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Teaching Matters

The UBC School of Nursing Teaching Scholarship Blog site



Welcome to the Elizabeth Kenny McCann Journal Club!



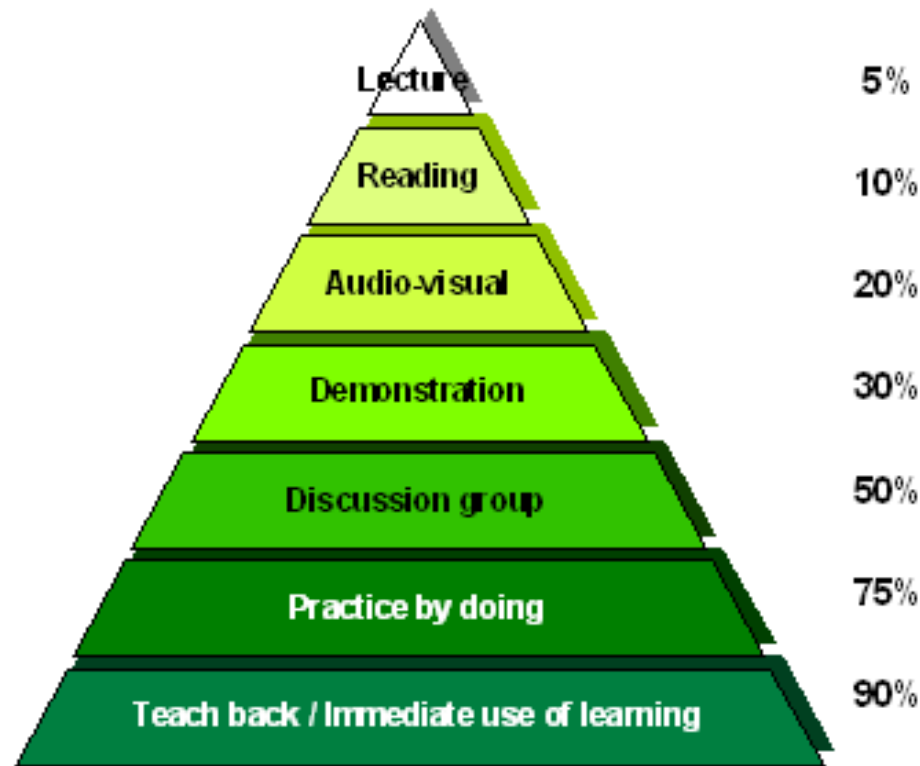
The Enduring Appeal of Learning Styles

- Catherine Scott describes the history and some of the problems with learning styles inventories and their use in her 2010 paper.

What are Learning Styles

- A form of psychometric testing?
- Categorizing learning preferences
- Developed from early ATI work in 1970's
- 71 different theories/forms!

Neuromyths?



Problems?

- No Consensus on LS (or TS)
- Conflation of LS with personality types, and cognitive theories
- No predictive validity
- Theory reflects western entity focused psychology rather than process focused theories
- motivation over-rides them with no contest

Concerns with LSIs

- Wasted teaching time
- Evidence or fashion/fad?
- Commercial aspects
- Stereotyping?
- Labelling students?
- Similar concerns with Teaching Styles Inventories?
- Practical Value?

Practical Application

“In this class there is a serialist pragmatist kinaesthetic learner (who is also field-dependent, not to mention his MBTI) primarily a convergent thinker, high on logico-mathematical intelligence but low on linguistic intelligence, sitting next to a holist, reflector, primarily visual and field-independent... who is also chronically shy (no-one mentions that). Even assuming that such things can be assessed with some validity and reliability, which is itself far from clear — what are you going to do about it? There are after all thirty other students in the class, each of whom could be described in similar terms. And two-thirds of them are female, and one-third male (two of whom are gay). Five of the class are from ethnic minorities, two are dyslexic, one is visually impaired, and three are clinically depressed (although only one of them knows it). Six are "mature" students — at least, they are chronologically over 25.”

In other words, a fairly typical class, composed of **people**. (One of them also has his Yorkshire terrier in a holdall, but perhaps we can ignore that.) James Atherton - 2009

Read more: [Learning styles don't matter](#)

A final quote

"The contrast between the enormous popularity of the learning-styles approach within education and the lack of credible evidence for its utility is, in our opinion, striking and disturbing. If classification of students' learning styles has practical utility, it remains to be demonstrated."

Pashler H, McDaniel M, Rohrer D and Bjork R (2008) "Learning Styles; concepts and evidence" *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* vol. 9 no.3; available on-line at http://www.psychologicalscience.org/journals/pspi/PSPI_9_3.pdf accessed 21 December 2013]



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Resource

Read more: [On learning styles](#)

http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/learning_styles.htm#ixzz33VbGjXso