

## New Approaches to Teacher Effectiveness

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### Abstract

Teacher effectiveness has been a focal point in plentiful interdisciplinary research conducted by educational psychologists, policy makers and social scientists. The literature abounds in proposed models for measuring and assessing teacher effectiveness in the light of the ever-changing and technology-dominated educational reality. This paper suggests three possible approaches that surpass the academic and pedagogical aims of the established practice. The authors of the current paper see emotional intelligence, the attribution theory of motivation and emotion along with the broaden-and-build theory, as the stepping-stone to increasing teacher effectiveness in language classrooms in the modern world. It is our claim that our attributional beliefs, underpinned by a certain degree of positivity and emotional skills, may lead to the sought after university teacher development and effectiveness more profoundly. It is believed that the proposed approaches will meet the pedagogical outcomes of the syllabi in practice by fostering the theoretical and practical knowledge and expertise needed by educators teaching the 21st century skills to language students.

*Keywords:* attribution; broaden-and-build; emotional intelligence; teacher effectiveness

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## Introduction

Teacher effectiveness and quality teaching have been a contentious issue in education for long, mainly because what constitutes each of the two terms is still debatable. A number of research studies have addressed the effectiveness of teaching in relation to teacher inputs, where factors like salary, teacher qualification and skills may impact teacher classroom practices and performance (Campbell, 2004; Griffin, 2013). However, numerous studies have questioned the relationship that is considered the base for developing effective teachers (Muijs & Reynolds, 2010).

To start with, no consensus has been found in literature on what effective teaching means or what qualities effective teachers embrace. As Rogers (2011, p.113) argues, “Effective of what? For whom? At what cost? In what way?” as the term “effective” itself is complex and controversial. Nevertheless, several attempts have been made to list certain possible traits of effective teachers. Walker (2008), for example, posits 12 characters of effective teachers, as perceived by his pre-service and in-service participants (e.g. being positive, forgiving and compassionate). In his study, teachers have been generally considered effective if they “have far fewer student problems and consequently are able to get their students to be more involved in learning” (p.1). Walls (1999), on the other hand, claims that the four essential elements of effective teaching consolidate the link between teaching “the process” and students’ learning “the product”. It is believed that better learning of students can be achieved by the utilization of what Walls called “The Four Aces of Effective Teaching: outcomes, clarity, engagement and enthusiasm”, where the presence of those four aces creates a reciprocal effective interaction between the students and the teachers. In other words, clarity of learning outcomes results in students’ engagement and shared enthusiasm. Clearly, most of the effective teaching models proposed in literature emphasize a balance between teachers’ skills and expectations and students’ interests and preferences.

Recognizing the importance of teaching quality and effectiveness, the authors of this paper attempt to describe three comprehensive approaches to education, which are perceived as learnable, beneficial and effective if well planned and implemented.

## Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

Teachers are often faced with burdensome and requiring tasks to act as models to their students, so they need to possess the necessary set of intellectual, pedagogical and interpersonal skills in order for them to create a conducive and friendly environment in which effective teaching and learning take place. Students require training and skills which will allow them to be competitive in the market; most are digital natives with a broad spectrum of modern skills, so the expectations they have from the teacher often go beyond the limits of the subject matter taught. Some are difficult to be academically pleased with what the curriculum and instruction methods have to offer. Thus, teachers are no longer expected to only be good communicators, knowledgeable experts in their fields, or passionate and approachable educators- they are required to possess a whole new set of skills that stretches far beyond the cognitive domain- teachers of the 21st century need to be emotionally intelligent.

Until recently emotions were considered a purely personal experience that was not to be manifested in a work environment, or on part of teachers in the classroom. But because

"emotions are often felt in the body, and somatosensory feedback has been proposed to trigger conscious emotional experiences" (Nummenmaa et al, 2013), teaching and learning are emotionally charged activities by nature.

Fredrickson (2001, p.1) suggests that "working definitions of emotions and affect vary somewhat across researchers". In her view, "emotions... are best conceptualized as multicomponent response tendencies that unfold over relatively short time spans"(p.2). Hess and Thibault (2009) believe that "emotions are considered to be relatively short-duration intentional states that entrain changes in motor behavior, physiological changes, and cognitions"(p.120). When properly managed and manifested, emotions not only facilitate teaching and learning- they help to establish a more effective communication channel. The term emotional intelligence (EI or EQ) is attributed to Peter Salovey and John Mayer who coined the term in 1990. Later, in 1996, 2009 and 2011, it was Daniel Goleman who popularized the term which has been gaining momentum ever since. Broadly put, EI is using and managing our emotions more effectively for a better self-awareness and inter-personal communication. Rational and emotional should be an integral part of the personal and professional profile of every teacher. Our fundamental claim in this paper is that each individual possesses some degree of EI that needs to be properly assessed, developed and utilized. Raddawi and Troudi (2013, p.170) state that "Teachers' level of EQ is an important variable in creating an emotionally intelligent classroom". EI should be the core of any teacher-training program, and recently, some schools in the U.S. (such as Arizona State University) have added EI as part of their pre-service teacher-training program. It is a well-known fact that teaching is in top 10 professions that are most likely to lead to burnout (Anderson, 2012). Early teacher attrition and loss of motivation seem to be a chronic condition, the solution for which could be a proper pre-service/ in-service teacher training that professes the understanding and utilization of the four branch model of EI, i.e. self-awareness (the perception of emotions), self-control (moderating emotions in the proper way), social awareness (understanding and appreciating others' emotions), and relationship-management (inter-personal skills). It is the goal of every teacher to create a positive atmosphere in class by first learning how to master and properly channel their own emotions.

However, this could never be achieved if teachers, themselves, are unaware of their own emotions or how to properly manage them. Goleman (1996) claims that the intelligence quotient (IQ) constitutes only around 20 percent of the factors that may lead to success in life. He gives credit to John Mayer and Peter Salovey for having "invented the whole field". Goleman has been passionate about the idea of using emotions that are inherent to every human for better achievements and excellent life skills. Job markets are in need of leaders; however, schools produce workers who possess proper theoretical background but lack the ability to utilize their knowledge. There must be a synergy between IQ and EQ, and students' achievements should not only be evaluated through normative exams. In the same vein, educators need to be fully aware of their own character strengths and weaknesses first to be able to cater to their students' emotional needs, because as Beard and Wilson state (2006, p. 173)- "emotion is inextricably linked to learning". They also claim that " emotional intelligence at work might contribute to improved team morale, more collaborative working, less energy waste on politicking and game play, thus reducing poor attitude or indifference" (p. 174).

Since its inception in 1990, the idea of incorporating social and emotional learning (SEL) into school's curriculum has gained popularity. Recent developments in the field suggest that

SEL should be introduced to preschoolers as a sound foundation for solidifying their life skills. Goleman's *Emotional Intelligence* (1996) presents two such models- in New Heaven schools and the Self-Science curriculum. The author claims that increased stress narrows the attention span and productivity rate, an idea that has also been extensively researched by another psychologist, Barbara Fredrickson (2001, 2013). They both discuss the spiraling effect emotions have on our well-being-continued stress, tension and lack of institutional support easily lead employees into a downward spiral, which is an "on-going hazard for performance".

In a recent study, Price and McCallum (2014) seek to investigate qualitatively the ecological influences that impact teachers' well-being and "fitness". They explore the perceptions of pre-service teachers at four levels-the microsystem, mesosystem, ecosystem and macrosystem. The study sheds light on the importance of incorporating the social and emotional skills of teachers that are essential for a more productive learning. It is expected that teachers value the potential of this development to apply a more holistic approach to education that would yield better student outcomes and transform education.

Fundamentally, teachers should have an increased awareness of what SEL is and how to practically apply it in their classrooms. By doing this, they will first learn to identify their strengths in delivering the message to learners. They will be able to respond, not just react to every classroom situation that is shaped by mutual trust, or the lack of it thereof. Self-awareness is the key to emotional control that stems from the notion of neuroplasticity- the ability of the brain to change with repeated experience. And unlike cognitive abilities that are predominantly inherited, the social and emotional skills, such as self-management and empathy, can be learned and developed. Furthermore, the reason for having such skills in the curricula is that not every child is offered good parenting or atmosphere where he can be taught such skills. According to Durlak et al (2011, p.2) "emotions can facilitate or impede children's academic engagement, work ethic, commitment, and ultimate school success." Their meta-analysis of 213 school based SEL programs relying on the astounding number of 270,034 students, has confirmed that schools with SEL programs reported that anti-social behavior went down by 10 percent, whereas pro-social behavior went up by 10 percent. Such data are indicative of the essential role teachers and their effective teaching have on the general well-being and life success of their students. In other words, both teachers and students need to possess the "21st century basics- critical thinking, problem solving, (and) collaboration" (Durlak et al, 2011).

Thus, learning to reason events and behavior, understanding our own feelings, being able to control them, understanding how to use them with others, understanding others' feelings and being able to deal with them are all skills that an individual can develop within Goleman's emotional intelligence model. Raddawi and Troudi (2013, p.175) posit "integrating emotional literacy in school curricula brings positive changes as children learn to maneuver their emotions and improve their academic performance while society can witness a decline in hostile behavior".

In summary, many studies have reported on the necessity for a healthy and cordial relationship in the classroom as a condition for scholarly achievement (Lang & Evans, 2006; Tuncay, 2009). Effective teachers should help students to manage their positive and negative feelings, and channel them into productivity and collaboration. Teachers should strive for classroom environments where they master, as Rogers (2011, 141) posits- "the ability to relate well to others and communicate clearly and effectively, the ability and skill to enthuse and

motivate, and the ability to cope with multi-task, group-oriented activities, as well as individual activities". On their side, teachers need to identify, manage and express their feelings in the correct manner since emotions come as a result of a stimulus; thus, proper actions and decision-making are key elements in the educational milieu.

### **The Broaden-and build Theory of Positive Emotions**

It is taken for granted that humans live with two sides to their lives - a positive and a negative one. At times where we feel tempted to focus on our negative side, positive psychology emphasizes that this part is only one aspect of the human, and focus should be given to "the other side – that, which is good and strong in humankind, and in our environs, along with ways to nurture and sustain these assets and resources" (Snyder & Lopez, 2009, p.9). Being aware of our weaknesses and attempting to improve or change them is not recognized any more in positive psychology as the best way for self-growth and learning. Rather, to work on our strengths and utilize them appropriately is more effective (Fredrickson, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011).

Within the field of positive psychology, Fredrickson (2001) has developed a new theoretical framework that accentuated positive emotions: "The broaden-and-build" theory. Fredrickson's theory postulates "experiences of positive emotions broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires, which in turn serves to build their enduring personal sources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources" (Fredrickson, 2001, p.218). An overview of literature on emotion has shown that positive emotions have gained a relative recognition in terms of attention compared to negative emotions (Fredrickson, 2004). Some two decades ago, the psychologist Paul Ekman demonstrated that negative emotions such as anger, fear and sadness "elicit distinct responses in the autonomic nervous system" (Fredrickson, 2003, p.331)

In general, emotions are unique features of every human that pose a real challenge for the scientist who attempts to study them. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the emphasis on part of psychologists has been placed upon investigating and learning how to deal with negative emotions as having a detrimental effect on the human body and psyche. Till now, the realm of positive psychology has not gained the deserved popularity though it is "both a movement and a science"(Fredrickson, 2015), and pieces of advice on how to live a happier and more sustainable life abound. To fill this niche in literature, Fredrickson with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been studying the essence and effect positive emotions have on our well-being. She has taken an evidence-based approach studying the response of people to visual and mental stimuli. In 2003, she reports the findings of other scientists who have found that people who feel good live longer. The claims made in the article suggest that it is far from useful to only focus on the treatment of mental illnesses or what causes them. No substantial research had been done on how to live a more meaningful life once healed, nor had many psychologists been interested in this branch of psychology. And while negative emotions were attributed to the question of survival and avoiding immediate threat to people, the study of positive emotions was considered a frivolous pursuit with no proven long-term benefit.

Fredrickson (2009) asserts that soft and ephemeral delightful states can change a person's mind and body in a way that subsequently transforms his/her life into its best situation. Positive emotions, in other words, trigger one's desire to change. Fredrickson's 'broaden-and-build' model of positive emotions, in its simplest definition, is an invitation to people to be open

and flexible to a wider range of options and perceptions in their lives. This broad flexibility will in turn “help people to discover and build survival-promoting personal resources” (Fredrickson & Kurtz, 2011, p.35).

Fredrickson (2001) believes that action tendencies connected with certain emotions “have been [generally] associated with physical reactions to negative emotions...whereas human reactions to positive emotions often are more cognitive than physical” (Snyder & Lopez, 2009, p.133). According to Fredrickson (2001), emotions like anger, fear or disgust, for example, are usually linked with urges to attack, escape and expel, whereas a positive emotion like joy is associated with inactive pleasure and purposeless activation. In contrast, in Fredrickson’s model, an emotion like joy “creates the urge to play, push the limits and be creative; urges evident not only in social and physical behavior, but also in intellectual and artistic behavior” (Fredrickson, 2004, p. 1369). In fact, effective teaching is not merely teaching cognitive and pedagogic skills, because “a positive, encouraging manner engages a more positive learning atmosphere and can help in the maintenance of long-term positive behavior” (Rogers, 2011, 141).

Projecting the insight Fredrickson's groundbreaking research in positive emotions and their impact on our well-being and progress has suggested, we strive to utilize this knowledge towards an improved model for teacher effectiveness. For example, her article dated 1998, posits that joy is not only an emotion that is often experienced while playing, but it also creates urges for approaching and pro-social behavior. If fostered in the ESL classroom, joy could accelerate and result in group and pair work, role-play and a deeper teacher-student and student-student interaction. It is the task of the teacher to lay the grounds for a classroom that abounds in joy and creativity. Personal growth and attaining knowledge come as a result of a constant interest-another basic positive emotion without palpable manifestation. Students often feel excited and motivated to continue learning once they have achieved a goal (intrinsic motivation) or been awarded by the teacher (extrinsic motivation). Thus, the feeling of contentment, we reckon, is the driving force in broadening the life and educational horizons of ESL learners. By providing a proper environment in which such emotions thrive, both teachers and learners broaden their perspective, which in turn leads to "... build(ing) important and lasting physical, intellectual, psychological and social resources..." (Fredrickson, 2004, p.146).

Another important implication the theory has in teaching and learning is what Fredrickson and Levenson (1998) have termed as “undoing hypothesis”. It is common that students experience anxiety (whether trait or state) or certain negative feelings before exams, or when being asked out by the teacher, or having a low self-esteem due to some physical or educational disadvantage. Therefore, the most effective way to bounce back is to experience some positive emotion(s), rather than neutral ones. This may have a long-lasting effect on their educational attainment such as language acquisition. This claim is also supported by Isen (1990), who claims that it is positive emotions that create a “broad, flexible cognitive organization, and ability to integrate diverse material” (p.89). In 2000, Fredrickson and her colleagues carried out an experiment subjecting 170 participants who experienced "anxiety-induced cardiovascular reactivity" to viewing films that elicited contentment, amusement, neutrality and sadness. They found that contentment-eliciting and amusing films resulted in faster cardiovascular recovery. Ehrman (1996) suggests that learners have an imaginary barrier preventing them from acquiring the language input, which is the effective filter. When stressed and unmotivated, the learner tends to " filter-up" and block the input. Once relaxed and motivated, the learner begins to "

filter-down" and unblock the input. This is an indication of the debilitating effect anxiety and other negative feelings could have on educational achievements.

Broadly put, positive psychology, as a relatively newly embraced approach in education, has built upon the common concept of schools being the most essential factor impacting the child's development. Schools' main task is to provide students with the basic skills that contribute to the positive development of their interpersonal or intrapersonal skills. Fredrickson's model has recently been implemented in a number of studies in education (Smart, 2009; Lopez, 2011).

### **Attribution theory of motivation and emotion**

Another theory, which we, the authors of the current paper, believe complements the chain of the suggested approaches to a more effective teaching, is the attribution theory. It is considered that, for the purpose of the present study, incorporating another recent theory emphasizing the relation between perceiving events and the impact they have on an individual's motivation and emotion, can be enlightening. The attribution theory as a field of investigation had its roots in research originated by Fritz Heider in 1958. It was then developed by other researchers such as Harold Kelley 1973 and Bernard Weiner, (1985, 1986, 1992, & 2006). However, Weiner's (1986) attribution theory has made its own contribution by linking the individual's motivation to his/her emotions in contexts of achievement. Therefore, Weiner's (1986) theory of motivation and emotion has become the 'framework of choice' within educational psychology which can be considered a 'thought-emotion-action sequence' whereby, unlike other theories of attribution, the "causal thoughts determine feelings and feelings, in turn, guide behavior" is more complete and comprehensive (Graham & Williams, 2009, p.22).

Weiner's (1986) attribution theory of motivation and emotion is one of the fundamental paradigms in social psychology. This theory focuses on how individuals attribute the cause of an event or a situation. It is important at this stage, however, to mention that 'motivation' is not intended to be part of this paper's discussion, as it comprises a vast body of literature being an independent area. The fact that it is linked to students' achievement in research highlights its importance and influence on students' emotions.

People, according to Weiner, are in constant search for reasons to explain why certain events occurred in a certain way. In other words, the core of this approach to individual emotions and motivation is concerned with the elemental dimensions that people use to interpret and understand their failure and success (Child, 2007). Graham and Williams (2009) claim that "much of the practical significance of attribution theory resides in its usefulness for understanding real-world motivational concerns that unfold every day in school settings, concerns such as emotional reactions to success and failure, self-esteem maintenance, and acceptance or rejection by peers" (p.11).

Weiner's theory posits that individuals are "likely to explain outcomes and events in their lives that are perceived as novel or important" (Albert & Luzzo, 1999, p. 433). A teacher who has delivered a successful demonstration lesson, for example, will not take a lot of time reflecting on the causes that contributed to his success. In contrast, failing to motivate students can be negatively attributed to students' disinterest, bad luck or lack of class time. Turner (2002) views attribution processes as part of sanctioning. If negative sanctions are attributed to the self, then negative emotions may be experienced such as anger, fear or sadness. Likewise, positive

sanctions attributed to the self or others result in positive emotions like happiness or pride. Negative emotions are usually the outcomes of a confrontation between people's expectations and negative unexpected events (Weiner, 2006).

A three-dimensional taxonomy formulates the core of the 'Attribution Theory of Motivation and Emotion': locus, stability and controllability. These are defined as follows:

- a) Locus: is related to determining the location of the cause. This cause can be external (situational) such as a task or luck, or internal (dispositional) to the person such as ability or effort. Whether external or internal, the cause is thought to be influential in the way it contributes to how an individual perceives his/her feeling of self-esteem or self-efficacy (Turner, 2002). If, for example, a teacher attributes his/her success to internal factors, this teacher's self-esteem and self-efficacy will be underpinned by a sense of pride. In contrast, if failure is attributed to an internal factor, self-esteem will be diminished; leading to a negative impact on self-efficacy.
- b) Stability: is the second dimension in the theory that focuses on the individual's perception that the cause of an event or situation will continue over a period of time. In this sense, causes can be constant or varying over time. Linked with the first dimension, the locus, an individual's ability (aptitude) is unchangeable (stable) and this stability results in a relatively fixed aptitude for a task, whereas one's efforts are inconstant and may vary from one situation to another in terms of efforts exerted and subsequent feelings.
- c) Controllability: is the third and last factor, which is concerned with an individual's active involvement in controlling the cause. In this case, "efforts is (sic) controllable because individuals are believed to be responsible for how hard they try. In contrast, aptitude and luck are generally perceived to be beyond personal control" (Graham, 1991, p.7). Therefore, emotions such as anger, frustration, or shame may arise at a certain event as a result of failing to achieve a task, whereas pride and enthusiasm may come to light if success is attributed to one's own abilities. Hence, an individual's expectancies and enormity of emotions are influenced by the way he/she deems stability of causes which in turn will trigger specific motivated behavior (Weiner et al, 1982).

In addition, a diverse causal attribution raises qualitatively disparate emotional experiences, and according to Weiner (1985), perceives causality, which is not the same among individuals. They are even dissimilar within an individual over a period of time and across situations. He situates the attribution theory of motivation and emotion within educational contexts. He also mentions several metaphors used in literature to describe classrooms and schools (e.g. temples of learning, marketplace of ideas). Weiner (1985) views the classroom or school as 'a courtroom' where everyone's (i.e. student, teacher, school principal) behavior and reactions are influenced by their perceptions of this courtroom. For instance, "a student considering the classroom as a courtroom is apt to be motivated by the avoidance of punishment" (Weiner, 2006, p.163). Conversely, a student guided by the school's or the classroom's metaphor as 'a temple of learning' will be directed by a desire to learn and understand. Judging it as a successful theory, a number of studies have adopted Weiner's (1985, 1986, 2006) attribution

theory of motivation and emotion in educational contexts (Graham, 2004; Li, 2004; Jarvela, 2011; Smart, 2009).

### Summary and Pedagogical Implications

Although these theories might look different as they approach the individual's interpersonal and intrapersonal skills from widely differing standpoints, and associate them to multiple origins, they occasionally overlap and sometimes congregate due to the complicated fabric of the human nature. Nevertheless, none of these theories deny the fact that emotions are crucial in our lives, and that they significantly affect the decisions that we make and the choices of our actions (Damasio, 2003).

Drawing on Goleman's Emotional Intelligence theory, Weiner's (1985) attribution theory of motivation and emotion and in light of Fredrickson's (2001) 'broaden-and-build' theory of positive emotions, the present study is inspired by the assumption that recent research of emotions has invoked: that all human emotional experiences involve elements of positive or negative emotions that may or may not last and affect an individual's personal world. In addition, as Denzin (2009) asserts, any individual's emotional experience results in states of reflection, cognition, feeling and interpretation.

In relation to teacher effectiveness, we believe that teachers' beliefs and perceptions of their weaknesses and strengths can be caused by external, stable or uncontrollable factors which may trigger a variety of reactions and positive or negative emotions. Consequently, different teachers will live, experience and respond differently to probably the same situations. On the basis of these assumptions, these positive or negative emotions, as can be elicited from Fredrickson's (2001) model of positive emotions, may affect the teacher's teaching and commitment to their profession and the students' learning. Weiner (1986) emphasizes the importance of causal dimensions in relation to an individual's outcomes (successes or failures) in academic achievement situations. This theory focuses on the workplace as an 'achievement oriented environment' that allows for a variety of situations entailing a range of cognitive processes on part of the individual, who is in search for causes of events and possible ways that facilitate achievement of goals in that environment. In this sense, teachers attributing outcomes of encountered events to certain causes will be engaged in analyzing those outcomes, which are perceived as unexpected, or challenging (Wong & Weiner, 1981).

It is our claim, in the current paper, that the three approaches discussed promote a high sense of self-awareness in the individual. Once teachers realize their potential and skills, including areas of strengths, weaknesses or those which need improvement, they can gain a better control over what happens to them, their interpretations of the events and their reactions to particular incidents. Understanding our attributional beliefs can boost our understanding of our students' attributional styles, their emotions and the way we translate all of those attributions into positive and effective teaching.

Eventually, it is a matter of practice, and as Rogers (2011) confirms, "effective teaching behaviours are not mere techniques- it is not a matter of a "bundle of skills that equals an effective teacher". The skills of effective teaching can be learned, but those skills need to be engaged within a desire to teach and willingness to engage and relate to children and young people" (p.120)

### ***Emotional Intelligence***

As far as emotional intelligence is concerned, it is obvious, as this paper has discussed, that emotions and cognitive skills are interrelated. Where our reason is needed to make a decision, a variety of emotions may interfere and affect that decision. Teaching is an emotional intellectual process. It is important that both teachers and learners be aware of their emotions during the class time and be able to figure out what emotions to take further (e.g. happiness or excitement due to success), or to pause and try to understand the reasons for failing and start over.

As this paper proposes, emotions affect motivation. Having said that, we believe that emotional intelligence components, practiced and well implemented in the classroom, would contribute to better self-awareness on part of students and teachers, and would pave the way for better communication and interaction. For example, if teachers address their students' negative emotions towards learning another language, validate those emotions, bear with their mistakes and provide constructive feedback, this will automatically influence students' understanding of themselves, enhance their potential and create a more encouraging learning classroom environment. Research has shown that using EQ activities in the classroom would enhance students' interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. If so, students and teachers would be working on the same page where achieving success is the ultimate goal. For this purpose, though, it is recommended that policy makers, educators and curriculum planners provide teachers with professional development training on EQ skills based on a well-prepared EQ curriculum activities. It is likely, that teachers' emotional literacy would positively impact students' performance, motivation and attitudes.

Likewise, students need training on emotional skills- components, benefits and implications for academic success. It is of importance that students of another language, for example, learn how to find out their points of strengths as well as weaknesses, their abilities, their negative emotions that may influence their progress in the classroom as well as the positive ones that may boost their efforts and interests. Understanding their potentials and those of others would allow for better communication and interaction between them, their peers, and their teacher. In a nutshell, learning about the EQ skills and practicing them in the language classroom would facilitate students' and teachers' tasks in fulfilling a positive learning environment. Students in a language classroom deal with and are exposed to lots of unknown issues; cultural, linguistic, social or even physical. Therefore, addressing the five components of the EQ (i.e. Self-awareness, self-motivation, empathy, interpersonal skills and regulation) in the language classroom would make learning more efficient and rewarding.

### ***The Broaden-and-build theory***

Fredrickson's Broaden-and-build theory posits that positive emotions trigger positive thoughts and responses to daily life incidents. Consequently, individuals who choose to react positively would be able to build a repertoire of skills and resources that help them make decisions or react less stressfully to negative events. Negative emotions would trigger negative thoughts and actions, and would probably set a solid barrier between the perceiver (i.e. learners) and the possible alternatives or options).

From our own experiences in the classroom, most learners of the English language hold negative beliefs about their learning and attributions about the progress they can make. They are

likely to create bubbles of negative images of themselves as learners of a second language, which are mostly accompanied with negative emotions such as fear, anxiety or frustrations. At this stage, we propose that teachers help their students realize the range of other available options, which contribute to their success and progress in their English class. Teachers play significant roles in unleashing their students' potentials and helping them transform the negative attributional beliefs about themselves into positive ones.

What is more, second language learners struggle while trying to attain a certain level of language proficiency, which is, most of the time, charged with negative feelings. Teachers, on the other hand, would struggle in their classroom if they were unable to develop positive mindsets suggested by the broaden-built theory. In fact, it is our belief, that the three proposed approaches to effective teaching are based in their very core on well-developed EQ skills and positivity of attributions and perceptions of the learning-teaching processes.

### ***The attribution theory of motivation and emotion***

Our language learners have their own perceptions of their success and failures. Those perceptions will affect the way they perceive their learning and progress in the language classroom. If not well interpreted, the learners are likely to blame their abilities or efforts or even attribute most of the results, whether negative or positive, to luck. They may also consider all those components uncontrollable or stable or both. Therefore, if the learners' attributions are wrong, they are unlikely to be motivated to learn, participate or be involved in the classroom. It is of importance that teachers be able to help their students realize their strengths and weaknesses and direct them towards better learning. Teachers can help their students foster a more positive attitude towards themselves and their potentials by designing classroom activities where the students realize their strengths without fear of failure due to certain grades scale. Students will learn best when they expect success, and teachers can play an important role in enhancing positivity in attitudes by allowing for more successful learning opportunities rather than failing ones.

Moreover, teachers can play essential roles in changing their students' negative attributions towards learning by helping them realize that their mistakes are normal in a language classroom and that it is common for a language learner to make a mistake, repeat them more frequently and gradually be able to fix them and find out the correct answers. In other words, teachers should help learners realize the difficulties in their learning, find out alternatives to overcome them and control the components that they have considered uncontrollable or stable. This is to say that students should be praised for any effort they make for the sake of progress, and hence become aware that their failures are due to lack of efforts, not ability. The more efforts exerted, the better progress attained. Although this may seem a laborious task for teachers to undertake besides the other teaching commitments, it is always said that consciousness and persistence of teachers would be eventually paid off.

Most importantly, teachers' attributions of themselves and their students are the core point of change. Teachers' motivational and positive attributions in the classroom have significant influences on students' dispositions and aptitude to learning. In other words, it is unlikely that teachers may expect students to not learn or improve regardless of the variety of strategies or techniques they implement into their lesson plans. Teachers should work to enhance

their learners' goal-orientedness and attributions. Dornyei (2001) states that we do things best if we expect success. Therefore, unless teachers enrich their motivational forces, students would not be inclined to make and observe any progress.

### Conclusion

Language classrooms involve multiple and complex processes that determine the specifics of the learning process, and have an impact on the overall learning environment. Highly experienced and academically prepared tutors are the sound foundation, on which solid blocks of knowledge are being laid; however, there are several other essential factors of paramount importance to be taken into consideration. Teachers, as knowledgeable and experienced as they get, need to self-reflect and work toward a more efficient set of pedagogical skills to satisfy the ever-growing demand on part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. This presumes a new paradigm under which both educators and learners are well aware of their own physical and developmental capabilities, areas for improvement and sound critical thinking skills. In other words, both teachers and students should be able to attribute their positive and negative experiences to the correct source to implement timely and appropriate measures. Hence, emotions are powerful engines that may boost or diminish motivation, which is the organic fabric of our academic aspirations. The ultimate goal is teaching and learning in a mutually respectful and positive environment, in which positive emotions flourish to broaden teachers' and learners' momentary perceptions, and build awareness to achieve academic rigor.

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