

## BUILDING STRONG EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN UNIVERSITY ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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### **Abstract**

*The paper highlights the essence of emotional intelligence, its importance for University students. Thanks to its adaptability, EI can and should be developed to achieve success in communication and learning with pleasure, and in further employment. Possible problems on this path are outlined and examples of possible application of EI in English classes at the university are given.*

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence; EI; education; higher education; English teaching.

### **Анотація**

*У тезах висвітлено сутність емоційного інтелекту, його важливість для здобувачів ВО. Завдяки його гнучкості, EI можна і потрібно розвивати, щоб досягти успіху у спілкуванні і навчанні з задоволенням, та в подальшому працевлаштуванні. Окреслено можливі проблеми на цьому шляху та наведено приклади можливого застосування EI на заняттях англійської мови в університеті.*

**Ключові слова:** емоційний інтелект; EI; освіта; вища освіта; викладання англійської мови.

In 1990 American psychologists, Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer, introduced the term EI (Emotional intelligence) in the article “Emotional Intelligence”. In 1996 Daniel Goleman advertised EI in his book “Emotional Intelligence”. In the book, Goleman analyses various research, including a Harvard Business School study that concluded emotional intelligence matters twice as much as IQ and technical skills when determining who will be successful in life [1].

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to be conscious of, control, and communicate emotions while handling interpersonal relationships with good judgment and empathy. In this case EI is akin to Multiple Intelligence introduced by H. Gardner, especially when it comes about Inter- and Intrapersonal ones.

According to Daniel Goleman’s work, there are five EI features: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills.

### **Self-awareness**

People with emotional intelligence are usually capable of evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. If their EQ is high, they can realize when their pride, selfishness and emotions influence their thinking and then identify targets for change. By getting to the root of negative feelings through reflection, those individuals strong in EI also make more rational and impartial decisions [2]. Moreover, such people are more conscious of their nonverbal communication, and more experienced expressed in using body language like face muscles. It is also proposed that if people cannot identify emotions in themselves, they will be unable to live fulfilling and enthusiastically rewarding lives [3].

### **Self-regulation**

People with high emotional intelligence are more adaptable to changing circumstances, and they control impulse-driven reactions and behaviors. Thus, EI helps people stay calm, cope with challenges, and think logically. Self-regulation is a must for students. This aspect of emotional intelligence helps learners cope well in the academic environment, because they can identify emotional restraint and further prevent escalation.

### **Motivation**

People with higher EI take the initiative, turn intention into action, and make more decisions. They can achieve their career and personal goals.

## **Empathy**

People with empathy and emotional intelligence understand the feelings, needs, and concerns of others. They can understand even the smallest of emotional changes like verbal and non-verbal, how others are feeling, what is most important to them, and their emotional state. Being able to listen to others pursue collaboration and inspire others.

## **Social Skills**

People with high EQ communicate clearly, stick to commitments, feel comfortable socially. EQ helps to separate friends from foes and to identify others' motives. They can have uncomfortable social conversations without hurt feelings. Any conflict for them is an opportunity to grow closer to others without confrontation. Their social skills are managed properly: relationships are developed, maintained, and improved with careful consideration. Natural curiosity pushes them to connect with those around them.

Assessing emotional intelligence is one of the primary steps for students to achieve their true potential. Since IQ isn't enough on its own, EQ skills must interfere with education for success. When it comes to student achievement and satisfaction with the college experience, EQ levels also affect learners. For example, students higher in EQ are habitually more engaged and show extensive resistance to burnout [4].

Emotions can precede thought, and when our emotions run high, our brains function differently — diminishing our cognitive abilities, decision-making powers, and interpersonal skills. Uncontrolled emotions can generate stress, which quickly affects physical as well as mental health, making people more vulnerable to anxiety and depression while avoiding strong relationships.

The theory has been applied actively in the business world, but has also become a focus of attention in education. Recent researches show that young adults are becoming less emotionally aware. Changes in family structure, the reduced role of parents in education, mobility and technology, Coronavirus isolation, war with Russia in Ukraine are main factors leading to the necessity to develop EQ at all levels of education. Unlike IQ, EQ is flexible and highly responsive to change. In education, it spreads to the institution, teachers and students through promoting academic success while reducing anxiety and negative feelings during the learning process. At the same time, outlines for future life are made while skills are developed that are in demand by employers. At a University level, the idea is in creating an environment conducive to raising students' EQ. Much of this involves creating a sense of identity, safety and value [5]. Thus, the lecturers are to foster:

- Attachment – A sense of belonging to the school or university.
- Reassurance – That others experience difficulties.
- Bonding – Facilitating the formation of friendships.
- Induction – Informing students of what is available.
- Training – In study skills, time management and stress reduction.
- Holism – Balancing academic learning with physical and social activities.

In a teacher-centred classroom, interrelationships among the group are not vital, but in communicative language teaching, where pair and groupwork are the necessity, support and co-operation between learners is essential. Freshmen mostly are reluctant to cooperate, often as a result of some fear, anxiety and anger rather than linguistic inability, and are unlikely to learn much in a student-centred classroom. Thus, the teacher has to focus on areas of language used to express emotions, and on classroom techniques which will reduce tension and produce better group work results. Another reason for it can be that general requirements for All-Ukrainian English Tests known as the National Multitest and the Common Entrance Examination involve deep Reading and Use of English skills, somehow neglecting Writing, Listening and Speaking abilities.

Based on my professional background I must admit that those active learners who are not afraid of making mistakes or show significant involvement in the process of ESP Learning must have had some positive experiences in their lives communicating with either native speakers or their foreign peers in diverse Internet communities or real-life situations. Having active position in life, team experience or leadership, drama club membership, team sports are the ways to make a solid foundation for studying and life success. The more they are engaged into it, the more positive income for the both sides we will get.

As FL lecturers we are supposed to use such activities which promote the sharing of ideas and communication in the classroom. Ice breakers, warmers and mingle activities help students get to know each other and promote interest in lessons if they are related to the topic area. Brainstorming and discussion encourage the sharing of knowledge and opinions. Group work encourages cooperation. Tasks should be designed so that all members have to contribute and have the same outcome. Collaborative reading and writing

activities as well as group speaking activities may be applied. The mentioned above is not a complete list, but just a couple of useful tips to boost the interactive process.

It is a well-known fact that enhancing your EI takes desire, patience, and practice. Provided there both “will and way”, consequently, those who want to develop their emotional intelligence should consider increasing their sleep quality by waking up consistently, staying away from sleep aids, caffeine in the afternoon. People who want to advance their EI should often check in with their emotions, keep stress under control, analyze and accept their emotions as valuable.

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