

## **A Theoretical Study About Motivating Auditory Learners**

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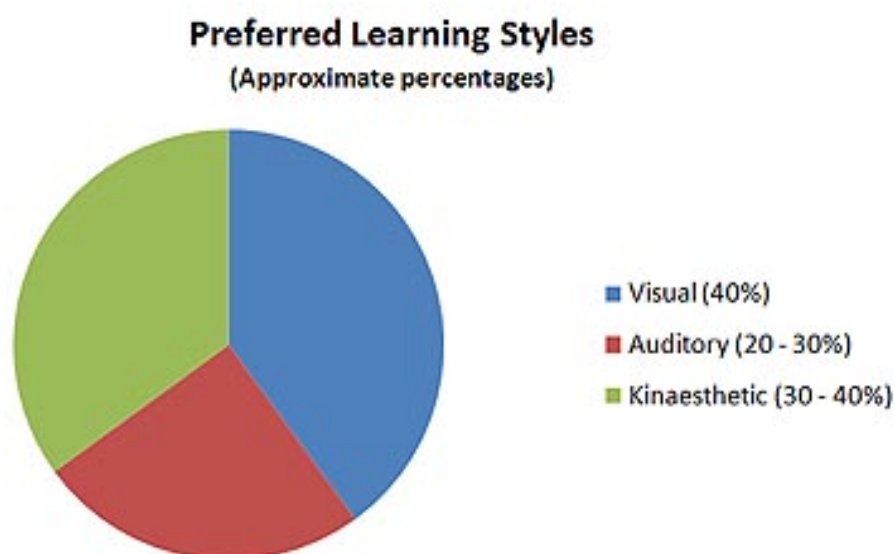
### **Abstract**

The teaching process has had a lot of changes in the last few decades. A lot of new methods started looking for the learners from a different point of view, and a lot of teachers have tried to change their methods of teaching to achieve a level that can satisfy all the students' abilities. One of the recent studies shows that learners are of different kinds; the students' abilities of learning vary according to the things presented in class. There are auditory, visual, audiovisual, and kinesthetic learners. The studies even show that when teachers prepare their lessons according to the kinds of learners they have, the results will be higher, and the class will change from a typical class to an interactive one. In this article, there will be a focus on one kind of those learners that is the auditory learners. In this study, a theoretical theory was used to determine the main characteristics of the auditory learners. Another thing, there are some tactics that have proved their effectiveness in motivating such learners, which in turn make the learners achieve better results.

*Key Words:* Auditory Learners, Audios, Discussions, Debates, Learning Style

## Introduction

According to Longman Dictionary, an auditory learner is “a learner whose preferred learning style is to learn by listening, rather than learning in some other way, such as by reading”. So, auditory learners are those who prefer to listen rather than to see. They have a great ability to memorize a lot of information by listening to them. Such learners have a great ability to learn musically. Therefore, they speak a loud while they write or study. Add to this, they prefer to listen rather than to have an eye contact. They also have the ability to lead discussions and debates in class. They have a good ability to express their feelings with sounds. Most of teachers use such students to be the spokespersons of the class. Another point is that this kind of learners finds it difficult to write and he/she prefers to say things instead. Carbo (1963) did a study about the percentage of the visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners’ percentage. He says: "Approximately 20 to 30 percent of the school-aged population remembers what is heard” (Carbo, 1963).



*Figure 1.* Percentages of Learning Styles Preferences

## Strengths of Auditory Learners

The best thing auditory learners like to do is explaining ideas to others. They can get the information easily if they know that they will speak them out again in front of the students, or even to another friend. Such learners have the ability to convince the learners around him/her to be convinced with their ideas. Another thing they are good at is that they have the ability to remember the very minute details mentioned in a discussion. Therefore,

they can learn, study and revise in groups, where they can give all the details mentioned in a lesson. Teachers might be surprised of the way they remember things, to the extent that they might ask about the very minute things. Teachers might think that they are trying to embrace them. Nevertheless, it is part of their personality. They want everything to be clear and this require much more prepared. One more point is that they can learn by making the lesson as a song. Auditory learners also follow the beats and try to choose a song for the lesson. If they are creative, they can even record it and listen to it while in the bus and memorize their lessons.

### **Difficulties Auditory Learners Might Face**

Auditory learners have a problem when writing things, they find it difficult to write and they even might be slow in writing. If they are asked to write something, they say things while they are writing. It will be easy to notice the auditory learners from the first dictation the teacher gives to students. They will be late in writing and their marks might be less than others, although they know all the words. If they are given the chance to give the spelling of each word orally, they will be the best in the class. Therefore, teachers should vary the testing system to include all the learners' styles, especially the auditory learners. They even have a lot of problems when a sudden sound disturbs the lesson. For instance, if something interrupted the lesson, while the teacher is explaining his idea, the auditory learner will have a difficulty in understanding, and he most probably will ask the teacher to repeat again. Nevertheless, such learners might be shy and they may pretend to understand the lesson. This, of course, will lead to having problems in their understanding and consequently have fewer results in it. Thus, teachers must notice this problem and try to repeat again, especially when the lesson is at a time where there are a lot of noises, such as having a lesson near a music class.

### **Tactics To Motivate The Auditory Learners**

**Songs.** As it is mentioned above, auditory learners like sounds and music. This means that he/she has the ability to memorize the things in rhymes. Therefore, teacher can make the lesson, or part of it, in a song. For example, he can make the mathematical rule, the grammatical rule, the scientific fact, ...etc. in a song. Another thing can be done here is to ask the auditory learners to do the song themselves. It will be really enthusiastic for them if they have to present something to their friends using the things they prefer to do. They will use the best tools to prove that they can make the lesson a success. Suzana Medina said in her book *The Effect of Music on Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition*: "There is strong

practical evidence supporting the use of music in the English language classroom; there is also a growing body of research confirming that songs are a useful tool in language acquisition. In fact musical and language processing occur in the same area of the brain.” (Medina, 1993). So, teachers should make use of this facility they have in the auditory learners they have in their classes, which in turn will activate all the class.

**Playing audio files.** Having some videos and audios in class motivate not only the auditory students, but also the whole class. No dare everyone will think of you as a professional teacher that tries to use some teaching tools to make an interactive class. When playing audio files or movies, you will see that the auditory learners silent trying to understand every single word mentioned in it. It is a good idea to ask the students to write the things they got from the file. This will insure that everybody gets the objectives you prepared.

Varley (2002) writes, "Uncertain whether audiobooks belong to the respectable world of books or the more dubious world of entertainment, elementary and high-school teachers have often cast a fishy eye at them, and many have opted for the safe course of avoidance." It has been really problematic issue in the non-English speaking countries, that teachers avoid using the audio tracks in class, while they can work as a very effective way to attract the students and to give them the feeling that they are doing something unusual. Avoiding such tools will not only make the learners unmotivated, but also prevent them from being exposed to the correct language from its native speakers. Another thing Varley (2002) states is: "If one thing has struck me about the way people describe listening to audiobooks, it is the reported intensity of their absorption and the emotional grip of the experience. 'They go right to your soul,' says one listener."

Hearing stories even gives enjoyment to such learners that live the story while being told by a good teacher, who knows how to say it in a very attractive way. “The essence and the delights of hearing stories beautifully told by extraordinarily talented storytellers” (Baskin and Harris, 1995, p. 376). It is really appropriate here to mention the benefits of playing audio files for the students in class. The audios

- Introduce new ideas that students might not otherwise consider
- Introduce new vocabulary or difficult proper names or locales
- Sidestep unfamiliar dialects or accents, Old English, and old-fashioned literary styles
- Provide a read-aloud model
- Provide a bridge to important topics of discussion for parents and children who can listen together while commuting to sporting events, music lessons, or on vacations

- Introduce students to books above their reading level
- Model good reading
- Organized good listening lessons
- Highlight the humor in books

### **Discussions and Debates**

Discussions and Debates are of great importance in class, especially for the auditory learners. It will give them the chance to lead the discussion, as they have the ability to divide the class into groups, and try to make the auditory learners the leaders. After giving the lesson, ask the groups to gather and discuss some ideas mentioned in the class. It is much better if you prepare some ready-made questions to be discussed. During the discussions, try to walk around and get involved in part of the discussion. You will notice that the auditory learners will explain the lesson in their own way. Students can use the Internet or their experience to give extra information about the topic being discussed. Having more time after this activity, you can ask each group to choose a spokesman, he/she will be the auditory student, and to show the results they got during their discussions.

In a study conducted in Minnesota in 2005, the findings showed that the debaters scored 36% higher on the reading post-test than on the pre-test. This improvement is 61% greater than improvements among the comparison group. Add to this, 80% of debaters reported no attendance problems compared to 49.02% with no reported attendance problems among the comparison group. One more point shown in this study is that by the end of their first year of debate, 100% of the debaters reported an increased interest in their classes. Such studies can tell us how important the debates and discussions are in classes having auditory learners.

### **Intonation**

The teacher in class should not use only one tone while teaching. Rather, he/she must change the intonation in accordance with the situation or the given idea. For instance, when talking about a serious issue, the high intonation is preferred, while the low one is better when expressing feelings. It is even a good way to get rid of boredom in class. So, if a teacher feels that the class is tired or bored, he should change the intonation into a funny one, such as slowing down to a great extent. This will refresh the students and make them laugh and consequently get back to the lesson. When we communicate with each other we always have a tone. Without ever telling anyone directly, we understand when a person is tired, angry, anxious, or has a positive attitude. A person's tone actually communicates much more than their verbal communication and actions do.

### **Conclusion**

Auditory learners are a very important part of the learning styles learners. They represent one third of the total of the students. This means that they are available in almost every class. Such learners are of great benefits, and they can achieve very high grades, if the lessons are designed in accordance to their strengths. Furthermore, auditory learners have a lot things can energize them and let them be the first in their class. As teachers, we have to design our lessons in a way that auditory learners can be included to play a main role in the lesson; they can do an action, not a reaction.

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