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Pós-Graduação Lato Sensu em Língua Inglesa

Why is it important to observe emotions in Teaching-learning to better understand the quality of Life in an English language classroom?

The significance of emotion observation in teaching-learning: understanding the quality of life in an English language classroom.

Advisor: Prof^a. Dr^a Adriana Nogueira Accioly Nóbrega

Rio de Janeiro, 21 de julho de 2023.



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Monografia apresentada ao programa de Pós-graduação em Letras da PUC-Rio como requisito parcial para obtenção do título de especialista em Língua Inglesa. Aprovada pelas Examinadoras abaixo:

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ABSTRACT

Sant'Ana, Lynda Pimentel do Lago; Nóbrega, Adriana Nogueira Accioly (Advisor). **Why is it important to observe emotions in teaching-learning to better understand the quality of life in an English language classroom?**

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This text highlights the journey of my personal experience as a bilingual teacher who have been in the educational field for thirteen years, with a particular sympathy for teaching children between the ages of 5 and 10. I aim to motivate a discussion on the significance in understanding the classroom environment and quality of life in an English language class. I worked on emphasizing the importance of continuous learning with affect and the reflective practice in addressing the unique needs of students. The role of empathy and emotions in the teacher-student relationship was recognized as crucial for fostering motivation and creating a positive classroom environment. Observing and acknowledging students' emotions was emphasized, along with the need for essential changes in the classroom setting to accommodate my students' individualities. Building relationships based on trust, cooperation, and kindness was seen as fundamental, while addressing unexpected situations and challenges. I attempted to establish an increased educational setting where students could blossom and develop their emotional and social skills through constructing a positive learning process. Particularly in this work, my objective is to get a deeper understanding of the teaching-learning relationship in the classroom and the influences that this relationship might cause based on the emotions brought by the students. I draw upon Exploratory Practice, from a social perspective on emotions, and some practices on Mindfulness and simple relaxation techniques. The corpus generated consists of drawings produced by my students and personal notes where I recorded the students' statements and my own observations throughout this work.

In the end, I analyze how this content and my insights have led me to understand that it is extremely relevant to consider the personalities of each student, overloaded with emotions, and with them, be able to understand the quality of life in the classroom in a way to experience learning regarding the emotions standing out during this process.

KEYWORDS

Teacher-student Relationship, Exploratory Practice, Emotions, Teaching-learning Observation, Reflective Classroom Environment.

“Attitude is a choice. Happiness is a choice.
Optimism is a choice. Kindness is a choice.
Giving is a choice. Respect is a choice.
Whatever choice you make makes you.
Choose wisely.”

— *Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart*

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Prologue: unveiling the silent voices behind my emotions

I find it suitable to begin the introduction of this work by talking about my personal background. In my family, I have been exposed to an environment characterized by emotional instability. I was raised on a farm located in the countryside of Rio de Janeiro, living far away from the excitement of urban centers and, above all, with a significant cultural and educational gap.

Therefore, my educational expertise unfolded in a small rural town during the 1990s, where the school I studied at grappled with resource constraints. Despite facing reading resource limitations and limited access to reading literary materials, I developed a deep affinity for visiting the public library in my small town, marveling at the rows of bookshelves teeming with knowledge and embarking on scholarly searches.

During my childhood, I found relief and freedom in the world of reading and writing as a means to escape the emotional turbulence that permeated my family life on a daily basis. Beginning my journey of literacy around the age of six, I remember how the scope of books and letters provided me with a shelter amongst the chaotic circumstances of my upbringing.

Reflecting on my own reframing experience, I would like to put it into words to you – the reader – how my engagement with the meaning of words and embracing literature, not merely as an academic pursuit but as a profound exploration of emotions, had a profound emotional impact on my development as a learner.

Speaking about emotional responsibility, I remember that when I was twelve years old, after the passing of my father, I received a book from someone very close to the family, the book "*Christiane F.*" Unhappily, without any guidance or emotional support, I read this grownup book, and its words and content deeply resonated within my soul perpetually.

Thus, today, I can say that I utterly understand the utmost importance of a teacher being truthfully cautious when presenting and reading a book to her students. The lexical choices, vocabulary, suggested images, pictures, and the message conveyed by the text are all crucial for a learner reflection and critical development of the lives that pass through a classroom. The affective impact and sensitive

consequences are forever imprinted in the reader's life, whether positively or negatively. There will always be some sort of change after every reading experience.

This immersive particular construction journey nurtured my passion for reading, fueling my curiosity and shaping me into an eager student hearing to the silent voices resonating through the words and works of several authors. As a result, I experienced a profound sense of belonging in the realm of fantasy, igniting in me a keen curiosity for knowledge acquisition. Consequently, I developed a deep affinity for reading books and their enchantments.

This investigation represents the diverse range of life experiences that have shaped my academic journey. Despite not having studied English during the early years of my schooling and lacking familial support in mastering the language, I pursued a bachelor's degree in Languages. Additionally, my participation in two student exchange programs, the first occurring during my second year of college with limited English proficiency, provided invaluable opportunities for growth. Moreover, the internships I undertook allowed me to acquire substantial knowledge, while other employment opportunities further contributed to my professional development and broadened my interests in the field.

Throughout my growth as a learner, I had the opportunity to study Languages at the prestigious university PUC-Rio, where I encountered incredible and unforgettable professors who were instrumental in shaping me as a person and a professional. Besides gaining access to incredible texts and books, I had the privilege of interacting with specialists who always demonstrated dedication, commitment, responsibility, and love towards other authors and their works and written productions.

After that, I graduated and began my career as a bilingual teacher thirteen years ago. In a natural process of seeking personal and professional improvement, some years after my graduation, I am now concluding my postgraduate studies, once again at the esteemed PUC-Rio.

Introduction: embracing emotions in the classroom

By discussing my motivation and the context for my interest on exploring the emotions in the classroom, I tried to illustrate my background and the deep impact of literature and emotions on my own development. Then, I would like to establish my role as an educator and my commitment to creating a positive and caring classroom environment that may acknowledge and address the emotions of my students.

As an educator, I have always recognized the importance of continuous learning and research to effectively address the unique needs of my students. While I have had experience teaching students of all ages, I have always felt a strong connection with children between the ages of 5 and 10. In order to handle the challenges of teaching this group, I have embraced a reflective practice, researching into various educational and instructional resources, including pedagogical literature. I have also sought guidance and feedback from experienced scholars and mentors.

About my professional experience so far, I came to understand the significance of empathy and emotions in the teacher-student relationship, as they play a vital role in fostering motivation and creating a positive classroom environment. Reflecting on the impact of students' emotions during mine and my students' daily routines have been a valuable experience.

It is crucial to emphasize the importance of observing and acknowledging the emotions that arise in the classroom each day. The lives of the students I work with are constantly changing, adapting to daily plans, readings, and personal moods, all of which influence our activities. Furthermore, children experience and express themselves in a wide range of emotions. By observing and reflecting on these emotions, I have been able to collaborate with myself as a bilingual teacher, understanding how to respond, support, and provide to the unique needs of each student.

Every day, as I interact with my students, I recognize the need for essential changes within the classroom setting. These changes are necessary to develop an educational routine that accommodates the personalities of the learners. Building a relationship based on sharing and trust within the group is fundamental. Once this relationship is established, it is important to foster a cooperative and caring environment where both students and I can motivate and support each other.

Kindness and respect for individuality are crucial, while observing school rules and achieving academic and social goals.

Furthermore, as a teacher, I am attentive in anticipating and preparing my own emotions for the upcoming days of class. However, I remain mindful of the need to accurately cross through unexpected situations, as children often bring a range of emotions into the classroom exposing their personal experiences. These emotions include not only sadness, disappointment, frustration, and loneliness but also positive situations where learners display helpfulness, kindness, spontaneity, creativity, gratitude, and enthusiasm. Additionally, I have deeply observed instances where some children exhibit signs of depression and low self-esteem, withdrawing into themselves.

It is evident that certain children may express emotions associated with loneliness stemming from their family backgrounds. However, I must recognize the positive feelings that emanate from students who consistently contribute to the class. Despite the challenges, I am determined to understand and address the issues that arise daily in the classroom, striving to create a greater educational environment.

I observed daily how some children struggle to cope with their frustrations, leading them to lash out at their classmates with hurtful words. It is crucial to address these challenges and tackle instances of bullying that may occur, particularly during the early years. When a child attempts to exclude others based on physical differences or emotional needs, opposing from ethical norms, it significantly disrupts the learning process and poses a significant hurdle. Therefore, in this study, I aim to explore the following puzzle: *“Why is it important to observe emotions in teaching-learning to better understand the quality of life in an English language classroom?”*.

Considering students' immature behaviors and the challenges they might face; I see myself as an educator in a position to help them establish positive relationships among themselves. My goal is to foster an encouraging and confident atmosphere where students can thrive and develop.

Subsequent to this introduction, this text is structured in the following manner: the subsequent chapter will present the theoretical framework, presenting an understanding of the study regarding emotions and Exploratory Practice. This section will be followed by the methodology employed during the research, portraying insights into the research approach. The resulting corpus generated from the conducted activity will then be presented, featuring a source of drawings for analysis alongside my personal notes. Following this, the findings will be subject to thorough analysis,

shedding light on the insights acquired during my investigation. Finally, this text will be concluded by reviewing the main points and showing the final remarks based on the research conducted.

The principles of Exploratory Practice, emotions, and mindful teaching

According to Allwright and Hanks (2001), Exploratory Practice in classrooms involves a way of enhancing understanding of quality of life in the classroom and it might foster active reflection and investigation of topics. It is worth emphasizing that my focus has been on encouraging students to engage in experiential learning and enhance their critical thinking abilities by gaining a deeper understanding of the dynamics within my classroom integrating research and pedagogy.

Aligned with Allwright (2003), regarding Exploratory Practice, I believe I have been working as a mediator and facilitator to enhance my group awareness and participation towards understanding throughout discussion, in a way of engaging their autonomy of learning, curiosity and creativity. Following this approach, I created opportunities to motivate my students to investigate and to ask questions, to explore the topics and share knowledge respecting their individual strengths and interests.

Besides, it has been important to make my students participate attentively, leading them to reflect upon their own feelings and acts by pursuing a collaborative work with this practice, and to ensure everyone is involved in this collective development. This work focuses on observing the emotions promoted in the classroom activities and they are aligned with the principles of Exploratory Practice.

In line with Allwright's (1993) ideas, Exploratory Practice is an approach that integrates research and teaching strategies to deepen teachers and students' understandings of their practice and enhance learning in a commonly constructive method. It involves an inquiry-oriented process where practitioners actively explore and critically reflect on their own participants' practices, aiming to improve teaching and learning experiences.

Through a collaborative and dialogical approach, teachers engage in coordinated inquiry, observing the impact of their instructional outcomes and exploring alternative ways of teaching. The focus is on creating meaningful learning experiences that promote student engagement and develop their critical perspectives. Exploratory Practice supports ongoing teacher development, enrich classroom practices, and enhance practitioners' understandings.

The concept of Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activity (PEPA) refers to teaching strategies that have the potential to be exploited for educational purposes (MILLER AND CUNHA, 2017). In the language classroom, there are various ways to incorporate PEPA effectively. I have chosen to explore literature analysis and comprehension, encouraging students to explore different perspectives, and engaging a debate about the author's intentions. Also, my students and I engaged in a collaborative activity in which the kids worked together to create something meaningful to express their feelings, fostering communication and respecting their individual skills, providing constructive feedback.

As proposed by Hanks (2019), I aimed to stimulate reflection on the significance of practitioners' emotions in the classroom, I worked with a Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activity. My research question “*Why is it important to observe emotions in teaching-learning to better understand the quality of life in an English language classroom?*” intends to shed light on the essential role that emotions play in educational settings.

Through the tasks conducted in my own classes, I have gained a deeper understanding of the dynamic interchange of emotions within my relationship with my pupils. According to Zembylas (2004), emotions may be generated through the fundamental aspect of human experience, carrying out our perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors influences. Also, emotions are not merely determined by genetics, but are influenced by social and cultural factors. Zembylas (2007) proposes that emotions are not fixed responses but are improvised based on individual's interpretation of a specific situation related to social life events.

According to Nóbrega-Kuschnir's (2003) perspective, the classroom is seen as a symbolic space where the classes' experiences unfold not only as a cognitive matter, but also as a social and emotional event. Besides that, she states that a superficial understanding of the classroom overlooks its true complexity as an educational setting. According to her, this perspective leads to an inaccurate perception of pedagogical contexts, simplifying them and promoting generalization instead of taking the learners' individualities into consideration. She emphasizes the need to recognize the classroom as a dynamic environment for interaction and learning.

Nóbrega-Kuschnir (2003) also suggests a perception in which the classroom is seen as a holistic system, recognizing the interconnected and an expected friendly relationship between social, emotional, and cognitive skills within the educational context. By embracing her idea, we recognize that these dimensions can gradually be integrated into the knowledge acquirement process.

As Megan Boler (1999) states, education might be conducted as the social control of emotions. Schools are seen as environments where emotions may be monitored through teaching strategies, aiming to refine emotions in students. Her ideas illustrate various academic disciplines such as social semiotics, and educational philosophy (ZEMBYLAS, 2007). Traditionally, emotion has been often studied and seen as an individual experience. It is generally associated with affect, considered separate from the rational mind and in need of control. The educational system may promote certain emotions, such as empathy and enthusiasm, while discouraging others, like anger and anxiety.

Teachers in modern classrooms encounter numerous challenges and difficult circumstances. According to Jennings (2015), the topic of Mindfulness carries an importance in our daily lives. Recent years have seen a rise in the popularity of promoting mindfulness as an intervention method. Extensive scientific research has consistently shown that mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have powerful effects in reducing stress, lightening suffering, and improving overall well-being.

Regarding the impact of difficult emotions on physiological stress responses and psychological experiences, Jennings (2015) highlights the connection between negative emotions and past learning experiences, and how emotional memories influence the behavior of teachers in the classroom. The author, drawing from personal experience, illustrates how challenging emotions can hold back teaching and the classroom environment, as well as how mindfulness practice can mitigate their effects.

Moreover, Jennings (2015) considers practical activities for cultivating mindfulness in relation to negative emotions and breaking habitual reactions. The use of mindfulness to reduce stress and occupational hazards in teaching, presenting a vision of how it can transform the teaching and learning environment by fostering creativity, innovation, collaboration, joy, and cooperation. Overall, teachers in

developing may mature the necessary skills to create a calm, relaxed, and vibrant learning environment that prepares students for the future.

Although I do not specifically work with Mindfulness practices, its theoretical concept is highly relevant to this research because I incorporated some of Mindfulness performs. For instance, when I apply relaxation techniques with children after engaging in activities that leave them very agitated or tired, we dim the lights, play soothing background music, and engage in massage and deep breathing exercises. Even though I may not follow Mindfulness practice intensely, it is present in my daily class routine by promoting a relaxing time.

One profitable way for exploring the intersections of love and emotions following the educational idea is to consider the perspectives of both hooks (1994) and Paulo Freire (1995). hooks, in her transformative pedagogy, emphasizes the importance of love as a central force in the process of education. She argues that love, in its radical form, has the potential to disrupt oppressive systems and create settings for genuine connection and understanding. Illustrating the notion of a "pedagogy of love", hooks (2003) supports that educators should foster nurturing and empathetic relationships with learners, cultivating an environment where emotions are acknowledged and fulfilled.

Similarly, Freire's (1995) critical pedagogy highlights the significance of love in educational praxis. For Freire, love is not merely an abstract feeling but a concrete act of care, respect, and solidarity towards learners. Love, in the Freirean sense, leads to recognizing and valuing the compassion and kindness of students, engaging in dialogue that releases their voices, and collectively working towards the change of oppressive structures.

Both hooks and Freire emphasize the essential role of emotions, especially love, in the educational process, highlighting the potential for love in pedagogies to generate empowerment and social change. Although I do not consider the setting of my classroom as a place to be focused on psychology and clinical therapy issues, hooks (2003) discusses the deeper observation about the practitioners' attitudes and behaviors, awakening me to ways of dealing with my students' feelings.

Methodology: a reflective and investigative practice

The present work aims to explore the question *"Why is it important to observe emotions in teaching-learning to better understand the quality of life in an English language classroom?"*. To deeper grasp the importance of the relationship between emotions and teaching-learning, I aimed to understand some spontaneous expressions generated by my students in the classroom context. Based on the investigative principles indicated by Allwright and Lenzuen (1997), I considered the importance of adapting the group's behavior and acts to manage pedagogical occurrences and unexpected events caused by the emotions expressed by students during daily routines.

The center of this research was on an investigation of emotions and their great influence on the quality of life within the classroom. My analysis highlighted the concept of quality of life as a fundamental issue, aligning with Allwright and Hanks' (2009) perspective and embracing reflective practices guided by Allwright's (2005) principles. Moreover, Allwright and Miller (2001) stress the importance of contemplation in fostering understanding, empowering practitioners to plan potential actions and provide improvements.

This paper was based on a class of fifteen students, around 6 years old. I could investigate and reflect on how important it is to pay attention to the personality of each student in order to address their individualities and needs. Each child's words, speeches, and records carried articulated emotions and feelings that looked for acceptance and affect during the learning process.

Aligned with my lesson plans, based on the proposed school curriculum, I aimed to apply pedagogical knowledge and carry out a *Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activity* – PEPA (MILLER AND CUNHA, 2017). proposed by the Exploratory Practice. In order to understand the students' emotional landscape in a more individualized way, I conducted an activity during the circle reading time, with question-and-answer sessions, and drawings to better understand the connections between emotions and teaching-learning.

The data sources for this study were field observations, group conversations, and collection of students' drawings. The data consisted of field notes from considerations, an "emotion report" in which I recorded how I felt about events in my classroom, and details such as lesson plans.

Drawing upon this practice, students were provided with a valuable opportunity to express their emotions through a comprehension and interpretation activity following their reading of the book "How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids" (2009) by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer. This book explores into various scenarios that vividly illustrate positive and negative character traits and attitudes.

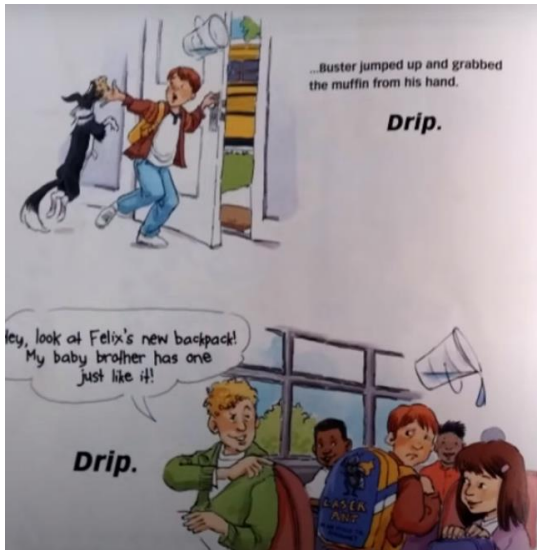
I introduced the activity by describing the emotional significance of the term "bucket" to the participants, ensuring their understanding of its metaphorical context. Afterwards, I provided them with illustrative examples of behaviors that contributed to ways of being "bucket fillers." These included actions such as expressing gratitude through sayings like "please" and "thank you," sharing toys and materials, employing kind words, actively listening to others while patiently waiting for their own turn to speak, and keeping an appropriate voice level. In contrast, I also explained the concept of being a "bucket dipper" by highlighting behaviors such as hitting, engaging in fights, talking over others during conversations, using offensive language or engaging in bullying, and employing mean-spirited words.



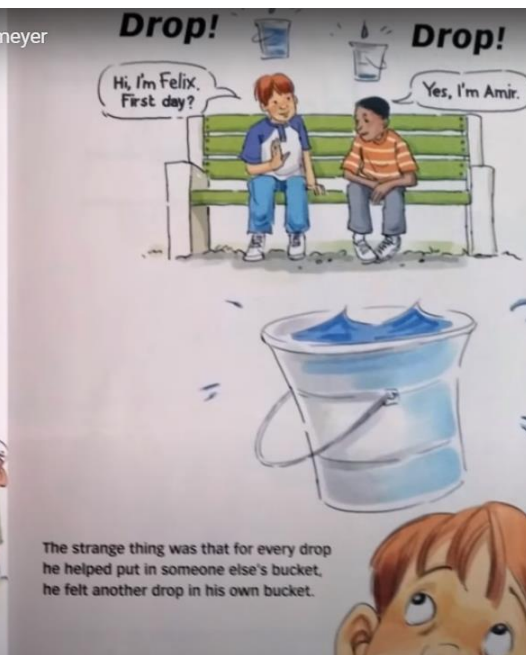
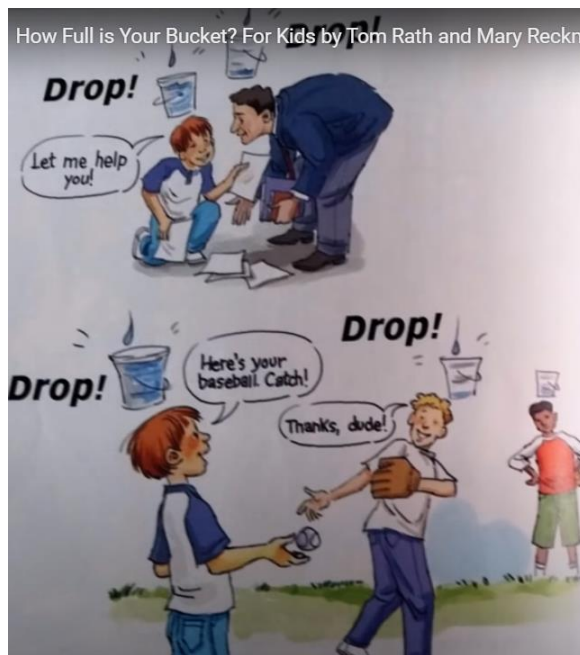
Figure 1 - Source: Amazon

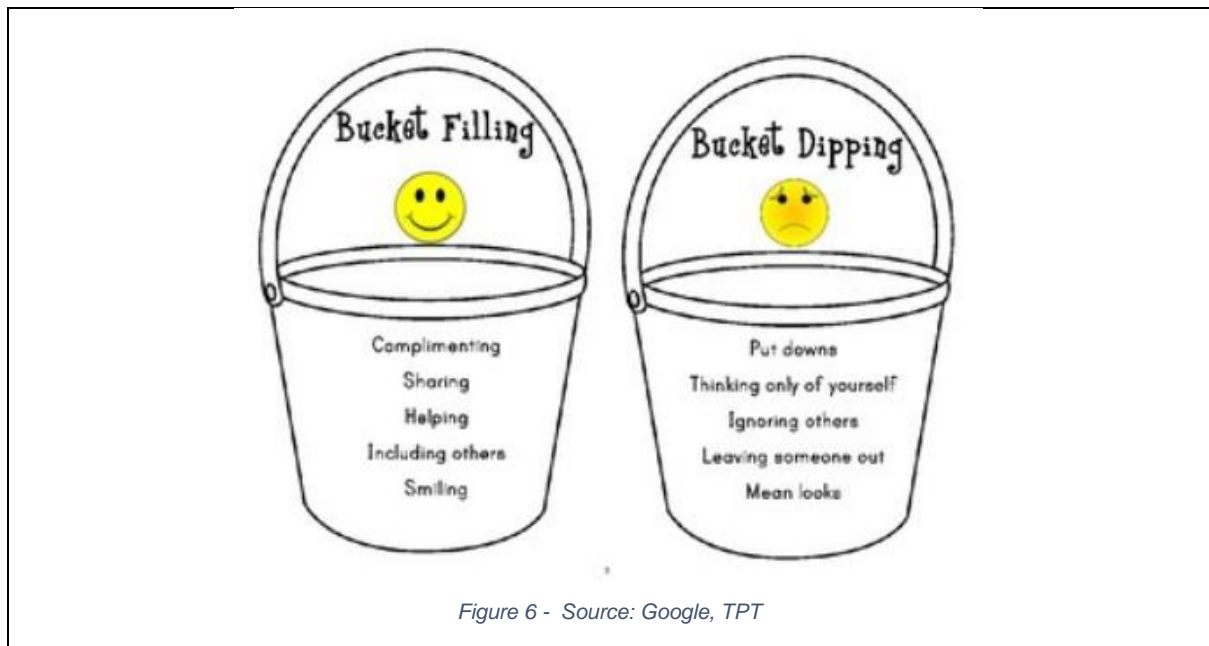


Figure 3 – Source: Youtube



How Full is Your Bucket? For Kids by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer





After the shared reading of the book *"How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids"* in a group discussion, my aim was to stimulate the children's reflection and encourage them to express their emotions and thoughts regarding specific positive or negative actions. This approach encouraged the construction of knowledge through self-evaluation and the sharing of individual understandings. The group dynamics facilitated a deeper understanding of one another and contributed to the overall knowledge of the quality of life in our classroom, thus promoting a healthy coexistence.

As part of this activity, students were encouraged to articulate their feelings using both drawings and words, enabling them to engage creatively with the material and reflect on their own emotional responses. By combining visual and linguistic modes of expression, students gained a major understanding of the book's themes and were able to explore their own emotional landscapes in a meaningful and personal way.

By applying the principles of Exploratory Practice, the analysis of these interactions revealed worthy insights into the learners' emotional and social skills development. The following seven principles of Exploratory Practice developed by Allwright (2002), and explored by Miller and Bannel (2002), and were used as the analytical framework for my study.

1. Put 'quality of life' first: Emphasize the importance of understanding and improving the quality of life within the language classroom.
2. Work primarily to understand language classroom life: Focus on understanding the general context of language classroom life rather than directly solving specific problems.
3. Involve everybody: Engage learners as active participants and co-researchers rather than ordinary subjects of research.
4. Work to bring people together: Cultivate social harmony and collaboration among all participants in education.
5. Work also for mutual development: Encourage the development of all individuals involved in the research, including learners and teachers.
6. Handle the work for understanding into classroom practice: Try to make the work for understanding to be effortlessly integrated into regular classroom activities.
7. Make the work a continuous project: Treat the work for understanding as an ongoing and organic process, recognizing that the language classroom is a dynamic social environment.

Essentially, my work followed the four steps of the practice proposed by Allwright and Lenzuen (1997):

a) Identify a puzzle.

Initially, my puzzle spun around the question, "*Why is it important to observe emotions in teaching-learning to better understand the quality of life in an English language classroom?*". I sought to explore how emotions, specifically in the teacher-student relationship, could play a role in activating and influencing the group dynamics during reading activities, both positively and negatively. However, as I investigated immersed, I realized the need to adjust my focus towards the core essence of the puzzle, emphasizing the critical relationship between teaching-learning practice that is strongly driven by the practitioners' emotions.

This study was predicated upon the analysis of students' interpretations. The interactive reading session, involving active engagement from the learners, provided a unique opportunity for them to utter their emotive responses towards the current school environment.

b) Select and adapt procedures to investigate the question.

With the basic principles of Exploratory Practice, in a pedagogical and playful manner, I sought to stimulate students' reflection through a shared reading of the book "*How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids*" during the circle time to encourage kids to reflect on this enterprise and motivate thoughts about the sensitivity of the topic.

c) Conduct the investigation in the classroom.

In relation to Mindful Teaching method and the importance of Exploratory Practice, I conducted a reflective study based on the participants' behavior and attitudes in my classroom, as well as their corresponding drawings. I carefully registered on my files relevant comments and statements made by the students. Continuous mindfulness was crucial throughout this research work, enabling a deeper comprehension of the process involved in cultivating and nurturing the participants' relationship.

During this ongoing process, I could implement a strategy of incorporating relaxing time after activities that aroused high levels of excitement or agitation among the participants. Recognizing the need to provide a moment for them to calm down, readjust, and have a deeper picture of new concepts for subsequent activities, I integrated these relaxation intervals into the classroom routine. By doing so, I aimed to create a conducive environment inspired by Mindfulness practices that promoted optimal learning circumstances and supported the students' cognitive and emotional well-being.

d) Reflect and interpret the results of the investigation.

The present work highlights the reflective impact of emotions and cognitive skills on the experiences and behaviors of the students. It is evident that the emotional needs of the students play a significant role in shaping their overall well-being and engagement in the educational setting. Each student's emotional expression through drawings provides a window into their internal world, revealing their longings, sorrows, and desires for connection and support.

Emotional voids might affect learners' ability to fully engage with their peers and participate in classroom activities. Similarly, students facing weaknesses may experience moments of low self-esteem and discouragement, highlighting the impact of cognitive skills on sense of inclusion and belonging.

On the other hand, other participants seem to display a strong sense of love and security in their familial relationships, which positively influences their decision-making skills, friendships, and overall sense of contentment. Other drawings might illustrate a deep connection to their loved ones and a need for emotional support and understanding.

It is important to recognize and address the emotional and cognitive needs of students in order to create a nurturing and inclusive learning environment. By understanding the unique experiences and challenges faced by each student, I may offer a more appropriate support, trying to facilitate social-emotional development, and foster a sense of belonging for all students.

Analysis: exploring participants' emotions and nurturing love

Among all the challenges and sudden occurrences during my classes considering participants' mood and behavior, I could observe a need stated by my students¹ for a sense of belonging and the importance of building a teacher-student relationship based on affect.



After reading the book "*How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids*", I asked the students to draw and tell me a word that could express their feelings in that moment, allowing them to describe why they were happy or sad within the school environment after reading something that could provoke their emotions.

Daily, I persistently took notes of a range of field observations relating to each participant following the activity I conducted with the class, in accordance with the framework outlined by the Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activity. These notes were organized in a highly personal and confidential manner as my "emotional report", encompassing a wealth of individual and private information relating to each learner.

It is prominent that my own and private remarks served as the foundation for my subsequent analysis, enabling me to better discern the contextual shades and interpretative significance inherent in the drawings and lexical choices employed by each student, particularly in the background of their emotive and naive expressions.

Nevertheless, I would like to underline that the observations I have been put in writing throughout the duration of this investigation, which I have regarded as my personal report for introspective contemplations, are not attached to this study. A further elaboration would be necessary on my part to enhance its content, potentially for employment in a subsequent, more comprehensive, and deeper research concerning participants' emotional experiences within the classroom setting.

¹ The names of the students have been changed to ensure and guarantee their privacy.

Students' illustrations	My reflection as a teacher
	<p>Luiza, a 6-year-old girl, has demonstrated possible signs of emotional neediness through her words. By observing her behaviors, it might represent her sentiments through the drawing featuring a cross. The student seemed to be affected in her social skills, showing a mark of sadness.</p>
	<p>Caio, also 6 years old, expressed his emotions by drawing a big, red heart symbolizing love. He might have tried to show his love towards his parents, indicating a sense of safety and a possible nurturing environment in his home. Caio conveys an expression of the significance and presence of love within his family relationships by cutting and portraying a big red heart between his parents, beautifully illustrating how embraced he must feel.</p>



Ricardo, a five-year-old-boy, said “*my parents mean everything to me*”. This sentiment is expressed through his drawing and his ability to establish positive relationships with his classmates.



Mariana, 6 years old, shared her deep joy as she described her mother as her “*best friend*”. With a drawing of two hearts and two girls wearing expressions of happiness on their faces, she displayed a sense of contentment and self-confidence in that setting and activity. She derives confidence from her mother's nurturing presence.



Luana, a 6-year-old-girl, expressed that she felt sad and didn't want to play with any of her classmates.

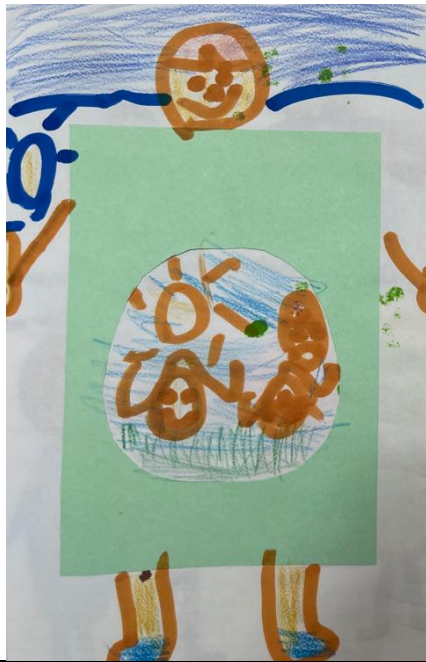
She was demonstrating a possible sense of longing and sadness due to the feelings she was experiencing at that moment.



Antonio, a 6-year-old-boy, has experienced some issues and that might have impacted his self-esteem. In this activity, he expresses a desire for a sense of belonging and possibly finds support and comfort in the presence of his family, who might bring a sense of warmth and humor into his childhood.



Mariana, a 6-year-old-girl, expressed that she felt happy playing. This student was spreading sweetness, affect, and joy through her drawings, and her actions seem to reflect a sense of love and calm.



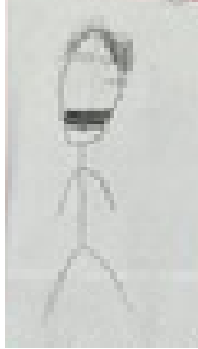

Mauricio, a 6-year-old boy, mentioned that his family was strict, and in his drawing, he tried to reflect the emotions he was carrying within his core. He illustrated a probable deal of consternation and respect aimed at his parents, expressing these feelings throughout the activity.



Ana Clara, a 6-year-old student, shared that she enjoys hiding herself under the stairs. This student has been facing interferences in her daily routine. In her drawing, Ana Clara expressed her beg and need for loneliness, and her leaning to engage in single play. It may show a longing for moments of self-reflection.



Lucas, a 6-year-old-boy, shared how much he enjoyed being with his family. This student brings into the classroom the emotion that he feels safe and embraced when his finally is together. In his drawing, it may be portrayed the idea of his

	<p>emotions being motivated by his parents' presence.</p>
	<p>Fernando, a 6-year-old boy, conveyed a reserved speech, opting not to engage in play with other children, and refusing to share free time with his classmates. He wanted to work alone. His illustration might carry his emotions through a face expression, employing a simple drawing and the lack of vibrant colors. The absence of a colorful background drew attention to a closed mouth, expressing silence and emotional distance from others, expressing a possible sense of loneliness.</p>
	<p>Bernardo showed how he feels embraced by playing with his friends, a six-year-old. He seemed to be unconfident and discouraged when he doesn't feel as involved as he would like to be.</p>



Beatriz, 6 years old, is a joyful and communicative girl, and took her mother as a role model. She expressed how much she loved spending time with her mother, highlighting the bond they might share.



Juliana's drawing, a 6-year-old girl, caught my attention when she illustrated herself feeling happy while playing. In her drawing, she showed herself playing jump rope with only one person, missing facial expressions for the other person. Additionally, while drawing the scene of jumping rope, the rope was tied to a tree, illustrating a moment when she plays with one adult.

I could observe in these drawings a rich embroidery of themes that may carry overwhelming emotional significance. To support my understanding, I tried to group them into themes encompassing love, family, and care. In the classroom, the portrayed emotions evoke an expressive sense of sadness and longing, while also highlighting the essential role of joy and excitement in social construction of learning. It is natural for children of this age to show their emotions freely, uninhibited by the distinctions or filters imposed by ethical and behavior issues in their surroundings school rules.

In the classroom, the conducted activity intended to show that teaching it is not only about presenting the content of the book, but also about how emotions arise and come to life as a social event. As Nóbrega-Kuschnir (2003) appropriately proposes, the classroom truly encompasses a multifaceted setting that intertwines social, cognitive, and emotional elements.

Nonetheless, this free way of expressing themselves becomes particularly evident in the classroom when a story is shared through reading books, allowing children to reflect and create connections with their own individual experiences or emotions rooted in the external school setting. As the authors Nóbrega-Kuschnir (2003) and Allwright (2003) assert, these connections bring forth a flow of caring emotions into the learning environment. During moments of their social interaction, as circle time and group activities, subjective experiences come alive, and the developing emotional conflicts are not only grasped as a need but also thoughtfully addressed throughout the acquaintance with learning.

The activity I proposed demonstrated my classroom being daily influenced by practitioners' social and emotional aspects. Moreover, it is worth noting that, beyond the observed aspects, an activity elicits various questions in students that are not controlled by the teacher. After conducting the activity with my class, I had the opportunity to integrate this practice as a contribution to the ongoing process of my classroom methodology.

Like Allwright and Hanks (2001), I can say that I worked towards trying to achieve an understanding that considered the most significant components, namely the cognitive and affective aspects. Following the suggestion of these authors, I could observe during my activity that positive emotions brought by some students, even if they are in the minority, help promote a classroom environment that is "good for the teacher" and "good for the learners," promising "job satisfaction" through the mutual nurturing of affect in a routine manner.

Following Exploratory Practice, I held a reflective perspective on the need for emotional issues that occur regularly in the classroom. This activity was not detached from the pedagogical content that I needed to work on during lesson plan with my class. Furthermore, as suggested by Nóbrega-Kuschnir, Griffo and Maciel (2023, prelo), it is essential for teachers to also reflect upon their own emotions as a way to

understand that I do not have the power to judge or interfere in the participants' stories and lives. It is important to underscore that educators also engage in reading and drawing, proposing comments, written reports, and the sharing of their own emotions.

In this sense, I may assume that emotion of love was present in all the responses obtained from the students after the activity that stirred their emotions. With all these mentioned practices, I have worked to identify the relevance of trying to better understand the qualities of the lives of my students in my classroom, bearing in mind not to label it as good or bad. Likewise, I am trying to keep the engagement of my students, promoting our mutual development, during our continuous and progressive work, including myself in this process of progress and reflection.

Most of the emotions observed during my classes are being simultaneously addressed through shared reflection. This process allows me to recognize the possible individual issues and emotional needs of the participants while inspiring me to provide opportunities for them to collectively explore and work on the development of the group's feelings.

By engaging with the diverse emotions of students that arise in the classroom, I have learned to prevent them from directly influencing my own emotions. I have worked extensively to approach their feelings in a more rational manner, aiming to cultivate tolerance and understanding in terms of respecting each participant's individual process and their unique lives. This perspective helps me minimize my personal and professional frustrations resulting from my own preconceived expectations.

Conclusion: enhancing quality of life through a reflective practice based on emotions

My personal background and prior experiences have significantly influenced my abilities as a learner and educator. Growing up in an emotionally turbulent environment, I found solace and personal growth through reading and writing. This immersion in literature not only fueled my academic pursuits but also served as a profound exploration of emotions and a means of personal development.

Recognizing the impact of literature on learners' emotional well-being, I became intensely aware of the responsibility that educators must hold in selecting and narrating books to students. As I reflect on my own experience, I understand the importance of providing guidance and emotional support to students when engaging with impactful literary works.

This paper is a culmination of my diverse life experiences and academic accomplishments. It voices my innate passion for literature, my commitment to responsible teaching practices, and my continuous growth as an educator. I believe that through sharing my journey, I can contribute to the broader discourse on the transformative power of literature in the lives of learners and the crucial role of educators in nurturing emotional development and critical thinking skills in the classroom.

Spotting the intricate dynamics between teaching-learning approach stimulates my commitment to exploring and investigating my continuous professional practice and development. This research represents my initial pace towards reaching an understanding and academically grounded comprehension of the participants involved in the educational setting. Indeed, the practices and insights gained throughout the process of my observations might shape future research endeavors in my academic trajectory.

The methodology employed in my study involved field observations, discussions, and the collection of students' drawings to gain insights into their

emotional landscapes. The analysis of these interactions provided me valuable considerations into the emotional and social skills development of the participants.

Echoing the ideas of Allwright (1993), I researched the puzzle “*Why is it important to observe emotions in teaching-learning to better understand the quality of life in an English language classroom?*” considering its genuineness and intensity, demanding ongoing investigations surrounding emotions and further scholarly discussions focusing on inquiry-oriented process. Furthermore, I may say that my teaching context and students have functioned as the motivation driving me towards becoming a researcher.

By integrating research and pedagogy, cheering investigation, questioning, and knowledge-sharing, I have tried to enable and create an environment that should nurture group awareness, autonomy of learning, curiosity, and creativity tailored to individual strengths and interests, as emphasized by Allwright (2003).

In order to improve and pool resources with this collective development, Exploratory Practice in the classroom has played a significant role in enhancing the quality of learning experiences and fostering active reflection among students. Drawing on the insights of Allwright and Hanks (2001), this approach has facilitated a deeper understanding of the dynamics in my classroom and has encouraged students to engage in experiential learning, thereby promoting critical thinking abilities.

I would like to highlight the significance of interdisciplinary discourse on emotion, fostering a deeper understanding of this essential aspect of children behavior in a bilingual language classroom. Being encouraged by Exploratory Practice (ALLWRIGHT AND HANKS, 2009; HANKS, 2017; MILLER ET AL., 2015), forwarding collaborative learning, and looking at learners’ essential individualities, I tried to support a love for learning for lifelong education.

This study focused on the significance of observing practitioners’ emotions in teaching-learning setting to increase awareness of the quality of life in an English language classroom. Through the practice of Exploratory Practice and a reflective analysis, I aimed to create an optimistic classroom environment that fosters motivation and supports the unique needs of each student.

The Potentially Exploitable Pedagogic Activity (MILLER AND CUNHA, 2017) approach has provided a framework for incorporating effective teaching strategies in the language classroom. In my own practice, I have chosen to explore literature analysis, inciting students to explore different perspectives and engage in discussions about the conveyed intentions of authors. Additionally, shared conversations have been employed to improve participants' communication, respect individual skills, and provide feedbacks, aligning with the principles of PEPA.

Through the Exploratory Practice approach, I tried to engage the learners as active participants and co-researchers, motivating their autonomy, promoting curiosity, and creativity. This work also integrated elements of Mindfulness to promote a calm and joy learning environment. It could highlight the recognition of the impact of negative emotions on teaching-learning experiences and emphasize the potential of mindfulness practices to mitigate their effects. Following this idea, I was also able to draw inspiration from the Mindfulness practices. As suggested by Jennings (2015), these practices have been engaged to reduce stress and improve overall well-being, proposing a valuable tool for practitioners to navigate challenging emotions and structure a positive learning setting.

Subsequently, Nóbrega-Kuschnir's (2003) perspective emphasizes the complexity of the classroom as a symbolic setting where social, emotional, and cognitive dimensions are interconnected. Similarly, by recognizing the dynamic characteristics of the classroom environment, educators may integrate social, emotional, and cognitive skills into the knowledge acquisition process.

Based on that, I could better reflect on the significance of practitioners' emotions in the classroom, recognizing their influence on the quality of life in an English language classroom. Also, emotions, as highlighted by Zembylas (2004), are a fundamental aspect of human experience, influenced by individuals' perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors, as well as social and cultural factors.

At length, drawing from the transformative pedagogies of hooks (2013) and Freire (1995), the importance of love in education is pointed out. Both hooks and Freire emphasize the significance of nurturing relationships, acknowledging, and valuing learners' emotions, and engaging in dialogue that empowers participants and works towards social change.

Embracing a more widely understanding of the classroom, identifying the influence of emotions and students' individualities, and incorporating practices such as mindfulness and love can contribute to creating an inclusive and empowering educational environment. By acknowledging the complex interplay of emotions and pedagogy, educators can promote meaningful learning experiences, nurture learner blissfulness, and work towards social transformation and improvement.

The findings of my study highlighted the importance of recognizing and acknowledging the emotions that arise in the classroom on a daily basis. Students may experience a wide range of emotions, both positive and negative, which can significantly impact their learning and overall group's well-being. By observing and reflecting on participants' feelings – including mine as well, I could understand more my students' individualities and address their needs more effectively.

This investigation has provided me, as a researcher, with valuable insights into my own academic journey and continuous development as a teacher. The profound understanding of learners' emotions has allowed for a closer alignment with my pedagogical practice. Thus, this work might be regarded as being shaped by a reflective perspective towards education and self-reflection.

Overall, I could learn, delve deeper, and immerse myself in the interconnection of emotions, teaching-learning processes, and the quality of life within my classroom. I was able to observe how emotions are not fixed responses but are constant unpredicted and expressed based on individual interpretations according to the conduction of each activity. The classroom was surveyed as a holistic system where social, emotional, and cognitive skills are integrated, emphasizing the need to create a collaborative and caring environment.

In conclusion, observing emotions in teaching-learning is of greatest importance for increasing awareness of quality of life in an English language classroom. By acknowledging and addressing practitioners' emotions, teachers may create a positive and supportive environment that should encourage student engagement, well-being, and overall academic enhanced success. The integration of Exploratory Practice with emotion, cognitive and social skills, and mindfulness principles further boosts the teaching-learning experience and this combination might contribute to the holistic development of students and the teacher as well.

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