

Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: Insights from Learning Styles and Learning Theories

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Abstract

Regardless of which aspects should be taught to who and when, in this model it is assumed that learning theories and learning styles apparently fail to approach this framework comprehensively. The gap among learning styles, learning theories, use of aids for teaching and learning vocabulary will be discussed below.

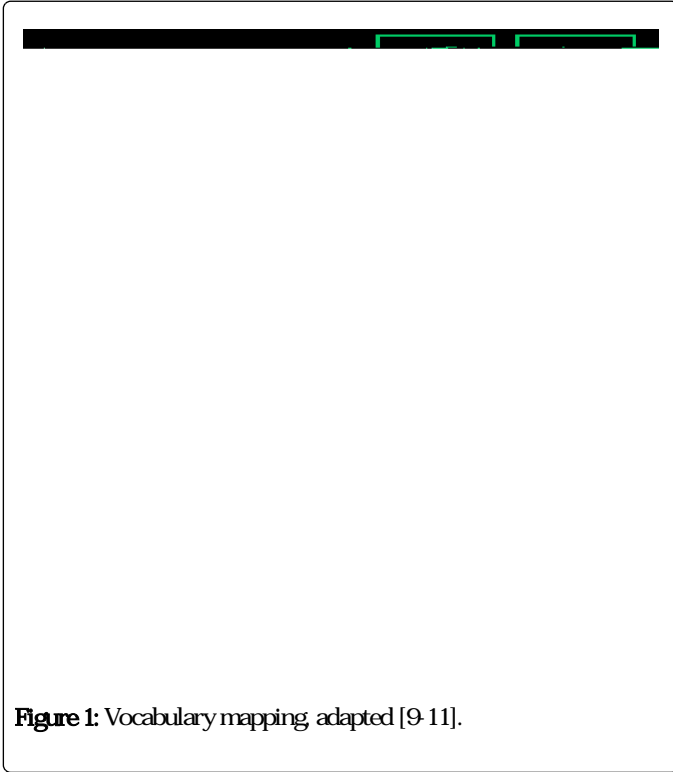


Figure 1: Vocabulary mapping adapted [9-11].

Restructuring

difference in the scores among the four learning modalities. Moreover, the authors do not agree to the inclusion of texts within the visual modality and for this reason they proposed the (R) learning modality (i.e. VARK) as compared to (VAK).



Figure 5: Anthony Gregorc's learning style proposed model.

Gregorc [7] proposed Mind Styles Model which is essentially based on perceptual abilities. These are divided into perceptual abilities and ordering abilities (Figure 5). While the perceptual abilities are divided into concrete and abstract ones, the order abilities have also two forms, namely sequential and random ordering abilities. In this model, neither of the perceptual abilities is absolute, rather there is a dominating one that a person would use more comfortably than the other. It is not clear though whether this generalisation is applicable to the four formed modalities. In other words, if there is a dominating perceptual ability and a dominating ordering ability, would that formula be applicable to a dominating learning modality (e.g. concrete sequential)? If this is allowed within this model, then it contradicts the first view that either concrete or abstract should be the dominant perceptual ability. And it also contradicts the view that either sequential or random should be the dominating ordering ability!

Discussion

Have introduced the above five models, now each of the three learning styles in relation to the the learning theories model and the word aspects model will be discussed. First, it should be noted that the framework for possible aids that can be used for teaching language is based on the division of aids into five types: 1) visual aids (e.g. charts), 2) audio aids (e.g. tapes), 3) audio-visual aids (e.g. TV programmes), 4) action aids (e.g. trips for cultural and language learning purposes), and 5) Multimedia aids (e.g. a mixture of any of the above four). According to the VAK theory, we assume that anything realised through eyes, then this would go with the visual learning style and anything realised through listening, this would go with the auditory learning style, and finally anything that is realised through physical acts would go for the kinaesthetic learning style. This would match visual aids, audio aids and action aids, respectively. In other words, if we consider the two lexical items (mind and brain), then a visual learner would prefer the use of visual aids to first understand these two lexical items, then recognise the different between them. There will be different stages for covering all the aspects of these two items in terms of form, meaning and distribution. There will be a difficulty explaining the abstract lexical item (mind) through the visual aids although a definition of the word in the form of text would be considered as a visual aid too! The meaning aspect is apparently easier to be processed

and presented through the visual aids. On the other hand, there is a need to switch to the auditory learning style, yet the audio aids for a proper oral form of the lexical items—both the abstract and the concrete lexical items (i.e. mind and brain). At the same time, kinaesthetic learning style which requires physical actions to be achieved does not necessarily match all the lexical items, especially the abstract ones. It would be easy to present to your students something reflecting the brain but it would not be the same level of easiness for the case of abstract words. While some techniques of acting like taking the students to somewhere to contemplate might indicate this meaning, but this again would be tied to the learners' level and age.

To move to the VARK model, a major different in this model is that first it excludes texts from the visual learning style—adding the (R) learning style. Second, it assumes that learners only have learning preferences, other than learning preferences and learning modes as in the VAK theory. Based on this, visual learners can learn (brain and mind) through visual aids (e.g. realia, models, drawings, etc.); while Readh.

