

A ROMP THROUGH THE HISTORY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE FROM A LANGUAGE TEACHING PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

This paper takes a swift look at the genesis and history of humanistic psychology in general and its offshoot, Emotional Intelligence, while it has an eye on the classroom and learner all through. For this purpose, it furnishes the theoretical background of EI touching Phenomenology, Affective theory, Multiple Intelligences, and Socio-constructivism. Having put the idea of Emotional Intelligence in perspective, it mentions some misconceptions about this theoretical proposal, particularly related to its practical implications for. Lastly, the article examines the role of Emotional Intelligence in FLT from a practical standpoint.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Humanistic Psychology, Multiple Intelligences, Language Teaching

1. Introduction

The contagious disease of “dogmatic pedagogy” once afflicted teachers and instructors in a viral manner and consequently ailed learners in one way or another. This manner of teaching which underpinned strict teacher-oriented ethics, without taking learners’ feelings into consideration, was in place for many centuries (Howatt, 2004). “The sage at stage” transmitted bulks of knowledge to learners who were –in turn-- to memorize and "contextualize" them through translation, mimicry, parroting and so forth. This lackluster manner of schooling striped learners of their creativity, innovation, and imagination, and causing the imagery and attitude of learners toward education to be dim, shattered, and eventually tarnished. As an antithesis, Humanistic Psychology and its trails emerged: Individual Differences, Personality Psychology, Rogerian school of psychology, Maslow Hierarchy of Needs, Learned Positivism (Seligman, 1990), Flow Psychology (Csíkszentmihályi, 1996), Affective Theory and Emotional Intelligence. Contrary to the earlier fashions of schooling which were purely based on either Behaviorism or Mentalism, the latter ones directed attention towards students’ feelings. The resonance also touched of Foreign Language, and

such methods and ideas as (De)suggestopedia (Lozanov, 1979), Silent Way (Gattego 1972), TPR, Affective Filter (Krashen, 1985), Community Language Learning (Curran 1972), and Communicative Language Teaching emerged. As a result of the incorporation of cognition and emotion, quality teaching and learning flourished and student-oriented curriculum and learner-developed content were introduced.

Humanistic approaches spot light on the salience and importance of students' 'within' in the learning process, that is, they "emphasize the importance of the inner world of the learners and place their thoughts, feelings and emotions at the forefront of any development ... these are aspects of learning process that are often unjustly neglected, yet they are vitally important if we are to understand human learning in its totality" (Williams, 2002. p. 30).

Besides the humanistic psychology and its offshoots, the works of scholars like Piaget and Vygotsky, who postulated humans as inherently social beings whose day-to-day interactions contribute to life-long education, helped the development of socio-cultural theory and social constructivism (Williams, 2002). The resultant integration of Humanism and Socio-cultural theories (self and society) bore Emotional and Social Intelligences.

In effect, the need for emotional awareness, which is the custodian and gate keeper of linguistic awareness, is the Achilles' heel of language learners, in that, they may refrain to be chin in chest and reflectively evaluate themselves realistically. But, when this need is dealt with properly, the fruits that Emotional Literacy bears in the farm of linguistics are tolerance of ambiguity, delayed gratification, self-assertiveness, identity development, self-control, and sociability--personality factors which are crucial to sustainable learning.(See Dornyei 2005;Goleman 1995; &Johnson 2001).A case in point is the "NLP", which puts learners' attitude, motivation, self-management, self-control and state of flow and full involvement on top of its agenda and claims to lead to strategic, cultural, communicative, linguistic competences.

2. From beating about the bush to right on the track

Scholars, authorities, mentors, educators, and proprietors have resorted to many, scientific or semi-scientific, yardsticks-- tests, inventories, criteria-- to describe people's intellectual capacity and intelligence: the list includes Temperaments, g Intelligence, Intelligence Quotient, revised IQ, the Big Five, Multiple Intelligences, Emotional Quotient, and Spiritual Intelligence.

The four temperaments are believed to have been "devised for understanding human nature and thereby improving the human condition" (Bobgan, 1992, p. 9). The people pigeonholed in them are characterized as the Sanguine, who are "cheerful, friendly, talkative, lively, restless, self-

centered, and undependable”, the Choleric, who are “optimistic, active, confident, strong-willed, quick to anger, aggressive, and inconsiderate”, the Melancholic, whose dominant traits include “melancholic, sensitive, analytical, perfectionist, unsociable, moody, and rigid”, and finally the Phlegmatic, who are characteristically “calm, dependable, efficient, easy-going, passive, stubborn, and lazy” (Bobgan, 1992, p. 9) This unsystematic and once popular pigeonholing of people in terms of personality and capability for the sake of the best choice has gone out of vogue and been supplanted by other more science-driven and psycho-fronted issues because what this quasi-scientific notion recommends require that people from all walks of life be housed in four fixed categories and, hence, contradicts many discoveries in psychology.

Then, there was the eugenics movement or genetic engineering and g intelligence by psychometricians and Philip Vernon's (Williams, 2002. p. 19) hypothetical construct of A, B, C intelligences; A; which we are born with, B, which is context-bound and what we display at everyday dilemma, C, which is measurable through intelligence tests. But the idea of intelligence, in the banner of IQ test, is highly indebted to Alfred Binet (1875-1911) and Theodore Simon who were responding to the Parisian school request for streaming intelligent and unintelligent pupils. And the revised IQ test –in its present shape- which was substantiated by American and French scientists under the title of the Stanford-Binet Scale.

Besides many old and novel, detailed or general, views which intend chiefly to know the difference in traits, characteristics, and moods of individuals (as in Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Modern Language Aptitude Test, PLAB Test), the more exhaustive Big Five Model also came into existence. It sheds light on different dimensions of human psyche by emphasizing five bipolar qualities (Dornyei, 2005): Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion-introversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism-emotional stability. But, the question is whether the Big Five can clarify all there is about personality. Funder's (2001) answer is “almost certainly no.... This lack of comprehensiveness becomes a problem when researchers, seduced by convenience and seeming consensus, act as if they can obtain a complete portrait of personality by grabbing five quick ratings” (Dornyei, 2005, p. 18).

3. One intelligence or many?

In 1980's, the Harvard psychologist, Howard Gardner, broadly criticized the long-held concept of IQ. He believed our culture has fallen short on defining intelligence, and also “seriously questioned the validity of determining intelligence through the practice of taking individuals out of their natural learning environment and asking them to do isolated tasks they had never

done before and probably would never choose to do again” (Armstrong, 2009, p. 6). He believed that boiling down a vast construct to a single mark under the banner of IQ is debilitating; since one single mark cannot judge one’s success or failure in future. In lieu of Unitarianism in Intelligence he firmly believed in Pluralism in Intelligences; and claimed that human mind is home to multiple intelligences to suit multiple needs:

It is of the utmost importance that we recognize and nurture all of the varied human intelligences, and all of the combinations of intelligences. We are all so different largely because we all have different combinations of intelligences. If we recognize this, I think we will have at least a better chance of dealing appropriately with the many problems that we face in the world (Armstrong, 2009, p. 5).

This train of thought caused him to devise an open list of intelligences: Verbal-Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Visual-Spatial, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Naturalist, Spiritual, (still counting!). His belief is that we have intelligence in all these areas, but are stronger in some than in others and that what makes each of us unique is how the intelligences interact (Gardner, 2006).

4. The road to EI: theoretical background

While observing the upheavals for intelligence and IQ and the heyday of Multiple Intelligences which mounted to many books, conferences, theses, and articles, Gardner’s student, Daniel Goleman, concurrent to some other psychologists (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, Bar-on) deliberated on a theory, which, to some degrees, took features from the triangle of Humanist Phenomenology, Affective Theory, and Socio Constructivism.

The birth of humanistic developments in science dates back to Sigmund Freud and his Psycho-sexual analysis and thence the ball rolled into Erik Erikson, who then amalgamated psycho-sexual issues into human life-span development, implicating the importance of “personal, social and emotional development” (Williams, 2002, p. 30). Once, all key personal, social, and emotional factors and elements of an individual are factored in, identity development turns to bootstrap. The next figure in the camp of humanists who were out for “the whole person” was Abraham Maslow. He engineered a hierarchy in two main categories (‘Deficiency needs’ and ‘Being needs’) wherein 8 issues subsumed. These needs start with physiological needs and stretch toward cognitive, aesthetic, and lastly self-actualization. This theory –although denigrated on and off- denotes, in a nutshell, that once the basic needs of learners are provided for and suited, the learners’ eye spring flows-- self-sustainable development.

Humanist psychology is hugely indebted to Carl Ransom Rogers, who drastically changed attitude towards therapeutic psychology by virtue of

his book, *Client-centered Therapy*, in 1951. Roger's school of psychology considers all human beings unique individuals. Although they resemble one another in terms of physique, physiology, and chemistry (we are all the same under the skin), they differ in terms of behavior and emotions. According to humanistic psychology, everybody has his/her own *self* and individual thoughts, feelings, and emotions are at the frontline of human development (Lefrancois, 1999); so, this branch of psychology appears to be more emotive than cognitive.

The implications of 'Humanism' for learning and teaching are: to take into account the learners' inner world and within, to involve the individuals in their totality (socially, personally, cognitively, and psychologically, in brief ecologically), the context is also up to de-suggest contextual difficulties, personal concerns, and mental worries. Generally, while needs wipe off, self-actualization automates. Williams and Burden (1997, p. 38) summarize humanism commandments for tutoring as follows:

- Creating a sense of belonging
- Making the subject relevant to the learner
- Involving the whole person
- Encouraging a knowledge of self
- Developing personal identity
- Encouraging self-esteem
- Involving the feelings and emotions
- Minimizing criticism
- Encouraging creativity
- Developing a knowledge of the process of learning
- Encouraging self-initiation
- Allowing for choice
- Encouraging self-evaluation

Affective theory could not renown itself at a more opportune time. It began in earnest as a necessary condition in learner-centered education, then took the side against "educating from the neck up" (Arnold, 1998, p. 5) and demanded emotive and affective experiences at the frontline of teaching. Since then, issues as stress, anxiety, curiosity, motivation, degree of acceptance, interests, attitudes, appreciations, values, emotional sets, or biases were taken seriously (Tooman, 2009). Adult educators know through their own empirical practice that learning occurs more often, and to a greater degree, when participants are involved emotionally, and research in neuro-biology supports this connection (Davidson & Cacioppo 1992; Levy 1983)". Without emotive stimuli in the affective dimension, learners become bored, and may abdicate from sustained learning endeavors (Krathwohl, 1964).

The next influential camp into Emotional Intelligence is socio-interactionism (socio-culturalism, socio-constructivism). This camp, unlike humanism, postulates human development mostly in reaction with the outer world. Its fans believe that humans are inherently social beings, who interactively learn from their surroundings. The context is also a source of tools to induce learning (Smidt, 2009). The underlying assumption behind the concept is that psychological development and instruction are socially embedded; to understand them one must analyze the surrounding society and its social relations (Hedegaard, 1996). Piaget also believes in the constant interaction of organism and its environment which bears development. He assumes that humans are essentially intelligent and talented but only in interaction with their environment can they build their outer worlds. It is understood that emotion is a social fact which is socially and dialogically, i.e., socioculturally, not individually, constructed in the interactions of the agent with agents and the environment. Matthews (2004, p. 156) believes that emotion is not a property of the individual, but of a discourse between individuals, actively constructed and negotiated during social interaction. Hawkey (2006, p. 139) accentuates this already strong pulse: “emotionality lies at the intersection of the person and society, for all persons are jointed to their societies through the self-feelings and emotions they feel and experience on a daily basis”.

5.Red carpet for EI

Howard Gardner’s “Multiple Intelligences” was pregnant with the preliminary hints of Daniel Goleman’s “Emotional Intelligence”. Of the trails of intelligences, two dealt with human beings interactions intrapersonally or inter-personally. These intelligences, which are equivalent to self-awareness and socializing, contributed to the foundations of Emotional Intelligence. Gardner, in his *Frames of Mind* (1993), assumes that intrapersonal intelligence is the development of the internal aspects of a person. "The core capacity at work here is access to one’s own feeling life--one’s range of affects or emotions: the capacity instantly to effect discriminations among the feelings and, eventually, to label them, to render them into symbolic codes, and to draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one’s behavior. In its most primitive form, the intrapersonal intelligence is the capacity to distinguish a feeling of pleasure from one of pain and, on the basis of such discrimination, to become more involved in or to withdraw from a situation. At its most advanced level, intrapersonal knowledge allows one to detect and symbolize complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings”(Gardner, 1993, p. 239). As mentioned above, the philosophy of intrapersonal intelligence orbits around those of humanistic and affective theories: regarding as paramount the within and

inner world of the individuals and their self-awareness, taking the personal feelings at the frontier, and being heedful to the self and the ‘whole person’ in the process of realization of his potential and, ideally, “self-actualization”.

With regard to the counterpart, Gardner (1993, p. 240) believes “the other personal intelligence turns outward, to other individuals, the core capacity here is the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular, among their moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions. Examined in its most elementary form, the interpersonal intelligence entails the capacity of the young child to discriminate among the individuals around him and to detect the various moods. In an advanced form, interpersonal knowledge permits a skilled adult to read intentions and desires, even when these have been hidden, of many other individuals and, potentially to act upon this knowledge.” The principles of Interpersonal Intelligence and Socio-Cultural theory are also on the same page: being alert to the day-to-day interaction is a root cause of learning and social development. For this purpose, the individuals are to be consciously aware of each others’ feelings for better relationship. These two personal intelligences are necessary and sufficient conditions in self and else awareness.

In the epistemological context hinted at above, Daniel Goleman took the hints of “MI” and developed his socio-emotional theory. The tenets of the theory, elaborated at length in his 1996 book, are encapsulated in the following phrases from some of the researchers who subscribe to this emerging camp.

Goleman(1995)	To motivate oneself and persist in face of frustration To control impulses and delay gratification To regulate one’s moods and keep distress from swapping the ability to think, to emphasize and to hope
Salovey (1997)	Perceive accurately, appraise and express emotions Access and/or generate feeling, when they facilitate thought Understand emotions and emotional knowledge Regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth
Matthews, Zeidner, Roberts (2002)	Emotional intelligence as (lack of) deficit Emotional intelligence as environmental tuning EI as effective interpretation of emotional situations EI as adaptive bias in problem evaluation

Mortiboys (2005)	Self-awareness or to be alert to feelings Self-regulation or to manage feelings Motivation or to use feelings to help achieve the goals Empathy or to tune into how others feel Social skills or to handle feelings well in interactions with others
Bar-on (2006, cited in <i>The EQ Edge</i>)	Intrapersonal: managing oneself, the ability to know one's emotions Interpersonal: managing relationships with others Adaptability: ability to adjust to change Stress management: controlling stress General mood: the ability to be optimistic and positive as well as to enjoy life

6. What 'EI' really is and is not

Remarks which throw light on EI abound. The following are examples:

- Developing emotional intelligence is the royal road towards the achievement of aims (Sparrow, 2006, xii).
- Emotional Intelligence ... is neither an intellectual capacity, nor an aspect of personality, nor just another term for soft skills, but rather it is a characterization of our habitual stance towards self and the world, which is determined largely by the attitudes we hold (Sparrow, 2006, xi).
- Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, understand, and manage moods and feelings—in both ourselves and other people. (Yeung, 2009, p. 3).
- Being emotionally intelligent means to be able to acknowledge and handle emotions in yourself and in others (Mortiboys, 2005, p. 7).
- It is the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships (Goleman, 1995, p 317).
- ZigZiglar believes that “it is not your aptitude, but your attitude that determines our altitude.” (Sparrow, 2006)

Short after the introduction of 'EI' to scientific communities, some off-the-mark definitions popped up. Among others, Stein and Book, two of the principal advocates of EI took steps to reinstate its true thrust and import:

EI is not aptitude, which concerns a person's ability to perform well in a particular skill or activity or discipline.... EI is not achievement, which concerns specific sorts of performance... as a school report card does. EI is not vocational interest, which concerns a person's natural inclination toward

or predilection for a particular field of work.... EI is not personality-- the unique set of traits that help form a person's characteristic, enduring and dependable ways of thinking, feeling and behaving.... Lastly, EI is not a crutch, a magic wand, or a cure-all (Stein & Book, 2006, p. 20-38).

7.The bottom line for language teaching

Amanda Knight and Tim Sparrow (2006, p. 22) resort to a five-step syllogism to demonstrate that Emotional Intelligence and performance are highly correlated:

1. Emotional Intelligence is composed of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Intelligences.
2. Intrapersonal Intelligence is what you need for effective self-management.
3. Interpersonal management is what you need for effective relationship
4. Effective self-management plus effective relationship lead to effective overall performance.
5. Therefore, emotional intelligence leads to effective performance.

As EI is highly correlated with performance, and the primary concern of teachers is performance improvement, the bottom line for them is they need to focus on emotional intelligence. In the language class, too, a focus on EI and self-awareness raising can be the affective counterpart and complement to language awareness and consciousness-raising, which lately has been a major focus in the cognitive domain in second language teaching (e.g., Andrew, 2007). Fahimand Pishghadam(2007, p. 249) summarize the significant emotional competencies in academic achievements as follows: the intrapersonal abilities, which involve emotional self awareness (the ability to recognize and to understand one's feelings); assertiveness (the ability to express feelings, beliefs and thoughts, and to defend one's rights in a non-destructive manner; self-regard (the ability to respect and accept oneself), self-actualization (the ability to realize one's potential capacities); and independence (the ability to be self-directed and self-controlled in one's thinking and actions and to be free of emotional dependency); stress management abilities, which involve stress tolerance (the ability to cope with and manage stressful situations); impulse control (the ability to resist or delay an impulse, drive or temptation to act); general mood abilities which involve happiness (being satisfied with life, enjoying being with others); and optimism (maintaining a positive attitude even in face of adversity). In a more itemized research, Pishghadam (2009, p. 39) established a link between with emotional competencies and language skills:

To be a good reader, one must know how to cope with and manage stressful situations, how to define problems and generate potentially effective

solutions, how to evaluate the correspondence between objective and subjective reality in a realistic and well-grounded fashion, and how to adjust emotions, thoughts, and behaviors to changing conditions... to be a successful listener, one must try hard to acquire a high level of EQ in general and stress management and intrapersonal abilities in particular. It seems that the nature of speaking skill is such that interpersonal competencies (empathy, interpersonal relationship, and social responsibility), intrapersonal competencies and general mood can be contributory. Besides developing intrapersonal and general mood abilities, one must learn how to be aware and appreciative of the feelings of others, how to establish and maintain satisfying relationships characterized by emotional closeness and mutual affection, and how to be a cooperative and responsible member of one's social group. And to be a good writer requires one to acquire stress management and adaptability competencies well.

8. Conclusion:

This review article attempts to shed some light on the role of Language and Emotional Intelligence through a humanist eyeglass. To this end, it lifts attention to the Humanism, Affective theory, Multiple Intelligences, and Socio-constructivism as the building blocks of EI. Thence, taking the principles as the road signs, it exorcises EI from off-the-course ideas. Finally, it substantiates the effectual role of EI in FLT by referring to the practical implications of two empirical study conducted in Iran.

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