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Impact of Multiple Intelligences on Teaching Reading to Preparatory Program Students

(Iraqi Case).

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Abstract

Debates about the intelligence have been a great issue in the 20th century. So far more than 130 different definitions were announced about what the intelligence is. Generally intelligence has been seen as a unitary concept till Howard Gardner a professor at Harvard University in the U.S.A proposed in the book Frames of Mind (1993) that the intelligence is a pluralistic view rather than the unitary concept. In his theory of multiple intelligence, Gardner broadened the conceptions of intelligence to include not only the results of paper-and pencil tests but also knowledge of the human brain and sensitivity to the diverse of the human cultures. He also introduced the concept of an individual-centered school that takes this multifaceted view of intelligence seriously.

The purpose of this research is to examine whether the implementation of Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence in EFL classes by Grouping students according to their dominant intelligence type and organizing respective type of activities for them can really have a positive impact on students' reading skills. This study was carried out at preparatory school of English at Ishik University. 95 Pre-intermediate and intermediate level of English students involved in the experiment and this study lasted 64 hours within two academic semesters. During the experiment, I used both qualitative and quantitative data. I applied many different types of learning activities relevant to the theory of multiple intelligences in the learning centers concerning with the type of the intelligence.

The data for this study was collected from the subjects' two different questionnaires and many other authentic assessment tools to identify their dominant intelligences. Another tool was students' interviews on motivation and attitudes regarding multiple intelligence teaching approaches. In order to see their attitudes toward reading two surveys were applied. One was at the very beginning of the experiment the other was conducted at the end of the study. The last and the most concrete data collecting tools were the scores of the pretest, posttest and the achievement tests.

The results of the study showed that experimental group that was taught using the approaches of multiple intelligence theory performed much better than the control group which was taught in the traditional way not only in the exam results, based on their surveys and interviews, also in the

stimuli of motivation and understanding the written language as well as vocabulary. According to the results of the post data tools, by using the multiple intelligence theories in reading classes, a great increase in the test results of the reading comprehension is seen. Moreover, even the lower level students showed a progress in everyday tasks such as doing homework, quality of homework, participating in the lesson and attending to the school.. Many students pointed out that learning should be individualized.