Teaching Inventory

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The four questions I am going to answer in this brief essay on teaching style are:

Were you surprised about your results? (2) How do you think your teaching style has affected you as a teacher or may affect you as a teacher? (3) How might different teaching styles inhibit effective collaboration between teachers? (4) What aspects of your teaching would you be willing to compromise on? Which are you not?

The results showed that my teaching goals need to be slightly more rote than understanding. This was somewhat surprising because I usually emphasize understanding more than procedure. It probably reflects the fact that I really enjoy solving mathematics problems using the same methods repetitively. In other words, because higher levels of mathematics understanding, whether conceptual or applied, require the ability to solve lower level problems with methods, I need to focus on rote problems first to get the problem solving techniques mastered.

The results also showed that I have a slight preference for symbolic cognitive processing over enactive processing and am about evenly split on individual and cooperative groups as far as teaching method is concerned. Math really uses symbols to represent sentences and the proper grasp of symbols is important for higher level cognitive processing. Taken together with the teaching goals matrix, this indicates that I really value the formulation and solving of basic rote problems before I move on to higher order thinking and application. In addition, the fact that I am evenly split between individual and cooperative group response shows that I like a balance between the mastery of individual problems by the individual and the mastery of a number of problems along with explanation that takes place in groups.

I think my teaching style will affect that way I manage classroom and assign homework. I will tend to give an even number of problems between basic mastery of techniques and application of those techniques and will tend to split my time between individual work on problems and group solutions of problems. Thus, based on these results I am likely to strive to achieve a balance between group and individual learning and basic and advanced problems on problem sets.

Different teaching styles might inhibit teaching the more the scores of the two teachers were at different extremes. Teachers who prefer rote basic problems strongly to help students master techniques might not co-teach well with teachers who prefer applied problems that highlight the real world application of the principles and techniques used in the more basic problems. Similarly, teachers who prefer individual assignments strongly to cooperative group assignments will inhibit those who prefer mostly group work. Put mathematically, teachers with points in opposite quadrants will have trouble agreeing on goals and interacting and co-teaching in both matrices.

I am willing to compromise and am positioned to do so because I do not have results in the far corners of the spectrum. In other words, I am close to the very center of the matrices in both learning and cognitive processing. This means that I can be flexible and can adapt to the styles of other teachers in a co-teaching environment and can make positive contributions in meetings to assignments and approaches that will benefit students from a variety of perspectives. In short, I think I can contribute and develop teaching plans within a teaching style that focuses on developing a variety of methods and techniques to promote learning.