

EMPATHETIC FEEDBACK IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Annotation: Empathic feedback plays an important role in the language learning process. Empathy the ability to understand and feel the emotions of others makes communication between language learners more effective and empathetic. This process helps the learner to more correctly understand expressions in language, respect cultural differences, and communicate his thoughts clearly and gracefully. This article considers the advantages of an empathic approach to language learning, methods of its formation, and practical recommendations.

Key words: language learning, empathic thinking, communication culture, emotional intelligence, cross-cultural communication, feedback, empathy, learning motivation, language competence.

Аннотация: Эмпатическая обратная связь играет важную роль в процессе изучения языка. Эмпатия — способность понимать и чувствовать эмоции других людей — делает общение между изучающими язык более эффективным и чутким. Этот процесс помогает учащемуся более правильно понимать выражения в языке, уважать культурные различия и ясно и тонко излагать свои мысли. В данной статье рассматриваются преимущества эмпатического подхода к изучению языка, методы его формирования, а также практические рекомендации.

Ключевые слова: обучение языку, эмпатическое мышление, культура общения, эмоциональный интеллект, кросс-культурная коммуникация, обратная связь, эмпатия, мотивация к обучению, языковая компетенция.

INTRODUCTION

As we all know, language is the medium of interaction, a means of communication, and the king of thought. For the peoples of the world, their native language is their invaluable asset and the pride of the nation. Language is the consciousness and memory of a nation, its psyche, spiritual and cultural identity, national values, and its past. The role of language in the development of a nation, state, and society is extremely important, necessary, and urgent. As a nation, state, and society progress, so does their affection and attention towards the language. Progress in social life determines the progress of language.

All conditions and opportunities have been created for the upbringing of the younger generation in comprehensive development, for their thorough mastery of modern knowledge and professions. In the process of these reforms, special attention was paid to the teaching of foreign languages. An important factor in this regard was the Decree "On measures to further improve the system of learning foreign languages", adopted on December 10, 2012.

Empathy, like a thread, connects us to those around us, allowing us to feel and understand the feelings, feelings and views of others. It is the ability to see the world through someone else's eyes and feel what they feel. In the context of human psychology, empathy plays the role of an important element in our relationships and social interactions.

The concept of empathy is not limited only to the ability to feel the emotions of others. It also includes the ability to understand them and respond appropriately. This phenomenon involves the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects that interact with each other, providing a deep understanding of and support for others.

Learning and understanding empathy is essential for our understanding of human nature and behavior. It allows us to better understand our loved ones and build deep and trusting relationships. Empathy is also an essential element of emotional intelligence that helps us find our way through complex relationships.

Different aspects of empathy in language learning:

1. Cognitive empathy. This aspect has to do with our ability to understand and predict the feelings and thoughts of others. Cognitive empathy involves the ability to be in another person's shoes and see the world through their eyes.

2. Emotional empathy. Emotional empathy has to do with our ability to feel and experience the emotions of others as if they were our own. It allows us to show empathy and empathy for the joys and sufferings of others.

3. Behavioral empathy. This aspect concerns our ability to respond to the emotional needs of others. Behavioral empathy involves demonstrating care and support in response to the emotional cues of those around them.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ON THE SUBJECT

The Moroccan Journal of Communication Studies Vol. 4, Issue 8, 2024 emotional activity. Against this background, empathy emerges as a critical human ability that holds immense potential for nurturing autonomous learning in learners, particularly in the field of language teaching, as emphasized by Mercer (2016). This article aims to explore the role of English language teachers' empathy in promoting learners' autonomy.

Carré et al. (2013) further elaborated on empathy as involving observation, reflection, and action—a process that entails not only observing others' words and actions but also reflecting on the underlying meaning behind them and engaging in interactions based on this understanding. In the same vein, Mercer (2016) succinctly defined empathy as the foundation for understanding the minds and emotions of others and nurturing relationships. Similarly, Krznaric (2014) characterized empathy as an art, emphasizing the imaginative act of stepping

into another's shoes, understanding their feelings and perspectives, and using this insight to guide one's actions.

Both Krznaric (2014) and Mercer (2016) agreed upon the fact that empathy is not a static characteristic fixed in an individual's personality but rather a dynamic attribute that can be cultivated and enhanced over time. This insight carries profound implications, particularly in the domain of education, where empathy plays a fundamental role in fostering supportive learning environments and facilitating meaningful teacher-learner relationships.

It implies grasping the interaction of emotions and their impact on oneself and others, fostering emotional wisdom (Steiner 2003: 54). Empathy in the L2 domain has been explored in relation to different aspects, such as language learning, teaching, and proficiency (Mercer 2016; Sakai 2019), teachers' inner language (Cook 2003), cross-cultural communication (Jiang and Wang 2018), teacher well-being (Oxford 2016), digital empathy in language teaching (Thaler 2023), teacher support and engagement (Sadoughi and Hejazi 2021; Zhang 2022), and relational empathy in language learning (Olivares-Cuhat and Zimotti 2023). In the classroom context, the quality of interpersonal relationships -the 'rapport' between teachers and students -is key for fostering an empathetic learning environment.

Language is viewed as a channel for empathy (Brown 1973) and it can create a safe and equal space for language learning and communicating (Mercer 2016). Teacher empathy can promote student motivation; however, this empathy can also pose challenges for instructors, being both rewarding and demanding (Konrath and Grynberg 2013).

Building rapport in the foreign language classroom is key for creating a safe and supportive learning environment. Empathy is directly linked to this process as it enables teachers to understand their students' needs (Mercer 2016). Moreover, it can help boost students' confidence and prompt them to actively use the foreign language.

Adult migrant learners may be exposed to situations of violence, racism and hostility that affect their ability to participate fully in language learning (Baynham, 2006). With these potential struggles in mind, Mercer (2016) outlines how promoting empathy improves group dynamics and cultivates cooperative and collaborative relationships among students, which, in turn, fosters an environment conducive to effective language learning and the strengthening of interpersonal and communicative skills. Despite these earlier contributions, a recent review of trainee teachers' practical experiences in their classroom interactions reveals that student teachers often harbor negative beliefs and concerns about working with learners of non-native backgrounds, while acknowledging the importance of empathy in their training to educate them (Hanna, 2023).

Given that cultivating positive other-regarding emotions is thought to be one of the mechanisms for inducing empathy towards individual subjects, which can generalize to favorable attitudes towards other members of the target group (Klimecki, 2019) and which is essential for effective intercultural communication (Mercer, 2016), further research exploring these links has been encouraged. In this light, Martínez-Otero Pérez (2011) raises the need to promote empathy in university curricula for the training of education professionals, placing special emphasis on the incorporation of the empathic intersubjective educational style in the instructional process.

Questions about the adequacy of initial teacher education in preparing them for engaging effectively with migrant students. As Mercer (2016) points out, trainee teachers' awareness of the importance of interpersonal skills in language learning can help them to assess the potential effects that such skills have on classroom life and cross-cultural

communication. Prospective empathetic teachers therefore require cognitive skills to interpret emotional cues, adopt diverse perspectives, and foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment (Underhill, 2013).[2; 238,245-b]

ANALYSIS & RESULTS

In our increasingly globalized world, the ability to understand and connect with others is more valuable than ever. Language learning not only facilitates communication but also fosters empathy, helping us build bridges across cultures. In this article, we explore the profound connection between language learning and empathy, and how this synergy can enhance personal and professional relationships.

The Empathy-Language Learning Link

1. Cultural Understanding:

- Learning a new language involves immersing oneself in the cultural nuances and social contexts of the language-speaking community.
- This immersion fosters a deeper appreciation and understanding of different perspectives, traditions, and values, enhancing empathy towards others.

2. Perspective-Taking:

- Language learners often put themselves in the shoes of native speakers to grasp idiomatic expressions and cultural references.
- This practice of perspective-taking translates into a heightened ability to understand and empathize with people from diverse backgrounds.

3. Emotional Connection:

- Language is a vehicle for expressing emotions, and learning a new language allows individuals to connect emotionally with speakers of that language.
- This emotional connection builds empathy, as learners understand the subtleties of emotions expressed in different cultural contexts.

Benefits of Empathy in Language Learning

1. Enhanced Communication Skills:

- Empathy enables language learners to communicate more effectively, as they are attuned to the emotional and cultural context of their interlocutors.
- This leads to more meaningful and respectful interactions, both personally and professionally.

2. Conflict Resolution:

- Empathy plays a crucial role in resolving conflicts by fostering understanding and compassion.
- Language learners with high empathy are better equipped to navigate misunderstandings and find common ground, reducing friction in multicultural settings.

3. Improved Learning Outcomes:

- Empathetic learners are more open to feedback and more willing to engage in collaborative learning experiences.
- This openness accelerates language acquisition and deepens cultural understanding, leading to more effective and fulfilling language learning journeys.

Cultivating Empathy Through Language Learning

1. Active Listening:

- Practice active listening by fully engaging with speakers, showing genuine interest, and seeking to understand their perspectives.

- This practice not only improves language skills but also enhances empathy by demonstrating respect and attentiveness.

2. Cultural Immersion:

- Immerse yourself in the culture associated with the language you are learning through travel, media, and interactions with native speakers.

- Experiencing different ways of life firsthand broadens your worldview and deepens your empathetic understanding.

3. Language Exchange Programs:

- Participate in language exchange programs where you can practice your language skills with native speakers while helping them learn your language.

- These reciprocal learning experiences foster mutual empathy and cultural exchange, enriching the learning process for both parties.

Real-World Applications of Empathy in Language Learning

1. Global Business:

- In the business world, empathy and language skills are invaluable for building strong international relationships and understanding customer needs in diverse markets.

- Companies that prioritize empathy in their communications can create more inclusive and resonant brand messages.

2. Diplomacy and International Relations:

- Diplomats and international relations professionals benefit greatly from empathy and language proficiency, as these skills enable them to navigate complex cultural landscapes and foster peaceful cooperation.

3. Education and Teaching:

- Educators who understand and empathize with their students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds can create more inclusive and supportive learning environments.

- This empathy enhances student engagement and academic success.

Conclusion: Embracing Empathy Through Language.[3; 285,292-b]

The journey of language learning is deeply intertwined with the cultivation of empathy. By embracing both, we can build stronger, more meaningful connections across cultures, enhancing our personal and professional lives. Whether in business, education, or daily interactions, the empathetic language learner stands poised to make a positive impact in an interconnected world.

In today's era of globalization, there is a need to master several languages. The process of learning a language involves not only mastering the rules of grammar and vocabulary, but it is also important to form mutual understanding in communication. Empathetic feedback plays an important role in this process.

Empathy is the ability to deeply understand the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others and to relate to them with empathy. Empathy in language learning enriches communication, not only technically, but also spiritually. This is especially important in cross-cultural communication.

When a language learner thinks empathically, he or she better understands the subtleties of emotion and meaning expressed in the language being studied. For example, trying to understand not only the grammatically correct use of a word or phrase, but also its

emotional tone in context. This will increase the possibility of natural and fluent communication.

Empathetic feedback teaches the reader to look not only from their own point of view, but also from the point of view of the interlocutor. As a result, the learner takes literary and cultural values into account, while maintaining respect and attention throughout the dialogue.

In order to develop empathy in the process of language learning, the following methods are recommended:

Active listening: Attentive attention to the words of another person and an effort to empathize with his/her feelings.

Enhancing intercultural knowledge: Learning the customs, values and history of the people in which the language is studied.

Thoughtful Expression: Choose a sincere and respectful tone when commenting on others.

Avoiding an evaluative approach: Trying to understand the point of view of others, rather than expressing your own judgment in any situation.[5; 43,47-b]

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, empathetic feedback in Language Learning strengthens one's cultural awareness and preparedness for global communication, while strengthening knowledge and skills. Through empathy, the learner not only acquires a good language, but also assimilates a real culture of communication. Therefore, in the process of language learning, as well as technical approach, special attention should be paid to human and empathic approach.

At a time when stress, conflict, and misunderstandings are increasingly prevalent in the modern world, empathy plays an important role in creating cohesive and supportive relationships. The ability to be empathetic allows us to better understand and support others, which can help reduce conflict and improve the quality of our lives.

In addition, empathy is the foundation of reciprocity and effective communication. The ability to understand others' feelings and concerns can help us build trusting relationships and successfully resolve conflicts and problems.

In the modern world, at a time when the ability to collaborate and interact with different people and cultures is becoming increasingly important, empathy is becoming a valuable skill that helps us be successful and happy in our society.

Empathy plays an important role in our ability to understand and support others, creating an environment of trust, support, and mutual understanding. It is an integral component of successful relationships, professional development and social well-being.

It's hard to overestimate the importance of empathy in our lives and in our society. It allows us to empathize with and support the joys and sufferings of others, improves the quality of our relationships, and helps us successfully resolve conflicts and problems.

In today's world, at a time when the ability to understand and respect the feelings and concerns of others is becoming increasingly important, developing empathy is a key aspect of our personal and professional growth. It is therefore important to put in the effort to develop this important skill and strive to create a more caring and supportive society.

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