



# Fostering Emotional Intelligence in the Language Classroom

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# Emotional Intelligence

- Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify and manage your own emotions and the emotions of others. It is generally said to include 3 skills:
- 1. Emotional awareness, including the ability to identify your own emotions and those of others
- 2. The ability to harness emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problem solving
- 3. The ability to manage emotions, including the ability to regulate your own emotions, and the ability to cheer up or calm down another person
- “We transmit and catch moods from each other in what amounts to a subterranean economy of the psyche in which some encounters are toxic, some nourishing.”  
— Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*

- “A child's readiness for school depends on the most basic of all knowledge, how to learn”.
- Seven key ingredients of this crucial capacity—all related to emotional intelligence:
  - 1. **Confidence**. A sense of control and mastery of one's body, behavior, and world; the child's sense that s/he is more likely than not to succeed at what s/he undertakes, and that adults will be helpful.
  - 2. **Curiosity**. The sense that finding out about things is positive and leads to pleasure.
  - 3. **Intentionality**. The wish and capacity to have an impact, and to act upon that with persistence. This is related to a sense of competence, of being effective.
  - 4. **Self-control**. The ability to modulate and control one's own actions in age-appropriate ways; a sense of inner control.
  - 5. **Relatedness**. The ability to engage with others based on the sense of being understood by and understanding others.
  - 6. **Capacity to communicate**. The wish and ability to verbally exchange ideas, feelings, and concepts with others. This is related to a sense of trust in others and of pleasure in engaging with others, including adults.
  - 7. **Cooperativeness**. The ability to balance one's own needs with those of others in group activity.  
— [Daniel Goleman, \*Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ\*](#)

# Empathy

## Self-Empathy

- Sensory awareness of our own internal feelings and internal state.
- Turning your attention inwards into your inner feelings.
- Getting connected with yourself.
- Becoming self aware of what is happening inside ourselves without judgments.
- Listening to your inner feelings and experiences.
- Facilitating inner dialogue between different feelings.
- Labelling your inner experiences, feelings and needs.
- Translating inner judgments into feelings and needs.
- When we are heard by someone else, it actually helps us feel into our own self more deeply. Having good friends listen to us has the same effect.
- Anything that reduces stress helps.

## Mirrored Empathy (Emotional Empathy)

- Emotional empathy of others via reflecting others in ourselves and ourselves being reflected by others.
- Emotional contagion is when we catch the emotions of others. The process in which a person or group influences the behavior of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of emotional states and behavioral attitudes.
- Empathic (active) listening and physical mirroring exercises can help foster this.

## **Cognitive Empathy**

- When we empathize with others, we gather insights and understandings of them which we form into mental models of who they are.

## **Empathic Arising, Creativity, Action**

- Once connection is created, taking creative action together.
- There's a quality to the action which is very connected and has a deep resonance.
- It's responding in an appropriate way to the other by holding their needs, values, feelings (common humanity) etc. in mind in the action process.
- Empathy is when the blocks to action are removed,.
- Also looking for creative ways to resolve conflict.
- Our minds are like a puzzle solving machine, we see ourselves reflected in others and they in us. Our minds automatically try to solve the puzzle of organizing our shared experience, which is Empathic Creativity.
  
- Perspective and role taking of others.
- This is based on the sense of self-awareness, when we recognize ourselves as separate beings. We can imagine being someone else or imagine being another person, animal, object, etc. and take on the role of that.

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- Negative emotions affect all our mental processes.
- All emotions are accepted, but not all behaviour, i.e. if you are angry you are not allowed to hit someone.
- Use emotional language: “Do you feel you have learnt this?”
- We need to know we are different in the strength of our emotions.
- All emotions, even negative ones, can be managed.
- Feelings don't kill, but if you don't feel, you can kill.



# Methods fostering emotional intelligence

- Action methods
- Games
- Team spirit activities
- Self-awareness activities
- Safety exercises
- Conflict resolution activities
- Problem solving activities
- Creative expression activities
- Art and drama activities
- Positive feedback activities
- Reflective activities



- **The name and the movement**
- **Difficulty level: Easy**
- **Task group: Everyone**
- **The expected outcome of the exercise: To learn names in a fun way**
- **Exercise description:**

Everyone says his/ her name and makes one movement that expresses him/her. The others repeat it.





# Favourite relaxation position

- **Difficulty level: Easy**
- **Task group: Everyone**
- **The expected outcome of the exercise: To learn names in a fun way**
- **Exercise description:**

In a circle everyone says his/her name and assumes a position that relaxes him/her. The others repeat it.



- **Toilet paper** (the leader passes around a toilet paper roll and asks each student to cut as many pieces as he/she wishes – in turn each student gives the group as many pieces of information about him/herself as the number of pieces he/she has)



- **Me market**
- **Difficulty level: Easy**
- **Task group: Everyone**
- **The expected outcomes of the exercise:**
- **To tell about oneself and learn each other's names**
- **Exercise description:**

Everybody is given five pieces of paper on which different personality adjectives are written . They have to walk around the room and see what kind of adjectives the others have got and try to exchange their adjectives with the ones that describe their character best.

The leader puts the rest of the adjectives on a market table and says that if they can not find the correct adjectives from each other they can also choose from the table.

When everybody has five correct adjectives they sit down and one by one they say what kind of people they are: My name is ... and I am lazy, funny, sleepy, active and hungry.



- **The Maps**
- **Difficulty level: Easy**
- **Task group: Everyone**
- **The expected outcome of the exercise: To warm up the group to process something**
- **Exercise description:**

The leader of the group walks on the floor and “draws” a map of the country in which they live, the map of Europe or the world or any place that is relevant for the task, the school, school yard, town, village, home, the human body etc. Then s/he asks the pupils to stand on the place on the map where they were born/ have fun / are usually comfortable/uncomfortable/ are scared / which is the worst or best place on the map / which they would like to visit / where something exciting happened.

If the group cohesion is good, everyone may hear each other's stories, but if the group cohesion is weak, they should share their stories in small groups.

If the teacher wants to handle values, the questions should deal with values, for instance “Where have you seen something wrong happening?”

If the map is of the body, where do they feel love? Where stress? etc

# Being capable of saying “no”

- In pairs, handed a list of questions/ requests
- One takes the role of saying “no”, first aggressively, then politely but without explanation, then apologetically with an explanation, then offering an alternative
- Simple questions and possible answers
- How do you feel about each answer?
- If you always have to give the same answer, have a look at your attitude, your feelings
- Another option: Give me some time to think about it.
- Sometimes saying “no” to somebody else is saying “yes” to yourself
- People feel guilty when they take time for themselves – some people are always ready to serve others, wanting to be good persons, to please, so that everybody will love them – these attitudes are caused by not being able to say “no”
- When you take care of yourself first, then your presence is radiating (oxygen mask on aeroplane)

# Communication styles



- Students are divided into three groups and walk backwards around the room.
- The first group apologize every time they bump into someone.
- The second group show indifference every time they bump into someone.
- The third group become aggressive every time they bump into someone and behave like bulldozers.
- If someone else bumps into them they behave again according to the role of their group (apologetically, indifferently, aggressively).
- The roles change so that everyone assumes all three roles.
- Each communication style is different – we behave in one of these ways in situations we find ourselves in.
- Me and the other
- In aggressive communication only I exist.
- In passive communication the other runs me over – defeat.
- A balanced communication style: you respect the way others communicate and you feel you coexist.
- It is important to take the right action at the right moment – when you don't have an open mind you always react in the same way, but when you are open-minded you adapt your reactions to the circumstances at hand

- **Miming and improvisation**

- The teacher hands each child a piece of paper with a profession and the children mime their profession – when they locate another student with the same profession they form **pairs**
- In their pairs they act out a short dialogue with one saying “**yes**” and the other saying “**no**” in their own language or English, using appropriate gestures, movements, facial expressions, body posture, tone of voice etc
- The pairs use two different languages or miming to improvise a **disagreement** - the class guess what is happening
- In groups with members of different mother tongues – they are given **situations** from everyday life (at the hospital, in the car, at school, in the aeroplane etc) – they have only a few minutes to decide on the scenario and roles – the rest is improvisation and miming (life itself requires improvisation) - after each short performance the audience guess the situation and the events



# Guided visualisation



- The teacher plays relaxing music, asks the students to close their eyes and
- Imagine their favourite colour around them
- Take a trip with their imagination to a forest, a beach, a country road, a house and imagine encounters and activities there
- The students follow the way back to reality and then discuss the experience



- **Positive comments:** We sit in a circle and the teacher has an empty seat next to him/her, where he/she invites one of the students and makes positive comments to him/her about the way he/she has worked and contributed to the group – the student thanks the teacher – the one who is sitting on the left of the chair left empty invites someone else and follows the same procedure – this is continued until everyone has received positive comments



- **Letter to our future self** (each student writes a letter to him/herself of twenty years from now – expression of feelings, expectations, dreams)

