Analyzing Multiple Intelligences Theory in Teaching New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook

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ABSTRACT

The birth of Multiple Intelligence (MI) theory has revolutionized traditional education since the twentieth century. Howard Gardner, the pioneer of this theory, believed that each learner has a unique way of acquiring information. This paper investigates how *the New Headway Plus for Upper-Intermediate-Third Edition*, a standard EFL textbook in Iraqi universities, can cater to the diverse MI profiles of Iraqi EFL learners. It evaluates the success or failure of senior undergraduates in actively engaging with different learning styles and activities in the classroom. The study maps the distribution of nine distinct modes of MI theory across all 12 Units_ Logic/Mathematical, Verbal/Linguistic, Musical, Bodily/Kinesthetic, Visual/Spatial, Naturalist, Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and Existential Intelligences. The results reveal that *the New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook* predominantly emphasizes Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence, followed by Logic/Mathematical, Visual/Spatial, and Intrapersonal, among other intelligences. Existential Intelligence is not addressed in the *New Headway Plus for Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook*. It underscores the need for teaching approaches that encompass all modes of MI. Educators are urged to bolster their learners' intellectual capabilities through comprehensive educational activities and student evaluation using school material.

Keywords: Multiple Intelligences; School textbooks; New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook; EFL Iraqi learners.

تحليل نظرية الذكاءات المتعددة في تدريس منهج الاتجاه الجديد لمتعلمي اللغة الانكليزية

المدرس فائزة عدنان صالح

ماجستير في تعليم اللغات المتعددة

رئاسة جامعة بغداد/ قسم البعثات والعلاقات الثقافية

الملخص

ظهرت نظرية الذكاءات المتعددة في تغيير التعليم التقليدي على يد مؤسس تلك النظرية هاورد جاردنر خلال القرن العشرين حيث اعتقد جاردنر ان متعلمي اللغة المستهدفة يكتسبون المعلومات بشكل فريد من نوعه. تهدف الدراسة الى تدقيق منهج الاتجاه الجديد للمستوى فوق المتوسط والذي يعتبر احد المناهج المعتمدة في الجامعات العراقية في قدرتها على الاستفادة من الذكاءات المتعددة لمتعلمي اللغة الانكليزية في العراق. يسلط البحث الضوء إلى مدى تضمين الذكاءات المتعددة في المنهج الدراسي من خلال نجاح او فشل الاداء الفعَال لطلبة الدراسات الاولية –المرحلة الرابعة عند تفعيل اساليب التعليم والفعاليات المختلفة في الصف الدراسي. اجريت الدراسة من خلال اعتماد تسعة انواع مختلفة من الذكاءات المتعددة في جميع وحدات المنهج الاثنى عشر والتي تضم الذكاء المنطقي او الحسابي، الذكاء اللغوي، الذكاء الموسيقي، الذكاء الحركي، الذكاء المكاني أو الصوريَ، الذكاء الطبيعي، الذكاء الاجتماعي، الذكاء الشخصي، الذكاء الوجودي. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة ان الذكاء اللغوي اعتمد بشكل بارز في منهج الاتجاه الجديد للمستوى ما فوق المتوسط وجاء بعدها الذكاء المنطقي أو الحسابي وكذلك الذكاء المكاني او الصوري فضلا عن الذكاء الاجتماعي من بين انواع الذكاءات الاخرى. كما توصلت الدراسة الى ضعف اعتماد الذكاء الوجودي في منهج الاتجاه الجديد للمستوى فوق المتوسط. لذا ينبغي على اساليب التدريس ان تشمل جميع الانواع من الذكاءات المتعددة من خلال تعزيز مهارات التدريسيين من اجل تحسين القدرات الذهنية للمتعلمين في حسن الاستفادة من الفعاليات التعليمية وتقييم الطلبة عبر المنهج المقرر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاءات المتعددة، المناهج المدرسية، منهج الاتجاه الجديد للمستوى فوق المتوسط، متعلمين اللغة الانكليزية في العراق

Introduction

The human brain characterizes powerful processors in the left and right hemispheres. Each one of them functions uniquely to express communication. The left hemisphere undertakes cognitive and logical

tasks, whereas the right undertakes creativity and visualization. The learners' minds function language skills through listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Skibba (2018) emphasized that people can interact in the target and foreign languages by repeating knowledgeable or experienced actions distinctively. In other words, the physical activity of the brain enhances learning.

All learners of the same age group acquire language differently. It does not mean that they are not intellectual genetically. Nevertheless, they simultaneously have different modalities to apply knowledge and functional language skills. For instance, a math teacher asks a question about equations and numbers. Visual learners could answer by remembering prior data stored as a vision in mind, whereas mathematic learners respond immediately with less need for visuals. Information is acknowledged and absorbed depending on the classroom atmosphere and the teaching tasks or activities learners need to apply.

Multiple Intelligence (MI) is a theory coined by Howard Gardner, a prominent professor at Harvard University. He defined it as a tool for stimulating comprehension and solving a problem in cultural contexts (as cited in Posada, 2017). In other words, it ultimately surpasses knowledge in meaningful, realistic, and social approaches (Ebadi & Beigzadeh, 2016). Gardner came up with this theory in 1983 as opposed to the perspective of intellectual quotient (IQ) standardized tests, the main focus of which is assessing only language-based contexts and equations or numbers. Not only does human Intelligence perform rationally, but it also communicates, such as by interacting distinctively with the subject material and cooperative learning (Marenus, 2024).

Gardner divided Intelligence into nine manifestations: Logical /Mathematical Intelligence _ rationally calculating numbers and reasoning, Linguistic intelligence_ inclusive comprehension of the rules

of grammar and structure of words in the spoken and written study of language, Musical intelligence _ melodies and songs that stored in mind while acting, Bodily / Kinesthetic Intelligence _ the capability of expressing actions by making the muscle movement, Visual/ Spatial Intelligence _ understanding information through visuals, images, or anything related to visuospatial abilities, Naturalist intelligence _ the capability of making connections among things existed in the universe, Interpersonal Intelligence _ socializing with peers for making relations, and Intrapersonal Intelligence _ realizing individual entity among other human beings, Existential Intelligence_ expressing notions in connection with the presence of human being and system of life.

Famous figures like Albert Einstein, T.S. Eliot, Mozart, Michael Jordan, Picasso, Charles Darwin, Oprah Winfrey, and Eleanor Roosevelt were not born with high IQ scores. Gardner stated (1993) that human beings function in every skill distinctively depending on the degree of skill and the nature of combining other skills (as cited in Kırkgöza, 2010: 127). However, each one of them is characterized by idiosyncratic intellectual traits. Brown (2001) stated, "Debaters, politicians, successful salespersons, "smooth" talkers, and con artists are all smart in their manipulative way" (p.404).

Morgan stated that Gardner's multiple intelligence theory can enhance students' creativity by implementing diverse activities in the classroom. Besides, students will be more willing to acquire information effectively and maintain positive energy to pursue their desire to learn if standardized and instructed activities meet their needs for learning (2021:124&138). What do teachers need to elicit a task-based response in an EFL classroom? In light of the mentioned question, a critical study of MI theory is presented with learning and teaching English.

Literature Review

Gardner's theory sets the basis for sustaining active learning and teaching in the education process. It expands educators' and learners' awareness of the subject material by exchanging information and acquiring knowledge (Jones & Jones, 2015). Enrolled students might not be interested in comprehensive language learning because the classroom has yet to reach a better atmosphere. Mueller (1987) clarified that language–active learners could be interested when participating in responding to multiple–right answers (as cited in Brown, 2001).

According to the following points, Yalmanci and Gozum (2013) specified the significance of MI theory in the EFL classroom. The first point is facilitating the teaching and learning process by understanding the EFL learners' intellectual capabilities. Educators will understand what they need to learn and how they fulfill their interests. The second point is encouraging outstanding students who can perform higher–order thinking skills to train their colleagues at a level lower than their academic level using MI activities (as cited in Dolati and Tahriri, 2017).

Previous quantitative and qualitative studies have shown fundamental connections of MI theory in schoolbooks at all levels of learning (Kirgoz, 2010; Razmjoo & Jozaghi, 2010; Buffa, 2013; Ebadi & Beigzaden, 2016; Mardani & Soleimani, 2016; Posada, 2017). A lot of public and private schools during the last ten years have included teaching MI theory in classroom instruction, such as Iraq, Iran, and Turkey, based on their homogeneous EFL textbooks (Posada, 2017; Mardani & Soleimani, 2016). Modes of MI theory were adopted at different levels of learning, from kindergarten to university.

Textbooks represent one of the significant learning materials in EFL classrooms. They use diverse techniques and methods to teach English in the classroom. In addition, language development and multicultural education are maintained when educators address language skills to

elicit learners' interest in understanding. Textbooks connect educators and learners to improve teaching and learning English at all levels. Researchers like Hutchinson and Torres (1999) and Cunnings (1995) (as cited in Ebadi and Beigzaden, 2016) supported its critical role in the EFL teaching and learning procedure because acquiring knowledge and improving language skills through content and instructional methods cannot be achieved without texts.

Case studies of the literature were adopted to measure MI theory in textbooks. For instance, Kırkgöza (2010) measured five series of English course books, *Time for English* and *English on Spot* for (4-5-6-7-8 grades). Unlike Razmjoo and Jozaghi (2010), who examined only eight units of the Top-Notch series, Ebadi and Beigzadeh (2016) analyzed one series of three *TPSOL* textbooks. Moreover, Mardani and Soleimani (2016) considered three series of *Interchange* third edition EFL course books, and Dolati and Tahriri (2017) undertook the *American English File*. Hence, little research has been done on one textbook.

The latest case study collected data from 30 male and female EFL instructors to see the connection between MI theory and activities available in *the American English File* to be implemented in the class. The analytical study concluded that only Logical/ Mathematical Intelligence was employed significantly, among other Intelligence. In addition, its primary focus has yet to be on the context of MI theory in whole units or their adaptation to the level of study.

New Headway Plus for Upper-Intermediate-Third Edition (2013), published by Oxford University Press, has been considered one of the standardized textbooks in Iraqi universities from 2015 till now. It is designed for the B2 level, equivalent to all senior students in the undergraduate elective program except those in the English Department. The textbook is comprised of Twelve Units. Each unit features learning

English as a Second/Foreign language, addressing the four basic language skills_ listening, speaking, reading, writing, language focus, vocabulary, and expressions in everyday English. Table 1 shows numerous activities that distinguish each Intelligence side with examples relevant to its implementations.

Table 1. MI theory in EFL language learning

MI Category	Activity to promote language learning	Examples of MI activity
Logic / mathematical	Identifying main ideas, matching sentence sequences, identifying the key answers, correcting wrong answers, solving problems, narrating a story in order based on its events,	Answer the questions; Match a line in A with a line in B; Rephrase the sentences; Guess the answers to these questions; Underline the correct answer; Tell the story; Put the events into chronological order;
Verbal/linguistic	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Note-taking, discussing topics, remembering	Listen and check your answers; Read the following text; Write a description; Ask and answer the questions; Can you remember? Who is speaking?
Musical	Sound differentiation, recognizing rhythms and musical instruments	Listen and repeat; Concentrate on the 'music'; Listen to a song;

Bodily/kinesthetic	Role-playing	Role-play the following situation with a partner;
Visual/spatial	Flashcards, drawing, using images, tables, charts, recognizing famous figures and movies, imagining	Look at the photographs; Find a picture in a magazine; Complete the charts; Complete the sentences with a word from the box; Do you know any films about.....?
Naturalist	Natural resources, animals, plants, the universe	Read the title and answer about ….; which places are mentioned in the pictures?
Intrapersonal	Note-taking, writing personal reactions, individual thinking	Write some notes about…;
Interpersonal	Discussion in the classroom, peering, pair work, group work	Discuss the question with the class; Work with a partner; Practice the conversation with a partner; Divide into two groups; Share with your class;

Adapted from Soars, L. & Soars J. (2013). New Headway Plus Upper-Intermediate (3rd ed.). Orymu S.A., Spain: Oxford University Press.

The *New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook* underscores celebrity people, places, and movies from the past to present for English teaching purposes. Table 2 shows Soars and Soars (2013) integrated a task-based approach to involve target language learners in accomplishing their requirements. Moreover, two or more MI activities regularly come together. For instance, Visual/Spatial Intelligence comes with Logic/Linguistic Intelligence in the Listening task of Units 3, 4, 7, 8, and 11. Hence, the educator's role throughout the text's content is

functioned in the teacher's book to capture the learner's interest and develop their language and communicative skills simultaneously.

Table 2. MI Theory in New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook

Units	Famous figures	Focused language task	Famous Scenes / Movies	Focused language task
1	Ian Walker Smith Thomas Creed.	Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking		
2	Marco Polo Tommy Willis Tony and Maureen Wheeler Tashi Wheeler Junko Tabei Scot and Jennifer Croy	Reading and Writing Exchanging Information Reading and Speaking Listening and Speaking Grammar Exercise Grammar Exercise		
3	Jane Austin Gilly Woodward Queen Elizabeth Alec Munreo Brian Jackson	Vocabulary and Speaking Practice Reading Listening and Speaking Grammar Exercise Practice Reading	Pride and Prejudice Shrek	Vocabulary and Speaking Grammar Exercise
4	John F. Kennedy John Lennon Princess Diana The Apollo Moon Elvis Presley Tom Hanks Leonardo Dicaprio Frank Abegnale	Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking	The death of President John F. Kennedy Catch me if you can	Reading and Speaking Reading and Grammar Exercise

	Steven Spielberg	Reading and Speaking Grammar Exercise Reading and Grammar Exercise Reading and Grammar Exercise Reading and Grammar Exercise		
5	Darius Knight Fraser Doherty Harry Byart Sarah Thomas Kym Manning Jack Deane	Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Grammar Exercise Grammar Exercise		
6	Jamie Oliver Gisele Bundchen Star bucks Coffee Odoga Bosko Steve Jobs	Reading and Speaking Grammar Exercise Reading and Speaking Grammar Exercise Reading and Speaking		
7	Pratima Kejriwal	Listening and Speaking		
8	John Travolta Chukotka Roman Abramovich Geoff Mackley The Hives band	Grammar Exercise Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Grammar Exercise	A night at the Oscars	Reading and Writing

		Grammar Exercise		
9	Lady Miranda Burdon-Carr Angie Gross Bob Wilden Henry Wardle	Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Reading and Speaking Grammar Exercise		
10	Otzi the iceman The Donner family Hilair Bellok Taj Mahal	Listening and Writing Reading and Speaking Listening and Vocabulary Grammar Exercise		
11	May Brown	Reading and Writing		
12	Mary Hobson Robbie Williams Frank Sinatra Zaha Hadid Abha Subramanian Simon Martin	Reading and Speaking Vocabulary and Listening Listening Reading and Writing Grammar Exercise Grammar Exercise		

Adapted from Soars, L. & Soars J. (2013). New Headway Plus Upper-Intermediate (3rd ed.). Orymu S.A., Spain: Oxford University Press.

The key emphasis of this paper is not to imply the psychological view of MI. Instead, it investigates whether *New Headway Plus for Upper-Intermediate* meets EFL intellectual needs by Gardner's theory. This text may categorize the success or failure of the active performance of senior undergraduates while operating different learning styles and activities in the classroom.

Methodology

The current study considers the validity of all manifestations of Intelligence of second or foreign language learning and teaching at *New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook*, among other series. In order to maintain the stability of retaining diverse information about EFL senior undergraduate students or stimulate experiential teaching in connection with IM theory, critical study was embraced. The researcher manually calculated each unit's MI activities, previously exemplified in Table 1. For instance, the total number of verbal/linguistic Intelligence in language focus activities related to four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Then, numerical data of the specified activities were also estimated separately. That is to say, sufficient descriptive statistics were featured by accurate frequency measured by taking the means of the MI Gardner's' theory of language learning categories divided by nine in SPSS software. This method is predominantly undertaken to confirm the convergence and divergence of MI modes relatively.

Results

The activities in this text are unequally distributed. The total number of activities in *the New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook* is 1186. As displayed in Table 3, every unit is comprised of a definite number of activities, equivalent to different modalities of Intelligence. The number disparity in activities in the textbook is subject to the EFL-focused tasks.

Table 3. The number of activities in New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook

Units Logic / mathematical   Verbal/linguisticMusica Bodily/kinestheticVisual/spatial NaturalistIntrapersonalInterpersonalExistential   Total Number of Activities

Table 3. The number of activities in New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook

Units	Logic / mathematical	Verbal/linguistic	Musical	Bodily/kinesthetic	Visual/spatial	Naturalist	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Existential	Total Number of Activities
1	13	30	2	1	16	5	3	17	0	87
2	32	33	0	5	24	7	11	15	0	127
3	23	28	1	1	10	4	11	11	0	89
4	26	37	1	3	19	2	12	16	0	116
5	28	19	0	1	20	0	16	10	0	94
6	32	22	5	1	24	0	16	12	0	112
7	22	30	1	1	17	0	16	14	0	101
8	30	29	3	0	27	5	19	17	0	130
9	38	26	5	0	22	0	13	14	0	118
10	33	23	1	0	14	0	17	14	0	102
11	28	35	3	0	17	0	15	12	0	110
12	28	19	2	0	18	0	16	15	0	98
	333	331	24	13	228	23	165	167	0	1186

Table 4 summarizes the overall measurement results. Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence initiated with an approximate percentage of (34.48) followed by Logic/Mathematical Intelligence with (32.35) percent. Visual/Spatial Intelligence ranked third at (20.77). Intrapersonal Intelligence came after with an approximate percentage of (19.54) compared to Interpersonal Intelligence (17.2). The lowest status of the other categories was estimated as well: Naturalist Intelligence (*F=5.75*), Musical Intelligence (*F=4.46*), and Bodily/ Kinesthetic Intelligence (*F =3.94*). Existential Intelligence resulted in (0) percent.

Table 4. Frequency of Multiple Intelligence (F%) in New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook

Musical	*Verbal/linguistic*	*Logic / mathematical*	*Units*
Intrapersonal	*Naturalist*	*Visual/spatial*	*Bodily/kinesthetic*
(%Total (F	*Existential*		*Interpersonal*

Table 4. Frequency of Multiple Intelligence (F%) in New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook

Units	Logic / mathematical	Verbal/linguistic	Musical	Bodily/kinesthetic	Visual/spatial	Naturalist	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Existential	Total (F%)
1	14.94	34.48	2.30	1.15	18.39	5.75	3.45	19.54	0.00	100.00
2	25.20	25.98	0.00	3.94	18.90	5.51	8.66	11.81	0.00	100.00
3	25.84	31.46	1.12	1.12	11.24	4.49	12.36	12.36	0.00	100.00
4	22.41	31.90	0.86	2.59	16.38	1.72	10.34	13.79	0.00	100.00
5	29.79	20.21	0.00	1.06	21.28	0.00	17.02	10.64	0.00	100.00
6	28.57	19.64	4.46	0.89	21.43	0.00	14.29	10.71	0.00	100.00
7	21.78	29.70	0.99	0.99	16.83	0.00	15.84	13.86	0.00	100.00
8	23.08	22.31	2.31	0.00	20.77	3.85	14.62	13.08	0.00	100.00
9	32.20	22.03	4.24	0.00	18.64	0.00	11.02	11.86	0.00	100.00
10	32.35	22.55	0.98	0.00	13.73	0.00	16.67	13.73	0.00	100.00
11	25.45	31.82	2.73	0.00	15.45	0.00	13.64	10.91	0.00	100.00
12	28.57	19.39	2.04	0.00	18.37	0.00	16.33	15.31	0.00	100.00

Sources: Conducted by the author based on the data in the Table (3)

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Discussion

This paper has overviewed MI theory comprehensively. Its primary purpose is to draw attention to modes of Gardner's theory in *the New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook.* The originality of this paper lies in the fact that his modes have the potential to reflect learners' strengths and weaknesses of learning styles. Following the question that led this discussion, there is no doubt that target language activities in connection with MI theory fill the missing tasks of teaching and learning processes, and educators are the central stimulators for adding these activities to the teaching strategy toolbox. The learning experience would be thought-provoking, focusing on communicative activities incorporated with meaningful English language acquisition.

The critical study yielded significant results in *the New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook*. The findings revealed that Logic/Mathematical Intelligence, Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence, Visual/Spatial Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, and Intrapersonal Intelligence favor learning and teaching activities among Gardner's nine manifestations. In this regard, these activities occupy the center of all multiple modalities. Another significant advantage in the study of Gardner's manifestations is that more than two intelligences are

assessed simultaneously, which improves a learner's second or foreign language acquisition.

However, Units 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 have yet to equally/fully cover MI activities in Bodily Intelligence, and all units covered zero activities in Existential Intelligence. Material designers must consider fulfilling learners' needs when acquiring the prompted content. On the other hand, each unit of the text materials must be in parallel with all these modes. As observed, textbook materials must encourage all students, whose minds are designed distinctively, to participate in the English language acquisition process regardless of their study level or the majority of students with intellectual characterization. In an analogical sense, the rainbow resembles Gardner's manifestations, not merely by its distinguishing colors or being in a comfortable setting. When the colors of the spectrum do not come together, nothing can be seen or achieved. Based on the primary studies of Brown (2001), Gardner (1993) (as cited in Kırkgöza, 2010), Hutchinson and Torres (1999), as well as Cunnings (1995) (as cited in Ebadi and Beigzaden, 2016), Dolati and Tahriri (2017) teaching approaches, should cover all modes of MI.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Instructing individuals on how learners adapt to learning English using all of MI Gardner's modes is essential. Educators should strengthen their learners' intellectual capabilities in educational activities and students' evaluation through school material. Standardized textbooks could improve their success only when moderately addressing various learning styles and activities. Professional book editors should present engaging and knowledgeable content with rich ways of metacognitive thinking.

The study suggests observing other text materials equivalent to the B2 level to see if they carry dissimilar results from the *New Headway Upper-Intermediate EFL Textbook*. Future studies can also provide

coverage of all MI modes at different study levels, one text at a time, either in private universities or abroad. The actual success indicator value experienced knowledge acquisition to be applied in real-world settings.

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