

The Impact of Social Emotional Learning in TESOL: A Narrative Literature Review

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Abstract: Social emotional learning (SEL) is mainly about appreciating social and emotional factors and learning life skills. SEL can be divided into five categories, including how to deal with oneself, others, and relationships, and work in an effective manner. SEL helps people recognize emotions and learn how to manage them. Taking non-native English language classrooms as examples, this paper discusses how English learners' performance changed when they engaged in diverse SEL experiences. Based on literature reading and analysis, this research indicates that the usage of SEL can actively affect teaching efficiency and improve learners' academic achievement. SEL can entirely improve English learners' interest and motivation in learning and support learners relaxed emotions. It also promotes communication among students, which allows more students to participate in teaching activities and results in better teaching efficiency. Efficient teaching and classes make students accept more professional knowledge and get better results than traditional teaching methods on exams.

Keywords: social emotional learning (SEL), TESOL, English learners (ELs), social-emotional factors, social-emotional strategy

1. Introduction

Many schools have taken social emotional learning (SEL) into daily education as an important part. SEL centers on students' development of five social and emotional competencies, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making [1]. SEL is a significant area of improvement for English and multilingual learners who begin schooling as a second language (L2) [2]. Social emotional learning may be the key for English learners to achieve long-term success in primary school, both inside and beyond the class [3]. The paper focuses on the results developed by social and emotional learning in classroom teaching. The classification summary of this paper shows the role of SEL in teaching English over the last five years and the effective results. The findings of this paper indicate the importance of social emotional learning in English learning and pave the way to a deeper level integration of social emotional strategies and the second language teaching.

2. Materials and Methods

The data used in reviewing and discussing the effect on social emotional learning (SEL) /social emotional strategy was journal articles from the online databases CNIK, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. The paper collected and analysed the questionnaires study and class practice of using SEL in English teaching to improve students' English grammar, listening and translating learning and find that almost all former research in SEL practice indicate that SEL helps students better adapt to the learning environment and achieve higher learning outcomes. Primary keywords for the research were social emotional learning (SEL) and TESOL, which were used to find relevant articles from 2014 to 2022. Most of the sources were collected by using the "snowballing" technique looking at the reference lists of the previous literature.

3. Findings

3.1. Analysis of the Combination of SEL and English Teaching

A paper indicated that experienced teachers who have utilized educational practices may effectively integrate SEL into the academic curriculum and afford social, emotional and cultural demands for students [4]. SEL could be combined with teaching English in several ways, such as by establishing positive relationships between students and teachers and using more interactive activities. An academic study about English language teachers and ESL classrooms was conducted by Timothy James, J. in Malaysian primary schools [5]. Timothy James, J. analyzed teachers' backgrounds and found that primary English teachers could carry SEL into their classrooms effectively by using some possible ways, such as relationships, rapport and other factors that can affect classes [5]. It also indicated that trust, empathy, friends, and role models are the codes, and these codes showed that teacher-student relationships were possible to integrate SEL into the classroom. The same year, Song, J. et al. conducted research titled "Translanguaging as a strategy for supporting multilingual learners' social emotional learning" [2]. The results of the research showed clearly that using translanguage as a strategy can create a space that allows multilingual writing and supports students' positive attitudes toward different cultures. The research raised a new approach to making use of translanguage as a strategy for supporting SEL and showed that it's an appropriate way to combine SEL and English teaching in multilingual classes.

A study was designed by Allbright, T. N. et al. to explore SEL in outlier schools and the research showed six common categories of support for students practicing SEL in school and indicated that Positive Behavior Interventions and supports help students improve their self-awareness and self-regulation and benefit themselves in relationships [6]. Research has shown that students gain positive achievements from SEL integrated into the English classroom [3]. An experimental research study was conducted by Kou J.N. and Xu J.F. [7]. By analyzing the collected data, the researchers of the study discovered that the students who participated in the survey prefer to learn by requesting help from others and are less willing to cooperate with others. Thus, under the examination mechanism, it requires teachers to create more conditions for learners to cooperate and provide effective guidance to promote students' cooperation.

3.2. Classroom Practices in Different Social Emotional Learning Aspects

The results of the social emotional strategy training practice conducted by Liu Q. revealed that applying social / emotional strategies to grammar learning in class and after class can help with activating the classroom atmosphere and creating a learning atmosphere of mutual assistance and cooperation [8]. It can also improve students' learning enthusiasm and reduce students' learning anxiety. The use of social / emotional strategies allows students to find new pathways and methods

to solve problems and enhance their collaboration and exploration capabilities. Social emotional learning (SEL) in class creates a better learning environment that makes students feel comfortable in the class and helps them study English grammar efficiently. The research also showed that social / emotional strategy training has the best effect on helping students with moderate grammar levels improve their academic performance. SEL ought to be undertaken as an assistance to moderate students in finding correct learning methods, adjusting their learning concepts, and reversing their learning mistakes. A quantitative study conducted by Yang Y.T. used questionnaires and data analysis and reached the conclusion through charts that social and emotional strategies provide learners with more language exposure in MOOC learning, including cooperative learning and question clarification [9]. The research also indicated that due to anxiety, MOOC learners prefer to discuss problems in communication area rather than directly seek teachers' help. MOOC learning reduces the possibility of students worrying about the poor impression of teachers and their anxiety, though it also reduces the communication between students and teachers and lacks teacher-student interaction. In the MOOC environment, the usage of SEL could help students stay focused in class and build connections between teachers and students. Whether it's MOOCs or offline courses, SEL practices can improve students' consciousness of social-affective strategies and interactions between students and teachers and be an efficient method of teaching and learning. Li J.Y. indicated in her paper that independent college English listening learning in the network environment can be used as a way of learning that gives full play to students learning initiative and creativity [10]. Its process experience could train students' attitudes and emotions and support a favourable structure to implement a social-emotional strategy. Li J.Y. also argued that though social-emotional strategy is a psychological intervention strategy and has certain inoperable and uncontrollable aspects, metacognitive strategy and cognitive strategy can not be effectively implemented without social-emotional strategy [10]. Social emotion strategy is a kind of basic psychological auxiliary strategy in learning and it creates a fundamental environment for teaching and learning. SEL is a very important strategy to promote the efficiency of learning in class practice and shouldn't be regarded as a useless strategy.

3.3. Social Factors and Affective Factors in SEL

Zhang Y. conducted a study titled "Investigation on Social Emotional Strategy in College Students' English Learning" and nested objects' frequency of use of social-affective strategies in the form of questionnaires [11]. The results of the social strategy questionnaire and the emotional strategy questionnaire indicated that social strategies are used more frequently than affective strategies. The low frequency of social and affective strategies indicated that the participants conducted fewer cooperative learning activities, and many emotional factors had deep effects on participants. The research also showed that anxiety can affect the acquisition of a second language. Reducing affective disorders will help students relax their minds and easily import knowledge, store it as permanent knowledge, and eventually translate it into language skills. SEL supports learners in maintaining relaxed moods and supplies further help for learners acquiring a foreign language. With appropriate teacher guidance, learners may be able to communicate more with others about their learning experience. The results demonstrated by Kou J.N. and Xu J.F. indicated that extroverted students are more likely to use social strategies in studying English, and intermediate students tend to use more emotional strategies [7]. Learners' personalities affect the usage of social and emotional strategies. Generally speaking, introverted students use Social strategy less than extroverted students, but students of different personalities didn't have significant differences in using Social strategy and other strategies.

An academic paper conducted by Li Y.Y. mentioned three socio-emotional factors, including risk-taking behavior, motivation, and attitude [12]. It also illustrated that socio-emotional factors will greatly affect the final efficiency of language learning. The spirit of adventure can encourage people

to use every opportunity to solve problems and acquire good language skills and many scholars have confirmed its importance. Extraverted learners are good at seizing opportunities in the learning process because of their spirit of adventure and this can help them learn more efficiently. The paper also indicated that motivation stimulates and regulates language learning activities, and attitude can fundamentally affect the learning effect. Correct and positive emotional factors could be boosters of foreign language learning and help with language acquisition. Teachers ought to give introverted students more opportunities to speak and discuss, which could improve their interests and performances.

4. Conclusion

Through a review of the literature, it was found that SEL is being used in many different areas and environments for teaching and learning English. Studies revealed that SEL has great positive effects on English learning for non-native English learners. SEL could support interactions between students and teachers both in online classes and outline classes. SEL affects learners' final performance by impacting some social and emotional factors. There are very few research studies that focus on SEL effects in written English learning and oral English learning, though different aspects of English learning may not apply to the same learning methods. Research in China indicated that SEL has effects on the English learning of college students, especially non-English majors. The results of the research could change if conducted in diverse regions with disparate social environments. This narrative review of the literature suggests that more research should be conducted on the effects of SEL on written English learning and oral English learning, or SEL effects on college students in general.

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