

**THE ROLE OF EMPATHY IN ENGLISH TEACHING**  
**РОЛЬ ЕМПАТІЇ У ВИВЧЕННІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ**

**Перерва К. М.**

**Дніпропетровський національний університет залізничного транспорту  
імені академіка В. Лазаряна**

**Днепропетровский национальный университет  
имени академика В. Лазаряна**

**Dnipropetrovsk National University of Railway Transport named after  
academician V. Lazaryan**

Метою цього дослідження є визначення ролі емпатії у процесі навчання англійської мови та залучення студентів до цього процесу та отримання плідних результатів у цьому напрямку. У цьому дослідженні був використаний якісний метод для з'ясування даних для пояснення позитивного ефекту емпатії для кращого навчання. Це дослідження підкреслює важливість емпатії та її впливу на процес плідності процесу вивчення англійської мови шляхом порівняння пояснень та поглядів різних досліджень. Дана стаття описує деякі основні висновки глибоких досліджень з цього питання, в якому розглянуто роль співпереживання у відносинах між викладачами та студентами та її відповідність до морального моделювання. Було зібрано дані шляхом опитування та спостереження в аудиторії та було використано теорію методології для аналізу. У статті розглядаються останні дослідження в галузі нейронауки та значення емоцій у прийнятті моральних рішень разом із психологічними дослідженнями щодо впливу емпатії на навчання. Емпатія вже давно є невід'ємною частиною системи освіти, якщо університети залучені до інтелектуального розвитку, вони за своєю суттю беруть участь в емоційному розвитку студентів. Результати пояснюють, що викладачі повинні ставитися до студентів з співчуттям та розумінням. Таким чином, цей підхід допоможе студентам легко навчатися, а також підвищить мотивацію студентів до навчання.

**Ключові слова:** емпатія, процес навчання, результати, підхід, позитивний ефект.

Целью этого исследования является определение роли эмпатии в процессе обучения английскому языку и вовлечение учащихся к этому процессу и получение плодотворных результатов в этом направлении. В этом исследовании был использован качественный метод для выяснения должных

данных для объяснения положительных эффектов эмпатии для лучшего обучения. В этом исследовании подчеркивается важность эмпатии и ее влияния на то, чтобы сделать процесс изучения английского языка плодотворным, сравнивая объяснения и взгляды различных исследований. В этом документе описаны некоторые ключевые выводы глубоких исследований этого вопроса, в которых рассматривается роль эмпатии в отношениях между преподавателем и студентом и ее актуальность для морального моделирования. Были собраны данные с помощью опроса и наблюдения в аудитории и использовал обоснована методологическая теория для анализа. В статье наряду с более старыми психологическими исследованиями по влиянию и эмпатии на обучение рассматриваются новейшие исследования в области нейробиологии и значение эмоций в принятии моральных решений. Эмпатия уже давно является неотъемлемой частью системы образования, если университеты участвуют в интеллектуальном развитии, они по своей сути вовлечены в эмоциональное развитие студентов. Результаты показали, что для достижения положительного эффекта преподаватели должны относиться к студентам с эмпатией. Таким образом, этот подход заставит учащихся легко учиться, а также повысить мотивацию студентов к учебе.

**Ключевые слова:** эмпатия, процесс обучения, результаты, подход, положительный эффект.

The aim of this study is to identify the role of empathy in learning process and to make students get involved in it and obtain fruitful outcomes in this direction. The qualitative method was used in this study to find out due data for explaining the positive effects of empathy for better learning. This study emphasizes the importance of empathy and its influence for making the English learning process fruitful through comparing the explanations and views of different researches. This paper describes some of the key findings from profound studies of this matter, which examined the role of empathy in teacher–student relationships and its relevance to moral modelling. The project collected data through interviews and classroom observations and used grounded methodology theory for the analysis. The literature considers the latest research in neuroscience and the significance of emotions in moral decision making alongside older psychological research on affect and empathy in learning. Empathy has long been an intrinsic part of the education system, if schools are involved in intellectual development, they are inherently involved in emotional development. The results explain that the teachers should approach the students like mother and father while teaching. Thus, this approach will make students learn easily and also make the students motivation high and better towards learning.

**Keywords:** empathy, learning process, outcomes, approach, positive effect.

Teachers' profession is related to many different roles such as: teacher's role in the narrow sense, teacher as motivator, evaluator, cognitive-diagnostic role, social relations manager and partner in the emotional interaction. The purpose of the study is to

investigate whether empathy is connected to the self-assessment of success in teachers' roles performing.

Communicative competence involves knowing not only the language code, but also what to say to whom, and how to say it appropriately in a given situation [11, p.146-153]. Moreover, this ability to use and interpret linguistic forms appropriately calls for social and cultural knowledge and experience beyond the grammar of the language [1, p.34]. How, then, can a Ukrainian EFL teacher cultivate students' intercultural communicative competence? The teacher herself is a non-native English speaker, the students are all Ukrainian, and the little English they encounter outside the classroom is often inappropriate.

Medgyes argues that the performance of non-native speakers is inherently limited: Non-native speakers can never achieve native speaker competence because they are, by their very nature, norm-dependent [9, p.46]. However, as Brown points out, communicative competence is relative, not absolute, and it depends on the cooperation of all participants [2, p.14]. Thus the norm itself is to some extent negotiable by and relative to the participants--native and non-native alike. One essential for successful intercultural communication, then, is the attitude of the participants, whose sense of appropriateness helps construct the norms.

Goldstein and Michaels describe empathy by combining several meanings noted by Macarov: "Empathic people can take the roles of other people, viewing the world as they see it, and experiencing their feelings. They are adept at reading and interpreting nonverbal communication. They sincerely try to understand helpfully, without passing judgment. Empathy differs from sympathy in that it does not include pity or approval and focuses on the feelings of others, not our own [7, p.82].

Gudykunst and Kim explain that we cannot understand the communication of people from other cultures if we are highly ethnocentric [5, p.429-444].

According to Porter and Samouvar, intercultural understanding goes through several stages from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism [14, p.351-382]. Ignorance or

feelings of denial and rejection are natural at the first stage. To help students shift their viewpoint, the teacher needs to make them encounter value conflicts. The stronger the impact on the students' belief systems and their value judgments, the more they will question the stability of their values [12, p.122-134]. Then, by reflecting on their belief systems and value judgments in comparison to the norms of the new culture, students will become aware of, admit, and then accept the differences. When students can tolerate differences and believe that no cultural group should be judged as being inherently superior or inferior to another, the teacher has successfully created a classroom culture where students have acquired empathy through intercultural understanding via the learning of English [10, p.29-45].

Moreover, Ukrainian English teachers should teach students that all languages are of equal value. Stevick points out that Ukrainian education has put too much stress on British and American English. Overemphasizing Anglophone culture may mislead students to assume the superiority of English [15, p.58-74].

It is time for us to stop deprecating differences and instead, to encourage students to understand them empathically, to generate a new harmony that will create a school environment where differences can be viewed more constructively. An empathic viewpoint can sensitize one to the full range and depth of someone else's affective stage or situation and create new insights into classmates' personal differences. Trying to understand a different culture can lead students to rethink their own beliefs, to develop empathy, and then to integrate differences into their belief system for constructive relationships with classmates [4, p.67].

When students learn English, they accept the premise that the language, the culture, and the society are very different from theirs. Therefore, English classes can challenge students' assumptions and help them see another way to view differences. Introducing cultural differences as pieces of information is not enough.

Livine and Adelman emphasize teaching the hidden aspects of the culture in language learning, because the part of culture that is exposed is not always that which

creates cross-cultural difficulties; the hidden aspects of culture have significant effects on behavior and on interactions with others [7, p.82]. By highlighting the hidden aspects of the language functions and characteristics with an empathic attitude including the positive value of differences, a Ukrainian teacher can help students reflect on the appropriateness of their performance.

English language learning introduces students to different interaction patterns for communication with different ranges of appropriateness from Ukrainian norms. An English interaction is governed by its culturally oriented rules and it is quite hard for students to figure out the hidden formula. As a consequence, they fail the interaction. For example, Brown showed how students failed to use appropriate turn-taking signals, formulated by the English conversation rules, in their interactions with each other and with the teacher [2, p.14]. Why do they fail? Because they try to apply their own cultural conversation rules developed through their native language acquisition for the English interaction [13, p.36].

Stevick explains how everyday teaching affects students: “We consciously choose or not choose one or another set of "life goals" that we want to help our students work on. We can pursue those goals openly and intentionally or indirectly and covertly or not at all. But whether we are consciously working on such matters or just on language skills, the "life goals" that will be affected most in our students are not necessarily the ones we think we are putting across. They are the goals--the values--that our students find built into us and into how we teach them, our fellow human beings, day by day” [15, p.58-74].

By now, it must seem pretty clear that empathy is an important personality asset, but you may be wondering how to make it fit amongst your current lesson plans. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Be an example. Know that your students watch you. They learn from your character and behaviors as much as they do from your instruction. Be a consistent example of empathy, and exude a caring, compassionate, understanding attitude. They’ll follow your lead.

- Create the environment. It's important that your students trust you and one another. If an understanding, trustworthy environment is established, then they're more likely to open up and display positive characteristics towards one another.
- Work on communication strategies. Feelings are very different from words. It's important that attention is given to helping students find the words to explain their feelings, in both their speaking and their writing.
- Offer collaborative group tasks. As students work together on specific tasks or challenges, they experience a sort of group molding that brings them together. Shared victory or failure gives them a collaborative experience that requires them to exercise those empathy muscles with their peers.
- Identify shared values and differences. Discussions and activities go a long way towards helping students see how they align or differ from others.

Therefore, we should emphasize the role of teaching in promoting our students' humanistic development, and the cultivation of a more empathic viewpoint must be justified as one of the life-goals for Ukrainian students, especially in their English language classes.

I cannot say that English language learning directly fosters students' empathy development. I cannot say that a better language learner could already have developed empathy, either. I don't have measures to estimate students' empathic attitude and cannot prove that I have been able to develop empathy in my students during my English language classes. However, I can insist that I should teach English to help students develop themselves with dignity. I want to be in the classroom to better students' lives.

Empathy teaches the teachers, parents, and the other people the way how to feel the other people feel in the same fashion. Because, it is not possible to make people have same feelings and same experiences in the lives, but it is possible to put yourself in others'shoes to feel what they feel. Actually, putting yourself in on place is the behaviour of human being not animals. If teachers develop a better way how to feel the students feel, then they can teach better than before. If the people do not put themselves

in somebody' s place, there is possibility for to be selfish for them. Empathy contributes too much to education due to its positive results seen teaching and training activities in educational environment and told by many teachers and trainers. Teachers should find various ways to develop empathy for many reasons, so that they can make their students think about the others. It is not possible to put everything into practice but empathy makes itself felt everywhere. Therefore, this study suggests that feeling is a best way for beginning to learn in many things. Especially, empathy is likely to work in classroom environment, since the teachers cannot take their respective students everywhere to teach, but through developing the way empathy the students put themselves in the place of other, and as a result they start learning.

### References

1. **Bialystok E., Hakuta, K.** In Other Words: The Science and Psychology of Second-Language Acquisition. / E. Bialystok, K. Hakuta // . - New York: Basic Books, 1994.- p.34.
2. **Brown H.D.** Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. Englewood Cliffs./ H.D.Brown // -NJ: Prentice Hall Regents, 1994. – p.14.
3. **Gerbert E.** Lessons from the Kokugo (National Language) Readers. Comparative Education Review / E.Gerbert // – Tokyo, 1993. – p.143.
4. **Goldstein A.P., Michaels G.Y.** Empathy: Development, training, and consequences. / A.P. Goldstein, G.Y. Michaels // - New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1985. – p.67.
5. **Gudykunst W.B., Kim Y.Y.** Communicating with strangers: An approach to intercultural communication. In J. Stewart (Ed.), Bridges not walls: A book about interpersonal communication. /W.B. Gudykunst , Y.Y. Kim // - New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995. – p.429-444.
6. **Holliday A.** Appropriate Methodology and Social Context. / A. Holliday // - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. – p.19.

7. **Livine, D. R., Adelman, M. B.** Beyond language: Crosscultural communication. Englewood Cliffs, / D.R. Livine, M.B.Adelman //, - NJ: Prentice Hall Regents, 1993. – p.82.
8. **LoCastro, V.** English language education in Japan. In H. Coleman. (Ed.), Society and the language classroom. / V. LoCastro //, - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. - p.40-63.
9. **Medgyes, P.** Native or non-native: who's worth more? / P. Medgyes // ELT Journal, 1996. – p.46.
10. **McKay, S. L.** Teaching English overseas: An introduction. /S.L. McKay // - Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992. – p.29-45.
11. **McLeod S. H.** Notes on the heart: active issues in the writing classroom./ S.H.McLeod // - Southern Illinois University Press, 1997. – p.146-153.
12. **Okuzaki M.** A Classroom Research Project about Strategic Competence. / M.Okuzaki // - Hakodate Eibungaku 36, 1997. – p.122-134.
13. **Porter R.E.** Intercultural Communication: A Reader. / - R.E. Porter // - Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1997. – p.36.
14. **Saville-Troike M.** The ethnography of communication. In S. L. McKay and N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), Sociolinguistics and language teaching. / M. Saville-Troike // - Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. – p.351-382.
15. **Stevick E. W.** Working with teaching methods: What's at stake? / E. Stevick // Heinle & Heinle, 1998. – p.58-74.