

Multiple Intelligences Theory in EFL Textbooks: A Comparative Evaluation between ‘Spotlight on English Book 1’ and ‘My Book of English Book 1’

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Abstract :

The textbook is the primary tool used in classrooms. It is the concrete resource which embodies the curriculum objectives. It is why the Algerian Ministry of Education made reforms in 2016 to improve the quality of textbooks. The present paper aimed to compare and analyze two textbooks of first-year middle school based on multiple intelligences theory. The textbooks were scrutinized by the use of EBadi and Beigzede's checklist. The findings revealed that the most predominant intelligences on both textbooks were the linguistic, followed by the interpersonal intelligences. It was noted that there was no occurrence of the naturalist intelligence on both textbooks.

Key Words: Multiple intelligences theory; EFL textbooks; second generation reforms; first generation textbooks; textbook evaluation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1983, Howard Gardner has revolutionized the field of psychology by his new ideas and beliefs. He claims that the notion of intelligence has to be re-defined. Traditionally, intelligence was considered as a single and an inborn capacity that can be measured by the I.Q test. However, Gardner proposed a different definition. He assumes that intelligence is rather multifaceted capacities that every person has. As a result, Gardner (1983), suggested the theory of multiple intelligence as an alternative.

After its emergence, many educators heed with applying that theory on education. They found that «it provides teachers with innovative ideas in terms of classroom instruction and helps them to make decisions on the best teaching strategies and learning tools in light of students’ individual differences and intelligence profiles » (Badi, 2016, p18). Moreover, research on the subject revealed that multiple intelligence theory positively impacts education (Armstrong, 2009; Christison, 1996; Palmberg, 2011). Nowadays, education has witnessed a shift in the roles of teachers and learners in classes. It shifts from the teacher centeredness approach to the learner centeredness approach. As a result, the focus becomes more on how learners can learn more efficiently based on their styles, needs, and capacities. For that end, Multiple intelligence theory (MIT) is considered one of the helpful theories to best apply the learner-centered approach in EFL classes.

The Algerian Ministry of Education adapted the curriculum to be up-to-date to the worldwide changes. The adaptation and refinement are based on the new studies and teaching approaches that facilitate the process and help learners learn more efficiently. In 2016, the ministry launched updated refinements called second-generation reforms; these reforms are declared to be an amelioration of the existing programs (first-generation programs) that focus on the learners’ needs and abilities (learners’ styles and MI). The result was the design of new textbooks that are built on the second-generation programs.

The new textbooks are perceived to cater for learners' multiple intelligence (MI) profiles (Teachers' Guide, 2016). To that end, the present paper aimed to analyze the newly designed textbook (My Book of English Book 1) and determine the extent to which MIT is implemented. Then, a comparative study between the old and the new textbooks will take place to give more reliability to results and answer the two research questions:

- 1- Is there any difference between a first-generation textbook and second-generation textbook in the light of MIT?
- 2- To what extent is the MIT implemented in the second-generation textbooks?

2. Multiple Intelligences Theory

Previously, the notion of intelligence was seen as an inborn and unchanged capacity that can be measured by the Intelligent Quotient Test (I.Q). In this sense, Binet & Simon (1905) claim that intelligence is a fundamental faculty, the alteration or the lack of which, is of the utmost importance for practical life. This faculty is judgment, otherwise called good sense, practical sense, initiative, the faculty of adapting oneself to circumstances. However, the previous view started to be criticized. Psychologists were discontent with the use of I.Q and the belief which sees intelligence as a unique entity (Gardner, 1983). The I.Q test ignores the human mind's imagination and creativity and gauges only the logical/mathematical and linguistic abilities (Ibragimova, 2011). Moreover, Snider (2001, p56) criticized the view because " it cannot provide a framework for education theories, such as those relating to language teaching," hence an alternative idea emerges.

In 1995, a committee of the American Psychological Association suggested another view of intelligence. It argued that "individuals differ from one another in their ability to understand complex ideas, to adapt effectively to the environment, to learn from experience, to engage in various forms of reasoning and to overcome obstacles by taking thought » (cited in Hutter & Legg, 2006, p02). Accordingly, intelligence is no more a single entity but rather multifaceted capacities. Two prominent theories burst on the scene: The Triarchic

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Theory (Sternberg, 1985) and the Multiple Intelligences Theory (Gardner, 1983).

Through his works with idiot savants and prodigies, Howard Gardner proposed a new psychological theory deemed Multiple Intelligences Theory. In 1983, he published a book entitled ‘Frames of Mind’ that involves his views and beliefs about intelligence. He actually opposes the old view and gives another definition:

“Nowadays an increasing number of researchers believe [...] that there exists a multitude of intelligences, quite independent of each other; that each intelligence has its own strengths and constraints; that the mind is far from unencumbered at birth; and that it is unexpectedly difficult to teach things that go against early ‘naive’ theories or that challenges the natural lines of force within an intelligence and its matching domains”.(Gardner,1993,ppxxiii)

The definition states clearly the idea that the human intelligence is not a single entity, but rather multitude of intelligences. Gardner further proposed eight types of intelligences.

3. Intelligence Types

MIT offers a clear idea about human intelligence and how it is pluralistic abilities rather than a single ability. The pluralistic view indicates that there are eight intelligences types: linguistic/verbal intelligence, logical/mathematical intelligence, bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial, naturalist, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence (Gardner, 1983), and every human being has his/her MI Profile (a combination of intelligences). Below is a brief description of each intelligence separately (Armstrong, 2009; Christison, 1996; Gardner, 1999; Snider, 2001).

1- Linguistic/Verbal Intelligence; people with this kind of intelligence are good at using words in both speaking and writing. They are good narrators of stories and also good readers. In other words, a linguistically competent person is the person who knows how to use the structure of the language, where to put the chosen form, and in

what context. Broca's area is the brain area responsible for this type of intelligence (Armstrong, 2009).

2- Logical/Mathematical Intelligence; Armstrong (2009, p06) defines it as « the capacity to use numbers effectively [...] and reason well ». There are many mathematical intelligence skills, for example, classification, calculation, prediction, inference, approximation, and hypothesis testing. The area responsible for this intelligence in the brain is the left frontal and right parietal lobes (ibid).

3- Interpersonal Intelligence; people who possess this intelligence type are good at social relationships. They understand the people around them and evaluate their emotions, desires, and intentions. They can have good careers in policy or psychology.

4- Intrapersonal Intelligence; people who possess this intelligence type have a great understanding of their own emotions and feelings and how to motivate themselves. They tend to be daydreamers and enjoy exploring their relationships with others. They also tend to assess themselves and finding what suits them best. They make great authors and scientists.

5- Visual/Spatial Intelligence; it refers to the ability to visualize things. It « includes sensitivity to form, space, color, line, and shape. It also includes the ability to graphically represent visual or spatial ideas » (Christison 1996, p28). People are good at visualizing things and having a great imagination. They are good with maps, graphs, and even videos. They would make good architects and even artists.

6- Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence; it refers to the ability to use physical skills as well as sensory ones. Those skills are «coordination, balance, dexterity, strength, flexibility, and space » (Armstrong, 2009, p07). People who possess this type of intelligence use body language and gestures easily to communicate with others, express their feelings and emotions, and express their ideas and thoughts.

7- Musical Intelligence; it involves expressing feelings and emotions using pitch, melody, rhythm, and performance. It entails many skills such as perception (as a music aficionado), discrimination (as a music critic), transformation (as a composer), and expression (as a performer) of musical forms (Armstrong, 2009).

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8- Naturalist Intelligence; it refers to the ability to distinguish and recognize patterns in nature. It is the capacity to know how to classify and understand the living species, whether plants or animals and sensitivity to « natural phenomena » such as cloud formation and rocks (Armstrong, 2009, p07). Hence, people who can distinguish between natural species can easily differentiate between what is harmful and what is beneficial to nature.

There are four primary points proposed by Armstrong (2009) and Christison (1996) that can help in better understanding intelligence types and the relationships between them:

- Each person possesses all eight intelligences;
- most people can develop each intelligence to an adequate level of competency;
- intelligences usually work together in Complex ways;
- there are many ways to be intelligent within each category.

4. Implications of Multiple Intelligences Theory in Education

MIT has a significant impact on education. It starts a paradigm shift in the teaching-learning process (Armstrong, 2009). It can be a helpful « vehicle for broadening the remit of education: to include subjects that address the several intelligences and ways of thinking, as well as teaching methods that speak to individual differences, and assessments that go beyond standard, short-answer language, and logic instruments » (Chen, Gardner, & Moran, 2009, p14). In the same vein, Fleetham (2014, p03) asserted that MIT is a « powerful and empowering tool for teaching and learning. It describes values and uses people's unique strengths, thereby helping people work and learn more effectively ». When learners are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they will work to improve their weak intelligence(s) with teachers' help. Hence learners will be more motivated.

Since MIT has multiple avenues to learning, it can be used to teach and learn languages (Armstrong, 2009). It offers an educational frame for teachers and learners that corresponds to the communicative approach. Likewise, Christison (1999, p2-4) suggested four advantages of using MIT:

“1. It helps students develop a better understanding and appreciation of their strengths and learning preferences.

2. It is a tool to develop a better understanding of learners’ intelligences.

3. It is a guide to provide a greater variety of ways for students to learn and demonstrate their learning.

4. It is a guide to develop lesson plans that address the full range of student needs”.

Using MIT when designing textbooks would be beneficial because “MIT related materials have the strong potential to improve foreign language instruction because they engage learners’ innate abilities” (Snider, 2001, p06). As this new theory came to the horizon, it gathered a lot of attention. Educators start to scrutinize its effectiveness in language education and its benefits when it is used in textbooks.

5. Multiple Intelligences Theory and Textbook Evaluation

The textbook has a significant role in learners' life. It can help them be motivated and stimulate their language learning (Allwright, 1981). The textbook also has a vital role since it contains the core of the lessons that will be dealt with. Based on that, a good selection and evaluation of textbooks are needed (CunningsWorth, 1995). Recently, a significant volume of research has been witnessed in the field of MIT and textbook evaluation. Below are some examples of the well-known studies that attempted to evaluate textbooks in the light of MIT.

Snider (2001) analyzed ten first-year college German textbooks. His objective was to determine the kinds of activities in textbooks and how they engage multiple intelligences in learners. The study revealed

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that « only eleven engage intelligences other than verbal/linguistic » (p133).

Furthermore, Botelho (2003) analyzed six English textbooks (American Headway 2, Explorations 1, Gateways 1, Go for it! 4, New Interchange 1, and Passages 1). Her objective was to determine how the textbooks respond to multiple intelligences theory and the extent to which the activities used helped learners improve their intelligence profiles. The results showed four types: linguistic/verbal, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and spatial/visual intelligences were the most predominant intelligences. While the remaining ones, namely, logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, musical, naturalist, and existential, were less used in the activities.

Moreover, Ibragimova (2011) analyzed two textbooks (Success Intermediate Students book, Success Intermediate workbook) used in intermediate language classes at Eastern Mediterranean University English Preparatory school EPS. He aimed to evaluate both the textbooks and classroom activities used in light of Multiple Intelligences theory. The findings showed that there was a distinction between textbooks' MI profiles and students' MI profiles. Results also showed that linguistic intelligence and logical intelligence were the most predominant types of intelligence in the two textbooks.

In the Algerian context, Boulmaiz (2011) conducted a study to evaluate the Algerian first-year secondary school textbook ‘At the Crossroads’ and analyze teachers' knowledge and application of the theory of Multiple Intelligences. Findings revealed that ‘AT the Crossroads’ textbook catered for two main types of intelligences: verbal/linguistic intelligence and logical/ mathematical intelligence. Results also showed that the teachers' sample group was not aware of what MIT is and how it can be used.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1 Corpus: The study's corpus consists of two English textbooks: the old one 'Spotlight on English' designed and published in 2008, and the new one 'My Book of English' developed and published in 2016. They both address the Algerian first-year middle school learners, and they are locally designed. The comparison will provide us with results that will help identify MIT's real implementation in second-generation textbooks. Before starting the analysis, it seems pertinent to introduce a general description of the textbooks. The following table illustrates some details:

	The Old Book	The New Book
Year of Publication	2008	2016
Number of Pages	189	160
Number of Units	07	05
Titles of Unites	Hello, Family and Friends, Sport, In and Out, Food, Inventions and Discoveries, Environment.	Me and My Friends, Me and My Family, Me and My Daily Activities, Me and My School, Me, My Country and the World.

Table 01: General Details about the Two EFL Textbooks (old and new)

The table above shows many noticeable differences in terms of volume, the number of units and the tackled content. First of all, the number of pages is reduced from 189 pages to 160 pages. The number of units is also reduced from 7 files (the word used in the book) to 5 sequences. An analysis of those differences will take place in the discussion later on.

6.2 Instrument

To conduct a reliable study, using a checklist is necessary because it offers a very economical and systematic way to ensure all relevant items are considered for analysis and evaluation (CunningsWorth, 1995; McGrath, 2002). Therefore, the MI checklist developed by EBady& Beigzede (2016) has been used. It was designed based on the literature review (Botelho, 2003; Estaji&Nafisi, 2014; Ibragimova, 2011) and the framework of MI theory (Gardner, 1983, 1999). The checklist has two versions: The English version, and the Persian one.

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It consists of 8 types of intelligences; each intelligence is described and illustrated by the types and sample of activities cater for it.

6.3 Data Collection Procedures

Since all single textbook units were designed based on a specific frame, it seems unnecessary to analyze all of them analyze. Thus, in the present study, one unit from each textbook (old and new) was carefully analyzed to determine the different intelligence types. After that, a comparative study was done to examine the real implementation of MIT in second-generation textbooks.

As mentioned before, the MI checklist was used to categorize the activities available on the two different units. It was noted that there are two types of activities: activities which cater for one intelligence type, and others serve more than one type. Therefore, the last were categorized based on the different types of intelligences they serve. It is worth mentioning that the researcher referred to the teachers’ guide when categorizing the new textbook activities because it involves a part entitled: The Representation of the Multiple Intelligences Theory in the Course book; a Sample Sequence.

After having the data, they were compared to answer the main research question: the extent to which MIT is implemented in second-generation textbooks.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of findings for each textbook are going to be presented separately to be clearer and more organized.

7.1 ‘Spotlight on English Book 1’ Results

The results obtained from the analysis of unit one « Hello! » in the old book are presented on the table below:

Types of Intelligences	Number of Activities	Percentage
Linguistic/Verbal Intelligence	25	53%
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence	15	32%
Interpersonal Intelligence	12	26%
Intrapersonal Intelligence	05	11%
Musical Intelligence	08	17%
Naturalist Intelligence	00	00%

Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence	04	09%
Visual/Spatial Intelligence	07	15%

Table 02: Number and Percentage of Occurrence of Each Intelligence in Hello! Unit

The first unit in Spotlight on English Book 1 involves 47 activities catered for seven intelligence types except for naturalist intelligence. The findings revealed that the linguistic/verbal intelligence is the most predominant type by 53%, followed by the logical/ mathematical intelligence by 32%. The third dominant intelligence is the interpersonal intelligence by 26% representing in 12 activities. The next frequently addressed types are musical intelligence by 17%, followed by visual/ spatial intelligence. It was noted that intrapersonal intelligence is represented by a low percentage (11%), followed by the bodily/kinesthetic with a percentage of 9%. However, the naturalist intelligence did not appear in any activity; hence it is considered the least predominant intelligence in the old book.

7.2 ‘My Book of English Book 1’ Results

The results obtained from the analysis of unit 1 ‘Me and My Friends’ are displayed on the table below:

Types of Intelligences	Number of Activities	Percentage
Linguistic/Verbal Intelligence	16	84%
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence	09	47%
Interpersonal Intelligence	07	37%
Intrapersonal Intelligence	04	21%
Musical Intelligence	03	16%
Naturalist Intelligence	00	00%
Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence	02	11%
Visual/Spatial Intelligence	03	16%

Table 03: Number and Percentage of Occurrence of Each Intelligence in ‘Me and My Friends’ Unit

Nineteen activities were carefully analyzed in the light of MIT. The above table shows that 16 activities catered for linguistic/verbal intelligence by 84%. This indicates that linguistic intelligence is the most predominant type, followed by The Logical/mathematical intelligence represented by nine activities by a percentage of 47%. The next addressed intelligence in the first unit is the interpersonal

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intelligence by a percentage of 37%, followed by intrapersonal intelligence with 21%. The visual/spatial and musical intelligence were represented by the same percentage (16%), whereas the bodily/kinesthetic intelligence represented 11%. Finally, the naturalist intelligence was the least predominant intelligence by 0%.

The findings revealed that there are similarities and differences in the distribution of intelligence types on activities. On the one hand, the linguistic/verbal, the logical/mathematical, and the interpersonal intelligences are the most predominant intelligences in the analyzed units. The visual/spatial intelligence is represented similarly. However, the naturalist intelligence is the least dominant in the old and new books. On the other hand, the main difference is the order of the remaining intelligences: in the old book, the fourth addressed intelligence is the musical, followed by the visual/spatial, then the intrapersonal, and the bodily/kinesthetic intelligences while in the new book: the intrapersonal, is followed by the musical, the visual/spatial and the bodily/kinesthetic intelligence. The figure below represents the results.

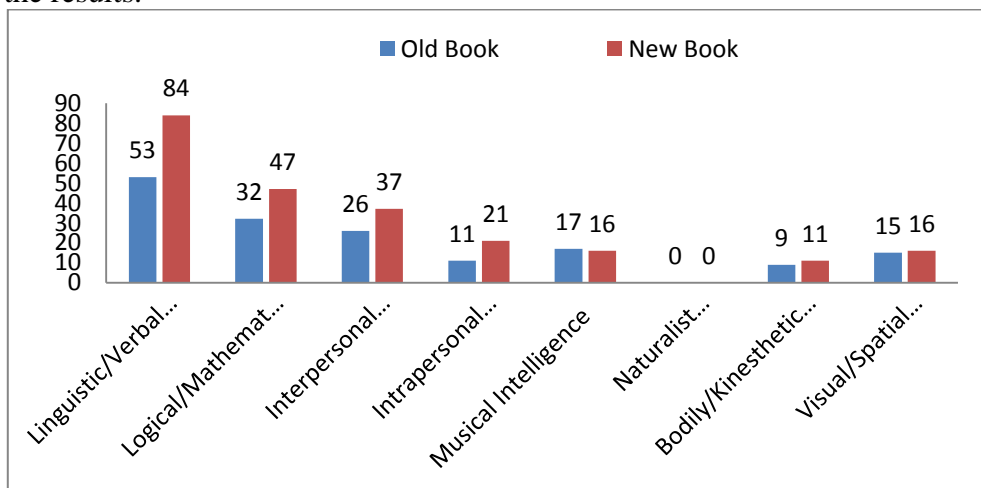


Figure 01: A Comparison between Percentages of the Old and New Books

The Algerian second-generation reforms in 2016 tried to put more focus on the learner as the essential part of the whole learning process. Hence, the curriculum objectives were all around improving learners' abilities and capacities by referring to their needs, learning styles, and multiple intelligences. Accordingly, textbooks designers took the duty to transfer curriculum aims from theory to practice. Yet, reality shows the opposite. Analysis of the two textbooks unveiled that linguistic intelligence is the most predominant type in old and new textbooks and this result is compatible with previous studies (Al-Mekhlafi, 2016; Al-Seyabi & A'Zaabi, 2016; Badi & Beigzede, 2016; Botelho, 2003; Boulmaiz, 2011, 2017; Ibragimova, 2011; Snider, 2001; Taase, Satarijan & Salimi, 2014). This result is predictable from the beginning because the textbooks are designed to learn the English language, i.e. read, write, speak, and listen. So, the vast number of activities catered for linguistic intelligence.

Moreover, the logical and the interpersonal intelligences were the most frequently addressed types in both textbooks, and this may be because textbooks designers emphasized on the logical/ mathematical intelligence to prepare learners to pass their tests and exams, and at the same time to improve their logical and critical thinking (classifying, matching, ordering), and their communicative competence to use the language correctly with others. After that, findings show that the naturalist intelligence is the least predominant type represented in both textbooks and this result is consistent with other previous studies (Botelho, 2003; Estaji & Nafisi, 2014; Nasiri, Ketabi & Dastejerdi, 2012). The lack of activities that cater to this type may be due to the little practical studies that show how to improve naturalist intelligence because it has been newly added to the list of intelligences. The visual/spatial intelligence has the same state because the visual aids (pictures, maps, graphs) help learners understand better when the vocabulary is related to visual representations.

When trying to answer the research questions, it has been found that a slight difference exists in the order of intelligence types. The Multiple Intelligences profiles of the 'Spotlight on English' is as follow: the linguistic/verbal, followed by the logical, the interpersonal, the musical, the visual/spatial, the intrapersonal, and the

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bodily/kinesthetic intelligences. However, activities on the new textbook cater for: the intrapersonal, the visual/spatial and the musical on the same level, and the bodily/kinesthetic intelligences. The distribution of intelligences was unbalanced; thus, there is no real implementation of MIT in the second generation textbooks, unlike suppositions.

8. CONCLUSION

This study was an attempt to find out the use of MIT in the Algerian EFL textbooks. It aimed to evaluate two first-year middle school textbooks that represent the first and second-generation reforms. Results revealed that the books’ MI profiles were unbalanced in the distribution of intelligences; the linguistic intelligence is the predominant one followed by The logical and the interpersonal intelligences. Others were frequently addressed, whilst there is no occurrence of the naturalist intelligence on both books.

Due to the rapid changes in the world requirements, the Algerian Ministry of Education responded by launching reformed educational programs in 2016 called the Second Generation Reforms. The new programs aimed to emphasize the learners’ needs and abilities (MI Profiles) by bringing ameliorations to EFL textbooks. However, the results revealed that the newly designed textbook ‘My Book of English’ failed to integrate the Multiple Intelligences theory. This might be because MIT still has ambiguous points in its practical application. Therefore, it seems beneficial to propose some pedagogical implications that can help in better understanding and applying the MIT.

Teachers should have the desire to update their knowledge concerning the new approaches and teaching methods, and use various sources and tools that cater to learners' needs and abilities while teaching. In the same vein, when teachers are aware of their MI profiles, they will change their teaching way, trying to vary the activities types. Inspectors, therefore, should train teachers about what

MIT is and how it is implemented in classes. Moreover, teachers are required to know their learners' MI profiles before they start teaching the program, then try to encourage autonomous learning which can help learners improve their weak intelligences and foster strong ones.

9. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCHES

MIT has attracted researchers all over the world due to its great interests. Nevertheless, this field is in its beginning in the Algerian educational context. As a result, many different kinds of research can be suggested. First of all, researchers can compare learners' MI profiles with their EFL textbooks. Then, they can study teachers' awareness and perceptions of MIT and investigate how applying MIT can facilitate the learning process. Finally, since assessment is an essential part in the learning process, research on how the evaluation process is going to be in the light of MIT is needed.

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