

Multiple Intelligences and Academic Achievement Amongst Hmong English Language Learners

Literature Review

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Introduction

For many years, educators have implemented the traditional teaching method in the classroom that tends to classify learners as a homogeneous group where teachers use the executive approach to transmit knowledge to all the students with a similar set of teaching methods (Sulaiman, Hassan, & Yi, 2011). With the traditional teaching approach, teachers struggle to find ways to reach the diversity of individual learning styles and needs. Learning styles is connected to individual characteristics and preferences, which reflect how a person perceives and interacts with the environment (Sulaiman, Hassan, & Yi, 2011). As more and more linguistically and culturally diverse children are entering the public schools in America, teachers are now exploring strategies that will ensure the highest learning for English Language Learners (ELLs). [Provide statement on implications of this work.](#)

Comment [J11]: Simply to a topic statement based on your research question that frames entire paper.

A group of students these teachers are learning to work with are the Hmong English Language Learners. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there are over 260,000 Hmong currently residing in the United States. Within the California public schools, there are approximately 1.4 million English Language Learners with 1.2 percent being Hmong (California Department of Education, 2012). With the number of Hmong students on the rise, researchers are finding that many teaching strategies used in the classroom today do not accommodate the different learning styles that many Hmong ELLs need (Hien, 1994).

Comment [J12]: Pull Hmong into opening paragraph above since this is your target population.

Researchers argued that Hmong students are at a disadvantage in American schools due to teachers putting an emphasis on more independent approaches to learning (Ngo and Lee, 2007). Researchers found that Hmong value kinship and cooperation over individualism, which indicates that Hmong students prefer to work with others, desire external support and guidance, and focus on social cues. This contrasts with the competitive culture of American schools (Ngo and Lee, 2007).

Comment [J13]: Keep developing based on pop statistics.

Want each paragraph to be framed w/ a topic statement to frame discussion of paragraph.

Hmong students, like all ELLs, need teaching strategies that promote the highest learning. Best practices for ELLs include strategies that stimulate interest, motivation, and brain growth (Lombardi, 2008). Lessons that implement interactive activities, visuals, tapping into prior knowledge, think-pair-share, teacher modeling, and brain-based approaches will promote academic achievement of ELLs. When students can make connections to what they are learning, they are more likely to grasp the concepts faster. Visuals like charts, videos, graphs, mind maps, and graphic representations help ELLs see and understand when they struggle with understanding the word or language. Language skills for ELLs can be developed through teacher read-alouds, readers' theater, think-pair-shares, rhythmic games and songs. Cooperative learning also helps build social language skills. Research also shows that effective strategies to teach ELLs also include front-loading, pre-teaching, teacher modeling, and provide adequate time to practice. These are all strategies that will support Hmong ELLs in every classroom.

One contemporary teaching approach that teachers can implement to recognize Hmong ELLs different learning styles is the Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory. This approach focuses on allowing the students to learn and absorb knowledge better by emphasizing on their dominant **intelligences** or their preferred learning methods (Sulaiman, Hassan, & Yi, 2011). Using this approach, teachers utilize the diverse learning styles of the students to create lessons that engage students in their SMARTs, a term created by Howard Gardner.

Comment [J14]: Be sure each paragraph substantive & meaningful. Should be around 5 statements & no less than 4.

With the increase in implementation of the Multiple Intelligences theory in the classroom, researchers have conducted various researches to prove its effectiveness in the classroom ([citations](#)). Their findings show that both teachers and students agreed that the implementation of the MI theory in their teaching and learning had a positive impact (Sulaiman, Hassan, & Yi, 2011). It increases the students' self-confidence and motivation throughout the

learning process by engaging them in the construction of their own meaning. The MI classroom allows teachers to cater to a broader range of learners with different strengths and weaknesses.

The success of the MI classroom has led to the objective of this study. The purpose of this lesson is to examine the effectiveness of the MI theory in a classroom consisted mainly of Hmong English Language Learners. Hmong English Language Learners, like all English Language Learners, have diverse learning styles and needs. Due to the sudden adaptation to a literate society from an illiterate society and varying from different learning styles, many Hmong students experience low academic achievement (Ngo and Lee, 2007). In a traditional classroom, Hmong students are not performing as high as their fellow subgroups under the Asian American group. In fact, they are performing significantly lower than the Hispanic and African American students. The achievement gap can be closed for the Hmong students if classroom teachers began to implement the MI teaching approach into the classroom.

The objective of this research is to test the **directional hypothesis** that incorporating the Multiple Intelligences teaching approach increases the academic achievement amongst Hmong English Language Learners. Researchers have conducted research on Hmong students and academic achievement. They have also conducted research on the effectiveness of the MI theory in the classroom with English Language Learners. However, there is no research on the effectiveness of the MI theory teaching approach implemented in a classroom consisting mainly of Hmong English Language Learners.

Comment [J15]: Perhaps leave open-ended at this point & state as question, not testable hypothesis. Can explore this later but just want to examine literature for this paper at this point.

Hmong English Language Learners

The Hmong people immigrated to the United States from Laos nearly 30 years ago (Ngo and Lee, 2007). This migration happened when the communist-allied military forces took over the fall of Saigon (Bulk, 1996). During the Vietnam War, thousands of Hmong people were

recruited by the U.S. CIA to fight against the North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao troops (Hein, 1994). When the United States withdrew from the war, the communists retaliated against the Hmong people. Thousands fled to the refugee camps in Thailand to escape retaliation. Many immigrated to the United States and resided in California, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota (Hein, 1994).

Once the Hmong families arrived to the United States, they immediately felt the pressure of adapting to a literate society. The Hmong people came from a tradition of oral storytelling, and everything had been told orally from generations to generation. It was not until after the 1950s that a written language was established for the Hmong language (Hein, 1994). Hmong refugee students faced issues in adapting to a literate society once they entered the American school system. They struggled in reading, writing, and speaking the English language. Like many immigrant parents, many Hmong parents were not able to help their own children due to linguistic and cultural barriers (Ngo and Lee, 2007).

For many Hmong students, the Hmong language is still the primary language used at home. This characteristic identifies them as English Language Learners (ELLs). ELLs is a term used to identify students whose primary language is a language other than English. These are also students who are in the process of acquiring English language skills and knowledge. Some ELLs are born in other countries and some are born in the United States. It is estimated that by the year 2030, about 40% of the school population will speak English as a second language (Artiles, Barletta, & Klinger, 2006).

With the increase of ELLs in the United States, the number of Hmong ELLs has also risen in the past number of years. It is important to acknowledge that in addition to language barriers, some challenges for Hmong ELLs include low academic achievement due to school's lack of effective instructional strategies to meet their cooperative learning styles. According to

Walker-Moffat (1995), Hmong students have difficulty with standardized tests due to its focus on an independent approach to learning (Ngo and Lee, 2007). A traditional classroom where the teacher lectures while standing at the front of the classroom, writes on the board, and questions students about the assigned readings lowers the academic achievement amongst Hmong ELLs. They come from a cooperative learning style culture, which is a reason why a Multiple Intelligence classroom can benefit Hmong ELLs academically. According to Marjorie Haley (2004), classrooms need to provide opportunities for students to learn in ways they are most receptive to maximize their potential for success in the academic setting and in real life.

Hmong ELLs, like all ELLs, benefit from a classroom environment where it is welcoming and non-threatening when acquiring new language skills. Teachers who teach ELLs can put second-language learners at ease by integrating cooperative learning activities like pair-share and jigsaw (Lombardi, 2008). Hmong ELLs will increase their language acquisition in classrooms where teachers use receptive and expressive language skills through read-alouds, vocabulary explorations, pair-shares, manipulatives, graphic organizers, visuals, autobiography writing, role-playing, and content-based instruction. Due to their cooperative learning style culture, a Multiple Intelligence classroom can significantly increase the academic achievement amongst Hmong English Language Learners.

Comment [J16]: Good section & so keep developing by editing out extra wording. Keep cogent & only words that are needed.

The Multiple Intelligences Theory

According to Pokey Stanford (2003), the Multiple Intelligence theory (MI theory) is described as a philosophy of education or an attitude towards learning. It was founded by Howard Gardner in 1983 to help educators broaden the perception of human potential beyond just test scores or the traditional IQ scores. Gardner suggests that intelligence should be viewed as the capacity for solving problems and creating products in context-rich and naturalistic

settings. He defined intelligence into nine SMARTs (Stanford, 2003). They include interpersonal, intrapersonal, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, linguistic, musical, naturalistic, visual-spatial, and existential (Stanford, 2008). Students come with different learning styles and intelligences; therefore, a MI classroom allows teachers to develop innovative teaching strategies that include a broader range of methods, materials, and techniques to reach the diverse range of learners. Teachers in a MI classroom are given the opportunity to use a variety of teaching strategies, expanded curricula, and authentic assessment to provide creative and active learning that engages all students in the construction of their own learning (Stanford, 2003).

The multiple intelligences theory is connected with the body-brain compatible education that promotes action-based learning. Brain research applies these twelve principles of how the brain works: (1) the brain is a complex adaptive system, (2) the brain is a social brain, (3) the search for meaning is innate, (4) the search for meaning occurs through patterning, (5) emotions are critical to patterning, (6) every brain simultaneously perceives and creates parts and wholes, (7) learning involves both focused attention and peripheral perception, (8) learning always involves both conscious and unconscious processes, (9) we have at least two ways of organizing memory, (10) learning is developmental, (11) complex learning is enhanced by challenge and inhibited by threat, , and (12) every brain is uniquely organized (Lombardi, 2008).

In a MI classroom, the teacher continually shifts method of presentation from linguistic to spatial to musical, combining many intelligences in creative ways (Stanford, 2003). Teachers who integrate the theory of multiple intelligences apply the different teaching methods due to students' interests, abilities and skills. It means that the best way to use the multiple intelligence theory is to know how to adapt the subject for different intelligences (Akkuzu and Akçay, 2011).

This approach has increased academic growth, even for students who were identified as unsuccessful and unmotivated (Stanford, 2003).

[Insert concluding paragraph to each section to indicate take home message. It can also transition reader to next section of paper.](#)

The MI Effectiveness on Academic Achievement in English Language Learners

Academic achievement is defined by Wikipedia as the outcome of education. It is the extent to which a student, teacher, or institution has achieved their educational goals. Suzanne Graney (2008) defines academic achievement as a formulation of teachers' judgment based on informal observations on student performance on daily tasks and classroom-based assessment procedures, such as writing samples, weekly assessments, and running records.

Through the implementation of the Multiple Intelligence teaching approach in the classroom, both teachers and students learn together and develop their multiple intelligences through diverse and natural ways of learning (Sulaiman, Hassan, & Yi, 2011). Students experience diverse and natural ways of learning and participating as an active member of the learning community. The MI teaching approach enables teachers to learn the abilities and interests of the students, thus in return, create learner-centered environment of the classroom. In this environment, students have a better learning connection and retention of the lesson (Sulaiman, Hassan, & Yi, 2011). It also fosters personal autonomy, responsibility, and empowerment.

In an action research conducted by Marjorie Haley (2004), the results have showed that the MI theory can have a positive impact on both teachers and students. Haley also found that teachers who plan and organize their instruction around the learning preferences of individual learners helped to unlock the full learning potential of their students (Haley, 2004). Many

Comment [J17]: Do not use wikis, as discussed in class. Only use the peer-review journals or other credible sources.

teachers find that the MI teaching approach contributes to their overall effectiveness as educators, which in turn improves the academic achievement of students.

Based on another action research conducted by Guneyesu, Ozdemir, and Tekkaya (2006), MI instruction does lead to the better acquisition and retention of knowledge for students. Third grade students were able to improve their academic achievement of outer space when the teacher organized the classroom into seven learning centers, each dedicated to one of the seven multiple intelligences. The data showed the integration of musical and bodily-kinesthetic activities helped the retention of knowledge acquired in the space unit (Guneyesu, Ozdemir, & Tekkaya, 2006).

Comment [J18]: For each study, review the following:
1)Purpose
2)Methods to address
3)Key findings
4)Implications to research/practice.
Want to use this info to build a case for your research.

Study Purpose

Despite the fact that the Hmong Americans have lived in this country for more than 30 years, very little research has been conducted on Hmong American education. The purpose of this research is to determine the effectiveness of the multiple intelligence theory on the academic achievement in English Language Arts among 3rd grade Hmong English Language Learners. Although there is research about the Multiple Intelligence theory's effectiveness on other ELLs, there has not been research conducted on its effectiveness on the Hmong student population.

The MI theory has received much attention over the past 20 years (Stanford, 2003). It has been implemented in many classrooms throughout the world to help differentiate instruction to students of diverse learning needs. Hmong ELLs have diverse learning needs and come from a culture of cooperative learning styles. The MI teaching approach provides students with different learning styles, whether they are music smart, word smart, people smart, nature smart, number smart, body smart, picture smart, or self smart. Hmong ELLs, like many ELLs, need instruction that cater to meet their individual learning needs.

With incorporating the MI teaching approach in the daily instruction of a classroom consisting mainly of Hmong ELLs, this research question is asked, “Will incorporating the Multiple Intelligence teaching approach increase the academic achievement in English Language Arts among Hmong English Language Learners?” The research will test the MI theory’s effectiveness and compare the results to high-concentrated Hmong ELLs classrooms where the MI theory is not implemented. The data will determine whether the MI theory has an impact on the learning abilities of Hmong ELLs in the area of English Language Arts. The study will determine if there are substantial differences in a MI classroom with Hmong ELLs and a traditional classroom with Hmong ELLs.

Comment [J19]: Ok, & so keep building on the text you have in the paper. In particular, be a bit more direct in terms of what findings of studies are & how they build a case for your work.

The entire study purpose section uses this research to identify the purpose of your study & how it will impact practice & research.

Reference List

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Comment [J110]: Check APA throughout.

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