

Multiple Intelligences in EFL: Exercises for Secondary and Adult Students

Review by MaryAnn Christison

The University of Utah, USA

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES IN EFL: EXERCISES FOR SECONDARY AND ADULT STUDENTS. Herbert Puchta and Mario Rinvoluceri. 2005, Helbling Books.

As the title of the book suggests, *Multiple Intelligences in EFL*, by Herbert Puchta and Mario Rinvoluceri is a resource book for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers of secondary and young adult students. The book consists of an introduction and five chapters. There are 75 activities for the EFL classroom presented in the five chapters. More of the activities are devoted to intermediate level students, but there are 29 activities that can be used with beginning and elementary level students. The authors use Gardner's original seven intelligences—bodily/kinesthetic, intrapersonal, inter-personal, linguistic, logical/mathematical, musical, and visual/spatial as the conceptual framework. They recognize two more "candidate" intelligences—the naturalist and the existential/spiritual—in their discussion, but do not include any activities for their development.

The introduction is divided into five short sections. Section 1 introduces the seven intelligences. Section 2 provides a very brief outline of the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI), including some of the criteria that Gardner proposes that would "qualify a set of behaviours, skills, and beliefs to be classified as a full-blown intelligence" (p. 12). In Section 3, the authors attempt to relate the theory of MI to the EFL classroom by offering classroom scenarios that might help teachers develop an expanded view of foreign language teaching. Section 4 suggests ways that teachers can help students develop thinking skills through their work with MI. Section 5 offers some particularly useful concepts for ESL teachers because it focuses on adapting course book materials and helping teachers include materials on MI in their classes. Because many EFL teachers are required to use specific textbooks that they, themselves, have not chosen, they need suggestions for how to adapt the required materials to include ideas from MI.

Each of the five chapters has a specific focus. Chapter 1 offers general activities for MI that not only help students develop their language skills but teach them about the theory of MI. Chapter 2 offers 14 activities that help teachers use their textbook as

springboards for developing MI activities. Chapter 3 is called "Looking Out" and focuses student attention on interpersonal relationships or on exploring the world around them. The activities in Chapter 4 ("Looking In") give students an opportunity to learn more about themselves as learners. Chapter 5 is entitled "Self-management" and helps students develop important metacognitive skills for thinking about their own learning. The book also includes a quick-reference guide so that teachers can easily select activities that fit with the level of their students or with the intelligence on which they wish to focus.

The book is well-designed, transparent, and easy to use. It provides an excellent introduction to multiple intelligences for EFL teachers. In fact, the authors thank Howard Gardner for his comments on their materials! So, in a sense it has the stamp of approval from the creator of the theory. Teachers will find the book also stimulates creativity and offers many interesting and useful activities for the EFL classroom. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the book is only an introduction to MI theory. While this is not a criticism of the book, (the book does not promise to be anything more than an introduction), I mention it so that teachers with more experience using multiple intelligences in the classroom will not be disappointed or expect too much from the book in terms of a discussion of the theory. There are other books for educators and language teachers (Armstrong, 1994; Christison, 2004; Gardner, 1993) that offer more depth in the discussion of MI theory and its specific applications to the classroom. Nevertheless, I found *Multiple Intelligences in EFL* to be an excellent book and recommend it to EFL teachers who are eager to explore the concept for the first time in their classes.

References

- Armstrong, T. (1994). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Christison, M. A. (2004). *Multiple intelligences and language learning* (A guidebook for theory, inventories, activities and resources). Burlingame, CA: Alta Book Center Publishers.
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligences: The theory in practice*. New York: Basic Books.

About the Reviewer

Dr. MaryAnn Christison is a professor in the Department of Linguistics at The University of Utah and Director of Graduate Studies. She is a widely-published author on the theory of multiple intelligences in language teaching. She can be contacted by e-mail at mac@linguistics.utah.edu