

CHAPTER 8

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE OF TEACHERS AS WELL AS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ATTACHMENT OF A STUDENT TO THE TEACHER AS THE CONDITIONINGS OF SCHOOL SUCCESS

Summary

This article is devoted to the meaning of emotional intelligence of a secondary Polish teacher to the emotional intelligence and attachment of a student to their teacher. They had been presumed to be important factors of a student's school success. One of the measurements of school success is lexical inventory. The presented research aimed to determine the relationships between the said variables. The results obtained in twelve schools of the Kuyavia-Pomerania Province confirm the connection between the emotional intelligence of a teacher and the attachment of a student to the teacher.

Key words: pupils, teachers, emotional intelligence, attachment, school success

INTRODUCTION

In the face of the current psychological knowledge, it still remains uncertain how significant the emotional intelligence of a secondary Polish teacher is for the emotional intelligence of the students and their attachment to the teacher/class

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teacher (here: Polish teacher) and their school success. This article focuses on a chosen indicator of school success, namely: the lexical inventory. The research conducted in twelve educational institutions in Bydgoszcz and surrounding towns reveal multiple interrelations between these factors. The studies were inspired by scientific reports about the positive impact of emotional intelligence on human cognitive functioning and achieving success as well as articles describing the aftermaths of teachers lacking emotional intelligence. They present an image of pedagogists which is significantly inconsistent with the social expectations towards their professional effectiveness. Beside emotional intelligence, the case literature also indicates communication competence as the second factor which accounts for the effectiveness of the teachers' work.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Aim

This paper aimed to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and communication competence of Polish teachers and attachment, the level of emotional intelligence and the lexical inventory of students.

Research tools

The study used four tools: a self-made survey to establish the communication competence of Polish teachers, the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire INTE (designed by N.S. Schutte, J.M. Malouffa, L.E. Hall, D.J. Haggerty, J.T. Cooper, C.J. Golden and L. Dornheim – adapted by Anna Ciechanowicz, Aleksandra Jaworowska and Anna Matczak (2000)), a language test “Leksykon” [Polish: “Lexicon”] (designed by Andrzej Jurkowski) and the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA) (prepared by M.T. Greenberg and G. Armsden – adapted by Hanna Liberska (2015)). It is worthwhile to mention that the IPPA inventory was primarily designed to measure the attachment of adolescents to their parents and peers, however, its experimental version has been used to determine the attachment of students to their Polish teachers.

Sample group

The sample group consisted of 30 Polish teachers and 182 students of secondary schools throughout Kuyavia-Pomerania Province. The research was carried out during a school year at schools.

Results

- Emotional intelligence and communication competence of the teachers

The majority of the teachers revealed a medium level of emotional intelligence (table 1) and communication competence.

Table 1. The level of teachers' emotional intelligence

Level of emotional intelligence	Number of teachers (N)	Percent of people (%)
high	1	3
medium	26	87
low	3	10
total	30	100

The majority of students obtained a medium level of emotional intelligence – they were 103 people (57%). The high level existed in 37 students (20%), whereas 42 students (23%) presented low level of emotional intelligence (table 2).

Table 2. The level of students' emotional intelligence

Level of emotional intelligence	Number of students (N)	Percent of the students (%)
high	37	20
medium	103	57
low	42	23
total	182	100

The research outcome indicates that the participating teachers were characterised by a moderate level of communicative competence. All obtained results fell between 20 and 39 points. Therefore, the group of teachers was not diversified with regards to communication competence. (The maximum number of points possible to obtain in the trial was 46).

For the purposes of statistic analysis, the INTE inventory, which measured the emotional intelligence, divided the Polish teachers into 3 groups based on its level:

- a group of philologists of low emotional intelligence
- a group of philologists of medium emotional intelligence
- a group of philologists of high emotional intelligence.

The following step was to divide the students according to their attachment to the teachers. Three groups of students were distinguished:

- students of teachers with low emotional intelligence (94 people (52%)),
- students of teachers with medium emotional intelligence (64 people (35 %)),
- students of teachers with high emotional intelligence (24 people (13%)).

The statistic analysis showed that the students of a Polish teacher with high emotional intelligence have a greater lexical inventory, high emotional intelligence and their attachment to the teacher is strong. The communication competence, however, neither correlates with the lexical inventory, emotional intelligence nor the attachment of adolescents. In order to determine the influence of emotional intelligence of Polish teachers on the attachment, lexical inventory and emotional intelligence of students, the authors applied Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test.

Based on the results of the analysis it may be concluded (with significance of $p = 0,001$) that the level of emotional intelligence of the Polish teachers considerably differentiates the level of attachment of their students (table 3). The results of the statistic analysis indicate that the higher level of emotional intelligence of the Polish teachers is associated with the higher attachment level of their students.

Table 3. Emotional intelligence of teachers and attachment of their students (N = 182) – results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) = 23,525, p = 0,001				
Emotional intelligence of the teachers		N	Mean	SD
IPPA - general	low level - subgroup of pupils	94	78,62	16,19
	medium level - subgroup of pupils	64	87,81	16,05
	high level - subgroup of pupils	24	95,12	19,76

Based on the results of the statistic analysis (significance $p = 0,004$) a conclusion can be drawn that emotional intelligence of Polish teachers has a considerable impact on the attachment of students, specifically their trust. The level of emotional intelligence of the Polish teachers is associated with the students trust them (table 4).

Table 4. Emotional intelligence of teachers and attachment trust they receive from students (N = 182) – results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) =15,767, p = 0,004				
	Emotional intelligence of the teachers	N	Mean	SD
IPPA -trust	low level - subgroup of pupils	94	30,09	7,45
	medium level - subgroup of pupils	64	33,84	7,10
	high level - subgroup of pupils	24	36,16	8,67

Based on the results of the statistic analysis (significance $p = 0,001$) a conclusion can be drawn that emotional intelligence of Polish teachers strongly differentiates the scope of students' attachment with regards to communication (table 5).

Table 5. Emotional intelligence of Polish teachers and the attachment of their students in the communicative dimension (N = 182) – results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) =23,727, p = 0,001				
	Emotional intelligence of the teachers	N	Mean	SD
IPPA - communication	low level - subgroup of pupils	94	25,60	6,17
	medium level - subgroup of pupils	64	29,01	5,83
	high level - subgroup of pupils	24	31,79	7,01

The research results also indicate that a high emotional intelligence of Polish teachers is related to a low level of alienation among their students (table 6).

Table 6. Emotional intelligence of Polish teachers and the feeling of alienation revealed by their students (N = 182) – results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) = 14,233, p = 0,0008				
	Emotional intelligence of the teachers	N	Mean	SD
IPPA - alienation	low level - subgroup of pupils	94	22,92	5,21
	medium level - subgroup of pupils	64	24,95	6,06
	high level - subgroup of pupils	24	27,16	5,50

The statistic analysis also enabled to draw a conclusion (significance $p = 0,0008$) that the level of emotional intelligence significantly differentiates the scope of attachment of their students in the dimension of their alienation. The higher emotional intelligence of the teachers is associated with the lower feeling of alienation among their students (table 6).

The statistic analysis shows (significance $p = 0,0001$) that the level of emotional intelligence of Polish teachers is highly meaningful for the emotional intelligence of their students i.e. their ability to use emotions to facilitate thinking and acting (table 7) as well as to recognize emotions (table 8).

Table 7. Emotional intelligence of teachers and the ability to use emotions by their students (N = 182) – results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) =25,682, p = 0,0001				
	Emotional intelligence of the teachers	N	Mean	SD
INTE I	low level - subgroup of pupils	94	50,03	8,43
	medium level - subgroup of pupils	64	55,14	6,33
	high level - subgroup of pupils	24	56,62	5,89

Table 8. Emotional intelligence of teachers and the ability to recognize emotions by their students (N = 182) – results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) = 17,893, p = 0,0001				
	Emotional intelligence of the teachers	N	Mean	SD
INTE II	low level - subgroup of pupils	94	41,60	6,97
	medium level - subgroup of pupils	64	45,17	5,98
	high level - subgroup of pupils	24	47,08	6,02

Another significant result is the confirmation that emotional intelligence of Polish teachers influences the lexical inventory of adolescents (both active and passive vocabulary) (vocabulary (lexical inventory)).

A relationship between emotional intelligence of Polish teachers and the lexical inventory of their students has been acknowledged with regards to both active (table 9) and passive vocabulary (table 10).

Table 9. Emotional intelligence of Polish teachers and the active lexical inventory of their students (N = 182) - results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) =27,693, p = 0,001				
	Emotional intelligence of the teachers	N	Mean	SD
Active vocabulary	low score - subgroup of pupils	94	25,46	13,19
	medium score - subgroup of pupils	64	31,42	11,21
	high score - subgroup of pupils	24	37,50	13,31

Based on the results of the statistic analysis it may be concluded (significance $p = 0,001$) that the level of emotional intelligence of the Polish teachers has a significant influence on the students' results in LEKSYKON active vocabulary test (tab. 9) and LEKSYKON passive vocabulary test (table 10).

Table 10. Emotional intelligence of Polish teachers and the passive lexical inventory of their students (N = 182) - results obtained with Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA rank-test H (2, N= 182) =26,090, p = 0,001				
	Emotional intelligence of the teachers	N	Mean	SD
Passive vocabulary	low score - subgroup of pupils	94	15,85	9,82
	medium score - subgroup of pupils	64	18,9	5,68
	high score - subgroup of pupils	24	20,45	6,78

The results of the statistic analysis disclosed the relationships between emotional intelligence of teachers and the attachment, emotional intelligence and lexical inventory of their students.

Therefore, the relationship between students' attachment to their teachers and emotional intelligence as well as lexical inventory has been acknowledged.

With the aim to investigate the relationship between the examined variables, the authors used the Spearman's r correlation coefficients. The analysis revealed

a significant weak correlation between the attachment to the teacher and the lexical inventory (general score) of the students ($r = 0,23$, $p < 0,05$).

Moreover, a statistically significant weak correlation was observed between emotional intelligence of students and their lexical inventory (general score) ($r = 0,31$, $p < 0,05$).

The results confirm the previous scientific reports concerning the importance of emotional intelligence of students for their school success measured by their lexical inventory. A rich lexical inventory, which is necessary not only during Polish language classes, may be transferred onto interpersonal communication, the ability to express personal needs, emotions as well as accurate recognition of other people's emotions and other phenomena (Cwynar, Bartoszak, Otręba, 2003).

No significant correlation was observed between the communication competence of the teachers and the attachment, emotional intelligence and lexical inventory of their students. This observation lead to a redevelopment of the model of expected interrelations between the examined variables (picture 1).

SUMMARY

A teacher who arouses positive emotions in his or her students builds up mutual relationship based on trust, openness and honesty. The teacher shapes the social and emotional competence of adolescents as well as creates a warm and sincere atmosphere which makes the student feel secure. The presented research results have partly confirmed earlier findings by Monika Tyszkiewicz-Bandur (2013) regarding the correlation between the secure style of attachment and high emotional intelligence i.e. adequate affective reactions, managing personal emotions and empathy. Students characterised by this type of attachment revealed a higher level of emotional intelligence and social competence compared to subjects who presented extra-secure styles of attachment. It may be assumed that people who are trustfully attached to by others should also be characterised by a secure style of attachment as they had passed certain models onto their charges. This, consequently, may lie beneath the presumption that there exists a relationship between the emotional intelligence of the teachers and the style of attachment of their students.

This may explain the result indicating the connection between the high emotional intelligence of Polish teachers and the high emotional intelligence of their charges. Based on the presented results of the statistic analysis a conclusion

may be drawn that the level of emotional intelligence of the Polish teachers is significant for the emotional intelligence of their students. The higher level of the emotional intelligence of the Polish teachers, the higher level of emotional intelligence among the students.

Eventually, the initial presumptions that emotional intelligence may be shaped have been acknowledged. In the light of the obtained data the courses and programmes which develop emotion managing, which are offered to students, seem particularly worthwhile. A Polish teacher who spend several hours weekly with the students plays a significant role in this process. Emotional intelligence contributes to teaching and educational competence. It influences such areas like: the perceived professional success, cooperation with students, creativity, personality development, stress resistance and minimizes the risk or scope of professional burn-out. As it turned out, it also influences the level of emotional intelligence of the students. Such a wide scope of influences of emotional intelligence stems out of the fact that it controls the affective energy and, hence, motivates to undertake reasonable and socially valuable actions. It is also beneficial for communication competence and interpersonal relations. A Polish teacher comes across a lot of opportunities to form emotion managing among their students. It is frequently accomplished unconsciously during discussions about the affective states of the literary characters or students' impressions as to the analysed works of art. Hardly no other educator is given a similar opportunity to emotionally bring up the young people as the Polish teacher. Currently the scope of their influences is expanding even wider as the new curriculum obliges Polish teachers to go beyond sheer literature and also take up painting, sculpture, film and other areas of art and culture. Such considerations may sensitize adolescents to the feelings of other people. Nevertheless, the major role remains the everyday contact with students. During a lesson young people attentively observe the teacher which probably makes his or her way to manage affect so influential on their abilities to recognize and use emotions.

Numerous research aiming to determine the relationships between emotional intelligence and various life skills leading to professional and interpersonal successes have currently been conducted. It has been proven, for example, that the ability to verbalize thoughts, feelings and mechanisms plays a significant role in learning. Subjects achieve a higher level of insight into the rules and mechanisms of solving logical tasks when they vocalize their requirements, describe their current actions, give reasons for them and answer the questions asked by the observers (Barnes, 1988). However, there was hardly any research aiming to explain whether or not an educator with a high level of emotional intelligence

is able to contribute to school success, like lexical inventory, of their students to a greater extent than the one with low level of this feature. Certainly every Polish teacher develops the lexical inventory of their students. Nevertheless, the empirical data presented in this paper prove that a Polish teacher who efficiently regulates and controls their affective states as well as introduces a positive atmosphere in the classroom has a wider scope of opportunities to improve the lexical inventory of the young people. It may be further transferred onto their school successes in various areas of school knowledge and everyday situations. Therefore, the study has confirmed the presumption that the higher level of emotional intelligence among Polish teachers is important for the higher lexical inventory of their students.

A lot of research reports (Goleman 2007, Przybylska 2006, Solecka 2010, Czerska 2001, Skorny 1992, Knop 2010, Szorc 2013, Urbańska, Urbański 2011) confirmed the relationship between the components of emotional intelligence of a teacher and level of cooperation with their students. A trustworthy and amiable educator evokes greater enthusiasm among their students, makes them interested in the subject and satisfied with the contact with him or her which, eventually, facilitates their active participation in lessons. This accounts for an indirect influence on the success of their charges. Teachers also affect the students' level of emotional intelligence, lexical inventory and the degree of attachment to the teacher.

The second feature measured among Polish teachers was communication competence which proved not to correlate with emotional intelligence, attachment and lexical inventory of students. Furthermore, no relationship was observed between the emotional intelligence and communication competence of the Polish teachers.

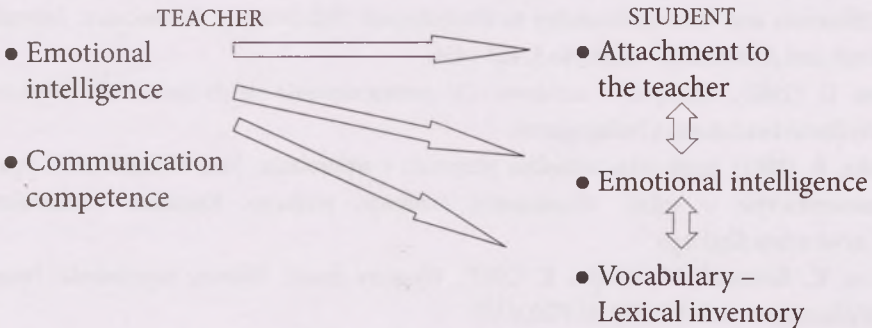
A lot of current reports underline a positive relationship between attachment to parents and peers and well-being, self-esteem and the feeling of satisfaction of life among adolescents. It is worthwhile to point out that the said variables are connected with the level of ability to manage personal emotions – which makes one of the components of emotional intelligence. Negative relationships have been observed between attachment to parents or peers and experienced traumas, the level of depression, anxiety and the feeling of alienation (G.C. Armsden, M.T. Greenberg, 1987). It ought to be stated that growing up changes the attachment figures among adolescents for whom peers become much more significant. Nevertheless, young people still seek role models in adults. The person who is likely to become an attachment figure for an adolescent is the teacher.

Students who reveal strong attachment to their Polish teachers also have a wide lexical inventory. The attachment relationship makes one of the

mechanisms of developing self-regulation processes and is significant for social functioning. A lot of research confirm that the bond with parents – being the first attachment figures in early childhood, plays the most important role in the emotional and social development of a child which is later transferred onto their cognitive and social “coping” at school. There is also empirical evidence for the relationship between attachment and the level of human cognitive functioning. Nevertheless, current research focus on the relationship between children and parents lacking proper study of the attachment between students and teachers.

It is noteworthy that the sample group consisted only of junior secondary and secondary students, i.e. students whose attachment style had already crystallized. One of the limitations on the presented research is their range embracing only one school subject and only one measurement of cognitive development, namely lexical inventory. For a broader perspective it would be advisable to study other skills and school achievements beyond lexical inventory. The assumed relationship between lexical development and both intellectual level and emotional intelligence still may not be rejected. One should bear in mind that tasks designed to verify verbal skills are regarded to be one of the measurements of intelligence and remain a part of the commonly used D. Wechsler (WAIS) test.

SUMMARY



Picture 1. Relationships between emotional intelligence and communication competence of the teacher and attachment to the teacher, emotional intelligence and lexical inventory of the student – based on the author’s own research.

It is also noteworthy that the majority of the participating secondary teachers and students showed a medium level of emotional intelligence, attachment to

the teacher and relatively low lexical inventory. Due to the positive relationship between the emotional intelligence of the teacher and the achievements of his or her students, the attempt to improve the emotional intelligence of teachers including various forms of teacher development seems worthwhile.

Summarizing the results of research into the functioning of Polish teachers, it ought to be emphasised that not only their emotional intelligence but also communication skills need professional support.

A possible solution to this matter might be an increase in the number of courses offered to the teachers to develop their competence. A massive role is also on the part of academics who prepare trainee teachers. A great deal of young people recalls their own negative experiences with malfunctioning educators. Academics are apt to change this image being a good role model and inspiration to future teachers. They should be especially aware of the important role they play in the expanding of students' knowledge as well as in developing the so called soft skills. Based on the research carried out by the author of this paper, a general conclusion can be made that the emotional intelligence of a teacher/tutor is an important predictor of the level of attachment, emotional intelligence and the lexical inventory of their students.

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