

My Learning Style

Every human being has different personalities, characteristics, and we all have that something that makes us unique. As we all know, the fact stated is true in every way. Because of that same fact we have the tendency to learn in different ways. For some, it might be easier to: visualize, memorize, hear, or touch, to mention some. Personally, I consider myself a sensing learner. Sensing learners are “concrete thinkers, practical oriented toward facts and procedures” (Learning styles). It is important for students to know what learning style they have; but is also important for a teacher to know how to improve their teaching style by knowing more about the different learning styles.

According to Felder and Soloman, “Sensing learners tend to like learning facts, like to solve problems by well-established methods, and are very good at memorizing” (Learning styles and strategies). We can say that sensing learners like to stay focus and stay with the “feet on earth.” In contrast with the intuitive learners, sensors are more careful and practical. They are more likely to understand when they “see” the problem or situation in their heads. Like Bowman states in her research paper, “Sensing learners understand better when they relate to the world” (Sensing and intuitive learners). That’s why they like real life situations, and are not completely comfortable with courses that don’t apply to the real world.

I remember when my dad used to sit with me, maybe two or three times a week to read. I am a native Spanish speaker and for me to hear my dad reading an English book was not something I expected as a thirteen-year-old girl. I was too little to understand

why I would need to learn a different language. And it was even harder to understand because; I was living in a country where everybody spoke Spanish. As I got more into the reading, I started to read by myself. There were some words that I didn't understand, so I would take the Spanish-English dictionary, and look up the word so I could have a better comprehension. I couldn't continue reading if I got stuck in a single word, so at times I felt so tired of doing the same process over and over (book-dictionary-book-dictionary). The time passed and I was getting better and better, I was more fluent and had a better knowledge of the English language. Connecting my experience to my learning style, I can notice that at first, It was very hard for me because I was not able to "relate it to the real world" I was just learning because me dad wanted me to learn not because, I wanted to learn. Then, when I started to put more attention to it I would have to be completely knowledgeable and understand the sentence word by word. That is also one of the characteristics that a sensing learner has.

When I was in freshman year in high school, a group of friends went to my house to study for a math test. Fortunately, math was not a problem at that time of my life (can't say that now!) I felt very confident with math problems, or definitions. One of my friends asked me how to solve an algebra problem. I remembered step by step how the teacher taught us to solve the problem. While I wrote the numbers down I saw my friend's "what-are-you-doing" face. The problem was so easy for me that I didn't realize that my friend had no clue. I tried to teach her all the ways possible but she was still not getting it. Another friend took over and in five minutes he did what I couldn't do. My friend understood the problem, solved it, and got it right. At the end of the day I asked her what he did that make her learn and get it. "I don't know you are too structured and

Methodist and I can't learn that way," she said. And yes, she was right. I was surprised that she found my teaching so overwhelming and confused by something quite basic.

I find very easy to memorize facts, so when a teacher gives me facts and definitions to study for a test is an easy "A" for me. But I have been in classes where the instructor would just talk, without stopping and later in the test expects me to remember everything he/she said. I struggle a little bit if in math class the professor doesn't go over the process of the problem step by step. Once I get it and am sure on how to do it is so easy for me to get it right. I am also very practical and careful when doing a math problem for example. I would do it and then check step by step to make sure to have everything right.

We have seen how differently we can learn. What for some can be trouble-free, and for others a real headache makes the difference between a learning style and another. But what is a learning style? It is amazing to see how some people find very easy to remember names of NBA players, or the exact words of a song, but at the same time struggle to learn subjects for school. According to Felder, learning styles are, "characteristics strengths and preferences in the way, that [learners] take in and process information" (learning styles). I found very interesting how York and Irvin define a learning style, "Is a measure of preference or habit. It measures not potentials but propensities" (485). A learning style does not tell us how smart we are, but tells us our aptitudes, abilities, strengths, weaknesses, and ways that we learn.

As a learner I am expecting to actually LEARN. Not just to be taught and a couple of days later forget about what I've "learn." It is important for a teacher to be aware that in a single classroom everybody can have a different way to learn. It would

make a huge difference if a teacher decides to have a variety of ways to teach. According to some studies, students retain 90 percent of what they say and do (Rief). Doing different activities in class, and making us participate and communicate our thoughts is one of the best ways a teacher can help us to learn. Not to just teach in a single way, reading, explaining, showing, or practicing. But to have a combination so students can be more comfortable and it would be both teaching and learning easier and smoother process.

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