

THE FINAL MEETING'S REPORT

Individuals differ in their general skills, aptitudes and preferences for processing information, constructing meaning from it and applying it to new situations. Individuals also differ in their abilities to perform different tasks and outcomes (Jonassen and Grabowski, 1992).

Often teachers share the frustration of knowing they are failing to meet the needs of a portion of the students in their classes. One reason is the failure to accommodate the unique learning styles of those students. Recognizing and defining the styles by which a person learns is important to the learning process as diagnostic tests are to the healing process in the field of medicine. Teachers are most helpful when they assist students in identifying and learning through their own style preferences (Friedman and Alley, 1984).

Learning style differences are not distinguished and systematically analyzed in classroom environment. Teachers and students are not informed and are not made conscious about learning styles. In addition, since students' skills, aptitudes, interests and preferences are not identified properly, there is a decrease in academic achievement and negative attitude toward learning and an increase in discipline problems. Besides, students are properly unable to choose appropriate jobs according to their skills and interests in many existing educational systems in different countries.

No two students are alike. They have different backgrounds, strengths and weaknesses, interests, ambitions, senses of responsibility, levels of motivation, and approaches to studying. Teaching methods also vary. Some instructors mainly lecture, while others spend more time on demonstrations or activities; some focus on principles and others on applications; some emphasize memory and others understanding. How much a given student learns in a class is governed in part by that student's native ability and prior preparation but also by the compatibility of the student's attributes as a learner and the instructor's teaching style (Felder and Brent, 2005). Mismatches between an instructor's style of teaching and a student's method of learning have been cited as potential learning obstacles within the classroom and as a reason for using a variety of teaching modalities to deliver instruction. The concept of using a menu of teaching modalities is based on the premise that at least some content will be presented in a manner suited to every type of learner within a given classroom or course. (Dunn and Dunn, 1987)

This project's motto is "In an ideal world, everyone in the class should be treated differently according to their individual learning styles." We believe that providing varied and flexible lessons will improve students' success and skill as well as making the lessons more enjoyable and meaningful. This Project aims to develop varied, flexible and appropriate lessons for a variety of learners which are separated according to auditory, visual and kinesthetic.

In our study, first we observed physics, history, maths, chemistry and history lessons together and we tried to display you how we teach in our education system. Then to support our thesis, we mainly focused on biology and english classes, because to be able to prove our thesis, the conditions of control groups and experiment groups should be same. In biology and english classes teachers, topics, grade, and level of students were same. Our variables were varied and flexible exercises. We observed our students in two classes: first classes-biology and english classes- were not varied for different learning styles, teachers taught the related topic at random without considering types of activities for different learning learning styles; second classes –again biology and english- were varied and planned for different types learner, same teachers taught the same topics after having prepared different activities for each learning styles.

On Tuesday, in her lesson our biology teacher only use the interactive board and could just addressed visual and auditory learners. On Thursday, she wanted her students to find and bring ---- into the class. After learning the properties of the related plants, students touched the plants they brought into the class, examined them, compared their plants and their properties with their classmates. They actively participated in the lesson.

On Tuesday, in her class our English teacher used the coursebook, did only the exercises in the book , as a result the needs of auditory and kinesthetic learners were not taken into account. On Thursday the same English teacher in addition to coursebook, used interactive board, made students watch DVD and answer the questions about it, helped students form problem and advice groups based on the sentences they had and matched them in front of the class. With these varied activities, our teacher supported the all visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners' needs.

At the end of these lessons, students in different classes were tested with the same exams. The results showed that students who had varied and flexible lessons were considerably more successful than the students in the other class. In addition to being more successful, students in varied and flexible classes were not get bored and got encouraged about the lesson.

In our study, we separated our students according to their learning styles but we did not put the visual students in a visual class, auditory students in a auditory class and kinesthetic students in a kinesthetic class. We grouped them in the same class due to the three very important reason;

1. In her research Yardım (2011) found out that none of the students has or uses only one learning style. Although one learning style is more dominant than the others in learners, learners use the combination of learning styles together. In other words, one is heavily visual but at the same he is a bit auditory and kinesthetic. Moody (1988) defended the idea that a student may have or may use more than one learning style. So we we seperate the students only visual, only auditory and only kinesthetic, we will neglect the visual learners' auditory and kinesthetic needs and this will be same for other types of learners.
2. In addition, Yardım (2011) and Price (1980) found out that learning styles can change according to gender. Yardım (2011) claimed that girls are more visual than boys. In our education system, we try to balance the number of males and females in the same class. If we seperate the students considering their learning styles, probably one class will be almost full of boys while the class will be almost full of girls. Such kind of classifying is not appropriate for our education policy.
3. Identifying students' learning styles and seperating them into the different classes require an expert study. Unfortunately, most of the school in Turkey lack of such kind of consultant.

For these reasons, we did not seperate the students into different classes considering their learning styles. Instead, we presented variety of techniques and activities in order to reach the majority of students.

Dunn, K and R. Dunn, 1987, "Dispelling Outmoded Beliefs about Student Learning", *Educational Leadership*, Vol.44, Issue.6, pp.55-62

Felder, R. M. And Brent, 2005, "Understanding Student Differences", *Journal of Engineering Education*, Vol.94, Issue.1, pp.57-72

Friedman, P and Alley, R., 1984, "Learning / Teaching Styles: Applying the Principles", *Theory into Practice*, Vol.23, Issue.1, pp.77-81

Moody, R., 1988, "Personality Preferences and Foreign Language Learning", *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol.72, No.4, pp.529-540

Price, G. E., 1980, Which Learning Style Elements are Stable and Which Tend to Change over time?, http://www.activeintelligence.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=29

Yardim, Ö.Y. ,2011, Young EFL Learners' Learning Styles: Matches and Mismatches Between Learners' Preferences and Their Teachers' Perceptions, M.A. Thesis, Uludag University