actions. There are a variety of factors that contribute to an individual's unique learning style (Tony Bingham 2010). An individual's learning style is a basic trait in how they take in and make sense of new information.

Keefe (1991) states that learning style can be thought of as both a student trait and a method of teaching. A student's preferred method of study and the motivations behind that method are revealed by their learning style. Every student has their own unique and consistent preferences when it comes to seeing, organizing, and remembering new material. Indicators of how students perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment, learning styles are comprised of cognitive, emotional, and physiological behaviours (Kang 1999). Students learn in diverse ways from one another, as discovered by Price (1977). Oxford (1990) found that various approaches to education exist. Their findings show that the correlations between student traits and pedagogical approaches vary greatly depending on the nature of the learning experience being analyzed. According to Bjork (2008), differences in learning, teaching, and interpersonal styles affect all three. Each person has innate pattern preferences, although these can change over time as a result of exposure to new things and personal development.

In today's society, the more proficient English speaker is seen as the true literate. This idea has motivated most of them to study English, and they have strived to become proficient in all four language skills. They're not settling for

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mediocrity when it comes to honing their abilities. As a result of their intense motivation, the students performed above and above their capabilities as they attempted to master the language. This ushered in a new era in education, one in which the focus shifted from the instructor to the student. In this method, the teacher's role is reduced to that of a facilitator, and students take greater responsibility for their own language acquisition. Here, a teacher encounters students of varying levels of proficiency who use a wide range of learning styles, necessitating the use of multiple approaches to instruction to ensure that all students are actively involved in the learning process (Kang 1999). In this way, every student can benefit from their preferred learning style while also working to strengthen their weaker one (Tony Bingham and Marcia Conner 2010). And a good educator will always be there for their students and adapt their teaching style accordingly. This will greatly inspire the students to employ efficient and fruitful methods of language acquisition.

There are many different sorts of students out there, including active and passive students. Learners who actively engage in retaining and comprehending new material will likely do so by sharing their thoughts on the subject with others. In contrast, introspective students initially ponder on the data in private. Unlike those who prefer to work alone, active learners thrive when collaborating with others. However, a classroom setting is not conducive to this type of learning for any of these students. Therefore, self-motivated students should study in groups where there

is room for questions and answers. Students who are thoughtful and give themselves time to fully grasp course material will also benefit greatly. They might pause to consider potential questions about the material, rather of just memorizing and heartening the concepts.

The second category of students is the sensing-intuitive type. Learners who rely on their senses are methodical and thorough when studying information, while those who rely on their intuition are more interested in exploring possibilities and establishing connections. While those with a strong emphasis on sensing enjoy solving issues with the help of evidence, those with a stronger emphasis on intuition are more likely to make novel discoveries and advance the state of the art. The sensors can aid their own learning by considering the relevance of the concepts they are studying to the real world. If students want more concrete examples of how to apply what they've learned in class, they can always ask for them. Learners who are similarly gifted in this area would do well to give themselves enough time to read the question, respond to it, and then reread the question.

Some students learn best through a combination of visual and verbal cues. Pictures, diagrams, flow charts, time lines, movies, and demonstrations help visual learners retain information. Verbal learners rely on both written and spoken explanations to compile and memorize information. When knowledge is delivered in both a visual and verbal format, everyone benefits. Visual learners can aid their own study by looking up visuals, diagrams,

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photos, etc., while verbal learners can enlist the aid of a buddy by having them read aloud or explain the topics. Some students prefer to take things slowly and methodically, while others may just dive in and start making connections.

Every student isn't necessarily just one kind of student. An individual's learning style might range from active and introspective to verbal and visual to global and sequential. Regardless of the learner's personality or preferred method of instruction, all students strive to become more fluent in the target language and employ a variety of methods and approaches in order to get there. Students of varying learning preferences approach the same material in unique ways. The implications on students' ability to grasp a topic in a given course are substantial. Only with their full engagement in class activities will this be achieved. Teachers should recognize their students' various learning styles and encourage them in ways that best suit them.

Language learning techniques are the learners' own actions and ways of thinking that are designed to facilitate language acquisition. The same teaching strategy can be effective for some students while having a negative impact on others based on their individual "learning style" (Sangeeth 2014). Learning styles can be broken down into its component parts. A student, for instance, may feel more at ease learning a concept after being exposed to illustrative material. Others may do better hearing the ideas explained aloud, while yet others may prefer to read extensively on the topic. As a result, the learning process will

be tailored to each individual's sensory preferences. It is possible that some people learn quickly while others take their time. Some people learn best in groups, while others may be more productive working alone. This is because of inherent character flaws between them. There are also innate distinctions at play. For some, the influence of their parents' education will be substantial since they have a strong capacity for understanding and are encouraged to be smart from an early age. Some students have inherent advantages over others. As a result, the use of methods varies from one learner to the next. Each individual will employ a unique method in their pursuit of conceptual clarity. However, in the end, they are able to strategically acquire the target language regardless of their own learning preferences.

To better their own learning, students employ learning strategies, which are specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques (Brumfit 1979) such as seeking out discussion partners or encouraging themselves to face a challenging language task. Strategies can be categorized as either cognitive, metacognitive, social, compensatory, emotive, memory-related, or any combination of these.

Learners who make use of cognitive methods including note-taking, reasoning, analysis, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, and reorganizing information, as well as formal practice of the same in authentic scenarios, demonstrate greater proficiency in the target language. Learners can benefit from metacognitive methods by using them to focus their efforts, organize and organize their language study, and

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check their progress towards mastery of the target language. The goal of memory techniques is to facilitate the formation of associations in one's mind, using visuals and auditory cues to help in comprehension, consolidation, and application of new language skills. Learners can use affective tactics to calm their nerves, boost their confidence, and learn to regulate their emotions. Similarly, by engaging in social techniques like question-asking, teamwork, and empathy, they are able to interact with others more comfortably.

Learning Styles to Improve Reading Skills

Learners can actively, consciously, and purposefully self-regulate their learning when they select strategies that fit their learning style and the L2 task at hand. One of the linguistic abilities being studied is that of strategy utilization in language learning. In order to better their reading abilities, students of all learning types employ both tried-and-true methods and creative solutions to the reading assignments they are assigned.

Reading is a means of conveying information through the reception and understanding of text. There are four main areas of focus: decoding, comprehension, textual analysis, and reaction. The reader will need varied reading techniques and skills to comprehend the subject-content and language patterns of the subject depending on the goal of reading. These are the skills that will allow on to read more effectively and enjoyably.

Teachers, while assigning a reading assignment, should choose subjects that will pique their students' curiosity. A student's ability to read well and complete a task successfully is greatly enhanced when they have a genuine interest in the subject matter being covered. Once a piece of reading material has been chosen, the next phase is "pre-reading," which should take no more than five minutes. In this case, inspiration is the key competency. Learners are prompted to continue their studies by being asked to answer basic questions on upcoming reading assignments. Here, students use a variety of methods, like brainstorming to check their past knowledge, emotional tactics, etc., to commit new vocabulary to memory.

The second phase, "while reading," is thirty minutes long. Here, the ability to read actively and intently is of utmost importance. Students are provided with the content and instructed to read it thoroughly before proceeding to the subsequent assignments. Cloze tests, gapped texts, multiple choice, matching, true/false questions and answers, and question and answer sessions are all examples of possible exercises. Each student will develop their own unique approach to the exercises based on their preferred method of learning. It is possible that other tactics will be used. Metacognitive tactics, annotating a book, synthesis of essential concepts, compensatory strategies, cognitive strategies, etc., are all examples of the types of methods used here.

Post-reading, the third and last step in reading instruction, requires only twenty minutes per day. The students are given another opportunity to read/skim the material rapidly after completing the aforementioned exercises. Currently, the

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ability to read critically is being emphasized. Annotating a text, taking notes, and using other cognitive processes are all employed here. This portion provides considerable opportunity to practice taking notes and writing summaries.

The students who adopt a growth mindset towards language learning are more likely to succeed in their pursuit of communicative competence. When students have several chances to practice the language with only the teacher's instruction, they tend to learn more effectively and like it more. Since students in a language classroom come from a wide range of backgrounds and degrees of expertise, no single approach will guarantee success. People learn in a variety of ways, and each person's approach is unique. The effectiveness of different teaching methods depends on the learner's aptitude and motivation to learn, both of which are shaped by these factors.

It cannot be emphasized enough that a given teaching approach may either complement or clash with a student's preferred learning style and approach. Students are more likely to succeed, feel comfortable, and have minimal anxiety if (a) their learning style and strategy preferences align with (b) the instructional approach and materials. When (a) and (b) are at odds with one another, the student is more likely to struggle academically, feel less self-assured, and struggle with high levels of anxiety. Such disagreements can be quite disruptive to the relationship between the teacher and the student. Disillusioned students may become so

opposed to the class that they refuse to engage with the teacher, the material, or even each other.

Activities Related to Other Language Skills

1. Four or five student groups are each given a card with a word on it. Each member of the group describes his term the term without actually using it. When all students have effectively described their words, they take the first letter of each and determine what new word the letters spell. (Puzzle pieces may also depict objects in a room; in this case, once all the words have been identified, the group determines which room in the house has been described.)

2. Students can be divided into pairs or larger groups. Each student has a sheet of blank paper. He listens to his partner or group leader as they describe a picture (either provided by the teacher or chosen by the students). As his partner describes the image, the student attempts to sketch a rough copy based on the description.

3. Students can be instructed to make liberal use of visuals, pictures, drawings, sketches, and cartoons and make use of several words to explain them.

4. Students may be enabled to watch short films, videos, live shows to understand and interpret a text.

5. Drilling of vocabulary and grammar is necessary but overdoing it fills the classroom with boredom. Students may be instructed to take part in interactive sessions with the teachers so that the language activities would thrill the young learners and develop curiosity among them to know more of language use.

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The above-mentioned techniques all contribute to a more communicative classroom environment by encouraging students to take an active role in their own learning and development. Learner strategies are the foundation for enhancing LSRW abilities, therefore once the idea of using strategies to learn the language is conceived, it is vital to focus on them. Successful language teaching and learning requires teachers to identify their students' individual learning styles and requirements, and then tailor their instruction accordingly. They should recommend a system for designing the curriculum that gives students plenty of leeway to implement tactics that work best with their individual learning styles, and then work to create the best learning environment possible for the students.

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