THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES
IN TEACHING BASIC ENGLISH TO CHILDREN

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Abstract

In his multiple intelligence theory, Gardner (1993) sought to extend the capacity of human potential beyond the frame of the IQ score. Moreover, Gardner has grouped the capabilities into eight categories or intelligences. Those intelligences are linguistic intelligences, logical-mathematical intelligences, spatial intelligences, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and the last one is naturalistic intelligence (Amstrong, 2002:2). According to Campbell’s experiences above, the writer is interested to investigate the Multiple Intelligences theory as teaching model especially in teaching basics English to children. All people posses all intelligences at varying levels, it is helpful for teachers to present content material through a variety of intelligences to make the information comprehensible to all learners.

Keywords: Multiple Intelligences, Teaching Basic English

INTRODUCTION

All children are unique learners. They have their own uniqueness and different characteristics. As learners, they are also very different as individuals with their strength and preferences. Such differences are perhaps due to different children’s social environment that stimulates them in their stage of learning. The social environment, the cultural context, and in particular the influence of peers, teachers, and parents engaged in interactions with children are also major sources of learning and development. As Vygotsky (1978; as cited in Pinter, 2006:10) states that the social environment too has important role to play. In addition, Hunt (1970b, p.4 as cited in Bruce et. al, 2000; 97) determines that growth is an interactive function of the person’s level of personality development (or stage) and the environmental condition he encountered. So, there are two factors that contribute to children’s growth. Those are the person level of personality development and the social environment. While Vygotsky emphasized the children’s social side, Piaget (1896-1980) has suggested that children construct knowledge for themselves and that they actively participate in the learning process. This is what he called “concrete operation” stage. In learning a language, children are centred on “here and now”, on the functional purposes of language. In this way, children are active constructors of their knowledge of the world. And in other way, children show us that they as individuals are different from adult person in their way of learning.

Learning is an active process. All parents and teachers who have observed children in learning situation can testify just how actively they are involved when they are interested. Also, since children at different stages of development- both their social side and cognition –respond differently to various model of teaching. The teacher has
to shape the teaching strategy to match the learner, in this case children’s intellectual level, the closer a teaching strategy is tailored to the learner’s conceptual or cognition level, the more learning will take place (Hunt, 1970b; p.2 as in Joyce, 2000:98).

Having considered all things above, how children in similarly-aged share certain characteristics (Piaget) and how the social environment, in particular the social interaction with their parents or teachers (Vygotsky), we often notice that individual children enjoy different activities. It indicates their intelligence. There is no one child who is stupid or smart, but there is a child who is prominent in one or some of types of intelligence. Just find out their style of intelligence which will reflect their best learning style.

Various techniques have been adapted in teaching and learning process. Many theories have influenced and become such things that fundamentally constructed the teaching-learning process. One of them is the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory proposed by Dr. Howard Gardner. Gardner, an American psychologist, suggested that intelligence had no unitary character; rather, it manifested itself in many different ways in different children (Frames of Mind: Theory of Multiple Intelligence (1983)). Gardner sought to extend the capacity of human potential beyond the frame of the IQ score. Teachers who are aware of this can ensure that their teaching is meaningful to all children with any one or any combination of these intelligences.

Moreover, Gardner has grouped the intelligences into eight categories. Those are linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and the last one is naturalistic intelligence (Armstrong, 2002:2).

Recently, Multiple Intelligences (MI) has been placed more than just a theory but it has been developed into a teaching and learning model. By using MI theory, teacher would teach students in eight ways and students could learn in many ways. Many teachers in The United States have implemented Gardner’s MI theory in their classroom. One of them is Bruce Campbell. He has applied the MI theory to his elementary third/fourth/fifth grade, multi-age classroom for six years. It resulted not only in higher test scores but improvement in other areas of the children’s life as well. Behavior problems are minimized; self-concept is enhanced; cooperation and leadership skill develop and above all, the children’s love of learning is increased (Campbell, 1997; xviii).

In this case, the writer is interested in the application of Multiple Intelligences theory in teaching field. Children are chosen as the specific target to teach because of their uniqueness in learning, and because they are still in best development. That’s why the writer would like to investigate; to give view hopefully will give an informative input to the readers.

METHOD
In this research the writer uses a qualitative study through library and internet research method. This research is to give a view of how the theory could be applied in teaching Basic English, and also to find the informative inputs. This study is to develop the theory of Multiple Intelligence by Gardner (1983), not to test the theory itself. As Danim (2002, 34) states that the comparative of characteristics between quantitative and qualitative study (based on his 3.2 table) is that quantitative study is to test the theory whether on qualitative study is to develop the theory.

This study was conducted through library and internet research, so the writer does not mention a specific population in a specific place. However, since the topic of this research about the implementation of multiple intelligences in teaching Basic English to children, whereas children in this case clarified as young language learners or person beyond the age of puberty (Douglas, 1994 : 90). So, the writer only suggests to use the MI theory to teach English to students of primary or elementary school, or instead to students of kindergarten. While a sample, as mentioned above because of the library and internet research, the writer cannot point out the sample because usually in library research is only investigated the data through the related books and not on human.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The writer will answer the research question by interpreting the data and the results of her investigation.

1. Research Question 1: What is the Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory in educational perspective?

   Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory is the modes in which people process information effectively, or the ways of how people are smart. Realizing the diversity of ability and intelligences among people, Dr. Howard Gardner, who was a psychologist Co Director of Project Zero and Professor of Education at Harvard University, proposed Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory in 1983. MI Theory is the existence of seven basic intelligences; visual – spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, verbal – linguistic intelligence, logical – mathematical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and bodily kinaesthetic intelligence. And recently in 1996, Gardner added the eighth intelligence – naturalist intelligence to his theory. Gardner identified and stated that intelligence: it entails the ability to solve problems, it involves a “biological proclivity” it has an identifiable neurological core operation or set of operations “and it is susceptible to encoding in a symbol system … which captures and conveys important forms of information” (Gardner, 1999 : 15-16). Then, Gardner suggested that intelligence has more to do with the capability for (1) solving problems and (2) fashioning products in context – rich and naturalistic setting. He tried to broaden the scope of human potential beyond the confines of the IQ score and take people to a renewed look at views about learning and development. His theory has contributed to educational practices and reformed movements around the world.

   Furthermore, these intelligences reflect learner’s myriad ways of interacting with the world. Although, each person possesses all intelligences to some degree, some
intelligence is more strongly exhibited than others. By various stimuli and education, MI can be nurtured and strengthened or ignored and weakened. It also provides educators with a conceptual framework for organizing and reflecting on curriculum assessment and pedagogical practices. In turn, this reflection has led many educators to develop new approaches that might better meet the needs of the range of learners in their classrooms.

The way in which Gardner’s theory has been translated into policy and practice has been varying. Howard Gardner did not, initially, spell out the implications of his theory for education in any detail. Subsequently, he has looked more closely at what the theory might mean for schooling practice. The approach entails:

- A broad vision of education. All seven intelligences are needed to live life well. Teachers, therefore, need to attend to all intelligences. As Kornhaber (2001: 276) has noted it involves educators opting ‘for depth over breadth’. Understanding entails taking knowledge gained in one setting and using it in another.

- Developing local and flexible programs. Howard Gardner’s interest in ‘deep understanding’, performance, exploration and creativity are not easily accommodated within an orientation to the ‘delivery’ of a detailed curriculum planned outside of the immediate educational context.

Next, the writer would like to describe all eight intelligence such as follow:

- Linguistic Intelligence involves the capacity to use language effectively and creatively no matter in writing or speaking. Linguistic people like to use language to express their ideas, convey information, and understand other people. They are good at memorizing names, places, or other detailed information.

- Logical-mathematical intelligence is the ability to use numbers effectively and engage in higher order thinking. People with this intelligence like to use language to express their ideas, convey information, and understand other people. They are good at memorizing names, places, or other detailed information.

- Spatial intelligence is the ability to manipulate and perceive objects or forms mentally and then to transfer those perceptions either mentally or concretely. They like to learn and think by visual stimuli and tend to organize things spatially. So, they learn best through graphic images.

- Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence involves using people's whole body or parts of their body to solve problems, to express ideas and emotions. Bodily-Kinesthetic learners like to touch, talk, create things, and move around. They are good at physical activities such as dance, hands-on tasks, constructing models, and any kind of movement.

- Musical intelligence is the capacity to think and express in musical forms. People with this intelligence own the sensitivity to the melody, sound, pitch or tone. They learn best through activities wherein they discriminate, transform, and express sounds.

- Interpersonal intelligence involves the capacity to perceive (he feelings, intentions, and motivations. Interpersonal learners can discriminate the cues
from facial expressions, gestures, or intonation and response effectively to those cues. They like to join groups, communicate with others, and make a lot of friends. Such interpersonal learners learn best by interacting with people, cooperating, and leading others.

- Intrapersonal intelligence means learners have the ability to understand themselves. They have a clear picture in who they are, what they can do, and what they want to do. They like to work alone and achieve their goals. They learn best through getting in touch with their inner moods, intentions, and self-motivations.

- Naturalist intelligence enables the learners to better relate themselves to the surroundings. They show strong interests in animals or natural phenomena. Being outside, making observation about the subtle changes in the environment, interacting with plants and animals allow such learners to perform with more confidence and ease.

2. Research Question 2: How can implement MI Theory into classroom activities?

As the writer has stated in chapter II, she pointed out in the point 2.3 Multiple Intelligences and classroom, and she detailed points into MI Teacher. Method of MI Teaching, MI classroom, and MI Lesson plan. All above points has become one reference of how implemented the MI Theory into classroom activities. Next, the writer would like to discuss the application of MI Theory in the classroom.

Everyone owns different learning styles and preferences. Some people may find that they have a preferred style of learning or way of encountering the world and less use or experience with other styles. Others may find that they use different styles in different situations. As teachers, we need to know student’s learning preference, help them to make good use of their learning styles, and develop ability in less dominant ones. Thus, teachers need o present information using different styles. This variety in presentation of content and overall instructional approach allows students to learn better and more quickly; especially if the chosen teaching method used better match their preferred learning styles. Also, students can learn in other ways, not just in their preferred style.

According to Kanar (1995), there are various modes used to discriminate a learner’s learning styles. She describes the three most common styles; (1) visual, (2) auditory, (3) kinaesthetic in her book “The Confident Student”. Then, the writer would like to outline the strategies for teaching the three most common styles of Kanar’s category as follow:

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<tr>
<th>Learning Styles</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strategies of Teaching</th>
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<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>Visual learning style involves learning through seeing images such as reading or writing tasks. Such students learn better by writing the information down, reading, and</td>
<td>1. Various visual materials can be present in the class. For example, pictures, charts, fresh cards, videos, and maps are good resources for visual learners.</td>
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watching. They seem to have a vivid image in their mind, so visual learners can recall what they learn easily by a glance at the context.

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<tr>
<th>Auditory</th>
<th>Kinesthetic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Auditory learning style involves filtering and transferring information through listening. They learn better by talking to people and hearing what was said. In addition, they may have some problem in reading and writing. Strategies for teaching Auditory students</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinesthetic learning styles involves learning through moving or touching. These learners seem to have more difficulty paying attention in the traditional classroom. They like to speak out what they learn and express emotion physically. They learn best by physical experience such as touching, holding, or doing hands-on activities.</td>
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| 1. Give a brief explanation about the content of the lesson in the beginning and summarize the new material at the end of the class. |
| 2. Have students read out loud the questions or whisper new information to themselves. |
| 3. Auditory activities such as group discussion, brainstorming, and presentation all allow students to acquire auditory stimuli. |
| 4. Advise the students to take notes by using tape recorders so that they can review what they learn or discuss in the class. |
| 5. Ask questions and encourage students to share their ideas. |

| 1. Advise students to take notes during lectures and underline the key points in the text. |
| 2. Provide activities such as role-plays, project work, and games to help students to join learning. |
| 3. Take frequent stand up and stretch breaks. |
| 4. Have students transfer new information from the text books to another medium such as computers or posters. |
| 5. Provide objects that are related to the subjects of the lesson so that students can learn things by touching, feeling, or operating the objects. |

The teaching strategies above are also to show and give another example of how teachers implemented the MI Theory into classroom activities. It has been adapted from http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/The_Practice_of_Learning_Theories/Multiple_Intelligences. It is stated beside the method of MI Teaching that the writer also stated in chapter II. Next the writer would like to give the example of MI lesson plan.
Although, there is no single, preferred model of MI-based lesson design. However, there are some basic concepts of MI lesson plan. Teachers are highly adept at creating approaches that best suit their teaching style as well as the needs of their students. Thomas Armstrong (1994), Linda Campbell (1996), and researchers who experienced in using the MI Theory, such as Nelly Ribot, Thomas Hoerr, Bruce Campbell, Karen L. Currie, have suggested sample lesson plan as one option for organizing MI instruction. Armstrong (1994 : 61) uses the seven days, the class has one main topic to be learned. While Campbell (1996 : 235) uses the sample lesson using eight activity centers. In a sample lesson plan, the main lesson acts as a theme for the eight intelligent. Nelly Ribot currently teacher English as a second language at Los Medanos School in Trenque Lauquen, Argentina.

In relation of how teacher assesses MI into classroom, Gardner believes that standardized tests only measure linguistic and logical/mathematical intelligences within artificial settings and tend to ignore the capability in other intelligences. The purpose of assessment should measure student’s learning processes in order to obtain information about student’s understanding of skills or knowledge as well as their approach to solve problems. From Gardner’s perspective, the assessment should connect their class work to real-life experiences and apply their knowledge to new situations. He pointed out that instruments for measuring intelligence should be ‘intelligence fair”. Consequently, we should get away from traditional tests that reflect only logical/mathematical and linguistic abilities and look instead at more specific intelligences in operation.

The following examples of tests are some important components in implementing authentic assessment that the writer tried to explore. Among others:

- Observation; the best way to assess student’s multiple intelligences is by observing students learning processes. For example, a teacher can observe how students operate a machine, solve problems, or interact with their group members. The teacher uses these tools to make records while students are working rather than checking the learning products.

- Portfolio; this is the way to collect student’s products and acknowledge their accomplishments. The teacher (or the students) can put students’ writing draft, final report, photos, videotapes, self-assessment essays, or drawing in the portfolio. Students might also be asked to reflect on their work and their various learning journeys. In this way, the teacher not only can evaluate students’ work but also grasp additional information about student’s learning progress.

- Performance; performance assessment require students to demonstrate their skills or multiple talents for the class or other audience. Performance tasks can be presented individually or in groups. Tasks such as oral presentations, role plays, exhibits, or instrument playing all directly help instructors evaluate a student’s complex skills and high-level understanding.

- Teacher-made tests or responses; the teacher can prompt questions and let students display their understanding in response of their work. For example, students can write down their comments or feedback to the work. Questions
allow students to think more on their own opinion, and develop insightful thinking. Those are the example of how MI Theory could be applied into classroom activities in teaching-learning process. Even though there are several ways of how MI Theory can be carried out in teaching and learning process, but the writer tries to offer and select some of way from several resources in more simple description.

CONCLUSIONS

In this point, the writer would like to explain her conclusions after considering and interpreting her data taken from chapter II and chapter IV. She concludes as follows:

1. Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences is the theory of the existence of eight intelligences; linguistic intelligence, logical mathematical intelligence, musical intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence, bodily kinaesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and the last one naturalistic intelligence. Those intelligences exist in human beings. MI theory recognizes the diversity of the learners in their learning styles, learning potentials, etc. and appreciates the development of learning strategies on the part of the learners.

2. MI theory has had utility in education. It has helped educators to reflect on their practice, and given them a basis to broaden their focus and to attend to what might assist people to live their lives well. It also encouraged them to look beyond the narrow confines of the dominant discourses of skill, curriculum, and testing.

3. By implementing MI theory, it is clear that a more “student-centered” curriculum is necessary. Gardner’s purpose in MI theory is to create “real life” learning situation for learners. For this reason, teachers need to help students link their prior knowledge with to be-learned information, so that students can apply what they have learned in the classroom to the real outside world.

4. According to Project SUMIT (Schools Using Multiple Intelligences Theory) in 2000 that there were some successful points in implementing practices of multiple intelligences theory.
   - Culture: support for diverse learners and hard work. Acting on a value system which maintains that diverse students can learn and succeed, that learning is exciting, and that hard work by teacher is necessary.
   - Readiness: awareness-building for implementing MI building staff awareness of MI and of the different ways that students learn.
   - Tool: MI is a means of fostering high quality work. Using MI as a tool to promote high quality student work rather than use the theory as an end in and of itself.
   - Collaboration: informal and formal exchanges. Sharing ideas and constructive suggestions by the staff in formal and informal exchanges.
   - Choice: meaningful curriculum and assessment options. Embedding curriculum and assessment in activities that are valued both by students and the wider culture.
• Arts: employing the arts to develop children’s skill and understanding within and across disciplines.

5. In relation teaching English to children, MI has also utility and has some key points;
• First, each child possesses capacities in all intelligences. Some might perform extremely high levels of functioning in all intelligences while others tend not to display many. Most of children, however, appear to possess some highly developed intelligence as well as some weak ones.
• Second, most children have the capacity to develop each intelligence to an adequate level of competency. The combination of the environmental influence such as school instructions, parents, and exposure to cultural activities can strengthen or weaken certain intelligence. If given appropriate instruction and encouragement, all intelligences can develop and reach to a higher level.
• Third, intelligences usually work together in complex ways. No intelligence works alone because intelligences always interact with each other. For example, to make a cake, one should read receipt, weigh the flour, and decide the flavor to satisfy all members of the family and one’s own preference. The process of making a cake needs the intelligences such as linguistic, logical mathematical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences.
• Fourth, there are many ways to be intelligent within each category. In other words, one can perform each of intelligence in different ways. For example, a bodily kinesthetic person cannot dance well, but is highly bodily-kinesthetic because he can make manual products well.

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