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## AN EXAMPLE OF MULTISENSORY TEACHING IN THE SUBJECT SOCIETY IN THE 5th GRADE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SLOVENIA Urša Batis Savnik

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**Abstract.** All of us who work with students (both younger and older) know that teaching is a demanding and responsible job. From teachers it requires love and understanding of students and of the learning material, dedication to work and, finally, a vision from which they can draw energy in moments of weakness and uncertainty. An essential part of a teacher's development is lifelong learning that takes place in various ways: through research, articles, books, contributions, and mutual exchange of opinions with experts from similar fields of work and activity. In a way, we spread our awareness of changes in the society and are aware of the needs that the modern world demands from us and the future adults we are now teaching. Teaching in the modern world cannot take place in a formal way but it is necessary to understand the results of research done in the field of human development which suggests a different way of teaching with the aim of achieving the most optimal results. The article is divided into four substantive parts: in the first part, I devote myself to the theoretical explanation of the modern way of teaching and why understanding changes is necessary. Then I explain the importance of the multisensory teaching method and define the learning types of students and their characteristics. This will be followed by an explanation of the importance of teacher preparation for the multisensory way of teaching. I will present an example of preparation for teaching in the subject society in the 5th grade of primary school, where I will describe my method of inclusion and consideration of the principle of multisensory. In the evaluation, I will summarize my opinion about the lesson and conclude my article by dwelling on the positive sides of the mentioned teaching method.

**Key words:** multisensory teaching, learning styles, visual type, kinesthetic type, auditory type.

### 1. Modern teaching methods

In the modern world of rapid changes, the role of a teacher and a student in the process of education is also changing. The awareness of this process on the part of the teacher is crucial in developing and imparting new knowledge to younger generations. It is precisely because of the latter that the importance of continuous education and monitoring of innovations in this field is part of the necessary professional development of a teacher.

The activity of both, the teacher and the student, is crucial in the modern way of teaching. Proactivity, the ability to cooperate and exchange opinions are skills that are the basis for building students' good attitude towards acquiring and upgrading knowledge.

In addition, the teacher should consider the following characteristics of the modern understanding of learning in his/her work (Dumont, Istance and Benavides, 2013):

- learning is constructive: research repeatedly confirms that students do not receive knowledge from the outside but build it in the process of making sense of their experiences.

- learning is self-regulated: students who master self-regulation are more successful, i.e., those who know how to effectively organize their time for learning, who set their own goals, etc.
- learning is contextual: it has been proven that a qualitative learning process always takes place in a social and cultural context and in cooperation with it.
- learning is collaborative: effective and successful learning takes place in collaboration with other students, other people, resources, and technology; learning is cumulative and takes place differently for everyone.

Teaching and leading lessons begins with thinking about the content and thematic group and the learning unit, which leads us to think about learning methods and forms of work, learning aids and teaching materials. Frontal teaching is mandatory when teaching new forms of knowledge and learning material. This form must be followed by other forms that activate students during the learning process (individual work, work in pairs and in groups). Thinking about cross-curricular connections leads us to integrate the conveyed content into other teaching subjects.

When preparing for lessons, we must be guided by the vision of multisensory teaching, which leads us in the direction of delivering the learning material through different senses using different tools and methods (e-textbooks, practical learning, use of videos, conducting experiments, etc.).

## 2. Multisensory teaching

Multisensory teaching is a combination of different learning styles, where vision, hearing, and touch work together in harmony. To include all senses in the learning process, we must include aids: working with e-textbooks, e-workbooks, presentations, videos, experiments, pictorial and verbal materials, worksheets...

This kind of teaching comes from the realization that people are different and learn in different ways. We call this diversity of learning - "learning styles". The term "learning style" was coined in 1954 by Herb Thelan (Švarcova, Jelinkova, 2017). In Western cultures, the following styles of perception are especially important: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (O'Connoe, Seymor, 1990). Research shows that 35% of people prefer the visual perceptual channel when learning, 25% are auditory learners and 40% of people remember information best through movement-kinesthetic activities (Rose, Goll, 1993).

The following is Table 1 – A table of learning styles, with an outline of personality traits of the individual and a description of the way of learning. The last column shows the learning method of each learning style.

**Table 1. Learning styles**

Perception style	Personality traits and the way of learning	What they need to learn well
<b>Visual style - visual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fast, dynamic, explosive</li> <li>- remember/understand what they see, imagine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they need a "picture" - sketch, illustration, sample</li> <li>• dynamic pace of work</li> <li>• they should "visualize" the material: sketches, mental patterns, color notes</li> <li>• in a conversation with them, state the essence, show what you want</li> <li>• they need: dynamism, transparency, visual stimuli, changes</li> </ul>

<b>Auditory style - hearing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- they are sociable, chatty</li> <li>- they remember and understand what they hear and talk about</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand, remember if they HEAR others and/or themselves</li> <li>• noise distracts them – PEACE!</li> <li>• have them explain, read aloud</li> <li>• involve them in the conversation, have them ask questions, have them repeat</li> <li>• say what you want, what you will do</li> <li>• encourage dialogue</li> <li>• they need: conversation, instructions, loud repetition, explanations</li> <li>• they do not like monologues, authoritativeness, harsh words</li> </ul>
<b>The kinesthetic style - touch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- they are deep, thoughtful</li> <li>- they remember/understand what they delve into, experience, try</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a pleasant atmosphere</li> <li>• understand what they make, study, test</li> <li>• they speak slowly, give them time to think</li> <li>• good relationships are key - they build trust!</li> <li>• work, break, work...</li> <li>• they need: safe environment, time, breaks, patience, friendly tone, kindness, personal experience (exercise)</li> <li>• they don't like to quickly change topics, jump into words</li> </ul>

### 3. An example of preparation considering multisensory teaching

When preparing for the learning process, we must start from the fact that "people learn in different ways. Some of us learn most effectively by reading, others by listening or by using visual materials. Some learn more by testing their ideas in a group discussion, while others prefer to learn on their own. Some need systematically presented information and learn gradually, others use a holistic approach." (Marentič Požarnik, 2000)

Thus, during the preparation, we consider learning approaches and work methods, and we also include various aids which help us to be aware of the diversity of the teaching material, which cover all styles of students' learning and receiving information. In a modern school, the goal is to support creativity, innovation, and diversity.

In Table 1 I defined learning styles and with that I helped myself to consider the elements of the multisensory method in my teaching preparation. In Table 2 – A table of suitable activities according to a learning style, I entered the forms and methods of work, teaching and learning aids, and the course of work itself.

**Table 2. Suitable activities according to a learning style**

LEARNING STYLE	SUITABILITY OF ACTIVITIES / ACCESSORIES
<b>Visual style - visual</b>	<p><b>Learning methods:</b> face-to-face, individual</p> <p><b>Work methods:</b> demonstration, working with a map of Slovenia, World Atlas, working with a globe, working with a worksheet, colouring, writing;</p> <p><b>Lessons and teaching aids:</b> Textbook Company 5, PowerPoint presentation, blackboard, map of Slovenia, globe, World Atlas, worksheet, notebook.</p>

<p><b>Auditory style - hearing</b></p>	<p><b>Learning methods:</b> face-to-face, pair work;</p> <p><b>Work methods:</b> listening to an explanation, conversation, cooperation, and conversation in pairs, listening to yourself and others, answering questions;</p> <p><b>Lessons and teaching aids:</b> Textbook Company 5, PowerPoint presentation, blackboard, map of Slovenia, globe, World Atlas, worksheet, notebook.</p>
<p><b>The kinesthetic style - touch</b></p>	<p><b>Learning forms:</b> individual work;</p> <p><b>Work methods:</b> watching a demonstration of working with a map of Slovenia, working with a world atlas, working with a globe and practical work with the tools, working with a study sheet, working in a notebook;</p> <p><b>Lessons and teaching aids:</b> Textbook Company 5, PowerPoint presentation, blackboard, map of Slovenia, globe, World Atlas, worksheet, notebook.</p>

With the help of Table 2, I realized that my preparation for the lesson was adequate, so I set about designing the course of the lesson. I am attaching Table 3 – a lesson preparation record.

**Table 3. A lesson preparation record**

<p><b>Number of hours:</b> 1</p> <p><b>CONTENTS:</b> People in the room  <b>THEME:</b> Slovenia, our homeland  <b>LEARNING UNIT:</b> Where is Slovenia located?</p> <p><b>Learning objectives:</b>  <b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They know how to show the location of Slovenia on a globe, a world map, a map of Europe.</li> <li>• They can name the neighbouring countries of the Republic of Slovenia and show their location.</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching forms:</b> face-to-face, individual, in pairs</p> <p><b>Teaching methods:</b> explanation, conversation, demonstration, working with a map of Slovenia, World Atlas, working with a globe, working with a study sheet, transcription;</p> <p><b>Teaching materials and teaching aids:</b> Textbook Company 5, PowerPoint presentation, blackboard, map of Slovenia, globe, World Atlas, worksheet</p> <p><b>Cross-curricular links:</b> activity days, Natural Science and Technology (rotation of the Earth on its axis)</p> <p><b>COURSE OF THE LESSON</b></p>	
<p><b>A TEACHER</b></p>	<p><b>STUDENTS</b></p>

<p><b>1. INTRODUCTORY PART</b></p> <p>I invite the students to sit in front of the blackboard.</p> <p>I place a globe in front of the students. I conduct the interview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What is it?</li><li>- What does it show?</li><li>- Why is it that way?</li><li>- ...</li></ul> <p>I rotate the globe and invite those students who know how to show Slovenia on the globe. I spin the globe in front of everyone.</p> <p>I explain that the globe is a model of the Earth's surface. It shows the distribution of land and oceans. It illustrates the shape of the Earth.</p> <p>I place a globe next to each student, spin it and instruct them to find Slovenia.</p> <p><b>2. CENTRAL PART</b></p> <p>I write the title of the lesson on the board: <b>Where is Slovenia located?</b></p> <p>I prepare a PowerPoint presentation. During the lesson, I support the material learned with pictures and notes on the presentation.</p> <p>Each pair of students gets the Atlas of the World. They open on pages 114-115. We look at the Earth and talk about the display.</p> <p>On the upper left side, we read the ratio between land and water. I say that the large areas that surround the land are called oceans. They read and name the oceans (<b>Atlantic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean</b>).</p> <p>Large land areas are called continents. I encourage the students to name the continents together: <b>North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, Antarctica</b>.</p> <p>I encourage the students to show the learned oceans and continents on the map.</p> <p>I hand out the worksheet and encourage the</p>	<p>They sit down in front of the board.</p> <p>They participate in the interview. They think and answer the questions asked.</p> <p>Some show Slovenia on the globe.</p> <p>Explanations follow.</p> <p>They all show the position of Slovenia on the globe.</p> <p>They sit down on the school bench.</p> <p>They open the Atlas of the World to a specific page. They participate in the conversation.</p> <p>They read and say the names of the oceans and continents. They watch the PowerPoint presentation, consolidate the names, and show them on the map.</p> <p>They paste the study sheet and solve it.</p>
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<p>students to solve it. They have a PowerPoint presentation and the World Atlas to help.</p> <p>We continue to explore. They look for Slovenia on the world map.</p> <p>They open the Atlas of the World on pages 28-29, and we look at Europe. What relief forms do we see on the map: plains, hills, mountainous world. Europe is a very varied continent.</p> <p>I direct the students to open the Atlas of the World on pages 26-27. They name and show the countries of Europe. I also show a presentation. I say that Slovenia is in Central Europe.</p> <p>I tell the students to turn to pages 12-13 of the World Atlas. I encourage them to show the national borders of Slovenia with their finger. I ask them which countries Slovenia borders and where these countries are located on the map.</p> <p>I encourage the students to name and show the countries of Europe.</p> <p>We finish the work with the World Atlas.</p> <p>Together we create a note on the school board:</p> <p><b>Our country, the Republic of Slovenia, is in Central Europe. Its neighbouring countries are the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Austria, and the Republic of Italy.</b></p> <p><b>3. FINAL PART</b></p> <p>They put away the Atlas of the World. Instruct the students to copy Slovenia next to the template and colour the neighbouring countries for homework and name them. They also make a legend.</p>	<p>They find and show Slovenia.</p> <p>They open the Atlas of the World to a specific page. They participate in the conversation.</p> <p>They search, show, and name the countries of Europe.</p> <p>They open the Atlas of the World. They participate in the discussion and point on the map.</p> <p>They close the Atlas of the World and put it away in a certain place.</p> <p>They participate in creating a common record on the school board and copy it into their notebooks.</p> <p>They erase Slovenia and mark their homework.</p>
<p><b>Homework:</b> Mark neighbouring countries on the map of Slovenia.</p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b> Additional activity - we read the material in the textbook.</p>	

#### 4. Evaluation of the lesson

The work in the class was dynamic and active. In the introductory part, I surprised them by changing the working environment and, instead of working at a desk, I created work in a circle. Circling the globe took quite some time, but it was interesting. Next time, it might be even better to give the children at least one more globe - this would shorten the time it takes for all the students to take their turn and increase the time more children would spend with the globe. I must say, however, that in class the children always can access and see the globe, which made working with it a little faster.

In the main part of the lesson, several different methods of work took place: frontal explanation, demonstration, answering questions during the PowerPoint presentation, practical work in pairs with various aids (world atlas, map), individual work (teaching sheet with colouring and writing) and a notebook (drawing, colouring) ... Learning took place in a pleasant and active atmosphere. Initial fears that I might have prepared too many different activities turned out to be wrong, as the students worked enthusiastically and were active and cooperative throughout the learning process.

They enjoyed working with the World Atlas, looking for maps and specific features with pleasure. Due to the combination of all three teaching styles, each student accepted the learning material in his/her own way; thus the learning dynamics in the class was at a very high level. The learning work was carried out individually and in pairs; and in my opinion, the second part (learning in pairs) enriched the learning process, drew them into cooperation and research and the exchange of opinions. However, I moderated the dynamics with individual work, where the students had the opportunity to internalize the learned material.

I planned an additional activity for students who would be faster, but we omitted this part, as they had enough to do with the other activities.

#### Conclusion

We experience the world around us in different ways, and our approaches to learning are equally diverse. What works for one person is completely ineffective for another. Understanding different teaching techniques has a positive effect on the way students are taught and their progress, which is also the goal of every teacher.

We know that quality education depends heavily on good teachers. The fundamental role of teachers in the learning and teaching process is holistic care for students, in a personal, professional, and social sense. The paradigm of a good teacher is shifting from a teacher who teaches well to a teacher who encourages learning or directs learning in such a way that it enables the student to achieve optimal achievements and development (Valenčič Zuljan and Blanuša Trontelj, 2014).

Teaching that considers children's different learning styles, i.e., multisensory teaching, is therefore a direction in which time and energy should be invested before starting to prepare for the delivery of some teaching content. In this way, we also fulfil the goal of primary school education in Slovenia, which states that it is the promotion of harmonious physical, cognitive, emotional, moral, spiritual, and social development of the individual by considering developmental laws (Elementary School Act, Article 2, Goals of education).

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