

Multiplicity in TESOL: Multilingualism, Multimodality and Multiple Intelligences

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Goal: Improve student learning and deepen retention by integrating Multiple Intelligences and multiple modalities into a unit on rooms in the house, taught with plurilingual pedagogy

Context: 7th grade at a public school in the Ecuadorian Andes; 132 students (82 male, 50 female; ages 11-12; L1s: Spanish and Kichwa); Beginners with 7 months of previous English instruction; 3 classes (43-45 students in each class); 8 hours of lessons over 4 weeks

Results: Test scores improved 0.88 points on a ten point scale compared to the previous unit. In the 2 classes that completed the full unit, the improvement was 1.38 points.

Activities

Visual/Spatial 1

- Use pictures to elicit the names of the rooms
- Tape pictures to the board to create the floor plan of a house
- Have students draw floor plans of their own houses and label the rooms

Kinesthetic 1

- Ask several students to come to the front of the room
- Position students to demonstrate the meaning of next to, between and opposite
- Reinforce meaning using hand gestures
- Ask students to describe where their classmates are
- Have more students come to the front and ask them to stand next to, opposite or between their classmates

Interpersonal

- Demonstrate asking questions about the locations of rooms, using floor plan of the teacher's house on the board
- Elicit student responses about locations of rooms in the teacher's house
- Divide students into pairs
- Students use floor plans of their own houses and ask their peers where different rooms are

Visual/Spatial 2

- Using pictures of individual rooms, create a floor plan for the teacher's house on the board and describe the location of the rooms
- Give students 2 minutes to remember the locations of the rooms
- Remove all but one picture
- Show a room and ask the students where to put it, following their instructions exactly
- When the students say the correct location, tape the picture to the board

Intrapersonal

- Tell students you are thinking of your favorite room, describe the location and ask students to tell you which room it is
- Ask students to think of their own favorite room and write clues to describe where it is
- Extensions: Have students describe the activities they do in their favorite room, ask them to explain why they like that room (in L1 if necessary), or have them read their clues to another student who guesses which it is

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Kinesthetic 2

- Show a picture of a room and ask the students what activities they do there
- Have the students demonstrate the actions and list them on the board under each room
- Say an action and have all the students demonstrate it
- Do an action and have the students tell you the verb for it, then the room
- Say the name of a room and have students demonstrate appropriate actions

Logical/Mathematical

- Scramble the letters in the rooms and write the names on the board
- Ask the students what is on the board
- Have students to unscramble the letters and write the names of the rooms
- Alternate activity: Create a logic puzzle and have students label the rooms on a blank floor plan by deducing their locations

Verbal/Linguistic 2

- Write a paragraph on the board describing your daily routine, including where you do each activity, with blanks for the rooms
- Have students read the paragraph and fill in the blanks

Musical

- Teach the students a song and have them sing it (to the tune of Frère Jacques)
Where's the kitchen? Where's the kitchen?
It's right here! It's right here!
It's next to the office. It's next to the office.
Here it is! Here it is!

Naturalist

- Write the names of rooms on slips of paper and have the students sort them into categories based on their similarities
- Encourage the class to find an arrangement where every room is part of a grouping
- Ask the students to explain why they grouped the rooms together (using L1 if necessary)

Verbal/Linguistic 2

- Draw a floorplan on the board and give students mini whiteboards and dry erase markers
- Point to a room and ask students to write it and hold up their answer
- Write questions and answers about the locations of rooms on the board, with blanks for next to/opposite/between, and have students write and show their answers

Recommendations

- Think about the methods of learning for each intelligence, not just the content
- Make sure to include all 8 intelligences and 7 modalities
- Give yourself plenty of time to create the activities for the intelligences that come less naturally or are most different from your typical teaching methods
- Recognize that not all students will respond equally to all the activities
- Plan the progression of activities so that repeated intelligences are spread through the unit
- Encourage students to use their first language(s) where necessary