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Learning Vocabulary through Multiple Intelligences

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Abstract

Howard Gardner's theory on Multiple Intelligences (*Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, 1983) challenged the traditional notion of intelligence and opened up a whole new world of possibilities in education by exploiting the different potentials individuals have. Both teaching and learning benefit from the stimulation and activation of these different intelligences, but it is often a case of how to do it. Although teachers do feel that a textbook needs to be integrated, time constraints and habit often limit their activities or teaching style. It is also true that they might feel intimidated by what incorporating Multiple Intelligences in their teaching means.

The advantages of making the effort include increased students' motivation, better academic results, and in the long run less work for the teacher.

In this paper the focus is on learning vocabulary, and how different simple activities address different intelligences. The first issue is what learning a word means (meaning, spelling, pronunciation, register, etc.). It then moves on to showing how the students' own imagination can be triggered to revise and record vocabulary, and subsequently teach each other different ways of organising their own vocabulary notebooks to make their learning more efficient. Raising the students' awareness of their own learning style and the way other people learn will not only help their own learning in general, but also make them more sensitive to themselves and others, thus developing their interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. This will indirectly improve communication itself, which is what language is ultimately all about.

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