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An Emotional Literacy Improvement (ELI) Program for EFL Teachers: Insiders' Views*

Seden Eraldemir-Tuyan**

Cag University, TURKEY

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Abstract: If the challenges of today's world are to be met, then there is a need to give more prominence to emotion in education, i.e. indulging the personal, emotional and spiritual aspects of teaching, and promoting the teachers' social-emotional competencies along with the schooling influence. In this respect, structuring the contents of in-service programs has gained vital importance in all fields of education including English Language Teaching (ELT). This action research study involved 17 EFL instructors to enhance their emotional literacy regarding learning in self and in others and consequently develop behaviors that would be caused by finding out about emotional intelligence. Relatedly, it was aimed to set up a framework of a teacher development program that the instructors at a foreign language school at a state university in Turkey improve their emotional literacy skills and create opportunities to impart these skills to their students as well as to people in their personal lives. The article reports on the participants' and the researcher's views regarding the maturation of an emotional literacy improvement program for in-service professional development purposes in ELT context.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, emotional literacy improvement, EFL teachers, professional development.

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Introduction

Cognitive dimensions on learning and teaching have been considered fundamental for success for many years. Consequently, in opposition to the emphasis given on the cognitive aspect in education, the affective domain is de-emphasized or not emphasized at all (Hargreaves, 2000) despite the fact that emotions, accompany all cognitive processes, including teaching and learning (Fogarty 1998; Gordon, 1987; Hargreaves 2000; Tyng, Amid, Saad & Malik, 2017). In English Language Teaching (ELT), affective domain, especially under the broad category of personality factors, has mostly dealt with emotions under the titles of self-esteem, motivation, inhibition, risk-taking, empathy, extraversion, etc. (Arnold, 2011; Brown, 1994; Dewaele, 2005;; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Gregersen, MacIntyre & Meza, 2014,) stressing their importance in language learning. With the advent of Emotional Intelligence, there has been an increasing interest in emotions in education (Chemiss, 2000; Cobb and Mayer, 2000; Gibbs 1995; Kelly and Moon, 1998; Mayer and Cobb 2000; Mortari, 2015; Pfeiffer, 2001; Singh & Kumar, 2016; Swain, 2013), both the emotions of teachers at work and students in and outside the classroom, which led to many scholars to discuss how to benefit from affective domain to raise the quality of education. When Salovey and Mayer (1990) coined the term "Emotional Intelligence" (EI) after exploring the relationships between cognitive brain functions and affect (including emotions, moods), they attracted considerable attention again on affective domain in learning. These researchers describe EI as "the ability to recognize how you and those around you are feeling, as well as the ability to generate, understand, and regulate emotions" (as cited in Mayer and Cobb, 2000, p. 166). Then, in 1995, Daniel Goleman expanded on the Mayer - Salovey theory in a way that helped educators make use of EI in educational settings. Accordingly, he described five general areas of emotional intelligence: Self -awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, which have a close bearing to all aspects of life, namely, teachers' and students' lives, in our context.

As to the emotions in teacher education, according to Collinson (1999), 'good' teachers make use of their *interpersonal knowledge* and *intrapersonal knowledge* as well as their *professional knowledge*. *Interpersonal knowledge* requires such

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**** Correspondence:**

Seden Eraldemir-Tuyan, Cag University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, 33800 Yenice/Mersin/TURKEY ✉ sedentuyan@gmail.com



characteristics as empathy to understand others, honesty and trust, respect, tolerance of different perspectives, good communication skills, political awareness. *Intrapersonal knowledge* includes the processes and conceptions that influence how teachers perceive and their decision- making, help them establish successful relationships with their students and colleagues (Collinson, 1999). Consequently, Collinson's study suggests that, these three kinds of knowledge derived from teachers' descriptions, is similar to Goleman's (1995) research on learnable aspects of intelligence.

Generally, people involved in education “at various times, worry, hope, enthuse, become bored, doubt, envy, brood, love, feel proud, get anxious, are despondent, become frustrated” (Hargreaves, 2000, p.2). Thus, the importance of emotions and emotional intelligence in teacher education and in-service training may become more obvious when we consider the nature of the interaction between the teacher and students in the classroom, the administration and teachers in a school. Obviously, the teachers’ not understanding, or misunderstanding their students’ emotions will prevent the teacher from responding effectively to the immediate context of the classroom, and consequently will lead to problems in the classroom and will lower the level of the quality in teaching. Similarly, if the interaction between the teachers and the administration lack emotional literacy, this will cause an ineffective environment for education. To avoid this, it is necessary for the people involved in education to establish a sound interaction (between administration - teacher, teacher - teacher, teacher - student), to understand one another’s emotions better.

Literature Review

Humanistic approaches focusing on the inner world of the learner consider the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the individual as the most important components of human

development. In this respect, the theories introduced by Erik Erikson, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers provide the basis regarding the nature of humanism within the learning process.

Erikson's theory (1963) implies that educators, in their attempt to care others, have the power of helping their students develop some very important personality traits like trust, autonomy, taking initiative, industry, identity, intimacy, integrity at different stages of their lives. From this point of view, this theory supports the contribution of EI to learning and how effective could teachers be to enable their students’ study and think positively, if they themselves are emotionally literate.

Maslow (1968) explains human behavior in terms of meeting basic needs. He argues for two different categories of needs: *deficiency* (or maintenance) needs and *being* (or growth) needs. His hierarchy of needs is usually presented in the form of a pyramid (see Figure 1 below).

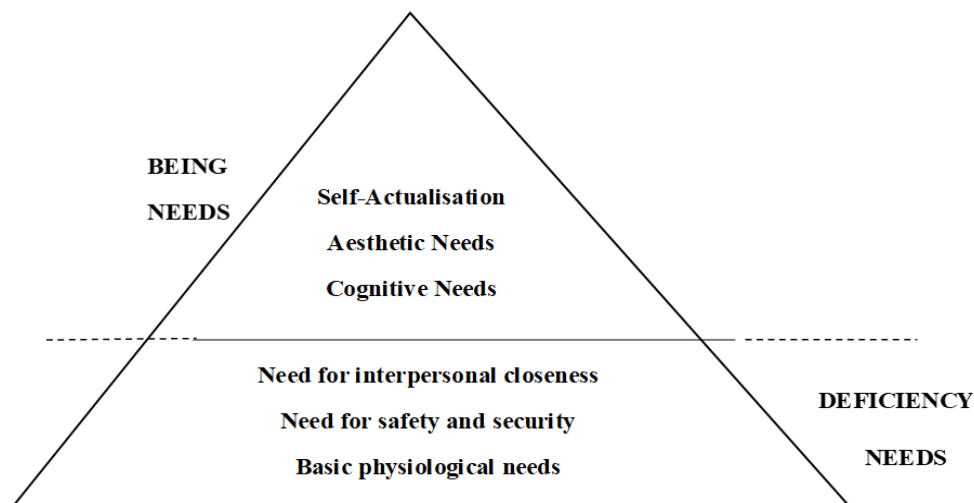


Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (as cited in Williams & Burden, 1997, p.34)

The first four layers of the pyramid portray the deficiency needs, which are straightly related to a person's psychological or biological balance. Physiological requirements such as food, water, sleep, and the absence of pain and the needs for security, belonging, and self-esteem are also included within these four layers. As Maslow (1968) asserted, if these needs were not met or not fulfilled in some way, it wouldn't be easy or even possible to go further up the hierarchy. The top three levels in Maslow's system represent the second category of needs, which are called the being needs. Within this category, if an individual fulfils his/her potential in terms of cognitive and aesthetic development, and the accomplishment of self-actualization, he/she can achieve the highest point in the hierarchy of needs. However, being needs are considered to require a particular kind of nurturing environment which people can express themselves and explore and therefore, and as Williams & Burden (1997) claim “few people ever become aware

of their full potential to attain self-actualization” (p.34). The fulfilment of human needs as expressed by Maslow has significant implications for every teacher including the emotionally literate EFL teachers who are the main focus of this study. These implications are listed as follows (Williams & Burden, 1997, p. 34-35):

- Students may be having difficulties with learning in school because their basic needs are not being met at home or in the classroom,
- Establishing a secure environment where learners feel that they belong and where they can build up self-respect by receiving respect from others,
- Learners should be encouraged to think (cognitive needs),
- Learners shouldn't be penalized for being different and creative (aesthetic needs),
- Classroom tasks should be challenging and encourage curiosity in order to help learners realize their full potential,
- One of the primary functions of education is to enable learners to develop as individuals in their own right, and thereby achieve self-actualization.

Rogers (1959) presents the concept of the ‘need for positive regard’, which comprises attitudes such as warmth, liking, respect, sympathy and acceptance. As Rogers claims, this need is reflected in the infant's need for love and affection. So, “if the parents give the child unconditional positive regard and if the child feels “prized” by the parents ... s/he will not be forced to disregard his/her experiencing process whenever it conflicts with the self-concept” (as cited in Pervin, 1993, p. 187). However, where positive regard is conditional, children and adults may eliminate the experiences by not becoming aware of them and limiting their potential for self-actualization (ibid). Roger’s (1959) views also contribute highly relevant ideas regarding the EI theory and the qualities of an *emotionally literate teacher*, which is within the scope of this study. Accordingly, following Rogers' theory teachers can foster their students' *self-awareness* by encouraging self-evaluation, *self-control*, emphasizing such personality traits as trust, worthiness, conscientiousness and adaptability, *motivation*, by taking the self-actualization of an individual as the central motive, *empathy and social skills*, focusing on the importance of others' feelings, needs and concerns.

Humanistic movements share the idea that “... much of human personality can be modified for the better through learning” (Mayer & Cobb, 2000, p. 169). Therefore, to promote the advancement of a society, the main focus has been generally on helping students to become “good” human beings by making them aware of values such as self-development, caring, respect, responsibility. There are three recognizable movements in the 20th century that heighten the importance of involving students in such practices to encourage their social and emotional development in education: (1) character education movement (Artman & Jacobs, 1928, in Mayer & Cobb, 2000), (2) affective (humanistic) education movement (Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers in the 1950s), (3) social-emotional learning movement. Although these movements mostly have common goals towards education regarding their philosophies, they differ in the way they emphasize their educational approaches.

The heart of character education is the belief that virtues such as honesty, hard work, kindness, patriotism, courage, be part of education for all students (Robinson III et al., 2000). This belief emphasizes the desire to help children become 'good people' (in Huitt, 1998; in Robinson III et al., 2000) - one of the greatest goals of education. As societal moral problems have increased in recent years, the realization that young people need moral direction, has come back to character education. However, despite the fact that character education includes any program or activity that schools engage in to help children become "good people", a restricted point of view define character education as "indoctrinating students with specific values, typically conservative ones" (Robinson III et al., 2000, p. 5).

The affective education movement is often considered synonymous with "humanistic education" and "psychological education" (Miller, 1976, in Mayer & Cobb). As De Carvalho (1991, in Huitt, 2001) suggests, “the purpose of humanistic education is to provide a foundation for personal growth and development so that learning will continue throughout life in a self-directed manner.” Humanistic education movement stemmed from the work of humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers in the 1950s and encouraged “experiential approaches for building a student's internal personal skills, self-knowledge, and feeling recognition, with a focus on promoting self-esteem and a positive self-image” (Wood, 1996, p.126).

Socioemotional learning (SEL) movement inherited some of its content from that of the humanistic education movement (Miller, 1976, in Mayer & Cobb, 2000). Similarly, SEL involves the stimulation and training of both a child's cognitive and affective development (Stern, 2002). As one of the followers of this movement, Stern (2002) claims that “by strengthening and increasing social-emotional educational opportunities, we will increase our children's capacity to learn, give them the tools to aspire to personal and professional achievements, and enable them to experience personal satisfaction” (p. 3). From this point of view, the research done in this area shows that SEL lays a basis for academic learning. Furthermore, SEL programs have been found to increase academic achievement (Elias, et al., 1997), increase pro-social behaviors, and reduce behaviors that may interfere with learning (Grossman, et al., 1997). It is also

believed that “through social and emotional learning, children’s EQ is bolstered, giving them an enormous edge in their personal and professional futures” (Stern, 2002, p. 1).

Humanism in ELT

As Williams & Burden (1997) suggest, a number of different language teaching methodologies have arisen from taking a humanistic approach; however, the main ones are *Silent Way*, *Suggestopedia*, and *Community Language Learning*. These three methodologies have common characteristics such as (Williams & Burden, 1997):

- Being founded more definitely on psychology than on linguistics,
- Considering affective aspects of learning and language as important,
- Being concerned with treating the learner as a whole person, and involving the whole person in the process of learning,
- Minimizing anxiety and enhancing personal security by realizing the importance of a learning environment.

Naturally, many other language teaching methodologies have also taken a humanistic approach in order to avoid the “alienation of learners from materials, from themselves, from the class and from the teacher” (Williams & Burden, 1997, p.37). In relation to teacher development, from the constructivist point of view, every teacher is unique. This view of teaching emphasizes the fact that no two teachers or two teaching situations can be the same. Accordingly, teachers need to be more self-aware regarding their beliefs and the ways they make sense of the world, specifically related to their views about education and how those views come to be formed and developed. In addition, they also need to be aware of the phenomenon that as teachers they themselves are construed by their learners while the learners construct their knowledge via the teachers’ words, actions, and interactions (Williams & Burden, 1997). Pennington (1990) supports the constructivist view, claiming that “teaching is most effective when it is based on two kinds of knowledge: knowledge of the students and knowledge of oneself” (p. 135). Similarly, De Lange (1990) defines teacher development as “a process of continual intellectual, experiential, and attitude growth of teachers” (p. 250). Roberts (1998) suggests that “constructivism and humanistic theories are mutually consistent; in that they value the perceptions of the individual and see learning in terms of personal change” (p.29).

Spencer Kagan’s Approach in Relation to Emotional Intelligence & Character Development

Following Goleman (1995), who expanded and emphasized the view of emotional intelligence as a list of personality characteristics, educators interested in policy found the link among EI, SEL, and character education persuasive with the idea that emotional intelligence was required to learn and behave well. Kagan, as one of those educators and a social psychologist is in favor of promoting the social and emotional development of students. His studies in the field are mainly on integrating character development (within an emotional intelligence (EQ) frame, see Table 1) into the curriculum.

Table 1. EQ/CD Links (Kagan, 2000, p.2)

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE 5 Dimensions	CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT The Virtues
Self Awareness	Integrity Honesty
Self Control	Good Judgement Self-discipline Impulse Control
Self Motivation	Perseverance Pride in one’s work
Empathy	Understanding Caring Respect Fairness
Relationship Skills	Leadership Helpfulness Cooperativeness Responsibility

In his studies, Kagan (1985;1994) argues for the long-term impact of structuring the curriculum for character rather than teaching about character by using a “structural approach.” In his terms, using a structural approach in character development means, providing opportunities for the students to acquire the virtues because of “the way content is taught.” The Kagan Structures Model places great emphasis on structures for helping to build the interaction of students with each other, the curriculum, and the teacher (Kagan, 2000).

In this study, Kagan's five dimensioned EQ model with its character development links has been taken as a guide for educational purposes. Therefore, some Kagan materials and structures have been adapted and/or used within the contents of the emotional literacy improvement course for the EFL teachers at the context of this study with his permission.

Methodology

Research Goal

This qualitative research study was designed to investigate the perceptions of the participants' and the researcher about their experience throughout an Emotional Literacy Improvement (ELI) Program which was designed for the instructors who teach English at the foreign language school (SFL) of a state university in Turkey. The participants of the ELI Program were expected to enhance their emotional literacy skills regarding learning in self and in others and consequently develop behaviors that would be caused by finding out about emotional intelligence. Thus, the researcher also intends to share insights and give some suggestions on how to set up the framework of a professional development program that various EFL teachers/instructors can improve their emotional literacy skills and create opportunities to impart these skills to their students as well as to people in their personal lives.

Sample and Data Collection

The participants of this study were the instructors of English who were teaching at SFL at a state university in Turkey. At the beginning of the year, the researcher held a meeting with all the teaching staff and explained the basics of emotional intelligence and the fundamental principles of the course. Following the meeting, the voluntary participation of 17 instructors (16 females, 1 male) out of 50 was ensured. The participants whose ages varied between 25-31 had 5 to 15 years teaching experience. The groups were formed on a voluntary basis since teacher development is believed to be self-initiated (Mathur, 1987; Fullan, 1991). Finally, out of the 17 volunteer participants, seven instructors in the piloting in fall semester and ten instructors in the main study in spring semester participated the course since the sessions aimed to integrate both the instructors' related needs and the requirements of the study.

As the frame of reference of the original study was mainly related to the tools of data collection, different instruments were chosen to be employed considering their rationale based on the theoretical and the methodological framework (see Tuyan, 2003). However, the findings reported in this article are limited with the researcher's and the participants views obtained via the researchers' footnotes and diary, learning logs filled out by the participants and section B of the Course Evaluation Questionnaire.

Pilot Study

Before getting involved in the real study, a pilot study was conducted during the fall semester.

Throughout the study, seven participant teachers were met once a week during three-hour sessions, for ten weeks. The focus of the program was mainly on Kagan 's model of EQ and supporting articles and activities to help teachers become aware of their strengths and weaknesses regarding EI.

The Cycles of the Pilot Study

1st CYCLE: Eliciting teachers' strengths and weaknesses regarding their Emotional

Intelligence (EI)

- EQ Map
- All about me Participant Profile Checklist
- Results Evaluation Document (the results were triangulated with the results evaluation document)

2nd CYCLE: Preparation of the input for the ELI Program

The most problematic dimension according to the EQ Map results considering the whole group was identified by means of content analysis and dealt with first. The course continued with the other problematic dimensions considering the density of the weaknesses of the participants.

3rd CYCLE: Task preparation;

- Kagan's five-dimensioned EQ model was taken as a guide, as his model was neatly organized and was used before for educational purposes.
- Each scale in EQ Map was categorized under Kagan's EQ dimensions and was ensured to match with the course syllabus items.

- Tasks for each session fronted by the researcher mainly consisted of the related articles for reading (gathered from different sources), experiential activities for practice (mostly produced by the researcher) and ideas for classroom practice (Kagan's activities).

4th CYCLE: Introducing the course content to the participants;

- Providing input
- Teachers read some related articles in their own time,
- Whole group discussion on the articles,
- Brainstorming,
- Peer discussion on definitions, etc.,
- Involvement in experiential activities
- Reflection on the activities by the teachers
- Learning Logs
- Peer discussion
- Whole group discussion
- Ideas for classroom practice

5th CYCLE: Finding out to what extent the activities help the teachers improve their emotional intelligence,

- EQ Map
- Teachers' learning logs
- Researcher's diary
- Researcher's footnotes

6th CYCLE: Researcher's reflection on the factors that should be taken into consideration while establishing an ELI Program,

- Researcher's Diary
- Course Evaluation Questionnaire
- Teachers' reflections in the learning logs.

The cycles followed in the pilot study were also followed in the real study. The researcher, considering the feedback on the content and structure of the pilot study gathered from the data elicited, tried to improve the possible weak points of the piloting in order to have better results in the real study.

Analyzing of Data

For data analysis, some steps were followed to reflect on the gathered data and improve the program. The pilot study was initially analyzed, and emergent themes were categorized. Particular attention was then paid to the possible problematic issues that would be a challenge to re-design the current program. After the pilot study analysis, the emergent themes were checked by the participants for validity check (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to ensure data and asked for any explanations and comments.

In what follows, the analysis of the original study (see Tuyan, 2003) was mainly based on the data obtained from the EQ Map-An Integrated EQ Assessment and Individual Profile, Version 4.5 and the Course Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ) (see Appendix 1). Essentially, the information given by the participants in 'All about me' Participant Profile Checklist, the opinions expressed in EQ Map Results Evaluation Checklist, the teacher reflections in the learning logs and the follow-up interview for insignificant change were used to support the findings obtained. Nevertheless, the findings reported in this article are a collection of the insiders' (participants' and the researcher's) views related to the overall conduct of the ELI program, which is based on a thorough content analysis (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011) made to the qualitative data obtained throughout the study.

Results

In section B of the CEQ (see Appendix 1), the ten participant instructors in the main study were asked to answer two open-ended questions related to the future implications of the ELI course. With these questions, it was aimed to elicit the teachers' opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of this program in general.

The Strengths of the ELI Course

The participants' identification of the strengths of the course covered two main categories:

- The atmosphere experienced during the sessions
- The procedures followed to run the course

The atmosphere experienced during the session

The teachers pointed out that they liked the friendly, non-threatening atmosphere created during the sessions which helped them to improve their knowledge of self, to involve their feelings and emotions and to evaluate themselves as a whole within the course environment for which they had created a sense of belonging. Regarding the positive experience, most participants stated the following in their CEQ:

- Good classroom atmosphere, real discussions and sharing ... *(Participant 2)*
- Our trainer was always motivating the people who joined the sessions, she was always one of us. *(Participant 8)*
- The session atmosphere was really friendly, and our trainer was always smiling. *(Participant 5)*
- I always cherish the interaction with my occasional partner and the whole group. I love it. Why? Because, I need relationships other than professional ones. Perhaps this is a sign telling me that my life lacks that kind of relationship, I mean, perhaps this is a need in everyone's life. *(Participant 10)*

The Procedures Followed to Run the Course

Within this category, the participants raised three points worth mentioning. Firstly, they pointed

out that having been given the EQ Map at the beginning and at the end of the course made it possible for them to see the change in their EQ strengths and vulnerabilities as can be seen in one teacher comment made in a CEQ:

- In my opinion, the most important strength of the course is that you made it possible for us to see the change in our EQ, by giving the EQ test at the beginning and at the end of the course. I think, it is a motivation to learn more about EQ and try to implement what we have learnt in our future life because I have noticed that the more, I learn about EQ the happier I become. *(Participant 4)*

Secondly, the participants stated that the input provided for the underlying components of EQ, the balance in the theory and the activities both for personal and professional development were interrelated, motivating, relaxing, exciting and informative. Concerning this point the teachers noted the followings:

- The materials given in the sessions were informative. The inspirational stories were especially related to the topic discussed in the session. *(Participant 3)*
- Generally, it was 'strong' enough. My general comment for each material is the same. Readings were interesting, enjoyable, and they teach a lot. Moreover, experiential activities were very important to me because they made me think about myself and I spent time to focus on myself as a whole. *(Participant 7)*
- Use of stories which helped us to understand and organize our ideas was good. *(Participant 9)*
- Good balance of theory and practice through poems, stories, cartoons, etc. *(Participant 10)*

Lastly, the participants emphasized that during the discussions (pair work, group work or whole class) made after different parts of the sessions, they had the chance to share common problems with the other participants. The following quotations from different learning logs reflect the importance they give to this procedure:

- I talked about with my partner a conflict I experienced in my classroom. I explained her how I dealt with it. And she also did the same thing. This raised more awareness about the causes of conflicts, what we did and should do, and its effectiveness. *(Participant 3)*
- Discussing the morals of the stories about our topic was the significant part of the session. We read the stories and talked about them with our partners. After that we had a whole group discussion and shared our ideas. *(Participant 5)*

The Weaknesses of the Course

The participants identification of the weaknesses of the course covered three categories. These weaknesses included the following points:

- Context-specific vocabulary items,
- Need of a wider/deeper content for some EQ sessions (theory & practice),
- The time devoted for the activities and the duration of the course.

The CEQ revealed that some teachers had difficulty in understanding the unknown words while reading the text given for individual reading before coming to the sessions. So, some teachers suggested that the meanings of these words had better be given in advance as stated in the following extract in a CEQ:

- The readings you have offered to provide input were so informative but sometimes there were some unknown words. in the texts that we couldn't find in dictionaries. Maybe, it is a good idea to give their meanings in advance. (*Participant 6*)

This weakness of the course was dealt with in the ELI courses held in the following years and giving the unknown context-specific vocabulary items attached to the reading materials was found to contribute to a better understanding of EQ concept by the participants and thus to lead to more fruitful discussions during the sessions.

The Need of a Wider Content for some EQ Sessions (Theory & Practice)

This point was raised by three participants, each claiming this need for different sessions. Therefore, it was concluded that this information was based on the personal needs of the individual participants, and the aim of the study need not be changed. However, in line with the aims of this study that any feedback can contribute to the implications for further studies, the following related points are found to be worth sharing and suggestive:

- More theory and more activities about Social Skills are needed.
- More activities on Self- Awareness would be helpful. They contribute to the understanding of EQ.
- Number of articles can be increased. Some extra optional activities can be offered for the ones who would enjoy reading more about it.

Duration of the Course

This was a problem which was also met during the pilot study. Therefore, the time devoted for each EQ dimension was extended from one week to two weeks. However, at the end of the real study, it was still found out that there were some participants who suggested devoting more either to some parts of the sessions or that the number of the sessions to be delivered for each EQ dimension should be increased.

Another point made by one teacher was that more time should be devoted for each session with the idea of providing opportunities for more activities and related discussions as stated in the following extract:

- Perhaps the time allocated to each session and topic was enough being it was an introductory course but expending more time on each topic could be more useful, providing opportunities for more discussion and activities.

Discussion and Conclusion

In the first place, it is worth mentioning that the findings of this study revealed positive contributions of the use of the two data collection tools before starting the ELI Program; mainly *the EQ Map* to diagnose the EQ strengths and vulnerabilities of the participants as a pre-test and post-test and *the EQ Profile Checklist* to have a general profile of the participants and get some detailed information on their educational and emotional backgrounds to establish sociality and understand the other person's perceptions as a first step in an intervention like the ELI Program. In this respect, the findings of this study are consistent with the Constructivist View (Pennington, 1990) and Robert's (1998) assumptions about teacher learning.

Secondly, the researcher's experience with the participants suggests that learner-teachers are capable of reflecting on their personal theories and training experiences when they are given the opportunity and supportive environment. Therefore, consistent with Maslow's (1970) ideas on education, it is believed that learner-teachers should be enabled to develop as individuals in their own right and actualize themselves. For example, our data, specifically the EQ Map results, teachers' reflections in their learning logs and their responses to CEQ (see also Tuyan, 2003), indicate that each participant teacher having had different perceptions as were diagnosed by EQ Map and Participant Profile Checklist, benefited from the ELI Program according to their individual needs regarding their individual EQ strengths and weaknesses. In this respect, it is also recognized that significant learning takes place when the subject matter is perceived to be of personal relevance to the learner-teacher and when the learner-teacher actively participates (Kolb's Active Experimentation in Kelly 1997; Dewey's Model of Learning in Zuber Skerritt, 1992; Rodgers 1959 in Williams &

Burden, 1997). Accordingly, considering the findings of this research and the feedback obtained from the participants of this study concerned with the use of experiential activities both for EQ practice and for classroom application, it can be suggested that while preparing the input for teacher development programs like ELI, the program developers should prefer experiential activities which foster change and growth through knowledge, observation and experience.

During the ELI course, the main aim was to raise the participants' awareness regarding their EQ strengths and vulnerabilities and thus get involved in a kind of personal and professional development. Therefore, first the related concepts were introduced, then practiced for better comprehension and finally exemplified with some classroom applications which they can use in their profession to increase their students' awareness regarding the different dimensions of EQ. In other words, the study had its own limits for different parts of the sessions. As a result, since the main concern was not the classroom application of EQ by the teachers, no extra time was spent to focus on the activities to be used in classroom. Mostly, one activity was applied in the session, but the explanation of the usage for the other activities was provided. Nevertheless, two teachers were found to suggest a further emphasis on classroom activities. All in all, to fulfill this felt need, in the following year, a new program whose main focus was on how to implement EI and ideas of SEL (Social Emotional Learning) into school culture, *Hand in hand with Emotions* project, was started with the collaboration of the staff development and syllabus unit of the institution (Tuyan & Sadik, 2008).

Reflecting on the comments by the participants, as the participants wanted to learn more about EQ, some extra improvements and additions were made to the following ELI programs offered by the staff developed unit depending on the number and the personal profiles of the participants. Additionally, as told earlier (Tuyan & Sadik, 2008) the implementation of EQ themes in the EFL classroom was made possible by *Hand in Hand with Emotions* project started in the same institution.

This research also contains theoretical implications for personal and professional development connected with the nature of learning for learner-teachers, the effect of learning environment to their learning and the importance of reflection both by the participants and by the researcher during the conduct of an emotional literacy improvement program. There seem to be four areas of particular importance, as below:

1. Consistent with the other studies focusing on the requirement of involving feeling in learning as well as cognition (Rodgers 1959 in Pervin, 1993; Fogarty, 1998; Gordon, 2000; Hargreaves, 2000), the researcher believes that learning is 'self-initiated' and the learner- teachers should be asked to volunteer to take part in any attempted teacher development program. As the researchers' experience with the participant teachers of the ELI Program suggests, volunteer teachers have a natural motivation for learning because of their personal feelings into the matter and thus have a tendency to take the responsibility of learning for themselves and improve without any resistance, and implement their learning points into their personal and professional lives.
2. As Roberts (1998) noted, learner-teachers also learn from each other, so their knowledge can be pooled. The experience with the participants of this study also supports this assumption. Specifically, the findings suggest that the participant teachers benefited from one another's learning points through discussions made on the contents of readings provided for the participants as well as the pair/group work activities and the Kagan structures aimed for experiential learning during the EQ sessions of the ELI Program. In line with Maslow's (1970) and Williams & Burden's (1997) views regarding the impact of learning environment on learning, when the experience with the participants considered, it can be recognized that the environment created for the participants should help them to improve their feelings and emotions. In this sense, they should also be enabled to evaluate themselves as a whole and create a sense of belonging to the learning environment.
3. The findings of this study suggest that the learner teachers should be given opportunities for reflection on new ideas/learnings, personal experiences and their links to their beliefs and past lives (Roberts, 1998) so that they can relearn and/or recognize their prior representations of the world as the Constructivist View (Pennington, 1990) of learning entails. To illustrate, the learning logs used for 'reflection-on-action' by the participants after each EQ session during the conduct of this research served primarily to this purpose as well as collecting data related to the study. Furthermore, during the discussions held after the readings offered and the experiential activities provided for the sessions, the participants were encouraged to share their personal experiences related to both their professional lives and their links to their individual beliefs and past lives. Additionally, the data obtained from this study leads to the conclusion that these kinds of opportunities helped the participant instructors to initiate a process of long-term personal and professional growth.

Depending on the experience lived with the participants of this research and the findings obtained, the following key considerations regarding the procedures to be employed and the environment to be created when establishing an ELI course for EFL teachers can be concluded by the researcher:

- Volunteer participants willingly participate in the development process. However, the teachers may not know the contents of the program, so an introductory session about the content of the program to all the teachers in school helps to increase the number of volunteers for the program.

- Assessment of the participants' EQ levels at the start and at the end of the program helps them to become aware of their weaknesses and thus focus more on their weaknesses and improve during the sessions. For this reason, the delivery of the individual assessments (both the pre-test and the post-test results) should be handled with care. In other words, firstly, while interpreting the results, the staff developer needs to offer support, uncritical understanding as well as being kind, empathetic, informative and to the point. Secondly, but equally importantly, participants of the program are also expected to improve by learning from the interpretations and the suggestions provided. Therefore, the staff developer needs to have digested the contents of the feedback to be delivered to the participants. In this way, especially the interpretations provided after the pre-test may be helpful and fruitful to complement and supplement the course content aimed at creating change (see Tuyan, 2003).
- It is believed that a positive relationship between the staff developer/provider and the participants helps to create an effective learning environment. Therefore, the staff developer/provider had better be authentic, caring, friendly, motivating and empathetic during the conduct of the sessions (see also Tuyan, 2003).
- The findings of this research suggest that when the learning goals of the participants are linked to their personal values and hopes, they feel more motivated to change. So, the staff developer/provider needs to help people realize if what they learn in the program fits with their personal and professional values or not (see also Tuyan, 2003).
- The experience with the participants reveals that experiential methods work very well for teaching emotional intelligence skills. Stories, cartoons, and different elaboration activities that employ all the senses are very powerful and effective for practicing the EQ skills.
- The results of ELI program reveal that sharing personal experience, problem solving, discussion in a friendly atmosphere can help teachers learn better, rather than being told what to do and how to do it.
- The experience gained throughout the study supports that learning log, as well as being a data collection tool of this study, is a very good learning device for the participant teachers for monitoring their own learning during the ELI program. This is because, it includes statements both about the things experienced and about the action plans arising from them.
- The experience and the feedback obtained from the participants during the conduct of this study suggest that pair work, teamwork activities decreases the anxiety levels of teachers and help them emphasize more on sharing and exchanging ideas.
- By the conduct of this study, it is recognized that the change in teachers may be more permanent if the school's culture and manner supports the change and offer a 'sheltered' atmosphere for practicing EQ skills with students (Roberts, 1998). In other words, it is believed that the school management should be open to change and flexible in terms of application of new ideas into the existing ELT syllabus. In this respect, *Hand in Hand with Emotions* project (see Tuyan & Sadik, 2008) helped to offer more fruitful outcomes by also providing a scene within the institutional context that made teaching EQ skills to students possible within an ELT syllabus.

Suggestions

The conclusions that have been drawn from this research matured from the personal EQ Mappings of individual instructors. In other words, they were grounded in the data generated by the participant teachers working at the institution in which the study was conducted. Although the interpretations were checked and negotiated with the teachers in the follow-up interviews, their validity applies only to this study. Therefore, in the first place, other action researchers can investigate whether these grounded theories are valid in their own contexts. Furthermore, this study is intended to point out program guidelines that maybe of concern to staff developers and may be pursued by other researchers in the field.

Secondly, during the ELI program, the main concern was not the classroom application of EQ by the teachers. So, in the following years, another EQ program whose focus was more like teaching Emotional Intelligence to students was conducted and the results were integrated into the existing ELT syllabus (see Tuyan & Sadik, 2008). Similar procedures can be followed by the other researchers in the field.

Thirdly, EQ has five dimensions each of which has different links to educational and social psychology. Considering the interests and needs of the teaching staff, different teacher development programs which would increase the teachers' conscious choices about the way they think, feel and behave can be developed and their use can be inquired.

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Appendix

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ) COURSE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions as sincerely as possible to give me a hand to make the necessary changes for future EQ courses.

B) Please answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the strengths of the course?

- 2) What areas of the course need improvement?

Thank you for your collaboration.