The Emotional Intelligence of English Language Learners in Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology

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Abstract: *This study explores the emotional intelligence levels of English learners in applied undergraduate universities and proposes strategies to enhance their emotional intelligence, thereby optimizing language learning outcomes. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research design, this study gathers data through questionnaire and interview. Data collection involved 111 students and 8 teachers. The findings indicate that students demonstrate a moderate level of emotional intelligence in four key areas: perceiving emotions, reasoning with emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. To address this, the study suggests integrating emotional intelligence training into language courses through structured activities, mindfulness practices, and stress management techniques. Additionally, student-centered interactive teaching methods, such as project-based learning and peer feedback, are recommended to foster emotional engagement. The study also highlights the importance of teacher training in emotional intelligence strategies, institutional support systems, and the creation of a positive, inclusive classroom atmosphere. Regular assessments and reflective practices are further emphasized to track students' emotional intelligence development. Implementing these strategies will create a supportive learning environment, enhance students' confidence, and improve their academic performance. Ultimately, fostering emotional intelligence in English learners contributes to a more effective and enriching language learning experience.*

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, English Language Learning, Language Acquisition, Communication Skills*

1. Introduction

China's applied undergraduate education has emerged in the context of the popularization of higher education, structural adjustments, and quality improvement (Wang, 2023) [1]. The core goal of applied universities is to cultivate innovative and application-oriented talents to meet the needs of local industries.

In the era of globalization, English, as an essential tool for international communication, has a profound impact on students' academic and professional development. Therefore, foreign language education plays a crucial role in applied undergraduate institutions, helping students improve their language proficiency and cross-cultural communication skills. However, with increasing academic pressure, the issue of emotional intelligence (EI) management among English learners has gained growing attention. Research indicates that emotional factors are critical in the process of foreign language learning. EI management not only affects students' mental health and well-being but is also directly related to learning outcomes and the effectiveness of teaching methods.

This study focuses on English learners at the Humanities and Information, Changchun University of Technology, exploring the role of emotional intelligence in language learning, with a particular emphasis on psychological and emotional factors in the learning process. The significance of this research is primarily reflected in two aspects: a) Cognitive and Emotional impact: EI levels influence learners' academic performance, learning attitudes, and their acceptance and appreciation of language and culture; b) Social Interaction and Cross-Cultural Adaptation: As an essential component of emotional regulation and social competence, EI affects learners' coping strategies and adaptability in cross-cultural communication.

Although the importance of EI in language learning has been widely recognized, most studies have focused on learners in Western countries. Research on English learners at applied undergraduate institutions in China remains limited. Based on classic EI theories proposed by Goleman (1995)[2],

Mayer & Salovey (1995)[3], and Bar-On (1996)[4], as well as studies by Chinese scholars Wangli & Caimin (2015) [5]and Caolei (2018)[6], this study explores the role and challenges of EI in language learning, aiming to fill the existing research gap. It is the aim of this study to investigate the current state of EI among English learners at Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology, and its impact on English learning. This study is structured as follows:

First, the Literature Review section introduces the concept and theoretical framework of EI, its application in language learning, and summarizes relevant domestic and international research to establish the theoretical foundation and research framework.

Second, the Research Methodology section details the research design, data collection, and analysis methods to ensure the scientific validity and reliability of the study.

Third, the Research Results section presents data analysis on the overall EI levels of English learners in Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology, their specific performance in various dimensions, and the relationship between EI and English learning efficiency.

Fourth, the Discussion section provides an in-depth interpretation of the research findings, analyzes the potential value and implementation paths of EI training programs, and examines how individual factors such as gender, grade level, and English proficiency influence EI and learning outcomes.

Finally, the Conclusion section summarizes the main findings of this study, proposes future research directions, and offers recommendations for schools and teachers on improving English teaching strategies based on EI.

This study provides theoretical support and practical guidance for enhancing English learners' emotional intelligence and optimizing English teaching, ultimately promoting students' overall development and improving the quality of language learning.

1.1 Literature Review

Recent research has explored the role of emotions in education, demonstrating their direct impact on classroom instruction and learning experiences. Dewaele et al. (2019)[7] conducted positive psychology (PP) interventions in schools and universities, fostering emotions such as hope, resilience, and joy to enhance language learning. Ismail and Hastings (2023) [8] highlight the importance of both cognitive and emotional factors in quality education, emphasizing that adaptive learning systems incorporating emotional states can improve learning outcomes.

The study of emotions in second-language acquisition (SLA) has spanned over 40 years, gaining increased attention around the turn of the millennium. Researchers have examined both positive and negative emotions in language learning. Shao et al. (2019) [9] introduced the concept of achievement emotion in SLA, identifying key areas for improvement. Chen and Zhang (2022)[10] investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and English performance, finding that well-being significantly influenced overall and listening performance, while self-control and emotionality affected speaking ability.

The quality of language instruction and learning is also influenced by emotional elements. Derakhshan (2023) [11] emphasizes how crucial it is to identify and control emotions in SLA. Fostering EI can improve reading performance in foreign language learning (EFL) circumstances, according to Davoudi (2023) [12], who finds a substantial association between EI and reading techniques.

In China, studies have examined the role of emotions in language education. Zhu and Pan (2018) [13] analyzed the effects of negative emotions, such as anxiety, on vocational college students' English learning. Jiang and Dewaele (2019) [14] found that foreign language enjoyment (FLE) is often influenced by teachers, whereas foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) is more learner-driven. Li (2020)[15] , using Positive Psychology frameworks, explored the relationships between Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI), FLE, and English achievement among Chinese high school students.

More recent domestic studies have expanded emotional research across different learning environments. Zhang (2022)[16], applying positive psychology, examined how motivational strategies can address negative emotions such as language anxiety and boredom in vocational college students. Qiao (2022)[17], based on humanistic and social interdependence theories, investigated the connection between emotional factors and cooperative learning engagement in high school English education. Shi (2022)[18],analyzed English phonetic self-concept and learning anxiety among private college students, offering strategies to improve self-perception and alleviate anxiety. Wang and Xu (2023) [19] explored

the influence of task complexity, working memory, and learner emotions on L2 writing performance, providing important insights for writing instruction.

Even though these studies provide insightful information, more study is needed to fully understand how emotional aspects impact foreign language acquisition in China's applied colleges. This study intends to investigate how different emotions impact foreign language learning in this context, since applied colleges place a strong emphasis on practical language abilities. In order to help students deal with emotional difficulties, it will classify both good and negative emotions, examine their causes, and provide suggestions for foreign language teachers. The ultimate goal of this research is to help applied institutions create a more encouraging and stimulating environment for English language learners.

1.2 Theoretical framework of the Study

Emotional Intelligence. Caruso and Salovey (2004)[20] state that two psychologists, John (Jack) Mayer and Peter Salovey, created the ability-based approach to emotional skills in the late 1980s and named it emotional intelligence. Perceiving emotions, relating to emotions, comprehending emotions, and controlling emotions are the four emotional abilities that, according to their statement, can help people develop emotionally savvy managers. The ability to identify and comprehend one's own emotions as well as those of others is specifically referred to as sensing emotions. Next, the ability to use one's emotions to improve thinking and problem-solving is known as "resonating with emotions." Understanding emotions also entails knowing the intricate connections between them, such as the connection between anger and grief and the reasons why two people may react differently to the same situation. Lastly, emotional management is the capacity to regulate one's own feelings as well as those of others.

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (Mayer et al. 2002)[21] was developed by Mayer and Peter to assess a person's ability to reason with emotional information through a range of engaging and imaginative tasks. The MSCEIT can be used in a variety of corporate, educational, therapeutic, and research contexts.

Constructivism in cognition. Another theory that may be used to better understand how emotional intelligence management can be applied to learning English as a foreign language is cognitive constructivism theory. According to Jean Piaget's cognitive constructivism theory, learning is an active process in which people build knowledge by interacting with and adapting to their surroundings, as Waite-Stupiansky (2022)[22] states. From the perspective of cognitive constructivism, emotional intelligence management can help students build their knowledge and grow their cognitive abilities. It improves students' thinking and cognitive skills, helps them control their emotions, and fosters a happy learning atmosphere. The emotional state and emotional management of learners are important factors that influence their cognitive processes and learning outcomes, thus they need to be considered and nurtured in emotional intelligence management.

Hierarchy of Needs. The purpose of this study is to help understand emotional intelligence management in learning English as a foreign language, and its relationship with the hierarchy of needs of learners. As stated by Simons et al. (1987)[23], Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory suggests that human needs can be divided into physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs, which are gradually fulfilled in a hierarchical order. The management of emotional intelligence is crucial for meeting the different levels of needs of learners. Emotional intelligence management has a significant impact on learners with different levels of needs. For instance, it can enhance learners' self-identity, increase their sense of belonging, and facilitate their growth and development. Applied universities can provide training and support for emotional intelligence management in curriculum, teaching methods, and student support services to meet the diverse needs of learners. This can provide recommendations for educational institutions to improve teaching and support services.

1.3 Significance of Study

This study is beneficial for English language learners. It is helpful to cultivate and establish positive emotions for applied university students, control the influence of negative emotions on their foreign language learning, and establish a pleasant preview process.

Additionally, it will help foreign language teachers in application-oriented universities to improve their teaching methods, detect and manage students' bad emotions in time, and help to complete the

course smoothly and improve the teaching effect. It also contributes to the formation of a relaxed and pleasant English learning atmosphere in the process of foreign language learning in application-oriented universities.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study aims to explore the emotional intelligence level of English learners in applied undergraduate universities in Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology. Specifically this study aims to address the following objectives :

1) To determine the level of emotional intelligence of English language learners from four aspects: perceiving emotions, reasoning with emotions, understanding emotions and managing emotions.

2) To propose strategies for improving emotional intelligence among English language learners to enhance their learning outcomes and overall development.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study Design

This study used a mixed research approach, especially the Sequential Explanatory Design, with the goal of using quantitative data to develop a general grasp of the phenomenon and qualitative analysis to obtain more in-depth understandings and interpretations.

The research process includes the following steps:

Phase of Quantitative Research: To gauge the emotional intelligence of English language learners and gather pertinent information, a questionnaire was employed.

Phase of Qualitative Research: Expert interviews were planned and carried out with an emphasis on methods for controlling students' emotional intelligence. The interviews were taped, typewritten, and subjected to thematic analysis.

Strategy Proposal: Based on the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative research phases, strategies were proposed for enhancing the emotional intelligence of English learners at Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology. This provided valuable references and guidance for improving the emotional intelligence of English learners.

2.2 Population of the Study

Purposive sampling strategy was utilized to select both teachers and students due to their critical roles in the educational process. This method ensures the inclusion of individuals with relevant experiences and insights necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the research issue.

The focus was on English and Business English major students from the School of Foreign Languages at Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology. The study specifically targeted second and third-year students, as their experience is more representative of ongoing learning processes compared to freshmen, who had limited experience, and senior undergraduates, who were often engaged in internships or transitioning into the workforce and were therefore less available for participation.

Eight English teaching specialists from the same institution were interviewed for the study's instructor population. With more than 15 years of combined teaching experience, these professionals contributed a wealth of information and real-world perspectives on teaching English and developing students' emotional intelligence. Students outside of the designated year groups or majors, as well as teachers with fewer than 15 years of experience or those teaching other courses, were not allowed to participate in the study. In order to improve the emotional intelligence of English language learners, the objective was to collect pertinent input and insights from both groups.

2.3 Data Gathering Tools

To investigate the emotional intelligence levels of English learners the researcher distributed questionnaires through platform WeChat groups. The questionnaire survey was a self-made questionnaire

by the researcher based on the descriptions of the four aspects of emotional intelligence : perceiving emotion, reasoning emotion, understanding emotion, and managing emotion as proposed by Mayer and Salovey(2002)[21]. After reliability testing, it was administered for a duration of 15 days. The questionaries are mainly about the four aspects of the emotional intelligence management of English language learners.

In order to obtain expert teachers' advice and methods on enhancing emotional intelligence strategies, the researcher primarily used interview as the data collection method. Interviews were conducted with 8 English teaching experts to explore their experiences, challenges, and strategies related to student emotional intelligence. The design of the interview questions aims to encourage in-depth communication from the respondents.

The questionnaire underwent a reliability test with the result above 0.7. which indicates that the questionnaire is reliable.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedures

Initially, the researcher obtained permission for the questionnaire survey from the dean of the School of Foreign Languages at Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology. After receiving approval, the researcher communicated with each English teacher to seek their assistance. Upon obtaining their consent, the researcher distributed the questionnaire through WeChat groups. To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, a sample of students from the School of Foreign Languages was selected for testing. The researcher conducted a reliability test to evaluate the appropriateness of the questionnaire's length, content, and question settings, and made modifications as necessary.

The internal consistency of the survey was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for reliability analysis, guaranteeing the validity of every component of the questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha should normally be higher than 0.7. The questionnaire was given to additional individuals after passing the reliability test. An impartial and nondiscriminatory procedure was guaranteed by the participant selection. To maintain transparency, the researcher let participants know ahead of time why the questionnaire was being used. Participants were given the assurance that the information would be kept completely confidential and utilized only for this study in order to get accurate results. There was enough time to acquire the data because the entire process took around a month to complete.

Prior to interviewing experts, the researcher made the goal of the study clear and created a thorough and focused interview guide. In order to assist specialists in offering guidance and opinions, this guide provides thorough explanations of the primary subjects and queries. The researcher then invited pertinent subject-matter experts to participate in the interviews by contacting them via WeChat, phone conversations, or in-person meetings. The researcher made sure that experts understood the confidentiality involved in the interview procedure and discussed the study's goal during the invitation process.

To properly record the opinions and suggestions of the experts, the researcher set up recording equipment or notebooks for the interviews. Experts were encouraged to thoroughly convey their viewpoints by maintaining effective communication and listening skills. Following the interviews, the researcher compiled the notes into written form or transcribed the recordings for further examination. This required compiling notes into a comprehensible text format or transcribing interview tapes verbatim.

In order to discover and extract important recommendations and viewpoints, as well as to find similarities and contrasts between them, the researcher meticulously studied and examined the text of the expert interviews throughout the qualitative analysis stage. The researcher created a thorough grasp of the research topic and suggested relevant best practices and tactics by combining and synthesizing the opinions and recommendations of many experts. Ultimately, the researcher combined the findings of the analysis and incorporated suggestions into a report that was presented and discussed with stakeholders and readers.

2.5 Treatment of Data

For the first objective, For the first research objective, weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the emotional intelligence level of the participants. The scale used to assess their level of agreement is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Likert Scale for the level of emotional intelligence of participants

Value	Range	Description	Interpretation
4	3.26 - 4.00	Strongly agree	High level of emotional intelligence
3	2.51 - 3.25	Agree	Moderate level of emotional intelligence
2	1.76- 2.50	Disagree	Low level of emotional intelligence
1	1.00- 1.75	Strongly disagree	Poor level of emotional intelligence

For the second objective, the analysis of expert interview data was conducted thematically. Before the interviews, the researcher clearly defined the research objectives and developed a detailed interview guide that covered the main topics and questions. Experts in relevant fields were then contacted through WeChat, phone calls, or in-person meetings to participate in the interviews.

During the interviews, the researcher recorded the experts' viewpoints using audio recording devices or notebooks, ensuring effective communication and active listening to encourage comprehensive responses. After the interviews, recordings were transcribed, or notes were organized for detailed content analysis.

In the analysis phase, the researcher meticulously reviewed the interview content, identifying and extracting key recommendations and viewpoints. The researcher then determined the common themes and differences among the experts' responses, summarized the integrated results, and developed research conclusions based on these findings. Practical suggestions and strategies for managing emotional intelligence among English learners were proposed.

The analysis of both quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data aims to provide a deep understanding of emotional intelligence levels among English learners and offer expert recommendations for enhancing emotional intelligence strategies. The final research conclusions and practical advice were summarized in the concluding section, and directions for future research were outlined.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The questionnaire survey involved 111 English and Business English students from Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology. Their participation played a crucial role in obtaining data and ensuring the quality of the study. Participants had the right to refuse or voluntarily withdraw their participation from the questionnaire during the study. They were not in any way required to spend for the research. The researcher clearly informs the participants about the purpose, nature, potential hazards, and risks of the questionnaire survey. The personal information, privacy, and content of the questionnaire responses need to be strictly confidential. The anonymity of the participants was maintained.

During the administration of the questionnaire, if participants encounter potential risks or hazards, the researcher took timely and effective measures to reduce the risks, ensuring data reliability. To ensure the confidentiality of the participants, the research utilized a coding system to process the data in a non-sequential manner. Additionally, the researcher informed the participants that the research results would be used solely for this study. The participants were informed of the results through WeChat and meetings.

3. Results

3.1 Level of emotional intelligence of English language learners

This section presents the data gathered through the questionnaire. Table 2 below shows the level of emotional intelligence of the respondents in the four different categories.

Table 2 Emotional Intelligence Level of Students

Indicators	Mean	Range	Mean Description	Interpretation
Perceiving Emotions	3.086	2.51 - 3.25	Agree	Moderate level of emotional intelligence
Reasoning with Emotions	3.054	2.51 - 3.25	Agree	Moderate level of emotional intelligence
Understanding Emotions	3.036	2.51 - 3.25	Agree	Moderate level of emotional intelligence
Managing Emotions	2.946	2.51 - 3.25	Agree	Moderate level of emotional intelligence

Level of perceiving emotions. The average score for perceiving emotions among English and Business English majors at Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology is 3.086, indicating a moderate level. Students perform well in recognizing others' emotions and understanding emotional states (3.16–3.23). However, their lower score for acknowledging personal emotions (2.65) suggests a tendency to ignore or suppress their feelings rather than actively recognizing them.

Students' social interactions are supported by their acute sensitivity to outside emotions. Long-term emotional management, however, may be hampered by worse self-perception and expression. Emotional awareness promotes improved self-regulation, social navigation, and general well-being, claim Lane & Smith (2021) [24]. Improving students' emotional intelligence, stress management, and interpersonal relationships all depend on their capacity to identify and communicate their own feelings.

Level of reasoning with emotions. The average score for reasoning with emotions among English and Business English majors at Humanity and Information College , Changchun University of Technology is 3.054, indicating a moderate level. Students acknowledge the influence of emotions on relationships (3.34) and thinking (3.13), as well as their significance in social interactions and cognition. They have weaknesses in emotional reasoning and management, though, as evidenced by their difficulties with understanding others' feelings (2.99), maintaining composure in confrontations (2.85), and handling academic stress (2.96). Students frequently feel anxious and impatient under pressure, even when they are aware of emotional factors. While Garrott (1968) characterizes reasoning as a systematic, goal-oriented process, Nambikkai & Veliappan (2016) emphasize the role that reasoning plays in influencing cognition and behavior. Targeted training in emotional intelligence and stress management is crucial for improving emotional reasoning since it promotes resilience and efficient problem-solving. degree of emotional comprehension. English and Business English majors from Humanity and Information College , Changchun University of Technology's have a moderate awareness of emotions, with an average score of 3.036. Pupils do well in empathy (3.16) and sensitive to others' feelings (3.14), and they acknowledge the significance of comprehending emotions (3.26). On the other hand, lower self-confidence (2.82) and adaptability to change (2.8) scores indicate that they may have trouble identifying and controlling their own emotions.

While students effectively interpret others' emotions, struggles with self-awareness may lead to avoidance or anxiety under stress. According to Liu (2023)[25], students who effectively recognize and regulate emotions achieve better English learning outcomes. Overall, students excel in understanding others' emotions but need improvement in self-awareness and adaptability.

Level of managing emotions. Survey data show that Business English and English majors at the Humanity and Information College, Changchun University of Technology have a moderate level of emotional management ability (2.946), the lowest among four emotional intelligence indicators. This suggests room for improvement in emotion regulation, stress management, and emotional adjustment.

For emotional regulation (2.93), 79.28% believe they can manage emotions in difficult situations, while 20.72% struggle. Regarding regulation strategies (2.94), 75.67% use relaxation techniques, but 24.32% lack effective methods. Social support seeking (2.74) received the lowest score, with 64.87% rarely discussing emotions or seeking help, indicating emotional introversion.

Students' confidence in emotional management (2.78) is still moderate, with just 66.66% feeling confident and 33.33% not, despite the fact that they understand the value of emotional management (3.34),with 96.4% identifying its function in learning. Usán Supervía, P., and Quílez Robres, A. conducted the study. (2021) [26] showed that children who have strong levels of self-efficacy and emotional control typically perform better academically. As a result, pupils' confidence, social support, and emotional management techniques need to be strengthened.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory emphasizes how crucial security and belonging are to emotional regulation. Students' inability to manage stress may be exacerbated by a lack of social support. As a result, consistent instruction and assistance can improve emotional control, promoting both academic achievement and personal development.

3.2 Strategies for improving emotional intelligence among English language learners

The information obtained from the interviews is shown in this section. Eight English teaching specialists from the same institution are interviewed for the study. With more than 15 years of combined teaching experience, these professionals offer a wealth of information and real-world perspectives on

teaching English and developing students' emotional intelligence.

Several important topics that provided guidance on how to improve emotional intelligence (EI) in English language learning surfaced from the information obtained from interviews with eight seasoned English teaching specialists. These themes give teachers a road map for developing a more emotionally intelligent classroom environment in addition to a thorough understanding of the tactics involved.To clearly illustrate the specific approaches for enhancing emotional intelligence and the corresponding practices adopted by teachers, Table 3 summarizes the involvement and recommendations of the interviewed educators across four key themes.

Table 3 Effective Ways to Improve Emotional Intelligence

Themes	Participants
Actively practice self-reflection	Teacher 1.3
Develop strong communication skills	Teacher 2.8
Cultivate emotional resilience	Teacher 6.7
Foster meaningful relationships	Teacher 1.4.5

Actively practice self-reflection. From the interview, the researcher identifies four key strategies for improving emotional intelligence: self-reflection, communication skills development, emotional resilience cultivation, and relationship building. Each strategy is emphasized by different teachers, highlighting their importance in education.

Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 propose the first strategy, which is "actively practicing self-reflection." According to Teacher 1, "regularly reflecting on emotional reactions in various situations helps identify patterns and develop better coping strategies, ultimately enhancing emotional intelligence." Teacher 3 adds that "by analyzing one's emotional responses and recognizing areas for improvement, students can actively cultivate greater self-awareness and emotional control." Piaget (1970) [27] suggested that people assimilate new information into existing cognitive schemas and modify them when new information does not fit. Similarly, self-reflection enables people to improve their emotional control by honing their comprehension of emotional patterns. In support of this idea, Hammad & Aberash (2024) [28], found that self-reflection enables learners to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, set learning goals, and track their progress, thereby enhancing their learning outcomes. Research further suggests that self-assessment and reflective thinking play a crucial role in English learning, promoting mindfulness, resilience, and overall academic well-being.

Develop your ability to communicate effectively. Teacher 2 and Teacher 8's emphasis on the development of effective communication skills is consistent with Piaget's theory of cognitive development. According to Teacher 2, "Enhancing emotional intelligence requires active listening, clear self-expression, and empathetic responses to build effective communication skills." In a similar vein, Teacher 8 states, "By practicing attentive listening, articulating thoughts clearly, and responding with empathy, individuals can strengthen their communication skills and emotional intelligence."

As a social interaction, communication helps people grow cognitively by enabling them to share viewpoints, question preconceived notions, and deepen their understanding. For instance, a teacher's perspective may change and intellectual growth may result when they hear a student's distinct point of view during a discussion.

According to Uztosun (2024) [29], cultivating metacognitive awareness is a key component of enhancing oral communication abilities in English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Reflective exercises assist students in evaluating their speaking skills, pinpointing areas for development, and modifying their language use for various academic contexts. Strong communication skills are crucial for language learning, and this reflective exercise improves competency and overall communication effectiveness.

Cultivate emotional resilience. Academic performance depends heavily on emotional resilience, which is the capacity to remain upbeat and flexible in the face of adversity and stress (Chen, 2022)[30]. Positive emotions have been shown to increase psychological resilience, expand attention and thought patterns, and ultimately improve learning outcomes and well-being.

Teachers 6 and 7 stress the value of developing emotional resilience, especially when it comes to properly handling stress. According to Teacher 6, "Building emotional resilience involves managing stress, maintaining a positive outlook, and embracing challenges with a growth mindset." In a similar vein, Teacher 7 points out that "To enhance emotional intelligence, individuals should develop resilience by staying positive, handling stress constructively, and viewing challenges as opportunities for growth."

Their opinions are in line with Maslow's Hierarchy of demands, which places a higher priority on safety and physiological demands. Effective stress management and challenge adaptation help students develop a sense of psychological security, which improves their ability to learn.

Foster meaningful relationships. Teachers 1, 4, and 5. Stress the value of developing deep connections by having courteous, candid conversations and being open to helpful criticism. In a similar vein, Teacher 4 explained that "Engaging in respectful discussions and remaining open to criticism enhances both emotional intelligence and interpersonal connections." Teacher 5 emphasised that "Meaningful conversations, grounded in openness and respect, help strengthen emotional intelligence and personal growth." Teacher 1 said that "Cultivating emotional intelligence requires open dialogue, mutual respect, and a willingness to embrace feedback."

Their opinions support Maslow's hierarchy of demands for belongingness, which emphasizes people's need for social interaction. Building solid bonds between students, instructors, and classmates in an educational setting produces a nurturing atmosphere where people feel included, which is crucial for both intellectual and emotional development.

This viewpoint is supported by research by Pyle et al. (2017)[31], which shows that peer interactions give English language learners real-world chances to practice their language abilities, get feedback, and improve their communicative competence. These exchanges increase motivation and confidence in addition to language proficiency. By providing regular opportunities to participate in scholarly debates, especially in complicated language situations, peer-mediated interventions in particular have been demonstrated to accelerate the development of the English language. Because it improves language learning, social confidence, and overall academic performance, building meaningful relationships is crucial for English language learners.

The four main strategies for raising emotional intelligence, in conclusion, go into further detail about their relationships to schooling and the theoretical underpinnings of these strategies. Reflection about oneself and the improvement of communication abilities are consistent with Piaget's Cognitive Constructivism, which highlights how people build knowledge by interactions and experiences. While self-reflection aids in modifying one's comprehension of emotional patterns, communication fosters cognitive growth and the extension of cognitive schemas. Table 4 below, drawing on the aforementioned theories, outlines specific teaching methods and activities that educators apply in English learning to embody the four emotional intelligence strategies.

Table 4 Teaching Methods or Activities Related to Improving Emotional Intelligence in an English Learning Environment

Themes	Participants
Encourage reflective writing	Teacher 2.3.5
Incorporate role-playing activities	Teacher 1.4.7
Facilitate collaborative projects and peer feedback sessions	Teacher 1.3.5
Analyze literature, films, or case studies	Teacher 3.6
Use mindfulness and stress management techniques	Teacher 2.8

Encourage reflective writing. Teachers 2, 3, and 5 stress that reflective writing connects language acquisition and emotional intelligence. According to Teacher 2, self-reflection promotes both emotional development and language proficiency. "Keeping an English journal where students express their emotions and experiences helps enhance self-awareness while strengthening their language skills."

"Encouraging students to write reflectively in English allows them to explore their thoughts and emotions, fostering both emotional intelligence and linguistic growth." Teacher 3 reaffirms the cognitive advantages by saying that students who articulate their emotions gain metacognitive awareness, which enhances their ability to regulate their emotions and express complex ideas. "Journaling in English provides students with a space to process their feelings and experiences, promoting deeper self-reflection and language development." Research backs up Teacher 5's assertion that journaling is a safe place for emotional processing. An affective interface was developed by Rajcic and McCormack (2020)[32] to improve awareness and regulation by fostering emotional self-reflection. Self-reflection journals dramatically increased adaptability and interpersonal skills, two essential elements of emotional intelligence, according to studies conducted on first-year master's students.

Reflective writing is a potent tool for both academic and personal development since it helps students become more self-aware, develop their metacognitive abilities, and improve their language ability.

Incorporate role-playing activities. Role-playing is emphasized by teachers 1, 4, and 7 as a crucial tactic for fostering emotional intelligence in English language learners. According to Teacher 1, "Engaging students in role-playing activities allows them to experience real-life emotional situations, helping them build empathy, improve communication, and develop conflict resolution skills in English." Teacher 4 concurs, "By participating in role-play scenarios, students can practice handling emotions, expressing themselves effectively, and resolving conflicts while enhancing their English proficiency." In a similar vein, Teacher 7 concurs that "Role-playing real-world situations enables students to strengthen their emotional intelligence by fostering empathy, honing communication skills, and learning to navigate conflicts in English."

By mimicking actual situations, role-playing develops social skills and empathy, which is consistent with Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory. Its advantages are further supported by research: Huynh et al. (2020) [33] showed that role-playing broadens students' viewpoints, while Frydman & Mayor (2024)[34] discovered that drama-based therapies improve emotional intelligence in early childhood. Role-playing is a useful strategy for holistic development since it fosters self-awareness, social competence, and linguistic competency in English language learners.

Facilitate collaborative projects and peer feedback sessions. Teachers 1, 3, and 5 emphasize the importance of group projects and peer evaluation in developing emotional intelligence in English language learners. According to Teacher 1, "Engaging students in collaborative projects and peer feedback sessions fosters teamwork, enhances active listening, and helps them develop the ability to give and receive constructive criticism with emotional sensitivity." Teacher 3 continues, "By working together on projects and participating in peer feedback, students practice empathy, refine their communication skills, and learn to handle constructive criticism in a supportive environment." In a similar vein, Teacher 5 emphasizes, "Collaborative tasks and structured peer feedback encourage students to engage in respectful dialogue, strengthen their emotional awareness, and develop interpersonal skills essential for both language and personal growth."

In line with Goleman's (1995)[2] theory of emotional intelligence, these exercises foster empathy, self-control, and social skills. Students learn how to successfully communicate, control their emotions, and respond positively to criticism by navigating a variety of viewpoints. Structured peer contact improves language skills and emotional fortitude, resulting in a more encouraging and stimulating learning environment.

Analyze literature, films, or case studies. Analyzing literature, films, or case studies is an effective method for enhancing students' emotional intelligence (EI) within an English learning environment. This strategy is in line with Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory, which places a strong emphasis on social skills, empathy, and self-awareness—all of which are important traits that may be developed by immersing oneself in intricate stories and emotional exchanges.

In support of this, Teacher 3 states that "Engaging students in the analysis of literature, films, or case studies helps them explore complex emotions, understand character motivations, and enhance both their critical thinking and language proficiency." Teacher 6 adds that "By discussing emotional themes and character relationships in stories and films, students develop empathy, improve their analytical skills, and strengthen their ability to express nuanced ideas in English." Additionally, Celume et al. (2020) [35] supported the development of children's socio-emotional competencies through drama pedagogy training.

By including the study of literature, movies, and case studies into the curriculum, teachers provide pupils the chance to improve their language skills and emotional control, which promotes both academic and personal development.

Use Mindfulness and Stress Management Techniques. In order to promote emotional intelligence (EI) in English language learners, mindfulness and stress-reduction strategies are essential. In line with psychological and educational ideas, Teachers 2 and 8 stress the value of self-control, emotional intelligence, and communication abilities.

According to Goleman (1995)[2], self-regulation is a fundamental aspect of emotional intelligence that can be developed via mindfulness exercises. Higher levels of emotional intelligence (EI) and mindfulness have been found to reduce academic stress and increase motivation among doctoral students (Zhang et al., 2024) [36]. Teacher 2 says, "Incorporating mindfulness practices like breathing exercises and guided reflections in English helps students regulate their emotions while improving their listening and speaking skills." Teacher 8 adds, "Using stress management techniques such as gratitude-sharing and mindful discussions allows students to develop emotional awareness, fostering both self-regulation and effective communication in English."

Learning English while practicing mindfulness and stress management improves emotional control, lowers anxiety, and fosters a supportive learning environment. Effective stress management enables students to communicate confidently, participate more completely, and develop emotional resilience.

Based on their personal experiences, a number of educators provide helpful recommendations to better foster a happy, motivating, and supportive English learning environment. These viewpoints offer educational and interpersonal foundations for improving emotional intelligence, while also reinforce the current emphasis on stress reduction and mindfulness. The recommendations and methods for establishing such a learning environment from the interviewed teachers appear in Table 5 below.

Table 5 Participants' Advice to building positive, encouraging and supportive learning environment

Themes	Participants
Foster a culture of respect and inclusivity	Teacher 1.2.4
Provide constructive and personalized feedback	Teacher 5.8
Use interactive and student-centered teaching methods	Teacher 3.7
Create a safe and supportive atmosphere	Teacher 2 .6

Encourage an inclusive and respectful culture. Fostering student participation, confidence, and a sense of belonging requires establishing a polite and welcoming learning atmosphere. According to theories of inclusive education and social-emotional learning (SEL), children are more likely to participate fully in class and achieve academic success when they feel valued and included.

Teacher 1 stresses the value of psychological safety, which allows pupils to voice their opinions without worrying about being judged. While Teacher 4 emphasizes that "Teachers should actively listen to students, recognize their contributions, and provide equal opportunities for participation," Teacher 2 says that "Teachers should use a variety of texts, discussions, and activities that reflect different cultures, experiences, and viewpoints to promote inclusivity." Research backs up this approach—Pulos et al. (2024)[37]found that respect and inclusivity enhance academic achievement and reduce behavioral issues.

Teachers may establish a supportive environment where students feel appreciated, inspired, and encouraged to succeed by applying evidence-based classroom practices and cultivating an inclusive and respectful culture.

Provide constructive and personalized feedback. Giving students individualized, constructive criticism improves their motivation and creates a positive learning atmosphere. "Students can identify their strengths, work on their weaknesses, and maintain motivation with the support of constructive, personalized feedback," says Teacher 5; similarly, Teacher 8 highlights that "tailored feedback makes students feel valued, understood, and encouraged to grow."

Individualized feedback improves self-efficacy, fosters active participation, and fortifies student-teacher relationships—all of which are consistent with formative assessment theories (Sadler, 1989)[38]. Additionally, research by Chanwaiwit (2018)[39] shows that feedback increases the efficacy of instruction and cultivates a positive attitude about learning English. Including constructive, tailored feedback improves student involvement and the quality of instruction.

Use interactive and student-centered teaching methods. An interesting and encouraging environment for learning English is created via interactive and student-centered teaching strategies. In a similar vein, Teacher 7 highlights that "Student-centered strategies like project-based learning and personalized guidance boost confidence, meet diverse needs, and make classrooms more inclusive." Teacher 3 says that "using interactive methods like group discussions enhances participation, improves language skills, and creates a positive learning atmosphere."

Research supports these approaches. According to Tasheva (2024) [40], group discussions and cooperative activities actively involve students and help them develop motivation and self-confidence by giving them the chance to practice language abilities in authentic settings. Interactive teaching techniques produce a dynamic and successful learning environment by promoting communication and self-expression.

Create a safe and supportive atmosphere. Establishing a secure and encouraging environment is essential for boosting students' self-esteem and motivation to study a language. Similarly, Teacher 6 emphasizes the importance of trust, saying, "Building trust through patient guidance and personalized support helps students overcome anxiety, boost confidence, and engage more fully in learning." This is in line with research that suggests teachers should change from being "controllers" to "community builders" in order to foster mutual support (McGee & Menolascino, 2013).[41] Teacher 2 says, "A respectful and inclusive classroom, built through active listening and encouragement, allows students to

feel safe expressing their ideas."

By fostering respect, trust, and encouragement, educators create a classroom where students feel safe to take risks, build confidence, and actively participate in their language learning journey.

4. Conclusion

The four main components of emotional intelligence—perceiving, reasoning with, comprehending, and managing emotions—were examined in this study of English language learners in applied college institutions. The findings show that pupils had the lowest scores in emotion control and, on average, moderate emotional intelligence. Although they are able to identify and understand emotions, students frequently find it difficult to successfully control them, especially when learning a language. In light of these results, the study highlights how important it is for educators to create a supportive learning environment in order to promote emotional intelligence. In order to lower anxiety, increase motivation, and improve learning outcomes, strategies like student-centered teaching, active listening, and tailored assistance were found to be crucial.

For applied undergraduate students, emotional intelligence is essential to enhancing their English language learning experience. Incorporating emotional intelligence training, implementing interactive teaching techniques, improving teacher preparation, creating institutional support, cultivating positive classroom environments, and routinely evaluating emotional intelligence development are some of the specific tactics this study suggests. By putting these tactics into practice, educators may foster a more emotionally supportive learning environment that boosts students' self-esteem, independence, and academic achievement. In the end, meeting students' emotional needs will result in improved language learning outcomes and a more optimistic outlook on learning English.

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