

Differentiating Teaching and Learning by Sang Jong Kwak



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Teachers Platitude

- Set aside personal learning preferences and experiences
- “What works for me” may not be “what works for my students.”
- Replace “should” with “what if”
- Be receptive to new or different ways of teaching



Why do we need differentiating teaching?

- Students' proficiency increases
- Learning opportunity changes
- Personal interests move in new directions
- Learning plan is not a destination but a road map, working document



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E & L Cognitive Styles

SYNOPTIC PROCESSING	ECTENIC PROCESSING
Field Sensitivity as learning style prefers to address material as part of context and often picks up material by 'osmosis.' It relates to wholes that cannot be disassembled. It can be compared to illumination by floodlight that shows the whole scene.	Field Insensitivity makes little or no use of the whole context and often excludes incidental learning. Responds best to material that is 'out there in black and white.'
Field Independence as learning style: prefers to separate material from context and finds what is most important. It can be compared to a spotlight that focuses sharply on one thing.	Field Dependence relies on context and does not select out what is important for focus. May prefer to have what is most important pointed out.
Random (non-linear) processing follows an internally developed order of processing.	Sequential (linear) processing follows an externally provided order of processing.
Global processing attends to gestalts and the "big picture"; is aware of 'forests' (vs. trees); oriented toward processing from the 'top down.'	Particular processing attends to discrete items and details; is aware of 'trees' (vs. forests); oriented towards processing from 'bottom up.'
Inductive processing goes from the specific to the general, generalizes from experience.	Deductive processing goes from the general to the specific, applies generalizations to experience.
Synthesis comprehends through assembly of components into a constructed whole.	Analysis comprehends through disassembly into components.
Analogue processing is a qualitative or metaphoric approach to interpreting experience; makes frequent use of associations.	Digital processing is a quantitative/literal approach to interpreting experience; tends to take things at face value.



E & L Cognitive Styles (Cont.)

SYNOPTIC PROCESSING	ECTENIC PROCESSING
Concrete (experiential) processing interacts with the world directly; learns through application of knowledge, often at the physical level.	Abstract (theoretical) processing: interacts with the world through cognitive constructs; learns from formal rendition of knowledge.
Leveling looks for similarities; often does not notice disparities and may seek to reduce them; tends not to notice articulations within composites.	Sharpening notices disparities and seeks to explore and account for them; tends to be aware of componential structure.
Impulsivity reacts quickly in acting or speaking with little or no conscious 'thinking it through' before acting (or speaking); acts on 'gut'; thought may follow action.	Reflectivity 'thinks something through' before taking action (or speaking); often does not trust 'gut reaction;' action usually follows thought.

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Chart by the Learning Consultation Service at the Foreign Service Institute, April 2017.*



Differentiating Activities Based on ILR Levels

L1+	L2	L2+ & 3
Vocabulary	+ Minor Details	+ Vocabulary in Context
Major Details	+ Sequence of Events	+ Author's attitude, tone
Main Idea	+ Cause & Effect	+ Concerns, Justification, Conclusion
	+ Compare & Contrast	+ Underlying Principle
	+ Problem & Solution	+ Inference & Implication
	+ Text Discourse	



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E & L Cognitive Styles and Differentiating Strategies

Synoptic	Strategies	Strategies	Ectenic
Field Sensitive	Background Info.	Recalling Details	Field Insensitive
Field Independent	Find sub, verb, obj.,	Group Chunks	Field Dependent
Leveling	Find Similarities	Find Differences	Sharpening
Global	Scan some key words	Look for details	Particular
Impulsive	Rapid Fire	Recall, transcribe	Reflective
Synthetic	Summarize	Categorize	Analytic
Analogue	Draw Pictures	Translate	Digital
Random	Field related parts	Sequence parts	Sequential
Inductive	Discover rules	Correct mistakes	Deductive



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E & L Cognitive Styles and Strategies on Higher Levels

Synoptic	Strategies	Strategies	Ectenic
Field Sensitive	Recalling Details	Background Info.	Field Insensitive
Field Independent	Group Chunks	Find subject, verb,O	Field Dependent
Leveling	Find Differences	Find Similarities	Sharpening
Global	Look for details	Scan some key words	Particular
Impulsive	Recall, transcribe	Rapid Fire	Reflective
Synthetic	Categorize	Summarize	Analytic
Analogue	Translate	Draw Pictures	Digital
Random	Sequence parts	Field related parts	Sequential
Inductive	Correct mistakes	Discover rules	Deductive



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Classroom Strategies on Higher Levels

Synoptic	Strategies	Strategies	Ectenic
Field Sensitive	6. Recalling Details	1. Background Info.	Field Insensitive
Field Independent	4. Group Chunks	1, Find sub, verb, obj.	Field Dependent
Leveling	3. Find Differences	3. Find Similarities	Sharpening
Global	3. Look for details	1. Scan some key words	Particular
Impulsive	6. Recall, transcribe	1. Rapid Fire	Reflective
Synthetic	4. Categorize	2. Summarize	Analytic
Analogue	6. Translate	5. Draw Pictures	Digital
Random	4. Sequence parts	5. Field related parts	Sequential
Inductive	6. Correct mistakes	6. Discover rules	Deductive



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Suggestions for Further Differentiating Teaching

- Differentiation on sub-skills: Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Grammar,
- Differentiation for homework,
- Further empirical research on differentiating teaching.



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