

Emotional Language Classroom and Teacher: Skill Development Initiative

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Abstract

The following article promotes Emotional Education methodology to be incorporated in B.Ed. for effective & productive acquisition oriented stress-free interactive emotional connect with the subject in hand. Here, we have chosen a novel methodology for English language learning as it is essential lingua franca for enhancing employability.

Emotional language is something that invokes an emotional response within a person. Using English as an Emotional language requires assistance from teachers because it is not something one acquires through childhood. But it is as equally important as any other native language people use in their daily lives. What Emotional language teacher teaches is means to an important end which is using language not only as a medium of communication but also for developing an emotional connection. (Challa, 2017)

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1.Introduction:Emotional language is something that invokes an emotional response within a person. Using English as an Emotional language requires assistance from teachers because it is not something one acquires through childhood. But it is as equally important as any other native language people use in their daily lives. What Emotional language teacher teaches is means to an important end which is using language not only as a medium of communication but also for developing an emotional connection. (Challa, 2017)

2.Motherese

Motherese is a term used for the way a mother talks to her young children. It is the most common way known for child's language acquisition. It is also known in general as the Caregiver speech. (Laing, 2016)

For an Emotional language teacher, the need for playing the role of Motherese is paramount. If a teacher acts like a mother to his/her students, then the probability of students interacting with him/her, confiding in him/her and sharing their ideas with him/her is most probable. The class hours would be more active and effective in that way.

Now-a-days, in a competitive and stressful world like ours, the bond between a teacher and the student is gradually diminishing with every year. If the situation like this prolongs, then it's inevitable for that bond to be void.

Without an understanding between a teacher and the student, the productivity would be less and less. Throughout the student lives, people will come across a lot of teachers. There may be teachers that intimidate them. There may be teachers that care less about the class and more about the completion of the syllabus.

Acquiring languages like English that aren't one's native languages as an Emotional language is a very useful and essential thing. And it is only possible with the teachers giving their absolute best in guiding their students. Unlike a mother tongue people acquire at a very early age, attaining English as the emotional language takes time and lot of work that is impossible unless there is a teacher to guide the student in a proper way. (Challa, 2017)

3.Facilitator:

Besides acting as a caretaker, Emotional Language teacher should also be a facilitator to the students. That means a teacher should be able to help students understand their common objectives and assist them to plan how to achieve these objectives. Every teacher should be capable of doing that thereby making the action or process easier.

The most vital quality a facilitator should possess is neutrality. Without neutrality, the outcome of any and every situation won't be fair. If the person who is meant to see that the things move along swiftly is biased and subjective, then the entire purpose of being a facilitator is pointless.

Emotional language teachers should be more open minded and objective when it comes to organizing discussions and debates. Objectivity is inarguably a vital part for a facilitator. Pre-conceived notions about a particular issue or issues leads the arguments astray leading to quarrels and disputes. Prejudice always obscures the truth. Consider an example. A teacher separates her class of 20 members into two distinct groups. She gives them a topic of 'Religion versus Science' and allots religion to one group and science to another group. And then, she instructs her students to begin the debate.

The teacher already having an opinion about the whole debate before it even started is totally normal. She could be a staunch Hindu for example. But if she's outspoken about her pre-conceived notion during the debate, then that doesn't lead to an ideal debate. She would contradict every point that is made by the group that supports Science.

4.Activities and games:

Many private schools are imposing inconvenient and stressful environment on their students. And teachers, instead of alleviating their stress, are worsening them even more. They are solely focusing on repetitively transmitting information to students in quantities more than they can consume.

The reason why education system is widely criticized is because it is doing everything else other than fulfilling its main purpose. Main purpose of a teacher is to deliver valuable and durable information to pupil that they can actually use in the real world.

A student should be taught to observe, analyze and perform practical experiments instead of staring at the visualized figure of a real-world machine or a natural entity. Confining a student within four walls degrades his/her capability of practicality and skepticism.

As per a research conducted by Kappa Delta Pi Group Discussion Resource, English as an emotional language is best taught through explicit, direct instruction and interactive approaches. It was thoroughly detailed and proved in the above-mentioned research. A teacher should be open to interacting with students and allotting them time to question and resolve their doubts.

Incorporating activities and games along with studying and learning in classes yields better outcomes. They help in not losing students' interest besides keeping them active and sharp. An Emotional Language teacher should critically think about all these aspects and act accordingly.

5.Emotional Intelligence:

Emotional Intelligence is the capacity to be aware of and express one's emotions. It is a tool to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically. Pertaining Emotional intelligence helps an individual to recognize his/her own and other people's emotions. It gives them the ability to discern between feelings and categorize them appropriately.

Emotional intelligence is widely regarded as a principal factor for personal and professional success. One can become emotionally intelligent as they age and mature. By using emotional intelligence, one can adapt to his/her environment by identifying and managing their emotions. It is in short termed as EQ or EI. (Goleman, 1995)

Emotional Intelligence is a skill every Emotional language teacher should have. Emotional language teachers can't expect success without having the ability to empathize with other's emotions.

Increasing Emotional intelligence is no easy task but still a vital one for every student. It has the ability to manage one's emotions in a positive way. It relieves stress. It helps in effective communication. It offers people the capacity to perceive and understand all the human emotions like happiness, melancholy, anxiety, love, envy and humor and many more.

If both teachers and students possess Emotional intelligence, then that kind of class would be ideal, and it will prosper without any breaks or struggles. Humans are emotional creatures by nature. So, Emotional intelligence is incorporated within them by default. All they have to do is master it, control it and use it to their advantage.

6.An Ideal Emotional Language Teaching Classroom

A language classroom could either be very boring or can be made extremely interesting by creating an ideal ambience. The main idea that is to be borne in mind while preparing for an ideal classroom is to ensure that the learning objective is met.(Cabau, B.,2009)The teacher should make use of the physical surrounding of the class and also inculcate many optimistic approaches towards teaching.

Basic skills to engage the audience or students do not involve dumping theory and various standards and rules. A language is not represented by its vocabulary and grammatical construction. It is the voice of a culture. (Toh, G. (2012) When a person learns a language, it means he is understanding the culture which brings about changes in his own perception too. The class should have a specific long term objective towards which the efforts are to be directed. A teacher should be able to ignite the imagination of the student.

7.Acquisition of English language:

For the acquisition of English language, establishing an English environment is a pre requisite. There is a reason why despite of no formal education of mother tongue, one is fluent and comfortable communicating in that language. That is the language one converses with close ones which adds an emotional touch.(Cabau, B.,2009)Also when one grows older listening to music, watching movies and most of all in an environment that is filled with the emotional language, acquisition is but inevitable.

8. Technology aided learning:

Recent surveys of high school students reveal 70% of the students are interested in technology than lectures. So, an ideal classroom should culminate into a fusion of both. The teacher should win the audience by using technology which keeps the students glued.

So, the teachers should use technology to boost student motivation and to enhance the material being taught. Using some online games help in engaging students and make it a fun filled environment.

Though one can see the dominant role that technology plays these days, teacher-facilitated learning should be enhanced and the importance is to be understood. It cannot be replaced. One can't expect miracles by just handing the students few devices. As teachers, it is seen as their responsibility to work towards it by making a collective effort.

9. An ideal classroom Environment

An ideal classroom should foster positivity and productivity. Teacher should be positive and confident – if the teacher seems not prepared, students would be least interested in the class. (Burke, Karen & Barbara Burke-Samide., 2013) Bad teaching habits might not necessarily let the student lose interest in the language but good teaching definitely leaves an impact on the student leaving the student with an urge to learn more. A good classroom environment needs to be:

9.1 Positive:

Humans have a tendency to scan through people and the ambience around while entering a new place, be it a new workplace, a changed apartment or a new friend that one meets. One thinks if he would feel safe, fit in well in the place and would he be comfortable in the others company. Same is the case with students. When a student enters a classroom, he/she needs to be assured that they would find it to be the best place to learn and unleash their talents. A positive classroom environment is the prerogative to build emotional connect for the students towards the subject or the language. The ambience has a wonderful impact on the students that keeps them coming back for more and keeps their minds open to learning new things. This improves academic efficacy. A classroom that lacks this basic feature gives way to resentment in students. They tend to be reluctant to learn new things. They only look for ways to escape the class.

9.2 Encourage questioning attitude:

In the words of the ancient Greek philosopher and scientist Aristotle, 'It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it. Let the students ask questions. Shutting them up is not the sign of a good teacher. Let the questions seem to be simple, foolish, and silly. One should let the student feel that every question posed is worth answering. This helps the student to come out of their shell and explore more and eventually learn more.

9.2.1 Motivate the students to talk more:

Students are stressed in a language class owing to the stress given to grammar and the perfection that is taught. Learning a language is possible only if talking is done. Usually, students have their mind thinking about the repercussions of talking and not talking. With this hesitant attitude, students often tend to talk less if not encouraged or ignored.

9.2.2 Stress free environment:

Start the class with an altogether different topic that has nothing to do with the curriculum. Make the environment light. Since the language classes are usually scheduled for the last hour of a day, students are exhausted by then. Use aids like a 5 minute music therapy where students are allowed to listen to music and relax for a while that lets them concentrate better on the class to be followed.

9.2.2 Engaging:

A class should leave the students wanting to learn more. It should involve the art of storytelling and taking the students through a ride where they learn by engaging themselves and never realize how time flew by. The time spent joyfully passes by within a blink of an eye and monotonous learning makes the class seem to be never ending. Voice modulation and narration is the key. Ask a question that leaves the whole class thinking. This creates interest. Build on this and then reveal.

10 Innovative:

A language classroom, though has its rules laid down for pronunciation, grammar, structure etc., it is the place that has the widest scope for innovation. Through innovative learning, students are enabled to grasp the subject easily and can retain it for long.

Encourage formation of a Classroom Community for a week that would be responsible for the presentation of programs on a selected day, preferable the last day or the first day of the week. Hand it over to them so that they can come with innovative ideas and encourage creativity. This will not only improve the productivity but also lets them all work in teams and understand the importance of leadership skills.

11 Focus is 'Them' and not 'You':

A teacher spends time after and before class in preparing for the class and habitually assesses the class based on the standards they set for their own selves. However, one ought to remember that how students perceive the teacher is of more importance if the objective is acquisition of knowledge by the students. Only if students' perspective is taken into consideration can a teacher mould the teaching ways to accommodate the needs of students. (Cheng, Yeun Cheong., 2013) The instructions given to guide the students, though majorly generalized. After taking them through the topic, need to be individualized depending on the student's need.

12 Inculcate a sense of belonging:

Think of a teenager wearing a jersey of his favorite sports team. He would wear it with such pride- all credit to the sense of belongingness that he feels. Same should be the case of a classroom. The student should be felt belonged to the class. No student should be left in isolation. The tone of instructions given and the student feeling needed by others determines the feeling of belongingness.

13 Unbiased:

Bias is a big No. It is to be understood that not every student is proactive. There are students who learn quickly and those who find it difficult to understand the structure of a particular language. One should always remain aware of this fact. Rather than being carried away by the students who easily understand and respond in class, focus should also be laid on the students who lack the social skills and get away with the class by nodding heads along with the majority around them.

14 Being receptive:

An emotional language teacher has to be open minded. It is to be understood that language classroom has a wider scope for innovation and imagination than any other. There can be multiple views for a single question. . (Gaurdino, Caroline A. & Elizabeth, F., 2013) So, the teacher has to be sympathetic to the varied views and should work at how to bring harmony among the answers for the question posed.

15 Stimulate self-assessment:

Asking students to list a few things that made them feel proud or their areas of improvement thrills them. This habit ensures they are more focused the next time they perform a task for they would bear in minds that they might be asked to introspect themselves. Assessing one own self lets them be grounded with a clear understanding of their calibre and flaws.

16 Full body learning:

Human body is said to have a strong memory of its own. Learning through gestures and bodily movements makes retention easy. There is a reason why activities like dancing and singing ensure memories are etched for a longer time in the human mind. Taking up activities that use the body and brain for learning aids acquisition of the emotional language.

17 Being passionate:

Displaying passion for the subject and the language interests the students and is a great gift that can be given to the students. It is the easiest way to keep the students engaged. Even if some of the students seem disengaged and not keen about the passion there is nothing to worry, they would actually learn by observing and absorbing though they seem to not showcase it. (Gaurdino, Caroline A. & Elizabeth, F., 2013) Telling out loud to the students that the teacher enjoys teaching the language reinforces their feelings.

18 Praise the students:

The classroom culture should be encouraging, praise the students for their work well done. Praising the students in front of the whole class boosts their confidence. They usually do not hear so much good in the whole day. So, praising keeps them motivated to perform better. Also, finding ways to reward students who are struggling encourages them to keep learning. This motivation helps them develop an emotional connect.

Learning a language is so different from other subjects when it comes to learning it virtually. Language acquisition requires the necessary speaking and listening skills unlike the other subjects. Students should be empowered to re-imagine tomorrow. It can be seen that classrooms today are technology driven. Teachers need not necessarily know everything about how to use various apps. Students should be encouraged to learn and teach other students, and the teacher can also be open to learn from the students. Think of how this process can enhance communication, presentation and team building skills.

11. Enhancing the classroom experience:

Ability to develop an emotional relationship with students:

Monica, a high school student was asked to write a test on the topic taught in the last week's class. She attempted but could reach an accuracy level of about 60%. While on the other hand she was asked to recall a story her grandmother recited during childhood and she came up with the summarized version with the names of the characters and the perfect chronology of the events in the story. (Fay, R., Lytra, V. & Ntavalagkou, M., 2010) This is an example of the kind of teaching abilities that should be imbibed from all the mothers and grandmothers. A teacher that develops an emotional connection with the students helps create an amicable environment for the students to learn the subject with all their heart and mind. A student fully present in the class with his mind concentrating on the topic and heart trying to connect with it can acquire it completely.

12. Ability to build students' confidence:

One reason for the friction students feel in a language class is the complex grammatical structure that is given so much importance to when a language is taught. So is the case with English. Teaching the rules and asking the students to abide by them at any cost makes them so cautious and many of them end up not talking at all for the fear of making mistakes. (Kephart, Newell C. & William Floyd., 1954). To help them fight this fear, it is the duty of a teacher to instill confidence in them.

Ability to maintain discipline in the classroom

As a teacher one must be aware of the thin line that draws between being friendly and being instructional. Instructing in a friendly tone is an art that is to be mastered. Students should realize the importance of learning the lesson being taught and not just lend their ears because they were dictated to. Maintaining an order and discipline involves the students being prepared for a routine over a period of time that helps regulating the brain to focus during that time of the day.

13. Make room for constructive criticism:

Criticism in a constructive way is healthy as this has the approval of the student. Positive criticism has the effect of learning by understanding what is wrong and why is it wrong. When correcting a student let them know that what is being corrected is the language but not the person being spoken to. (Lodico, M.G., Spaulding, D.T. and Voegtle, K.H., 2010) Ensure that the feedback is restricted to the point and is not vague. This ensures the student to take criticism in an optimistic way and develop on it.

14. Time of the class:

Depending on the time of the day the class is held different approaches need to be adopted to by the teacher in order to ensure the class is lively. If the class is held in the early hours students usually tend to be attentive and fresh. However, usually language classes are pushed towards the end of the day. This is the reason why a language teacher has to make good efforts to keep the class engaging.

15. Impart information about the target language's culture:

One has to understand that the class is multi-cultural. Depending on the diverse cultural background of the students, some might easily learn and understand the culture of the language being taught while others might find it difficult to fit into the scenario. Consider one the important emotion of humans- humour. Humor has different definitions in different languages. To learn what a language is trying to say, one has to know the culture of the language. Giving examples and telling stories about the native culture of the language helps students in acquiring the language.

16. Flex the time-table:

Following a set time-table is a must for preparing the students for academics. It helps to have a check on the progress of the syllabus. Yet, tweaking it a little by asking the students to choose between 2 topics as to what would they want to learn on a particular day is good at times. (Gaurdino, Caroline A. & Elizabeth, F., 2013) This practice makes the students believe that they too have a say in the proceedings of the class. It makes them feel empowered and they look forward to more of such classes.

17. Keep moving:

One should shed the inhibitions about the looks and remember that communication and linguistics is much beyond looks. Many a times when a person is asked to present before a large audience, most of them focus a lot on their physical attributes. If the person is comfortable in their own skin and the tangibility does not consume so much space in the head, it is a lot more easier to concentrate on what is to be delivered and how is to be delivered. This is a habitual behaviour that is to be inculcated over a period of time. So, the students are to be encouraged to participate in activities that keep them moving in the class.

18. Conclusion

The idea of Emotional Intelligence in tandem with language learning, the various concepts that have been detailed and the ideas and that have been taken into consideration shape up the Emotional Language

Teaching method making it one of the most reliable and successful language teaching methods of today. The theories have been tried and tested and the method is gaining its ground quickly. The burden of success is equally shared by the teacher and the learner and gives rise to a new dimension of collaboration for learning.

We took the case study of English Language to implement Emotional Language Teaching. But this method can be implemented on any language and in fact any subject to create efficient and quality learning platform. It is our sincere request to the Educational Institutions and governments to make Emotional Education mandatory for a progressive holistic education for the leaders of the future as a Skill Development Initiative.

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