

Connections Between Learning Styles and the Quality of Learning

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Learning is a process of accumulation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values through study, experience or teaching, which causes a persistent, measurable change that is specific at a behavioral level. In other words, learning allows individuals to form a new mental construct or to revise the existing one, this way producing behavioral changes, changes of activity.

Keywords: *learning styles, quality of learning, behavioral level.*

Phenomena of human behavior and learning process include some virtual favorable natural forces when they are mastered and directed with care, while there are a number of circumstances in which the favorable development of individuals is going in a positive way. Behavioral reactions which are used as messages of the contents of the personality are very different, ranging from involuntary reactions to those translated by a range of emotional expression, empathy events, oral reports and products of business. Each of these external indicators acquires a certain informational value in an approximation of private general structures of personality, but none expresses them fully when the individual is located outside of the learning system.

The model of training is a first step in the process of learning, ensuring its improvement this way. Instruction is involved when inserting work material, organizing the task (learning) and producing problematic situations that make the student, the young react through a series of assimilation activities. In this case, the style of specific knowledge involved in the process of training plays an important role, with reference to a subcategory called his style of learning. Generically, the meaning of own style is the manifestation of personality under the aspects of his mental functioning. Individual styles reflect a particular mode of expression, behavior and performance of an activity, whether it is learning or training. On the one hand people orient their thinking in the direction of a way of making such activities, giving value to a series of processes, ways of achieving and re-

flecting on processing information. On the other hand, the interaction of the communication field of education will be authentic when each personality will engage in it completely, expressing their sincere emotions, ideas, experiences accepting on the other hand ideas, emotions and experiences of others, being able to understand and change them through active cooperation.

Keef and Ferrell (1990) define the learning style as a complex of human characteristics inter-correlated and stabilized in time and space, a model (a form) that combines internal and external operations resulting from behavior, personality, attention, cognitive abilities, specific response and targeting preferences/options, all representing the level of development of the subject and its reflection in its specific conduct.

Particularities of the learning style are in direct connection with age. This way, during childhood it is directly influenced by the process of education through the perception of the school situation; the awakening of the pupils' interest, stimulating of their motivation is, in good measure, a result of the management of the instructive process. Here also appears a correct dosage of difficulties in learning, according to the practical situation and the individuality of students. During adolescence, the learning style will suffer influences because of frequent changes of specific emotional disposition of young individuals and of attitude with a strong field of volitional configuration. Teenagers lean towards a pragmatic style of learning and sometimes a reflexive one, not accepting the imposition of an authoritarian type.

In the early stage of maturation, learning style can turn into a reflexive-theoretic one, people being part this way of a register, and then to the full maturation, individuals must look back to a pragmatic style of learning to accompany the development of a concrete activity molded on the personal evaluation feelings. During this period, needs and experiences of the person who learns need to be beyond the expertise of instructor. Adults are people who direct themselves in the learning process and every adult is unique because of his personal experiences (Knowles, 1984).

As we saw, the style of learning is one that allows the individual to subsequently use its qualitative and quantitative mechanisms with the goal to structure and process mental phenomena in the business of learning. Research revealed the importance of adapting styles/methods of learning to the structure of personality of individuals, but also the social elements who leave their fingerprints on them, having a determining role. In 1999, Harp, Kulski and Radloff proved that a person who learns effectively has clear goals according to he or she learns, has a wide range of learning strategies and knows when to use them, uses available resources effectively, knows its strengths and weaknesses, controls his emotions in the appropriate manner, assumes responsibility for their learning, plans, monitors, and evaluates and adapts the learning process. Transmission of information must not become an end in itself but to remain an offer of incentives and differentiation of their cognitive structures to participate in a beneficial way in optimizing the style of learning.

Professional studies suggest that there is a cycle that includes four phases and is significant for the effectiveness of learning, these being the following: concrete experience, followed by observation and reflection on experience, which will lead to an analysis and formulation of conclusions, which are then used to test future situations. The study of learning styles also focuses on the implications of this in practice; the motivation for this is bound by the subsequent insertion of the individuals in society. The style of cogni-

tive-integrative variable learning will shape specific models that people will use during their existence, applying them to varied situations and events.

In the process of learning, we are not only interested in the explanations related to training and how to use the style of learning but also the conduct of the evaluation of teachers along with the training and development of the students' self-assessment. Thus, educational desiderata include a register of new powers, unlike the traditional powers centered on the transmission of information and assessment of acquiring transmitted information.

The learning process has a structure that includes teaching and acquiring a concrete material based on perceptions and representation, understanding and determining on the basis of comparison and analysis of essential acquiring of items, of causal relationships, etc.; Preparation, understanding and ownership of different forms of generalization through concepts, rules, principles, laws, strong and powerful appropriation of concrete material and generalizations through activities meant to establish knowledge in students' conscience, training and strengthening of principles and skills through their practical application.

All these items represent essential items which make up the organic unity of the process of learning as a process of awareness and training.

The quality of the learning process begins right when establishing it next to the process of adaptation, of balance with the external, complex environment and consists of the accumulation of social and individual experience (new).

Learning, as the fundamental form of human activity conducted in an organized framework, in contemporary society – in specialized training and education facilities and targeted towards the assimilation of systems of knowledge and skills constitutes itself as a potential instrument of social progress and is performed during your whole life, allowing the transfer through generations of acquisitions made in society in the plan of progress

and in an organized framework.

The quality of the learning process consists of an accumulation of formal and informal events with educational aspect which aims to develop and optimize the ability to meet the specific current and future needs of knowledge, skills, performance of some people (mainly). The modernization of Romanian education, its centering on quality, including assessment, has given rise to controversy among practitioners. Quality, quality assurance, is extremely important for education (school) in Romania. Thus, in the context of developing national economies and globalization of the economy the modification of the concept of quality is noticed as well as the objectives and tasks that are related to quality management in all areas, and education represents a strategic area in this respect.

Romanian education situation in terms of quality of education is much debated today, most of the times having a dichotomy presentation. Recent opinions inserted on the basis of specialist studies are not very favorable in this respect, but it should not be forgotten that the quality problem does not only depend on the responsibility of the school, and the positive outcome in this regard requires efforts from the government but also from the local and national community.

Besides, quality issues in the education from a conceptual, structural and organizational aspect has gotten an increasingly more European and international connotation. Management education must truly create a space to promote school performance in terms of competitiveness.

Method, materials, lot of subjects

This study's primary objective is to investigate the relationship between the learning style and the quality of learning. The experimental design was built with applicability in the pre-university level (higher education) initially.

Application of specialized instruments was done on a batch of 94 subjects ($N = 94$) who formed two groups: 59 students in the class XII in the College "Edmond Nicolau" in Bucharest and a group of teachers (35 persons),

teachers of different specialties working in the same school. The research was conducted during January to March 2008, having as a place to conduct even the location of education said.

Subjects were randomly selected, being contacted on a voluntary basis and trained for the purposes of completing the evidence used, none of them being financially rewarded later. The subjects were aged between 17 and 51 years, with an average of 27.7 and standard deviation ($sd = 7210$) of both sexes (31 persons female and 63 male persons) responded to items contained in "The style learning", a tool that assesses four styles of learning, namely: flexible work by developing reflective thinking, theoretical and pragmatic and have completed a scale in 7 steps referring to the quality evaluation process of learning, with an indication from 1 = Disagree to 7 = very agreeable.

Results, discussion

In compliance with the principles of objective experimental design it was started from formulating the basic hypothesis that suggests that there is a significant correlation between the perception of the quality of education and the learning style.

In this context, the scores of respondents obtained through a descriptive statistical analysis (table 1 and 2) and by highlighting a correlation-calculation of Spearman's ranks (r) (Table 3) have been recorded and interpreted. *The obtained correlation coefficients were statistically significant values and confirm the initial assumption*, remarking that the values are calculated for the correlations between the learning style and quality of learning are especially significant for the flexible style of learning ($r = 0460$, $p < 0000$), reflective style of learning ($r = 0409$, $p < 0,000$) and pragmatic style of learning ($r = 0361$, $p < 0,000$).

The assumption formulation in the current approach is just a direction of the study on the two variables, but the results cause us to go into the subject taking into account the existence of other important factors that subscribe to the educational process.

We believe that such a study represents the change that happens today in the Romanian education system and that learned and analyzed information in a specialized context

will allow us to design a model of optimization and efficiency and adequate in terms of the learning process.

Tabel 1: Descriptive Statistics „The questionare of learning style”

Statistics (N=94)

		A	R	T	P
N	Valid	94	94	94	94
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.1809	5.1915	5.4787	2.3723
Median		2.0000	5.0000	6.0000	2.0000
Mode		3.00	5.00	6.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		1.05711	.70751	1.33383	1.00519
Variance		1.117	.501	1.779	1.010
Skewness		.354	-.292	-1.245	1.008
Kurtosis		-.684	-.956	1.342	.498
Minimum		1.00	4.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		5.00	6.00	7.00	5.00

Tabel 2: Descriptive statistic “The quality of the learning process”

Statistics (N=94)

		Calitate
N	Valid	94
	Missing	0
Mean		4.1170
Median		4.0000
Mode		4.00
Std. Deviation		1.62545
Variance		2.642
Skewness		.053
Kurtosis		-.376
Minimum		1.00
Maximum		7.00

Tabel 3: Spearman Correlations – style of learning –the quality of the learning process

Correlations

		A	R	T	P	Calitate
Spearman's rho	A	1.000	.460**	.132	-.034	.186
			.000	.206	.743	.073
			94	94	94	94
R		.460**	1.000	.409**	-.401**	.029
				.000	.000	.784
				94	94	94
T		.132	.409**	1.000	-.130	.107
					.211	.304
					94	94
P		-.034	-.401**	-.130	1.000	.361**
						.000
						94
Calitate		.186	.029	.107	.361**	1.000
					.000	
						94

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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