

The 25th P.A.R.K. Conference

25.
Special edition
P.A.R.K. Conference

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Embrace the Differences Learner Preferences and Strategies

Marjorie Rosenberg

Mendel University, Brno, 9 November 2019

'I never knew there were different styles of learning. I thought I just couldn't learn a foreign language.'

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How do learners learn differently?

- › By filtering information through different sensory channels
- › By the strategies used to perceive, store and recall material
- › Through the approaches used by individuals
- › Through cognitive processing
- › Through behavioural patterns



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Viva la différence!

- › Classes consist of unique individuals
- › Learning takes place in different ways
- › Different sensory channels are used to perceive, process, store and recall information
- › Mixing methods reaches more learners

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Are we getting the message across?



Disrupting Ray Cohn
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In the classroom

- › Most classes have variety of learner types
- › Teachers often teach in the way *we* learn
- › Mix of methods can reach more learners
- › Help learners stretch out of preferred styles
- › Encourage learners to develop successful strategies
- › Harmonise and challenge learners
- › Metacognition of styles gives learners more insight
- › Tolerance grows from acceptance of other styles



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Myths and misconceptions

- › Everyone learns the same
- › We need to teach to each style separately
- › Being aware of styles / preferences takes too much time in the classroom
- › Some styles / preferences are better than others
- › Learner competence is connected to their style

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What styles are *not*

- › An excuse
- › A way to pigeon-hole
- › Right or wrong
- › A limitation with no possibility of stretching
- › An indication of competence
- › Judgemental



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Two models

- › Sensory-perception: VAK
- › Cognitive processing: Global-Analytic



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VAK Model

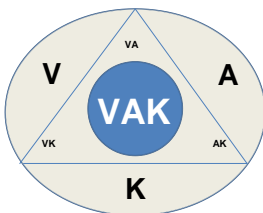
- ☐ Visual
- ☐ Auditory
- ☐ Kinaesthetic motoric
- ☐ Kinaesthetic emotional



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Standard VAK Model



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Visual Learners' Strategies

- › need to see things written down
- › write out words to check spelling
- › usually take notes in class
- › like visual materials and handouts
- › generally have good handwriting
- › like to use colours and highlighters
- › may draw ideas to remember them



They need to rearrange material and learn it again.

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Miming a process / activity

- › Form a small group of 6 – 8
- › Choose one of the processes or activities from the list and mime the steps to the others
- › Have them guess what the activity is and name each of the steps you mime
 - Finding a paper jam and fixing it in a photocopier
 - Getting ready for a long car trip to an unfamiliar destination
 - Preparing for a presentation on a new subject
 - Making an omelet with cheese, vegetables, etc.



Kinaesthetic Emotional Learners' Strategies

- feel comfortable in a group in which they like the people
- need to connect learning with positive feelings
- often personalise their learning materials
- may need to find their own reasons for learning
- like the freedom to be creative
- need to be able to ask for help



They need to learn to put their emotions aside.



Activities for Kinaesthetic Emotional Learners

- Using role plays
- Creating personalized activities
- Asking for emotional responses
- Making use of creativity
- Telling personal stories to illustrate point
- Discussions of personal likes and dislikes
- Personal surveys and questionnaires
- Cooperative learning activities (interdependence within groups)



Cooperative learning

- › Put students in cooperative expert groups
- › Give each group a short text
- › Have them answer questions about it
- › Put them together in home groups
- › Ask about the texts, experts in each group help the others to answer



	Home Group A	Home Group B	Home Group C	Home Group D
Expert Group 1	Person A-1	Person B-1	Person C-1	Person D-1
Expert Group 2	Person A-2	Person B-2	Person C-2	Person D-2
Expert Group 3	Person A-3	Person B-3	Person C-3	Person D-3
Expert Group 4	Person A-4	Person B-4	Person C-4	Person D-4



Global / Analytic Model



❑ **Global**



❑ **Analytic**



Global Learners' Strategies

- remember the entire experience rather than the details
- prefer to try things out rather than read detailed explanations
- perceive information holistically
- are relationship-oriented in groups
- like to please others
- value feelings over facts
- tend to be spontaneous



They need to learn to take criticism without attaching emotions to it.



Activities for Global Learners

- Unjumbling words or sentences
- Paraphrasing
- Spontaneous role plays
- Creative writing
- Discovering rules from examples
- Storytelling – predicting – creating endings



Telling a story about the others

- Form small groups
- Using one of the pictures, decide what another group of learners did together last weekend
- Create a beginning and end
- Be as creative as possible

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Analytic Learners' Strategies

- perceive information in detailed way
- remember specifics
- may prefer to work alone
- are generally self-motivated
- are task-oriented
- value facts over feelings
- can usually take criticism more rationally



They need to work on creating an overview and not get caught up in the details.



Activities for Analytic Learners

- Word grids
- Matching activities
- Logic puzzles
- True/false activities
- Error correction
- Problem-solving activities
- Using critical thinking skills
- Structuring and categorizing
- Using maths skills



The Magic Square

Match definitions 1-9 to the words and phrases in the 'magic square'. Write a number in each box. When you finish, the columns and rows will add up to 15.

- 1 what you pay to borrow money from a bank or other financial institution
- 2 give someone money for a fixed time
- 3 a decision about how safe it is to lend money to a person or company
- 4 the maximum amount of money that you can spend with a single credit card
- 5 how you have to pay money back to a bank
- 6 when you buy something now and pay for it later
- 7 when you do not pay an amount you borrowed right away but later
- 8 the lowest amount that you can repay when you buy things on credit
- 9 take money directly out of a bank account



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<input type="checkbox"/> credit	<input type="checkbox"/> carry a balance	<input type="checkbox"/> lend money	= 15
<input type="checkbox"/> interest	<input type="checkbox"/> repayment terms	<input type="checkbox"/> debit	= 15
<input type="checkbox"/> minimum payment	<input type="checkbox"/> credit rating	<input type="checkbox"/> credit limit	= 15

English for Banking and
Finance 2
Rosenberg, Pearson 2012



The Magic Square Answer Key

[6] credit	[7] carry a balance	[2] lend money
[1] interest	[5] repayment terms	[9] debit
[8] minimum payment	[3] credit rating	[4] credit limit



An activity for all: Grammar Bingo

- Visual learners like to see the questions written out
- Auditory learners like to ask and answer questions
- Kinaesthetic emotional learners like the personalised aspect
- Kinaesthetic motoric learners like to move about
- Global learners like to have all the tenses on one page
- Analytic learners like practicing the tenses and making sure they are correct



Grammar Bingo

Write answers to the questions. Mingle with the others and find someone with the same answer.
Try to get five answers in a row (across, down or diagonal) from five different people.
When you have done this you have 'Bingo'!

What were you doing yesterday at 8 pm?	What haven't you done for years?	What do you do every morning?	What are you going to do this evening?	What food did you like best as a child?
What do you do once a month?	What are you studying?	What do you do on the weekend?	What book are you reading?	Which sport have you never done?
How many movies have you seen this year?	Where do you live?	When did you start to learn English?	What do you hope will happen next year?	What do you dislike doing?



How activities appeal to different learner types

- Using different sensory channels
- Making use of different cognitive processing
- Helping learners make use of strengths
- Creating possibilities to discover new strategies
- Accepting how students learn
- Giving a feeling of progress
- Increasing confidence and motivation



When giving/writing instructions ...

- Remember to use different words:
 - Look at ...
 - Listen to ...
 - Discuss ...
 - Imagine you are ...
 - Draw ...
 - Create ...
 - Choose one or more ...
 - Analyze the ...



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Finding ways to stretch

- Writing ⇒ Speaking
- Listening ⇒ Movement
- Movement ⇒ Writing
- Overview ⇒ Details
- Details ⇒ Overview
- Writing ⇒ Movement
- Listening ⇒ Speaking
- Facts ⇒ Emotions
- Emotions ⇒ Facts



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Expanding activities

- Organizing visually (V) – have learners speak about the words
- Half crossword (A) – write a telephone dialogue using the phrases
- Cooperative learning (KE) – write summaries of the articles
- Miming processes (KM) – write out the process step-by-step using sequencing words
- Telling a story about the others (G) – act the story out
- Magic Square (A) – role play a dialogue using the vocabulary



Asking for feedback

- › What worked for whom?
- › Why did it work?
- › What did you remember about it?
- › What can you do on your own?
- › How can you stretch?
- › What else can you do?



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What role do learning styles play in the classroom?

- › A way to raise awareness
- › Learners take an active part
- › Can increase motivation
- › Learner-centred
- › Help learners develop successful strategies



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Time for Reflection

- › Which activities did you enjoy most?
- › How did these compare with your learning preferences?
- › Which activities will work in your classroom?
- › Do you have ideas for adapting the activities?
- › How can you stretch?

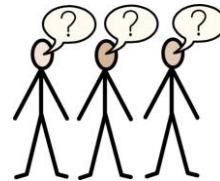


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Any questions?



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Acknowledgements

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CEM – The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. 1961 and Microsoft clip art

Activities taken from

- › *Communicative Business English Activities*, Marjorie Rosenberg, Express Publishing 2018
- › *Creating Activities for Different Learner Types*, Marjorie Rosenberg, Wayzgoose Press 2016
- › *English for Banking and Finance 2*, Marjorie Rosenberg, Pearson 2012
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- › *Technical Connections 2*, Sigrid Haydo-Pruggger, Sabine Martinjak, Petra Preede, Marjorie Rosenberg, hpt 2012

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Thank you for your attention.



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