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USING STORY-BASED ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPING YOUNG LEARNERS' EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE IN THE ENGLISH LESSONS

The concept of emotional competence arose due to the work of American psychologist Howard Gardner on the plurality of forms of intelligence. The list of intelligences proposed by Gardner as a basis for competence development includes, in particular, two personal varieties: intrapersonal and interpersonal. The researcher argues that in relation to emotional development, intrapersonal intelligence involves understanding one's own feelings and emotions in order to control one's behaviour. People who are high on intrapersonal intelligence, can understand much about their feelings and emotional states as well as assess their strengths and weaknesses. The emotionality of interpersonal intelligence is traced in the understanding of other people's feelings, the ability to assess their emotions, motivation, desires and intentions [2].

H. Weisbach and W. Dax consider emotional intelligence to be the ability to "intellectually" manage one's emotional life. R. Bar-On considers emotional intelligence as a set of various abilities that provide the ability to act successfully in any situation. The list of key abilities includes self-esteem, self-confidence, empathy, ability to overcome difficulties, awareness of one's own emotions, stress resistance, self-control, optimism, etc [4].

Based on the work of J. Meyer and P. Salovey, Daniel Goleman developed a theory of emotional competence. The essence of emotional competence is defined as a complex personal and social formation which is based on emotional intelligence and emotional culture and has a certain structure. Emotional intelligence, according to D. Goleman, includes the ability to recognize their own feelings and the feelings of others, motivate themselves and manage their own emotions and emotions in relationships with others. Emotional culture provides for the ability of an individual to adequately express their own emotions and respond to the emotions of others, i. e. to manage their own emotional state [3, c. 24-25].

D. Goleman identifies five components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, emotional control, motivation, empathy, social and leadership skills [3, c. 317-318]. On this basis, we consider the structure of emotional competence as a unity of five functions and the ability to implement them. The cognitive function of awareness of one's inner states, preferences, opportunities and intuition involves the development of the ability to be aware of one's own feelings and emotions, the ability to be aware of one's own weaknesses and strengths and the ability to feel one's own dignity. The controlling function is to develop control over one's inner states, impulses and capabilities, for the development of which one needs to possess the ability to keep emotions and impulses under control, the ability to adhere to standards of decency

and honesty, responsibility for one's own work, the ability to adapt to change, the ability to feel comfortable with new ideas, approaches and new information. The motivational function is aimed at managing or promoting the achievement of goals and involves the development of the ability to strive for continuous improvement, the ability to align decisions with goals, the ability to persevere in using opportunities and achieving goals despite obstacles and failures. The empathic function is related to the awareness of feelings, needs and problems of others and is aimed at developing the ability to understand other people's feelings and be interested in their concerns, the ability to realize other people's needs for development and the skill to improve their abilities. The social function includes the ability to promptly accept desired responses from others through the development of the skill of using active tactics of influence, the ability to listen carefully, to send persuasive messages, to negotiate, to resolve disputes, to inspire and lead groups, to initiate or manage change, to develop relationships, to cooperate to achieve common goals and to organise group interaction to achieve collective goals [3, c. 26-27].

According to the current curriculum in foreign languages, the goal of modern foreign language education of primary school children is to form foreign language communicative competence for immediate and mediated intercultural communication, which ensures the development of other key competencies and meets different life needs of the child [1]. Foreign language education involves the formation of skills to communicate within different domains, topics and situations, to communicate in writing, to adequately use the experience gained in learning the native language and other subjects, to use non-verbal means of communication in case of lack of available language, to critically evaluate information and use it for different needs, to express their thoughts, feelings and attitudes, to interact effectively with others orally, in writing and through electronic means of communication, which are the result of the formation of emotional intelligence. Foreign language education is not limited to learning a foreign language, as it involves active work on the basis of the studied material: comprehension, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and other cognitive skills. Foreign language education in the primary education system, being aimed at developing the emotional sphere of each learner, allows to learn about the world through multilingual and multicultural experiences, forms a humane attitude to reality and becomes the basis for developing emotional and values-based attitudes to everything around younger learners.

The analysis of the scientific literature and the observation of the educational process during teaching practice prove that the development of emotional intelligence can be effective in the process of teaching communicative reading in English lessons. In preparation for the English lesson, the teacher plans the appropriate use of methods and techniques that will cause emotional uplift in children at all the stages of teaching to read stories.

Research in neuroscience, cognitive science, and psychology has shown that reading a good story allows to immerse oneself in rich sensory details, emotional feelings, and moral complexity. Reading allows the brain to use language, details, allusions and metaphors to create mental representations. This occurs in those areas of the brain that are activated if the same scenario unfolds in real life [5].

Taking into account the psychological features of the formation of emotional competence in the process of learning to read in English, we suggest a set of story-based exercises organized in four stages.

Sample Story

Maria's legs don't work the same as her friends'. She uses a walker to help her. But the kids in her class make fun of her for "not even being able to walk like normal" and they call her "weird". One time they moved her walker so she couldn't reach it until her friend saw and came to help her.

The **first**, motivational stage aims to activate the learners' life and language experience in accordance with the theme and the emotional charge of the text under study. At this stage, reproductive-productive and receptive-reproductive exercises that prepare learners for reading the text are to be used. The main focus of such exercises should be on identifying the level of the formation of learners' emotional intelligence, values clarification, creating motivation for emotional perception and understanding of the text that will be offered for reading. For instance:

Instruction: *Take the five finger friendship challenge, write down what makes you a good friend and share with your classmates.*



The **second**, cognitive stage involves performing a communicative task for reading in order to find information about emotions and feelings, ways to manage emotions, verbal and nonverbal levels of expressing emotions. To do this, it is advisable to offer receptive exercises, aimed at recognizing and differentiating emotionally charged details of the content of the text, for example:

Instruction: *Read the story and decide what colour emotion Maria has. Say why.*



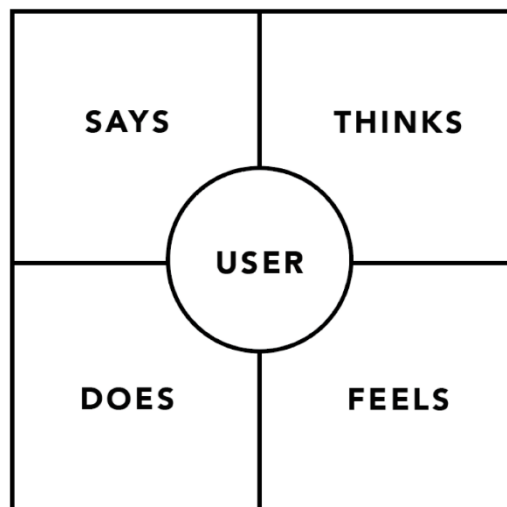
At the **third**, focused practice stage, the language and speech material of the text with an emotional background is processed in order to ensure a full understanding of the verbal and nonverbal levels of the text. Practice can be organized with the help of reproductive- productive exercises in which learners reproduce certain elements of the text that contain a description of a character's behaviour, emotional state and feelings, the they add their own comments, for example:

Instruction: *Listen to three music pieces. In pairs, decide which of them best suit different parts of the story. Say why you think so.*"

The purpose of the **fourth**, reflective communicative practice stage is the learners' creative application of certain skills that are part of their emotional competence in situations similar to those that happened to the characters in the story. Reflection involves summarizing, discussing the possibilities of developing relationships in their own life context, covering the emotional and behavioural components. At the communicative level, the exercises of this stage are productive and are performed using a verbal description of the situation by the teacher, the teacher's verbal task, situational pictures, sound effects and/or using drama. The following is an illustration of such exercises:

Instruction: In pairs, complete the Empathy Map. Then present your ideas to the class."

EMPATHY MAP



Thus, the development emotional competence in the process of teaching reading to young learners should be based on stories which presupposes four-stage procedure and high emotional stress. Further research is needed into the area of the structure of emotional competence.

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