

Learning Styles

Education

The visual-auditory-kinaesthetic claim, and why no trial supports it.

The claim

- Each learner has a preferred modality
- Teaching to it raises attainment
- Around 70 models are in circulation
- Widely believed by teachers worldwide
- VAK and VARK are the common forms

The evidence

- Preferences are real; the benefit is not
- The meshing hypothesis has failed tests
- Pashler et al. 2008 found almost no valid studies
- Later trials continue to find no effect
- Time and money spent on it are wasted

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

People do have preferences. Matching teaching to them does not improve learning, and no well-designed study has shown that it

Educational reference. The useful residue: match the medium to the content, not to the pupil. Maps are visual because maps are visual.