



INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING STYLES AND CASE STUDY IN THIS FIELD.

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Annotation. Learning styles has been the topic of discussions for a long time. Many researchers have been doing an effort to find conceivable factors that affect learning styles. One person is studying for a test every day and the test results is not as they expected, after so long reading process. Why? The thing is there is no one way to study some methods might work great for one person and not at all for others.

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Learning styles has been the topic of discussions for a long time. Many researchers have been doing an effort to find conceivable factors that affect learning styles. One person is studying for a test every day and the test results is not as they expected, after so long reading process. Why? The thing is there is no one way to study some methods might work great for one person and not at all for others. Everybody learns differently. In order to find a study method that's best for you it is important to know your learning style. One of the main factors that held the attention is the gender differences in language learning styles. According to researches boys and girls acquire languages differently from each other (Ebel, 1999). This case study involves small-scale research on individual and gender differences in learning styles, reasons of much more successful language learning process of females



than males. For this case study, I conducted a small research consisted of two students: one female and one male ESL learner. During this research I gave them freedom to choose different handouts then I interviewed them about what is their the most productive way of studying. At the end, I should confess that the results of the participants nearly the same with previous researchers. The female ESL learner found interesting both visual and tactile learning style however opted for listening style.

The term ‘learning style’ has been used to describe an individual’s natural, habitual, and preferred way of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills (Reid 1995).

In addition, Reid et al., (1998) mention that language learning styles is an ‘internally based characteristics, often not perceived or consciously used by learners, for the intake and comprehension of new information’ (p. ix). According to Cornett (1983) the language learning styles are the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behavior. Reid (1998) restate that there are six major learning style preferences, covering visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, group and individual.

First group involves whom are prefer the visual learning style. When teacher starts using visuals Visual learner may find it easier to focus and understand the material. They prefer watching over listening, reading or anything else. Students who prefer the visual learning style ‘learn well from seeing words in books, on the chalkboard, and in workbooks. Students can remember and understand information and instructions better if their teachers read them. Students will not need a lot of oral explanation and they can learn alone with a book’ (Reid, 1998,p. 165).



Another type of learning style is auditory or may be called “aural”. They seem to learn best by ear. Students who prefer auditory learning style, ‘learn well from hearing words spoken and from oral or by moving their lips as they read; especially when they are learning new materials. They will learn well from audiotapes, lecturers, and class discussion’ (Reid 1998, p. 165).

Kinesthetic students learn effectively by ‘experiencing and by being physically involved in classroom experiences. Students can remember information well when they actively participate in activities, role-play, field-trips and so on’ (p.166).

The fourth style is tactile learning style and they easily acquire the language ‘when they have an opportunity to do hands-on experiences with materials. In a laboratory experiments, designing and building models, and touching and working with things may create the most preferred learning atmosphere for the students.

Fifthly, Reid, J. M. point out that ‘students who prefer the group learning style best when they are studying in a group or at least with another student. Students value group interaction and class work with other students and can remember information better when they work with two or three classmates. The stimulation and motivation students gain from group work or learn or work with others help them learn and understand new information better’ (p. 166).

Finally, the students who loves solitude and study better when they are alone, may be referred as individual learners. This kind of quiet atmosphere helps them to be more productive and they make better progress in learning when they work by themselves (Reid,1998, p.166).

For this case study, I worked with two students; one male and one female student to observe how individuals are different in choosing styles and their preference are not the same in the



terms of styles. Beforehand, both of the participants asked from me not to reveal their names. So I am going to mention them as a Student A (male student), Student B (female student). Student A (male student), is a very active and talkative seventeen-year-old ordinary school boy. He was born and raised in a traditional Uzbek family. The Uzbek language is his native language and he is fluent in Russian as well. He said that his is interested in learning languages and I think that his English learning journey is becoming much more fun. When I took placement test to identify his level, results showed that his level is pre-intermediate. According to his report, he has been learning English consistently for a year. Before that, he took ordinary school lessons in government schools. To reach this level, he studied not so hard, by watching you tube videos, cartoons, movies he enriched his lexical resource. In addition, he managed to gain solid foundation in grammar but he has difficulties with his communication skills; lack of fluency and coherence affects his overall performance. In the terms of learning styles I can't say only one learning style for him. Because, in debates he likes to study in group and discuss materials with others. Sometimes, he read his notes out loud because it helps him to hear what he has been studying. Moreover, he take notes during classes and reads over them often when he is trying to memorize something. And he is referred as an auditory and tactile learner at the same time.

Student B is a sixteen-year-old female student who was born and raised in the Uzbek family. She knows almost three languages. Uzbek is her native language and when she is at school she mainly uses Russian and she is fluent enough in that language, and English is in progress. When I conducted an interview with her, honestly I was amazed by her speech. She managed to gain solid foundation which adequate for starting IELTS classes. The result of placement



test showed that her level is around upper-intermediate. When I asked how she reached to this level, she stated that the atmosphere at home and profession of her parents were golden opportunity her. Moreover, she was privileged by her siblings as well, because all of her elder siblings are fluent in English. From elementary school, she was exposed to English at school, extra classes and interest for language learning gave her a distinct advantage. However, after interviewing her, I realized some obvious problems. Her overall speaking performance was satisfactory, but there was still room for improvement. For example, inappropriate word choice, impact of L1 on her pronunciation. In addition, in writing she needs certain amount of improvement on coherence and cohesion. After all of the test and interviews it became clear that, her learning style was a visual. She preferred to study alone with books, colored highlighters. And she finds watching videos much more productive and a fun way of learning rather than reading books and listening teachers.

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