

Emotion identification by trainee teachers. A descriptive study based on picture books

La identificación de las emociones por parte del profesorado en formación. Un estudio descriptivo a partir de álbumes ilustrados

A identificação das emoções pelos professores em formação. Um estudo descritivo a partir de álbuns ilustrados

在培训中的教师识别情感：基于绘本的描述性研究

تحديد العواطف من قبل المعلمين قيد التأهيل. دراسة وصفية تعتمد على البومات مصورة

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Abstract

Identification of emotions in the educational environment is fundamental for the development of social competence. The present article presents work conducted with trainee teachers on emotions related with anger, sadness, fear, love and joy. The aim of this work was to examine whether teachers are able to recognise such emotions when exhibited through text and describe the way in which they experience such emotions when they are narrated. Through the use of different picture books illustrating the aforementioned emotions, interactions took place with trainee teachers in order to familiarise them with the texts. Study participants came from the Faculty of Education at the University of Murcia and were undertaking a Primary Education double honours degree. Participants were administered a simple instrument through which they stated whether emotions described in presented texts corroborated their perception of the same emotions and whether, in addition, texts provoked the same emotion in them. Unlike implicitly illustrated emotions, those that were explicitly illustrated in picture books were generally detected by participants. This, therefore, indicates that emotion identification concurs with social awareness of emotions. It appears likely that the critical approach when applied to communication, in this case literary, is not yet well developed. Thus, inclusion of initial teacher training that includes emotions as a component of the communicative competence into the development of teaching and learning processes in the education system presents a challenge.

Keywords: Literature, education, teachers, emotions, literacy.

Resumen

La identificación de las emociones en el ámbito educativo es fundamental para el desarrollo de la competencia social. En este artículo han sido trabajadas con profesorado en formación las emociones relativas a la rabia, la tristeza, el miedo, el amor o la alegría con el fin de comprobar si estos docentes reconocen tales emociones ante el estímulo que suponen los textos y cómo las experimentan ante su narración. A través de diferentes álbumes ilustrados que las contienen, se interactuó con el futuro profesorado con el fin de que conociesen los textos. Los participantes pertenecieron a la Facultad de Educación de la Universidad de Murcia, concretamente a cursos de Educación Primaria y a dobles titulaciones. Les fue aplicado un sencillo instrumento para describir y comprobar si, desde su punto de vista, los textos corroboraban la emoción y si, además, les ha hecho sentir la misma. Las emociones que se encontraban de forma explícita en los álbumes fueron detectadas, mientras que las implícitas, en general, no fueron apreciadas por el alumnado. Existe pues una concurrencia con la conciencia social relativa a las emociones, pero probablemente el enfoque crítico aplicado a la comunicación, en este caso literaria, no está tan desarrollado. La formación inicial de docentes en la que se inserten las emociones como componentes de la competencia comunicativa se convierte pues en un reto a incorporar en el desarrollo de los procesos de enseñanza y aprendizaje en el sistema educativo.

Palabras clave: Literatura, educación, profesorado, afectividad, alfabetización.

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Resumo

A identificação das emoções no contexto educativo é fundamental para o desenvolvimento da competência social. Neste artigo, trabalhamos com professores em formação sobre emoções relacionadas com a raiva, a tristeza, o medo, o amor ou a alegria, a fim de verificar se estes professores reconhecem estas emoções no estímulo dos textos e como as vivenciam na sua narração. Através de diferentes álbuns ilustrados que as contêm, interagimos com os futuros professores, a fim de os familiarizar com os textos. Os participantes pertenciam à Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de Múrcia, concretamente a cursos de Educação Primária e duplas titulações. Foi-lhes aplicado um instrumento simples para descrever e verificar se, do seu ponto de vista, os textos corroboravam a emoção e se os faziam sentir a mesma emoção. As emoções que se encontravam explicitamente nos álbuns foram detetadas, enquanto as emoções implícitas, de um modo geral, não foram apreciadas pelos alunos. Existe, assim, uma concordância com a consciência social relativamente às emoções, mas provavelmente a abordagem crítica aplicada à comunicação, neste caso, literária, não está tão desenvolvida. A formação inicial de professores que inclua as emoções como componente da competência comunicativa é, pois, um desafio a incorporar no desenvolvimento dos processos de ensino e aprendizagem no sistema educativo.

Palavras-chave: literatura, educação, professores, afetividade, alfabetização.

摘要

在教育领域识别情感对于社会能力的发展至关重要。在本文中，我们与在培训中的教师一起研究了愤怒、悲伤、恐惧、爱或喜悦等情感，以检查这些教师在面对文本的刺激时是否能够识别这些情感，并在叙述过程中如何体验这些情感。通过包含这些情感的不同绘本，我们与未来将成为教师的人员进行了互动，以便他们了解这些文本。参与者来自穆尔西亚大学教育学院，具体包括小学教育课程和双学位课程的学生。我们应用了一个简单的工具来描述和验证从他们的角度来看，文本是否证实了这些情感，以及这些文本是否使他们感受到了同样的情感。显式出现在绘本中的情感被检测到，而隐含的情感则总体上未被学生所察觉。因此，在情感方面存在与社会意识的一致性，但在这种情况下，应用于文学交流的批判性方法可能尚未得到充分发展。将情感作为交际能力的组成部分纳入教师的初始培训，成为在教育系统中发展教学和学习过程的一个挑战。

关键词: 文学、教育、教学、情感、读写能力。

ملخص

يعد تحديد العواطف في المجال التعليمي أمراً ضرورياً لتنمية الكفاءة الاجتماعية. في هذا المقال، تم العمل على المشاعر المتعلقة بالغضب أو الحزن أو الخوف أو الحب أو الفرح مع المعلمين قيد التأهيل من أجل التحقق مما إذا كان هؤلاء المعلمون يتعرفون على هذه المشاعر عندما يواجهون التحفيز الذي توفره النصوص وكيف يختبرونها قبل روايتها. ومن خلال الألبومات المصورة المختلفة التي تحتوي عليها، تفاعلنا مع معلمي المستقبل حتى يعرفوا النصوص. وكان المشاركون ينتمون إلى كلية التربية بجامعة مرسية، وتحديداً إلى دورات التعليم الابتدائي والدرجات المزدوجة. تم تطبيق أداة بسيطة عليهم لوصف والتحقق مما إذا كانت النصوص، من وجهة نظرهم، تدعم المشاعر وما إذا كانت، علاوة على ذلك، تجعلهم يشعرون بنفس الشيء. تم الكشف عن المشاعر التي وجدت صراحة في الألبومات، في حين أن المشاعر الضمنية بشكل عام لم تكن موضع تقدير من قبل الطلاب. لذلك هناك توافق مع الوعي الاجتماعي المتعلق بالعواطف، ولكن من المحتمل أن النهج النقدي المطبق على التواصل، وهو في هذه الحالة الأدبي، ليس متطوراً. إن التأهيل الأولي للمعلمين الذي يتم فيه إدراج العواطف كمكونات للكفاءة التواصلية يصبح تحدياً يجب دمجه في تطوير عمليات التدريس والتعلم في النظام التعليمي.

الكلمات الدالة: الأدب، التعليم، المدرسين، العاطفة، محو الأمية

Introduction

Teacher training is one of the most important aspects in the educational setting. A large amount of the responsibility for knowledge dissemination and, above all, personal development, falls on the shoulders of teachers. Personal development comprises all elements linked to content including that which concerns values and forms of behaviour. Without a doubt, the global crisis brought about by the pandemic highlighted the need to reflect on all of the dimensions involved in teaching and learning processes. For this reason, emergence of COVID-19 marked a turning point with regards to its impact on emotional aspects in teachers (Azañedo, 2021; Barrios & Peña, 2019). Focusing on such issues implies keeping in mind that, in the social sciences, interaction with individuals is important and that these individuals expose themselves, on a daily basis, to a series of emotions that condition their actions.

The present text seeks to examine emotion recognition in teachers undertaking initial teacher training in order to, above all, identify whether they are aware of important emotions. For this reason, the pretext of visual narrative presented via picture books is used. Participant responses to this medium will highlight potential needs regarding emotional education which will complement current curricular training provision provided through study plans. In the current social climate in which sustainable development goals (SDG) outline certain training actions (Gómez Gil, 2018), emotional education serves to promote achievement of many such goals and has a particular impact on social justice (Barrantes, 2016). Ultimately, emotional education teacher training, communication skills and the use of multimodal pretexts will have to be considered as the backbone of our work.

Emotional education in the post-pandemic context

Not even five years have passed since the pandemic allegedly ended and multiple questions have arisen about human behaviour, its formation and the construction of societies.

In the case of the latter, ongoing debate exists between dehumanisation and personalisation (which had already begun), which has probably grown since the global crisis. As proposed by Gabriel (2021), these dark times may have dissipated somewhat with the need for cooperation between individuals and consider the emotions of others. However, emergence of new technologies and artificial intelligence highlights the need for reflective processes regarding the activities being performed in the educational setting (Corral & De Juan, 2021).

The novelty of this landscape, mainly due to audio-visual technologies, is characterised by a pinch of greater ease as users start to demand from machines aspects of knowledge they wish to acquire or on which they wish to work. This contrasts sharply with human nature. As argued by Harari (2012), this has enabled human survival as a species, given that we have assumed the capacity to tell stories, definitively, the outstanding ability to narrate, invent storylines and make arguments. Within such narrative, yearnings, desires, thoughts and emotions of human beings are found in code (Egan, 1994). For this reason, narrative could provide an important educational instrument or resource. As already discussed, potential imbalances resulting from the global crisis linked to the pandemic have placed an emphasis on the challenges arising in all knowledge areas and, particularly, in those concerning language and literature (Vega et al., 2020). Given the transversal nature of linguistic and literary fields, they may provide a vehicle for shedding more light on emotions. Such an approach was achieved and is discussed in the present study.

Teacher training in the communication and social competence

The educational context advanced considerably over the last century and this progress has led to debate around teacher training. We appear to have positioned ourselves within a balanced model in which the acquisition of curricular knowledge from teachers is combined with the striving for

competencies that enable such knowledge to be operationalised. Amongst such competencies, both communication and social competencies (Valdez & Pérez Azahuanche, 2021) are deemed essential for teachers to be able to exercise successfully in the classroom or any other educational space.

Together with the communication dimension which, from the perspective of the present research team, is essential for didactic processes to flourish, another aspect must be considered in which the emotional competence is promoted to the foreground of communication processes. Findings reported by Goleman (1996) made clear the transcendental importance of the development of emotional intelligence. For this reason, authors such as Cejudo et al. (2015), Gallardo et al. (2023) and Urosa (2021) urge the need to reinforce the emotional aspect throughout teacher training.

A mechanical conception of education cannot be allowed in which basic knowledge is disseminated in isolation from bias related with the emotions experienced by teachers. Emerging awareness of these aspects following the events of the pandemic has already been discussed and, for this reason, it appears important to reinforce this element in teacher training. Naturally, the same could be extended to include other agents from within the educational community such as parents (Bocanegra, 2024). With regards to development of their competencies, teachers must be aware of the resources at their disposal. Often, the cultural role models closest to students can cause their emotions to flourish and, based on presented evidence, reflection and debate regarding ways in which to manage such emotions could be proposed (in the case of not being pertinent to the context in which emotions manifest or, also, in the case of being absent; it is also possible to reinforce emotions that are pertinent). In the contribution presented in the present paper, linguistic and literary education is used, through pertinent texts, to highlight all of these issues. As already outlined, the informative and emotional flow possessed by narrative and the

impact it has on people must be capitalised on in the educational setting.

Linguistic and literary education. Relationship with emotions

The search for instruments capable of gathering evidence on the progress of emotional education is an ongoing task (Bisquerra & López Cassà, 2021). In the view of the present research team, codes hidden in the linguistic and literary manifestations of the feelings, thoughts and beliefs of human beings are, generally, not capitalised on to the best of their potential. The very naming of emotions is dictated by the use of language, which determines the description and definition of emotions. Consequently, tracing the emotions of a person from linguistic and literary content presents a challenge, above all, due to issues related with the daily use of language. This aspect often prevents us from addressing sufficiently the significance of words or content beyond their literary purpose.

One of the pillars of language learning pertains to vocabulary. Vocabulary emerges as fairly stable in the sense of its social use, however, at the same time, variations and modifications to its meanings have an impact on the way in which individuals behave. For this reason, emotions are also reflected through the use of vocabulary and, as highlighted by authors such as Gomis et al. (2022) and Ros et al. (2023), a specific use of lexis exists through which the emotions of children, young people and adults are exhibited and recognised. Thus, attending to the semantics of linguistic and literary uses will support the recognition and classification of emotions. Not only do words act in order to potentially soothe human feelings, but, also, literature, through its therapeutic function, can help channel emotions and aid recognition via the exhibition of the actions and thoughts of fictitious characters (Ibáñez et al., 2023; Vara, 2016). In the case of the present study, as will be discussed in the following sections of this article, picture books are used to work on emotions with teachers undergoing initial teacher training.

Thematic picture books as a pretext

Research into emotions in Spain in reference to the child setting - a setting associated with trainee teachers - often alludes to the film *Inside Out* (Porto, 2016) or the picture book *The Colour Monster* (2012) published by Anna Llenas. These two examples may be the most socially recognised works but many more texts exist that speak to emotional development and may impact competency development in both teachers, who act as mediators, and the students who are being educated.

Beyond stereotypically being present in the child setting, a number of characteristics inherent to picture books help turn them into a formidable resource for learning or reflecting on concepts and issues that concern human beings. The fact that they are pieces of work in which images prevail over words enriches the interpretations that can be made of their content. At other times, the so-called counterpoint effect can occur, in which an image contradicts written text, opening up a whole other world to induce critical capacity in readers/receivers (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006; Consejo Pano, 2014). The desired outcome of this type of output is that reading goes hand in hand with sentiment. In this way, the process of literary education is characterised by striving for aesthetic and emotional sensitivity to complement the basic understanding acquired by the reader (Montijano, 2019).

As mentioned above, the reading of picture books requires dialogic mediation where debate and reflection arises on the issues considered by these artistic pieces of work. Various authors (Riquelme & Munita, 2011; Rodríguez Turriago et al., 2022; Vargas et al., 2020; Wolk & Labbo, 2004) have already laid out this path for working with picture books. The content of such picture books addresses a variety of sensitive topics making it highly ideal to introduce them to students or other individuals with whom teachers are working in an educational sphere, as they provide a space for reflection that may help to change behaviours or provoke emotions. Next, a study

conducted by the present research team will be discussed, in which teacher training was combined with the use of picture books and emotion recognition or expression through referent artistic pieces of work.

Objectives

The main aim of the activity described in the present study is related with the way in which trainee teachers identify emotions from picture books. Through the presentation of different pieces of work that implicitly or explicitly allude to emotions, the present study sought to examine whether trainee teachers are capable of detecting or experiencing depicted emotions. In addition, two secondary aims were proposed. The first examined differential outcomes as a function of participant qualifications, whilst the second considered the effect of gender. These three goals allowed the perspective to be taken for recognising and treating emotions in teachers undergoing teacher training.

A number of authors (García Domingo, 2021; García Vila et al., 2022; Llorent, 2020; Pérez Escoda et al., 2010; Ruiz Melero et al., 2023) have already highlighted the role of emotions in university students, concluding that there is a need to continue to work on the emotional competence in this populational group.

Method

Participants

A total of 84 trainee teachers participated in the present study. The majority of participants were female, corresponding to 79% of the final sample. This distribution is relatively typical within groups undertaking this type of qualification. Participants were undertaking one of three different degree courses. As can be observed in Table 1, students were all enrolled on the third academic year of a degree course at the participating university and were divided between those undertaking the Primary Education degree, Early Childhood Education and Primary Education double honours degree and, finally, Primary Education and Physical Activity and Sport Sciences double degree.

The distribution of degrees being studied, as shown in the table, was even and considered the presence of students in the classroom the day in which the activity was performed that

facilitated data collection, to be described in depth in a later section. Intentional sampling was used, given that participating classes had already been selected.

Table 1. Participant distribution according to group

Course	Sex distribution of students (number and percentage)
Third year Primary Education degree	37 (8 males [21%] and 29 females [79%])
Third year Early Childhood Education and Primary Education double honours degree	29 (1 male [3%] and 28 females [97%])
Third year Primary Education and Physical Activity and Sport Sciences double honours degree	18 (8 males [44%] and 10 females [56%])
Overall	84 (67 females [79%] and 17 males [21%])

Texts used and procedure

The present study was based on a hermeneutic paradigm and employed a qualitative and descriptive approach to observing participant behaviour (Capocasale, 2015). Thus, students were presented with and read the different picture books selected for the present study. Selected books were *Little Beauty* written by Anthony Browne and published for the first time in 2008. This recounts a beautiful story of friendship between a gorilla and a cat and, in so doing, incorporates some of the emotions sought to work on in the present study, which may arise in readers of the text or be identified in the text through actions of the leading characters. The second story to be worked on was *Fox*, created by Margaret Wild and illustrated by Ron Brooks, and published in 2000. This storybook combines ideas of friendship, seduction, loyalty and betrayal, all of which are transmitted through personification of a dog, a magpie and a fox. The third picture book used was *El regalo [The Present]*, written by Agnes Laroche and Stéphanie Augusseau, and published in 2015. Here, the story describes the joy of a small boy due to the imminent delivery of a present. The unexpected ending may provoke a very specific emotion amongst readers/receivers.

The fourth piece of work employed was *Dirty Bertie*, published in 2007 by the author David Roberts. The text describes the bad habits of the main character, a young boy, which impact the way in which readers receive the story and, potentially, the emotions they experience. The fifth picture book worked on is Michael Rosen's *Sad Book*, which was launched onto the market in 2004. The very title of the book points to a connection with one of the most basic emotions and made it an ideal piece for conducting the present research action. Finally, *The Island*, published by Armin Greder in 2007, recounts a tale in which a number of raw emotions are combined, including fear and fury.

As already discussed, the aim of the research action was to identify six emotions, namely, fear, happiness, anger, disgust, love, and sadness, through presentation of the various picture books briefly described above. The intervention was performed in participants' regular classrooms, with the different stories being read. Following this, a simple instrument was administered to gather information on perceived emotions. The instrument used in the present study was based on that previously conceived by Iglesias-Cortizas et al. (2018). It comprised two stages. The first stage requested participants to state the extent to which they experienced certain

emotions after being presented with and reading each picture book. In this sense, participants responded using a scale composed of the descriptors: ‘not at all’, ‘at some point’, ‘quite often’, and ‘very often’. In the second stage, participants, regardless of their previous responses, were requested to indicate the emotions they believed the narrated stories sought to portray. The combination of both stages (with clear predominance of the latter), determined overall outcomes for verifying the identification of emotions by study participants. It is important to highlight that participant students had no knowledge of the

texts employed prior to their participation in the study. This aspect is important to consider when interpreting study findings.

Results

Next, outcomes of the present study are presented. Given the descriptive nature of the study, the decision was made to, initially, present outcomes for the overall sample (Table 2) and, following this, break outcomes down as a function of gender and qualification being undertaken by participants.

Table 2. Frequencies relative to the emotions detected in the picture books employed

	<i>Little Beauty</i>		<i>Fox</i>		<i>El regalo [The Present]</i>		<i>Dirty Bertie</i>		<i>Sad Book</i>		<i>The Island</i>	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Fear	19	22.6	55	65.5	2	2.4	0	0	33	39.3	56	66.7
Happiness	65	77.4	15	17.9	70	83.3	21	25	8	9.5	2	2.4
Anger	25	29.8	52	61.9	0	0	3	3.6	5	6	62	73.8
Disgust	0	0	2	2.4	0	0	82	97.6	3	3.6	10	11.9
Love	78	92.9	28	33.3	76	90.5	5	6	20	23.8	2	2.4
Sadness	28	33.3	60	71.4	6	7.1	2	2.4	83	98.8	56	66.7

It can be observed that the distribution of emotions detected by trainee teachers tracks fairly closely the intention of picture books. For this reason, it serves to highlight that explicit illustrations portrayed by the books were interpreted by readers but implicit illustrations were less well recognised. In this way, in *Little Beauty*, the love (92.9%) professed between the main characters was the most reported emotion, although happiness (77.4%) was also a frequently detected emotion in responses. Moments of anger, fear and sadness were also reflected, although to a substantially lesser extent (around 30%). The happy ending of the story likely underlies the greater reporting of positive emotions relative to the less pleasant happenings in the story. In the second piece of work, *Fox*, sadness (71.4%) and fear (65.5%) emerged, alongside anger (61.9%). Indeed, the text presented does not inspire much optimism. Instead, acts of

betrayal, envy and mistrust have a profound effect on participants. In the same way as seen with the first text, the ending again emerged as being of resonance, however, in this case, the absence of happiness probably conditions responses. The third picture book clearly instilled feelings of happiness (83.3%) and love (90.5%). In this case, given that *El Regalo [The Present]* presents a simple text, in which no conflict takes place that could give rise to negativity, the outcomes presented above were somewhat foreseeable.

Dirty Bertie follows a similar path to that recounted in *El Regalo [The Present]* in the sense that, its clear thematic orientation drives clearly towards the identification of emotions resoundingly related with disgust (97.6%), followed by happiness (25%) as the second most indicated element by trainee teachers. With regards to *Sad Book*, sadness, reported by

98.8%, predictably stands out from responses, although fear (39.3%) and love (23.8%) were also identified. This latter emotion is important given that, from the author’s viewpoint, it is one of the emotions that likely gives most significance to the text. The final picture book employed, *The Island*, is potentially the piece of work that, together with *Little Beauty*, combines the greatest number of emotions, with relatively even identification from responses. In this sense, anger (73.8%), sadness and fear (both 66.7%) contribute to perceptions of a tale that is raw and seemingly does not generate any other type of reaction. Next, outcomes for each story book are broken down and responses presented according to the emotions identified by participating students as

a function of gender and qualification being undertaken (Tables 3 to 8).

Turning attention to the individual picture book *Little Beauty* (Table 3), it can be observed that, regardless of qualification being undertaken, all participating students identified love and happiness as basic emotions, with high percentages emerging in all examined degree courses. This corroborates the homogeneity of responses in this regard, although it is true that responses stood out from participants undertaking the Early Childhood Education and Primary Education double honours degree in that all students identified love to a greater extent than students on other courses where greater diversity emerged.

Table 3. Reporting frequencies for emotions identified in the picture book Little Beauty

<i>LITTLE BEAUTY</i> (EMOTIONS)											
		3 rd . PRIMARY EDUC.		3 rd . EARLY + PRIMARY)		2. ^o (SPORT + PRIMARY)		TOTAL		TOTAL (F / M)	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Fear	F	8	21.6	4	13.7	2	11.1	14	20.9	19	22.6
	M	3	8.1	1	3.4	1	5.5	5	29.4		
Happiness	F	22	59.4	23	79.3	6	33.3	51	76.1	65	77.4
	M	6	16.2	1	3.4	7	38.8	14	82.4		
Anger	F	8	21.6	6	20.6	5	27.7	19	28.4	25	29.8
	M	6	16.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	35.3		
Disgust	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Love	F	27	72.9	28	96.5	8	44.4	63	94.0	78	92.9
	M	8	21.2	1	3.4	6	33.3	15	88.2		
Sadness	F	14	37.8	7	24.1	3	16.6	24	35.8	28	33.3
	M	2	5.4	0	0.0	2	11.1	4	23.5		

With regards to the piece of work *Fox* (Table 4), it can be seen that fear is the most frequently identified emotion. Together with sadness, this emotion was most frequently reported overall. Nonetheless, variations as a function of qualification and gender are noteworthy. Specifically, once again, greater

percentages emerge in the group of students undertaking the Early Childhood Education and Primary Education degree when compared with the other two groups. A notable difference also emerges as a function of gender, with fewer males reporting sadness than females.

Table 4. Reporting frequencies for emotions identified in the picture book Fox

		FOX (EMOTIONS)									
		3 rd . PRIMARY EDUC.		3 rd . EARLY + PRIMARY		2. ^o SPORT + PRIMARY		TOTAL		TOTAL (F / M)	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Fear	F	19	51.3	22	75.8	6	33.3	47	70.1	55	65.5
	M	6	16.2	1	3.4	1	5.5	8	47.1		
Happiness	F	6	16.2	3	10.3	2	11.1	11	16.4	15	17.9
	M	2	5.4	1	3.4	1	5.5	4	23.5		
Anger	F	23	62.1	14	48.2	6	33.3	43	64.2	52	61.9
	M	3	8.1	0	0.0	6	33.3	9	52.9		
Disgust	F	1	2.7	0	0.0	1	5.5	2	3.0	2	2.4
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Love	F	9	24.3	10	34.4	4	22.2	23	34.3	28	33.3
	M	2	5.4	1	3.4	2	11.1	5	29.4		
Sadness	F	22	59.4	20	68.9	6	33.3	48	71.6	60	71.4
	M	7	18.9	1	3.4	4	22.2	12	70.6		

Moving on to consider the picture book *El Regalo [The Present]* (Table 5), it can be observed that, both love and happiness stand out in the overall findings. The same pattern emerges as before with regards to higher scores being recorded for both emotions amongst Early Childhood Education and Primary

Education double honours students. Students undertaking the other two degree courses coincide with regards to the emotion pertaining to love, although more variability is seen in relation to happiness. Differential outcomes were not found as a function of gender.

Table 5. Reporting frequencies for emotions identified in the picture book El Regalo [The Present]

		EL REGALO [THE PRESENT] (EMOTIONS)									
		3 rd . PRIMARY EDUC.		3 rd . EARLY + PRIMARY		2. ^o SPORT + PRIMARY)		TOTAL		TOTAL (F / M)	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Fear	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	2.4
	M	1	2.7	1	3.4	0	0.0	2	11.8		
Happiness	F	25	67.5	26	89.6	6	33.3	57	85.1	70	83.3
	M	5	13.5	1	3.4	7	38.8	13	76.5		
Anger	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Disgust	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Love	F	26	70.2	25	86.2	10	55.5	61	91.0	76	90.5
	M	6	16.2	1	3.4	8	44.4	15	88.2		
Sadness	F	2	5.4	1	3.4	0	0.0	3	4.5	6	7.1
	M	3	8.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	17.6		

Analysis of outcomes corresponding to the picture book *Dirty Bertie* (Table 6) revealed no significant differences in reporting as a function of degree study being undertaken or gender. This is explained by the fact that all respondents reported the emotion or feeling of disgust, leaving little space for any other type

of emotional response. Happiness slips in as the second most detected emotion, being those undertaking the Early Childhood Education and Primary Education double honours degree, once again, the group that most reported this alternative emotion.

Table 6. Reporting frequencies for emotions identified in the picture book *Dirty Bertie*

<i>DIRTY BERTIE (EMOTIONS)</i>											
		3 rd . PRIMARY EDUC.		3 rd . EARLY + PRIMARY		2. ^º SPORT + PRIMARY		TOTAL		TOTAL (F / M)	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Fear	F	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Happiness	F	7	18.9	10	34.4	2	11.1	19	28.4	21	25.0
	M	2	5.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.8		
Anger	F	1	2.7	2	3.0	0	0.0	3	4.5	3	3.6
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Disgust	F	29	78.3	27	72.9	9	50.0	65	97.0	82	97.6
	M	8	21.6	1	3.4	8	44.4	17	100.0		
Love	F	1	2.7	1	3.4	1	5.5	3	4.5	5	6.0
	M	1	2.7	1	3.4	0	0.0	2	11.8		
Sadness	F	1	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5	2	2.4
	M	1	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9		

Analysis of the fifth picture book, *Sad Book* (Table 7), revealed that virtually all students perceived the emotion stated in the title of the book - sadness. This emotion emerged unanimously in all qualification groups. At the same time, no differences emerged as a function of gender. In contrast, a substantial number of students undertaking the Primary Education degree reported the emotion of fear, whilst more students enrolled on the Early Childhood Education and Primary Education double honours degree identified love when reading this text.

Three emotions stood out following analysis of the picture book *The Island* (Table

8), namely, sadness, fear and anger. Whilst the latter emotion most stands out due to the number of times it was reported, this text emerges as illustrating the widest variety of emotions. With regards to analysis according to qualification, students undertaking the Early Childhood Education and Primary Education double degree reported anger more than students on other degrees, though this group also identified fear, whilst those undertaking the Physical Activity and Sports Sciences and Primary Education double degree exhibited fairly balanced reporting that differed from those enrolled on the other examined degrees. As seen with the texts examined previously, no notable differences were found to exist in responses as a function of gender.

Table 7. Reporting frequencies for emotions identified in the picture book Sad Book

<i>SAD BOOK (EMOTIONS)</i>											
		3 rd PRIMARY EDUC.		3 rd . EARLY + PRIMARY		2. ^º SPORT + PRIMARY		TOTAL		TOTAL (F / M)	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Fear	F	15	40.5	7	24.1	2	11.1	24	35.8	33	39.3
	M	5	13.5	1	3.4	3	16.6	9	52.9		
Happiness	F	2	5.4	3	10.3	1	5.5	6	9.0	8	9.5
	M	2	5.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.8		
Anger	F	2	5.4	1	3.4	0	0.0	3	4.5	5	6.0
	M	1	2.7	1	3.4	0	0.0	2	11.8		
Disgust	F	1	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.5	3	3.6
	M	1	2.7	0	0.0	1	5.5	2	11.8		
Love	F	8	21.6	10	34.4	1	5.5	19	28.4	20	23.8
	M	1	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9		
Sadness	F	28	75.6	28	96.5	10	55.5	66	98.5	83	98.8
	M	8	21.6	1	3.4	8	44.4	17	100		

Table 8. Relative frequencies for emotions identified in the picture book The Island

<i>THE ISLAND (EMOTIONS)</i>											
		3 rd . PRIMARY EDUC.		3 rd . EARLY + PRIMARY		2. ^º SPORT + PRIMARY		TOTAL		TOTAL (F / M)	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Fear	F	19	51.3	19	65.5	6	33.3	44	65.7	56	66.7
	M	7	18.9	0	0.0	5	27.7	12	70.6		
Happiness	F	1	2.7	1	3.4	0	0.0	2	3.0	2	2.4
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Anger	F	27	72.9	16	55.1	8	44.4	51	76.1	62	73.8
	M	5	13.5	1	3.4	5	27.7	11	64.7		
Disgust	F	4	10.8	1	3.4	0	0.0	5	7.5	10	11.9
	M	3	8.1	0	0.0	2	11.1	5	29.4		
Love	F	0	0.0	1	3.4	1	5.5	2	3.0	2	2.4
	M	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Sadness	F	18	48.6	21	72.4	5	27.7	44	65.7	56	66.7
	M	6	16.2	1	3.4	5	27.7	12	70.6		

Discussion

After presenting the study outcomes, this section strives to discuss findings and make some final conclusions. Firstly, it serves to highlight that findings corresponded with expected outcomes. In other words, responses to the picture books presented and read by students did not raise any unexpected questions. Instead, as will be further discussed, responses revealed that perceptions were grounded in more explicit than implicit aspects of recounted stories. This finding directly connects with the act of reading and the capacity to develop critical thinking in individuals. The global crisis has probably led to the emergence of more passive behaviours, which may cause a communicational distance to arise, in which striving for ease in day-to-day life becomes a priority (López Valero et al., 2022).

Critical action enables more in-depth content, idea linking and potential divergence in the interpretation of storylines and tales which did not take place in the present study. Thus, in certain picture books used, presence in the title of a term that is already strongly linked to given emotion meant that students were not encouraged to search beyond this initial stimulus. This is one of the reasons for which present findings were not surprising. In this way, as previously indicated, responses found that, in stories such as *Little Beauty*, positive emotions are highlighted over the less positive emotions that are also described in the text. Another example is *Dirty Bertie* in which the identification of emotions other than dirty, as appears in the title, was virtually entirely numbed.

An example that clearly underlines this distinction between the implicit and explicit is the existence of social information relative to the emotional sphere which is highly typified in the cultural ambit. Nonetheless, nuances do not appear to exist in the consideration of such information and emergent socially patterns seem to be somewhat stereotyped. It should be kept in mind that the majority of research on university students is focused on either

emotional intelligence (Barrera et al., 2019; Rodríguez de los Ríos et al., 2020) or the impact of the recent pandemic (Robles et al., 2022). From the standpoint of the present study, a more in-depth examination is required of the aforementioned emotional nuances. Indeed, the situation described above has a disproportionate impact on standing in the way of decision making regarding what an emotion is and the function it may have in teaching and learning processes. The social and personal dimension also influences the development of the competence of communication in individuals independent of curricular and academic content. Trainee teachers must be equipped with the potential to feel these emotions and understand their potential to steer behaviour in order to enable reflection and design more complete and enriching teaching interventions.

The present study also examined the additional variables of qualification under study and gender, however, no significant outcomes were revealed in this regard as might have been expected. In this regard, it would have been difficult for gender to have had a substantial impact given that the sample was characterised by a majority female distribution. In accordance with traditional studies in the field of education, female representation tends to outweigh that of males, preventing critical discussion around whether gender conditioned outcomes. With regards to the qualification being studied by participating students, it serves to highlight that students undertaking Early Childhood Education and Primary Education degree reported a more homogeneous identification of emotions than students from the other two qualification groups. This being said, fairly even values were reported. From this, it could be tentatively surmised that students on this degree are more emotionally sensitive, however, this conclusion is not supported given that reports did not differ greatly between students enrolled on the different degree studies examined.

Current times, almost five years after the pandemic, are characterised by emerging

novelties that, potentially, lead to emotional inhibition. For example, the emergence of artificial intelligence, despite having a positive prognostic for implementation (Escotet, 2023; Strzelecki, 2023), limits emotional expression in individuals and promotes calls for machines to be able to articulate thoughts and feelings. As has also already been highlighted in the present text, resorting to narrative means rediscovering the differential factor of human beings with respect to, for example, animals. An advantage of working with texts is that they provide ways of coding human thinking and interspersing elements that have concerned and continue to concern humanity.

Conclusions

Given all of that discussed in the present study, the importance of education is clear. Reflection on education poses questions and challenges focused on its organisation and conditions. The concept of educational action appears to be untouchable, however, the precepts on which it should be based are not so clear. Such precepts do not necessarily have to be born out of the inevitable association between the educational and sociocultural ambit. In this case, the tendencies of the latter reflect of the former and, inevitably, elements of informal education will end up influencing its more formal and curricular aspects. As already mentioned, artificial intelligence, presence of *influencers*, notions of ease and, sometimes, failure to enjoy the time in which actions are performed, sculpt a novel landscape, which serves as a guideline for shaping the thinking and behaviour of individuals. The first conclusion, therefore, of the present study is that a need exists to reflect on the connecting tissue linking social/cultural conditions to educational conditions. All of this, urges adoption of a view towards decision making by educators pertaining to educational practice not being mechanic but, instead, targeting individual development.

The second conclusion is linked to the first one in terms of educational processes. From the viewpoint of the present study, an individual's capacity to communicate

effectively in contexts that are of importance to them, implies that communicative action reaches beyond words and combines verbal and non-verbal aspects. Coding of these manifestations on paper, illustrating thought processes, developing reflections on forms of communication and creating atmospheres in which individuals can express themselves presents a challenge that is still to be addressed by the educational system. Elements mentioned in our first conclusions discussed above support this proposal. To this end, agents in the educational community must be made aware of the importance of this. In terms of the aforementioned verbal and non-verbal issues, emotions find a way of manifesting through both situations. As is already known, the written word contains human feelings and thought, but, at the same, gestures, movement and paralinguistic elements are also powerful transmitters. Alongside the latter, the physiological aspects already identified above, such as laughter or crying, must also be considered. Awareness of the incorporation of these elements and, above all, adequate handling of them, in the communication process is a contemporary challenge. In addition, present findings referring to priming of the explicit over the implicit could also be considered alongside this, highlighting a need for equipping the public to be critical.

In consideration of findings reported by Puiggali et al. (2023), the fact that the main competence worked on in university teaching degrees was teamwork, is a hopeful finding with regards to emotional research. Although it is important to examine whether such group work incorporates affective aspects of individuals or sticks closely to curricular aspects. In terms of future perspectives, thoughts wander towards research on emotions and emotional intelligence conducted, for example, by Aguayo and Aguilar (2017), Alabau and Reyes (2023), Molero et al. (2017), Pastor and Marín (2021) and Pérez Escoda et al. (2010). Picking up on this line of research would steer away from addressing only audio-visual issues or issues surrounding the use of artificial intelligence in teaching and learning

processes. Instead, search strategies are encouraged to target human dimensions pertaining to the expression of feelings, beliefs and thoughts.

The post-pandemic period ought to show the way towards valuing attitudes and behaviours that emphasise solidarity, interest in the feelings of other people and construction of a more pleasant world to live in (Zakaria, 2021). In this sense, it serves to, once again, mention Sustainable Development Goals here. Whilst emotions are alluded to - outlined at the beginning of the article through the idea of social justice - in-depth, explicit descriptions are not made. For this reason, a greater incorporation of emotions must be present in implementation of these goals. Further, the final conclusion of the present study pertains to the link between communicational development, including literary uses, and individual wellbeing. In the case of the latter, Losada et al. (2022) and Mendiri et al. (2024) highlight educational institutions as important entities for delivering achievement initiatives targeting individual well-being. From the perspective of the present research team, capitalising on the incredible resource provided by literary texts may offer an outstanding pretext for highlighting and promoting the flowering, expression and respect of human emotions.

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