

Sharpening Intelligences by Developing Vocabularies Through Book Report

Yustin Sartika

Fakultas Bahasa dan Sastra, Universitas AKI
Jl. Imam Bonjol 15, 16, 17 Semarang 50139
email : yustinsartika@yahoo.com

Abstract

All students will come into the classroom with different sets of developed intelligences. This means that each student will have his/her own unique set of intellectual strengths and weaknesses. These sets determine how easy or difficult it is for a student to learn information when it is presented in a particular manner. This is commonly referred to a learning style. Many learning styles can be found within one classroom. This article shows how teachers can teach book report more effectively through more interesting strategies. By developing vocabularies and using a mix of media or multimedia which is appropriate to learning style, it would not only about "Book Report", the traditional listing of characters, settings, and plots.

Key words: *intelligence, learning style, developing vocabulary, multimedia*

1. Introduction

"A great many people think that polysyllables are a sign of intelligence" Barbara Walters. Words have power. Those are like arrows. If you shoot well, they will hit the target perfectly. But like arrows, sometimes words sting. Once those are used, cannot be taken back. People with extensive vocabulary and knowledge how to use it will find it easier to function in our world. There are some smart people who can't spell worth beans and has a particular way of pronouncing foreign-based words (sorbet is *soibert*; café au lait is *coffee oh luddy*). Meanwhile, there are some other people who can speak five languages is entirely flummoxed when

it comes time to calculate the tip for a waiter.

According to Dr. Howard Gardener who developed the theory of multiple intelligences, going beyond the IQ test to discover the many ways humans are smart. This theory has emerged from recent cognitive research and documents the extent to which students possess different kinds of minds and therefore learn, remember, perform, and understand in different ways (Gardner, 1991).

"we are all able to know the world through language, logical-mathematical analysis, spatial

representation, musical thinking, the use of the body to solve problems or to make things, an understanding of other individuals, and an understanding of ourselves. Where individuals differ is in the strength of these intelligences - the so-called profile of intelligences -and in the ways in which such intelligences are invoked and combined to carry out different tasks, solve diverse problems, and progress in various domains."

Gardner says that those differences challenge an educational system that assumes everyone can learn the same materials in the same way and that a uniform, universal measure suffices to test student learning. Indeed, as currently constituted, our educational system is heavily biased toward linguistic modes of instruction and assessment and, to a somewhat lesser degree, toward logical-

quantitative modes as well. Gardner argues that a contrasting set of assumptions is more likely to be educationally effective. Students learn in ways that are identifiably distinctive. The broad spectrum of students - and perhaps the society as a whole - would be better served if disciplines could be presented in a numbers of ways and learning could be assessed through a variety of means. He identified intelligent abilities including language, music, spatial reference, kinesthesia, naturalistic, and possibly existential intelligence. Gardner's definitions include ways to improve someone weaker areas "strengthening brain". Which based on American Academy of Neurology, Learning—even about learning—reduces the risk of Alzheimer.

2. What are Multiple Intelligences?

The theory of multiple intelligence, developed by Psychologist Howard Gardner in the late 1970's and early 1980's, points that individuals posses eight or more relatively autonomous intelligences. Individuals draw on these intelligences, individually and corporately, to create products, and solve problems that are relevant to the societies in which they live (Gardner, 1983, 1993, 1999, 2006b, 2006c). The sight identified intelligence includes linguistic intelligence, logical-

mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, naturalistic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence (Gardner, 1999).

(1) Logical-Mathematical Intelligence -- the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. Most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.

(2) Linguistic Intelligence – the ability to use language masterfully to express oneself rhetorically or poetically. Also allows one to use language as a means to remember information.

(3) Spatial Intelligence -- the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems. Not limited to visual sight, Gardner noted that blind children can possess spatial intelligence.

(4) Musical Intelligence -- the ability to read, understand, and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. (Auditory functions are required for a person to develop this intelligence in relation to pitch and tone, but it is not needed for the knowledge of rhythm.)

(5) Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence -- the ability to use one's mind to control one's bodily movements. This challenges the popular belief that mental and physical activities are unrelated.

(6) Naturalist Intelligence- the ability to know recognize, appreciate, and understand the natural environment. It involves such capacities as species discernment, communion with the natural world and its phenomena, and the ability to recognize and classify various flora and fauna.

(7) Interpersonal Intelligence – the ability to apprehend the feelings and intentions of others.

(8) Intrapersonal Intelligence -- the ability to understand one's own feelings and motivations.

According to Gardner's analysis, only two intelligence – linguistic and logical mathematical – have been valued and tested for in modern secular schools; it is useful to think of that language-logic combination as “academic” or “scholarly intelligence”. Linguistic Intelligence, as one of Gardner's Eight Intelligence is the ability to use language masterfully to express oneself rhetorically or poetically. It also allows one to use language as a means to remember information. This intelligence involves the knowing which comes through language; through reading, writing and speaking. It involves understanding the order and meaning of words in both speech and writing and how to properly use the language. It involves understanding the sociocultural nuances of

a language, including idioms, plays on words, and linguistically-based humor. If this is a strong intelligence for students, they have highly developed skills for reading, speaking, and writing and they must think in words. Students probably like various kinds of literature, playing word games, making up poetry and stories, engaging in involved discussions with other people, debating, formal speaking, creative writing, and telling jokes. Students are likely precise in expressing their self and irritated when others are not. When students love learning new words, they do well with written assignments, and their comprehension of anything they read is high.

3. Strong Vocabulary Contributes to Reading Comprehension

Vocabulary, or word meaning, is one of the keys to comprehension. In 2000 National Reading Panel (NRP) identified vocabulary instruction as an essential skill which is needed by students to improve their reading achievement. Listening vocabulary, speaking vocabulary, reading vocabulary, and writing vocabulary are other types of vocabulary which are also identified by NRP.

Clearly then, we need to focus on ways to help our students own the words we believe they need from each of our

content areas. Research suggests educators focus on four practices that help bring words alive for their students (Blachowicz and Fisher, 2004):

a) Develop word awareness and love of words through word play.

Several of the strategies and activities focus on this aspect of vocabulary development. Too often, in an attempt to cover as much content as possible, we forget to give our students the opportunity to play with words. We forget that while they play with words, students create meaning.

Having activities, materials, and resources that allow students to play word game are part of “positive environment for word learning”. All teacher know the value of play, the things we enjoy and view as sources of pleasure stay with us throughout our lives. Playing with words enables students to develop a metacognitive understanding of how word works. When learning words is fun, students become interested in words, and see them as objects they can use and examine.

b) Develop explicit, rich instruction to build vocabulary.

Blachowicz and Fisher suggest the STAR model because it provides explicit vocabulary instruction.

1. Select- Select the best words to teach. Draw a story to text map for a piece of text, then select three to five words that students would need to use to summarize the text.
2. Teach- we find it helpful to thinking of the teaching to be done before, during, or after reading
3. Activate/analyze/apply- Students need to be active in learning. To activate their uses of new vocabulary, use the critical words first in the discussion of comprehension
4. Revisit- as the last step, we need to revisit the new words through review, games, writing, words book, and in countless other ways.

c) Build strategies for independence.

Helping students learn to understand vocabulary by using context clues, word parts, and, yes, even dictionaries can lead to word ownership. However, teachers need to explicitly teach students how to use these tools to develop the skills needed to make use of context clues, word parts, and dictionaries.

d) Engage students actively with a wide range of books.

Exposing students to many forms of literature in a variety of ways—including reading aloud to and with them—helps students develop broad vocabularies.

Students own the words when they can use words in a variety of ways. When students are able to—and choose to—incorporate new vocabulary into their writing and speaking, then as educators, we can infer that students truly understand the vocabulary and, in fact, own it.

Book report, as one of new subject, is given in universities which offer English language and literature. Some students thought book report relates with a review or a synopsis of books. Cecilia (Pranata Edisi Khusus, 1998) denotes “book report” as an action of presenting an explanation, no matter how superficial, and a summary of novels and plays. When students will review or summarize a novel or a play, they have to read it.

According to Littlewood (1981:42) states that reading is digestive process and it has two principles, firstly they are learning by understanding, it means selecting, discriminating, and organizing. The second principle is flexibility. He must take time to read slowly when the meaning of word is difficult.

Aebersold and Field (1997: 15) say that reading is what happens when people look at the next and assign meaning to the

written symbols in the text, further, the text and the reader are the two physical entities necessary for the reading process to begin. Thus, there is an interaction between the text and the reader that constitute actual reading.

A student's background knowledge and prior experiences play a large role in vocabulary development. As students build connections between known words and unknown words, they develop a deeper understanding of their reading. Thus, the more experiences children have with reading or being read to before they enter school, the more background knowledge they have to support the understanding of their reading.

Reading as a process to interpreting, understanding, and organizing message and information is obtained by the writer through written form. When a student tries to read a list of unconnected words on a page, it is similar to a struggling student who tries to read a narrative text without a general understanding of the words being read. No connections. No meaning. No comprehension.

Book report is given in some universities which offer English Language and Literature. By summarizing and reviewing novels, students can develop their vocabularies. When students read a

novel or play and come across difficult words in a novel, play, or short story, they will try to find the meaning in the dictionary. It will be easier for them to "learn" the new vocabularies and memorize new words in informal situation. Teacher can ask the students to find the synonym or antonym of the word and ask them to create new sentences. By developing vocabularies, students can improve their linguistic intelligence.

4. Analysis

Teachers can teach book report subject more effectively through more interesting strategies. It would not only about "Book Report", the traditional listing of characters, settings, and plots. Teachers have to allow their selves to think "outside of the book report".

a. Visual-Spatial

It is in terms of physical space, as do architects and sailors. Students who like to draw, do jigsaw puzzles, read maps, daydream are usually aware of their environments. They can be taught through drawings, verbal and physical imagery. Teacher can ask them to report a/ some books by:

1. Creating a 30-second movie commercial/trailer podcast

2. Creating a Graphic Novel version of the book
3. Makingbook report Video
4. Drawing a Portrait of a Character
5. Mapping the mind of the Author's Accomplishments
6. Cause and Effect Chart
7. Making a PowerPoint presentation
 - a) Why this should be a movie
 - b) Summary
 - c) TV series idea
 - d) Abridged version of the book

Tools include models, graphics, charts, photographs, drawings, 3-D modeling, video, videoconferencing, television, multimedia, texts with pictures/charts/graphs will help students to improve their spatial intelligence. Visual media such as object identification and spatial relationship will help students acquire concrete concepts.

b. Bodily-kinesthetic

Using the body effectively, like a dancer or a surgeon, they keen on sense of body awareness. Students who have this kinesthetic intelligence like movement, making things, and touching. They communicate well through body language.

Using some equipments and real objects will help teacher to improve student's kinesthetic intelligence through physical activity, hands-on learning, acting out, role playing.

1. Act a Scene as a Character
2. Character Monologue
3. Dramatic Reading
4. Dramatic Scene
5. Book Talk, With the student as Host
6. Mock Trial
7. Pantomime of a Scene
8. Puppet Show
9. Role Play as the Book's Author
10. Scene Tableaux
11. Tell the story through a different character
12. Dress up like the character and retell the story

Models force decisions among still, limited movement, and full movement visuals. Motion is used to depict human performance so that learners can copy the movement. Several models assert that motion may be unnecessary and provides decision aid questions based upon objectives. Visual media which portray motion are best to show psychomotor or cognitive domain expectations by showing the skill as a model against which students can measure their performance.

For performance, many models discuss eliciting performance where the student practices the task which sets the stage for reinforcement. Several models indicate that the elicited performance should be categorized by type; overt, covert, motor, verbal, constructed, and select. Media should be selected which is best able to elicit these responses and the response frequency. One model advocates a behavioral approach so that media is chosen to elicit responses for practice. To provide feedback about the student's response, an interactive medium might be chosen, but any medium can provide feedback. Learner characteristics such as error proneness and anxiety should influence media selection. Testing which traditionally is accomplished through print, may be handled by electronic media. Media are better able to assess learners' visual skills than are print media and can be used to assess learner performance in realistic situations.

c. Bring the Beat

It is about showing sensitivity to rhythm and sound. Students not only love music, but they are also sensitive to sounds in their environments. Students may study better with music as the background. Using some tools includes musical instruments, music, radio, stereo, CD-

ROM, multimedia, teacher can ask them to do some activities. Creating, recording, adding liner note and explaining a soundtrack for a book they read. Students can also invent a rap about the book.

A distinction is drawn between verbal sound and non-verbal sound such as music. Sound media are necessary to present a stimulus for recall or sound recognition. Audio narration is recommended for poor readers.

d. Interpersonal

It includes understanding and interacting with others. Students learn through interaction. They have many friends, empathy for others and street smarts, so teacher can teach them through group activities, seminars and dialogues. Tools include the telephone, audio conferencing, time and attention from the instructor, video conferencing, writing, computer conferencing and E-mail will help them do the activity perfectly.

1. Group Performance
2. Group Presentation
3. Panel Discussion
4. Literature Circle
5. Create an "Interview with the Author"

Design should cover whether the materials are to be used in a home or instructional setting and consider the size

what is to be learned. Print instruction should be delivered in an individualized mode which allows the learner to set the learning pace. The ability to provide corrective feedback for individual learners is important but any medium can provide corrective feedback by stating the correct answer to allow comparison of the two answers.

e. Intrapersonal

Every student has to understand his/her own interests or goals. They have to be in tune with their inner feelings; they have wisdom, intuition and motivation, as well as a strong will, confidence and opinions. Some activities will sharpen students' intrapersonal intelligence, such as:

1. Individual Oral Report
2. Scrapbook or a Memory Box
3. Character Monologue
4. Dramatic Reading

Since students with intrapersonal intelligence are the most independent learners, teacher can teach them through independent study and introspection by using some tools include books, creative materials, diaries, privacy and time.

f. Linguistic

This kind of intelligence is about using words effectively. These learners have highly developed auditory skills and

often think on words. They like reading, playing word games, making up poetry or stories. They can be taught by encouraging them to say and see words, read books together. Tools include computers, games, multimedia, books, tape recorders, and lecture. There are some games to sharpen students' linguistic intelligence, for examples:

1. Bingo
2. Charades
3. Concentration
4. Crossword
5. Board Game
6. Jeopardy
7. Pictionary
8. Scavenger Hunt
9. Word Search
10. Glossary
11. Flash Cards

Besides those games, there are some other strategies which can be used by the teacher to sharpen students' linguistic intelligence. By asking students to make a poem which also describe the story of the novel will also enrich student's vocabulary. Since there is disagreement about audio's superiority to print for affective objectives; several models do not recommend verbal sound if it is not part of the task to be learned, teacher can use printed words to develop students vocabulary.

Pictures facilitate learning for poor readers who benefit more from speaking than from writing because they understand spoken words; self-directed good readers can control the pace; and print allows easier review. Decisions on color display are required if an object's color is relevant to what is being learned.

g. Logical -Mathematical

It relates with reasoning and calculating. Think conceptually, abstractly and are able to see and explore patterns and relationships. Students like to experiment, solve puzzles, and ask cosmic questions. They can be taught through logic games, investigations, and mysteries. They need to learn and form concepts before they can deal with details.

Students can make their book report by asking and answering question. Since plot is a narrative events, the emphasis falling on causality, they can also play 'cause and effect' games while discuss the plot of a novel or short story. That will sharpen their logical thinking.

"Curiosity by itself takes us a very little way, nor does it take us far into the novel- only as far as the story. If we would grasp the plot we must add

intelligence and memory
(Foster, 1949: 83)

When students try to analyze the plot, they wouldn't only run his eye over a new fact and mentally picks it up. Students need to isolate and relate to the other facts that he has read on previous page. That would also need memory. Memory and intelligence are closely connected, for unless we remember we cannot understand (Foster, 1949: 84)

Calculating always relate with number but not only on mathematic subject. Teacher can also use novel, play, and short story to improve students' mathematical intelligence. Teacher can ask students to play "1 sheep 2 sheeps" games. For example, counting how many words 'rebel' found in each chapter in a book about world war.

5. Conclusion

At first, it may seem impossible to teach to all learning styles. But when we use a mix of media or multimedia, it becomes easier. As we understand learning styles, it becomes apparent why multimedia appeals to learners and why a mix of media is more effective. It satisfies the many types of learning preferences that one person may embody or that a class embodies. A review of the literature shows

that a variety of decisions must be made when choosing media that is appropriate to learning style.

Most models consider learner characteristics as media may be differentially effective for different learners. Although research has had limited success in identifying the media most suitable for types of learners several models are based on this method. Categories of learning outcome will be ranged from three to eleven and most include some or all of Gagne's (1977) learning categories; intellectual skills, verbal information, motor skills, attitudes, and cognitive strategies. Several models suggest a procedure which categorizes learning outcomes, plans instructional events to teach objectives, identifies the type of stimuli to present events, and media capable of presenting the stimuli. By applying more creative learning style and mixing some media or multimedia, book report would sharpen students' multiple intelligences.

REFERENCES

- Aebersold, J. A. and M. L. Field. 1997. *From Reading to Reading Teacher: Issues and Strategies for Second Language Classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blachowicz, Camille L. Z., and Peter Fisher. "Vocabulary Lessons." *Educational Leadership* (March 2004): 66-69
- Blythe, T., & Gardner H. (1990). *A School for all Intelligences*. Educational Leadership, 47(7), 33-37
- Campbell, L. (1997). *Variations on a theme: How teachers interpret MI theory*. Educational Leadership, 55, 1. College Press. Translated into Chinese, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese
- Fogarty, R., & Stoehr, J. (1995). *Integrating Curricula with Multiple Intelligences. Teams, themes, and threads*. K-college. Palatine, IL: IRI Skylight Publishing Inc. (ED 383 435)
- Foster, E.M. (1949). *Aspects of the Novel*. Butler and Tanner Ltd. London
- Gagné, R. M. (1977). *The conditions of learning*. (4th ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences* (10 anniversary ed.). New York, NY: Basic Books
- Gardner, H. (1997). Is there a moral intelligence? In M. Runco (Ed.), *The creativity research handbook*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press
- Gardner, H. (1999). *The disciplined mind : What all students should understand*. New York: Simon & Schuster
- Gardner, H. (2006a). *Five minds for the future*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Gardner, H. (2006b). *Multiple intelligences: New horizons*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gardner, H. (2006c). Replies to my critics. In J. A. Schaler (Ed.), *Howard*

- gardner under fire: The rebel psychologist faces his critics* (pp. 277-344). Chicago: Open Court
- Gardner, H. Feldman, D.H. & M. Krechevsky, M. (Gen. Eds.). (1998a). Project Zero frameworks for early childhood education: Volume 1, *Building on children's strengths: The experience of Project Spectrum*. Volume authors Chen, J-Q., Krechevsky, M., and Viens, J. with E. Isberg. New York: Teachers College Press. Translated into Chinese, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese
- Gardner, H. Feldman, D.H. & Krechevsky, M. (Gen. Eds.). (1998b). Project Zero frameworks for early childhood education: Volume 2, *Project Spectrum early learning activities*. Volume author Chen, J-Q., with E. Isberg and M. Krechevsky. New York: Teachers
- Gardner, H. Feldman, D.H. & Krechevsky, M. (Gen. Eds.). (1998c). Project Zero frameworks for early childhood education: Volume 3, *Project Spectrum preschool assessment handbook* volume author Krechevsky, M. New York: Teachers College Press. Translated into Chinese, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese
- Gardner, H., & Moran, S. (2006). The science of multiple intelligences theory: A response to Lynn Waterhouse. *Educational Psychologist*, 41(4), 227-232
- Gardner, H., & Laskin, E. (1995). *Leading minds: An anatomy of leadership*. New York, NY: Basic Books
- <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/the-9-types-of-intelligence.html#ixzz2kenUetso>
<http://www.tecweb.org/styles/gardner.html>
- Lane, C., *Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligences from "Prism on the Future,"* Teleconference Magazine, August 9, 1999, by Carla Lane, Ed.D. as quoted in The distance learning technology resource guide.
- Littlewood, William. (1981). *Communicative Language Teaching : An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press
- Murniati, Cecilia Titiek. (1998). *Book Report : What, Why, and How*. Pranata Edisi Khusus. UNIKA
- Nisbett, R. E. (2009). *Intelligence and how to get it: Why schools and cultures count*. New York: W W Norton & Co
- Nolen, J. L. (2003). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom*. *Educational Leadership*, 124(1), 115-11

