

# IF ONLY I KNEW HOW TO DO IT...

How to study effectively at university?

Know yourself: Learning styles

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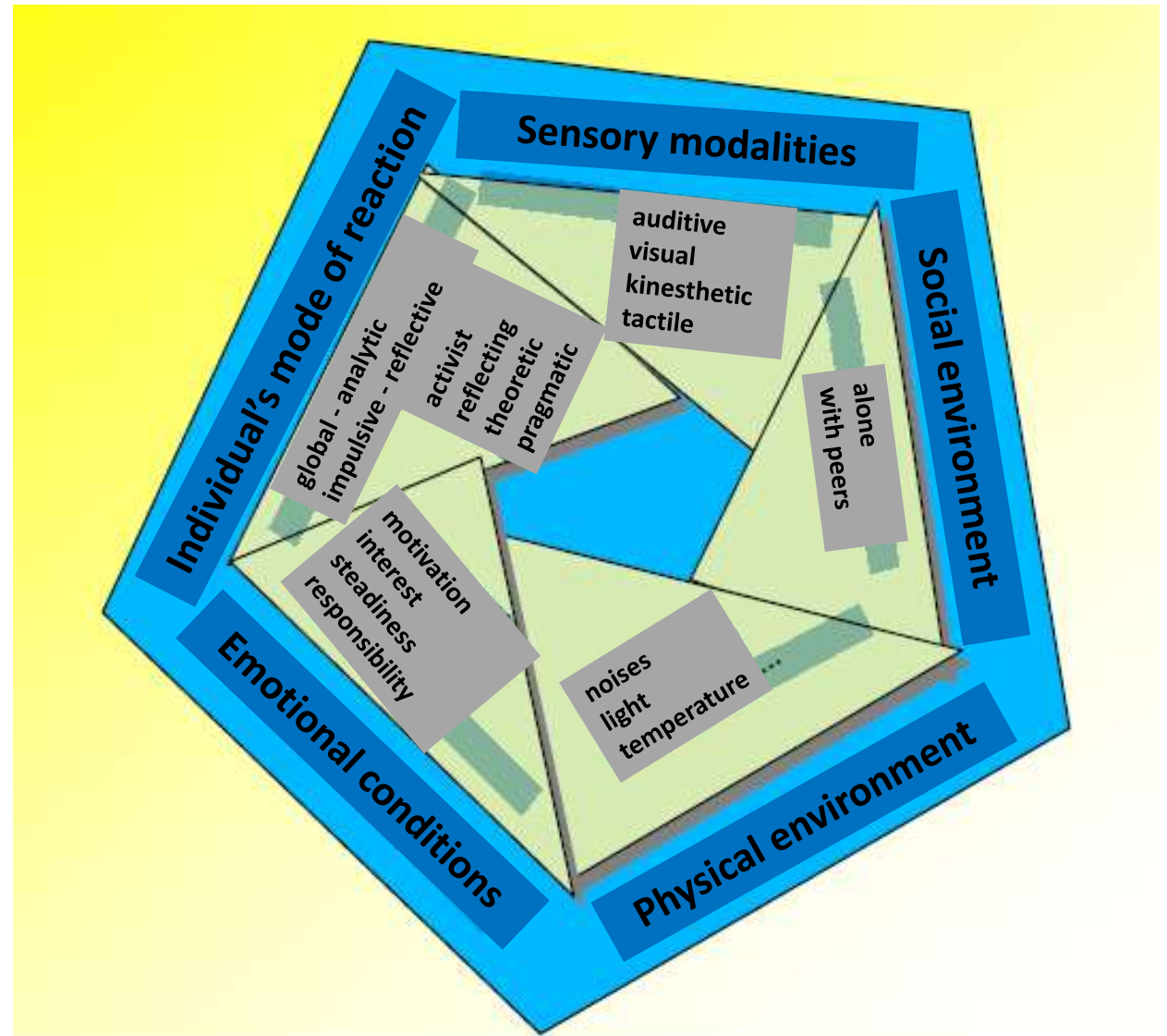
# Styles, strategies, techniques of studying

- There is no universally efficient method to study – everybody has to find their own method that fits them the best
- We have to know our own style of studying
- How do you study?
  - Depends on personality
  - Basic learning skills
  - What do you study?
  - Why do you study?
  - Physical and social factors

# Styles of studying

- Outer and inner conditions, modes of ...
  - Acquiring information
  - Processing information
  - Remembering/recalling the study material

...that we prefer the most



# Styles of studying

- Dominant style of studying varies from person to person
- The individual's study style will be the combination of the above factors
- To know your own study style you need enough study experience
  - surveys
  - observation, self-reflection
- Your strengths and weaknesses – important to know them, be conscious about them!
  - Identify your weaknesses → develop study strategies that help to remove barriers , decrease disadvantages
- Make yourself conscious of your study style → more success in learning

# Determine your style of studying

- Which is the easiest way / most efficient channel to obtain information?
  - seeing
  - hearing
  - moving
- Which conditions help us in obtaining and storing information?
  - social
  - physical, environmental
  - emotional
- In which way do we process information, and how can we recall it?

# Styles of studying – sensory modalities

## Auditive type:

- Verbal stimuli (oral communication, talks, presentations)
- Reading aloud when studying
- Easiest learning by oral explanation
- Often speaks a lot – thinking aloud
- Likes music – easily recalls lyrics, conversations
- Remembers the name of a person rather than his looks
- Useful:
  - study with peers,
  - discuss the study material with someone,
  - repeat the study material aloud
- Should attend lectures by all means

# Styles of studying – sensory modalities

## Visual type:

- Most common
- Retain  $\frac{3}{4}$  of what they read and see
- Two types:
  - Process information in form of words
  - Retain what they have seen in diagrams and pictures
- Almost photocopy the read or studied material (remember if the piece of information was in the middle or at the bottom of the page)
- Useful:
  - Paying particular attention to figures, tables and graphs
- Recommended to take notes in classes, prepare an outline when studying
- Memorizing: thought map is a good method
- Important: have a comprehensive look at first, repetition in last stage of studying
- Shorter, more intensive study periods are more efficient

# Styles of studying – sensory modalities

## Motoric (kinesthetic) type:

- Movement plays an important role
- Like physical activities, tasks full of action
- Do not like sitting in the same position for a long time
- Studies easily when walking while reading, reciting the learning material
- Recommended:
  - take notes,
  - prepare outlines,
  - draw figures



# Styles of studying – sensory modalities

- Tactile type:
  - ca. 15% of students
  - When learning about objectified things:
    - need to touch it,
    - hands-on experience
  - When the study material is not tangible:
    - Need to write or draw it,
    - Must be involved

# Styles of studying

- Everybody: dominant perception + secondary strength
- If our main channel of perception does not match the teaching method of the lecture/practice → difficulty in studying, unless compensated by our secondary strength
- Recommended: use as many of our sensory organs as possible in studying – most efficient students apply more than one sensory channels at the same time

# Factors determining the style of studying

- Which conditions support obtaining and storing information?
- Which ...
  - social
  - physical, environmental
  - emotional

... conditions characterize our individual style of studying?

# Study styles – Social and physical environment

- Under which outer conditions can you study best?
- Do you like to study alone or with other students?
- Do you need the support/control of a tutor/mentor?
- Do you prefer silence or background music?
- Do you prefer diffuse or directional lighting?
- Do you prefer lower or higher temperatures?
- Do you prefer sitting, lying, standing or walking?

# Study styles – emotional conditions

- **Motivation, interest**

- Student with inner motivation – does not require checking, feedback
- Student with outer motivation – needs control of studying process, regular checking of knowledge
- Depends on what you are studying
- Closely related to motivation: steadiness

- **Steadiness**

- How persistent are you when learning something / performing a task?
- Self-observation: I am more persistent if ....
  - .... I succeed in carrying out easier tasks first
  - .... I successfully solve the most difficult tasks first

# Study styles – emotional conditions

- **Responsibility**

- To what degree do you take responsibility for your own learning?
- Individuals with higher sense of responsibility:
  - Self-controlled study (develop and carry out a study plan consciously, independently)
  - Adults: this factor is predominant
  - University studies: students are expected to be responsible for their own study process

# Study styles – according to the mode of reaction

## **Activists:**

- Study easily with hands-on experience
- People of action
- Impulsive, start acting immediately
- In classes are active, take the lead with pleasure
- Social beings, pay attention to others, like studying with peers
- Open to new things, enthusiastic about new things
- If the excitement fades, they look for new challenges at once
- Do not like studying from books; process complicated study materials with difficulty
- They discover relationships between things with intuition

# Study styles – according to the mode of reaction

## **Thoughtful, observant (reflective style):**

- Important to understand things
- Prefer to remain in the background, appreciate quietness, prefer well-considered decision
- Carefully analyze data, any information – before forming their own opinion
- Listen to others, readily blend others' opinion with their own thoughts
- Keep their distance, tolerant
- Like studying alone, from a book
- Like tasks that require hard work, perseverance
- Strength: thoughtful, thorough, precise
- Weakness: decide slowly, not confident enough, avoid risks



# Study styles – according to the mode of reaction

## **Theorizing (abstract style):**

- Important: logical relationships, conceptions, thinking
- Like analysis and synthesis
- Sound science is important for them, like to create general theories
- Like to understand the world through symbols
- Appreciate systematic, well-planned work
- Solve problems step by step, thinking logically
- Maximalists
- Strength: disciplined behavior, objectivity; easily learn study materials with logical structure; but difficult to remember descriptive type of material without any logical structure
- Weakness: difficult to handle emotions; easygoing only with students with the same study style

# Study styles – according to the mode of reaction

## **Pragmatic, divergent:**

- Important: want to change things
- Learn actively, by experimenting
- Aim at practical application of any acquired knowledge
- Are good at implementing plans, performing tasks
- Open to new experiences
- Often follow their intuition
- React quickly, confidently to ideas; bring decisions quickly, easily
- Extremities in learning – weak in theoretic deductions, excellent in practical tasks
- Impatient with people who are not pragmatic
- Weakness: may reject anything without the possibility of practical application