

Lesson Plan Design Based on the Integration of Multiple Intelligences

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Las ideas y conceptos expresados en el siguiente Trabajo de Grado son responsabilidad del autor.

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“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever”. (Psalm 107, 1).

Resumen

Este documento de investigación presenta ideas relevantes acerca de la teoría de las Inteligencias Múltiples y sus orígenes. Posteriormente, describe las ventajas de la teoría aplicada a la educación, como un desafío a las prácticas pedagógicas tradicionales desde que ésta fue postulada. Sumado a lo anterior, el documento propone la integración de esta alternativa teórica específicamente a la enseñanza del Inglés como lengua extranjera dentro del contexto Colombiano. Finalmente y con el fin de soportar la viabilidad del diseño de planes de clase a la luz de la Teoría de las Inteligencias Múltiples, son abordados algunos pasos que fácilmente pueden ser aplicados dentro del aula por los docentes de la lengua extranjera interesados en este enfoque de enseñanza. Dentro de los pasos mencionados, cabe destacar la creación de actividades y estrategias de evaluación, que adaptadas al contexto educativo Colombiano, pueden aportar numerosos beneficios tanto a los estudiantes como a los docentes involucrados en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del Inglés.

Abstract

This research paper presents relevant ideas about the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (MIT) and its origins. Subsequently, it describes the advantages of MIT applied to education, as a challenge to traditional teaching practices since it was postulated. Additionally, the document proposes the integration of this theoretical alternative specifically to English language teaching in Colombian educational contexts. Finally, in order to support the feasibility of designing lesson plans in the light of the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, some steps, which can easily be applied in the classroom by foreign language teachers, are explained. These steps include the creation of activities and assessment strategies that can be adapted to Colombian educational contexts, and bring numerous advantages not only for students, but also for teachers of English to speakers of other languages.

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LESSON PLAN DESIGN BASED ON THE INTEGRATION OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Becoming a successful English Foreign Language (EFL) teacher today involves more than providing learners with high quality information, training and instruction. Effective teachers must acquire relevant knowledge about their students' individual differences in the learning process, because every one of them is unique in cognitive and affective development, motivation, learning styles, needs, interests, personality and other social factors, that influence the way they learn a foreign language. The mentioned aspects and others have been the subject of different research works in foreign language studies, becoming important contributors to success in mastering this field. In this sense, a number of researchers (Oller, 1981; Brown, 1984; Liao, 1996; Lujan-Ortega, 2000; Bond, 2002) have considered intelligence as a significant factor of foreign language achievement, arguing the positive correlation between both. Oller (1981) asserts that language acquisition is the result of genetic and neurological development, that is, the intelligence in itself. In the same way, Brown (1994) points to the importance of memory in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). In this regard, intelligence could facilitate the memorization of vocabulary lists that was characteristic of early methods of English Language Teaching (ELT).

Among the others who have spoken about intelligence, Howard Gardner (1983) offers a contemporary perception. The author proposes the Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT), which is referred to a conglomerate of different components of cognition that exist in all individuals, and even those components that differ in strengths from one to another, can be enhanced through training and practice.

It is worth considering that Multiple Intelligence Theory has been applied to many aspects of education. Richards and Rodgers (2001) have ventured to distinguish MIT as an approach to language teaching that allows teachers to integrate different disciplines and aspects of communication. Similarly, Christison (1996) states that MIT gives EFL teachers an opportunity to look at their teaching practices from diverse areas of learning and the perspective of individual differences. Aside from the advantages gained by educators, MIT practices offer many benefits to EFL learners. For instance, they have the opportunity to reach the learning goals using their strengths and potential. In other words, students learn the foreign language effectively meanwhile they enjoy that process.

Following the earlier ideas, this paper aims to highlight the importance of involving Multiple Intelligences Theory in a Colombian EFL context. Taking into account that the Ministry of National Education in Colombia has implemented a goal of bilingualism for high school and university students by 2019, it is important that EFL educators are equipped with the appropriate tools to help them become proficient in English. With this purpose, some literature related to the Theory will be presented, in order to provide teachers with clear ideas about what it represents as a challenge for the traditional concept of intelligence and the standard view of the tests to measure it. Then, some steps to design a lesson plan will be suggested as a useful guide for teachers interested in integrating MIT in their EFL classroom. Finally, this Research will provide an example of a lesson plan for English classes based on the Theory mentioned here.

Contextualizing the Multiple Intelligences Theory

What is Intelligence?

There are different points of view from psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists and other researchers about the term intelligence, which have been explained mostly by their

particular training, methodology, and strongly determined by culture. For instance, in Eastern cultures, the sense of the word intelligence includes aspects such as benevolence or right judgment, whereas in Western countries the term tends to be related to social competence or problem solving (Sternberg, 2000). In order to explain these differences, Ruzgis and Grigorenko (1994) argue that in Africa the concept of intelligence is reflected by skills that promote harmonious intragroup/intergroup relations. Super and Harkness (1986) assert that participation in family and social life are considered as important aspects of intelligence for Kenyan parents. In contrast, the Western definition of intelligence has a close connection to the performance in academic contexts. In the Western world, people who give value to scientific knowledge and put forth great effort into lifelong learning are considered intelligent (Stenberg, 2000).

This last concept goes back to the Greeks, who mainly emphasized the importance of logical-language skills, which were reinforced by the appearance of the first intelligence tests early in the 20th century designed by the French psychologist Alfred Binet. He argued that intelligence consists of complex mental processes involving the ability to demonstrate memory, judgment, reasoning and social comprehension, and also focused his attention on the measurement of language abilities (Sternberg 2000). The purpose of that first IQ (intelligence quotient) test was to measure the so-called general factor of intelligence, “g”, that is still supported by some influential psychologists such as Herrnstein and Murray (1994) who stated that “intelligence is a reasonably understood well-construct, measured with accuracy and fairness by any number of mental standardized tests” (p.1).

However, this view has been analyzed and increasingly questioned by some researchers, such as Fagan (2000) who has considered other aspects different than merely linguistic, logical and mathematical skills in order to define the term intelligence as “the processing that can be

measured by performance on elementary cognitive task and influenced by cultural setting” (p.168). Similarly, Sternberg and Ben-Zeev (2001) declare that intelligence is “the ability to learn from experience and to adapt to the surrounding environment” (p. 368), associating the concept with abstract reasoning, problem solving, judgment in decision making, or even certain social skills. Sternberg (2001), like other psychologists such as Guilford (1967) and Thurstone (1939), goes beyond the monolithic conception of intelligence, adopting a pluralistic view of the term. As a result, he proposed the Triarchic theory that considers three different dimensions of intelligence: a) Analytical intelligence, that includes the ability to learn how to do things, solve problems and acquire new knowledge; b) Creative intelligence, that takes into account the capacity to respond well in new situations; c) Practical intelligence, that is referred to select contexts in which people can excel and solve practical problems (Smith, 2001).

Among those contemporary perceptions, Gardner (1983) challenges the traditional concept of intelligence through his proposal of the Multiple Intelligences Theory. Not only does this affect the way intelligence is viewed, but it also confronts the standard view of the tests to measure it. This innovative definition will be presented in the next section.

Defining the Multiple Intelligences Theory

Gardner (1983) defines intelligence originally as “the ability to solve problems, or fashion products, that are valued in one or more cultural or community settings” (p. 7), and later as “a bio-psychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture” (Gardner, 1999, p. 33-34). In agreement with other researchers (Feuerstein, Rand, Hoffman and Miller, 1980), Gardner confirms that intelligence is the result of the interaction between heritable potential and environmental factors and, therefore, it is educable. That means, intelligence can be developed in

diverse ways through relevant experiences, as well as influenced by the environment and culture, in contrast with some psychological views (Herrnstein and Murray, 1994) in favor of a stable and unchangeable intelligence from birth.

In addition, Gardner (1983) suggests a pluralistic view of the human mind rather than unitary. That is, human beings have many ways to know, understand and learn about the world. He initially categorized seven different types of intelligences: Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Spatial, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Interpersonal and Intrapersonal. In 1997, he added the Naturalistic and one more, “spiritual”, which requires further investigation (Gardner, 1999). Gardner states that all individuals have different levels of these types of intelligences, and through specific practice and training the skills mentioned can be developed and strengthened.

Having defined the theory, the eight intelligences outlined above will be described in the following section.

Types of Intelligences

Gardner considered different aspects of human beings in order to postulate the eight types of intelligences. The first two abilities are Linguistic and Logical-Mathematical which correspond to the general intelligence and psychometric tradition. Additionally, Musical, Spatial and Bodily-Kinesthetic, can be seen like artistic disciplines. Finally, Personal intelligence is closely related to emotional dimension, and the naturalistic intelligence which all refer to the relationship of individuals with the natural world. To demonstrate the characteristics of each one, they will be outlined below in more detail.

Linguistic Intelligence. It involves both brain hemispheres but it is mainly located in the temporal cortex's left hemisphere called Broca's area (Lazear, 1991; Morchio, 2004). It is related to the ability to use spoken and written language effectively and creatively.

According to Armstrong (2003), students with this type of intelligence prefer to spend time reading, telling stories or jokes, watching movies, writing in a journal, creating works, writing poems, learning foreign languages, playing word games, or researching things of interest.

Gardner (1999) emphasizes that individuals who have Linguistic Intelligence are able to use language to convince others of their own position and to understand patterns of language; also, people who possess this intelligence in a greater degree can memorize and recall detailed or complex information, and be better than others at explaining or teaching concepts and ideas. Lazear (1993) adds that Linguistic intelligence helps learners to use grammar and syntax in speaking and writing appropriately.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence. According to Laezar (1991), this intelligence involves both hemispheres of the brain. The left one allows for the ability to solve logical problems, produce, read, and understand mathematical symbols, and the right one enhances the ability to understand numerical concepts in a more general way. Furthermore, Gardner (1983) claims that this intelligence implies the capacity to use numbers effectively, analyze problems logically and investigate problems scientifically. People who have this intelligence enjoy solving mysteries, working with numbers and complex calculations, counting, organizing data in tables, fixing computers, assembling puzzles, and playing video games; they can also estimate, guess, and remember numbers and statistics easily (Armstrong, 2003). It is the intelligence of mathematicians, scientists, engineers, and logicians (Gardner, 1983).

Musical Intelligence. It concerns the ability to understand music. It is mainly located in the right frontal and temporal lobes (Lazear, 1991). People who are strong in this intelligence are able to recognize musical tones and rhythms and have the ability to express emotions through the music, showing “sensitivity to rhythm, pitch and melody” (Christison, 1996, p.11). These

students enjoy spending time singing, listening to music, playing instruments, attending concerts, creating music or rap, and humming when they study (Armstrong, 2003).

Spatial Intelligence. It includes the ability to form two and three-dimensional drawings (Armstrong, 2000), and the potential to understand, manipulate and modify the settings of large and limited space (Gardner, 1983). For people who have this type of intelligence, it is easy to remember pictures and objects instead of words; they can focus their attention on the types of cars, bicycles, clothes, and hair (Armstrong, 2003). It is the intelligence of architects, pilots, navigators, chess players, surgeons, artists, painters and sculptors (Gardner, 1999).

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence. It involves the ability to use the body (totally or partially) to express ideas, learn, solve problems, make activities, or build products (Gardner, 1983). These people learn physical skills quickly and easily; they can dance gracefully, act, and imitate gestures and expressions of several people (Armstrong, 2003). “Sample skills are coordination, flexibility, speed and balance” (Christison, 1996, p.11). According to Gardner (1983), this is the intelligence of athletes, mimes, dancers, actors, surgeons, artisans, inventors and mechanics.

Interpersonal Intelligence. It refers to the ability to communicate with people effectively. Lazear (1993) emphasizes the capacity to engage in verbal and nonverbal communication for people who have this type of intelligence. They can also be good leaders, express empathy and motivate others (Snider, 2001). This intelligence also includes the ability to consider what things are important for other people, as well as to remember their interests, motivations, perspectives, personal backgrounds, intentions, and often predict their decisions, feelings, and actions (Armstrong, 2003; Gardner, 1983; 2006). Besides these traits, people with interpersonal intelligence like talking, learning in groups or in pairs, and working with others;

they have many friends, spend a lot of time helping people and enjoy enlisting as volunteers for several important reasons (Armstrong, 2003). It is the intelligence of teachers, therapists, counselors, politicians, marketers, and religious leaders (Gardner, 2006).

Intrapersonal Intelligence. It entails self-reflection, self-awareness, self-consciousness, and introspection. As Gardner (1999) states, it “involves the capacity to understand oneself, to have an effective working model of oneself including one’s own desires, fears and capacities- and to use information effectively in regulating one’s own life” (p.43). That is, they have a good sense of their strengths and weaknesses, and the ability to think deeply about important things for themselves (Armstrong, 2003).

Naturalistic Intelligence. It is the ability to “understand the natural world” (Stefanakis, 2002, p.2). These people enjoy camping, hiking, taking care of pets, and finding and categorizing the names and details of people, animals, plants, and objects in their environment (Armstrong, 2003). It is the intelligence of natural and social scientists, poets, and artists, who are able to recognize little details and use their perception effectively (Gardner, 1999).

Taking into account that the theory of Multiple Intelligences has had a positive impact in different areas, it is essential to mention specifically its role in the education with a focus on foreign language teaching and learning. In the following sections, that fact will be further explored as well as the manner of how MIT can be integrated into Colombian EFL classrooms.

Educational Implications of the theory of Multiple Intelligences

As mentioned before, the theory of Multiple Intelligences has contributed to change the traditional views on human intelligence focused excessively on IQ and teaching methods based on rote learning. In contrast to previous theories, MIT recognizes that each student is a unique individual and consequently all of them learn in different ways.

However, MIT was not intended to be a teaching method. Initially, Gardner, student of Psychology at Harvard University, was fascinated by the neurologist Geschwind's discussion of what happens when normal or gifted individuals have a cerebrovascular accident or some other form of brain damage (Gardner, 2003). This fact led the author to work for 20 years in a neuropsychological unit trying to understand the organization of human abilities in the brain, which would later motivate him to develop his theory.

In the first decade after the publication of his book *Frames of Mind* (1983), a number of teachers started to revise their educational system in the light of the MIT, finding that implementing it in the classroom can benefit both the teacher and all of the learners. According to Kornhaber (2001), the theory allows students to think and learn in many different ways, and at the same time it gives teachers the facility of organizing their teaching practices and reflecting on their effectiveness. Moreover, some investigators from the Project SUMIT (Schools Using Multiple Intelligence Theory), after collecting data during a three-and-a-half year period, from 41 diverse schools that implemented MIT, announced improvements in standardized test scores, in learning, motivation, and social adjustment for students with learning disabilities, in students discipline and in parents' participation (Kornhaber, Fierros, & Veenema, 2004). Aside from the advantages already mentioned, Greenhawk (1997) discusses the implementation of the Theory at White Marsh Elementary School in Maryland, finding that MIT based curriculum helps students understand their abilities as learners, build confidence, take educational risks, and retain more knowledge.

When addressing the Colombian educational context, similar advantages as the discussed above can be found. As it can be perceived, the traditional system has been taken for granted in Colombia for a long time. In this system of conventional education, teachers are in charge of

controlling the learning environment, focusing mainly on the cognitive development of the class, so the students who are considered intelligent are those who are more capable to complete linguistic and logic tasks in most cases. The implementation of MIT can be a good solution to these ineffective traditional methods of teaching, because it considers many different ways to be intelligent, and if it is applied in educational instruction and evaluation, students would be able to express their understanding through various modes.

Furthermore, in Colombian classrooms most of the teachers are the center of the process, as knowledge providers, who give academic instruction in front of the class. On the contrary, in MIT the role of the teacher can be transformed from the owner of knowledge to an instructional manager who guides students through individualized learning pathways and value students' differences. About this matter, Emig (1997) claims that it has "put magic" (p.50) into teaching, due to teachers' increased interest in how children learn beyond what they learn. This does not necessarily imply the increase of the curriculum content. Instead, teachers have the opportunity to highlight what themes are truly significant and approach them from many different points of view, using class materials that are appropriate for most or all of the intelligence types. Consequently, children are actively involved in their learning process, to either capitalize on their strengths or compensate for their weaknesses, and they discover their true intellectual profile.

In brief, the theory of Multiple Intelligences can be a very helpful "vehicle for broadening the remit of education" (Chen, Gardner and Moran, 2009, p. 14), due to the encouraging premises on which it is based, and without doubt, it can be applied effectively in foreign language classrooms, which will be addressed in the next section.

The Application of Multiple Intelligences Theory to English Language Teaching (ELT)

In an increasingly globalized society, learning a second language has become one of the main tools in order to facilitate communication across international borders. It is estimated that English is spoken by about 1.5 billion people all over the world, and due to this trend its acquisition has been promoted in some educational contexts, becoming the language most widely taught as a foreign language in over 100 countries (Crystal, 2003).

It is clear from the evidence above that it has been necessary to generate some global English as a foreign/second language (EFL/ESL) teaching methods and approaches around the world. With regard to this, Richards and Rodgers (2001) have distinguished Multiple Intelligences Theory as an approach in ELT. The authors define MIT as “a learner-based philosophy” (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 115), in which students have the opportunity to get the language learning goals without getting worried about its complexity, in opposition to traditional teacher-centered methods. In accordance, Cluck and Hess (2003) in their study “Improving Student Motivation through the Use of the Multiple Intelligences”, found that implementing MIT in the EFL classroom led to a higher level in students’ participation and motivation in opposition to traditional teaching methods.

Given that in the context of Colombia, where students’ indifference to learn a foreign language is observed, the integration of MIT in lesson plans can be one possible way to enhance their attitudes and motivate them to be “actively involved in their own learning process” (Nunan and Lamb, 1996, p. 9). As a result, when students are makers of their own knowledge they are driven to immerse themselves in the foreign language, not only to complete academic goals, but to use it effectively in real life situations.

Through the application of MIT, Colombian EFL teachers are called to identify their students' intelligences and adapt some activities that speak to each one of them. Larsen-Freeman (2000) suggests that teachers can determine what intelligences are catered to in the activities they normally use, or they can also create new lessons that address all the intelligences during every session; although the latter might be laborious, it will offer a change from traditional lectures. At this point, it is worth mentioning that all intelligences have strengths in different aspects of the foreign language learning process as it is proposed by Brown (1994):

Musical intelligence could explain the relative ease that some learners have in perceiving and producing the intonation patterns of a language. Bodily kinesthetic models have already been discussed in connection with the learning of the phonology of a language. Interpersonal intelligence is of obvious importance in the communicative process. (...) . One might even be able to speculate on the extent to which spatial intelligence, especially a "sense of direction", may assist the second culture learner in growing comfortable in new surroundings. (p. 94)

Finally, in an EFL context, MIT can promote innovative benefits not only in relation with an increasing of student performance, but it has made special contributions to the application of new assessment methods (Hoerr, 2002). The consideration of MIT can help educators to assess students' knowledge beyond standards, so that they can demonstrate what they know through their skills rather than strict test scores. As previously mentioned, the Colombian educational system is traditional, therefore its methods of calculating student's skills are restricted. Learners are forced to display limited intelligences, which does not measure their proficiency accurately. If MIT was reflected in the evaluation of knowledge in Colombia, students would feel more comfortable in demonstrating their abilities in a foreign language.

Before proposing how to apply MIT in lesson plan design for EFL teachers, it is important to explain what a lesson plan is and which components are necessary to include.

Lesson Plan

In theory, lesson plans can be designed in different ways, depending on what steps teachers choose to follow in order to accomplish the main learning purpose. For a better understanding of the lesson plan design based on the theory of Multiple Intelligences, readers will be provided, first, with some key information related to the Lesson Plan in general.

Definition

According to Ur (1996), a lesson plan is an organized event with different goals and contents, but whose main objective is learning. They are useful for both, experienced and novice teachers, a guide to know what to do inside the classroom (Jensen, 2001).

Some authors recognize the important use of lesson plans in language teaching, like Farrell (2003), who argues a lesson plan describes what students should do in order to attain a learning objective, and the role of the teacher as their guide in this purpose. In addition, a lesson plan helps teachers to have a clear idea of the lesson's objectives and to establish the appropriate activities to achieve those (Brown, 1994).

Components

According to Brown (1994), a lesson plan should contain the learning goal, objectives, materials, procedures and evaluation. The goal refers to the purpose to be achieved at the end of the lesson that is sometimes given by the lesson topic (Brown, 2001). This goal, according to Farrell (2003), should be described appropriately and clearly through the objectives that indicate the students' path to the learning target. In order to develop these objectives, applying different activities or procedures, Brown (2001) considers the materials as a component that helps to

remind teachers to bring all the things to be used in the class, even the handouts for students and workbooks that have been already corrected.

Aside from this, Brown (2001) suggests that the lesson plan should also include a warm-up activity, a set of many other exercises or techniques such as “whole-class work, small-group and pair work, teacher talk and students talk” (p. 151), and closure. Finally, the author mentions the importance of assessing the learning of students, as well as the effectiveness of the lesson plan, in order that teachers can improve for the next class session (Brown, 2001).

How to integrate the Multiple Intelligences in the Lesson Plan Design

Indeed, Multiple Intelligences approach can make the language learning process more effective and individualized. That implies teachers design lesson plans in such a creative way, so that the class is relevant for each student. In this section, some steps will be suggested as a useful guide for teachers interested in integrating the theory of Multiple Intelligences in their EFL class:

1. Determine learning objectives
2. Identify your intelligences
3. Know your students’ intelligences
4. Select activities that appeal to multiple intelligences
5. Propose different ways to assess

With this in mind, the five steps mentioned previously will be detailed below:

Step 1: Determine learning objectives

Before thinking about the type of intelligence that can be enhanced in the lesson, it is fundamental to define the learning purpose that will be achieved at the end of the lesson, according to the content that will be taught.

Step 2: Identify your intelligences

Teachers should recognize and understand their own intelligences, not only for knowing their particular learning preferences, but also to determine how those tendencies can influence their pedagogical choices or condition the way their students learn. Then, it will help teachers avoid showing preference to students who have similar cognitive inclinations to them.

In addition, as it is suggested by Armstrong (2000), it is important that teachers start with applying the theory they will use inside the classroom to themselves, in order to have a better understanding of it and become actively engaged in its application with students.

At this point, Christison (1998) proposes a questionnaire for teachers who are planning to implement multiple intelligences in language teaching. (See appendix: A Multiple Intelligences Inventory for EFL Teachers)

Step 3: Know your students' intelligences

Once teachers have identified their own intelligences, they should consider the strongest intelligence in every student, with the purpose of helping all of them achieve a language learning goal. Teachers can do this diagnostic through a test that can be adapted to the age of students (see Appendix: B Multiple Intelligences Inventory for EFL Students)

Step 4: Select activities that appeal to multiple intelligences

Language learning tasks can be developed around different types of intelligences, as it is proposed by Richards and Rodgers (2001) “language is not seen as limited to a ‘linguistics’ perspective, but encompasses all aspects of communication” (p. 117). By utilizing diverse activities, each student is able to optimize existing intelligence types, and encourage the undeveloped ones (Gardner, 1983).

Next, some activities to highlight each intelligence will be proposed to help teachers choose which they consider appropriate for the sake of developing the content and achieving the specific learning goal. Teachers should notice that it is not necessary that all of the intelligences are promoted in the same lesson plan, but those can vary from one session to another, benefiting in this way, all the students.

With this in mind, some specific examples of activities that speak to each intelligence could be:

Linguistic Intelligence: As it can be perceived, almost all activities in the Colombian EFL classroom are appropriate for this type of student. However, authentic sources are not always used by teachers. Therefore, it is essential they create activities incorporating the use of native literature and media to grasp the actual usage of the language itself. According to Harmer (1994), this can make learners more confident to deal with real life situations, learn new vocabulary and expressions, acquire the language faster and produce it better. Also, promoting discussions of issues that students consider interesting and encouraging creative writing could be beneficial linguistic activities.

Logical- Mathematical Intelligence: An example of this type of activity could be a logic game such as deciphering a riddle, associating scattered or complementary data; these activities elicit the ability to solve problems and to help students focus their attention on the meaning; also, an exercise that enables students to acquire familiarity with vocabulary and grammar structures is to re-read a text looking for specific answers (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004). In this way, Colombian learners could develop or improve reasoning in the context of a foreign language as a way to address problem solving that is implicit in any type of learning and in the situations they will confront with native English speakers. By developing language through logical-

mathematical activities, Colombian learners are more likely to be able to express understanding and their point of view in encounters with foreigners and deal with critical thinking situations in English.

Musical Intelligence: Teachers can include reception activities such as listening to songs in order for students to comprehend the input; also, they can encourage them to create original melodies or interpret lyrics, which will develop their production skills. By using these dynamic exercises in the classroom, learners can become more capable to perceive and produce the intonation patterns of a language (Brown, 1994). Most importantly, as it can be seen, Colombian culture is saturated with music, and by appealing to this interest, teachers are able to benefit learners' concentration and creativity, as well as to spark their curiosity for the English language.

Spatial Intelligence: This type of intelligence can include activities such as visualization, painting and using mind maps (Christison, 1997). The use of visual materials such as pictures, videos, PowerPoint presentations, posters, and cards can be interesting and attractive to EFL learners, and according to Arnold and Fonseca (2004), these can make language input more comprehensible to students. In contrast to traditional instructional methods in Colombia, by giving EFL students an opportunity to absorb and express information visually would greatly expand their ability to comprehend and express themselves in English.

Bodily- Kinesthetic Intelligence:

The use of role-plays, drama, games, project work, shadow puppets, and many activities related to group dynamics directly address the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence in the language classroom. Non-verbal aspects of communication are also very relevant in language teaching. For example, gestures are movements of the body used to communicate an idea, intention or feeling. (Arnold and Fonseca, 2004, p. 128)

The activities proposed above can be suitable for Colombian contexts where some students show a lack of interest and lethargy in the classroom. These strategies provide an alternative to classical teaching approaches, that in current society are guaranteed to leave students bored and uninterested. In contrast, with physically stimulating exercises, EFL teachers are able to help to rouse energy and focus students' attention and participation. Furthermore, various non-written prompts are useful in several aspects of learning a foreign language and if these are used in EFL classrooms in Colombia, students would have the ability to absorb vocabulary in a different form.

Interpersonal Intelligence: The importance of the emotional dimension of education is evident in the work of the neurobiologist Damasio (1999) and Schumann (1994) who explained how emotion and reason are distinct but inseparable facets to learning in general. It can be noticed that in some cases Colombian students prefer fulfilling tasks with others and are more likely to achieve the language goals within this cooperative classroom atmosphere. With this in mind, activities such as group brainstorming, board games, pair work and conflict meditation (Christison, 1997) can be useful in EFL Colombian contexts. Through encouraging their capacity to understand others, work as a team and socialize effectively (Hymes, 1971; Canale & Swain, 1980), students can increase their confidence and reduce their anxiety to develop communicative competence.

Intrapersonal Intelligence: Robles (2002) proposes intrapersonal activities such as thinking and talking about feelings and the use of a questionnaire to reflect on self-performance. Additionally, Smith (2001) argues that through self-expression and reflection students are able to improve their foreign language proficiency. In the light of Colombian EFL classrooms, these activities can enhance students' intrinsic motivation so that they think about what they really

want to achieve and how they can do it. In this way, intrapersonal reflection will provide students with the chance to assess how they believe they are progressing related to the learning targets, and motivate themselves to improve their language skills, without being pushed for success by teachers or the educational system.

Naturalistic Intelligence: Arnold and Fonseca (2004) suggest some activities such as semantic maps related to nature, brainstorming on naturalist topics or descriptions of scenes in nature; the authors say these can help students not only to develop sensitivity to the vegetal and animal world, but also to improve their lexical knowledge. Apart from these classroom exercises, it is important to recognize that in Colombia there is an incredible capacity to learn English through exploring nature. Although leaving the classroom could generate more work for the teacher, it is well worth the results. When students go outdoors they have less pressure to 'learn', but instead, they are inspired by curiosity and are stimulated to discover things that are applicable to everyday life. Arnold and Fonseca (2004) also confirm that appealing to naturalistic intelligences not only develops sensitivity to the vegetal and animal world, but also improves students' lexical knowledge.

Step 5: Propose different ways to assess

First of all, teachers should take into account that it is not about assessing the multiple intelligences development, but the initial language objectives of the lesson plan by the means of the intelligences. That is to say, students will demonstrate their proficiency using the intelligences they have.

Traditionally, linguistic intelligence has been the most popular mode used in evaluations, but because it is restricted to writing essays and taking multiple choice tests, students are not able to display their understanding in distinct ways. Unfortunately, conventional EFL testing methods

in Colombia also follow this strict pattern. For students in Colombia, memorization of verb tenses and grammatical structures consumes their learning and their common fear of making mistakes prevents them from immersing themselves in English as a living language. Instead of imposing stringent tests that exclude different expressions of comprehension, Colombian students would benefit greatly from being able to show what they have learned in various ways through dynamic forms of evaluation.

There is no doubt that it is possible to integrate different types of intelligences in evaluation (Gardner 2006). For instance, students who have spatial intelligence could be evaluated through mind maps or interpreting pictures and photographs; those who have bodily-kinesthetic intelligence could be prompted to do demonstrations; students with naturalistic intelligence could have the opportunity to classify, identify and recognize details in natural settings, and musical students can be given the chance to sing or interpret lyrics; for interpersonal learners, interviews or debates would be useful tools for assessing, and finally, those who have intrapersonal intelligence could be required to make independent projects (Armstrong, 2000).

Although not all students have the same strengths, this does not imply that the teacher will have to make many forms of a test to evaluate student by student. The most important thing here is to take into account that the students learn in different ways in order to create a dynamic test that enables students to express knowledge in varying forms.

Given these points, proposing different ways of evaluation will bring lots of advantages for students in Colombian settings. MIT applied to assessment would represent a change from testing methods that only appeal to a small percentage of students. Evidently, it can create a stress-free environment where all learners feel comfortable to demonstrate the knowledge they really have acquired beyond merely memorizing the mechanics of the language. As a result, the

focus of EFL in Colombia would not be on high marks on traditional exams, but instead, on guiding students to be able to communicate effectively in the English language.

Finally, having seen these five steps to integrate the theory of Multiple Intelligences in EFL classes, this Research paper will provide a Lesson plan on Comparative Adjectives that can be an useful example for English teachers interested on that (See appendix: C Lesson Plan).

Conclusions

The main purpose of this paper was to point out how the integration of MIT in the design of EFL lesson plans enables Colombian teachers of this subject to be more effective and increases the capacity of students to become proficient in the English language.

With this in mind, the most important characteristics of the Theory were presented in the paper, in order to guide EFL teachers who are interested in applying it in their classrooms. It was mentioned the innovative definition of intelligence by Howard Gardner (1983), as the result of the interaction between heritable potential and environmental factors, which can be educable and developed through relevant experiences, special training and practice, in contrast to some views of intelligence as a stable and unchangeable factor from birth. In addition, it was described the pluralistic view of the human mind of Gardner, through eight different types of intelligences: Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Spatial, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and Naturalistic, which all individuals possess to a greater or lesser extent.

As it was shown within this work, MIT was not intended to be a teaching method initially. However, in the first decade after the publication of *Frames of Mind* by Howard Gardner (1983), in which the author challenged the traditional concept of intelligence and the standard view of the tests to measure it, a number of teachers started to revise their educational system in the light of the MIT, finding that implementing it in the classroom can benefit both the teacher and all of the learners.

Following these ideas, it is worth summarizing some benefits of applying the Multiple Intelligences Theory in EFL classrooms. First of all, the role of the teacher can be transformed from the owner of knowledge to a guide who promotes an individualized learning, which is based on the abilities and interests of each learner. Consequently, the role of students from the

traditional classroom also changes, because they become the center of the language learning process and gain self-esteem and confidence to participate actively in class without getting worried about making mistakes. Aside from this, MIT empowers students to acquire a better knowledge of themselves, become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and discover what motivates them, what they like and what kind of learning works best for them. In this sense, MIT is closer to the real world and, because it allows students to discover their true intellectual profile as an important tool for their daily lives and their future.

Another advantage of MIT in EFL classrooms is that the learning environment becomes encouraging and stress-free. In such a classroom climate, students feel motivated to learn and comfortable to demonstrate the knowledge they really have acquired beyond merely completing complex academic tasks. As a result, discipline problems can be significantly reduced.

Finally, MIT applied to assessment would represent a change from testing methods that only appeal to a small percentage of students. Nowadays, EFL teachers know that students are able to achieve the language learning goals apart from linguistic and logical/mathematical approaches. Due to this, they can now recognize that if a student has difficulty learning the language, it is probably necessary to innovate their conventional teaching strategies in order to appeal to a wider variety of interests. At this point, this paper emphasized the idea that teachers must understand individual differences with the goal of providing the students with several facets to learn the foreign language. By offering students different ways to express what they have learned, academic achievement can improve and students, who had previously been unsuccessful in linguistic and logical skills, have the opportunity to achieve good levels in new areas, which can also have a positive impact on reducing school dropout.

When addressing the Colombian educational context, similar advantages as the discussed above can be found. Therefore, it is advisable for Colombian EFL teachers to consider the steps for planning a lesson that were presented in this paper. These steps can be adapted to any learning situation and different groups of learners. In addition to their versatility, they also focus on the development of communicative competence, which is the main goal of language learning, rather than the rigid use of grammatical structures.

However, some possible obstacles that Colombian EFL teachers might find when applying the lesson plan design suggested in this paper, are the limited class time and large classes. For that reason, to design activities and evaluations for every student according to his/her strongest intelligences would make teachers' work more complicated and stressful. In order to deal with this fact, this paper suggests that not all lesson plans need to include procedure and assessment specifically targeting each type of intelligence, but these can vary from one session to another, so that all the students have the opportunity to use their strengths to demonstrate their understanding, and it is not more laborious for teachers.

In brief, after reviewing the theory, it can be noticed that the use of MIT in foreign language teaching supports the need for inclusive education, in which all students are considered intelligent and their strengths are valued. Thus, by applying their natural abilities in Colombian settings, students can feel drawn to learning a foreign language, and enjoy the classes instead of being mere spectators. When they are given an opportunity to participate actively in their learning process, results will increase and consequently educators will be one step closer to reaching the goal of bilingualism by 2019.

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Appendix A

Multiple Intelligences Inventory for EFL/ESL Teachers

Christison (1998)

Directions: Rank each statement below 0, 1, or 2. Write 0 next to the number if the statement is not true. Write 2 in the blank if you strongly agree with the statement. A score of 1 places you somewhere in between. Compare your scores in different intelligences. What is your multiple intelligence profile? Where did you score highest? lowest?

Linguistic Intelligence:

_____ I write and publish articles.

_____ I read something almost every day that isn't related to my work.

_____ I pay attention to billboards and advertisements.

_____ I often listen to the radio and cassette tapes of lectures and books.

_____ I enjoy doing crossword puzzles.

_____ I use the blackboard, the overhead projector, or charts and posters when I teach.

_____ I consider myself a good letter writer.

_____ If I hear a song a few times, I can usually remember the words.

_____ I often ask my students to read and write in my classes.

_____ I have written something that I like.

Total: _____

Musical Intelligence:

_____ I have no trouble identifying or following a beat.

_____ When I hear a piece of music, I can easily harmonize with it.

_____ I can tell if someone is singing off-key.

_____ I have a very expressive voice that varies in intensity, pitch, and emphasis.

_____ I often use chants and music in my lessons.

_____ I play a musical instrument.

_____ I listen to music frequently in the car, at work, or at home.

_____ I know the tunes to many songs.

_____ I often hum or whistle a tune when I am alone or in an environment where I feel comfortable.

_____ Listening to music I like makes me feel better.

Total: _____

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence:

_____ I feel more comfortable believing an answer is correct if it can be measured or calculated.

_____ I can calculate numbers easily in my head.

_____ I like playing card games such as hearts, gin rummy, and bridge.

_____ I enjoyed math classes in school.

_____ I believe that most things are logical and rational.

_____ I like brain-teaser games.

_____ I am interested in new developments in science.

_____ When I cook, I measure things exactly.

_____ I use problem-solving activities in my classes.

_____ My classes are very consistent; my students know what to expect.

Total: _____

Spatial Intelligence:

_____ I pay attention to the colors I wear.

_____ I take lots of photographs.

_____ I like to draw.

_____ I especially like to read articles and books with many pictures.

_____ I am partial to textbooks with illustrations, graphs, and charts.

_____ It is easy for me to find my way around in unfamiliar cities.

_____ I use slides and pictures frequently in my lessons.

_____ I enjoy doing puzzles and mazes.

_____ I was good at geometry in school.

_____ When I enter a classroom, I notice whether the positioning of the students and teacher supports the learning process.

Total: _____

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence:

_____ I like to go for long walks.

_____ I like to dance.

_____ I engage in at least one sport.

_____ I like to do things with my hands such as carve, sew, weave, build models, or knit.

_____ I find it helpful to practice a new skill rather than read about it.

_____ I often get my best ideas when I am jogging, walking, vacuuming, or doing something physical.

_____ I love doing things in the outdoors.

_____ I find it hard to sit for long periods of time.

_____ I often do activities in my classes that require the students to move about.

_____ Most of my hobbies involve a physical activity of some sort.

Total: _____

Intrapersonal Intelligence:

_____ I regularly spend time meditating.

_____ I consider myself independent.

_____ I keep a journal and record my thoughts.

_____ I would rather create my own lessons than use material directly from the book.

_____ I frequently create new activities and materials for my classes.

_____ When I get hurt or disappointed, I bounce back quickly.

_____ I articulate the main values that govern my life and describe the activities that I regularly participate in that are consistent with these values.

_____ I have hobbies or interests that I enjoy doing on my own.

_____ I frequently choose activities in the classroom for my students to work on alone or independently.

_____ I encourage quiet time and time to reflect in my classes.

Total: _____

Interpersonal Intelligence:

_____ I prefer going to a party rather than staying home alone.

_____ When I have problems, I like to discuss them with friends.

_____ People often come to me with their problems.

_____ I am involved in social activities several nights a week.

_____ I like to entertain friends and have parties.

_____ I consider myself a leader and often assume leadership roles.

_____ I love to teach and show someone how to do something.

_____ I have more than one close friend.

_____ I am comfortable in a crowd or at a party with many people I don't know.

_____ My students help decide on the content and learning process in my classes.

Total: _____

Naturalistic Intelligence:

_____ I am good at recognizing different types of birds.

_____ I am good at recognizing different types of plants.

_____ I like to garden.

_____ I enjoy having pets.

_____ It's easy for me to tell the make and year of most cars.

_____ I often look at the sky and can tell you the different types of clouds and what kind of weather they bring.

_____ It's easy for me to tell the weeds from the plants.

_____ I like to spend time in the outdoors.

_____ I enjoy learning about rocks.

_____ I have plants in my home and office.

Total: _____

Appendix C

Lesson Plan

Let's celebrate Halloween

TOPIC	AUDIENCE GROUP	TIME
Comparative adjectives	This lesson is designed for a group of 14 fourth graders at "LA CASITA DE BELÉN", who range in age from 8 to 9.	2 sessions of 50 minutes
<p>AIM</p> <p>Students will be able to express their ideas by using correct comparative form of adjectives.</p>		
<p>OBJECTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable students to use the comparative form of adjectives correctly. • To familiarize students with some vocabulary about Halloween celebration through a listening exercise. • To offer a writing activity so that students can make descriptions using comparatives. • To provide oral practice in order that students can use the language learnt in a real situation. 		
<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>Board, markers, lyrics sheets, flashcards, costumes.</p>		
<p>VOCABULARY</p> <p>Nouns: Snow white, witch, angel, devil, prince, monster, red riding hood, wolf, beauty, beast Cinderella, stepmother, hare, turtle Adjectives: nice/ nasty, good/bad, handsome/scary, innocent/tricky, beautiful/ugly, kind/ mean, fast/slow</p>		
<p>PROCEDURE ACTIVITIES</p> <p>First session:</p> <p>WARM UP: 15' Students should reflect about how they celebrate Halloween, and what costume they would like to be this year. Then, the teacher asks them to share their opinions. Later, they listen to a song about Halloween, and sing along with the lyrics; students are asked to circle the Halloween characters they find in the song.</p>		

DURING: 20'

The teacher motivates the students to play a memory game. There are 28 cards face-down forming a rectangle on the board (14 different characters of a Halloween party and their names: Snow white, witch, angel, devil, prince, monster, red riding hood, wolf, beauty, beast Cinderella, stepmother, hare, turtle). The student selects two cards and turn them over, if they are a matching pair, the student is awarded another turn for making a new match. If the cards are not a match they are turned back over and it is now the next players turn.

WRAP UP: 15'

After completing all the matches, every student chooses one character to be for the next session (they should wear costumes). Then, the student writes a short description of his/her character using basic adjectives, after the teacher presents a simple example.

Second session:

WARM UP: 10'

Initially, the students sing the song that they learned last class.

DURING: 30'

The teacher demonstrates how to contrast characters, using short and long adjectives in the comparative form. Taking into account that each character already assigned has an opposite, students are organized into pairs to formulate comparative sentences based on the examples provided by the teacher.

The teacher takes the students outdoors to have a Halloween celebration, and ask them to report back to the class the comparison of the characters by pairs (the students wear their costumes).

WRAP UP: 10'

Finally, the teacher presents awards to the characters, using the superlative forms of the adjectives, in order to introduce the topic for the next session. (For example, the most beautiful character, the ugliest one, etc)

ASSESSMENT

The teacher will take into account:

- The exercise with the lyrics sheet
- Students' interaction
- Fluency and accuracy in the oral activity
- Class participation