



## THE ROLE OF LEARNING STYLES IN ENRICHING SPEAKING SKILLS

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### **Abstract**

*Learning style is an emerging concept in the field of education. The researcher hopes that teaching based on the learning style of the learners, can benefit the learners to a greater extent. When the learners' styles and teaching are matched in the classroom learning can become easier. Learners will find learning enjoyable and get motivated to learn. The aim of this research is to improve the speaking skills of the secondary level learners through learning style.*

**Key Words:** *Learning Styles, VARK Model, and Speaking Skills.*

### **Learning Styles**

Learning style is how an individual acquires and processes information while learning. It is believed that each and every individual will have their own learning style. When the learners are taught in their preferred style learning can become effective. It can help learners in retaining the information studied. There are many learning style models namely VARK model, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, David Kolbs model, Felder-Silverman Learning Styles model, Anthony Gregoc's model and Dunn and Dunn Learning Style model which can be used.

### **Methodology**

The learning style differs from one learner to another and their learning can be enhanced by following certain learning styles. One of such tools is VARK learning style which can be used to strengthen the learning of the students. The model adopted for the study is the VARK model by Neil Fleming, an educator for more than forty years. VARK is an acronym for Visual, Aural, Read/Write, and kinesthetic preference modalities and is believed that one or two of these preferences will be dominant in the learners. So, the dominant style can be used to teach new information to the learners. This model is easy to use and can give students information on how to maximize their learning.

### **Using VARK**

Based on this model, learners can be divided into four groups namely

- ❖ Visual learners
- ❖ Aural learners
- ❖ Read/Write learners and
- ❖ Kinesthetic learners

### **VARK In Enhancing Speaking Skills**

Speaking is the productive skill, and is the ability to express one's ideas. Among the four skills speaking can be considered as the most important skill. The researcher has modified this model to some extent to prove that speaking skills can be enhanced by using the appropriate Learning Style. The focus group is the secondary level students of a government school. The reason behind is to make the learners understand the concept of "learning style". The learners are made to recognize their own predominant style so that they can excel in their studies. Understanding one's style of learning can motivate them to show interest towards learning and help them become self directed learners. The learners can learn faster and learning can become easy and enjoyable. Among various levels of learners, it is the secondary learners who are in need of care and attention for their development. They can use their learning style as a tool to learn better. It will also be helpful for them to pursue their higher education.

Fleming's learning style inventory was used to classify the learners into four groups. The questionnaire was not only used to recognize one's own learning style but also makes the learners aware of other learning styles. The questionnaire was analyzed. Among thirty six students, there were fourteen visual learners, five auditory learners, seven read/write learners, and ten kinesthetic learners.

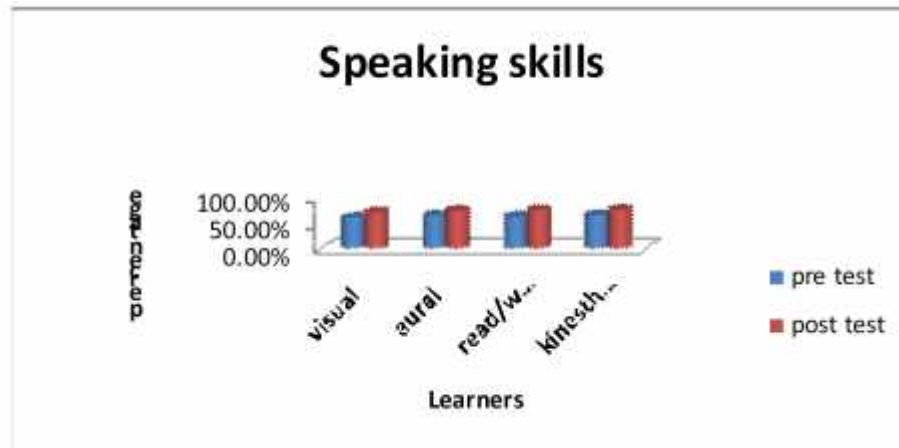
The learners were categorized based on their preferences. They were taught and given activities based on their style. The researcher could witness change in their performance. First they were embarrassed and were not ready to perform the task. They tried to escape from the situation and concentrated on giving excuses rather than doing it. They were also hesitant in doing the activities. But once they were divided they felt little comfortable. When their learning style and teaching went hand



in hand, they were more enthusiastic and it kindled to bring out the talents in them. Different teaching modes favored the learners. When the kinesthetic learners were given role play and the aural learners, group discussion their responses were more and concentrated well on their subject. Similarly visual images and reading materials helped visual and read/write learners.

The learners were taught the art of speaking. Enough practice was given to them. They were made to speak on various topics of their choice. They were assessed based on their context used, coherence, body language, vocabulary and pronunciation.

## Result



When their performances were assessed the researcher could witness that the students' speaking skills have improved. Visual learners improved from 60% to 72%, Aural learners from 63% to 74.4%, Read / Write learners from 68% to 81% and Kinesthetic learners from 67% to 79%.

## Findings of the Study

When the concept of learning style was implemented in the class room, there was significant development in the learning of the learners. It helped to enhance the learner's ability to learn. In the usual classroom, when the activities were given the learners were hesitant and tried to escape from performing the activity. Whereas, after dividing them based on their style, they were eager to learn with their peer group members. As they were the learners with liking for one particular style they could learn effectively. The activities received their attention to a greater extent. The findings of the study are as follows;

- There were improvements in the Speaking skills of the learners.
- There was active participation of all the learners.
- It helped to enhance the confidence level of the learners.
- There was remarkable development in each and every learner.
- The learners enjoyed learning, since they have learnt according to their learning style.
- It helped them to interact their ideas freely

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