

Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine
Sumy State University (Ukraine)
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Proceedings

STRATEGIC INNOVATIONS OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS AND FOREIGN PHILOLOGY IN CRISIS TIMES

I International Scientific and Practical Conference

1 June 2024

Sumy State University, Ukraine



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The collection includes scientific materials devoted to current problems in the field of distance teaching and learning in the era of digital technologies, in particular in language pedagogy, media innovations, modern translation, ethnolinguistics, stylistics, methods and methodologies of modern linguistic and literary disciplines. The composition of the collection is scientific research on the preservation of national identity and cultural heritage, intercultural communications, psychological theory and practice, sociological research.

For teachers of higher education institutions, graduate students, students, teachers of secondary schools, gymnasiums, lyceums and colleges, all those interested in socio-humanitarian issues.

The materials are printed in the author's editorial

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**DESIGNING SEL ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING ANALYTICAL READING:
FOCUS ON SELF-AWARENESS**

Incorporating Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) into educational frameworks has gained significant attention in Ukraine for its role in holistic development of pre-service English language (EL) teachers and fostering their resilience. All Ukrainian educators need to change and adapt themselves to the present wartime conditions. The abstract explores the integration of SEL activities specifically designed to enhance analytical reading skills, with a particular emphasis on fostering self-awareness. By combining these two educational priorities, we aim to create a synergistic approach that not only improves reading comprehension and critical thinking but also nurtures students' ability to understand and regulate their emotions.

Fostering resilience and developing self-awareness are closely interconnected, as both are essential components of emotional intelligence and personal growth. O'Loughlin (2020) emphasizes that EL teachers should focus on creating a safe environment in schools and in classrooms that will help each child recognize, nurture, and expand their own internal resilience that has enabled them to weather their past situations and that will allow them to continue the healing process. Self-awareness

presupposes «the ability to recognize one's own feelings, interests, and strengths, in addition to maintaining an accurate level of self-efficacy» (Yoder, 2014). The skills related to self-awareness competence include a) labeling and recognizing one's and others' emotions, b) identifying what triggers these emotions, c) analyzing emotions and how they affect others, d) accurately recognizing one's strengths and limitations, e) identifying one's needs and values, and f) possessing self-efficacy and self-esteem (Yoder, 2014).

Understanding and managing one's emotions effectively is crucial for the person's resilience as students can better navigate challenges and recover from setbacks. Identifying their strengths and weaknesses, they can leverage their strengths and work on their weaknesses. Effective self-regulation is a key aspect of resilience, as it allows to stay calm and composed under pressure, maintain a positive outlook, and persist in the face of challenges. Setting and achieving realistic goals builds confidence and resilience, providing a sense of accomplishment and motivation to tackle bigger challenges, etc.

Developing self-awareness skills in an English Analytical Reading class can be achieved through a variety of engaging and reflective activities. To help students identify and label emotions in themselves, it is suggested to use the activity «*Name out the Emotion*» both before and after reading. Have each student call out their emotion at the beginning of the class which helps them become aware of their own and others' emotions and interact more effectively with their peers. After reading, repeat the activity to see if and how the students' emotions have changed, and discuss what in the reading might have influenced these changes.

To enhance the efficacy of SEL activities and improve language competence it is recommended to provide the vocabulary for feelings (e.g., *elated, blue/down, rejected/disappointed, angry/enraged*). Also, ask students to generate additional words that extend their emotional vocabulary identifying feelings they might have in different situations (e.g., *How would you feel if you were in character's place? How would you feel if your friends left you out when they were planning an activity? How would you feel if someone said something nasty about you?*).

Major themes of short stories can be used for designing both pre-reading and post-reading tasks for developing self-awareness skills. For instance, before learners read D. Hammett's story «*The Gatewood Caper*» they answer the following questions which encourage them to understand their own emotions, communicate effectively within the family, reflect on their own behavior and consider how their actions may impact family relationships: *Is it good or bad to be egoistic in your family circle? Can it help to improve family relations? Is there anything people in your family could do to make you feel happy, to make your life easier?.*

«*All Summer in a Day*» by R. Bradbury, a short fantasy story, can be viewed as a powerful tool for developing self-awareness competence in students. Here are several post-reading activities designed to enhance their self-awareness:

1) *Emotion Mapping activity* is aimed at facilitating students a) *to identify and label their own and others' emotions*. Students are instructed to create an emotion map for the characters. They can note significant events and the emotions experienced by each character, discussing how these emotions influence their actions and pointing out factors that b) *trigger these emotions*. For analyzing c) *how the emotions of characters affect others* the students work in groups to fill a chart with columns (for characters' names, emotions felt, triggers, and impact on others). After completing the charts, each group presents their findings to the class and facilitates a discussion on the emotional dynamics in the story;

2) *Creating a list* of the character's strengths and challenges based on their actions, behaviors, and interactions with others in the story supported with evidence from the text, helps students d) *accurately recognize one's strengths and limitations*;

3) *Values Clarification Activity* promotes e) *identifying and articulating one's own needs and values* based on the themes of the story. Students create a word cloud with values (e.g., honesty, empathy, responsibility) and rank them due to their importance. Then, they reflect on their choice in a group discussion: *What aspects of your life do you prioritize the most? When faced with difficult decisions, what factors do you consider most important? What are some goals or aspirations that resonate*

deeply with you? What do you need to feel a sense of belonging or connection? What values do you admire or look for in others?

4) *Character Empowerment Collage* is aimed at *f) fostering a sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem* inspired by the themes of “*All Summer in a Day*” with the use of an online collage-making platform. Students are guided to select and arrange images, symbols, and quotes that represent their personal experiences of resilience and self-efficacy;

5) recording observations in a chart with columns *Characters’ Experiences and Emotions and My Experiences and Emotions*. As students read the story they make connections between the character's world and their own which develops the skill of understanding their own emotions and those of other people;

6) *Empathy journal writing*, done from the chosen character's perspective, is a good tool for exploring the characters' emotions and considering their impact on others. Students are assigned to imagine themselves in the shoes of one of the characters from the story (e.g., Margot, one of the other children). After completing the journals, it is recommended to facilitate a class discussion where students share their insights and discuss the importance of empathy.

To sum up, by developing self-awareness, students gain a deeper understanding of themselves, which in turn builds their resilience. This interconnectedness allows them to face life’s challenges with greater strength, adaptability, and confidence. The recommended activities are designed to acquaint pre-service English Language teachers with critical reading and SEL strategies that they can apply in both their academic and professional lives.

References:

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