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# The views of tourism management teacher program students on the five step learning strategy: The example of the national and regional planning tourism course

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine the views of the students enrolled in the Tourism Management Teacher Program on the Five Step Learning Strategy (FSLs).

One-shot case study design was used in the study. The population of the study consisted of the students enrolled in the Tourism Management Teacher Program in the Educational Faculty of Commerce and Tourism, the Department of Tourism Management at Gazi University, who were taking the course on National and Regional Planning in Tourism.

The data was collected using the Five Step Learning Strategy Scale (FSLSS). Descriptive statistical formulas were used in data analysis.

It was observed that the views of the students about FSLs mainly consisted of “I agree” and “I strongly agree” options. It was concluded that FSLs can contribute to the effective learning of a subject.

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*Keywords:* Five step learning strategy; learning strategy; learning; active learning; meaningful learning.

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## 1. Introduction

Learning, which is one of the main functions of the brain, is a natural behavior like breathing. Thanks to learning, an individual adapts to the environment and thus can survive. In this context, learning can be defined as a process of adaptation to the environment. In this process of adaptation to the environment, the individual naturally interacts with the environment and acquires new behaviors. Thus, learning can also be defined as “acquiring a new behavior” in general terms (Berbaum, 2005:315). To acquire new behaviors, the learner should make attempts and do investigation. To make attempts and to investigate are the two principle factors of learning (Chanel Balas, 1998:15). To make attempt and to investigate, the learner uses the learning strategy/strategies he/she has.

Learning strategies are “the acts chosen by the learners to facilitate learning and communication tasks” (MacIntyre, 1994:190). The use of strategy is not unconscious at all. To solve a problem he/she encounters, the

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learner makes a conscious effort and uses strategies (Atlan,2000:112). Activities such as drawing up questions about the learned subjects, answering these questions, summarizing the learned subjects, presenting the learned knowledge by way of graphics figures etc. and by making explanations about the learned subjects can be considered as learning strategies (Açıkgöz,2003:81). In addition, students efforts such as underlining, taking notes on the text, rehearsal, grouping, using simulations, organization, asking questions by themselves, forming spatial representations and note-taking are among learning strategies (Senemoğlu,1997:562-579).

The present study suggests that the Five Step Learning Strategy (FSLs) will be effective in developing the relationship of the students with their knowledge and in their learning. The Allosteric Learning Model forms the theoretical basis of the FSLs. Giordan (1995), who developed the model, states that this model has three variables: the learner, the teaching environment (teacher or teaching staff) and knowledge (or skills). The learner does not acquire new knowledge (or skills) as they are, but acquires the knowledge by preparing for this according to his/her own style and rhythm, in order to seek answers to his/her own questions and to satisfy his/her own needs. The teaching environment (the teacher or teaching staff) can be considered as the behavioral or mental structure of the learner and as an inter-related constituent to transform this structure. The learner achieves learning by comparing his/her potential sources with the environment prepared by the teacher, through making a continuous adaptation. The third principal variable of the model is the knowledge (or the skills). Knowledge is rarely considered as the product of a simple transmission. Knowledge is the product of a process of transformation and emerges as a result of the transformation of questions, previous ideas, behaviors and the reasoning styles of the learner (Topbaş,2007:240-247).

To achieve learning by transforming mental design, the learner should firstly be interested in the knowledge or skill to be learned (intentionality-orientation); reaching related sources (confrontations); comprehension and expression (modeling) and finally drawing a conclusion and reaching a new mental design (configuration of the knowledge) (Giordan,1995).

FSLs, which is thought to help in enabling the student to engage in an intensive interaction with the learning material and thus to help in the transformation of the mental design, consists of five steps. In the first step, the learner prepares questions about the subject to be learned; in the second step, the learner writes the answers to these questions; in the third step, the learner visualizes the knowledge he/she has acquired in a scheme; in the fourth step, based on the acquired knowledge and the prepared scheme, the learner writes a conclusion; and in the fifth step, based on the emerging conclusion, the learner prepares a suggestion.

The purpose of this study is to determine the views of the students enrolled in the Tourism Management Teacher Program in the Educational Faculty of Commerce and Tourism, Department of Tourism Management at Gazi University on FSLs. In this context, within the framework of the question “What are the views of Tourism Management Teacher Program students on FSLs”, attempts were made to answer the following questions:

What are the views of the students on “preparing questions” about the subject matter?

What are the views of the students on “writing answers” about the subject matter?

What are the views of the students on the “visualization” of the acquired knowledge?

What are the views of the students about “writing conclusions” based on the acquired knowledge and the scheme?

What are the views of the students about “writing suggestions” based on the arising result?

## **2. Method**

### *2.1. Study Model*

A one-shot case study design was used in the study (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003). In the context of this model, the courses were conducted using FSLs for a period of 14 weeks. After the studies were completed, the views of the students were collected using FSLSS.

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