

*Through the looking glass of student perception:
How foreign language students see
teacher trait emotional intelligence and why it matters*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine how students perceive teacher trait emotional intelligence (TEI) and how those perceptions relate to students' own self-reported attitudes and motivation. Adult students of ESL/EFL were given an online questionnaire consisting of two parts: one to provide observer-reported data on their teacher's trait emotional intelligence and the second to measure students' own attitudes and motivation. In total, 129 participants of 28 nationalities took part. The results showed that the perceived teacher TEI domains of teacher sociability and teacher self-control were significant predictors of student positive feelings and attitudes towards the teacher. With this paper, we make the case that observer reports of teacher TEI by students could be a valuable tool in L2 instruction by offering teachers unique insight into their own classroom behavior, thereby increasing teacher self-awareness which could lead to improved classroom practices.

Keywords: trait emotional intelligence; attitudes; motivation; teacher sociability; teacher self-control

1. Introduction

There is an increasing acceptance and understanding of teaching as an “emotion-laden process, yet there is still much that we do not fully understand about how teacher emotions function in classrooms, how they influence the practice of teaching and how they shape teacher professional identities” (Gkonou, Dewaele, & King, 2020, p. 1). What also remains somewhat hazy is how students’ impressions of their teachers’ emotions relate to their own learning process in the L2 classroom.

Aside from the customary course evaluation forms routinely administered to students at the end of a term, language learners are rarely asked directly what they think about their teachers in a formal manner, and even less so with regard to their teachers’ emotional aspects. With this current study, we attempt to “break the ice” by asking adult foreign language students to quantify their teachers’ trait emotional intelligence (TEI) using an adapted version of the TEIQue 360° short form test (Petrides & Furnham, 2006). Given that most student/teacher relationships call for at least some degree of social and personal distance, we argue that exploring students’ personal and often unexpressed impressions of their teachers’ emotions could benefit both students and teachers by effectively holding up a mirror to language teachers, offering a distinct perspective in revealing teachers’ own blind spots in their practice and classroom behavior.

2. Literature review

2.1. Emotion and the language classroom

The language classroom is an emotionally charged environment for both students and teachers (Dewaele, Gkonou, & Mercer, 2018; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Gkonou, Dewaele, & King, 2020). Teachers with high TEI help themselves and their students deal with emotions in the classroom (Dewaele, Gkonou, & Mercer, 2018; Dewaele & Mercer, 2018). Dewaele (2020) found that teachers with high TEI were more intrinsically motivated to be good teachers. They also had stronger identified regulation and were less amotivated. More granular analysis of the four facets of TEI revealed that teachers with higher levels of wellbeing and sociability were most likely to be strongly intrinsically motivated while teachers with low levels of wellbeing and emotionality were most likely to be amotivated. Teachers are often cautious about their emotional reactions in the classroom and selective about which emotions to show, carefully keeping certain emotions glossed over or cordoned off from student view completely. Nonetheless, despite engaging in so-called “emotional labor” to edit out truly

felt emotions in order to only show the desired ones (Hochschild, 1983), students are generally aware of and responsive to a teacher's reactions, including automatic involuntary facial change in response to an emotion. For example, a teacher's spontaneous nod of approval or disparaging glance is often noticed and taken to heart, regardless of the teacher's intention (Acheson & Nelson, 2020; Benesch, 2012, 2017; Dimberg, Thunberg, & Elmehed, 2000; Sime, 2006). King (2016) found that teachers in Japan went to great lengths to stifle displays of negative emotion, reasoning that such displays would demotivate students. Curiously in stark contrast, a later qualitative study by Humphries (2020) of a teacher at an engineering college, also in Japan, profiled a teacher who felt so emotionally drained and fed up with his unmotivated students, that he effectively granted himself *carte blanche* to openly express his dissatisfaction and frustration in the classroom.

Even though some people are more adept at controlling their emotions (e.g., by natural predisposition, disciplined practice, or some combination thereof), observers are still often able to pick up on very subtle emotional cues. As Barsade and Gibson (2007) assert, teachers may often not be aware that they are showing emotion through facial expression or body language. Emotions we do not even realize we are feeling can influence our thoughts and behaviors. Further complicating matters is the ongoing debate over whether or not emotional intelligence (EI) can be changed, and if so, to what extent. On the positive side, there is some evidence that teachers in general can learn to control and regulate their own emotions, thereby increasing the effectiveness of their practice (Sutton, 2004), and this is true for language teachers as well, particularly those with less experience (Gkonou & Mercer, 2017). In fact, teachers often already do consciously self-modify their own emotional displays in the classroom. Sutton, Mudrey-Camino, and Knight (2009) found that in a study of 400 junior high school teachers, 97% believed that their teaching practices would be improved by increasing positive emotions in themselves, actively using strategies such as self-talk, deep breathing and visualization to control their own facial reactions in the classroom.

Student perceptions of how teachers behave have a significant relation to student outcomes (Clark et al., 1979; Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011) and there is little doubt that students are acutely aware of teachers' emotions, both negative and positive (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003), including nonverbal behavior. In a qualitative study of adult language learners' perceptions of teacher nonverbal behaviors, Sime (2006) analyzed five separate EFL classes, interviewing participants after each class, finding that learners characterized teacher gestures into three general categories with three distinct functions: for the learner's benefit, to serve an organizational function, such as classroom management, and for emotional engagement. The researcher also found that learners preferred teachers

who conveyed enthusiasm through their gestures and that those gestures promoted a relaxed atmosphere. Unsurprisingly, the researcher noted that no matter how subtle teachers' gestures were, learners noticed and interpreted them, positing that "the fact that teachers may often be unaware of the emotional effects that their nonverbal actions may have on individuals does not mean that learners are oblivious to them" (2006, p. 222). In other words, teacher behavior significantly affects student outcomes and "student perceptions of teacher behavior can have an important influence on causal relationships in the classroom" (Clark et al., 1979, p. 30). Teacher EI may also have a positive effect on student achievement by strengthening the students' own self-perception of aptitude and ability (Curci, Lanciano, & Soleti, 2014).

2.2. Observer-reported EI

Noticing and making judgements about others' emotions is a constant process, whether we are aware of it or not. As Kahneman (2015) notes, the tendency to make judgements about others' emotions is so basic and atavistic that people as early as infancy tend to assign emotional personality traits even to non-human objects. He comments: "The perception of intention and emotion is irresistible . . . Your mind is ready and even eager to identify agents, assign them personality traits and specific intentions, and view their actions as expressing individual propensities" (2015, p. 76). Furthermore, these perceptions have salient effects on behavior and personal relationships. As Elfenbein, Barsade and Eisenkraft point out, ". . . social perception of emotional abilities [is] an epiphenomenal construct – that is, judgments of EI are theoretically important in their own right because they exist in our minds, not necessarily because they are accurate or valid for use as a measurement device. People continually make these judgments, and these judgments subsequently have meaningful interpersonal consequences" (2015, p. 19).

While it is true that impressions of others' emotions can be faulty and bias-prone (Kahneman, 2015), a strong argument can be made that self-impressions are even more unreliable, at least in certain respects. Cooper and Petrides (2010) have been critical of self-reported measures of ability EI as have other researchers, noting a strong general proclivity towards overestimating one's own positive traits and abilities (Chance, Norton, Gino, & Ariely, 2011). In contrast to the pitfalls of self-reported EI tests, a good deal of solid research supports the validity and accuracy of observer-reported testing across various contexts (see Furnham, 2008). In one particular study in the field of organizational psychology, co-workers rated personality traits of their colleagues in the work environment and it was found that such observer ratings of personality traits

were indeed better predictors of overall performance than self-reported ratings (Oh, Wang, & Mount, 2011). Assessing oneself impartially may be difficult due to the all too human flaw of self-delusion, which has led researchers to argue that people are sometimes better judges of the EI of others than of their own (Furnham, Race, & Rosen, 2014). Grant (2018) concurs: "As a social scientist, if I want to get a read on your personality, I could ask you to fill out a survey on how stable, dependable, friendly, outgoing, and curious you are. But I would be much better off asking your coworkers to rate you on those same traits: They're often more than twice as accurate."

Trait emotional intelligence is defined as "a constellation of emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies" (Petrides, Pérez-Gonzalez, & Furnham, 2007, p. 26). TEI deals with how people perceive their own emotional competences and their own inner landscapes, using four domains as follows: wellbeing; self-control; emotionality; sociability.

In a paper on TEI of ballet dancers and musicians (Petrides, Niven, & Mouskounti, 2006), the researchers compared observer versus self-reported ratings and investigated the validity of TEIQue tests in relatively small sample sizes (34 ballet students, 5 ballet teachers). First they compared self-ratings to observer ratings of ballet students and teachers, and then explored the relationship between TEI scores and ballet dancing. The researchers found a high rate of self-other convergence, meaning that:

ballet teacher ratings on the TEIQue 360° – SF showed high inter-rater reliabilities, which suggests that not only do lay people understand the nature of the trait EI facets, but they also agree when they rate others on them. Furthermore, teacher trait EI ratings converged with student trait EI scores, which supports the accuracy of emotion-related self-perceptions. In other words, it is clear that there is at least some convergence between self- and other-perceptions of emotion-related abilities as well as between self-perceptions and objective performance on affect-laden tasks. (Petrides et al., 2006, p. 104)

The authors provide evidence that "in relation to the operationalization of trait EI . . . the TEIQue provides complete and valid measurement of the construct. In stark contrast to ability EI tests, the TEIQue shows robust psychometric properties, even in small sample research" (Petrides et al., 2006, p. 106).

We argue in the present paper that the same principles that undergird the value of observer EI reports in the workplace and other contexts could be transferable to the language classroom. Language learners have a unique vantage point, both physically due to the layout of many traditional classrooms, and psychologically, because of the inherent power structure of the relationship between students and teachers. As a result, learners have a special awareness of teachers that teachers themselves may not even have. Moreover, while research

on observer reported EI has been flourishing in the corporate world, there is a remarkable gap of such research in educational settings, particularly in the foreign language (L2) classroom, which is ironic considering that teacher and student emotions are elaborately interconnected and thus will necessarily influence each other (Hargreaves, 2000; Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018; Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2019; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

In terms of traditional self-reported tests of performance and intelligence, a significant male bias towards self-enhancement and a significant female bias towards self-diminishment has emerged (e.g., Beyer, 1998; Furnham & Rawles, 1995). Schutte et al. (1998) revealed a significant gender difference in self-reported measures of TEI, but Petrides and Furnham (2000) found that there were generally no significant differences between males and females in total measured TEI, with the exception of the domain of “social skills,” with females self-reporting higher scores than males. In a study of the effect of perceptions of teacher characteristics on enjoyment and anxiety of Spanish students of English, the researchers found that teacher gender was unrelated to student level of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) (Dewaele, Franco Magdalena, & Saito, 2019); however, the effect of student gender was not tested. Previous research did show a small gender effect on learners’ classroom emotions, with female L2 learners reporting both more anxiety and enjoyment (Dewaele, MacIntyre, Boudreau, & Dewaele, 2016). The “emotional sensitivity hypothesis” posits that women are more likely than men to notice subtle or ambiguous emotional displays of others. However, a study of 5,000 participants (Fischer, Kret, & Broekens, 2018) found contradictory evidence and little solid support for this hypothesis. Testing both self-reported EI and perceived emotion of others, the authors found that:

men did score lower on self-perceived EI, which suggests that they think of themselves as less confident in perceiving, understanding and regulating emotions than did women. However, this did not affect the intensity ratings of target emotions. In other words, men and women’s self-perceived emotional intelligence is not a reliable predictor of rating the intensity of the intended emotion displays on the face. (Fischer et al., 2018, p. 14)

Although research on emotion in SLA and particularly positive emotion is steadily gaining momentum (Dewaele, Chen, Padilla, & Lake 2019; Dewaele & Li, 2020), given the emotional and social nature of the classroom and of the student-teacher relationship, such empirical investigations remain paltry (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017; Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Mercer & Kostoulas, 2018). Furthermore, despite some recent notable exceptions (e.g., Dewaele et al., 2019), the topic of student emotion perception of teachers is practically uncharted territory in SLA research. There is some evidence that how students render the classroom in emotional terms matters in measurable, observable outcomes. In a study of

2,000 language arts students at the 5th and 6th grade levels from a diverse urban school district in the United States, researchers found a positive correlation between student reported emotional climate of the classroom and observer-reported student conduct (Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2011). The researchers posited that “in emotionally supportive classrooms, students liked and respected their teachers more and in turn, behaved better. These findings align with a growing body of research evidencing the influence of emotional aspects of the classroom in student motivation, engagement, performance, and conduct in school” (Brackett et al., 2011, p. 32).

Interest in teacher psychology is growing fast, and in particular, an “area with little research at present but with considerable implications for classroom life and teacher well-being concerns teacher emotions, their emotional intelligence and ability to self-regulate . . . this suggests there remains a whole rich under explored area for future research” (Mercer, Oberdorfer, & Saleem, 2016, p. 220). In the context of the foreign language classroom, we propose that the TEI of teachers as reported by student observers could unearth valuable insights with not only theoretical implications but potential uses applicable in the classroom as well. We realize that teachers might have their misgivings; after all, students may not always regard their teachers in a favorable light. However, such feedback from students could add meaningful contributions to the study of teacher psychology by helping teachers learn about their own strengths and weaknesses.

3. The study

3.1. Research questions

The study reported in this part of the paper was conducted with the purpose of addressing the following two research questions:

1. What is the relationship between student perceptions of teacher TEI and students' own self-reported positive feelings? If a significant relationship does exist, which domain of trait EI correlates most strongly with a favorable impression of a teacher?
2. How does perceived teacher EI affect student attitude towards the teacher?

We hypothesize that student perceptions of teacher TEI will predict at least some aspects of student attitude and motivation in the classroom. Since past research has shown that FLE is highly correlated with teacher friendliness, we predict that the domain of perceived teacher sociability will be a predictor of student positive feelings.

3.2. Methodology

3.2.1. Participants

This study draws on data collected from a larger research project. Participants from all over the world were asked to fill out an anonymous online questionnaire. The respondents were all adults enrolled in an English as a foreign or second language classes at the time of the study (total $N = 129$, male $n = 40$, female $n = 87$, unspecified gender $n = 2$). Ages ranged from 18 to 60 years old ($M = 23$ years, $SD = 6$). Participants reported 28 different nationalities, with 6 participants providing dual nationalities. The largest nationality group represented was Austrian ($n = 40$), followed by French ($n = 16$), Japanese ($n = 14$), UAE ($n = 9$), Syrian ($n = 7$), and Belgian ($n = 7$). The highest first language group was German ($n = 43$), followed by Arabic ($n = 26$), French ($n = 23$), and Japanese ($n = 13$).

Participants were asked how many languages they knew in addition to their mother tongue and English, "proficient enough for at least a basic conversation." All respondents were automatically considered to be bilingual since they were required to represent at least lower-intermediate level English proficiency to participate in the study. Therefore, additional languages known are in addition to their L1 and English: 32 respondents knew no additional languages, 57 knew one additional language, and 41 knew two or more additional languages.

When asked to describe their own English performance in comparison to their peers on a 5-point Likert scale, the mean was 3.70 and the standard deviation amounted to .82, which indicates that most participants considered themselves slightly more proficient than their peers. In describing their own level of English (also on a 5-point Likert scale), the mean was 4.11, with a standard deviation of .80, indicating that most participants indeed rated their own levels of English as rather advanced.

3.2.2. Instrument

The first section of the questionnaire included a basic collection of demographic and personal items concerning the number of years spent learning English, the amount of time spent using English outside the classroom and self-reported rating of English ability, both independently and compared to their classmates. The dependent variable of *student attitude and motivation* was measured using a construct adapted from the *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery* (AMTB, Gardner, 1985). The section included 22 total items, with responses measured on a 5-point Likert scale ($M = 3.83$, $SD = .58$, $\alpha = .869$). Negatively worded items were reverse coded. The subsections were modified from the original AMTB to better suit the relationship

between teachers and adult learners. Items that dealt with homework and parental guidance were omitted. Questions dealing with anxiety were also omitted. The two subcategories were as follows: (1) *positive feelings* ($M = 3.91, SD = .65, \alpha = .794$) and (2) *attitude towards English teacher* ($M = 3.76, SD = .63, \alpha = .790$).

The independent variable of *perceived teacher emotional intelligence* was measured using a 22 item construct adapted from the TEIQue 360° short form (Petrides & Furnham, 2006), meant to assess TEI from the perspective of an observer. Responses were measured on a 7-point Likert scale ($M = 5.21, SD = .95, \alpha = .914$). The subsections were consistent with the domains of the original test: (1) *teacher wellbeing* ($M = 5.51, SD = 1.18, \alpha = .669$), (2) *teacher self-control* ($M = 5.20, SD = 1.23, \alpha = .758$), (3) *teacher emotionality* ($M = 5.06, SD = 1.14, \alpha = .796$), and (4) *teacher sociability* ($M = 5.18, SD = .83, \alpha = .641$).

Q-Q plots of the dependent variables showed nearly normal distributions (Figures 1-2), so the more powerful parametric statistics were chosen.

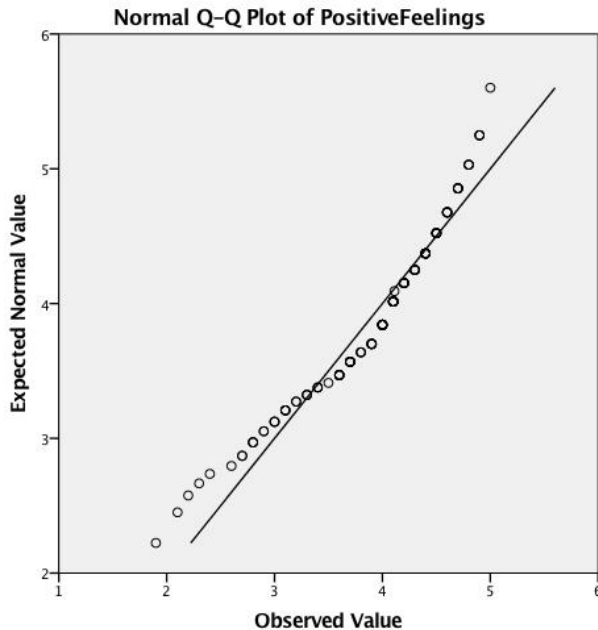


Figure 1 Normal QQ plot of positive feelings

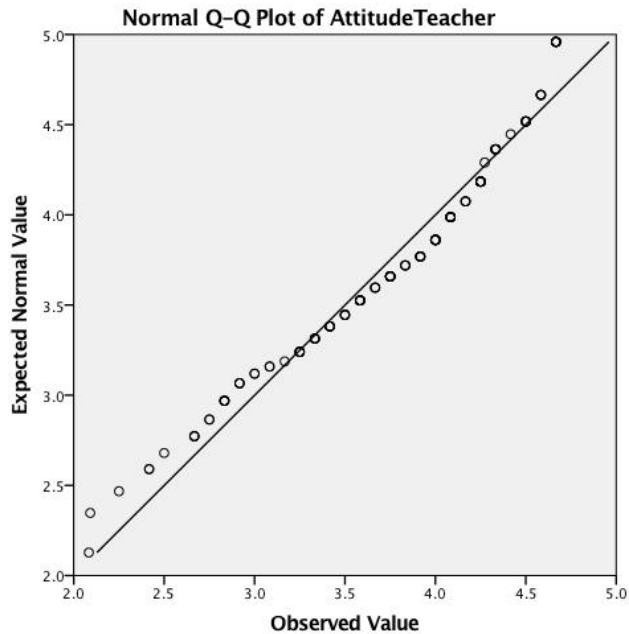


Figure 2 Normal QQ plot of attitude towards teacher

To answer the research questions, first Pearson’s correlation analyses were conducted (see Table 1), and the significant independent variables were tested for unique variance using a multiple stepwise regression. All Durbin-Watson values fall between the accepted range of 1 and 3, and the tolerance values are all above .20, which suggests that there is no multicollinearity.

Table 1 Pearson’s correlation analyses for dependent variables

Pearson’s correlation	Positive feelings	Attitude towards teacher
T sociability	.397*	.654*
T wellbeing	.289*	.538*
T emotionality	.314*	.536*
T self-control	.314*	.625*

Notes. * $p < 0.05$

3.3. Findings

3.3.1. Positive feelings

Pearson’s correlation analyses showed that student positive feelings correlate with all four domains of perceived teacher TEI, with teacher sociability showing the strongest correlation ($r = .397$). A multiple regression analysis was used to

determine the unique effect of predictor variables while controlling for the effect of others (see Table 2). It revealed a significant regression equation for teacher sociability ($F(1, 127) = 23.787, p < .000$) with the R^2 value equaling .158, which indicates that teacher sociability predicts 15.8% of the variance of students' positive feelings, a medium effect size (cf. Plonsky & Ghanbar, 2018).

Table 2 Multiple regression for student positive feelings

Predictor	R^2	F	p	β	Durbin-Watson	Collinearity diagnostics tolerance
T sociability	.158	23.79	.000	.397	1.41	1.000

Notes. Dependent variable: Student positive feelings

Predictor: Perceived teacher sociability

3.3.2. Attitude towards the teacher

Pearson's correlational analysis showed that all four domains of teacher TEI correlate with attitude towards teacher, with teacher sociability showing the highest correlation ($r = .320$). A stepwise multiple regression analysis showed that the Durbin-Watson value (1.97) and the VIF value (1.00) indicated no concern for autocorrelation nor multicollinearity, the normality and residual plots indicated linearity and homoscedasticity. A significant regression equation was found, with two variables – teacher sociability and teacher self-control – predicting 46% of the variance: Adjusted R^2 square = .455, ($F(1, 127) = 94.92, p < .0001$), which is a large effect size (cf. Plonsky & Ghanbar, 2018). The strongest predictor was teacher sociability ($\beta = .424, p < .0001$), explaining 42.8% of variance, followed by teacher self-control ($\beta = .298, p < .0001$), explaining an additional 3.6% of variance.

4. Discussion

The first research question asked about the relationship between student self-reported positive feelings and perceptions of teacher TEI. The results show that all four domains of perceived teacher TEI correlate with positive feelings, underscoring the importance of the teacher-student relationship and student perceptions of teacher emotional aspects. The TEI domain of teacher sociability correlated most strongly with student positive feelings and also predicted unique variance in positive feelings, indicating that friendlier, more sociable teachers make students feel more positive in the classroom. This finding is consistent with a study by Dewaele et al. (2018), which found that teacher characteristics predicted 20% of the variance in foreign language enjoyment, with teacher friendliness being the strongest positive predictor.

In terms of student attitude towards the teacher, all four the domains of perceived teacher TEI showed a positive correlation. The domains of teacher sociability and teacher self-control predicted a large amount of variance, providing strong evidence that students prefer language teachers they perceive as sociable and friendly, and that students have better attitudes towards teachers who they think effectively control their own emotions in the classroom. Based on this, it can be presumed that teachers who are better able to control their own emotions will more effectively put students at ease and create a more positive environment with less anxiety (see Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Furthermore, the student preference for teachers who they perceive can effectively control their own emotions accords with earlier research showing that “socially and emotionally competent teachers set the tone of the classroom by developing supporting and encouraging relationships with their students . . . and acting as a role model for respectful and appropriate communications and exhibitions of prosocial behavior” (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009, p. 492).

Both consciously and unconsciously, teachers craft a classroom persona, carefully selecting which of their personal traits to reveal, exaggerate, or, conversely, play down or conceal completely (King, 2016). In doing so, teachers can become almost like caricatures of themselves and often report feeling typically associated with performers rather than educators (Beadle, 2009; Lamb, 2017). Regardless of the “authenticity” of teacher emotional displays, students are constantly observing and judging their teachers’ TEI from their own vantage point and, as our results indicate, those assessments have predictive effects on students’ positive feelings and attitudes towards the teacher. These results combined with established research on the validity and uses of observer reported EI testing in various settings suggest that it might be worthwhile to survey adult students about how they perceive their teacher’s TEI since those perceptions are related to their own attitudes and motivation. Furthermore, due to their point of view as observers, students have a unique awareness of their teacher’s TEI and might hold a key to a deeper understanding of teacher psychology.

This study has potential pedagogical implications. Student reported assessment of teacher TEI can be extremely valuable in improving teachers’ self-awareness and might help illuminate teachers’ own blind spots. Because of their unique vantage point, adult students have special insight into their teacher’s TEI. In other words, students may know their teachers in ways that their teachers simply do not know themselves (at least in the less private aspects of emotion). Because the student-teacher relationship is reciprocal by nature, such assessments might benefit students as well. In proposing that students assess their teachers’ TEI, we realize that teachers might have their misgivings; after all, students may not always regard their teachers in a favorable light. However, such

feedback from students could add meaningful contributions to the study of teacher psychology and also help teachers at the individual level to learn about their own strengths and weaknesses. Although some teachers might feel resistant to hearing their students' observations, we suspect that many might also be unexpectedly enlightened and encouraged by what their students report.

One result that seems to emerge repeatedly is that students prefer more sociable teachers and that teachers perceived as more emotionally intelligent tend to fare better in the classroom. While some teachers may be more naturally predisposed to sociability and self-control, Gregersen, MacIntyre and MacMillan (2020) propose a cognitive reappraisal strategy called "finding silver linings" in order for teachers to deal with stressful situations, particularly those that may arise while studying abroad. Similarly, Falout and Murphey (2018) make the case for teachers to actively construct meaning and purpose in teaching, even if they do not feel that they were "meant to be" teachers. In order for teachers to function optimally, they need support and encouragement, which must include recognition and respect for the job's emotional challenges.

One limitation of the present study is the unavoidable self-selection bias; students who were willing to take the survey probably had more positive attitudes about their teachers and the learning process to begin with. Another limitation involves the absence of data about the teachers themselves and the particulars of the teaching contexts, including the students' motivation for taking the class and how long they had known the teacher. Since emotions are highly context dependent and even teacher-specific (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017), further research is needed to delve more deeply into this topic. It might be worthwhile in the future to collect teachers' self-reported TEI and compare the results against the observer-reported scores by their students to look for similarities and disparities. As the present study was cross-sectional, it was also impossible to look at students' perceptual changes of teacher TEI over time in relation to student attitudes, which could be done with a longitudinal design.

5. Conclusion

This study illustrates the relationship between perceived teacher TEI, and student attitudes and motivation. The results show that the domains of perceived teacher sociability, teacher emotionality, and teacher self-control can predict student positive feelings, student attitudes towards teachers, and student foreign language anxiety levels. We propose that there could be inherent value in student observer reports of teacher TEI and asking students to report those perceptions in an ethical, nonthreatening manner could help teachers improve their own self-awareness and teaching practice. We do not contend that student opinions of teachers

should be taken at face value. However, given the proven utility of observer-reported EI testing, we argue that such inquiry in the setting of the foreign language classroom could be beneficial. There is ample room for discovery in the multifaceted and richly complex area of the psychology of language learning and teaching, and we feel that this study is a starting point for further research.

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