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A Study of Two English Language Coursebooks in Turkey: Focus on Multiple Intelligences

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze two coursebooks, namely, *Texture of English 4* and *My English 5*on the basis of to what extent the activities and tasks included reflect the intelligent types proposed by multiple intelligences theory. Taking the general characteristics of the intelligences into account, a checklist has been designed and the activities in those two coursebooks were categorized according to the checklist prepared. It is found that although both coursebooks represent different intelligence types and at varying degrees, verbal/linguistic intelligence is the predominant one while the naturalist intelligence is represented the least. Results also showed that there is not any example of existential intelligence.

Keywords: Multiple intelligences, coursebook, Texture of English 4, My English 5, Gardner

1. Introduction

Many attempts have been made to define and measure humans' intellectual capabilities one of which was proposed by Francis Galton who believed that he could measure human intelligence. By developing some earlier forms of IQ tests in the late 19thcentury, in 1906, Alfred Binet developed the most well-known IQ test in the world which is known as Stanford- Binet IQ test (Gardner, 1999). Gardner was one of those who distrusted those intelligence tests which perceived intelligence as a body of knowledge that is supposed to be known by individuals at a given age. He proposed a new theory called Multiple Intelligences Theory (hereafter MIT) in his book Frames of Mind (1983) in which he openly rejected the notion of IQ tests which were built on intelligence as a monolith concept.

Gardner (1983) believes that intelligence cannot be measured by traditional IQ tests and his view of intelligence differs from traditional ones in that each individual has potential intelligence in different areas. As he comments on how brain works, he gives us the rationale behind his theory:

> It is fundamentally misleading to think about a single mind, a single intelligence, a single problem- solving capacity. And so, along with many others, I tried to make the argument that the mind/brain consists of many modules/organs/intelligences, each of which operates according to its own rules in relative autonomy from the others. (Gardner, 1983, p.6)

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When the related literature is studied, it can be seen that intelligence types can be outlined as follows:

Verbal/ Linguistic Intelligence (VLI): VI represents the capacity of effective use of the words both in speech and writing. Activities involving VLI are telling jokes and stories, writing letters and poetry, reading, writing, using language for specific purposes, recalling information and learning new languages (Oliveira, 2009). Writers, novelists, comedians and poets are supposed to have high VLI (Razmjoo & Jozaghi, 2010).

Logical/ Mathematical Intelligence (LMI): LMI signifies the using numbers, recognizing patterns, and working with abstract symbols, shapes and functions as can be found in traditional mathematics and geometry courses. LMI involves deductive, inductive reasoning, logical thinking and the processes of problem-solving (Gardner, 1993, p.20)

Spatial/ Visual Intelligence (SVI): SVI involves "the sensitivity to form, space, colour, line and shape" (Christison, 1996, p.11). The activities supporting SVI are supposed to involve tasks such as driving a car, using a map, thinking in pictures, creating art objects such as sketches and paintings. Successful sailors, artists, decorators, surgeons, graphic artists, architects, and painters are supposed to have highly developed SVI so as to perform well in their jobs (1996).

Bodily/ Kinesthetic Intelligence (BKI): Not all professions depend on pure mental abilities. Many professions and jobs such as those related to sports and manual jobs depend on the use of the body and its movements. BKI involves the ability to use physical skills such as coordination, balance, flexibility, sense of timing, and dexterity. As Gardner (1993) puts, BKI means "using the body to express an emotion to play a game or to create a new product" (p.19). It is hypothesized that successful actors, athletes, dancers, acrobats and surgeons highly develop in this intelligence.

Musical Intelligence (MI): MI involves the ability to express emotions and feelings through music and involves being sensitive to rhythm, pitch, beats and melody. Musicians, music dancers, dance bands, and composers are supposed to have highly developed MI. People who have a strong hold of this intelligence are good at composing songs, playing musical instruments, creating music from objects and singing (Oliveira, 2009).

Interpersonal Intelligence (II): II involves interacting with people effectively, having empathy, understanding others, and being sensitive to other people's feelings and moods. Professionals such as teachers, religious leaders, politicians, directors, sales people, team leaders and supervisors should develop themselves in this intelligence type so as to work effectively. People with this intelligence are eager to take responsibility in group and pair work (Oliveira, 2009).

Intrapersonal Intelligence (TI): TI includes "the capacity to understand oneself , to have effective working model of oneself- including one's own desires, fears, and capacities – and to use such information effectively in regulating one's own life" (Gardner,1999,p.43). The people with this intelligence are supposed to have the ability of self- reflection, self- awareness and self- consciousness.

Again, it can be seen in the literature that Gardner proposed two new intelligences which are naturalist intelligence (NI) and existential intelligence (EI). Although he claims that EI refers to the capacity for questioning deeper about human existence, he indicates that there is a need for more verification and validation for the applicability of it (Gardner, 1999). NI and EI can be summarized as follows:

Naturalist Intelligence (NI): NI involves sensitivity to and understanding of nature. This intelligence helps recognizing, classifying and categorizing species found in nature such as plants, animals, and minerals (Gardner, 1999). It is hypothesized that people who are strong in NI might be successful biologists, veterinarians, environmentalists and geologists.

Existential Intelligence (EI): EI is defined as the capacity to locate oneself with respect to the furthest reaches of the cosmos. Existential issues stemming from human condition such as the significance of life, the meaning of death, the ultimate faith of the physical and psychological world, and profound experiences such

as love or total immersion in a work of art are all related to EI (Gardner, 1999, pp. 60-62). As Gardner (1999) exemplifies, Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Einstein can be considered as individuals who carried the features of EI.

Shearer (1994) found that there was a relationship between a person's intelligences and the intelligences related to that individual's particular occupational qualities. For instance, while musicians scored highest in MI, firemen scored the lowest. Similarly, while engineers scored highest in LMI intelligence, writers' score was the lowest. Also, Shearer (1996) asked 10,958 people from the US and Canada through a questionnaire which aimed to find individuals' mean scores in eight intelligent types. The profile scores of the participants showed the results given in Table 1. More than half of the participants seemed to have developed their II (n=56.13) and TI (n=52.08) while MI (n=48.61) and NI (n=43.98) remained as the least developed ones. Thus, the mean scale scores for each of the eight proposed intelligence types suggest that people seem to have developed II more than they did their NI in the US and Canada.

Table 1. Intelligence Types of 10,958 People in the US and Canada (Shearer, 1996)

Intelligence type	**Mean**
Interpersonal	56.13
Intrapersonal	52.08
Spatial	50.88
Linguistic	50.26
Math-logical	48.95
Kinesthetic	48.79
Musical	48.61
Naturalist	43.98

Each person has a different intelligence profile in a way to combine all intelligence types at different degrees. In some individuals, some of these intelligences may be strong while some others may be weaker. Gardner (1993) believes that an individual's intelligence profile can be altered and/or improved through education but several aspects such as our cultural values, opportunities provided to us and people's decisions have effect on how and to what extent our intelligences are nurtured (Gardner, 1999, p. 34).

Berman (1998) reinforces the benefits that MIT can offer to foreign language teaching because teachers can view learners as individuals who have unique ways of learning and perceiving things. As a theory that can be put into educational practice, MIT has many benefits as well as challenges. Regardless of its benefits and challenges, as Moran, Kornhaber and Gardner (no date; no page number) articulate, adopting and using multiple intelligences activities in our classrooms "can bring about a quiet revolution in the way students see themselves and others. Instead of defining themselves as either "smart" or "dumb," students can perceive themselves as potentially smart in a number of ways."

Many schools in the U.S. have changed their curriculum to apply the MIT (Gardner, 1993). The application of this theory in education has been expanded not only in the U.S. but also in different parts of the world. Foreign language curricula all around the world were revised in order to cover different intelligence types and language textbooks have been updated to integrate into the teaching materials. However, Kırkgöz' (2010) study of two coursebooks, namely, Time for English and Spot on English, revealed that VLI and SVI activities were the most widely used activities while NI was the least used one along with no example of EI.

Coursebooks have a vital role in the process of language learning and teaching and have an effect on actualization of the curriculum, educational plans and decisions through the use of interesting and useful materials, tasks and activities in classrooms. In terms of MI and curriculum applications, Arikan and Sarıcaoğlu (2009) indicate that the aim is not to prepare nine different lessons related to students' intelligence types but to arrange materials so that the lessons can be more effective by supporting students, letting them to interact and helping them to improve their less strong intelligences. Hence, it is crucial that coursebooks are designed to address as many of the intelligences as possible in order to cater for the needs of the students' various intelligences.

Arikan and Tekir (2007) point out that it is important to evaluate coursebooks and materials in order to understand to what extent they meet students' needs. Similarly, many research studies have been conducted

in order to analyze some coursebooks in relation to how MIT has affected the content of these course materials. Palmberg (2002), in Finland, analysed a coursebook in order to identify the intelligences nurtured through the coursebook. The results showed that the VI was predominantly represented in the coursebook.

Hence, in this present study, two nationally published ELT coursebooks used in Turkish state schools, namely, Texture of English 4 and My English 5 were analyzed in relation to how the intelligence types are realized in the activities/tasks given in them.

2. Method

The researchers analyzed two different coursebooks, namely, Texture of English 4 and My English 5. Both coursebooks are commonly used in 4th and 5th grades in state schools in Turkey. Both coursebooks consist of fourteen units along with five consolidation parts.

A checklist has been designed relevant to definitions given by Gardner (1999) and activities were categorized accordingly. During the analysis of the coursebooks, it was observed that some instructions/ activities catered for particular intelligence types while some others catered for more than a single intelligence. While deciding on matching the instructions/activities with specific intelligence types, Kırkgöz's (2010) checklist was also used for gaining some insight. Table 2 illustrates the final checklist used to categorize the activities given in coursebooks in terms of the types of intelligences studied.

As for the development of the categories, activities such as "write a sentence, listen to the story or answer the questions" are categorized as "VLI" while activities such as "read the dialogue and act it out" are categorized as "VLI, II and BKI." Thus, one single coursebook activity was counted as multiple intelligence types.

Each activity in the coursebooks was analyzed and identified independently by two of the researchers. Then, the interrater reliability was measured and the raters' agreement was around 95%. The third researcher worked as an expert who gave his rather more experienced opinion so as to reach the final decision on the remaining 5%.

Table 2. The Checklist Used (Intelligence Types and the Corresponding Coursebook Activities)

Intelligence Types	Representative activities
Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence	Ask and answer.
	Read a dialogue, text, story, etc.
	Listen to a story, dialogue, etc., and say.
	Read and write.
	Complete the sentences.
	Make dialogue, sentences, etc.
	Fill in the blanks.
	Describe.
	Talk about....
Visual/Spatial Intelligence	Look.
	Match the words/sentences with the pictures.
	Draw.
	Colour.
Logical/Mathematical Intelligence	Categorize.
	Put into correct order.
	Solve the puzzle.
	Choose the correct answer (Multiple choices)
	Find the missing parts, hidden words, difference, word, sentences, etc.
	Odd one out.
	Unscramble the words.
	Follow.
	Decode the secret message.

Table 2 Continued. The Checklist Used (Intelligence Types and the Corresponding Coursebook Activities)

Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence	Act it out. Dramatize. Do the actions. Practice. Follow the instructions. Cut. Imitate. Play a game (TPR). Point.
Interpersonal Intelligence	Ask to your friends. Give instructions to your friends. Work in groups/pairs. Talk with your friend. Make dialogue with your friends.
Intrapersonal Intelligence	Talk about your own family. Talk about your likes/dislikes/ your favourite activities. Draw your favourite cartoon character.
Musical Intelligence	Say the chant. Listen to a song. Sing a song.
Naturalist Intelligence	What is the weather like? Geographic features.
Existential Intelligence	-

3. Findings

Table 3 illustrates that the activities in Texture of English 4 are mainly representative of VLI (44.9%). It is followed by SVI (27.2%) and LMI and II (9.1% each). The fifth one is BKI (3%). Although NI (2.4%), MI (2.1%) and TI (1.8%) are reflected in small proportions there appears no representative of existential intelligence.

Table 3. Occurrence of Intelligences in *Texture of English 4* (in percentages)

Units	f	V	L	S	B	M	I	T	N
1	27	44.4	11.1	29.6	-	3.7	11.1	-	-
2	21	47.6	9.5	28.5	9.5	-	4.7	-	-
3	20	50	-	30	-	5	10	5	-
C	5	60	40	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	24	41.6	4.1	29.1	8.3	-	12.5	4.1	-
5	16	43.7	6.2	31.2	12.5	6.2	-	-	-
6	19	47.3	5.2	42.1	-	-	5.2	-	-
7	18	44.4	11.1	33.3	5.5	-	5.5	-	-
C	17	47	11.7	35.2	-	-	5.8	-	-
8	20	50	10	15	-	5	2-	-	-

9	18	44.4	5.5	27.7	5.5	5.5	11.1	-	-
C	6	50	16.6	16.6	-	-	16.6	-	-
10	18	50	-	16.6	5.5	5.5	16.6	5.5	-
11	20	50	10	30	-	-	5	5	-
12	21	33.3	-	23.8	-	4.7	4.7	-	33.3
C	15	40	26.6	13.3	-	-	13	-	6.6
13	18	38.8	11.1	27.7	5.5	-	11.1	5.5	-
14	18	50	5.5	27.7	-	-	11.1	5.5	-
C	6	16.6	50	33.3	-	-	-	-	-
Total	327	44.9	9.1	27.2	3	2.1	9.1	1.8	2.4

Table 4 illustrates that the activities in My English 5 are mainly representative of VLI (49.6%). It is followed by SVI activities (19.1%), II (10%) and LMI (7.7%). The fifth one is BKI (6.4%). Although TI (5.1%), MI (1.7%) and NI (.1%) are somehow reflected in the activities and tasks, there is, again, no representative activity targeting EI.

Table 4. Occurrence of Intelligences in *My English 5* (in percentages)

Units	f	V	L	S	B	M	I	T	N
1	34	55.8	8.8	11.7	-	2.9	11.7	8.8	-
2	32	50	9.3	15.6	3.1	3.1	9.3	9.3	-
3	32	37.5	3.1	34.3	12.5	-	6.2	6.2	-
C	15	53.3	6.6	33.3	-	-	-	-	6.6
4	36	52.7	2.7	11.1	22.2	-	5.5	5.5	-
5	31	51.6	-	22.5	12.9	3.2	6.4	3.2	-
6	36	52.7	5.5	19.4	-	2.7	11.1	8.3	-
C	11	54.5	18.1	27.2	-	-	-	-	-
7	44	45.4	4.5	18.1	4.5	2.2	13.6	11.3	-
8	26	50	15.3	7.6	7.6	-	11.5	7.6	-
9	37	51.3	8.1	10.8	8.1	5.4	13.5	2.7	-
C	10	60	10	20	-	-	-	10	-
10	33	48.4	3	15.1	6.0	-	-	9	-
11	32	46.8	12.5	15.6	9.3	-	-	-	-
12	34	50	8.8	20.5	2.9	-	17.6	-	-
C	11	36.3	36.3	27.2	-	-	-	-	-
13	28	53.5	10.7	21.4	3.5	-	10.7	-	-
14	35	45.7	8.5	22.8	8.5	2.8	8.5	2.8	-
C	11	54.5	-	45.4	-	-	-	-	-
Total	528	49.6	7.7	19.1	6.4	1.7	10	5.1	0.1

4. Conclusion

This study found that there were 327 written instructions in Texture of English 4 and 528 in My English 5. The results of the present study revealed that VLI is represented predominantly in both coursebooks which are currently used in Turkish state schools. These results show that the distribution of the intelligence types in the coursebooks studied is not balanced. Hence, it can be concluded that there is a need to enrich the activity types given in the coursebooks in support of developing students' EI, NI, TI and MI types. These results are

in support of Kırkgöz' (2010) previous findings in that her study had also revealed that the 4th and 5th grade English language textbooks she studied included activities that were categorized predominantly as VLI and SVI activities while NI was identified as the least intelligence type represented. Similarly, she found no example of EI intelligence.

This study has two major limitations. First, categorizing instructions as representatives of intelligence types is a difficult process which involves researchers' individual decision making processes that may be rather subjective. Second, the number of the coursebooks studied is limited to two which makes generalizing the findings rather more difficult. Hence, future studies should make use of rather more objective categorization strategies with a greater number of coursebooks.

Despite these limitations, this study can be considered as an important attempt to put the profile of English language coursebooks produced in Turkey in terms of their relationship with MIT. Integration of MIT into curriculum of English Language Teaching (ELT) in primary and secondary schools is a very recent improvement in Turkey (Kırkgöz, 2010). In the future, both coursebooks and classroom applications should be checked on to see the effect of MIT activities on students' happiness, success as well as their well-being.

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