

Отримано: 26 червня 2022 р.

Прорецензовано: 24 липня 2022 р.

Прийнято до друку: 3 серпня 2022 р.

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DOI: 10.25264/2519-2558-2022-14(82)-116-121

Kostyuk O. Yu., Didyk L. I. The necessity of fostering emotional intelligence in teaching a foreign language to university students in the context of online learning. *Наукові записки Національного університету «Острозька академія»: серія «Філологія»*. Острог : Вид-во НаУОА, 2022. Вип. 14(82). С. 116–121.

УДК: 37.025

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The National University of Ostroh Academy**THE NECESSITY OF FOSTERING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS  
IN THE CONTEXT OF ONLINE LEARNING**

The article analyzes the online and offline education of students of the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Languages of the National University of Ostroh Academy during the Covid-19 pandemic and Russian military aggression against Ukraine through the prism of the development of emotional intelligence. The article provides an analysis of the influence of the emotional state, and feelings of the participants in the education process on the perception of the material, learning a foreign language and learning outcomes. The paper emphasizes that in the process of language learning, thinking and reproduction of the learned material are as important as the conditions of learning material that involve taking into account the feelings and emotions of students. In addition, the authors point out that since emotions and thinking are interdependent, teachers of foreign languages can get better results when they pay attention to the peculiarities of the development of students' emotional intelligence during the formation of their reading, listening, and writing and speaking skills. The influence of the development of emotional intelligence on the process of learning a foreign language has become of particular importance in connection with the mass transfer to online education, which was caused by the Covid-19 quarantine back in 2020 and intensified with the start of the war of Russia against Ukraine. Moreover, online learning in institutions of higher education during this period has changed not only in terms of methods and approaches to teaching a foreign language but also prompted teachers to take the emotional state of students into account more seriously. Positive learning outcomes are often directly related to the general emotional states of students, which depends on factors such as recognition of their achievements, encouragement, motivation and engagement in learning. This article presents the results of a survey on motivation to learn and the general mood of students during online and offline learning. The survey was conducted among first-year and fourth-year students of the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Languages of the National University of Ostroh Academy. The survey showed that students are more motivated to learn when they learn offline. So, there is an urgent need to study the impact of students' emotional intelligence on the process of teaching a foreign language.

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, emotional quotient, emotional knowledge, online learning, fostering, foreign language learning, motivation.

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**НЕОБХІДНІСТЬ РОЗВИТКУ ЕМОЦІЙНОГО ІНТЕЛЕКТУ У НАВЧАННІ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ  
СТУДЕНТІВ ЗВО В КОНТЕКСТІ ДИСТАНЦІЙНОЇ ФОРМИ НАВЧАННЯ**

У статті аналізується он-лайн та оф-лайн навчання студентів факультету романо-германських мов Національного університету «Острозька академія» під час пандемії Covid-19 та російської воєнної агресії проти України крізь призму розвитку емоційного інтелекту. У запропонованій статті здійснюється аналіз впливу емоційного стану, почуттів учасників навчального процесу на сприйняття матеріалу, вивчення іноземної мови та результати навчання. У роботі підкреслюється, що у процесі вивчення мови важливими є не лише мислення та відтворення вивченого, а й умови сприйняття навчального матеріалу, які передбачають врахування почуттів та емоцій учнів. Крім того, автори зазначають, що оскільки емоції та мислення є взаємозалежними, викладачі іноземних мов можуть отримати кращий результат, коли беруть до уваги особливості розвитку емоційного інтелекту студентів під час формування їх навичок читання, аудіювання, письма та говоріння. Вплив розвитку емоційного інтелекту на процес навчання іноземної мови набув особливого значення у зв'язку із з масовим переведенням на он-лайн навчання, яке спричинило карантин Covid-19 ще у 2020 році та посилюється з початком війни росії проти України. Більше того, он-лайн навчання в закладах вищої освіти у досліджуваній період змінило не лише методи та підходи до викладання іноземної мови, але й спонукало викладачів більш серйозно враховувати емоційний стан студентів. Позитивні результати навчання часто безпосередньо пов'язані із загальним емоційним станом студентів, який залежить від таких факторів, як визнання їхніх досягнень, заохочення, мотивація та залучення до навчання. У цій статті представлено результати опитування про мотивацію до навчання та загальний настрій студентів під час он-лайн та оф-лайн навчання. Опитування було проведено серед першокурсників та студентів четвертого курсу факультету романо-германським мов Національного університету «Острозька академія». Опитування показало, що студенти є більш вмотивованими вчитися, коли вони навчаються оф-лайн. Отже, існує нагальна потреба вивчати вплив емоційного інтелекту студентів на процес навчання іноземної мови.

**Ключові слова:** емоційний інтелект, емоційний коефіцієнт, емоційні знання, он-лайн навчання, сприяння розвитку, навчання іноземної мови, мотивація.

The educational process at universities has been put under forced quarantine during the last few months and has brought both challenges and possibilities to try new methods and approaches to the process of teaching-learning a foreign language. Although Ukrainian universities have adjusted the provision of educational services differently using blended learning, distance learning, or even various mixtures of methods and approaches, students are still facing many challenges while studying at their university. Even though many educators and students mention technical issues as one of the main problems of online learning, emotional setup and a positive, healthy environment during the Covid-19 pandemic have played a crucial role in knowledge acquisition and learning, especially foreign language learning. Many educators conclude that without a positive mindset, students tend to fail in their language learning, provided the right methods of teaching are applied. Therefore, every foreign language teacher should know and apply certain teaching strategies and approaches to develop students' emotional intelligence together with language skills, such as reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The **importance** of fostering the emotional knowledge of students is very high because the emotional state of learners cannot be separated from their cognitive processes, and therefore, the development of the former guarantees a positive impact on the latter. The **aim** of this article is to analyze the role of emotional intelligence in teaching foreign languages at university, offering further application of such analysis in foreign language teaching; in addition, to present the results of the survey conducted at the National University of Ostroh Academy, the purpose of which was to compare the overall moods, attitudes, and feelings of students towards their studying online versus studying offline. The **scholars** who were first to research and introduce the term emotional intelligence were Mayer J. D. and Salovey P. Also, Wharam J. studied emotional intelligence from a general perspective. However, Marquez P. G., Martin R. P., and Brackett Holzer J. show the direct connection between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of learners, while Tevdovska E.S. investigates the influence of emotional intelligence in the framework of language learning and teaching. Oz H., Demirezen M. and Pourfeiz J. show the link between emotional intelligence and attitudes toward foreign language learning. Arshad M., Syed M.I., Heider Z., and Khalid M studied the connection between self-esteem and students' academic performance at university. Also, Korlat S., Haider C., Mayerhofer M., Pelikan E., and Schober B. studied teenagers' well-being and learning in the times of COVID-19. And Nenko Y., Kybalna N., and Snisarenko, Y. analyzed distanced learning of Ukrainian students during the quarantine times. Overall, there are not many studies on fostering the emotional intelligence of Ukrainian university students during online studies. Therefore, there is a high relevance and importance of investigating these issues with the aim of finding effective solutions, strategies and approaches which can be applied by different educators in general and foreign language teachers in particular.

Emotional intelligence (EI), emotional quotient (EQ), or emotional knowledge was first defined by such scholars as Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990 within the field of cognitive psychology (Wharam, 2009: 7-8). Emotional intelligence needs to be taken into account in teaching a foreign language because it is as important as other cognitive processes. The definition of EI helps better understand why the development of EI is crucial in foreign language learning; here is the definition of emotional intelligence offered by the scholars Salovey and Mayer:

... the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (qt. in Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, 2004: 197).

It is clear that emotional intelligence and logical thinking or cognition are intertwined. So, one depends on the other and vice versa.

Since learning a foreign language is a cognitive process that can be effective, providing it is intellectual growth, it is not possible without developing emotional intelligence. Research findings show that there is a relationship between EI and foreign language learning. For example, one study suggests that there is a direct connection between emotional intelligence and attitude towards foreign language learning (Oz et al., 2015: 421). If there is a positive attitude towards learning a foreign language, there is motivation to learn it as well. Obviously, learning any foreign language without a positive attitude and motivation becomes a difficulty for any student at the university level. Hence, recognizing the strong connection between EQ and learners' success in foreign language learning can be used by university instructors to form the right attitudes and styles in their teaching practice. In addition, there are certain strategies and approaches that educators should not only be aware of but should also actively apply in the learning process at university to achieve academic success.

Undoubtedly, effective methods and strategies of teaching a foreign language can yield positive results in terms of language acquisition; however, educators should not underestimate the importance of emotional intelligence in learning a foreign language. University students, especially first-year and second-year students, who come to the university from different backgrounds, need both support and motivation. Even though their primary goal is to study various courses at university, different fears and anxieties might interfere with their clear mindset and plan to study. Students are adolescents with their own personal psychological mindsets, which are inherent to almost all the representatives of this age group (Holzer et al., 2021). Thus, they might worry about such trivia as their appearance, sense of belonging to the group, their perception by others, as well as any type of criticism related to any aspect of their personality. So, all these fears and doubts are becoming major obstacles to clear thinking, attentiveness, and rationalization, which are the main factors in foreign language learning at university.

Moreover, the fears of many students are often aggravated by some students' psychological peculiarities, which are characterized by their low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence. Such psychological peculiarities might impede the normal learning process and learning a foreign language in particular (Arshad et al., 2015: 156). And, because "emotion is inseparably intertwined with cognition" (Kenely, 2019: 22), it is not possible to develop students' cognitive skills, including a foreign language learning, without addressing students' emotional state properly and timely. Therefore, in order to reach effective foreign language learning results among university students, it is a priority task of an educator to reduce their fears and anxiety by developing students' emotional intelligence. In addition, the influence of emotions on thinking and attention might often be subconscious, which not often can be easily tracked and, therefore, controlled and changed. So, students' language learning can be either impaired by negative emotions or supported by motivating and positive thinking, which is part of educators' major responsibilities.

Furthermore, today students are forced to face new challenges which have come with new forms of studying during the forced lockdown as a result of the world Covid-19 pandemic. Many university administrations have realized the urgency of changing the

forms and methods of teaching and reverting to distance learning. Even though online or distance learning is not a new way to study a subject, especially a foreign language, this study process has challenged many Ukrainian university students. These challenges appear in different forms, for example, the lack of motivation, poor time-management skills, forcing oneself to spend much time in front of the personal computer, a huge load of homework, inability to prioritize the tasks, difficulties in communication with peers and instructors, socio-emotional balance and technical issues (Mishra, 2020: 7). All these complications affect studying and, especially foreign language acquisition among university students.

In addition, students' emotional intelligence is not developing because of certain external problems which are related to a teacher's personality. Thus, Nenko, Kybalna, and Snisarenko mention such inadequacies as bureaucracy and insufficient professionalism of some teachers in Ukraine (Nenko, 2020: 16). It is not only students' own individual features that might interfere with their studies, but also teachers' attitudes and styles become a serious hindrance in the development of EQ of Ukrainian students. Therefore, both educators and students need to be informed regarding the importance of emotional intelligence in the education process at university and in general personal development on the whole.

Consequently, educators' awareness of the importance of emotional intelligence acquisition among university students is crucial to students' academic achievements. The ability to organize a positive and stress-free learning environment is the key to successful foreign language learning. What is more, the development of emotional intelligence of students is equally important for their work as independent learners as well as work in pairs or groups. So, to develop students' IE, there are several techniques and strategies that might be useful. One of the easiest ways to develop emotional intelligence is by boosting students' motivation by encouraging them not to give up and continue studies, showing personal interest in the subject, giving regular feedback, taking into account students' opinions regarding the study process, and involving in regular open discussions with students. Even though these strategies seem to be very simple, they play a crucial role in the overall academic achievement of the students in terms of foreign language learning.

Furthermore, because of the current situation with the quarantine regime at universities, the studying environment of students has changed for the worse in terms of their mental well-being. The research findings of one study conducted during the time of the quarantine reveal that students were "on average more depressed, slightly more anxious, more stressed, and felt more lonely than half a year earlier" (Elmer, Mepham, Stadtfeld, 2020). Even though the study suggests that the overall students felt only 'slightly more' anxious, stressed and lonely, these markers can be very alarming for the teaching of foreign languages and for educators in general. Such a situation with the young people at university indicates that students might be less attentive and less motivated to study. Moreover, they might be less interested in the studying process in general, not to mention studying particular subjects. In other words, there might be a necessity to sharpen students' interest in studying triggering, their self-motivation and willingness to continue what they have already started. Thus, teachers of foreign languages have to be aware of the current students' feelings of anxiety and depression in order to be ready to deal with the situation adequately and in a timely manner.

However, the other research findings reveal that Chinese students share many similar characteristics with European students in terms of their mood and overall well-being during the quarantined learning. Thus, the authors of the article "The psychological impacts of a COVID-19 outbreak on college students in China: A longitudinal study" present the analysis of students' moods and show that at the very beginning of the outbreak of COVID-19, the first two weeks, are marked by "psychological distress, depression, anxiety and affectivity" (Li et al., 2020). Obviously, because China became the centre of the disease outbreak, the psychological health of Chinese students could not have been much more stable. Since the psychological stability of the students was shattered, their emotions or emotional intelligence was also affected in the circumstances of mass panic and fear. Not only fear of the disease but the very conditions of isolation and quarantine triggered the rise of emotional dissatisfaction and low interest and motivation to study in Chinese students. Hence, it is clear that external factors, such as mass fear and panic, can badly influence a young person's psychological well-being lowering the levels of positive thinking and self-conscious interest in knowledge and studying processes in general.

Today, Ukrainian students are not in the same conditions as Chinese students were at the beginning of 2020, and they do not feel that much fear and panic. However, the forced isolation and the quarantined studying processes have influenced their attitudes towards studying, in general, and learning a foreign language in particular. A recent survey, conducted in February 2022 at the National University of Ostroh Academy, revealed students' views on online and offline studies and evaluation of their own vision of motivation, interest, and teachers' feedback, taking into account the current circumstances of the forced distance learning. 60 students of the university, 41 first-year and 19 fourth-year students of the Romance and Germanic languages department participated in the survey. First-year students prefer online studying (36,6%) over offline studying (34,1%), while only 26,3% of fourth-year students responded that they prefer online studying, and 42,1% prefer offline studying.

1. Which type of the studying process do you prefer?  
19 students



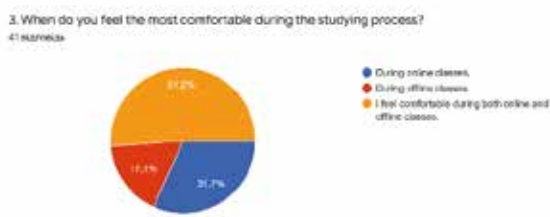
Fourth-year students

2. Which type of the studying process do you prefer?  
41 students

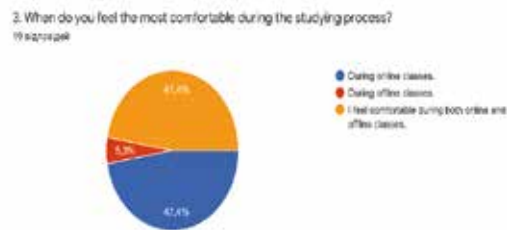


First-year students

Also, 31,7% of first-year students noted that they feel comfortable when they study online, and only 17,1% of respondents feel comfortable when they study offline. Seniors' responses regarding feeling comfortable during online and offline classes are 47,4% and 5,3%, respectively.

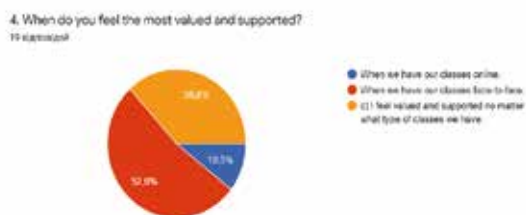


Fourth-year students

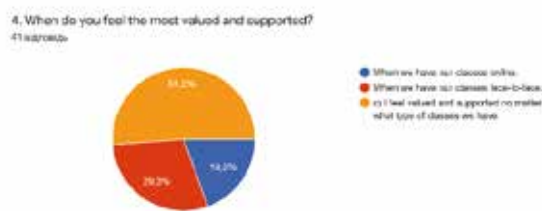


First-year students

However, answering the question when students feel the most valued and respected, first-year chose the option when they have “classes face-to-face” 29,3% and the option when they have “classes online” only 19,5%; while fourth-year students’ results are even greater in their difference between feeling supported during “classes face-to-face” 52,6% and during “classes online” – only 10,5%.

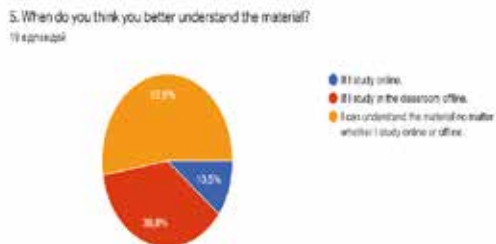


Fourth-year students

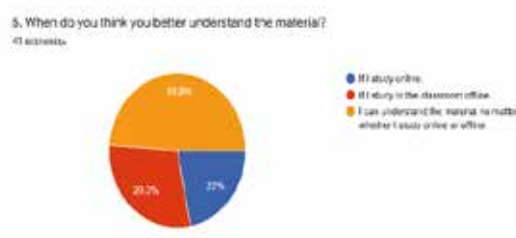


First-year students

Even though many students responded that they feel comfortable during online classes, still 29,3% of first-year students responded they better understand the material during offline classes in comparison to 22% of students who understand the material better when they study online. This difference in understanding the material better during offline classes rather than online is even greater in the responses of the fourth-year students – 36,8% and 10,5%, correspondingly.

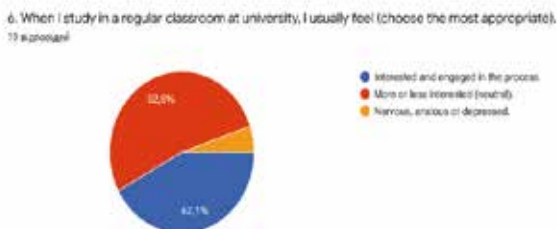


Fourth-year students

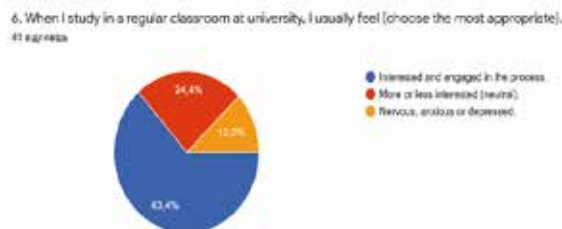


First-year students

Furthermore, there is some difference in the level of engagement between the answers of first-year and fourth-year students. Thus, during regular classes at university, the first-year students feel “interested and engaged in the process” (63,4%) and “more or less interested” (24,4%); the fourth-year students “feel interested and engaged in the process” (52,6%) and “more or less interested” (42,1%).



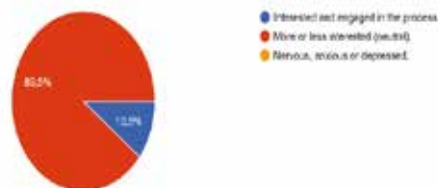
Fourth-year students



First-year students

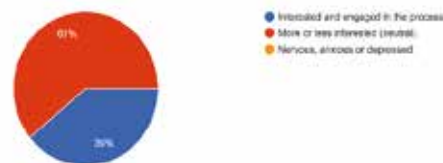
However, when asked about their overall feeling during online classes, first-year students replied that they feel “interested and engaged” (39%) and “more or less interested” (61%). In comparison, fourth-year students’ responses regarding online classes were “interested and engaged” only 10,5% and “more or less interested” – 89,5%.

7. When I have my classes online, I usually feel (choose the most appropriate).  
13 відповідей



Fourth-year students

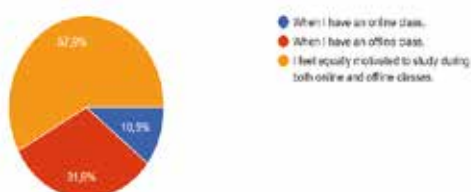
7. When I have my classes online, I usually feel (choose the most appropriate).  
41 відповідей



First-year students

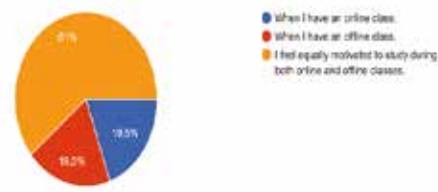
Upon being asked when they felt most motivated to study, most of the first-year students chose during offline classes – 31,6% and during online classes, only 10,5%. The seniors feel equally motivated to study during offline and online classes, and the answers for both categories comprise 19,5% each.

8. When do you feel the most motivated to study new material?  
19 відповідей



Fourth-year students

8. When do you feel the most motivated to study new material?  
41 відповідей



First-year students

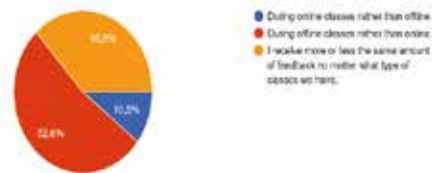
Finally, answering the question about when students feel they receive more feedback from their teachers, the first-year students chose during online classes – 34,1%, and during offline classes – 22%, respectively. On the other hand, 52,6% of fourth-year students voted for the “during offline classes rather than online” option, and only 10,5% voted for the “during online classes rather than offline” option.

9. When do you think you receive more feedback about your study progress?  
41 відповідей



Fourth-year students

9. When do you think you receive more feedback about your study progress?  
19 відповідей



First-year students

In conclusion, it should be noted that, undoubtedly, technological innovations and the internet allow smooth study processes at universities. However, humans are not machines, and there is no way we, educators, can disregard the importance of such factors like motivation and support. Many research findings have proved the significance of developing not only various cognitive skills while teaching a language but developing emotional intelligence as well. The survey conducted at the National University of Ostroh Academy also proves that during online classes, most students feel less engaged and motivated to study compared to how they feel during traditional classroom studies. Also, taking into account the internal and external factors which can impede learning and the lack of face-to-face communication, the importance of using various strategies for developing university students' IE becomes a priority task for every foreign language teacher.

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