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THE THEORETICAL APPROACH TO LEARNING STYLE

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It is noted that each student prefers different learning styles or learning techniques. Students prefer to learn in different ways: some like to study alone, to act in a group, others to sit quietly aside and observe others, and others prefer to do a little of each.

At the beginning of the process of formal education (school), the expectations from children and their parents are high. One of the factors that influence school performance is represented by the student's preferred learning style. The learning style is a manner to learm specific to each student.

When you know your learning style very well, the adaptation becomes easier, learning becomes more efficient and pleasant, tasks being easy to accomplish.

Keywords: *students, learning style,personal developments, teaching profesion.*

ABORDAREA TEORETICĂ A STILULUI DE ÎNVĂȚARE

Este remarcat faptul că fiecare elev preferă diferite stiluri de învățare sau tehnici de învățare. Elevii preferă să învețe în diferite moduri: unora le place să studieze singuri, să acționeze în grup, altora să stea liniștiți deoparte și să-i observe pe ceilalți, iar alții preferă să facă câte puțin din fiecare.

În debutul copiilor în procesul de educație formală (școala), așteptările din partea acestora și a părinților lor sunt mari. Unul din factorii care influențează randamentul școlar este reprezentat de stilul de învățare preferat de elev. Stilul de învățare este o manieră proprie fiecărui elev de a învăța.

Când îți cunoști foarte bine stilul de învățare, adaptarea se face mai ușor, învățarea devine mai eficientă și mai plăcută, sarcinile fiind ușor de realizat.

Cuvinte-cheie: *elevi, stil de învățare, dezvoltare personală, cadru didactic.*

Introduction

Learning has been and continues to be the focus of attention of specialists in the field of educational sciences and psychology, due to the complexity of the process and its essential role in the formation and development of personality.

Various explanatory theories of the learning process can be found in the specialized literature, which include various data and conclusions. These theories explore a wide range of perspectives, starting from classical stimulus-response approaches and reaching humanistic, social, cognitive and constructivist aspects of learning. These theoretical paradigms represent the foundation for the development and implementation of didactic practices in varied educational contexts.

At the human level, the learning process reveals its multiple valences, being both informative and formative. In this perspective, we understand learning as a complex approach to knowledge and life, emphasizing the human ability to acquire new skills to better adapt to changes in the environment. At this level, the concept of learning acquires a psycho-pedagogical dimension and refers to the process of knowledge assimilation, acquisition of skills and development of intellectual abilities [7].

In addition, the individual discovers a fundamentally new way of accumulating and transmitting experience through social interaction. Thus, we can affirm that learning, through its contents, influences behavior modification, being influenced by individual experience. This involves, on the one hand, a cognitive aspect, which includes understanding, information processing and compliance with norms, and on the other hand, a practical aspect, which includes the acquisition of practical skills, the formation of habits and adaptation to social behavior patterns [9].

The fundamental purpose of every educational process is to explore and effectively exploit the learning resources available to students. Among these essential resources is learning style, which influences how knowledge is directed and assimilated, as well as how the student interacts with his teachers and peers. The style differences approach is essentially an approach to the diversity of human capacities to search for, organize, interpret, imagine, and ultimately reuse information. In the pursuit of knowledge, students use these capacities in various ways and proportions [3].

In the opinion of A. Kolb, the learning style designates the concrete ways through which the individual reaches changes in behavior through lived experience, reflection, experiment and conceptualization [8] .

Learning style is a construct that, together with learning preferences and cognitive styles, can be included in the umbrella term „personal style” [14].

It should be noted that a minimal definition of learning styles can be found in Honey, P. and Mumford, A. „a description of the attitudes and behaviors that determine an individual's preferred way of learning [6, p. 34].

„Learning outcomes depend on the conditions in which students study” estimated Bates and Sangr [1].

In the research carried out by Hall and Villareal, they emphasized the fact that in describing the most useful activities carried out in education, students tended to refer to these activities from the perspective of their own learning preferences: „I am a visual/ tactile learner... I have to show me” [5].

„Learning styles, also called cognitive styles, represent those cognitive, affective and generally psychological characteristics that indicate the ways in which people who learn, perceive, interact and respond to the learning environment. It represents all the cognitive characteristics that have a determining role in the learning process” [4, p.76-77].

Learning style is also defined according to Pritchard, such as: a certain way in which an individual learns; a mode of learning, an individual preference or best way of thinking, processing, and demonstrating that information has been assimilated and thus learning has occurred; an individual's preferred means of acquiring knowledge and skills; habitual habits, strategies or mental behaviors regarding learning, as a particular way of thinking about the educational process that the person has [13, p.41].

Their learning styles have a significant relationship with knowledge performance, namely that students with assimilative and convergent learning styles have better results in computer-assisted learning; on the other hand, divergent and accommodative students have better results in instructor-assisted learning.

Generalizing various opinions, we will conceive it integratively: learning style as a superordinate concept, consisting of personal cognitive, affective and psychic characteristics that influence the way individuals perceive, interact and respond to the learning environment, and which, together with the preferences of learning and cognitive styles, fall under the general term of „personal style”.

The large number of models and theories is justified, since the theoretical premises from which their authors start are different. An extensive study, a critical analysis of learning styles is carried out by Coffield, F., Moseley, D., Hall, E. and Ecclestone, K.

In this context, we would like to mention that none of the analyzed models is perfect or complete, each of them managing to capture and satisfactorily model certain aspects and less others. Each theory has its explanatory value, strengths and weaknesses, the images offered being complementary.

Starting from the theoretical contributions made in the field, the authors carried out an examination of the most influential theoretical models and instruments of learning styles with a special emphasis on validity and support with practical applicability. Figure no. 1 below represents the synthesis made by the authors after examining 71 models regarding learning styles [2]

In this context, the models considered by the authors to be significant are identified, models that have been classified into five large „families”.

Within these models, the most significant differences observed at the individual level are determined by psychomotor peculiarities. Research shows that several characteristics influence a student's strategy: attitudes, motivation, culture, beliefs, age, learning style, tolerance for ambiguity, and „each characteristic develops in its own way, with unequal accumulations over units of time” [11, p. 61-62].

In the given study, we intend to analyze the models and learning styles that we expect to apply in our research.

Fig. 1. Families of learning styles [2].

Learning styles and preferences are largely constitutionally based including the four modalities: VAKT[2]	Learning styles reflect deep-seated features of the cognitive structure, inciuding 'patterns of ability'	Learning styles are one component of a reiatively stable personality type	Learning styles are flexibly stable learning preferences	Move on from learning styles to learning approaches, strategies, orientations and conceptions of learning
Dunn and Dunn[3] Gregorc Bartlett Betts Cordon Marks Paivlo Richardson Sheehan Torrance	Riding Broverman Cooper Gardner et al. Guitford Holzman & Klein Hudson Hunt Kagan Kogan Messick Pettigrew Witkin	Apter Jackson Myers-Briggs Epstein & Meier Harrison-Branson Miller	Allinson & Hayes Herrmann Honey & Mumford Kolb Felder & Silverman Hermanussen, Wierstra, de Jong & Thijssen Kaufmann Kirton McCarthy	Entwistle Sternberg Vermunt BiggS Conti & Kolody Grasha-Riechmann Hill Marton & SâljO McKenney & Keen Pask Pintrlch, Smith, Garcia & McCeachie Schmeck Weinstein, Zimmerman & Palmer Whetton & Cameron

Vermunt proposed a model that was grounded in modern constructivist perspectives, aiming to provide a deeper and more integrated understanding of the learning process. According to his view, the learning environment and the student's learning experiences influence the development of learning styles. Thus, they interact with environmental conditions, causing the individual to adopt different approaches to learning. The established learning styles in turn interact with the environment, thus determining the choice of specific approaches to the learning process by the individual [15].

One of the most influential models of learning styles is the one created by Dunn and Dunn. It combines elements of internal determination with those of external determination. In essence, this model states that there are five lines that determine learning styles: the influence of the environment; the influence of the emotional (motivation, persistence, responsibility, conformity/ non-conformity, the need for structure); group influence (preference for individual or group work, with or without an authority figure); the influence of physiological elements (preference for visual, auditory or kinesthetic, favorite moments of the day); the influence of psychological elements (analytical, global, impulsive or reflexive information processing models) [apud 12, p. 66].

D. Kolb identifies four learning styles: accommodative style, convergent style, divergent style, assimilative style. Each learning style designates concrete ways by which behavior changes are reached through lived experience, reflection, experiment and conceptualization. Each learning style designates concrete

ways through which behavior changes are reached through lived experience, reflection, experiment and conceptualization [8].

We emphasize the fact that when we talk about the problem of learning styles, we focus less on what is achieved and insist on how school learning is achieved.

Honey and Mumford highlight 4 distinct learning styles. The four learning styles described by the authors are: active style, reflective style, theoretical style and pragmatic style. Knowing the specific student's style, the teacher can choose the teaching methods and adapt the learning process so that the assimilation of new information and skills becomes easier and more efficient [6].

The classification of learning styles developed by Honey and Mumford distinguishes between the following four styles:

The active – If this style characterizes you, you like to be the center of attention. You put a lot of enthusiasm into practical activities. As soon as an activity is finished, you want to immediately start a new one, without stopping and analyzing what you have done and what you have learned. The study that involves the following methods suits you best: training, projects, role play and outdoor learning.

The Reflective – You learn best by standing back and viewing experiences from a number of different perspectives before jumping to a conclusion. Take your time to analyze your newly acquired knowledge before you start putting it into practice. The following study methods suit you best: group discussions, feedback from others, mentoring, observation, film and video.

The theorist – If you are a theorist, you prefer to learn by asking questions and constantly looking for the logic behind assumptions and concepts. Enjoy intellectual challenges. You have a logical and rational approach and tend to be objective. The most suitable study methods for you are: research, reading, distance learning, continuing education, learning in traditional classrooms, lectures, questions and answers.

The Pragmatic – The Pragmatic is always looking for a connection between learning and the practical application of the acquired knowledge. You like to experiment with ideas: Do they work in practice and how? [6].

Nevot identifies for each learning style – active, reflective, theoretical and pragmatic – the main blockages that students can encounter and suggests some solutions that teachers can approach, to improve or improve these sensitive aspects.

In the active learning style, the most common obstacles that can prevent the development of this knowledge are: the fear of failure or the fear of making mistakes, anxiety, the feeling of obligation to do what you don't want, lack of self-confidence, thinking too carefully about certain things .

Proposed solutions include new activities, things that have not been done before, at least occasionally, activating curiosity, practicing problem solving in groups, changes in activities during classes; discussions; communication of ideas, solving exercises using repetitive techniques, allowing mistakes, stimulating critical thinking.

Regarding the reflective style, the main obstacles are determined by insufficient time given to planning and thinking, the obligation to quickly change the activity, impatience, lack of control and lack of orientation on the finality, students paying more attention to the work itself than to obtaining the result. Teachers can improve these aspects by practicing careful writing, drawing on the board to perform certain tasks, developing protocols, gathering information through observation, oral communication, investigation, adding new information, allowing time for creative thinking, providing thinking models, introducing a stage of reflection in each action, awakening the joy of knowing, activating and maintaining interest, the teacher's oral presentation.

For students who have a predominantly theoretical learning style, they may face the following obstacles: the impulse to stick with first impressions, preference for intuition and subjectivity, disapproval of structured and organized approaches, excessive dependence on others (teachers or colleagues), preference for spontaneity and risk, the inability to convert thoughts into action and the inability to complete and perform work. The suggestions offered refer to the careful reading of theorems and problems; analyzing complex situations; anticipating obstacles and finding solutions to overcome them; summarizing theories; formulating conclusions; practice formulating questions; perseverance; memorization practice and automation; application of concepts.

The pragmatic learning style can raise certain problems for students, such as: overthinking about useful things, lack of vision about the usefulness of what is learned, not completing subjects, distraction and lack of concentration. Possible suggestions for remedying these problems consist of self-correction and self-assessment, asking for help from experienced people, experiments and observations, studying the techniques used by other people, role-playing, exercises and using images [11].

So, it can be said with certainty that every student has his own learning style. The way in which he adapts the learning methods to his own style will determine the achievement of optimal results.

We cannot ignore another model of learning style – the Felder-Silverman model. This model, putting in parentheses the conditions in which the educational act is carried out, takes into account four types of information processing: active, reflective, practical, abstract [16]. Each of these types has a manifest preference for a particular type of approach to new information.

The active learner prefers to manipulate and try to work with information, to experiment, while the reflective learner tends to focus on theoretical aspects, to speculate on possible outcomes.

Another discrimination is related to the difference between those who learn intuitively and those who are focused on sensing concrete elements (sensing vs. intuitive learning). In essence, if students focused on the concrete are more connected to the aspects encountered in everyday life, they are intuitive, they have a strong emphasis on theory, on creativity.

The third tier is related to the difference between students who prefer visual learning versus those who prefer written text

The fourth level is related to the way of analyzing the acquired information – students focused on sequential learning tend towards an approach with small steps, on a formal logic and easy to decipher, while students with a global approach approach the analysis of information in a way holistically, but have difficulty explaining how they solved the problem.

We also mention the following styles identified by Albert Canfield:

1) Social – that prefers group learning activities;
2) Independent – likes to achieve goals alone;
3) Applied – prefers learning activities directly related to real world experiences;
4) Conceptual – gets involved in verbally structured tasks;
5) Neutral – usually has learning difficulties, does not prefer any of the above modalities;
6) Mixed styles – based on combination of strategies: social/ applied, social/ conceptual, independent/ applied, independent/ conceptual.

In agreement with the ideas presented previously, we confirm that experiential learning is oriented towards affirming the student's individuality in the learning process.

We can conclude that by identifying students' learning styles, teachers will optimize their teaching methods according to students' learning styles, they will really clarify their students' needs and, last but not least, they will have better results in teaching and implicitly, school satisfaction will increase.

We also mention that the inclination a person shows towards a learning style can be based on the environment in which he grew up or previous life experiences. Depending on these external factors, the student can develop skills specific to a certain style. We can highlight the fact that a person's learning style is determined by his intellectual abilities and therefore knowing his own style is particularly important.

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