CHAPTER 6

Conclusions, Implications, Recommendations and Limitations

Introduction

The current chapter is intended to provide a digest of the conducted research. A general overview of the study as well as recommendations, suggestions and limitations are presented here.

6.1 Background to the Study

Teaching English as a foreign language came to be formally established as an academic course since the role of English was recognized as a global language. Since then, many approaches and perspectives have kept influencing it as an internationally demanded course.

The learner-centered or personalized instruction is the 21 century dominant trend in EFL and in educational settings as a whole. The main goals of this approach include, enhancing the students’ sense of ownership in the classroom by giving them more power, and allowing them to make choices about their learning processes. In other words, the thing which is of the utmost importance and which determines the effectiveness of a methodology in an EFL class is the needs and wants of learners. According to Jack C. Richards, learner-centered teaching means, “looking for ways in which learners can be more active participants in the lesson, more engaged in the content of the lesson, and have more choices about what they want to do and how they want to do it” (Richards, 2012).

The theory of multiple intelligences is a psychological theory which considers each human being a unique person possessing a unique set of potentials. In this respect, it perfectly matches with the recent trends in EFL. Many language teachers may have heard about this theory, though a few of them (if not any) might have ventured to infuse it into their strategies. On this account, there is lot of scope to explore this theory and the knowhow of implementing it in our classrooms.

This thesis introduces the theory of multiple intelligences and discusses the practical insights into the theory and how to put it into practice for the benefit of EFL
classes. Moreover, the researcher conducted a survey study on foreign students at AMU to investigate the state and strength of multiple intelligences among them and to look into the relationship between their intelligences profile and the applied method of language teaching at AMU. Relying on the set forth MIT theoretical postulations and the results of the conducted survey the researcher culled a collection of tasks and activities as the practical guidelines for bringing in the MIT in EFL classes.

6.2 The Research

The aims and objectives of the present research is accomplished through clarifying the theoretical principles of the theory of multiple intelligences and examining the effectiveness of its use in EFL classes from various pedagogical aspects. As a part of this research a set of questionnaire was modified and applied to collect the required data from foreign students at AMU in the session 2015.

The content of the thesis is arranged into six chapters as follows:

First chapter, entitled ‘Statement of Intent’ gives an outline and general overview of the thesis. The topics which are discussed in this chapter include background and rationale, methodology, aims and objectives, research questions and the proposed chapters of this study. The researcher also calls attention to the significance of the study.

Second chapter which is entitled ‘Review of Literature’ provides a comprehensive review of the relevant literature until the present. The given literature is generally divided into three portions, the works and materials dealing with the theoretical backgrounds of the theory of multiple intelligences, the works highlighting the pedagogical use of the theory and finally the materials focusing on the integration of the theory in EFL classes from different aspects.

Third chapter ‘Intelligence, Multiple Intelligences and EFL Pedagogy’ presents an exhaustive introduction to the theory of multiple intelligences. For this purpose, a number of similar theories and concepts which may be mistaken for the MIT as well as the supporting and critical views are discussed in this chapter. Then it comes to the implementation of MIT in education in general and in EFL in particular. In this regard, a set of requirements for true application of the MIT in EFL classes is
suggested. Furthermore, it presents practical ideas to align the teaching aspects, i.e. teaching strategies, lesson plans and assessment methods with MIT principles.

Fourth chapter ‘A Survey of Empirical Study at AMU’ deals with the analysis of the results of the survey which was conducted at AMU on identifying the MI profile of 125 foreign students at AMU. The chapter provides the introduction and background to the study and explains the methodology of the research and the used instrument. The statistical analysis of the given data is also illustrated in tables and graphs. Besides, this chapter establishes the background for the practice of MI based activities to be discussed in the ensuing chapter.

Fifth chapter ‘Designing Activities through Assimilation and Incorporation of MIT’ offers a collection of activities for EFL classes. These activities are selected, modified and designed based on the intelligences that they draw on. The researcher also defines the language points, skills and the suitable levels for each activity.

Finally, ‘Sixth’ and final chapter which is the present chapter provides an overview of the study along with its conclusions, recommendations, suggestions and limitations. It also contains the findings of the whole study.

6.3 Conclusion of Study

The conclusion of the present study in one hand reflects the theoretical arguments on MIT and its applicative prospects in EFL pedagogy. On the other hand, it is derived from the analysis and interpretation of the data provided by the responses of the foreign students to the given questionnaire. It highlights the MI profile of foreign students and more importantly analyzes the degree these intelligences are developed in them and the extent to which they have been utilized in English language classes:

1. Based on the first three questions in the questionnaire, the majority shows that:
   
   I. They are not confident enough about their overall proficiency in English.
   
   II. They are not quite satisfied with the last score they obtained in English language test.
   
   III. Studying English in undergraduate course did not fulfill their expectations regarding their English language improvement.
2. Theoretical argumentations in chapter three suggest that the theory of multiple intelligences in many aspects can be highly effective in improving the status of English language teaching and learning as a foreign language.

3. The researches in MIT are the best evidence endorsing that application of this theory is of prime significance in EFL pedagogy.

4. Likewise, chapter five shows that there is a good scope for the infusion of the intelligences in EFL activities to be implemented in classroom situations.

5. The provided literature on the theory of MIT in this study supports that multiple intelligences are premised on solid theoretical basis. It means that the implementation of this theory in language learning and teaching process is needed to make the EFL pedagogy more interesting, encouraging and motivating for students.

6. The analysis also establishes that these foreign students are not naturally incompetent in their language abilities because they showed that they have almost all intelligences in them. This means that their intelligences have not been properly exploited in their language learning classes.

7. The analysis and findings reflect that the most number of participants are musically intelligent. In fact, musical intelligence is the one which can be most easily and prevalently engaged in English classes. So, it is upon the teachers to take it as an advantage and count on this intelligence in their teachings to involve more learners into the active learning process.

8. Regarding the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, a rather large number of respondents showed weak inclination towards this intelligence, quite the same number claimed being strongly inclined. It is so because they have not possibly learned to express themselves/ to show their talents through bodily activities as often as they learned to manifest their knowledge verbally. It might have been assumed that performing physical or hands on activities are not of primary importance in today’s daily life therefore they are not highly attended or valued in educational settings as well. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is closely attached to the area of language learning and teaching that it cannot be simply neglected. Communication and conveying the messages in a foreign language is not only the matter of verbal communication, but it needs a mastery over body language too. Besides, many students do not desire to be in the process of learning unless they do
something physically, or create something or practice an action. So, it needs a good effort by the language teachers to go beyond the monotonous lecture-based methods and benefit from this intelligence in their students.

9. The number of participants who reported having a weak or no inclination towards visual-spatial intelligence is not too small to be neglected. It suggests that still lot of work is needed to introduce and develop this intelligence. This can be accomplished by incorporating colors, art works, ideographic languages and graphic symbols into language classes.

10. Among all the intelligences, linguistic intelligence receives most attention in language classes, say, through writing assignments, written and oral tests. However, according to the respective graph, not even half of the respondents report to be strongly inclined towards linguistic intelligence. So, although linguistic intelligence is the most attended intelligence in teaching but it is not the most favored or developed intelligence in learners. However, it doesn’t mean that it should be undermined in our teachings but there is a need to update or replace new, interesting and innovative strategies for availing this intelligence in learners.

11. As it was revealed, a considerable number of participants reported to have a strong tendency towards the both personal intelligences. This can be used as a privilege to develop other intelligences through these two intelligences. As it was already talked about, intelligences do not work in isolation they can interfere each other as catalysts.

12. In case of logical/mathematical intelligence some effort is needed from language teachers to make students participate in problem-solving and logical thinking activities to develop this intelligence. However, since a language class should not look like an extremely rule-based logical class, the corresponding tasks must be chosen cautiously.

13. The naturalist intelligence is one of the most overlooked intelligences in classroom. It is up to the teachers to turn their attention to this intelligence since, on the basis of what was found out, it is a prevalent intelligence among learners.

14. On the basis of the above mentioned inferences the last but not the least conclusion is that there is a need for incorporating the existing intelligences of students in EFL pedagogy.
6.4 Significance/ Implications of the Research

Relying upon the findings of the conducted survey, which were presented above, this study, is significant in the following sense:

1. To identify the theory of multiple intelligences in terms of its theoretical and applicative paradigms as a new theory to be nicely adapted in language classes.
2. To help teachers realize the educational aspects of the theory and how to put it into operation in their EFL classes.
3. To shed light on the prospects and scope for the implementation of MIT principles at AMU.
4. To analyze the development and suppression of learners’ multiple intelligences based on practices in EFL classes at AMU.
5. To help teachers discover the different potentials of themselves and their learners and match their teaching strategies accordingly.
6. To highlight the advantages of an MI-based language class over a conventional class.
7. To give teachers practical guidelines to infuse the ideas of MIT in all domains of their teaching in EFL classes including, their strategies, exercises and assessment processes.
8. To help learners find out the wide range of their abilities and their intellectual strengths and learn to utilize them as useful means for learning a foreign language.
9. To suggest the educators and stakeholders set up the educational environments with consideration of MIT principles.
10. To inform the curriculum designers and material developers take into consideration the needs and capacities of all types of learners in EFL classes.
11. To encourage the students to be more expressive regarding the ways in which they prefer to learn through.
12. To initiate rethinking into the traditional assessment methods and set them aside in favor of new evaluation techniques on the basis of the ideas of MIT.
6.5 Limitations of the Study

The present study discusses about the theory of multiple intelligences and its applicability in EFL classes. It looks at the various aspects of the language classes from the perspective of MIT. Moreover, it examines the status of English classes and the intellectual potentials of EFL students at AMU, the conclusions of which were reported above. Regardless of the discussed issues and the mentioned conclusions and implications, the study bears the following limitations:

1. The data based case study has been conducted on foreign students at AMU, while it can also be investigated among students of other courses and classes.
2. There are few other measures, such as interview and observation, which can be used along with questionnaires or checklists to explore the MI profile of individuals which the researcher intends to conduct in the later phase of the study.
3. The present study is confined to investigation of the relationship between the MIT and language teaching and learning processes. However, the future studies can explore the role and relationship of other factors like age and gender in using various combinations of intelligences.

6.6 Recommendations/ Suggestions of the Study

On the basis of above limitations, the following recommendations are provided for future studies:

1. To design programs, like teacher training programs, workshops and conferences to raise the awareness among teachers and educationists about the MIT and applicability of its ideas in education in general and in EFL in particular.
2. To develop materials for EFL learners that caters to their diverse needs with consideration of different intellectual strengths of them.
3. To analyze the effectiveness of applying MI based activities in EFL classes in terms of the achievement of the students.
4. To analyze the relationship between the development of each intelligence and factors like age and gender and the learning styles that learners use.
5. To study the implementation of MIT in other domains such as literature teaching.
6. To conduct specific studies on the relationship between each intelligence and the learning achievements of students.
REFERENCES