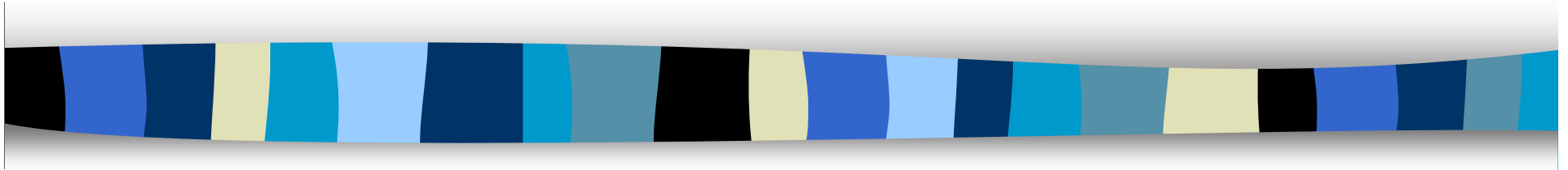# Teacher Action Research
Multiple Intelligence Theory in the Foreign Language Classroom

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I am a doctoral student at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. In addition to taking classes towards a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction, I am an Adjunct Instructor with the Spanish Department. This semester I am teaching Spanish 102.

Today's Agenda

- **Teacher Action Research**
  - What is it?
- **Implementing MI in a FL Classroom**
  - Why?, How?, So What?
- **Activities**
  - Take and MI Survey
  - Classify Classroom Activities According to the 8 intelligences

Teacher Action What?

What is Teacher Action Research?

- Research conducted by TEACHERS
- Address everyday issues in the classroom
- Implement and Monitor
  - New Teaching Methods
  - New Activities
  - Classroom Management Techniques

Teacher Action Research
In 3 Easy Steps…

- **Develop research questions**
  - Based on everyday classroom issues
  - Based on research / coursework / workshop
- **Collect, Analyze and Summarize Data**
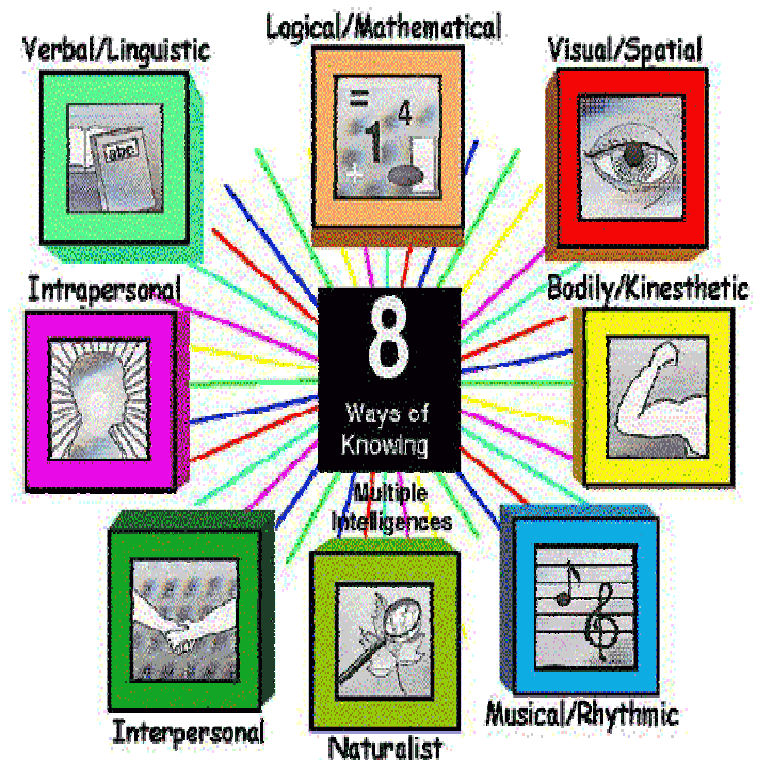- **Make informed decisions**

Where did I get the idea for my Teacher Action Research?

I Read The Research…

■ **Howard Gardner**
Identifies intelligences as cognitive processes in the brain that operate and develop based on biological and cultural influences.

From: http://www.multi-intell.com/MI_chart.html

And More Research...

- **Mary Ann Christison's (1996)** article explains the importance of classifying classroom activities in order to identify "neglected intelligences."

- **Ann Brualdi's (1996)** article explains the importance of using MI Theory in the classroom to teach and assess diverse learners.

Teacher Action Research In 3 Easy Steps

Research Questions…

After reading the research, I asked myself the following 3 questions:

1. Am I using activities in my class that appeal to the eight intelligences?

2. What are the strong and weak intelligences of the students in my classroom?

3. How do my students rate the usefulness of classroom activities?

Collect, Analyze and Summarize

1. **Classify Classroom activities**
   - Am I teaching to all 8 intelligences?

2. **Multiple Intelligence Inventory**
   - What are the strong and weak intelligences of the students in my class?

3. **Activities Survey** (Ask the students!)
   - How useful are my classroom activities?

1. Classifying Classroom Activities

- Use a list of sample activities categorized by intelligence—many are available on the Internet

- Classify my own activities by intelligence using the list as a guide

- Identify "neglected" (or in my case "missing") intelligences

Classification of Classroom Activities

Visual - Spatial

- Preparing visual stories
- Computer presentations
- Preparing a video tape
- Drawing

Bodily - Kinesthetic

- Participating in movement exercises
- Dancing & acting
- Building & fixing

Interpersonal

- Working in teams
- Teaching / helping others
- Debating

Intrapersonal

- Writing in a Journal
- Self Assessment
- Individual Activities

My Classification of Activities

Activity / Description	Intelligences that Apply
ŅDos por DosÓa classroom game used to review chapter material. Students answer questions by writing the correct answer on the board	Interpersonal, Kinesthetic, Visual, Verbal
ŅT□eres la profesoraÓStudents work individually correcting mistakes on a worksheet	Intrapersonal, Logical, Visual, Verbal
Review Worksheet	Intrapersonal, Visual, Verbal
In class question and answer sessions on grammar	Interpersonal, Visual, Verbal, Logical
Group Quizzes	Interpersonal, Visual, Verbal
Individual Quizzes	Visual, Intrapersonal
Individual Cultural Graphs and Diagrams	Logical, Visual, Intrapersonal, Naturalist
Group Work: Cultural Review Questions	Interpersonal, Logical, Visual, Verbal, Naturalist
Ņ¿Qui˘n en la claseÉ ?ÓStudents use the target language to find out information about their classmates in order to complete a chart	Interpersonal, Visual, Verbal, Kinesthetic, Naturalist
Individual Gustar Posters: Student draw 3 things that they like to do and then explain them to the class	Visual, Intrapersonal, Verbal
Overhead Transparency Listening Activities	Visual, Verbal, Intrapersonal
Individual Writing Assignments	Visual, Logical, Intrapersonal

What I learned…

1. Most of my activities appeal to *visual, verbal, logical, interpersonal,* and *intrapersonal* intelligences.

2. A few of my activities appeal to *kinesthetic* and *naturalist* intelligences.

3. None of my activities appeal to *musical* intelligence.

2. Multiple Intelligence Inventory

With the students:

- I explained Multiple Intelligence Theory
- Emphasized that it is NOT a test or measure of one's intelligence.
- I discussed with the students their individual results .

MI Inventories

- A variety available on the Internet
- **Warning!** Not all are appropriate for all age / grade levels
- For Elementary and Middle Schools:

http://gse.gmu.edu/research/mirs/misurvey.html

- For adult students:

http://www.drexel.edu/dclae/academicresources/mi/armstrong.asp

Sample Section of an MI Inventory

Linguistic / Verbal Intelligence (sample)

_____Books are very important to me.

_____I enjoy word games like Scrabble, Anagrams, or Password.

_____English, social studies, and history were easier for me in school than math and science.

_____When I drive down a freeway, I pay more attention to the words written on billboards than to the scenery.

_____My conversations includes frequent references to things that I've read or heard.

From: www.drexel.edu/dclae/academicresources/mi/armstrong.asp
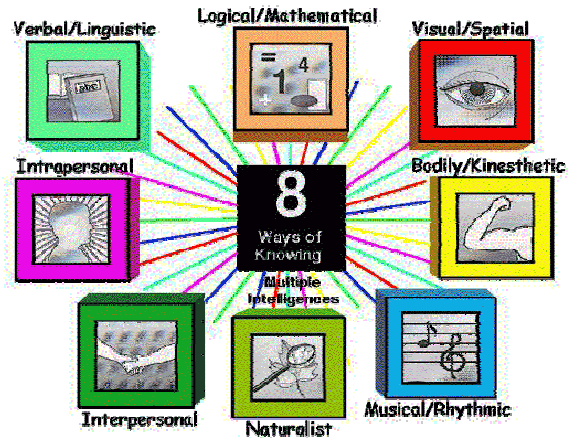
The MI Inventory and the Results

- The MI Inventory had 10 statements for each intelligence. Students checked statements that applied to them. Then multiplied the number of statements that applied by 10 (Ex. 8 statements = 80)

- 16 Completed Surveys

- Using Microsoft Excel, created bar charts to visually identify trends and patterns.

The Results of the MI Inventory

% of Students with Intelligence Profile Score >= 70
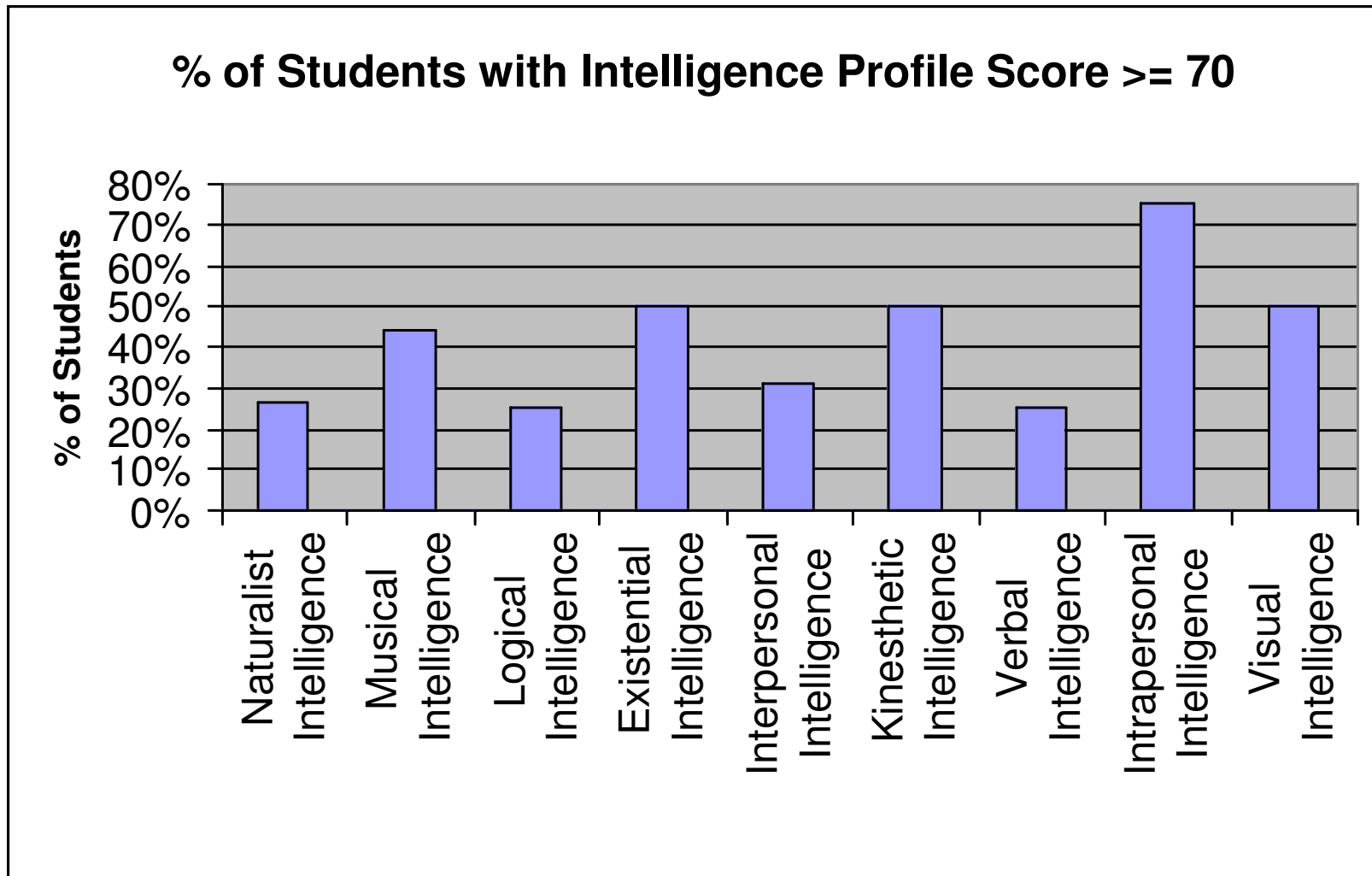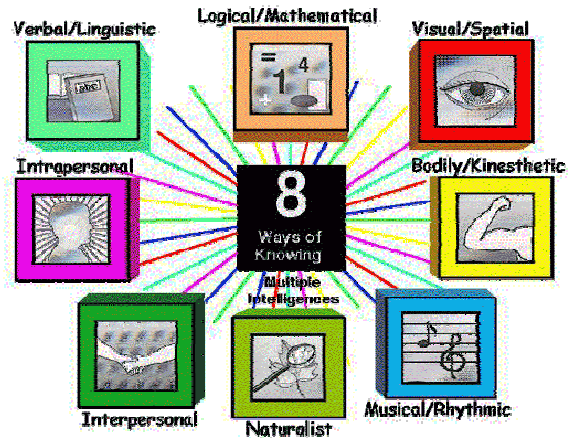
Recapping the Results the MI Inventory

- 12 (of 16) students scored between 70 and 100 for *Intrapersonal* intelligence.

- *Visual* and *Kinesthetic* intelligences scored equally (50% of students scored >70).

- 13 students scored greater than 50 for *Musical* intelligence.

3.   The Activities Survey

What do my students think about the activities I use in class?

Before the survey:

- I gave the students the option to take the survey anonymously.

- I reviewed each activity to be sure that students understood what they were evaluating.

- I encouraged students to write comments.

A Sample of the Activities Survey

Activity	1 not useful at all	2 somewhat useful	3 useful	4 very useful	5 extremely useful
"Dos por Dos" Games (black board competitions in pairs)					
"Tú eres la profesora" Fix the mistakes worksheet					
Review Worksheet (Chap. 3)					
In class question and answer sessions on grammar					
Group Quizzes					
Individual Quizzes					

The Results of the Activities Survey

% of Students Rating Activity Very or Extremely Useful
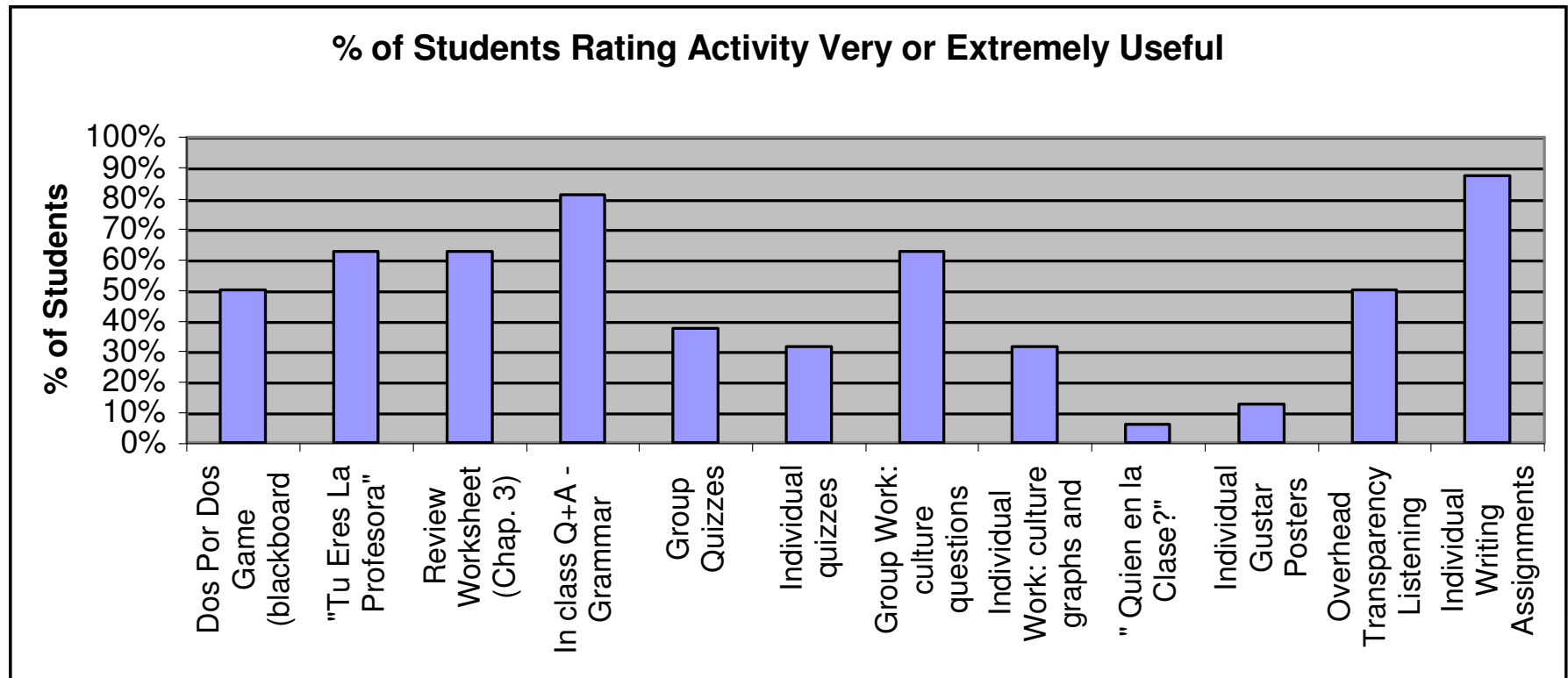
The Results of the Activity Survey

- 50% of the students rated 7 of the 12 activities as very or extremely useful.

- Less than 40% found quizzes (both group and individual) to be very or extremely useful.

- 90% of the students found the individual writing assignments very or extremely useful.

What Did I Do With the Results?

Make Informed Decisions

- Only 2 of the 12 activities appealed to the *kinesthetic intelligence*, yet 50% of the students were strong in this intelligence.

- None of the activities appealed to *musical intelligence*, yet 13 students (of 16) were strong in this intelligence.

- 3 of the 12 activities appealed to the *logical intelligence*, yet 12 students (of 16) were strong in this intelligence.

Change in Lesson Plans

- Created activities that appeal to Logical, Kinesthetic, and Musical intelligences.

- Reconsidered the use of quizzes.

- Implemented the use of alternative assessments (diagrams, lyrics, role plays).

- Continued use of activities rated most useful.

Considerations

- MI inventories are very subjective.

- How students rate their interests one day may change significantly the next day.

- Other factors other than intelligences can influence student opinion of activities.

Conclusions

- Teacher Action Research is a systematic approach for teachers to address classroom issues

- Explaining MI theory helps students to understand how they learn.

- Application of MI theory and activity surveys can help the instructor become more effective in the classroom.

Obrigado!

Merci

Grazie

Activities

Thank You!

Gracias

Vielen Dank