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THE POWER OF EMOTION IN EFL: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ELECTRONIC STUDY RESOURCES

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Abstract. This study explores the role of emotionally engaging strategies in teaching materials, particularly focusing on their impact on the teaching and learning process. Emotion plays a powerful role in education, often influencing engagement and retention more effectively than logic or reasoning. The research aims to identify and assess the specific activities and features within English e-textbooks published by a trade book publishing company that is capable of evoking emotional responses. Using multimodal corpus methodologies, the study examines elements such as structure, typography, visuals, color, teaching activities, diversity in learning tasks, languaging (making thoughts explicit), and the use of music. These features are analyzed to understand how they contribute to emotional engagement, which can enhance learners' connection to the material. The findings suggest that these emotional engagement strategies are significant in improving language competencies. By incorporating emotional stimuli, textbooks can create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment, fostering deeper cognitive and emotional connections to the content. The study also highlights that emotional engagement is not only beneficial for making the learning process more enjoyable but also for increasing retention and improving overall language acquisition. The results emphasize the potential of emotion-driven strategies to enhance language learning outcomes. As educational materials evolve, it becomes increasingly important to consider emotional factors in their design. This study advocates for the integration of emotional engagement into educational content, encouraging further research into how such strategies can be systematically applied to foster better learning experiences and more effective language development.

Keywords*: emotion in education, teaching materials design, emotional engagement, emotion-driven strategies, multimodal corpus methodologies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Emotions frequently function as a primary motivator for human action. Individuals process information at both conscious and subconscious levels, and emotional appeals often circumvent rational analysis by engaging in more primal, instinctual responses. Consequently, even when individuals are exposed to logical arguments, they are more likely to be influenced by emotional stimuli, particularly when those emotions resonate with their values or lived experiences.

The research in cognitive psychology and education highlights the pivotal role of emotions in enhancing productivity in language acquisition. Studies indicate that emotional responses elicited during language learning activities promote greater engagement and facilitate cognitive processing. The interaction between emotion and cognition suggests that emotions can profoundly influence motivation, attention, memory retention, and, as a result, learning outcomes.

In contrast, negative emotions such as anxiety can impede language acquisition. In their seminal study on foreign language anxiety, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) illustrated how stress and anxiety can obstruct the cognitive processes essential for learning, thereby resulting in diminished academic performance. This notion aligns with Krashen's (1982) affective filter hypothesis, which posits that emotional states, particularly anxiety, can establish a mental barrier that hinders the efficient processing of language input.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) emphasize the crucial role emotions play in maintaining motivation, particularly in the context of long-term pursuits like language learning. Positive emotions, such as enjoyment, curiosity, and pride, contribute significantly to sustaining learners' motivation over time. Similarly, Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory underscores the impact of positive emotions in broadening individuals' attention and cognitive capacities, which in turn fosters creativity and flexibility when engaging with learning tasks.

Neuroscientific studies offer additional evidence, demonstrating that emotionally salient stimuli activate neural pathways critical for long-term memory formation. Immordino-Yang and Damasio (2007) contend that emotions are inherently intertwined with cognitive processes, particularly within social and cultural contexts such as language learning. Their research underscores the role of emotional experiences in facilitating the integration of cognitive learning processes, thereby enhancing the learner's productivity and effectiveness.

Building on the work of Forgas (1995), emotions are shown to interact closely with cognitive functions, including memory. Forgas proposes that emotionally charged experiences are more likely to be remembered and recalled, a concept known as the affect infusion model. In the context of language learning, emotionally engaging activities can enhance the retention of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural knowledge.

Activities that engage emotional expression, such as role-playing, storytelling, and discussions of personal experiences, have been shown to significantly increase learners' emotional investment in the learning process, which in turn enhances retention and performance (Plonsky, Sudina, & Teimouri, 2022). A more recent study conducted in 2023, which explored spontaneous emotional responses in offline learning environments, revealed that real-time emotional reactions – particularly those involving positive emotions like interest and curiosity – lead to improved learning outcomes (Mou, Xin, Song, Xiang, & Tang, 2023). In a similar vein, research by Shao, Nicholson, Kutuk, and Lei (2020) emphasizes the pivotal role of positive emotions, such as joy and curiosity, in fostering intellectual growth and motivation among language learners. They argue that cultivating supportive environments and encouraging positive emotional experiences are essential for optimizing learning outcomes.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE, METHODOLOGY AND DATA

This paper examines English textbooks from a particular trade book publishing company to identify and understand the mechanisms of emotionally charged tools within their materials that influence the learning processes of students. Discourse analysis was conducted using the Macmillan Education Everywhere digital student books, which offer learners a print-free option for accessing the content of traditional physical textbooks. The selection of these e-textbooks is justified by their widespread use among English teachers and their publication by reputable publishing houses. The materials provide a wide range of resources to suit learners at different levels of English. The primary components of the corpus under investigation include textual information, images and photographs, videos, and audio content.

The identification of emotion-inducing strategies utilized in the e-textbooks will be conducted using Pauwels' model (2012) for analyzing websites as multimodal discourse. Given the inherently

multimodal nature of the selected e-textbooks, this approach is expected to make a significant contribution to the research field. Pauwels' model (2012) offers a structured framework for examining various aspects of webpages, which may reveal specific techniques employed within the materials. By applying this multimodal framework to the selected data, the analysis will assess multiple layers of the e-textbook design, ensuring that even those elements that may be less visible within the web pages are not overlooked. This model facilitates in-depth interpretations of the constituent elements, thereby elucidating their intended meanings.

Visual materials will be examined through the theoretical lens of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). Their framework on visual representation will be utilized to conduct a visual analysis of the images, photographs, and videos, enabling the identification of specific points and elucidating their emotional impact on the audience. Kress and van Leeuwen's concept of Visual Grammar introduces various mechanisms for analysing visual images, with structures that provide distinct interpretations of social interaction forms. In line with this study, visual design can be interpreted by analysing cues and signs that possess individual meanings and can combine to produce a broader effect.

The identification of emotion-producing strategies employed in the video materials of the selected e-textbooks will be conducted using the scheme developed by Nevenka Dimitrova, Hong-Jiang Zhang, Behzad Shahraray, Ibrahim Sezan, Thomas Huang, and Avideh Zakhor (2002). Following the studies of Dimitrova et al. (2002), a video is regarded as a document, and the most effective approach to studying it involves indexing its data. A video document should be segmented into shots and scenes to develop a corresponding table of contents, and key frames or sequences should be extracted as index entries for the respective scenes or narratives. Consequently, content-based video research identifies the meaningful compositional structure and extracts and represents content attributes of any video source by analyzing its video, audio, and text components. These tables present still images that can then be further analyzed in accordance with the theories of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006).

This research was supported by observations made during teaching students of different levels. These observations allowed for the practical examination of how the e-textbooks and their multimodal elements influenced students' engagement and emotional responses in diverse classroom settings. By working directly with students, the study gained valuable insights into how different components of the e-textbooks were received, which enriched the analysis of the materials. The real-world application of these resources provided a nuanced understanding of their emotional and pedagogical impact across varying levels of language proficiency.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The textbook series published by "Macmillan Publishers," a British publishing house, provides various teaching and learning aids. The authors employ both verbal and non-verbal educational resources to create materials that are visually appealing, polished, and professional. Consequently, learners are both visually and verbally encouraged to engage with the proposed study materials. These elements present a diverse array of learning topics, activities and particularities that can foster emotional engagement among students.

1. *Structure*. From a global perspective, the materials demonstrate that teaching is facilitated through the structured presentation of activities. These recurring structures play a crucial role in engaging students and fostering a sense of comfort throughout the learning process, as they provide clear expectations for the student's next steps. Furthermore, the authors establish a coherent progression within the teaching units, guiding learners toward revision sections. These revision sections are pivotal components of the materials, as they reflect and reinforce the outcomes of prior learning. Additionally, the design of the materials is simple and familiar, featuring a clean and well-organized layout that aids students in comprehending the content with ease. Well-structured tasks not only capture learners' attention but also enhance their engagement. A moderate level of visual complexity further contributes

to this engagement, as it creates an environment that evokes feelings of comfort, minimizing anxiety and confusion and promoting a positive emotional response to the learning experience.

2. *Typography*. Nonverbal elements play a significant role in the design of e-textbooks and in shaping the impact of their textual messages. The use of typography in the verbal content is intentionally simple. Since verbal messages consist of written words, each word in the material exhibits paralinguistic properties specific to the text. These paralinguistic features are expressed through choices in font style, color, capitalization, and the inclusion of non-alphabetic or abstract characters. For instance, the use of bold, colored fonts in headlines enhances the prominence of key messages, while bold typefaces in section and subsection titles serve as navigational aids for readers. These textual paralinguistic cues influence how students perceive and process the content, helping to establish a visual hierarchy that enables quick scanning, identification of key information, and recognition of relationships between elements.

The verbal messages are clear and highly readable due to the careful application of typographical techniques such as appropriate paragraph spacing, line spacing, font size, and letter spacing, all of which significantly impact readability. These design elements contribute to a seamless reading experience, making the material visually pleasant and facilitating the absorption of information. Ultimately, this attention to typographic detail evokes a positive emotional response, promoting greater engagement and a more enjoyable learning experience.

3. *Visuals*. The materials are not only linguistically codified at the lexical level but are also visually enriched through the inclusion of photographs, drawings, abstract images, videos, tables, symbols, and icons. Each type of visual element enhances the effectiveness of the content, working in tandem with the text to provide clearer, more precise instructions. The integration of both verbal and visual coding significantly aids in improving memory retention and comprehension. Importantly, when visual media elicits emotional responses, it deepens the processing of language input, thereby facilitating more effective learning outcomes.

The use of images in the educational materials provides visual variety and enhances their overall appeal. These visuals capture learners' attention by depicting real-life situations that evoke emotional responses in language learners. Photographic images, in particular, accurately portray the characteristics of scenes, allowing learners to experience a sense of immersion. Visual prompts not only stimulate imagination but also engage learners' emotional understanding, enriching their use of descriptive language. Because these visuals create vivid or real-life experiences, they serve both to entertain and enlighten students, effectively conveying the deeper connotations of the activities while eliciting emotions that learners would typically encounter in similar real-life contexts. By providing contextual support to the written content, these images can evoke favourable emotional responses, which in turn enhance recall and increase information retention. Visual elements, especially those that elicit emotions, are instrumental in strengthening learners' memory of the topics studied in class.

The videos, ranging from one to four minutes in length, are designed to present material in a concise, interactive, and visually engaging manner. They serve as a highly effective tool, bringing the outside world into the classroom and allowing learners to witness real-life scenarios in action. These videos offer students the opportunity to imaginatively experience or emotionally engage with staged, yet realistic, situations. From the very first seconds, the videos make a strong initial impression, quickly capturing learners' attention and offering an enjoyable and dynamic alternative for presenting language content.

In explanatory videos, the primary represented participant is typically the teacher, who assumes the role of an authoritative figure. The segments in which the teacher explains grammar concepts feature direct engagement with learners through a "demand" approach, where the teacher addresses students with a direct gaze. This eye contact fosters a sense of interaction, creating an imaginary yet meaningful relationship between the teacher and the viewers. As a result, strong engagement is established, promoting a sense of equality in the power dynamic between the teacher and students. The teacher's friendly and warm demeanor further enhances this connection, fostering a feeling of trust, which is

essential in the teacher-student relationship.

When explaining grammar, the teacher often incorporates humor, with jokes tied to the topic being discussed. These jokes serve as a form of emotional manipulation, encouraging students to enjoy the learning process. By ending each video on a light-hearted note, the videos effectively motivate viewers to find enjoyment in their studies. On the other hand, interactive parts of videos, through such techniques, create an immersive learning environment in which emotions play a crucial role in decision-making.

The visual analysis of the e-textbooks reveals that the authors strategically use photographs and videos of people to evoke emotional responses from students. Key elements such as body language and facial expressions of the depicted human participants are critical in shaping the emotional impact of the visual content. Numerous images feature participants who engage learners directly through eye contact, which fosters a strong connection between the viewer and the represented individuals (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This direct gaze encourages interaction, creating an imaginary yet impactful relationship between the learners and the participants.

The use of personal pronouns in both the textual and audio components further dissolves any perceived barriers between the learners and the visual participants, establishing a familiar and comfortable learning environment that reduces anxiety. Messages are constructed with a high degree of interactivity, due to the use of the word "your," along with "you," which reflects the authors' intent to project a friendly and approachable tone. It serves to establish a conversational dialogue with the learners. Additionally, the use of interrogative sentences and the imperative mood are linguistic strategies that actively involve the students, fostering a welcoming and communicative atmosphere in the digital space.

Intimate social distance, created through both visual and linguistic elements, enhances learners' sense of connection with the participants in the images and videos. This engagement not only generates specific emotions but also highlights positive themes, such as support and assistance, contributing to an environment in which students feel comfortable and emotionally supported in their learning journey.

Most of the shots in the e-textbooks are presented at close and medium distances, creating the impression that students can virtually enter the represented space and position themselves within the depicted situations. In certain photographs, objects are shown at such close range that learners can only see them in part, evoking a sensation that they could physically interact with these objects. This framing technique enhances the sense of presence, making learners feel as if they are part of the scene which, as a result, can elicit a corresponding emotional response. The proximity of these visual elements encourages the viewers to immerse themselves in the context, aiding them in generating ideas and, consequently, acquisition of the material. This use of close-up and medium shots effectively facilitates emotional and cognitive engagement by drawing the students into the learning environment and making the material feel tangible and immediate.

4. *Colour*. Color is regarded as a mode that encapsulates human emotional experiences. In teaching materials, the use of color in images plays a critical role in enhancing emotional connections. For instance, colors that highlight faces in photographs create a stronger emotional impact, intensifying the connection between the learners and the depicted individuals. Similarly, the warm tones used in images of meals are engaging, evoking positive and inviting feelings that can stimulate discussion. Photographs of nature, featuring typical, calming colors, further evoke a sense of invitation, encouraging learners to contemplate and explore the landscape. This sensory engagement with nature can be highly beneficial in sparking creativity and generating ideas in students, making color an important element in fostering emotional and intellectual responses in educational contexts.

5. *Teaching activities*. Learners encounter a diverse array of activities presented at a pace that is appropriate for most students, ensuring effective coverage of multiple topics. The authors employ a dual approach, reinforcing the same topics through both verbal and non-verbal modes. This repetition not only captures attention but also enhances the delivery of educational content, transforming the learning

experience into something more immersive and engaging. By integrating these different modes, the materials facilitate a deeper understanding of the subjects while enriching the overall educational experience.

Storytelling and narrative-based learning are powerful strategies that evoke emotional responses in language learners. These activities require students to read or listen to emotionally charged stories, encouraging them to reflect on the characters' feelings, predict character reactions in various scenarios, and even rewrite sections of the story from alternative emotional perspectives. This approach fosters empathy and deep emotional engagement among learners.

By tapping into students' emotional and cognitive schemas, storytelling facilitates a more natural internalization of language structures. The narratives provide an emotional context for language, rendering abstract grammatical rules and vocabulary more meaningful and memorable. Through this immersive experience, learners are able to connect emotionally with the content, enhancing their overall understanding and retention of the language.

The incorporation of role-play in language learning significantly enhances emotional involvement, as these activities simulate real-life scenarios in which learners must engage both emotionally and cognitively. This immersive approach facilitates more meaningful language use.

During role-playing activities, learners find themselves in situations that require emotional reactions, such as participating in a job interview, resolving a conflict, or comforting a friend. Audio-visual cues are often integrated to intensify the emotional impact of these scenarios, further enriching the experience. Role play allows students to practice language within emotionally charged contexts, encouraging spontaneous use of language structures. Through these engaging and emotionally rich interactions, learners participate in meaningful communication, which can lead to improved language acquisition and retention.

Allowing learners to express themselves through creative writing is another emotionally engaging activity that taps into their emotions, fostering a deeper investment in the language learning process. This emotional connection to their writing content enables learners to apply language structures in more meaningful ways, enhancing both their engagement and understanding.

Similarly, activities involving games generate emotional excitement and engagement, creating a fun and stimulating environment that can significantly enhance motivation and lead to improved learning outcomes. Language games evoke emotions such as excitement and tension, making the learning experience more dynamic and enjoyable. By incorporating these emotionally charged elements, both creative writing and game-based activities contribute to a more effective and engaging language learning experience.

6. *Liking*. A relaxed and pleasant atmosphere is cultivated through the use of the liking technique, which effectively generates emotion, interest, and attention among learners. The materials present complex compositional structures that showcase the teaching content in an engaging manner for students. Importantly, the complexity of these structures remains largely invisible to the learners, allowing them to engage with various scenes that evoke emotional responses.

The cohesion between linguistic and visual elements fosters favorable mental images in learners, facilitating their ability to absorb the material more effectively. Furthermore, the user-friendly design of the e-textbook enhances navigation, allowing learners to explore the content effortlessly. This ease of navigation contributes to an increased sense of enjoyment and satisfaction, reinforcing their positive engagement with the learning materials.

7. *Diverse learning activities*. The value of diversity in the materials is emphasized through the wide range of represented elements, encompassing various activities and situations. This variety provides learners with numerous diverse experiences, making the materials both interesting and multifaceted. Such diversity not only enhances engagement but also fosters emotional involvement, allowing students to connect more deeply with the learning process. By incorporating a broad spectrum of activities, the materials cater to different learning styles and preferences, further enriching the educational experience.

8. *Languaging*. Languaging, defined as the specialized use of vocabulary that incorporates foreign words or languages unfamiliar to the audience and distinct from the language that students are mastering, is also evident in the teaching materials. This approach serves as an effective means of inducing a sense of exoticism among learners, heightening their interest in deciphering the meanings of these unfamiliar terms, even when these terms originate from a language distinct from the target language being taught.

By exploring cultural contexts, language learning becomes more meaningful and engaging. Discovering and understanding cultural nuances not only enriches the learning experience but also fosters empathy and appreciation for different perspectives. This engagement with diverse linguistic and cultural elements enhances students' overall language acquisition and encourages a deeper connection to the material.

9. *Music*. Music is a powerful emotional stimulus, it significantly enhances the learning experience. In videos and audio activities, music acts as a vehicle for creating emotional connections with the staged situations, contributing to a rich and immersive experience that can lead to improved learning outcomes.

In certain videos, the incorporation of background music enhances the impact of the information presented by capturing students' attention and evoking emotional responses. This auditory element fosters a sense of realism, making listeners feel as though they are part of authentic scenarios, which can positively influence memory retention. By creating an immersive atmosphere, background music not only enhances engagement but also helps learners internalize language patterns. The emotional responses elicited by music make the learning experience both enjoyable and memorable, reinforcing the connection between language and emotion.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study explores and highlights the significant role that emotionally engaging features in e-textbooks can play in developing students' language competencies. By incorporating language teaching methodologies that emphasize emotional involvement, the research demonstrates that emotions could enhance productivity and contribute to more meaningful language acquisition. The interplay between emotion and cognition fosters motivation, cognitive engagement, and memory retention, proving that emotionally stimulating activities are key to reducing boredom and increasing learner participation.

The investigation highlights that a sophisticated combination of pedagogical innovation and emotional engagement can effectively address diverse learning needs. Through a structured design, the materials can create an environment that fosters comfort and clarity, enabling students to navigate their learning journey with confidence. Typography, visuals, and color choices seamlessly integrate to enhance readability, comprehension, and emotional resonance, while interactive videos and role-play scenarios add depth to the learning experience by immersing learners in realistic and emotionally charged contexts. The incorporation of storytelling, creative writing, and diverse activities ensures a dynamic and inclusive approach to education, appealing to various learning styles and fostering a sense of connection. Techniques like the strategic use of music, the "liking" effect, and languaging further can enrich the emotional and cognitive dimensions of learning, transforming abstract concepts into tangible, meaningful experiences. Moreover, emotionally charged content encourages learners to form mental imageries and emotional arousals, which, in turn, promote deeper cognitive processing and long-term retention of knowledge.

This research provides valuable insights for textbook creators, showcasing how emotionally engaging elements can improve the overall effectiveness of educational materials. As a result, these findings offer a pathway to designing more impactful e-textbooks that can significantly enhance the outcomes of language learning in online environments.

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Захарова Гарсія Ганна. Сила емоцій у вивченні англійської як іноземної: *Дискурс-аналіз електронних навчальних ресурсів. Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, **12** (1) (2025), 6-14.

У цьому дослідженні розглядається значення емоційно залучених стратегій у навчальних матеріалах, зокрема їхній вплив на процес викладання та навчання. Емоції відіграють потужну роль в освіті, часто впливаючи на залучення та запам'ятовування матеріалу ефективніше, ніж логіка чи міркування. Метою дослідження є виявлення та оцінка конкретних особливостей в електронних підручниках англійської мови, опублікованих однією видавничою компанією, які здатні викликати емоційні реакції. Використовуючи мультимодальні корпусні методології, у дослідженні аналізуються такі елементи, як: структура тексту, типографіка, візуальні матеріали, кольорова палітра, навчальні завдання, різноманітність вправ, мовні засоби та музичні компоненти. Ці особливості досліджуються з метою з'ясування, як вони сприяють емоційному залученню, що може посилити зв'язок студентів із матеріалом. Результати показують, що стратегії емоційного залучення є важливими для покращення мовних компетентностей. Завдяки включенню емоційних стимулів підручники можуть створити більш динамічне та захоплююче навчальне середовище, сприяючи глибшим когнітивним і емоційним зв'язкам із контентом. Дослідження також доводить, що емоційне залучення є корисним не лише для підвищення привабливості навчального

процесу, але й для покращення запам'ятовування та загального оволодіння мовою. Отримані дані вказують на потенціал стратегій, орієнтованих на емоції, для покращення результатів вивчення мови. З розвитком навчальних матеріалів стає дедалі важливішим ураховувати емоційні чинники в їхньому дизайні. Це дослідження виступає за інтеграцію емоційного залучення в освітній контент і заохочує до подальших досліджень щодо того, як такі стратегії можуть бути систематично застосовані для створення кращого навчального досвіду та більш ефективного розвитку мовних навичок.

Ключові слова: емоції в освіті, дизайн навчальних матеріалів, емоційне залучення, емоційні стратегії, мультимодальні методології.