

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

Emotions are a vital part of the journey for both language teachers and learners, yet they often take a backseat in discussions about language acquisition. Traditionally, the focus has been more on cognitive skills, but the recent shift known as the 'affective turn' in applied linguistics is changing that. This shift emphasizes how emotions shape the way teaching and learning unfold. This article dives into the various emotions that teachers and learners' experience, what triggers these feelings, and how they impact the learning process. It reviews important theories and research related to emotions in teaching and learning, as well as in teacher development. It also offers practical methods for building emotional competence—essentially, the ability to understand and manage emotions effectively in the context of language education.

Keywords: Emotions, affective turn, emotional competence, language acquisition, cognitive skills, language education, practical methods, motivation, anxiety.

Introduction

This research surveys the various types of emotions which are undergone in the classroom and suggests some possible solutions to improve emotional intelligence and the capability to effectively control the feelings during teaching and learning. This article aims to explore a number of statements but there are two key points that stood out. Firstly, emotions are an essential part of teaching a language because they can form the best ways of teaching and effect student's desires to apply what they have learned in practice.

The secondly, emotions are feelings in the classroom about teachers, classmates, the usage of English, methods and teaching materials, the feedback of teachers, some networking sites for learners. Negative feelings can disappoint students when they cannot achieve their aims in the classroom. The following emotions can be experienced by learners in the process of learning a new language: afraid of being ashamed in front of classmates, vacillate to show his or her knowledge, feel anxiety about pronouncing words incorrectly and making some grammar mistakes, worry about misunderstanding the instructor's explanations. The ability of performing knowledge is sometimes relevant to pupil's character, sex, self-assurance, learning opportunities and cultural aspects. Wen and Clement (2003, p. 18-38) researched in China that if Chinese learners spoke aloud in the classroom it was not be appreciated by other students, it seemed like bragging and caused dissatisfaction among students.

Literature Review

The process of teaching might arise both positive and negative emotions for teachers. Favorable connections involve that inspired learners, small-sized classes, modern technologies and resources, well-furnished room, qualified and supportive supervisors who can offer innovative ideas and, reinforcement for teaching. Unpleasing situations can cause frustration and irritation. They may include sizable class, demotivated students, inadequately equipped room. Dewaele (2018, p. 21-45) said that teachers had to take an emotional thermometer in order to decrease concern in foreign language classroom.

Small-Sized Classes for favorable learning environment

Small-sized classes can be a great example for creating favorable learning atmosphere. The advantages of small classes are well-documented (Blatchford et al., 2003). They allow for increased individual attention from the teacher, opportunities for more personalized feedback, and a stronger sense of community within the classroom. Smaller class sizes can lead to higher levels of student participation and interaction, which is particularly beneficial for language learning, which requires active communication (Tsui, 1996).

Modern Technologies and Resources

The integration of technology into the classroom has been found to significantly enhance the learning experience (Zhao, 2003). Interactive whiteboards, educational apps, and online resources can provide diverse learning opportunities and cater to different learning styles. The use of authentic materials (e.g., online articles, videos, podcasts) helps learners connect with the target language and culture more effectively (Little, 2007).

Well-Furnished Room

The physical learning environment can significantly affect the learning process (Maxwell, 2008). A well-furnished room with good lighting, comfortable seating, and appropriate learning materials can create a more positive and conducive learning atmosphere. A comfortable and inviting classroom environment contributes to learners' sense of comfort and security, reducing anxiety and improving overall well-being (Woolfolk, 2016).

Impact of Frustration and Irritation for unpleasing learning environment

Frustration and irritation, which are often linked to negative emotions like stress and anxiety, have been shown to impair cognitive processes essential for learning, such as attention, memory, and problem-solving (Tyng et al., 2017). These emotions can lead to negative attitudes towards the subject matter, the learning process, and the overall educational experience. The experience of frustration and irritation can further contribute to a loss of motivation and engagement, making it more difficult to foster a positive learning experience.

Inadequately Equipped Room

An inadequately equipped room (e.g., poor lighting, uncomfortable seating, lack of suitable materials) can create a distracting and uncomfortable learning environment, hindering

concentration and engagement (Maxwell, 2008). The absence of necessary resources (e.g., textbooks, technology, visual aids) limits the types of learning activities that can be implemented and can lead to frustration for both students and teachers who lack the tools they need. A poorly equipped learning environment can create a sense of neglect and devaluation, negatively impacting learners' motivation and self-esteem (Woolfolk, 2016). This can create a general sense of apathy and disengagement.

Methods

This methodology conducts a comprehensive review of existing literature on the role of emotions in language learning and teaching. This includes studies on emotional intelligence, affective factors, and pedagogical strategies that incorporate emotional awareness. The study conducts semi-structured interviews with language teachers to gather insights on their experiences and perceptions regarding the emotional dynamics in their classrooms.

Teachers organize focus group discussions with students to explore their emotional responses to language learning activities and how these affect their engagement and motivation.

This study implements observational studies in various language classrooms to analyze emotional interactions between teachers and students. Focus on non-verbal cues, classroom atmosphere, and the impact of emotional expression on learning outcomes.

Data Collection

1. Literature Review: This study gathers existing research articles, books, and studies related to emotions in language teaching and learning, and uses databases like Google Scholar, JSTOR, and educational journals.

2. Qualitative Research: Interviews: This study conducts interviews with 10-15 language teachers and 15-20 students, focusing on their emotional experiences and perceptions.

Focus Groups: This study organizes 3-4 focus group sessions with students from different language backgrounds to discuss emotional challenges and positive experiences in learning.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis analyzes interview transcripts and focus group discussions to identify recurring themes related to emotions in language teaching and uses coding techniques to categorize responses.

Observational data analyzes observation notes to identify patterns in emotional interactions, focusing on non-verbal cues and classroom dynamics.

Results

The results from the survey and case studies highlight several key findings:

1. Qualitative findings: Emotional support: Teachers reported that creating a supportive environment significantly enhanced student motivation.

Anxiety and Fear: Many students expressed feelings of anxiety, particularly during speaking activities.

Positive Emotions: Most students felt instances of joy and excitement were linked to interactive and engaging teaching methods.

2. Quantitative Findings: 70% of students reported feeling anxious during language assessments, while 85% felt motivated when participating in collaborative activities. Teachers noted that 60% felt inadequately prepared to address emotional challenges in their classrooms.

3. Classroom Observations: Observations revealed that classes with more interactive activities fostered positive emotional expressions, such as laughter and engagement, compared to traditional lecture-based classes.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the significant role emotions play in language teaching and learning, revealing both challenges and opportunities for educators. The integration of emotional awareness into pedagogical practices can transform the language learning experience for both teachers and students.

The study found that engaging, interactive teaching methods - such as group work and role-playing - elicited positive emotional responses from students. This supports the idea that experiential learning can enhance emotional engagement, leading to deeper learning. The correlation between enjoyment in learning activities and increased motivation suggests that teachers should prioritize dynamic and interactive approaches to instruction.

Conclusion

In conclusion this study underscores the critical importance of emotions in language teaching and learning. The findings reveal that emotional dynamics significantly influence both student engagement and learning outcomes. By fostering an emotionally supportive classroom environment, educators can enhance motivation and reduce anxiety, thereby facilitating a more effective language learning experience.

The research highlights the necessity for teachers to develop emotional intelligence and to implement pedagogical strategies that address the emotional needs of their students. Engaging, interactive teaching methods not only promote positive emotional experiences but also encourage deeper learning and participation.

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