ON MATCHING TEACHER'S TEACHING STYLES WITH STUDENT'S LEARNING STYLES

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Abstract: A mismatch between students' learning styles and teacher's teaching styles can cause ineffective instructional activities to happen. To avoid that, a teacher must be informed about students' behaviors in the classroom that shape one's learning styles, and use such information to develop teaching styles that are compatible with students' learning styles. This paper discusses about the spectrum of learning styles and its impact on teaching styles taken from the perspectives of Lawrence's and Grasha's explanations and theories on teaching styles and their implications to classroom instructions. Suggestions of instructions that match learning styles and teaching styles and to overcome teacher's resistance to modify one's teaching styles are presented. The discussions and suggestions made contribute to instructional theories.

Keywords: *learning styles, teaching styles, instruction*

A teacher's knowledge of student learning style is essential. Student learning styles in learning can become a source that informs teachers about their students' learning preferences, thus allowing them to provide constructive feedback to help the students reach higher levels of achievement (Cooper, 2001; Doyle & Rutherford, 1984). Studies suggest that matching teaching styles with students' learning style improve students' learning achievement (Šafaříková, 2016; Arifin, 2015; Budiarta et.al, 2014; Kovacic, 2014; Peacock, 2001). However, teaching styles must be seen as a repertoire of teaching methods or a continuum of possible teaching strategies for teachers who are concerned with a variety of learners, a variety of learning objectives, and a variety of learning contexts (Gibson, 2001). This paper discusses the learning styles based on Myer-Briggs Type Indicator and their implications to teacher's teaching style. The possible instructions are also discussed.

The MBTI Dimensions and Their Study Styles

The MBTI (Myer-Briggs Type Indicator) was developed based on the Jung/Myers theory of psychological types as a way of describing and explaining certain consistent differences in how normal people use their minds. The MBTI identifies an individual's preference in perceiving information and making decisions according to four dichotomies of the eight MBTI dimensions: extroversion or introversion (E – I), sensing or intuition (S – N), thinking or feeling (T – F), and judging or perceiving (J – P). Later, these four dichotomies are used to develop the 16 distinct types of personalities: ISTJ, ISFJ, ISTP, and ISFP; ESTP, ESFP, ESTJ, and ESJF; INFJ, INTJ, INFP, and INTP; and ENFP, ENTP, ENFJ, and ENTJ. The following explanation is brief description of each dimension's study styles based on Lawrence's description (Lawrence, 1993: 43-46).

1. The extroversion's study styles (E)

Learners who fall under this dimension learn by talking and interacting both in verbal and non-verbal ways. They engage physically in their environments, and pay full attention toward objective events. Also, they prefer talking to help their thoughts come into forms and become clear. For their study styles, they like to act first and reflect later, and they dive into new material given to them. They usually have a strong and external-extraverted reason for studying, for example, to prepare to teach someone and prefer to study with a friend. The extroverts also start interaction whenever they feel is needed in order to stimulate reflection, and to keep them on track, they avoid distractions that will cut into their concentration (Lawrence, 1993: 43).

2. The introversion's study styles

The introverts are usually quiet and often do reflection. They tend to keep their thoughts inside their minds and pay more attention on their own thoughts. They enjoy inner events, ideas, impressions and concepts and learn in private, individual was. Their study styles are reflecting first then acting later, and always trying to justify their thoughts by looking for new data. They are comfortable with working privately and extroverting whenever they feel like they have to. Reading is their main way of studying and they do not mind becoming a good listener in a group work (Lawrence, 1993: 43).

3. The sensing's study styles (S)

Learners in this dimension are good with memorizing facts and observing specifics. Their minds process data step by step, starting with the concept first then moving to abstract

ones. They are careful and thorough in order to understand something that happens. Learners with the sensing type stay connected to practical realities surrounding them and pay full attention to what is in the present moment. In studying, they use sequential or step by step approach to learning new material, starting from familiar or solid facts and moving gradually to abstract concepts and principles. Furthermore, they use their own personal and concrete experience to approach abstract principals and concepts (Lawrence, 1993: 44).

4. The intuition's study styles (N)
While the sensing ones rely on facts and practical realities, the intuitivists are often being caught up in inspiration and rely more on their insight than careful observation. They also prefer verbal fluency more than on memory of facts, and good with general concepts more than details and practical matters. They are experts in associating, finding meanings, and reading between the lines. In studying, they prefer to follow inspirations and jump into new materials to pursue an intriguing concept. Reading is comfortable for them. They try their own way through understanding new material, hopping from concept to concept to find the big picture. Once they find the big picture of a new material, they can attend to its details. Exploring new skills are more preferred by them rather honing the present ones (Lawrence, 1993: 44).

5. The thinking's study styles (T)
People with this dimension like to make impersonal judgments in order to find objective truth. They analyse their experiences to find out logical principles underlying the experiences, then use the logical principles to keep their mental life neatly ordered. They naturally criticize almost everything in order to find clarity and precision and making decisions by staying away from their emotional concerns. Their study styles are mostly characterized by having objective material to study. They tend to compartmentalize emotional all the issues so they can clarify their thoughts and continue completing their task. Their way of dealing with problems is to analyse the problems in order to bring logical order to avoid confusion. This type of learners studies something to master it (Lawrence, 1993: 45).

6. The feeling's study styles (F)
This type is doing very well with people. Their value others based on motives and personal values, and attend to relationships. They always make everything they care as personal to them, and seek harmony in quality relationships. Their emotional life is very important for them and they are honest in

appreciating other people and their accomplishments. They study best by learning with others and responding to their needs and preferring topics to study that they really care (Lawrence, 1993: 45).

7. The judgment's study styles
People with this dimension have a clear structure in their learning structure. They learn to complete and to get closure over something, and they organize their life into an orderly plan. Their study styles include plan and schedule their work, prefer to know exactly what they are accountable for and what standards are used to judge their performance. Assignments are serious for them, and they are very persistent in doing their assignments (Lawrence, 1993: 46).

8. The perceiving's study styles (P)
People of this dimension enjoy exploration even without a pre-planned structure. New experiences are thrilling for them, and they manage emerging problems with emerging structures. They are not afraid of something new and different, even are stimulated. They spontaneously follow their curiosity when studying new material. Since they are impulsive and always do something interesting enough for them, they always try to find novel ways to complete their assignments. They study to discover something new, thus losing interest on studying something already familiar for them (Lawrence, 1993: 46).

Teaching Styles
Although psychological type of a teacher is not a sole factor that influences one's actual behaviour in the classroom, it is recommended for a teacher to recognize one's psychological type in order to enrich his or her repertoire of teaching methods and strategies. The followings are explanations about the MBTI dichotomies and teaching styles according to Lawrence (1993: 74-75), and Grasha's five teaching styles (Grasha, 1994: 142-143).

1. The MBTI dichotomies and teaching styles
Extrovert – introvert differences
Extroverted teachers are more likely to allow students to choose what they want to study and how they want to do their learning tasks. They also take part with their students in classroom or school projects. Achieving harmony in classroom activities with student and dealing with their attention are common behaviours for them. Introverted teachers, on the other hand, prefer to select materials for students and structure their learning activities.

They are more thrilled with ideas they are trying to teach and tend to control the classroom attention to themselves.

Sensing-intuitive differences

Teachers of sensing types have a tendency to emphasize facts, practical information, and concrete skills, while of intuitive types tend to emphasize concepts and relationships. For sensing type teachers, facts are important, while for intuitive type teachers facts are used to understand larger matters. When giving tasks to students, sensing type teachers are more likely than their intuitive counterparts to keep things centralized by focusing the activities on a narrow range of choices, while intuitive type teachers do not mind giving a wide range of choices to students since they expect independent and creative behavior from students.

Thinking-feeling differences

Thinking type teachers seldom make comments about student performance, and when they do, the comments are likely to be objective statements. They tend to deal with the class as a whole. Feeling types show their compliment and critics to students as well as their supports and corrections, both in words and by their body language. They encourage students to spend more time in their individual work and enjoy attending to each student in their individual work.

Judging-perceiving differences

Judging type teachers prefer orderly classroom activities with commitment to structure and schedules, while perceiving type teachers prefer to move around the classroom and be more flexible in structuring the materials Perceiving type teachers encourage more movement around the classroom, more independence, more open ended discussions, and more socializing in study groups.

2. Grasha's five teaching styles

The Five Teaching Styles was coined by Grasha in 1988 for categorizing common styles of teaching of college teachers. Grasha believes that teachers' behaviours in teaching, or teaching styles, represent a pattern of needs, beliefs, and behaviours in their classroom. Moreover, styles of teaching affect one's way of presenting information, interacting with students, managing classroom tasks, supervising coursework, and other classroom activities (Grasha, 1994).

Expert

Teacher with this teaching style possesses knowledge and expertise that students need. An expert teacher is shown to display their detailed knowledge in classroom and challenge their students in order to enhance their competence. Their concerns are conveying information and ensuring that students are well prepared.

Formal Authority

Teacher with this teaching style is known by their knowledge and role in a faculty. Because of that, this kind of teacher is concerned with establishing learning expectations and goals for their students. To do that, they provide positive and negative feedback for the students and expect them to behave according to the rules of conduct.

Personal Model

This kind of teacher believes in "teaching by personal example" (Grasha, 1994: 143). Therefore, they are more likely to establish a model, a prototype for students to think and behave. To achieve their personal goal, they encourage students to observe and then imitate the model. They also guide and direct the students by setting examples and showing how to do things.

Facilitator

Teachers with facilitator style are characterized by their ability in maintaining teacher-student's natural interactions. They like to guide students by asking questions to them, exploring options and alternatives for them, and encouraging them to develop criteria for their choices. Their personal objective is to promote students' capacity for independent action and responsibility.

Delegator

Similar to the previous style, teachers with delegator style tend to expect their students to function autonomously. They are more likely to assign students to independent tasks or to take part in a project as part of autonomous teams. They are available whenever the students request them to appear as a resource person.

What Can Teachers Do?

Ideally, before the classroom activities begin, a teacher collects as much data as possible regarding students' learning styles. Still, as a teacher, we often jump into introducing our classroom contact without even considering that students' learning styles can become a helpful source to help us designing instructions that can mediate the learning process successfully. Felder and Henriques (1995: 28) discuss several efforts to design instructions that "fit for all".

1. Motivate learning

We need to teach new material to our students as much as possible in the situations to which they can relate their personal and future career experiences, or in other words, teach

them materials that are relevant to their daily and future life, rather than simply as a material to memorize.

2. Balance concrete information (sensing) and conceptual information (intuition)

This means that we have to balance the materials about language as science and language as communication tool. Felder and Henriques (1995: 28) argue that the balance does not have to be equal, yet must be periodically appeared in order to spark learners' interest and to give them more opportunities to develop their knowledge about language learning.

3. Balance structured teaching approach with open-ended unstructured activities

Teachers can design instructions that emphasize formal training (step-by-step or deductive and sequential tasks) and more open-ended unstructured activities with emphasis on conversation and cultural contexts of the target language. In other words, teachers have a wide variety of teaching instructions and activities that can be used interchangeably according to students' needs.

4. Have a wide range of audiovisuals collection

Photographs, drawings, cartoons, movies, and other audiovisual materials can make the learning process more interesting and reinforce teachers' lectures. The use of audiovisual materials can become a refreshing opportunity for students, especially after they are through some repetitive drill exercise in basic vocabulary and grammar or join the lectures in classroom. Audiovisuals can also be used to stimulate students' interest before they are assigned to do some task both in individual and in a group.

5. Provide options to cooperate with others or to work individually

Not all students can perform their best when interact with others, and vice versa. Therefore, teachers must be flexible enough to modify their direction on how to complete the tasks given.

6. Give inductive and deductive presentation of course material in balanced way

Some students see the big picture first, and others seek for the details first. To make sure that all students get the benefits of our teaching presentation, we can balance our teaching presentation or lectures in inductive way and in deductive way. For example, we can use target language as medium of instruction in the classroom with aim to facilitate language acquisition process and develop students' oral communication skills

(inductive), while at the same time provide explicit instruction (written) to facilitate their formal language learning and develop their written communication and interpretation skills (deductive) (Felder & Henriques (1995).

Suggestions of Instructions that Match Learning Styles and Teaching Styles

Learning style simply describes how a student learns, and this implies that teacher's teaching style deals with how a student prefers to learn in classroom. Although it is not realistic to expect a matched learning style and teaching style (Gibson, 2001; Doyle & Rutherford, 1984), a teacher must possess a repertoire of teaching methods and strategies to fit students' styles of learning.

Studies show that matching teaching styles with students' learning style can improve students' learning achievement (Šafaříková, 2016; Arifin, 2015; Budiarta et.al, 2014; Kovacic, 2014; Peacock, 2001). However, this is not to say that teacher should use their preferred teaching style exclusively. Teacher is even strongly suggested to have a repertoire of teaching styles. In doing so, it would be helpful for teacher to seek information about how students behave in the classroom when learning and how do students learn in order to modify one's teaching styles to fit one's students' needs. The followings are suggestions of classroom instruction that can be used in classroom:

1. Instructions that fit for ISTJ, ISFJ, ISTP, and ISFP styles:
   - giving opportunities for students to work individually;
   - giving a detailed order on what they have to do;
   - establishing the goal first and explaining it to them;
   - using audiovisual materials in classroom lecture;
   - giving practical test or a step-by-step project; and
   - giving compliments and paying attention whenever needed.
2. Instructions that fit for ESTP, ESFP, ESTJ, and ESJF styles:
   - asking the students to work in a group;
   - explaining about the project first;
   - establishing the goal first and explaining it to them;
   - using audiovisual materials in classroom lecture;
   - giving practical test or a step-by-step project.
3. Instructions that fit for INFJ, INTJ, INFP, and INTP styles:

- giving the students opportunities to work individually or in group;
- explaining the theory first, and then allow them to apply the theory;
- leaving the instruction open for some creativity;
- giving reading and listening as part of the lectures.

4. Instructions that fit for ENFP, ENTP, ENFJ, and ENTJ styles:
   - giving them a variety of task choices with a set deadline to spark some interest for them;
   - giving lecture in form of seminar and discussion;
   - giving the students opportunities to work individually or in group;
   - explaining the theory first, and then allow them to apply the theory;
   - leaving the instruction open for some creativity;
   - giving reading and listening as part of the lectures.

Overcoming Resistance to Match Teaching Style and Learning Style

The first and the most essential thing to do first, in the author's opinion, is a teacher's willingness to modify one's teaching styles by first paying attention to students' styles of learning in classroom setting.

Some teachers may refuse to modify their teaching styles and tend to use their styles exclusively, without considering students' learning behaviours in the classroom. Therefore, to overcome this resistance, we as a teacher must reflect back to our primary goal in teachings in this present time, which is to assist students in becoming an autonomous learner in order to improve their life.

1. **Adopting a new perspective on classroom management and control**

Often, teachers are afraid to lose control over what happens in their classroom. We are afraid to being taken advantage of by our students, or are being disrespected by them. Regarding this, Grasha (1994: 146) advices us the followings:
- Presenting clear idea before the classroom about the role and the authority of teacher in the classroom
- Strictly managing time spent in the classroom
- Specifying outcomes of the time spent in the classroom
- Defining clear roles of teacher and students in a consultation session, group project, or in a seminar
- Explaining the objective to learn clearly

2. **Adopting a new perspective on students' capability**

Grasha (1994: 146) argues that capability can be viewed as static or even as something that students may or may not possess. The author is more likely to view students' capability as a dynamic one, which develops over time according to student's nature and teacher's nurture. Thus, a teacher can allow one's students to take initiative in group work or group or project, delegate tasks and responsibilities evenly, and invite them to share about their experiences or challenges they face during completing the tasks given individually or as a member of a team.

Conclusion

The MBTI types can be used as information to match a teacher's style in teaching with student's learning style. Since all learning styles of learners blend together in the classroom, it is essential for a teacher to modify one's style in teaching based on students' styles.

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