

Learning Styles in Education: Implications and Advantages

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ABSTRACT

The field of adult education and literacy is plagued by confusion about definitions. Over the years definitions have evolved from provisions in federal law and initiatives of groups advocating particular methodologies or the needs of specific adult populations. The result is that definitions tend to merge statements about the goals to be achieved (e.g., improving the literacy of a particular population) with a particular means (e.g., adult basic education) to achieve the goal. There are many tests available to help you and your students discover your best learning style. Generally speaking, however, if you are someone who is more likely to think in pictures, prefer to meet with someone in person, and are more likely to want visual diagrams when completing a project you have tendencies towards visual learning. Similarly, if you are more likely to think in terms of sounds, prefer to speak on the phone with someone, and want verbal instructions then you tend towards auditory learning. Finally, if you are more likely to think in terms of moving images like mini-movies in your mind, prefer to participate in an activity when you meet to speak with someone, and tend to jump right into a project without reading directions you tend towards tactile/kinesthetic learning.

Key words: learning styles, adult learning.

INTRODUCTION

The challenge for Learning Styles will be to move from a system that still depends on teachers with limited training in working with adults, to one in which professional competence in working with adults is a basic requirement. Any strategy to make this transition must involve both professional development and support for the teachers now in the field as well as a new system for a new generation of adult educators.

To be successful, the Commonwealth's strategies must energize and gain the commitment of all the state's political, education, business, and civic leaders. No strategy will succeed unless it engages leaders in each community and county to identify needs and develop programs and services appropriate to the community's unique circumstances. The most serious challenge will be to motivate low-skilled, under-educated adults within the working age population to seek further education. Simply expanding the number of providers and programs will not necessarily increase demand from the populations and communities where the needs are greatest. Deep seated social, economic and cultural barriers—many dating back generations—lead people to

Undervalue education. In addition, in many counties it is difficult for people to see a direct relationship between better education and better-paying jobs. Either there are no jobs available or many existing employers do little to emphasize the connection between better education and the possibilities for getting a job, keeping a job, or earning a higher wage. For many, getting more education and earning a high school diploma or a college degree has little positive meaning.

Only the negative consequences are obvious: getting more education often means leaving one's family and community for jobs and opportunities for advancement somewhere else. The future of Kentucky depends on uplifting the quality of life and economy of all of Kentucky. The social and economic costs of neglect of large parts of the state will drag down the rest of the state and seriously hinder its capacity to compete in the global economy.

Much like strategies to curb epidemic, strategies to reduce illiteracy and raise the educational attainment of Kentucky's population must include both short-term efforts to face the immediate crises as well as long-term strategies to get at the underlying causes. Short-term crises include the imperative to keep helping welfare clients make the transition from welfare to work within the constraints of federal and state mandates and the need to train workers for immediate employer demands. Long-term prevention must address the underlying, persistent problems of the state's economic structure as well as the low awareness--if not appreciation--among segments of the population of the vital connection among education, employment, and improved standards of living.

Therefore, it is helpful to distinguish between at least these dimensions of the issue:

1. "Literacy" refers to the knowledge, skills, and competencies of individuals. The federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of the Workforce Investment Act)¹ defines literacy as "an individual's ability to read,

write, speak in English, compute and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.” Literacy is often defined in terms of specific domains such as “basic academic skills,” “workplace skills,” “life skills,” “parenting skills,” or skills

necessary to exercise one’s rights and responsibilities for citizenship. Different dimensions of literacy are often categorized by terms that cluster several dimensions of literacy important for different clients. Examples include workplace literacy (combining both basic academic skills and workplace skills), and family literacy (combining basic academic skills and other skills essential for successful parenting).

2. “Education attainment” usually refers to the numbers of years of schooling completed or the level of credential (e.g., high school diploma or associate degree) an individual has obtained. Despite concerns about the meaning of credentials, there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and literacy.

3. “Literacy initiatives” often are defined in terms of the needs of a particular target group. These may be parents of young children, youth who have dropped out of high school without earning a high school diploma, welfare recipients, persons with limited English-speaking ability, incarcerated adults, or adults in the workforce.

4. Other literacy initiatives are defined in terms of a particular educational service, strategy, or means to address a target population’s literacy problems. “Adult basic education” and “family literacy” are examples. These initiatives are often defined in terms of a particular configuration of services for the target population (e.g., assessment and information and counseling services).

5. The term “lifelong learning” is often associated with “literacy.” Lifelong learning is a means to the goal of maintaining necessary levels of literacy throughout one’s lifetime. The goal of lifelong learning has implications for both individual adult’s learning behavior as well as education policy and the design of the education system.

Goal six of the National Education Goals illustrates a broadly stated goal that incorporates expectations about both adult literacy and the kinds of policies and services that should be in place to improve literacy. Goal six, “Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning,” states that, “By the year 2000, every adult will be literate and possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.” The objectives related to this goal touch on several of the common elements of definitions listed above, for example:

- Different dimensions of literacy (e.g., academic and workplace skills),
- The level of education attainment (e.g., increasing the number of persons who complete postsecondary degrees),
- The needs of target groups (e.g., parents, minorities, or part-time learners),
- The need to increase the availability of particular educational services, strategies or means (e.g., accessibility of libraries to part-time learners or opportunities for parental involvement), and
- The importance of lifelong learning, both in the learning behavior of individuals and in the educational system’s responsiveness to the needs of adult learners.

Literacy goals include:

- Providing primary education in childhood that adults were deprived
- raising awareness for adults;
- knowledge bases and adults about their cultural heritage;
- increase confidence in adults.

Professional education goals include:

- Equipped with the necessary skills to adults living;
- providing the necessary manpower for the country's goals;
- achieving social equality and equity and eliminate the existing differences between different classes.

Adult characteristics:

To understand the characteristics of adult learners, their mental and physical condition should be considered in the following referred to some of them.

Operating speed:

Slow reaction in adults is natural that necessarily means reducing the logic and practice skills, not due to weakness and increased awareness of natural forces and their skills.

Consciousness:

No stimulus and incentives encouraging, despite inhibiting stimuli, slow transfer rate, mental, and weak inhibitors of natural forces (mostly visual and auditory) are factors that slow reaction affect individual mental and

cognitive activities, but never able to understand, understanding and learning ability (which varies with the speed of learning) is not relevant.

Health:

What is most age, longer duration is necessary to be heard by listening issue. Why is that when elderly people and old could not hear well, their confidence and vulnerable to the possibility that negative beliefs about their find, they are great. Visual abilities can be like other people, usually decreases with age.

Background of knowledge - skills and beliefs of adults:

Adults, social experiences, many have already learned different values and beliefs in their pronouns have stabilized, so changes in the new act very cautiously. The idea of such a manner that skill and applying them older and longer life is, Similar resistance to accept new ideas will be more and more severe. Thus, the adult criteria for the built and paid for their ideas and beliefs that are forming. Because of these criteria and the beliefs that they are afraid of failure, Therefore, to prevent it, sometimes against the resistance of new phenomena are only the material taught and its face that make reinforced concrete and tangible interference situation is.

Characteristics of adult education:

Flexibility in time:

In the past, usually one of the obstacles in the way of learning and development of adult education was being inflexible and time courses were programs. But now most countries have to consider that the speed limit of time and learning ability and facilities must be adults. Flexibility in time means that not only should the time classes and programs for adults is appropriate, but necessary facilities should be provided for independent study.

Flexibility in the location:

One of the aspects of flexible space is that individuals can, regardless of their residence to the study and advancing their knowledge and skills pay. For example, adults in remote villages should like people who live in the city use of educational programs. After flexibility in other places is that the issue of specificity of location is not considered primarily educational.

Flexibility in age:

Educational opportunities for certain age should not use it for all regardless of their age, is possible. In fact, educational programs must use people of different ages to prepare.

Flexibility in admission:

No adult should not only be deprived of education because of the necessary conditions for admission in the class does. Of course this is not such a person without academic records to participate in university classes is accepted, Adoption order is that the adults in educational programs at different levels, according to the possibility of using the opportunity that is provided must be based on the experience and knowledge and their knowledge is.

To combine education and job responsibilities:

Adults should be able to work during that time engaged in training classes take them. In other words, their presence in the class should be considered part of their work. This means that low-literate or illiterate working people who are allowed to work an hour of your daily spending surpassed participation in educational programs.

The Three Different Learning Styles:

Style 1: Visual

Fleming states that visual learners have a preference for seeing material in order to learn it.

- **Strengths of the visual learner:** Instinctively follows directions, can easily visualize objects, has a great sense of balance and alignment, is an excellent organizer
- **Best ways to learn:** Studying notes on overhead slides, reading diagrams and handouts, following a PowerPoint presentation, reading from a textbook, studying alone
- How do you know if you're a visual learner?

Style 2: Auditory

With this different learning style, students have to hear information to absorb it.

- **Strengths of the auditory learner:** Understanding subtle changes in tone in a person's voice, writing responses to lectures, oral exams, story-telling, solving difficult problems, working in groups

- **Best ways to learn:** Participating vocally in class, making tapes of class notes and listening to them, reading assignments out loud, studying with a partner or group
- How do you know if you're an auditory learner?

Different Learning Style 3: Kinesthetic

Kinesthetic learners tend to want to move while learning.

- **Strengths of the kinesthetic learner:** Great hand-eye coordination, quick reception, excellent experimenters, good at sports, art, drama, high levels of energy
 - **Best ways to learn:** experiments, acting out a play, standing, moving, or doodling during lectures, studying while performing an athletic activity like bouncing a ball or shooting hoops
- How do you know if you're a kinesthetic learner?

Conclusion

Beyond the issues relating directly to DAEL (Department of Adult Education and Literacy), the task force heard a number of concerns about the Commonwealth's overall approach to adult literacy.

- Lack of coherent statewide leadership and coordination among multiple complementary initiatives aimed at the same problem.
- Lack of continuity in state leadership. Cited in particular was the difficulty sustaining a high level commitment to the issue long enough to make a difference because of changes in priorities of the state's political leaders. A high level of turnover in the leadership of the Department of Adult Education and Literacy has also contributed to the instability.
- Tendency to think of adult education as a separate categorical program rather than a strategy that cuts across the mission and responsibility of multiple Commonwealth programs and initiatives (e.g., early childhood education, welfare reform, economic development, and corrections).
- Multiple uncoordinated categorical federal initiatives that tend to drive (and fragment) policy for an overall state effort that is largely funded by Kentucky.
- A tendency to commingle and confuse different functions. The most important distinction is between functions focused on the needs of clients (adult learners, employers, communities, regions, and the Commonwealth as a whole) and functions associated with the operations and performance of providers. It is important that each of these functions receive attention, yet the tendency is for one (e.g., overseeing a network of providers) to drive out attention to overall system strategy.
- Inadequate coordination of services to meet the needs of individual adults, communities, employers, and regions is hindered by:
 - Vertical financing and regulatory relationships between separate federal and state programs and local providers and administrative units. These vertical relationships can hinder the horizontal coordination of services for individual adult learners, communities, and employers.
 - Turf wars among providers, local politics, and long-standing conflicts among neighboring counties.
 - Inadequate links with and leverage of other public and private initiatives and investments to reach the target population. Major sources of help include employers, postsecondary education, and workforce development.
 - Lack of a state financing policy and strategy for provider performance incentives and collaboration, and tax and other employer incentives for leverage of non-state resources.
 - Lack of programmatic and administrative flexibility to meet the rapidly changing needs of adult learners, employers, regional economies, and communities.

Some research findings that can be a learning process for the Guidelines for training operations are applied, is given below:

- 1- Preparation for adults to learn how much he depends on previous learning. Knowledge that has accumulated because of an ability to absorb new information more person is. Past educational experience features a diverse group of adult learners, the starting point of any activity on the diversity training is emphasized.
- 2- intrinsic motivation, learning a deeper and make them sustainable. When the need is met directly by the learning itself, what is learned, but is complementary learning. Creating a training activity in adult learning needs, learning ensures stable
- 3- Positive reinforcement (reward) learning to reinforce the negative (punishment) is more effective. Many adults because of negative experiences at the beginning of schooling are weak and afraid. Feeling of success in adult learning for continuous learning and adult participation is essential.

- 4- To maximize learning, information must be provided an organized manner. Entries can be simple or complex can be arranged around related concepts are organized. Starting point for organizing content knowledge for adults and adults is linked to past experiences
- 5- Learning, especially regarding skills development, will be added frequently.
- 6 - Duties and meaningful content than meaningless subjects are learned more easily and are later forgotten. This issue, especially for older adult learners is true. Challenges of adult learning facilitators by the way that content was significantly associated with the experiences and needs of learners is.
- 7- Passive than active participation in learning activities, learning increases. Adult educators are allowed to participate actively in India, a stable and meaningful learning to help
- 8- Environmental factors affect the learning. Tangible things such as noise, crowded places, temperature, light and ... Learning process can be prevented. Other factors such as stress, ridicule, pressure, fatigue and low health can also reduce learning.

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