

UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE, ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

BACHELOR'S DEGREE STUDY PROGRAM

ESSAY - 4

COMPREHENSIVE ESSAY READING-Part 2

MODULE – 45

[Instructions: Read the essay and when you encounter each set of questions, indicate
your answer on the separate answer sheet.]

Thesis Report by: *Geraldine Weaver-McGill*

**Title of Thesis: “*Emotional Intelligence and its
Importance in Second Language
Teaching and Learning*”**

Introduction

The three Rs of traditional schooling are now being replaced by a fourth – relationships. Many modern educational psychologists now believe that to achieve success academically and in life you need not just cognitive skills but also emotional literacy. Which includes the ability to manage anger, develop self-esteem and communicate well.

Chapter 1: Learning Theories Related to Emotional Intelligence

In this chapter I will examine three of the leading theorists of language learning – Yorio, Stern and Rubin – and their beliefs on learner variables, highlighting the importance of emotional literacy for educators and students alike.

Yorio's Learner Variables

In 1976 Yorio identified 6 variable factors relevant to L2 language acquisition. They were; age, cognition, native language, input, affective domain and educational background.¹

The area of affective domain is the most variable. It is linked to emotional literacy with its social-cultural factors, such as attitude to the target language, culture and its people. This area is also widely variable because of egocentric factors, such as depression, anxiety, homesickness and self-consciousness. Personal motivation, whether it is integrative or instrumental, is also an important variable.

H.H. Stern and Joan Rubin's Good Learner Characteristics

The findings of Rubin and Stern's research as to why some students learn a second language in a superior way to others are relevant here. They were both published in 1975 and are remarkably similar. Rubin listed seven good learner characteristics; a willing and accurate guesser, a strong drive to communicate, attends to form, seeks out conversations and practices, monitors own speech and that of others and attends to meaning.

Stern listed the following: a personal style or positive learning strategies, an active approach to the learning task, a tolerant and out-going approach to the target language and empathy with its speakers and technical know-how about how to tackle a language. He continued with strategies of experimentation and planning, with the object of developing the new language into an ordered system and revising the system progressively, constantly searching for meaning, willingness to practice and use the language in real communication. Stern concluded his list with the necessity to auto-monitor and criticize developing the language into a separate reference system, and learning to *think* in it.²

It is Stern's third point of a tolerant approach to L2 and empathy with its speakers that I wish to examine in this thesis. My research shows that this empathy and drive to communicate gives learners the successful edge not only in L2 studies but also in their lifestyles and careers.

Antidote

Antidote is an organization dedicated to promoting emotional literacy in schools. Along with the National Emotional Literacy Group (NELIG), they have been working to prove to the Department of Education that they need to take pupils' emotional well-

being very seriously. Their campaign has been very successful and there is some form of emotional education in almost all of Britain's primary schools.

“Unless children feel they are likeable, are proud of themselves, and feel they have some control over their lives, they will find it difficult to commit to learning” says author and campaigner Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer.³ Learning involves risks. The insecure child will be reticent or rebellious and the upset student is handicapped, as learning involves listening and concentrating. The idea is to create an atmosphere of respect based on cooperation and understanding. Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer says:

“Children who respect themselves, can apologize, don't need to bully others or assert themselves and can deal with disappointments and don't waste energy hiding their weaknesses.⁴

Brewer maintains that parents have to be emotionally in tune with their offspring. Those who criticize and humiliate produce hostile and resentful children. Praise should be for work well done, for self-esteem is based on real achievements. If the child's skills falls outside the academic realm, find something he can excel at, perhaps in the manual or artistic fields.

Mistakes and their correction are important, too. In a positive way we learn from them. For L2 students, mistakes need to be handled with care, as they are an integral part of language acquisition and the learning process.

It is essential that teachers have empathy and emotional literacy, as mistake correction can stimulate or demotivate timid students. It is essential to give many simple opportunities to repeat correctly.

Chapter 2: Emotional Intelligence, its Importance in Health

That the mind and body are linked is not a new idea. The educationalist Maria Montessori notes: “Man's movements must be coordinated with the centre – the brain,

thought and action are two paths of the same occurrence, it is through movement that higher life expresses itself.”⁵

In 1974, Robert Adler conducted a series of experiments that proved that our immune system could “learn” just like our brains. He gave rats a medicine that suppressed the disease-fighting T cells, in a sugar solution. After removing the medicine their immune systems continued to suppress T cells and the rats became sick and died. He continued until he found pathways linking the nervous system to the lymphocyte and macrophage cells of the immune system. His findings were revolutionary. No one had suspected that immune cells could be sent messages from the nerves. He concluded that the immune system not only connects, but also is essential for efficient immunity function.⁶ Another way the emotions influence the immune system is the release of hormones under stress. Long-term stress and anxiety are as dangerous to health as viruses. People who suffer from long-term depression or anger and hostility were found to have *double* the risk of developing illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, breathing or stomach complaints. In health care this puts emotional problems on a par with the negative effects of cholesterol or smoking.

Studies were made of elderly women recovering from hip fractures. If their depression was treated along with their physical needs; they needed an average of eight days less hospitalization, and were one third more likely to make a full recovery and walk again. In similar surveys of cancer and heart attack patients, 122 men were assessed for an optimistic or pessimistic outlook following their first heart attack. Eight years later, 21 out of 25 of the most pessimistic had died but only 6 of the most optimistic. Their mental attitude was a better indicator of their survival than all the clinical factors, including blood pressure, damage to heart and cholesterol levels.⁷

Friendship

A report in Science magazine in 1987 concluded that social isolation was very dangerous to health “as significant to mortality rates as smoking, high cholesterol, obesity and lack of physical exercise.”⁸ In fact, smoking increases mortality risk by a factor of 1.6 and isolation by 2.0, making it a greater health risk. Patients with supportive friends and family and support groups survived longer. For example, women with advanced breast cancer who attended weekly meetings with fellow sufferers, survived *twice* as long.

□ Which statement is the most accurate?

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552. People who suffer from long-term depression or anger and hostility were found to have *double* the risk of developing illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, breathing or stomach complaints. In health care this puts emotional problems on a par with the negative effects of cholesterol or smoking. Another way the emotions influence the immune system is the release of hormones under stress. Long-term stress and anxiety are as dangerous to health as viruses.
553. Brewer maintains that parents have to be emotionally in tune with their offspring. Their mental attitude was a better indicator of their survival than all the clinical factors, including blood pressure, damage to heart and cholesterol levels. Those who criticize and humiliate produce hostile and resentful children. Praise should be for work well done, for self-esteem is based on real achievements. Learning involves no risks. If the child’s skills fall outside the academic realm, find something he can excel at, perhaps in the manual or artistic fields.

Emotional Intelligence in Medical Care

Although there is growing evidence of the importance of emotional care in both disease prevention and treatment, many physicians feel it is only a minority part of their professional skills or “fringe medicine”. If adults learnt as children the necessity of developing emotional skills, they could then apply this lifelong habit to their professional and personal life. Two other groups would be the elderly and the economically impoverished. It makes financial sense, as less hospitalization means a considerable saving in the health service budget. The five-fold chance of dying if suffering from depression following a heart attack would deem it necessary on ethical grounds alone. “The clear demonstration that psychological factors like depression and social isolation distinguish the coronary heart disease patients at highest risk means it would be unethical not to start trying to treat these factors.”⁹ Indeed the popular image of a brow wiping handholding nurse during recovery is just very good medicine.

Chapter 3. Emotions and Cognition

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A friend told me of his children’s reaction to his new relationship after their mother’s death; “Dad”, they said, “our heads tell us it’s OK but in our hearts it feels wrong”. This is the rational mind conflicting with the emotional mind.

Limbic structures give us emotional feeling such as sexual arousal and pleasure and the all-important parent-child bond (species without a neo-cortex abandon their young). However, the center of passion, which sometimes acts while the neo-cortex is still coming to a decision, is the amygdala. This means almond in Greek, named for its shape. We have two situated at the base of the limbic ring. It is responsible for that quick “fight of flight response” essential to give us the edge for survival.

Joseph Le Doux, a neuroscientist working at New York University was the first to discover the key role of our amygdala in the emotional brain. It acts as an emotional trip wire short-circuiting the neo-cortex, allowing us to act without thinking. He adds; “the emotional system can act independently of the neo-cortex and memories can be formed without any conscious cognitive participation at all.” ¹⁰

This means we have two brains, one for ordinary reaction and one for emotionally charged ones. This is why many of our disturbing emotions stem from infancy (especially if there is abandonment or mistreatment) before the development of our neo-cortex. The amygdala is almost fully formed at birth and these emotional pre-cognitive memories often remain with us for life.

Impulse Control

One of the most striking predictors of academic ability is a test given to pre-school children. Their ability to control their impulses was tested, which is one of the most fundamental factors in emotional intelligence, the choice between gratification and delay, desire and self-control. The experiment was conducted at Stanford University USA by a psychologist, Walter Mischel and proved to be an accurate predictor of the children’s academic success when traced some fourteen years later as adolescents. The children were given a marshmallow and offered a second one if they could wait to eat it until the researcher had run an errand. The children who had chosen to grab

the sweet usually within seconds of the researcher leaving the room had significantly lower SAT scores, were socially less adept, more prone to delinquency, and quick to anger, provoking fights. After all those years they were still unable to put off gratification.

Anger Control

Most of us have met someone who has an explosive temper whose family or colleagues cower rather than confront them. One of the most notorious was Mellbourne McBroom, whose sad tale is now taught to airline trainees. It is interesting to note that McBroom's temper might not have proved fatal had he not been a pilot. In 1978 as McBroom's plane approached Portland, Oregon USA, he noticed a problem with the landing gear. He began to circle the airport as he steadily became more and more angry with the mechanism. His co-pilots fearful of his wrath watched in silence as the plane ran out of fuel and crashed, killing ten people! 11 A cautionary tale indeed and one that is making the business community look into educating their personnel and management teams to be more emotionally friendly. In working with a team, emotional intelligence is essential, as open communication, co-operation, listening and speaking clearly are so important to the efficient running of most social or business organizations. New teaching techniques, with subtle yet motivating criticisms, are being employed because the reality is that efficient teams make all the difference in a fiercely competitive market. The Harvard Business Review stated, "As it develops, neither IQ nor academic talent were not predictors of on-the-job productivity." 12

In a study at Bell Labs, a scientific "think tank" with some of the most talented scientists and engineers available, they examined why some teams were highly successful and others only average despite the high quality of its members. One

surprise was that over-keenness had a negative effect, reducing the overall performance. These over-enthusiastic people were seen as domineering and resentments occurred and other team members didn't give their best and were reluctant to participate. Domineering and overly critical members reduced productivity and performance.

Harmonious groups had less tension and were more able to exploit the abilities of a particularly talented member. They built up formal and informal contacts, and networks overcame problems using these communication skills. This is emotional IQ in action. 13

Chapter 4: Social Interaction and Communication Skills

As every teacher knows, some children interact well with their peers and some are left on the fringe of the group, social outcasts unable to join in. This stigma usually manifests itself in children of pre-school age and can follow throughout their academic studies into adult life. In the most extreme cases, those affected drop out of school early and frequently underachieve for their IQ. This is understandable, as why would one want to spend eight hours a day in a place where no one likes you!

In a study of children's play in the first grades, observations were made of the behavior of the popular and unpopular child. Those who had good social graces responded well to non-verbal clues, made eye-to-eye contact and had a good sense of space. One in ten children have learning difficulties in interpreting non-verbal messages. The socially isolated child often misreads the teacher as well as their playmates, and fails to learn effectively. Such children were observed hovering on the edge of play, reluctant to participate, in case their rejection was made public. It was found that the socially competent noticed and interpreted clues from the group and never tried to lead too soon after joining in. 14

Good Communications

Communication is fundamental when teaching or learning a second language and therefore students who have good verbal communication skills in their own language can apply these skills to L2 learning. Often school children who have poor verbal skills find themselves outcasts on the fringe of social groups. “I used to rush up to people and hit them,” said Laura.¹⁵ This fifteen-year-old pupil is part of a scheme to improve verbal communication abilities. The scheme is part of an experiment at a school in Leicester, England. Laura and six other pupils spent one session a week for ten weeks preparing a short poem to perform in front of a sympathetic audience. Before the experiment Laura had been at risk of exclusion because her behavior was so bad. The scheme helped her to reason and express herself verbally, which developed her self-image, boosted her confidence, and made a tremendous difference to her self-esteem.

The scheme’s coordinator, Rosemary Sage, has been researching the importance of spoken skills for thirty years. She says, “Eighty percent of life’s activities involve spoken skills against twenty percent needing reading and writing.”¹⁶ However, teachers spend more time in school talking *to* not *with* pupils. Based on the scientific understanding of the brain’s function (it is thought that the right-hand side of the brain controls the visual and the left-hand side controls verbal reasoning), it seems that poor integration of these functions may limit language use, the ability to follow instructions, and the appreciation of cause and effect. Dr. Sage feels teaching communications skills “is the only way to improve academic performance.”¹⁷

The scheme’s weekly sessions start with a “brain gym” in groups of eight to twelve with activities that actors and public speakers use to stimulate verbal dexterity: poems, songs, linguistic games, stories and verbal reasoning, with role-plays, where

pupils are constantly asked, “What happened next? Why did he act like that? What should she do now?” All participants are active, and continually stimulated to express themselves. The motto is “action through words rather than action *not* words. It is the quickest, cheapest and most efficient way of transmitting information; without it effective learning is most unlikely.”¹⁸ Since, the school has noticed an improvement in all subjects. An interesting result was that setting aside the writing and books for a while, and helping students *externalize* their thoughts has had a positive effect on the more passive skills of reading and writing. This applies to not only failing students but also high achievers, who although were communicative at home were withdrawn in school. Here more formal responses are required and some children had been reluctant to speak, as they felt wrong answers were detrimental to their image. All the above are skills of the emotionally intelligent and all the activities can be easily applied in a L2 class, to encourage the student to use the language learnt in a communicative way.

□ **Which statement is the most accurate?**

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555. Dr. Sage feels teaching communications skills “are the only way to improve academic performance.” Based on the scientific understanding of the brain’s function (it is thought that the right-hand side of the brain controls the verbal and the left-hand side controls the visual), it seems that poor integration of these functions may limit language use, the ability to follow instructions, and the appreciation of cause and effect.
556. New teaching techniques with subtle yet motivating criticisms are being employed, because the reality is that efficient teams make all the difference in a fiercely competitive market. In working with a team, emotional intelligence is essential since open communication, co-operation, listening and speaking clearly are so important to the efficient running of most social or business organizations.

557. Domineering and overly critical members reduced productivity and performance. Those who had good social graces responded well to verbal clues, made eye-to-eye contact and had a good sense of space. Harmonious groups had less tension and were more able to exploit the abilities of a particularly talented member. They built up formal and informal contacts, and networks overcame problems using these communication skills. This is emotional IQ in action.

Controlling Temperament

Idealists may reason that if emotional intelligence is so important to our academic record, social relationships and a successful career, it should be taught from early school years. In theory we should be able to modify our temperaments to better adapt to modern society's demands.

Jerome Kagan, a psychologist at Harvard, suggests that there are four main temperamental types: timid, bold, upbeat and melancholy – and each is due to a different type of brain activity. ¹⁹ For many years, mothers have been bringing their children to Kagan's Laboratory for child Development. Timid babies to the more extrovert types were monitored through the years to adulthood. Kagan believes the difference lies in the sensitivity of the neural circuit centered on the amygdala.

The timid types are born with a neuro-chemistry that is easily aroused. In contrast, their socially easy-going peers have a nervous system calibrated with a much higher threshold for amygdala arousal. Kagan found that experiences could shape the destiny of our emotional makeup. An over-excitabile amygdala can be modified.

Genes alone do not determine our behavior. Thus childhood is an opportunity to shape and remold our genetic predisposition. In short, emotional intelligence can be taught.

Chapter 5. Retraining Our Emotions

Many adults when facing emotional difficulties turn to psychotherapy, systematic emotional relearning. In a study for people with severe conditions such as acute depression or obsessive-compulsive disorder, half those studied were given the standard drug treatment (Prozac informally known as the happy drug). 20 the others received behavior therapy. Many suffering from this disorder feel compelled to wash their hands constantly to the point of breaking the skin, over a period of time they were given access to washing facilities but not allowed to use them forcing them to confront their fears (i.e., not washing would expose them to a fatal illness). Brain scans at the end of the treatment showed a significant decrease in the prefrontal lobes to the same extent as the patients receiving medication, their experiences had changed their behavior as effectively as Prozac. Behavior therapist Kagan found even the most timid of children responded to encouragement.

If their parents motivated them to try new things and pushed them forward by adolescence they were coping well and could handle distress and control impulses. By contrast the neglected or abused child with indifferent or self-absorbed parents was handicapped and this treatment left its imprint on the emotional circuitry.

One of our first emotional lessons learnt in infancy is being soothed when distressed, in a critical period between ten to eighteen months. This is when the pre-frontal cortex is forming a connection with the limbic brain, learning key lessons for self-control. Also there is the vagus nerve, which continues to develop throughout childhood. This is connected to the heart, and other parts of the body, and sends signals to the amygdala from the adrenals, prompting it to secrete catecholamines, which trigger the “fight-or-flight” response.

John Gottman, a psychologist, comments: “Parents can modify their children’s vagal tone (how easily triggered the vagus nerve is) by coaching them emotionally, talking

about their feelings, not being too critical or judgmental, problem-solving about emotional predicaments, suggesting alternatives to hitting and withdrawing when sad.”²¹ Suppression of the vagal activity that primes the amygdala to flood the body with these “fight-or-flight” hormones is the key to a stable well-behaved child.

The continued developments of neural circuits throughout childhood underline the importance and impact of traumas and emotional lessons in infancy.

These experiences follow us into adulthood. The brain remains flexible and all learning implies change. Psychotherapy is, in a sense, a remedial class for those lessons missed or misshaped earlier in life. Therefore it would be logical to give children the guidance and skills they need for emotional intelligence in school.

Emotional Lessons

As a teacher I can hear myself commenting “Oh no, not another lesson to fit in between math and P.E.!” Ideally, of course, emotional lessons should start in infancy; Dr Kagan, in his observations of pre-school children remarked that character types were already predetermining their social behavior. I feel that emotional literacy should be taught not as a separate lesson, but incorporated into the very fabric of school life. For instance, take a very common every day experience that all teachers from infants to primary will be familiar with: it’s time to line up for lunch or playtime and three or four want to be first in line. Every teacher deals with this problem in different ways some use alphabetical order and change each day. Some use it as a reward. A good method is to ask the “pushers” to pick a number and go in that order. The lesson is that there is always amicable ways to settle disputes, without fighting.

Group activities in class can be used to elicit information without revealing names. For instance, who lead the group, who didn’t contribute and were there any special skills some children had, such as good spellers or artistic talents that helped the

groups' success? This can be a valuable lesson in group participation and co-operation.

Some special schools such as Nueva in San Francisco, USA, run classes in self-science. The lesson starts with children giving their feelings out of ten, i.e. "It's Friday, I'm excited, a ten." Teachers speak of issues such as feeling left out, envy, controlling impulses and situations that could easily erupt into playground battles. Karen Stone McCown, developer of the self-science curriculum and director of Nueva, says: "Learning doesn't take place in isolation from kids' feelings. Being emotionally literate is as important for learning as math and reading. My goal is raising the level of social competence in children, as part of their general education, not just as something taught remedially to those who are faltering and identified as "troubled." 22

The next step would be to take the lessons learnt from such highly focused programs and make them available to the entire school population, taught by ordinary teachers. Of course Nueva is a school where the pupils are privileged both socially and economically. It is questionable whether such programs would work where they are needed most in areas where poverty, drugs and crime are the daily backdrop to pupils' lives. Troup Middle School lies in the center of a decaying manufacturing town. Various recessions have led to unemployment and the mainly white middle class have moved away leaving the enrollment of Troup 95% black and Hispanic. Drugs, crime and violence are almost a daily routine. A program was set up by a group of Yale psychologists that mirrors Nueva's ideas; it was called the social competence program. Lessons on decision making about sex have a raw edge here; as New Haven, where Troup is situated, has the highest female population with AIDS in the US. Guidance is given about facial expressions as school bullies often

misinterpret neutral messages and girls with eating disorders fail to distinguish anger from anxiety or hunger.

Mary Ellen Collins, the school's coordinator for the program comments; "I can't just teach academic subjects anymore with the problems these kids face just living. Some of them have home situations so horrific, that just getting to school is a struggle." 23 The social development program is not always taught as a separate class but incorporated into reading, science and social studies. In the urban chaos in which they live, putting aside their problems, motivating self-study and managing impulses can mean survival. The aim is fewer drug problems and arrests, better marriages and greater earning power. 24

□ **Which statement is the most accurate?**

558. Jerome Kagan, a psychologist at Harvard, suggests that there are four main temperamental types: timid, bold, upbeat and melancholy – and each is due to a different type of brain activity. For many years, mothers have been bringing their children to Kagan's Laboratory for child Development. Timid babies to the more extrovert types were monitored through the years to adulthood. Kagan believes the difference lies in the sensitivity of the neural circuit centered on the amygdala. Genes determine our behavior. Thus childhood is an opportunity to shape and remold our genetic predisposition.
559. For instance, take a very common everyday experience that all teachers from infants to primary will be familiar with: it's time to line up for lunch or playtime and three or four want to be first in line. Group activities in class can be used to elicit information to reveal names. Every teacher deals with this problem in different ways; some use alphabetical order and change each day. Some use it as a reward. A good method is to ask the "pushers" to pick a number and go in that order. The lesson is that there is always an amicable way to settle disputes, without fighting.
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general education, not just as something taught remedially to those who are faltering and identified as “troubled.” 22

561. Suppression of the vagal activity that primes the amygdala to flood the body with these “fight-or-flight” hormones is the key to a stable, well-behaved child. John Gottman, a psychologist, comments: “Parents can modify their children’s vagal tone (how easily triggered the vagus nerve is) by coaching them emotionally, talking about their feelings, not being too critical or judgmental, problem-solving about emotional predicaments, suggesting alternatives to hitting and withdrawing when sad.” 21

Chapter 6: Emotional Literacy Learning for Life

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Emotional literacy therefore is important for social and academic success. Of course it can’t compensate for a violent or traumatic childhood or being brought up in poverty or crime-stricken neighborhood.

Various educationalists have identified as critical periods the three transitional steps in the education system: a child’s entry into kindergarten, from junior to middle school and finally the adolescent period.

At five the “social emotions” are at a peak such as pride, confidence, insecurity, jealousy and envy and the cognitive ability to compare oneself with others. At eleven, most children say “goodbye” to the security and comforts of early childhood, and almost all feel a drop in confidence and a heightening of self-consciousness; the ability to make friends at this point is crucial to one’s self-esteem. If family life no longer offers a stable base, school life must offer guidance in social competence and communication skills.

This daunting task requires two major changes: firstly, for those teachers go beyond their traditional role, and secondly, for the wider community to become more involved with schools.

The aims of this specialized guidance should be: begin early, be age appropriate and continue throughout the school years and involve the home and community.

At Troup there is a poster that prominently displays a six-point plan of action, to help resolve conflicts. It reads: 1. Stop, calm down, and think before you act. 2. Say the problem and how you feel. 3. Set a positive goal. 4. Think of lots of solutions. 5. Think ahead to the consequences. 6. Go ahead and try the best plan.” Most current emotional literacy programs were put in place as a result of specific problems, notably violence and a breakdown of discipline in school. Indeed only recently the French government has introduced up to six months imprisonment for verbally abusing a teacher.

Linda Lantieri, founder of the Resolving Conflict Creatively Program, sees her work as something not to prevent fights in school but to show students that they have many choices beyond aggression or passivity and how to resolve conflicts without violence, replacing it with skills to stand up for their rights. The tactics involve mediators, usually pupils who have had remedial emotional classes and conquered past difficulties. The hostile parties are asked to listen without interruption to each other and paraphrase what’s been said so there’s no misunderstanding. Solutions are offered that both parties can accept, and sometimes agreements are signed.

The campaign for emotional literacy run by Antidote (page 9) states: “Educational organizations have the potential to help all learners develop into well-rounded individuals, who can express themselves, form enduring relationships, contribute usefully in the world and achieve their learning potential.”²⁵ Teaching is inspiring

learners, through their own curiosity and creativity, to seek solutions to problems and respond positively to challenges they will meet in life. Academic learning cannot be divorced from emotional and social development, what with the immense cultural changes that have occurred in the last twenty years, incorporating children of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Susie Orbach, member of Antidote says, “I’m not an educator so I can’t speak from that perspective, but as psychotherapist, I’ve learnt about the relationship between emotional development, learning and social structure. From the evidence of my field, *emotional development in these two ways needs to be an essential, integral part of the school curriculum, school ethos and school life*, just as it needs to be an integral part of child rearing, family life, work life, the health services.... In short wherever people congregate.” 26.

Chapter 7. Applying Emotional Intelligence to L2 Teaching

In the previous pages I have tried to illustrate how essential an individual’s emotions are to learning ability, for a happy and fulfilled life, and how these cannot and should not be divorced from any cognitive activity. The question is now, how can one apply this knowledge to L2 teaching? For my research I have interviewed several teachers with many years experience of L2 teaching and also a teacher trainer and author for the O.U.P. IN Spain. Also, I spoke to a T.E.F.L. examiner working for Trinity College, London, who runs oral exams on twelve levels, (my school has been preparing students successfully for Trinity exams for three years now alongside the normal curriculum.)

Interview with Isabel Rengal

Isabel is Spanish and teaches English as a foreign language in a private school in the province of Malaga. Her father was a professor of English and the importance of a

second language and interest in the English-speaking culture was conveyed to her as a child. She continued her studies in the U.K. where she met her husband; she comments; “Now I speak English so well I even *dream* in it!” When asked what makes some students better learners than others she replied; “Their attitude to the subject makes a difference. This is often set before the first lesson and depends on external factors. The teacher can try and change this but with older students it tends to be ingrained. The successful student is motivated by integral forces to succeed and usually does. Of course, cognitive factors play a role; an A grade student will get top grades in English, too. However, in my class I’ll sometimes get a good student who is poor in other areas, but something in their background gives them an interest in English. It may be a family member who is English-speaking and conveys an enthusiasm for the culture in their home or just a passion for cartoons or pop music. This is often enough to make a successful student, for this proves that attitude is fundamental to success.” 27

Interview with Tracey Chandler

Tracey is English and trained as a teacher in the U.K. She moved to Spain ten years ago where she continued teaching English as a foreign language in a Language Institute, offering courses to adults and children in small groups. When asked what gives student that special edge that makes them good L2 learners, she replied; “Consistency, input and attitude. I have worked in a language school for eight years now and students who have been with me since that time repeating, practicing and slowly building up a structure in the target language, are successful. Of course if their attitude wasn’t positive they wouldn’t be there!” 28

Paul Seligson: Author for the O.U.P. IN Spain and Teacher Trainer

Paul Seligson works as a teacher-trainer all over the world. When I attended his lecture organized by the Oxford University Press in May this year, he had just completed a teacher training tour in Brazil. He included in his talk some comments about successful L2 learners. He mentioned Mario, who works as an interpreter in Brussels, speaks nine languages fluently and is one of life's natural linguists, "And I hate him!" commented Paul, in an aside that amused his audience. Mario is currently learning Turkish to be prepared for Turkey's entry into the E.E.C. Mario's method for keeping each language lively and fluent is to talk to an imaginary Martian on his shoulder and explain everything in sight to this inquisitive alien, switching languages periodically (this conforms to H.H. Stern's good learner list on page 8 – a personal style or learning strategy, ordered and separate reference system and learning to think in it.) For nine languages it is probably a must if you are not to become hopelessly mixed.

Another student of Paul's, a U.K. asylum seeker, he always had a pen and wrote everything down. Paul remembered his student days when he was told "never show the text or the pronunciation will be lost."²⁹ A quick and successful learner, this student needed to see the words in order to commit them to memory. Paul encourages his students to customize textbooks, make their own notes, draw graffiti, etc. He always sets homework not all of them do it but the ones who do benefit from the extra input and he encourages weak students to practice the tape or pre-read texts before the lesson. This highly qualified teacher advises to always keep lesson records as a valuable source of lesson data, input for tests and to see how much they depend on L1 feedback on quality for explanations – and to remember what you have taught! The process of learning happens inside each one of us in different ways and teaching is unlikely to work if we simply pursue the same, or repeat one or two, formulas. Vary,

personalize and negotiate your teaching. Each student will come to the class with a unique point of view. Make it personal. We can't teach a language, only stimulate learning. Teach techniques as much as language. 30

Interview with Trinity Examiner Lauren Walker

Having taught English as a second language for many years Lauren moved on to teacher training and was invited to join the board of Trinity examiners. Lauren travelled to Spain in June 2002; she visited my school in her capacity as examiner. I had a chance to talk to her at length about her career in L2 teaching. "Teaching language by the direct method has been my life and although I've been doing it for twenty years I'm still enthusiastic and still learning!" Lauren believes the student's motivation for learning is crucial to success. Start with a negative attitude and the perseverance that's necessary will seem like a hard slog. She felt that the teacher could ignore emotions only at the expense of learning. After all, teaching is supposed to promote personal learning and is worthless if it doesn't do so. 31

Chapter 8: Emotional Methodology

Firstly, I don't believe L1 should be totally eliminated from the classroom. Neither should it be encouraged. Adult students seem to need to relate new learning to the structures of L1 but habits are easily formed and hard to break. The teacher should set the tone initially and remember Stern's list that good language learners seek out opportunities to communicate, and there is no better place than in the classroom. The teacher can listen and correct if need be. In day-to-day verbal communications we don't always have this opportunity to express oneself in L2. Textbooks can be used to promote memory by observing and covering, always give a time limit to activities to keep students alert. Don't ask what they see (only the strongest student will answer) but ask randomly what they remember, uncover text line by line ask, "What comes

next? Or what came before?” Select key phrases for memorization, encourage marking of text with one word prompts, cover and remember from these prompts.

In pair work, students often use L1 for communication or clarification. For this reason I avoided it for years until, viewing it from the emotional angle, I realized it was “time out” for students to relax briefly before continuing with the task. Now I use this by asking partners to say a sentence in L1 for their partner to translate, mime, memorize or write down, checking for accuracy. This also works with the entire class. The answers can be very diverse and amusing. The ideal is to vary lessons as much as possible and avoid using the same monotonous formulae. I suggest trying to make each lesson memorable in some way and encourage learning by defining the goals, the core grammar to be covered in the syllabus, the vocabulary you expect them to know at the beginning. I have tried linguistic games like anonymous errors on the board for student correction with the whole class participating, this stimulates self-correction skills. Exchanging anecdotes and experiences about common verbal errors or personal stories about successful or unsuccessful students can encourage expression and learning from each other and the world through English. I advise testing with grammar, listening or oral exercises, soon after explanations, to check for comprehension and the ability to use it. Often I stress mark text on the board for pronunciation and do personal research on my teaching methods to get feedback on activities, the course and my teaching. Finally, try asking fast finishers to develop pedagogical material for their peers and keep an open mind by discussing methods, aims and sometimes even ask for suggestions for exam subjects. 32

Chapter 9: Motivation

MODULE – 48

The above are methods and ideas to encourage and motivate students in class, and extra-curricular activities to promote learning. My interviewees felt as I do, that attitude to the target language was fundamental to success.

I think it is appropriate at this point in my studies, to talk about motivation. We may assume that, in order to be able to study, a student must have intelligence or cognitive ability. Also motivation, that is to *want to study*. Motivation may be divided into two parts: intrinsic and extrinsic. The adolescent student typifies extrinsic motivation by studying to avoid a punishment or arguments with parents over low grades. Intrinsic motivation is when study gives pleasure or satisfaction or is the path to a personal goal. Before embarking on a course of study, a student should ask himself the following questions:

What are the reasons that have induced me to start this course?

Am I studying for more reasons than just to pass or are there other reasons that could convert this into a personal satisfaction?

Stern, Yorio and Rubin all realized that motivation is one of the biggest variables among students. A child in an international school in a foreign country, surrounded by his compatriots, may be slow to the country's language compared to a child placed in a local school with no one to communicate with. Likewise an adult in the same situation with the added economic pressures will have both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Many prominent psychologists have studied human motivation both biogenic (having its origins in biological processes) and sociogenic (origins in social processes.) Some, like Skinner, theorized that all motivation is external and relates to habit formation by reward and punishment.³³ Indeed we all behave in certain ways because we have learned through experience that some responses are more effective

than others. This is of utmost importance to a teacher, because by extrinsic manipulation it is possible to alter behavior, break habits and substitute them with better ones by rewarding and punishing (or just not rewarding) undesirable ones.

It was supposed that humans had complete control over their actions whereas animals were motivated by instinct. It came as a shock that the animal kingdom and man might not be so dissimilar. In 1938, A.H. Maslow expounded a theoretical model, which showed the hierarchy of human needs (he stressed we move up the triangle in his model *only* when our organic needs are satisfied.) At the bottom is personal needs defined as physiological and safety, then social with love, belonging and self-esteem and at the apex, intellectual needs with self-actualization, understanding and knowledge. If we accept Maslow's model has any validity, it seems that anything a teacher may wish to impart clearly comes at the end of a very long list! Here find a link to the Troup school program (page 20) run by Mary Ellen Collins in which pupils with chaotic social backgrounds found it difficult to attend school, and achieve any academic success. Hunger, insecurity, and fear would give them a great disadvantage against their well-fed, loved and socially secure peers. Teachers depend on pupils "cognitive drive"³⁴; and can manipulate their curiosity and physical awareness. Classrooms are artificial settings, and reading skills don't come naturally to most humans. We also need to manipulate the social assets lower down in Maslow's triangle such as self-esteem, confidence in front of our peers and community approval, known collectively as attention needs. The idea of an inquisitive, active experience-seeking child is part of Piaget's theory of cognitive growth.

□ **Which statement is the most accurate?**

562. The aims of specialized guidance should be: begin early; be age appropriate and continue throughout the school years; and involve the home and community. Academic learning is not the same as emotional and social development, with the immense cultural changes that have occurred in the last twenty years, incorporating children of diverse cultural backgrounds.
563. This highly qualified teacher advises to always keep lesson records, as a valuable source of lesson data, input for tests and to see how much they depend on L1 feedback on quality for explanations – and to remember what you have taught! Vary, personalize and negotiate your teaching. Each student will come to the class with a unique point of view. Make it personal. The process of learning happens inside each one of us in different ways and teaching is unlikely to work if we simply pursue the same or repeat one or two formulas.
564. A child in an international school in a foreign country, surrounded by his compatriots, may be as slow to the country's language as a child placed in a local school with no one to communicate with. Likewise, an adult in the same situation with the added economic pressures will have both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
565. Teaching is inspiring learners, through their own curiosity and creativity, to seek solutions to problems and respond positively to challenges they will meet in life. Hunger, insecurity, and fear would give a great advantage against well-fed, loved and socially secure peers. Academic learning cannot be divorced from emotional and social development, what with the immense cultural changes that have occurred in the last twenty years, incorporating children of diverse cultural backgrounds.

The Differences in Adult and Child Motivation

At this juncture in my review of motivation I think it is important to study the principal differences between the motivation of adults and children and their different approaches to the learning task. According to new data, it seems we are born with an innate ability for acquiring language. A study published in "Science" August 2002 by Professor Laura-Ann Petitto and her colleague shows research concluded from examining video clips of babies babbling. The research was based on the knowledge that brain activity in the left hemisphere, where the language mechanisms are situated, would control activity on the right side of the face. They found that babies open the right side of their mouths to vocalize "This suggests that language functions specialise in the brain at a very early age" says Prof. Petitto. ³⁵

L2 in Children

One of the strongest advantages children have over adults, as learners, are psychomotor considerations, which involve the co-ordination of the “speech muscles” or more commonly known as accent. When children are exposed to a second language, a near-native pronunciation is normally achieved. Whether or not they become fluent speakers depends very much on frequency and the context of their studies. For example, a child living in a country where his peers speak another language will have a strong motivation to learn, in order to join the speech community. Children have few preconceived notions concerning the target language culture and possess a strong drive to communicate, without an adult’s self-consciousness. Youngsters are less afraid of committing errors, mainly because they are less aware of language forms and the possibility of making mistakes. Therefore, the supposed “superiority” of these child learners is not their *age* but the meaningfulness and context of their learning.

Although most of the countries of European Community now consider a second language, usually English, to be an important part of the infant and primary curriculum there is still no concrete research to prove that this early learning has any great value. Piaget’s readiness theory, when children pass from the Concrete Stage to the Formal Operational Stage, is at around eleven years old. It is at this stage in Piaget’s outline, more or less at puberty that the student now has the ability for abstract or formal thinking as well as some of the spontaneity of the younger child. This ability transcends concrete experience and directs perception. Cognitively then, it makes sense to start L2 at this age.

The argument between those who favor an early start and those who favor Piaget’s “critical period” is still very controversial and is inconclusive.

Penfield, a neurophysiologist, was influential in the view that the early years before puberty were best from his observations of brain-damaged adults and children who re-learned to speak. He concluded that a biological timetable existed for language based on the lateralization of the two hemispheres of the cerebral cortex. This seemed to be confirmed by his own inability to learn French in Montreal where he lived, compared to his children attending nursery school in this bilingual city. Thus, early-language-learning was given a neurological sanction. Later this was considered erroneous, as lateralization occurs earlier and doesn't necessarily mean a loss of abilities. ³⁶

Again many claim the “superiority” of the child learner and the opposing viewpoint that the greater cognitive maturity and experience of the adult are both assets. Ausubel summed it up well and I quote; “Objective research evidence regarding the relative learning ability of children and adults is sparse but offers little comfort to those who maintain the child superiority thesis. Although children are probably superior to adults in acquiring an acceptable accent in a new language, E.L.Thorndike found many years ago that they make less rapid progress than adults in other aspects of foreign language learning when the time is held constant for the two age groups.” ³⁷

The National Foundation for Educational Research undertook a study from 1964 to 1974 with two groups of children: one starting French at eight years old and the other starting at eleven. The groups were assessed regularly and initially the early starters showed superiority in listening and speaking but later only in listening. It showed the feasibility of starting L2 in primary school, without any detriment to other subjects. More important was not the age of the students but the amount of instructional time devoted to the language. Carroll concluded that the start of instruction could be delayed if more intensive instruction is given. ³⁸ In 1979 Krashen summed up the debate well in this statement; “ Adults and older children in general initially acquire

the second language faster than younger children (older is better for the rate of acquisition) but child second language acquirers will usually be superior in terms of ultimate attainment (younger is better in the long run)". H.H. Stern stated that: "Language learning may occur at different maturity levels from the early years into adult life. No age stands out as optimal or critical for all aspects of second language learning." 40

L2 in Adults

Ausubel's distinction between "rote and meaningful" learning suggests that adult L2 learning is often mechanistic in the classroom, and is not related to existing knowledge and experience. However for a child, rote learning is fun and imitation, play and practice are meaningful activities. Adults also suffer from greater L1 interference, and due to work and social demands, and other stressful conditions, are more likely to have less time to devote to the task. In contrast, the economic and social demands on adults to succeed in L2 acquisition are effective motivators. Other variables are whether the language is taught in formal or informal settings. Formal learning will expose the learner to the rules of the language (phonological, syntactic or socio-linguistic) in an orderly fashion, with ample opportunity for trial and error and feedback. In informal situations, feedback may be more or less absent and the learner may be exposed to any number of combinations of the rules. Time and intensity often varies widely between these two broad categories.

Aptitude

Aptitude can be defined as the ability to do something well and the motivation to do it. Intelligence doesn't appear to be a factor in L1 (of course intelligence influences the ability to retain structures and express coherently), so it seems that intelligence is not a factor in second language acquisition *in a natural setting*, learners of average

and below IQ will acquire a basic “survival” language in a social context. It seems it’s more important to profit from certain types of instruction and innate talents such as musical sensitivity and rhythm; the ability to mimic sounds are assets.

According to Carroll and Sapons, two main features of ability are: language knowledge and auditory ability. Personality traits thought to favor L2 learners are extraversion and an ability to entertain and empathize. An extrovert personality or one that is willing to risk ridicule or failure in order to communicate in an uninhibited and outgoing style would be an asset to a L2 learner. However, an introvert (one who would naturally withdraw from social interaction) might be more adapted to the systematic study of a language. The concept of “language empathy”, I feel, is critical to good learner characteristics. The willingness and capacity to identify with others is not only a successful recipe for a healthy and full life but also crucial to the second language learner. It has been described as “the essential factor in the overall ability to acquire a second language.”⁴¹ Language is very much integrated with ego and one of the explanations of the success of the child learner is that his “language ego” is not fixed but *fluid*. Therefore, the adoption of a new accent and language is easier for a child than for the adult, whose language ego is less malleable. However, should the adult have an empathic attitude to the target language culture and people and wish to adopt an open, almost naïve status, he will be in a state of “readiness” to receive instruction. Guiora claimed that sensitivity to responses and facial expressions are related to extroversion, and a lack of ethnocentricity is identified as characteristic of good language learners.

Conclusions and Recommendations

I feel my research has been very productive. It started with reading about reader variables and affective domain. I became interested in the work of Antidote and the

books about schooling the emotions by Elizabeth Hartley Brewer and Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Golman. I came to the conclusion that we cannot separate our emotions from our intellect. All human beings are emotional creatures, and at the center of all thoughts, meaning and action is emotion. We are influenced by our emotions: they dictate our reactions, social interactions, academic achievements, goals and choices. Empathy, self-esteem, extraversion, inhibition, imitation, anxiety, self-consciousness are all emotions that dictate and control our success in second language learning.

Analyzing different language learning theories by celebrated figures in the field of research, such as H.H. Stern and D.A. Ausubel, has been enlightening and I hope I shall become a more empathic teacher because of it! I shall certainly try to make my lessons personal and tailored to the individual needs of the *adult* language learner. I shall be more sympathetic in allowing L1 into the classroom because to a monolingual person, their ego and identity is dependent on L1. To be lost in the unfamiliar tasks of another language can be a cause of anxiety and disenchantment. My own experience of living and working in a country where I had to use L2 to survive economically and socially has also focused on the need for structured instruction. “Immersion” with all its pitfalls and exposure to informal language forms can retard progress, or advance it, depending on the affective domain, ego and emotions of individuals.

Emotional Literacy in Schools

I would like to see emotional literacy incorporated into the general curriculum of schools not just as remedial measures for disruptive and failing students but as a general attitude and approach for all. We are all emotional creatures, as Shakespeare said, “Give me that man who is not passions slave.” Controlling emotions, reining in

impulses, learning to handle upsets, listening and focusing takes will and wherever these programs are tried the academic success and educational scores are improved and help to turn the tide of educational decline and return schools to their traditional role of preparing the next generation for their roles in life to make better friends, students, sons, daughters and in the future husbands, wives, workers, bosses, parents and citizens. I'm not suggesting that these courses can immunize children against the disadvantages of poverty, broken homes and abuse but as Tom Shiver says, "A rising tide lifts all boats, and it's not just the kids with problems but all kids who can benefit from these skills; these are an inoculation for life."⁴² "*Non scholae sed vitae discimus*" we learn not for school but for life. "The main hope of a nation lies in the proper education of its youth" Erasmus.

□ **Which statement is the most accurate?**

566. A study published in "Science" of August 2002, by Professor Laura-Ann Petitto and her colleague, shows research concluded from examining video clips of babies babbling. The research was based on the knowledge that brain activity in the left hemisphere, where the language mechanisms are situated, would control activity on the left side of the face. They found, however, that babies open the right side of their mouths to vocalize. "This suggests that language functions specialize in the brain at a very early age."
567. Early-language-learning was given a neurological sanction. Later this was considered erroneous, as lateralization occurs earlier and doesn't necessarily mean a loss of abilities. D.A. Ausubel, a neurophysiologist, was influential in the view that the early years before puberty were best from his observations of brain-damaged adults and children who re-learned to speak. He concluded that a biological timetable existed for language based on the lateralization of the two hemispheres of the cerebral cortex. This seemed to be confirmed by his own inability to learn French in Paris where he lived, compared to his children attending nursery school in this bilingual city.
568. Language is very much integrated with ego and one of the explanations of the success of the child learner is that his "language ego" is not fixed but *fluid*. Therefore, the adoption of a new accent and language for him is easier than for the adult, whose language ego is less malleable. However, should the adult have an empathic attitude to the target language culture and people and wish to adopt an open, almost naïve status, he will be in a state of "readiness" to receive instruction. Guiora claimed that sensitivity to

responses and facial expressions are related to extroversion, and a lack of ethnocentricity is identified as characteristic of good language learners.

569. H.H. Stern stated: "Language learning may occur at different maturity levels from the early years into adult life. No age stands out as optimal or critical for all aspects of second language learning." Adults and older children in general initially acquire the second language faster than younger children (older is better for the rate of acquisition), but child second language acquirers will usually be superior in terms of ultimate attainment (younger is better in the long run). Therefore, the adoption of a new accent and language is easier for the child, whose language ego is less malleable.

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