MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES IN ACTION:
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MOVIES UNIT IN THE 9TH GRADE ENGLISH COURSEBOOK IN TURKIYE

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Özet

Her birey benzersizdir ve farklı şekillerde öğrenir. Bu gerçeğin farkında olarak, eğitim sürecinin kişisel farklılıklara göre şekillendirilmesi, her öğrencinin potansiyelini en üst seviyeye çıkarmak için büyük önem taşır. Öğrencilerin farklı öğrenme stillerine ve ilgi alanlarına sahip olması, öğretim materyallerinin de bu çeşitliliğe uygun olarak hazırlanmasını gerektirir. Dewey, çocuk merkezli bir yaklaşımı savunmakla birlikte eğitimin tek tip bir öğretim yöntemi dayatmak yerine her öğrencinin bireysel deneyimlerine, ilgi alanlarına ve güçlü yönlerine göre şekillendirilmesi gerektiğini vurgulamıştır. Gardner'ın, öğrencilerin dilsel, müziksel ve kişilerarası gibi farklı zeka türlerine sahip olduğunu öne süren MI teorisi, öğrencilerin başarılı olabileceği çeşitli yolları vurgulayarak Dewey'in görüşünü desteklemektedir. Dewey ve Gardner, bireysel farklılıklara hitap eden, çeşitli ve anlamlı deneyimler yoluyla her öğrencinin kendine özgü potansiyelinin gelişimini destekleyen eğitim ortamlarını savunmaktadır. Bu çalışma kapsamında, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından hazırlanmış olan 9. sınıf İngilizce ders kitabında yer alan "Movies" ünitesini çoklu zekâ kuramı bağlamında incelemesi amaçlamaktadır. Veriler, nitel bir araştırma yöntemi olan doküman analizi tekniği kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Ders kitabının içeriği, Gardner'ın Çoklu Zeka Kuramı temel alınarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar, bu ders kitabının öğrencilerin çeşitli zekâ türlerine hitap eden etkinlikler içerdiğini ve dil öğrenme sürecine olumlu katkıda bulunduğunu göstermektedir. Çoklu zeka kuramının öğretim materyallerine dahil edilmesiyle daha dinamik, uyarlanabilir ve duyarlı bir eğitim yaklaşımı mümkün hale gelmektedir. Bu da öğrenme çıktılarını, öğrenci katılımını ve genel gelişimi büyük ölçüde iyileştirebilir.
Anahtar Kelimeler: İngilizce Ders Kitabı, Çoklu Zeka Kuramı, Eğitim Programları

Abstract

Every individual is unique and learns in different ways. Being aware of this fact, shaping the educational process according to individual differences is of great importance to maximize the potential of each student. The fact that students have different learning styles and interests requires teaching materials to be prepared in accordance with this diversity. Dewey, while advocating a child-centered approach, emphasized that education should be shaped according to each student's individual experiences, interests and strengths rather than imposing a uniform teaching method. Gardner's theory of MI, which suggests that students have different types of intelligence such as linguistic, musical and interpersonal, supports Dewey's view by emphasizing the various ways in which students can be successful. Dewey and Gardner advocate for educational environments that address individual differences and support the development of each student's unique potential through varied and meaningful experiences. This study aims to analyze the "Movies" unit in the 9th grade

English textbook prepared by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkiye in the context of multiple intelligences theory. The data were collected using document analysis technique, which is a qualitative research method. The content of the textbook was analyzed based on Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. The results show that this textbook contains activities that appeal to students' various types of intelligences and contributes positively to the language learning process. By incorporating the theory of multiple intelligences into teaching materials, a more dynamic, adaptive and responsive educational approach becomes possible. This can greatly improve learning outcomes, student engagement and overall development.
Keywords: English Coursebook, Multiple Intelligences, Curriculum

Introduction

Individual potential is greatly influenced by education, and effective teaching requires an awareness of how students learn (Hattie, 2008). Acknowledging that every individual is unique is largely based on the work of researchers who highlight these differences; yet, it still falls short of addressing learners' diverse needs in both learning and teaching environments. Dewey's philosophy of child-centered education and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences both emphasize the importance of recognizing different learning styles to create more engaging and successful educational experiences.

Dewey (1997) highlights in his book *"Experience and Education"* that "Every experience is a moving force." The idea of educators giving priority to learners' own experiences underscores the critical role that educators play in facilitating meaningful learning rather than undermining it by imposing their own past experiences. In the context of Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, this idea becomes even more significant, as it highlights the need for educators to recognize and nurture the diverse ways in which students learn and engage with their environments. Gardner's theory (1983) posits that intelligence is not a singular construct but rather a combination of different modalities, including linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligences. Each student possesses a unique blend of these intelligences, which influences how they process information, solve problems, and connect with their learning experiences.

When educators fail to account for the individual differences highlighted in the multiple intelligences theory and beyond—essentially ignoring the 'moving force' behind each student's learning journey—they risk stifling the very essence of educational growth and development. To remain true to the principle of experience, educators must adopt a holistic approach that recognizes the dynamic interplay between a student's interests, strengths, and

the contexts in which they learn (Moran et al., 2006). For instance, a student with a strong musical intelligence may engage more deeply with educational content when it is presented through songs or rhythmic patterns, while a student with strong bodily-kinesthetic intelligence might thrive in hands-on activities that allow for movement and physical expression. By acknowledging and incorporating these diverse intelligences into their teaching methods, educators can create learning experiences that resonate with students on multiple levels (Gardner, 1983). Moreover, understanding the moving force of a student's experience involves assessing not only their current capabilities but also their potential for growth and development (Dewey, 1997). It means actively listening to their interests, aspirations, and the cultural backgrounds that shape their learning preferences. This approach aligns with Dewey's vision of education as an evolving process, where educators act as facilitators, guiding students toward meaningful experiences that foster their individual strengths and prepare them for future challenges. Ultimately, honoring the moving force of each student's experience by integrating the principles of multiple intelligences into educational practices ensures that learning is not merely a passive reception of information, but an active and engaging process. It acknowledges the uniqueness of each learner, cultivates their potential, and ultimately reinforces the foundational principle of education as a dynamic interplay of experiences that shape not only academic knowledge but also the holistic development of the individual.

A Brief Overview of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory

In his influential work *"Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences"* (1983), Gardner revolutionized our understanding of intelligence by proposing that it is not a singular, fixed attribute but rather a spectrum of distinct intelligences. Gardner argued that individuals possess various intelligences, each representing unique ways of understanding and engaging with the world around them. He identified seven primary intelligences: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. This framework underscores the idea that each person has a unique combination of these intelligences, which significantly influences their learning processes and modes of self-expression (Gardner, 1983; Gardner & Hatch, 1989). He later expanded the theory to include additional intelligences, recognizing the complexity and diversity of human capabilities (Gardner, 1999). By acknowledging this diversity, Gardner called for a more inclusive and

tailored approach to education, advocating for teaching methods that cater to the unique strengths and learning styles of each student. His insights have profoundly influenced educational practices, encouraging educators to develop more dynamic and multifaceted learning environments that foster the individual potential of every learner (Tomlinson et al., 2010). This shift toward recognizing and nurturing diverse intelligences has paved the way for more personalized educational experiences that respect and promote students' varied capabilities.
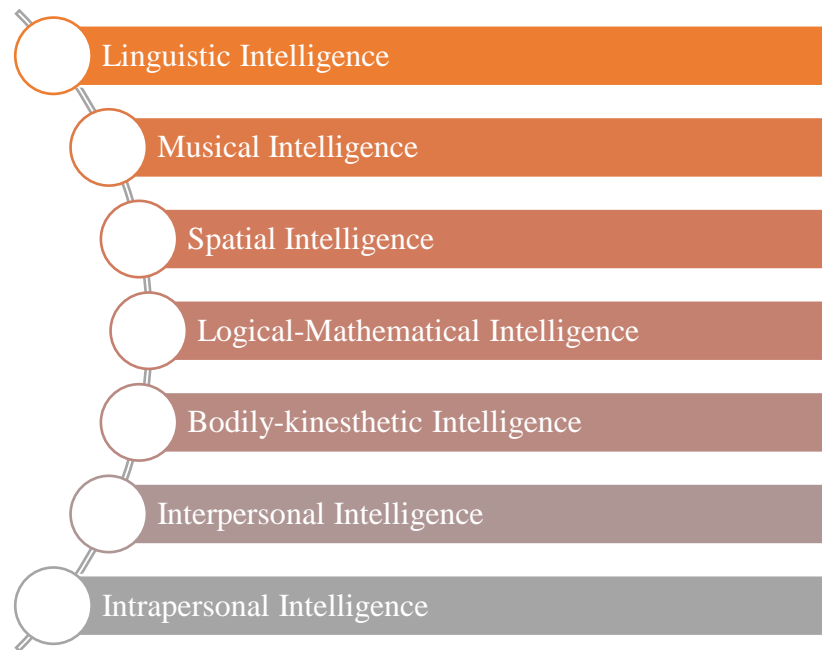

Figure 1: Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (Gardner, 1983)

Here are the brief explanations of each dimension follows (Gardner, 1983).

- *Linguistic Intelligence:* This intelligence highlights a person's skill with language and words. Individuals strong in this area excel in reading, writing, and communication, often showing talent in storytelling and poetry.

- *Musical Intelligence:* Individuals with musical intelligence have a keen sense of sound and rhythm. They can create, perform, and appreciate music, thriving in environments that emphasize musical expression.

- *Spatial Intelligence:* This type of intelligence enables individuals to visualize and manipulate objects. Those strong in this area excel in design and visual arts, often interpreting maps and graphs with ease.

- *Logical-Mathematical Intelligence*: This intelligence reflects critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Individuals with high logical-mathematical intelligence enjoy analyzing patterns and concepts, often excelling in science and mathematics.

- *Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence*: Characterized by skillful body movement, individuals with this intelligence excel in physical activities like sports and dance. They learn best through hands-on experiences and physical engagement.

- *Interpersonal Intelligence*: This intelligence involves understanding and interacting effectively with others. Individuals strong in this area possess strong social skills, empathy, and excel in teamwork and leadership.

- *Intrapersonal Intelligence*: This intelligence relates to self-awareness and understanding one's emotions and motivations. Individuals with high intrapersonal intelligence engage in self-reflection, guiding their personal growth and decisions.

Materials and Methods

The primary research method used in this study was document analysis, a systematic approach for reviewing and evaluating documents that enables researchers to extract meaning, enhance understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009). As a qualitative method, it facilitates an in-depth exploration of written content, offering valuable insights into the context and strengthening the credibility of research findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study focused on analyzing the "Movies" unit in the 9th-grade English textbook, prepared by the Turkish Ministry of National Education as part of the 9th-grade curriculum (2017-23), using Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory as a framework. The interactive version of the textbook was obtained from the official website of the Ministry of National Education of Türkiye (OGM Materyal, 2024). The 'Movies' unit in the English coursebook includes four main sections, each of which was evaluated based on the key components emphasized in the original textbook. Through document analysis, the textbook content was systematically assessed according to Gardner's principles, aiming to identify how multiple intelligences were addressed within the teaching materials.

Findings

Hattie (2008) emphasizes that understanding how students learn and how different teaching strategies impact their learning outcomes is crucial for fostering educational success. By analyzing the "Movies" unit in the 9th-grade English textbook through the lens of Gardner's

Multiple Intelligences Theory (1983), this study aims to uncover how diverse intelligences can be catered to in instructional materials. The 'Movies' unit in the English coursebook consists of four main sections:

A) Leisure Pursuits

The findings underscore the importance of activating prior knowledge through introductory questions that engage students at their respective levels while highlighting the value of using their linguistic intelligence in social contexts. As students express their opinions about movies, they are encouraged to incorporate vocabulary and phrases related to films and leisure activities, supported by relevant visuals. This approach is further enriched by listening activities that engage their musical intelligence, providing auditory cues to aid comprehension, even when encountering unfamiliar words or phrases. Additionally, the activities create opportunities for learners to discuss their preferences and favorite activities, fostering an environment that nurtures interpersonal intelligence. Some activities include a QR code that directs students to the Education Informatics Network (EBA), where they can access VR experiences, a language teaching portal, digital technologies, learning materials, and resources on sustainable development. By participating in team/group activities, individual tasks, and both indoor and outdoor settings, students are encouraged to embrace their unique preferences, normalizing the idea that everyone is different. This diversity also helps learners categorize vocabulary into meaningful sets, supporting their spatial intelligence.

Using engaging audio tracks and prompts not only captures students' interest but also facilitates the practical application of vocabulary in peer interactions, enhancing their linguistic and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences as they actively participate. While the primary focus of these activities is on classroom interactions and collaborative pair work to practice newly acquired structures and phrases, they also allow students to rehearse expressions for verbal communication, fostering their logical-mathematical intelligence as they make connections between language and meaning. In addition, encouraging students to take notes from their peers enhances both interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences, enabling them to reflect on their interactions and personal preferences. Incorporating idiosyncratic expressions promotes the discovery of new structures and vocabulary in the target language, enriching the learning experience. By prompting students to reflect on their experiences, these activities

reinforce the understanding that language is intrinsically connected to everyday life, making the learning process more relevant and meaningful.

B) What's on?

Before delving into the reading content, visual clues are provided to enhance learners' vocabulary knowledge in movie genres, which not only attracts their attention visually but also encourages them to reflect on meanings without directly giving definitions; this approach serves as a hint that stimulates curiosity. Engaging students in a guessing game right before reading a person's diary about a memorable movie day further captivates their interest and primes them for the content they are about to explore. Such activities align well with intrapersonal intelligence, and by highlighting key target words intended for the unit, the learning experience becomes more engaging and relevant. After the reading, learners are encouraged to apply their newly acquired vocabulary in a matching activity, which reinforces their understanding and retention of the words. Additionally, teaching skimming and scanning strategies equips students with the skills to derive meaning from text using both top-down and bottom-up approaches, thereby supporting their reflective skills when engaging with various texts. Moreover, providing opportunities for students to personalize their learning about the movies unit through expressions like "I like" and "I prefer" fosters their engagement and enables them to use relevant words and phrases both in the classroom and beyond. Furthermore, encouraging learners to write about their personalized reflections on the story and share these insights with their peers significantly enhances their overall learning experience. Activities such as acting out scenes, playing games, and collaborating with classmates not only maximize their learning potential but also cultivate important social skills that benefit them in various aspects of life. In this way, the integration of engaging activities creates a rich learning environment that nurtures both language acquisition and personal growth.

C) Invitation Only

Engaging learners in discussions about accepting and rejecting invitations not only enhances their social skills in both school and after-school settings but also fosters their interpersonal intelligence. Such social environments heighten their awareness of negotiation and compromise, allowing them to find common ground with their peers. Through activities like these, students come to realize that every individual is unique, which cultivates tolerance and

appreciation for the differences they observe. As they read dialogues and focus on meaning and sentence structure, learners discover various ways to express their ideas, thereby enhancing both their interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Listening to audio tracks that feature everyday language helps them to internalize the input received while working in pairs enables them to transform receptive skills into productive skills. By connecting with their peers and asking questions about movies, they deepen their understanding of interpersonal differences and foster mutual respect.

Visual aids serve as effective tools to capture learners' attention and provide them with clearer imagery related to the language they are studying. Supporting students in using target expressions enhances their ability to articulate their thoughts more profoundly. Activities that involve acting out scenarios and creating dialogues similar to the examples allow them to engage in authentic learning experiences. Moreover, the use of colorful texts, visuals, diverse structures, and images captivates their interest, making learning more dynamic. In one activity, learners are encouraged to create their own notes using provided vocabulary, which helps them grasp and generate new meaningful language units. By incorporating cultural aspects into the target language, students gain insights into how people react in various contexts and what behaviors are considered kind or unkind, thus enhancing their cultural awareness. Finally, holding whole-class discussions enriches the learning experience by providing opportunities for students to share their perspectives, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of multiple intelligences. By engaging learners in diverse activities that appeal to their various intelligences, such as linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal, we create a comprehensive learning environment that promotes both language acquisition and personal growth.

D) As I See It

Encouraging learners to work in groups and engage in discussions not only increases their comfort in expressing opinions but also enhances their interpersonal intelligence. When the questions posed focus on reasoning, they enable students to think critically about cause and effect in a structured manner. In addition, scanning for information in movie reviews helps students practice identifying specific aspects of characters' lives, experiences, personalities, and preferences, thereby enriching their social awareness and understanding of diverse environments. Movies serve as authentic resources in foreign language teaching, broadening

learners' awareness of different lives, cultures, and habits. By focusing on movie reviews, students can enhance their linguistic intelligence through writing and productive skills. Subsequently, sharing their own reviews with peers allows them to further practice their expression and communication skills. The visual format of the movie reviews, reminiscent of a computer screen, captures students' attention and stimulates their interest in the material.

Focusing on pronunciation, including consonants and vowels, supports their musical intelligence by helping them develop an ear for sounds and rhythms. Incorporating tongue twisters adds a fun element to language learning while reinforcing their understanding of phonetics. Concluding the unit with acting activities, where students are encouraged to think like directors, enhances their creativity and invites them to explore various genres, stories, and characters. This personalization enriches their learning experience. Furthermore, encouraging learners to assess themselves promotes their intrapersonal intelligence by fostering reflective thinking. This self-assessment not only helps students recognize their strengths but also highlights areas for improvement, making the learning process more meaningful and self-directed.

Areas for Improvement: A Critical Analysis

In examining the Movies Unit, several opportunities for enhancement emerge that could significantly enrich the learning experience. By critically analyzing the current curriculum, we can identify specific areas where adjustments can foster deeper engagement, accommodate diverse learning styles, and promote a more inclusive educational environment. Here's a way to introduce the key suggestions for improving the Movies Unit:
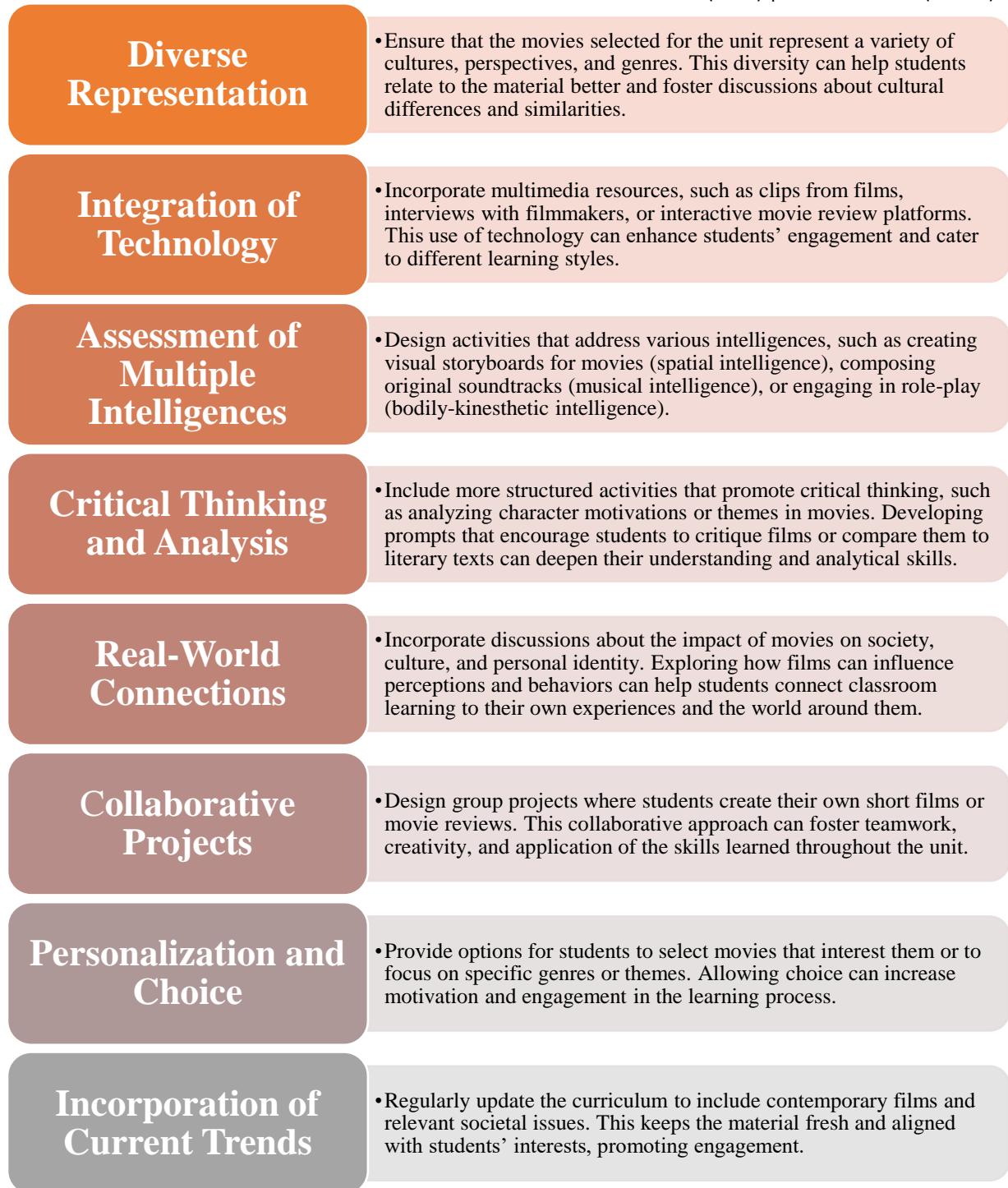
Diverse Representation	•Ensure that the movies selected for the unit represent a variety of cultures, perspectives, and genres. This diversity can help students relate to the material better and foster discussions about cultural differences and similarities.
Integration of Technology	•Incorporate multimedia resources, such as clips from films, interviews with filmmakers, or interactive movie review platforms. This use of technology can enhance students' engagement and cater to different learning styles.
Assessment of Multiple Intelligences	•Design activities that address various intelligences, such as creating visual storyboards for movies (spatial intelligence), composing original soundtracks (musical intelligence), or engaging in role-play (bodily-kinesthetic intelligence).
Critical Thinking and Analysis	•Include more structured activities that promote critical thinking, such as analyzing character motivations or themes in movies. Developing prompts that encourage students to critique films or compare them to literary texts can deepen their understanding and analytical skills.
Real-World Connections	•Incorporate discussions about the impact of movies on society, culture, and personal identity. Exploring how films can influence perceptions and behaviors can help students connect classroom learning to their own experiences and the world around them.
Collaborative Projects	•Design group projects where students create their own short films or movie reviews. This collaborative approach can foster teamwork, creativity, and application of the skills learned throughout the unit.
Personalization and Choice	•Provide options for students to select movies that interest them or to focus on specific genres or themes. Allowing choice can increase motivation and engagement in the learning process.
Incorporation of Current Trends	•Regularly update the curriculum to include contemporary films and relevant societal issues. This keeps the material fresh and aligned with students' interests, promoting engagement.

Figure 2: Key Suggestions for Enhancing the Movies Unit

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study emphasize the significance of aligning curriculum content with differentiated instruction and student-centered learning principles, as suggested by Hattie

(2008). Hattie's research highlights that strategies enhancing student engagement and accommodating diverse learning preferences can greatly impact student achievement. This study contributes to the broader discussion on improving educational practices by analyzing how well the "Movies" unit in the 9th-grade English textbook aligns with these principles.

This research is particularly valuable as it intersects with Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (1983) and Dewey's educational philosophy (1997), both of which stress the importance of recognizing and addressing individual learner differences. By analyzing the curriculum through the lens of Gardner's theory, this study evaluates the extent to which the "Movies" unit supports various intelligences, such as linguistic, musical, spatial, and interpersonal abilities. Dewey's emphasis on experiential learning further enriches this analysis, advocating for content that resonates with students' interests and real-life experiences. Hattie's (2008) perspective supports this view, suggesting that diverse teaching strategies can transform the learning experience by making it more engaging and effective.

By integrating Gardner's and Dewey's insights, the study underscores the value of a curriculum that acknowledges multiple intelligences and promotes active, personalized learning. This approach can foster greater student engagement and achievement, ultimately creating a more holistic and inclusive educational experience. The study also offers recommendations for curriculum developers to refine the "Movies" unit, proposing regular feedback loops that allow students to share their experiences and challenges with the material. Such insights can guide ongoing curriculum adaptation, ensuring it remains responsive to students' evolving needs.

In sum, this research not only provides empirical evidence on the alignment of curriculum materials with diverse learning needs but also highlights the potential for more dynamic and adaptable teaching approaches. By incorporating multiple intelligences into instructional materials, educators can create a richer, more responsive learning environment that better supports the varied needs of all students. The analysis of the textbook content based on Gardner's theory has shown that the activities included effectively address different types of intelligences, positively contributing to the language learning process. Additionally, recommendations for curriculum developers have been provided, aiming to further enhance the unit's effectiveness and responsiveness to diverse student needs.

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