



---

**Universidad de Valladolid**

FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN Y TRABAJO SOCIAL  
FACULTAD de FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS

Máster en Profesor de Educación Secundaria  
Obligatoria y Bachillerato, Formación Profesional y  
Enseñanzas de Idiomas

TRABAJO DE FIN DE MÁSTER

An Approach to Integrate Emotional Education into the  
Foreign Language Classroom

Jordan Martín Infante

Tutor: Fernando Colomer Serna

2016-2017

## Abstract

Psychological and mental illnesses such as depression affect every year a larger amount of people, warning the World Health Organization (WHO) that during the following years they will become the type of disease that affects a larger number of individuals. Specifically, teenagers represent one of the main risk groups and are probably the ones more susceptible to suffer this kind of distress. However, the Secondary Education centers in Spain continue to ignore this fact and do not offer their students a psychological and emotional formation that allows them to avoid this type of diseases or a real support to overcome them. Indeed, the effects of this situation are observable both in the personal and in the academic field, what arises the need of incorporating to our Compulsory Secondary Education classrooms a set of tools that foster the students' emotional and psychological education.

Focusing this topic on the field of foreign language teaching, surveys such as the Eurobarometer and the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) barometer point out that the Spanish are at the bottom of European ranking in terms of English proficiency level. In fact, the reasons behind this poor performance have both a psychological origin – lack of motivation and confidence – and a methodological origin, as a significant part of our teachers continue to utilize obsolete and ineffective methods when teaching a foreign language. Therefore, it is required an approach that fosters not only the students' emotional education, but also a better and more effective acquisition of the foreign language. Bearing this in mind, the objective of this dissertation is the creation a methodological approach that allows the natural acquisition of the English language and that also cultivates the pupils' emotional intelligence and takes care of their mental health.

*Keywords:* Emotional Education, Emotional Intelligence, Foreign Language Acquisition, English as a Second Language, Compulsory Secondary Education, Methodological Approaches

## Resumen

Las enfermedades de tipo psicológico y mental tales como la depresión afectan cada año a un mayor número de personas, alertando la Organización Mundial de la Salud de que en los próximos años se convertirán en el tipo de afección que afecte a un mayor número de individuos. En concreto, los adolescentes son uno de los principales grupos de riesgo y probablemente los más propensos a sufrir este tipo de malestar. Sin embargo, los centros de Educación Secundaria en España continúan ignorando este hecho al no ofrecer a sus alumnos una formación psicológica y emocional que les permita evitar estas dolencias ni una ayuda real a la hora de superarlas. Efectivamente, los efectos de esta situación son observables tanto en el ámbito personal como en el académico, por lo que es necesario incorporar a las aulas de nuestra Educación Secundaria Obligatoria una serie de herramientas que permitan la educación emocional y psicológica del alumnado.

Centrando este inconveniente en el ámbito de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras, estudios como el Eurobarómetro o el barómetro del Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) señalan que los españoles nos encontramos a la cola de Europa en cuanto a nuestro nivel de inglés. De hecho, los motivos detrás de este bajo rendimiento tienen tanto un origen psicológico – falta de motivación y confianza – como metodológico, pues una parte significativa de nuestros docentes sigue empleando métodos anticuados e ineficaces a la hora de enseñar una lengua extranjera. Por lo tanto, es necesario un enfoque que fomente tanto la educación emocional del alumnado como una mejor y más eficaz adquisición de la lengua extranjera. Teniendo todo esto en cuenta, el objetivo de este Trabajo de Fin de Máster (TFM) es la creación de un enfoque metodológico que permita la adquisición de la lengua inglesa de una forma natural y que a su vez cultive la inteligencia emocional del alumnado y cuide de su salud mental.

*Palabras clave:* Educación Emocional, Inteligencia Emocional, Adquisición de una Lengua Extranjera, Inglés como Lengua Extranjera, Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, Enfoques Metodológicos

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Introduction .....	1
2. Objectives .....	4
2.1. General Objective .....	4
2.2. Specific Objectives .....	4
3. Justification .....	5
4. Theoretical Framework .....	7
4.1. The Teaching of English as a Foreign Language .....	8
4.1.1. Communicative Competence .....	8
4.1.2. Skills .....	13
4.1.2.1. Listening .....	14
4.1.2.2. Speaking .....	15
4.1.2.3. Reading .....	16
4.1.2.4. Writing .....	18
4.1.2.5. Oral Interaction .....	19
4.1.2.6. Thinking .....	21
4.1.3. Non-verbal Language .....	22
4.1.4. Acquisition or Learning .....	23
4.2. Psychological concepts .....	25
4.2.1. Emotional Intelligence .....	26
4.2.2. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences: Intrapersonal and Interpersonal .....	29
4.2.3. Neuro-linguistic Programming .....	31
5. Methodological Bases .....	32
5.1. Foreign Language Teaching Methodologies .....	33
5.2. Application of Emotional Intelligence .....	37
5.2.1. Dealing with Emotions .....	37
5.2.1.1. Anger .....	38
5.2.1.2. Anxiety and Stress .....	39
5.2.1.3. Sadness and Depression .....	41
5.2.2. Empathy .....	42
5.2.3. Motivation .....	44
5.2.4. Feedback .....	45

5.2.5. Flow .....	46
6. An Approach to Integrate Emotional Education into the Foreign Language Classroom .....	48
6.1. Preparing the Ground: the Classroom Environment .....	49
6.2. Combining Role-Playing and Task-Based Processes to Foster Language Acquisition and Interpersonal Intelligence .....	53
6.3. Transactional Talk as a Means to Achieve Flow .....	58
6.4. Using Oral Production to Eliminate the Taboos Associated to Expression of Emotions .....	60
6.5. Speaking with Change of Sensory System .....	62
6.6. From Relaxation to Physical Activity .....	65
6.7. Non-verbal Communication as a Tool to Foster Empathy .....	67
6.8. Providing Feedback and Solving Conflicts .....	69
6.8.1. Evaluating and Providing Constructive Feedback .....	69
6.8.2. Conflict Resolution .....	71
7. Conclusions .....	72
8. Proposed Improvements .....	74
9. References .....	76

**TABLE OF CONTENTS: TABLES AND FIGURES**

Table 1: Linguistic competences ..... 9

Figure 1: Conceptualization of emotional intelligence by Salovey and Mayer ..... 28

Figure 2: Relation between the level of challenge and skills to achieve *flow* ..... 48

## 1. Introduction

Psychological and mental diseases are becoming the most common type of illness during the 21<sup>st</sup> century and one of the main issues that affects our society in both health and socio-economic terms. In fact, according to the World Health Organization (2011), “by 2030 depression will be the leading cause of disease burden globally” (p. 1). Nonetheless, it is in the case of teenagers that this negative situation becomes more significant. Specifically, the above mentioned organization asserts that mental illnesses such as depression are the first cause of disease and the third cause of death among adolescents (World Health Organization, 2014). What is more, research has found that a vast amount of teenagers suffer “emotional distress” after beginning secondary education, but most of them felt that no real assistance was provided at their schools (Ellis, 2017). The fact of finding out that virtually no help is offered to adolescents at their educational centers results to be more disturbing when it is found out that the psychological field points to adolescence as the most suitable period to acquire the fundamental emotional habits that will lead the rest of our lives (Goleman, 1996). Consequently, all these factors highlight the imperious necessity of incorporating emotional education into our Compulsory Secondary Education schools. Indeed, the acquisition of emotional intelligence is seen as essential nowadays, as it is what allows an individual to deal efficiently with his/her own or other people’s emotions in order to achieve a healthy state of mind and to guide appropriately his/her life actions. Unfortunately, the Spanish educational system continues to give a marginal status to emotional education, a situation that at present seems far to be changed. In particular, the recent educational reforms carried out by the LOMCE (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa*) modifying LOE do not make significant contributions in terms of emotional education, while the possibility of reaching a global agreement on education that solves this and other issues does not appear to be a reality in the short term. On top of that, whereas countries like Finland have already put into practice methods that foster a comprehensive education of the student, the overall picture in Spain is that of a system that mainly pays attention to the learning of academic contents. Therefore, the need of incorporating the cultivation of emotional intelligence in Spanish secondary schools seems now more pertinent than ever.

This dissertation will precisely look at the integration of emotional education into the foreign language subject, focusing on the English language. Particularly, the English language is definitely one of the pending subjects of the Spanish population, being this exemplified by several facts. First of all, the Eurobarometer report manifests that Spain is the second European

country with a lower level of English, only behind Hungary (European Commission, 2012). In addition to that, the last edition of the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) barometer (2017) brings to light that almost a 60% of the Spanish population is unable to understand or speak English, whereas only a 19.4% is able to maintain a conversation in this foreign language; actually, a 40% of those surveyed consider that the Spanish educational system gives little or none importance to the learning of foreign languages. If we look for the reasons behind these negative outcomes, most researchers coincide in pointing out to two main elements. On the one hand, a significant amount of Spanish students tend to show a lack of confidence and a fear to ridicule when trying to communicate in a foreign language, something that is indeed in direct relation to the field of emotions and emotional intelligence (Lendoiro, 2014). On the other hand, most educators agree that our schools have a tendency to impart excessive theory and grammatical explanations, in contrast to the more communicative methods employed in countries like Sweden (Aguilar, 2017). Accordingly, it is needed a new way not only to approach the teaching a foreign language, but also to increase students' motivation and emotional control.

Considering all those elements, the aim of the present dissertation is creating a new approach to the teaching of the English language that manages to foster both the pupils' communicative competence in the foreign language and their emotional intelligence and awareness. In other words, our objective is to design a set of tools that permit a better acquisition of the foreign language, while at the same time students learn how to control their emotions and to interact respectfully with their classmates. As well as that, it has been emphasized during the last years that foreign language teaching should be addressed to allow the students to take part in actual communication situations, what highlights the necessity of paying special attention to the oral skills. Similarly, the national and regional curricula for Spain – *Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre* (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2015) – and Castilla y León – *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015) – stress also the need of learning how to use the language in real contexts, which involves again the oral competence. Therefore, the approach that will be created in this dissertation to integrate emotional education and foreign language acquisition will be mainly focused on the cultivation of the oral production and oral interaction skills. To this end, this dissertation will carry out a research effort in two principal directions. On the one hand, we will look at the competences and skills that are aimed to be developed in a foreign language classroom, without forgetting the manners in which they can be fostered. On the other hand,



the psychological field will be approached to elucidate the forms in which human emotions can be recognized and handled, so that we can later apply this knowledge to the secondary education environment.

This dissertation is then divided in the following parts. Section 2 states in a more detailed manner the objectives pursued by this paper, making a distinction between general objectives and specific objectives. Afterwards, Section 3 provides a more in depth justification of the motives behind the necessity of incorporating emotional education into the foreign language classroom in secondary education. Thereupon, Section 4 is divided in two main parts:

- Section 4.1. analyzes the skills and competences that a foreign language classroom should develop, as well as other relevant concepts that must be regarded when imparting this subject in our Compulsory Secondary Education system.
- Section 4.2. provides a detailed description and explanation of what lies beneath the term *emotional intelligence*. Moreover, other psychological theories that can be useful in the educational field are also dissected, such as the theory of multiple intelligences or neuro-linguistic programming.

Section 5 is divided in two parts as well:

- Section 5.1. makes an account of the most important methodologies utilized for teaching a second language, which will serve as a starting point to create our own approach.
- Section 5.2. illustrates the main techniques provided by the psychological field to recognize and control our emotions and achieve a healthy state of mind. Besides, the theory of multiple intelligences and neuro-linguistic programming procedures that can be relevant in the field of emotional education are examined as well.

Referring to Section 6, this one describes the specific approach that has been designed in order to integrate foreign language acquisition with emotional education. Subsequently, Section 7 shows the conclusions and findings that the whole process of research and creation of an approach have brought to light. In the last place, Section 8 points out the different elements that can be changed or added in order to improve this dissertation.

## **2. Objectives**

The starting point of this dissertation will consist on the explicit statement of the objectives that we are going to pursue along the following sections. With this purpose in mind, we will make a distinction between the general objective around which this paper revolves and the specific objectives that will help us to reach that main purpose.

### **2.1. General Objective**

The main objective of this dissertation is the creation of an approach to the teaching of a foreign language that integrates emotional education with the natural acquisition of a foreign language. Specifically, it is intended to describe the role of the teacher and the students, the activity typologies and the environmental elements, among others, that should be followed in order to help the students not only to naturally acquire and utilize the English language, but also to achieve a healthy growth in terms of psychological and emotional development. However, what we are going to propose is not a strict methodology that has to be followed step by step, but a set of tools that can be freely utilized depending on the necessities of each educational context. In brief, our main goal is to develop a methodological approach that makes possible the fostering of both the students' emotional intelligence and communicative competence in the English language.

### **2.2. Specific Objectives**

In order to fulfill this general purpose, a number of specific objectives have to be achieved as well. Although some of them show a dissimilar nature, the sum of all of them will permit us to appropriately develop an approach that incorporates both the cultivation of emotional intelligence and the fostering of the communicative competence in the English language. These specific objectives can be described as follows:

- Finding out the elements that make up the communicative competence in a foreign language, as well as the manners in which they can be cultivated.
- Analyzing and understanding the nature of the six skills that have to be fostered in a foreign language classroom, discovering as well the multiple forms that exist to put them into practice.
- Illustrating the differences between the processes of acquisition and learning of a second language, showing the reasons behind the decision of creating an approach that fosters acquisition over learning.

- Becoming aware of the nature of non-verbal communication and showing its importance in the fields of emotional intelligence and language acquisition.
- Gaining a deep understanding of the concept *emotional intelligence* and demonstrating the necessity of including emotional education in Compulsory Secondary Education.
- Being cognizant of the theses of the theory of multiple intelligences and neuro-linguistic programming and their benefits on education.
- Elucidating the diverse tools and techniques that the psychological field offers to achieve a healthy psychological and mental state, adapting then these methods to the specific context of the English subject in Compulsory Secondary Education.

### 3. Justification

The present section will elucidate the reasons behind the necessity of incorporating the teaching of emotional intelligence into the classroom of English as a foreign language in Compulsory Secondary School. With that purpose in mind, the arguments of some of the most relevant scholars in the field and the remarks present in both European and Spanish curricular documents will be utilized to support the justification of the choice of the above mentioned topic.

In the first place, both the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (Council of Europe, 2001) and the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015) – the one that establishes the curriculum for Compulsory Secondary Obligation in Castilla y León – point out the significant influence that affective factors have on the process of learning a foreign language. On the one hand, the former states how elements such as self-esteem and motivation affect the student in the foreign language classroom, cleverly expressing that a positive emotional state makes the student “more likely to learn and to succeed” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 161). On the other hand, the latter asserts in relation to the first foreign language that motivation is a major factor in the acquisition of the linguistic and socio-cultural contents of the subject, what stresses the need of using particular methods to help the student in this sense (Council of Europe, 2001). Therefore, the critical importance of psychological and emotional elements in the foreign language classroom is highlighted by both European and regional documents, being this one of the elements that gives green light to the present dissertation.

In direct relation to what has been previously said, the *Affective Filter hypothesis* stated by the linguist and educational researcher Stephen Krashen provides also relevant findings in regard to the application of emotional intelligence in the foreign language class. Similarly to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* and the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo*, Krashen (1982) mentions motivation, self-confidence and anxiety as the affective factors that influence the success in second language acquisition. However, he only relates this to language acquisition and not with language learning, since students “tend to show stronger relationships to second language achievement” when communicative approaches are used in the classroom (Krashen, 1982, p. 31); in any case, Krashen’s distinction between acquisition and learning will be explained further on. To put it another way, this American scholar argues that those who do not show those psychological traits mentioned above will have access not only to a lesser amount of language input, but also to a lower degree of comprehension of the message. Accordingly, Stephen Krashen affirms that a positive emotional state is needed in order to achieve a better acquisition of a second language, and encourages teachers to create classroom situations that permit a low affective filter (high motivation and self-confidence, and low anxiety).

If we are dealing with the field of emotional intelligence, the figure of Daniel Goleman must be surely brought into debate; in fact, several of his findings serve to justify the aims of this dissertation. First of all, Goleman warns about the tendency of the present generation of children towards isolation, depression, anxiety and aggressiveness, among others, and puts school as the ideal place to handle this issue and adolescence as the optimum period to solve it (Goleman, 1996). As well as that, this American psychologist provides scientific evidence on how emotional disturbance supposes an obstacle to a process of learning, such as the one of a foreign language, due mainly to the fact that the working memory – in charge of processing the information that a student receives in a English classroom, for instance – does not execute its functions correctly under adverse psychological conditions (Goleman, 1996). In brief, Goleman illustrates how a vast amount of teachers are starting to realize that the origin of many of their students’ academic difficulties has an emotional foundation.

In the last place, it is compulsory to mention the large number of research studies carried out that put academic performance in direct relation with emotional intelligence. Among others, the study conducted Gil-Olarte Márquez, Palomera Martín and Brackett (2006) took into account four factors to determine this relation. Specifically, seventy-seven high schools students took the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test and a General

Intelligence test, which were compared to a measurement of their personality traits and their school results. In short, it was found out that those “students with high EI tended to be more prosocial and perform better in school” and it was suggested “that integrating lessons on socio-emotional learning in schools might improve students’ performance” (Gil-Olarte Márquez, Palomera Martín & Brackett, 2006, p. 122), just as the present dissertation aims. In addition to this, we have to mention the content of the article carried out by Extremera Pacheco and Fernández-Berrocal (2004). In particular, what they did was to analyze the data of several of the most recent and important researches regarding the impact of emotional intelligence on school performance. Through the analysis of a significant amount of investigations, they concluded that students which are emotionally intelligent tend not only to show less disruptive behaviors, but also to obtain a better school performance. On top of that, they also end up pointing out the necessity of integrating the development of emotional intelligence in the secondary school classroom, which is precisely what this dissertation proposes for the foreign language subject.

Accordingly, students’ psychological and emotional state has an influence on the process of learning (or acquiring) a second language, what arises the need of integrating the development of emotional intelligence to the English classroom. In fact, through the achievement of a healthier psychological condition not only students’ motivation will increase, but also their cognitive processes will work more efficiently to acquire the content of the English as a foreign language class. In words of Karen Stone McCown, developer of a program called Self Science that helps students developing their emotional competence, “learning doesn’t take place in isolation from kids’ feelings. Being emotionally literate is as important for learning as instruction in math and reading” (as cited in Goleman, 1996, p. 164).

#### **4. Theoretical Framework**

The nature of the present dissertation focusing in the application of emotional intelligence in the foreign language classroom makes necessary that this section is made up of two main parts. On the one hand, we will pay attention to the competences and skills that are meant to be developed in our Compulsory Secondary Education so that we can discover the precise aspects that any methodology should take into consideration in the English as a foreign language classroom. To achieve that goal, special attention will be paid to what is present in the European and Spanish curricula and to the theories of the main scholars of the field. On the

other hand, we will make a first approach to those emotional and psychological aspects and concepts that we consider convenient to be integrated in the English classroom, such as emotional intelligence, multiple intelligences theory and neuro-linguistic programming. Again, the main scholars of these fields will be brought into question, deepening in those aspects that may be more useful in the case of secondary education and in the critical period of adolescence.

## **4.1. The Teaching of English as a Foreign Language**

### **4.1.1. Communicative Competence**

Although there are many competences that are developed in a foreign language classroom, it is undeniable that cultivating the **communicative competence** will always be the main objective. Being the aim of this dissertation that of finding a new approach to the teaching of a second language, our first task consists in discovering the nature of that competence and its principal characteristics.

First of all, let us start by looking at the description of communicative competence present in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. According to this document, it is an ability comprised of three main components: linguistic competences, sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences; let us give a closer look to each of them. Starting with the linguistic competences, they relate to the knowledge that speaker has about the lexical, grammatical and syntactical components of a language, among others, and about the language as a system in general terms (Council of Europe, 2001). Nonetheless, acquiring these linguistic competences consists not only in being aware of the characteristics, but also in being able to recall and use that knowledge whenever necessary. Therefore, a linguistically competent speaker possess a real understanding of the mechanisms that govern a language, since simply knowing them is not enough. As well as that, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* also mentions six more competences as part of the linguistic competence; Table 1 makes a quick account of all of them.

Competence	Definition
Lexical competence	Knowledge and ability to use the vocabulary of a language
Grammatical competence	Ability to understand and express meaning by producing and recognizing well-formed phrases and sentences according to the morphological and syntactic principles of the language.
Semantic competence	Awareness of the meaning of words, sentences or texts.
Phonological competence	Ability to perceive and produce the particular phonological features of a language
Orthographic competence	Ability to perceive and produce the correct symbols that make up texts
Orthoepic competence	Ability to express orally correctly what it is found in written form

**Table 1: Linguistic competences (Adapted from Council of Europe, 2001)**

In relation to this linguistic competence, it is noteworthy that the national and regional curricula for Spain – *Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre* (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2015) – and Castilla y León – *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015) – mention this competence as the main one that has to be developed in the foreign language class. This is probably due to the fact the LOMCE (*Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, para la mejora de la calidad educativa*) modifying LOE mentions the linguistic competence as one of the seven key competences that every student has to acquire during his/her Compulsory Secondary Education period, and does not mention the communicative competence as such. In fact, the linguistic competence covers a narrower range than the communicative competence that the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* and most linguists and scholars defend, so it seems reasonable to follow the stipulated by these to achieve a better understanding of the foreign language.

The second component of the communicative competence according to the *CEFR* (2001) is the sociolinguistic competence. Specifically, it refers to the social conventions that take place in a communication exchange, such as rules of politeness or norms governing



different contexts. These social conventions regarding language use can be classified into five categories (Council of Europe, 2001):

- Linguistic markers of social relations (i.e. linguistic resources to point out a difference in the status between the speakers)
- Politeness conventions (i.e. the manners with which the exchange is delivered with appropriateness and respect)
- Expressions of folk wisdom (e.g. proverbs, idioms or other popular expressions)
- Register differences (i.e. the different varieties of language according to the context)
- Dialect and accent (i.e. lexical, grammatical and/or phonological characteristics proper of an specific place)

In brief, the sociocultural competence is related to the social dimension of language and with the ability of adapting our language use to the different contexts we may encounter.

The third element that makes up the communicative competence is the pragmatic competence. Particularly, this one is related to the speaker's ability to use language to perform communicative functions and to utilize it in a manner beyond the literal sense of words (Council of Europe, 2001). This may be the more difficult to acquire and understand for a non-native speaker, so let us give a close look to the components of which it is made up. First of all, we have the discourse competence, which is achieved when sentences are arranged in a coherent manner (Council of Europe, 2001). In particular, this is related to the order of words within a sentence, with providing the appropriate message according to the context and with following the proper text conventions. Additionally, the pragmatic competence also includes what is called functional competence. In this case, functional competence deals with the ability of using language with specific purposes (Council of Europe, 2001). In other words, language may be used with the intention of expressing attitudes, giving information or explanations, or instructing, among others. Consequently, the functional competence is what allows us to use language with a specific purpose to achieve a goal.

Accordingly, this is how the communicative competence is defined in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* and, therefore, those are the competences that any foreign language student should acquire. However, this dissertation would be incomplete if only a single conception of communicative competence were analyzed. Hence, we will now focus our attention on the understanding of communicative competence that the most important academics of the field defend, so that we



can have a more objective and broader view of what it is the most important competence that a foreign language class aims to develop.

We cannot speak about communicative competence without referring to figure of Dell Hymes, which was actually the one who coined the term in 1966. As it can be observed in his paper “On Communicative Competence” (1972), Hymes developed his conception of communicative competence in reaction against Noam Chomsky’s idea of that competence. Specifically, Chomsky considered that people have a subconscious knowledge of the rules of a language, and that mere grammatical competence is what allows someone to communicate. In other words, Chomsky assumed that the ability to speak a language was innate and universal, and depended mainly on understanding the grammar of a language, what leaves the social factor out of the equation. In contrast, Dell Hymes stated that the competence of communicating was consequence not only of having acquired or learnt the proper grammatical rules, but also of being able to adapt those grammatical forms to each specific context. Therefore, his notion of communicative competence involves the mastery of other elements apart from the linguistic competence, such as social factors. In fact, this is quite similar to the description of communicative competence provided by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, which considers linguistic competence just as a sub-division within communicative competence. Similarly, Hymes also creates a sub-division within the communicative competence including four aspects. First of all, we have what Hymes calls the *systematic potential*, which refers to the speaker’s possibility of creating an unlimited amount of new utterances. Secondly, communicative competence also involves *appropriacy*, being this the ability of adapting language to the context. Thirdly, Hymes also mentions the awareness of how usual or rare is a linguist element and creating sentences in relation to that knowledge, an ability that receives the name of *occurrence*. Lastly, the speaker is conscious as well of the possibility of a grammatical construction to exist in a language, which receives the name of *feasibility*. Accordingly, Hymes’ conception of communicative competence comprises not only a mastery of the linguistic elements of a language, but also the ability to adapt that grammatical knowledge to the social context. Consequently, this competence is only achieved through social interaction and through the specific issues and needs that may appear in actual interaction.

Michael Canale and Merrill Swain’s article “Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing” (1980) also brings to light significant matters regarding the topic we are dealing with. Particularly, they claim that communicative

competence comprises both the knowledge of language use – language in context – and the grammar rules themselves; to put it another way, it is the combination and interaction of grammatical competence and sociolinguistic competence. Up to this point, Canale and Swain’s understanding of communicative competence does not seem to differ from Hymes’ conception, but an important divergence can be identified. Specifically, while Hymes includes performance or the ability to use language correctly within the term communicative competence, Canale and Swain prefer to make a distinction between communicative competence and communicative performance. That is, Canale and Swain associate communicative competence to having the knowledge related to language use and grammatical rules, but not to the actual use of language. Apart from that, they consider communicative competence to be made up of four components: the above mentioned grammatical and sociolinguistic competences, to which must be added the discourse competence and the strategic competence; let us provide a quick vision of all of them (Canale & Swain, 1983):

- Grammatical competence: It is related to knowing how to construct a correct and comprehensible statement.
- Sociolinguistic competence: It deals with the social and cultural rules of language use.
- Discourse competence: It involves being able structure language through cohesion and coherence.
- Strategic competence: It requires the ability of making communication effective and resolving the issues that may appear in any interaction.

Therefore, Canale and Swain’s notion of communicative competence includes the knowledge of the linguistic system and the social and cultural factors associated to linguistic interaction. Besides, they make a distinction between communicative competence and communicative performance, so the ability of using language in real communication would not belong to this competence.

The last conception of communicative competence we are going to approach is that of Sandra Savignon. In the first place, Savignon affirms that “communicative competence is a dynamic rather than a static concept,” as it depends on the interaction and cooperation of the interlocutors, who may have a different degree of knowledge of the linguistic system (Savignon, 1983, p. 8). Hence, communicative competence is determined by the participants of the interaction, what makes this competence an interpersonal trait (Savignon, 1983). As a consequence, we cannot talk about having acquired this competence or not, but about the

degree of competence a speaker has. As well as that, Savignon also follows Hymes' idea that the ability to perform or proficiency is part of the communicative competence, something that differentiates her notion from that of Chomsky or Canale and Swain. Consequently, communicative competence equals communicative performance according to Savignon. In the last place, this academic considers as well that communicative competence is made up of other components such as the sociolinguistic and strategic competences. Nevertheless, the main dissimilarity with other scholars is that Savignon (1983) states these competences may appear even before the acquisition of any linguistic or grammatical competences. To sum up, Savignon's notion of communicative competence involves the interaction of linguistic and social elements, and the equivalence between communicative competence and performance, what places her in a position near to that of Hymes. However, in contrast to other scholars, she considers this competence to be a dynamic and interpersonal trait, refusing then the idea that it is specific to each individual.

Taking all these definitions into account, we can consider communicative competence as a concept that implies:

- Not only being aware of linguistic elements (grammatical, lexical, semantic, and orthographic) that make up language, but also knowing how to use them in actual communication.
- Being cognizant of the social and cultural norms and conventions that are attached to a specific language and producing output accordingly.
- Going beyond the literal meaning of words and being able to use the language with specific communicative purposes and adapting it to the concrete context.
- Being sensible of the constructions that are likely to appear in a language or not.
- Being able to structure discourse through coherence and cohesion.
- Being capable of solving the issues that may appear in actual communication.

#### **4.1.2. Skills**

Regarding the skills that have to be developed in a foreign language class, they have been traditionally divided in four main skills: *listening*, *speaking*, *reading* and *writing*. Nonetheless, a fifth and sixth skills have been added recently to these ones, which are the *oral interaction* or *conversation* and *thinking*. Since this dissertation has the main objective of creating an approach for the teaching of a foreign language, it seems essential to analyze the

nature of these six skills. Accordingly, the following paragraphs will provide a description of these skills, the importance behind the attention they are given in the foreign language classroom, and the goals that have to be achieved in each of them, without forgetting other relevant facts and strategies that may be appropriate to point out.

#### **4.1.2.1. Listening**

The first skill we are going to analyze is the aural reception, which usually receives the common name of *listening*. According to the *CFER*, *listening* activities consist in the listener receiving and processing “a spoken input produced by one or more speakers” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 65). During this process, listeners are involved actively in the interpretation of what they hear, “bringing their own background knowledge and their linguistic knowledge” to understand the information present in the aural text (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 3). Specifically, *listening* activities may have a wide variety of sources, such as public announcements, the media or conversations, but the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* emphasizes the necessity of these documents being real and presenting the sociocultural and transversal contents that this curriculum fosters (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015).

Although all the skills presented in this dissertation are important, the aural reception is especially significant due to several reasons. In the first place, *listening* is the skill that covers a larger amount of time during the communication process. As an illustration, a 90% of the information that students receive in school is thanks to aural reception (Schwartz, 1998). As well as that, it is through listening that we receive most of the input that enables us to acquire and learn a language (Schwartz, 1998), which makes it a primary tool in the foreign language classroom. On top of that, the ability of knowing “how to listen” permits a language user to understand a message and participate in a communication even when he/she does not have the appropriate grammatical or lexical knowledge yet. All these reasons show the necessity of giving aural reception the adequate attention to foster students’ communicative competence.

A foreign language class should help students develop a set of strategies to be able to understand any message they receive in aural medium. Specifically, two main *listening* strategies are used to improve students’ comprehension: *top-down* and *bottom-up* strategies. On the one hand, *top-down* strategies relying on the listener’s previous knowledge and expectations to interfere or predict the message taking the context of the text as the main basis (Morley, 1991). On the other hand, *bottom-up* strategies have the actual listening input as their focus. Particularly, it is what we commonly understand as comprehending the meaning of the

lexical items and sentences themselves (Richards, 1983). To this two type of strategies we could add the *metacognitive* strategies, which are the ones that help the listener decide which listening strategy should be used in each occasion (Schwartz, 1998).

In the last place, let us focus our attention on the goals and objectives that a student has to achieve at the end of the Compulsory Secondary Education in terms of *listening*. With this purpose in mind, we will analyze what the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* stipulates (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015) in relation to oral comprehension in the 4<sup>th</sup> year ESO – the one which puts an end to the stage. In particular, this curriculum that the language user must be able to understand, at least, the general meaning and the essential information of short/medium-length texts about general topics. To that end, they have to know how to use the appropriate strategies and the corresponding sociocultural and sociolinguistic elements. Besides, the students have to be able to distinguish the communicative functions of an oral text, as well as the communicative intentions associated to phonetic patterns. Lastly, syntactic and lexical items related to day-to-day affairs and the student’s own interests must be comprehended, even though it may be necessary the help of the context or visual aids.

#### **4.1.2.2. Speaking**

Moving now to oral production, this skill is normally referred under the term *speaking*. If we follow the description provided by the *CFER*, *speaking* consists in producing and oral text “which is received by an audience of one or more listeners (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 58). Furthermore, *speaking* involves at least three areas of knowledge, which are the following: mechanics, which relates to pronunciation grammar and vocabulary; functions, which help the speaker to know how precise he/she should be; social and cultural norms, which are related to the contextual circumstances of *speaking* (Stovall, 1998) Regarding this skill, the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* points out that is one of the most troublesome for students, what arises the need of making them feel more comfortable using the language and of avoiding excessive corrections (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015).

The significance of oral production in the foreign language classroom is highlighted by several realities. First of all, it is by several scholars considered that the *speaking* ability is “measure of knowing a language” (Stovall, 1998, p. 164). In particular, it is thanks to *speaking* that we can be aware of a student’s fluency and degree of language acquisition. What is more, being most of real life acts of self-expression made through oral production, *speaking* becomes a key point of the communicative competence. However, *speaking* is not only the result of

having acquired or learnt a language, but also an essential element of the process of learning (Stovall, 1998). In brief, oral production is a fundamental vehicle for communication, so any language acquisition approach should give it a primary status.

Indeed, when working with the oral production skill, the focus should be placed in the students **output**. According to Alice Omaggio Hadley (2001), we can distinguish two types of output: *structured* output and *communicative* output; let us find out their main characteristics. Structured output has its focal point in the student using correctly certain structures and forms. In other words, students are asked to use a specific grammatical structure to learn how to use it properly. Conversely, communicative output puts as the main objective the expression of a message. Therefore, the center of attention is placed on transmitting certain information, even though the student makes some grammatical mistakes. Of course, these two types of output can be utilized together during any oral production task.

Similarly to what it was done with oral comprehension, let us find out what the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* stipulates the speaking goals in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of ESO (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015). Nonetheless, we find the difficulty in this case that the above mentioned curriculum shows together the criteria related to both speaking and conversation, so it is our task to differentiate them. Having said that, students are required to produce medium-length texts with a simple structure with the sufficient fluency to be understood, being hesitations allowed. As well as that, they have to incorporate to those oral texts the sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge they have acquired, performing in any case the communicative functions that the text requires. In the last place, they have to show a wide range of common syntactic structures and general topics related vocabulary, always with cohesion and coherence.

#### **4.1.2.3. Reading**

Let us now deal with the skill of visual reception, simply known as **reading**. Using again the *CFER* as a reference, we can describe this skill as receiving and processing “as input written texts produced by one or more writers” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 68). In particular, this involves not only being able to decipher the message, but also being able to understand and comprehend it. If we consult the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo*, we find out that the utilization of real-life materials is emphasized again, to which it is added the necessity of providing texts in which the unknown terms can be inferred thanks to the context (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015).



The compulsoriness of working overly this skill is shown by its many profits in the field of the foreign language classroom. First of all, *reading* is a valuable source of language input, and therefore allows students to absorb lexical or grammatical forms naturally. Moreover, having seen the importance of social and cultural factors in the foreign language classroom, it is undeniable that *reading* is a useful means to get to know more deeply other cultures (Byrnes, 1998). Furthermore, *reading* also allows to students to access the contents and information of any other non-linguistic subjects, something that acquires even more relevance in a moment in which bilingual education is on the rise.

Several are the *reading* strategies that can be incorporated to the foreign language class, being the following the more significant according to Hadley (2001):

- Previewing: Getting a sense of the structure and content through titles and headings.
- Predicting: Using previous knowledge to find out about content and structure.
- Skimming and scanning: Quick survey to look for specific information.
- Guessing from context: Figuring out the meaning of lexical items thanks to contextual information and prior knowledge.
- Paraphrasing: Restating the ideas to check comprehension.

Indeed, to these strategies we must add the careful reading of passages, which involves paying attention to every detail in order to achieve total comprehension.

To close this section, we will turn our attention to the goals and objectives required by the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* in terms of written comprehension (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015). In similarity with the oral comprehension, students have to identify the main and essential information of short/medium-length texts in any register, dealing these with day-to-day affairs or topics of their own interest. By the same token, students have to know and apply the appropriate comprehension strategies, and utilize the sociocultural and sociolinguist aspects that have already acquire in the process of reading. Furthermore, they have to be able to distinguish the main communicative functions in the written texts, without forgetting the most common syntactic structures and discursive patterns. Finally, vocabulary related to general or students' interest topics must be recognized, being also necessary to know the main conventions regarding format and punctuation.

#### 4.1.2.4. Writing

It is now the time of approaching written production, commonly recognized as *writing*. In this case, this skill is based in producing “a written text which is received by a readership of one or more readers” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 61). Actually, *writing* is much more than the final written product, since it requires recursive thinking and reflexing, and the collaboration with other skills such as reading (Musumeci, 1998). Besides, as *writing* also involves a period of preparation and adapting to different discourse conventions, it is not simply a written version of spoken language (Musumeci, 1998). Apart from that, the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* makes a quick reference to written production as well, advising to relate students’ written production to topics that are of their interest and close to them in time (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015).

As it has just been pointed out, *writing* goes beyond the mere conversion of spoken discourse into written form. This fact is clearly illustrated by the several sub-skills that required to carry out accurately the written production. Specifically, Alan Matthews, Mary Spratt and Les Dangerfield make an account of them in their work *At the Chalkface* (1991). In the first place, we have the *graphic skills*, which is related to what we usually consider as format; among others, this skill involves the proper use of spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Secondly, the writing process requires of grammatical skills. In particular, the correct use syntactic constructions and the knowledge of the grammatical rules are the indicators of the acquisition of this sub-skill. Thirdly, the ability to adapt the message to different styles and registers is fruit of the mastery of the *stylistic or expressive skills*. Fourthly, coherence and cohesion are primary aspects of any written composition, and this with which the rhetorical skills deal with. In direct relation to this are the *organizational skills*, as they attend to the correct sequencing of the ideas along the text. Accordingly, this paragraph has illustrated how the writing skill involves the interaction and collaboration of various abilities, showing this a clear distinction between spoken and written language.

As well as that, within a foreign language classroom, two main approaches to written production can be identified. On the one hand, *transcription-oriented writing* consists mainly on “the act or copying words, spoken or written” (Musumeci, 1998, p. 269), so we could relate it to the moments in which students put into paper what is present on the board or what the teacher has said. Consequently, being this approach principally based on writing other people’s ideas or practicing grammatical structures, an actual communicative intention is difficult to



find, what suggests that its utilization in the classroom should be minimal. On the other hand, *composition-oriented writing* “involves the combination of words and phrases to express ideas and feelings, to convince, to muse, to instigate, to inform, to delight,” among others (Musumeci, 1998, p. 272). Therefore, this approach to writing leads to actual communication and implicates all the sub-skills that have been present in the previous paragraph, since encourages students to convey a proper message as such. In accordance, having the language users to take into account factors such as audience, context and purpose (Musumeci, 1998, p. 272), *composition-oriented writing* requires a process of reflection and planning to truly perform a communicative act.

To conclude, we will pay attention to the writing goals and objectives that the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* remarks (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015). Again, students are required to produce short/medium-length texts with a clear structure and coherence, always showing a reasonable mastery of frequent use vocabulary and format conventions. Moreover, they have to be able to utilize the adequate writing strategies and the sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge they possess in the process of writing, as it was the case with the other skills. Additionally, they have to know and use a wide range of common syntactic structures and of vocabulary related to day-to-day affairs or their own interests. In the last place, the appropriate communicative function has to be transmitted through the most habitual discursive patterns and models of organization.

#### **4.1.2.5. Oral Interaction**

The fifth skill that this dissertation will analyze is the oral interaction; that is, the *conversation*. According to the *CFER*, in the spoken interaction “the language user acts alternately as speaker and listener with one or more interlocutors so as to construct conjointly [...] conversational discourse” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 73). Moreover, this is the last skill that has been integrated to the curricula, as the competences associated to it were usually part of the *speaking* skill. In fact, in the Spanish and regional – Castilla y León – curricula, too little attention is paid to this skill. Actually, both the *Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre* (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2015) and the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015) continue to show an organization of the contents in four blocks (production and comprehension of written and oral texts), forcing the user to search in the *speaking* block to find the competences and contents attached to oral interaction.

As *speaking* and *conversation* were until recently considered to be the same skill, it is mandatory to elucidate the main differences between them. With this goal in mind, we will use what has been stipulated by Osborn and Osborn (2014) on this issue. First of all, oral production is usually carefully planned and relies significantly on memory, while oral interaction is spontaneous and has a bigger dependence on the speaker degree of mastery on the language. In fact, oral production is normally an individual task and the speaker is not interrupted, so he/she is not in need of actually constructing new statements according to the situation's needs. In contrast, the interlocutors in a conversation are constantly producing new pieces of language to respond to their counterparts' utterances. Furthermore, public speaking is structured according to time limits and discourse characteristics, whereas conversation does not have a rigid structure or time constraints. However, conversation has to follow rules of etiquette depending on social convention, which are comprised within the cooperative principle. Additionally, oral production requires a more formal delivery that avoids pauses and informal linguistic items, such as fillers or marks of hesitation. Conversely, conversation permits a higher degree of informality and the use of phrases proper of everyday language.

Works by scholars such as Brown and Yule (1983) and McCarthy (1991) show that oral interaction can be divided into two main types according to their function: *transactional talk* and *interactional talk*. Starting with the former, it focuses on the message that it transmits, as it has the clear function of getting something from the interlocutor. Hence, the objective in this type of talk is that of the message being fully understood. In regards of interactional talk, its main purpose is "to establish and maintain social relationships" (Stovall, 1998, p. 166). As it merely aims to create social bonds and relations, precise accuracy in the transmission of the message is not strictly obligatory. In any case, real-life conversations usually manifest characteristics of both types of talk, so the foreign language teacher should take this into account and foster the utilization of elements belonging to both types. Following different terminologies, transactional talk can also be referred to as functional talk, while interactional talk may also receive the name of small talk. Lastly, it has to be mentioned that a third category within conversations can be identified, which receives the name of banter. This one is a relaxed conversation between friends relying on humor and jokes, although this one is less common in the English classroom.

With reference to the goals and objectives of oral interaction in Compulsory Secondary Education, we have to take into account that the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* does not have a specific section for this skill (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015). Therefore, we will try

to elucidate them by looking at the *speaking* criteria that this curriculum establishes. First of all, students are required to be able to maintain conversations in which information and opinions are exchanged in a simple but justified manner, even though repeating may be necessary to be understood. Besides, they are also expected to participate in dialogues of a medium duration, being them allowed to paraphrase or simplify to correctly express themselves. Apart from adapting the message to the sociocultural and sociolinguistics conventions as in other skills, in the case of oral interaction the students also have to adapt their message to the specific interlocutor. Indeed, the rest of criteria match those verbalized in the *speaking* section. Finally, it has to be stated that we have also analyzed the *listening* criteria for this section, but most of those goals are explicitly addressed to oral texts in which the language user does not intervene.

#### **4.1.2.6. Thinking**

Let us finish this skills account by making reference to a one that is little by little gaining ground in the foreign language classroom: thinking. Particularly, this skill is what allows to evaluate the problems associated to a topic and to find the more efficient solution. In fact, this is an ability that may be related to any school subject, something that is highlighted in the case of the foreign language due to the high amount of cognitive processes that language acquisition demands. Although the Spanish law does not make an explicit reference to the existence of this sixth skill, both the *Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre* (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2015) and the *ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo* (Junta de Castilla y León, 2015) suggest that students have to learn to solve problems on their own and develop critical thinking. In particular, the key competence “Aprender a Aprender” (Learning to learn) stated by the LOMCE modifying the LOE involves that the students is able of his/her own processes of learning so that he/she can properly adjust them to what is taught in the classroom. Besides, it also requires adopting a reflexive point of view and using every life experience as source of knowledge. As well as that, the key competence “Sentido de la iniciativa y espíritu emprendedor” (Sense of initiative and entrepreneurial spirit) also remarks the necessity of the students having analytical and problem solving skills, critical thinking and self-evaluation capacity, characteristics that can surely related to thinking as a skill.

According to Eduard Bono (2004), the objective should be that the students end up acquiring what is called higher order thinking. In other words, higher order thinking involves the analysis, evaluation and synthesis of what the student is being taught, meaning this that the

pupil does not have only to learn of memorize the contents, but also to create new knowledge through judging and questioning that academic content. Of course, achieving this requires of more complex and challenging teaching methods that have to put the students in real life situations that actually require reasoning and problem solving. In brief, we could define these thinking skills as the mental processes that help us to integrate new knowledge into our mental construction of how things are based on previous experiences. Therefore, thinking will enable the student to learn from every experience he/she faces and not only from the specific content taught in class. Indeed, this skill has a direct relation to the topic of emotional intelligence discussed in this dissertation, as it helps students to realize their own potential and to learn from every social and personal experience that affects them from a psychological point of view.

#### **4.1.3. Non-verbal Language**

As we have seen in our approach towards the term communicative competence, communication is actually much more than the use of words. In fact, there are several pragmatic factors that influence communication that depend heavily on cultural background. One of these factors is non-verbal language, which is mainly transmitted through the visual medium. Nevertheless, non-verbal language has never been given too much significance in the context of the foreign language classroom, leaving students with an incomplete image of what communication is. Hence, the following lines will bring to light what non-verbal language is and its importance in the process of communication.

In the first place, non-verbal communication is defined by the *Collins Dictionary of Medicine* (2004) as “Transmission of information from person to person without the use of words, as by gesture, bodily attitude, expression, exclamation, and so on.” With that definition as a starting point, let us deepen in this term to find out which elements make it up. According to Pérez de las Heras (2016), non-verbal communication depends on at least three factors. The first one is proxemics, which deals with the distance or separation between people when communicating. Indeed, this is definitely a social and cultural factors, but students also need to know that the distance between them and their interlocutors varies depending on the message they are trying to transmit and on the context. The second factor accounted by Pérez de las Heras what are usually called gestures, being these the conscious or unconscious movements that our body executes. In particular, she makes a distinction between two types of gestures. On the one hand, macrogestures are those that are carried out though the head, the body or the limbs. On the other hand, microgestures are the ones that take place in our faces, and are usually

to our moods. In the last place, the third factor is the gaze, as not looking into your interlocutor's eyes does indeed send a message.

As well as that, the *CFER* also points out three types of non-verbal communication that complement what has been verbalized in the previous paragraph (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 88-90). Specifically, the practical actions that accompany language activities are a form of communication, such as pointing or doing visual demonstrations of actions. Moreover, paralinguistics is a part of non-verbal communication as well. In this case, we can include in this term elements like body language, extra-linguistic speech-sounds (such as 'sh' for requesting silence) and prosodic qualities (voice tone, loudness or length). Additionally, we can also mention paratextual features as types of non-verbal communication. In contrast to the others accounted in this paragraph, these ones are not portrayed through the body, but through images, tables, or figures, among others.

The importance of being aware of all these non-linguistic elements can be appreciated in various aspects of the communicative process. First of all, many of these non-verbal elements are culturally related and may vary significantly from one culture to another. Consequently, it is necessary that language users possess knowledge of how these forms of communication are carried out in the countries in which the language they study is spoken, avoiding thus incorrect or offensive uses during interactions. Furthermore, each non-verbal communication form serves to add nuances of meaning to our messages, so it seems reasonable to assume that only being cognizant of them language user will be able express themselves fully. Lastly, and in direct relation to the emotional intelligence topic that this dissertation copes with, non-verbal signs are directly related to moods and emotional states. Hence, these non-linguistic result essential when we are facing our own or other people's emotions, since knowing the nature of a psychological state is the first step to deal with.

#### **4.1.4. Acquisition or Learning**

Once we have analyzed which are the communicative aspects that any foreign language class should foster, it is time to pay attention to how students actually get to know the language. Two main terms enter the discussion in this sense: **acquisition** and **learning**. Though some people do not make a distinction between them and consider the difference irrelevant, the fact is that these two terms present a significant contrast in terms of getting to know a language. Therefore, this section will present the differences between language acquisition and language learning, trying to discover which of the two processes should be pursued.

To begin with, let us observe the distinction made by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. First of all, the *CFER* points out that both terms can be utilized in the general sense of knowing a language, but remarks that they can also refer to dissimilar processes. On the one hand, acquisition is defined as the “untutored knowledge and ability to use a non-native language resulting either from direct exposure to text or from direct participation in communicative events” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 139). That is, the individual manages to know the language through the reception of input and a constant exposure to the language. On the other hand, language learning is defined as “the process whereby language ability is gained as the result of a planned process, especially by formal study in an institutional setting” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 139). Accordingly, one would be able to speak a language thanks to the study and understanding of its linguistic rules. With these two definitions in mind, the *CFER* verbalizes the existence of the approaches to language teaching. The first one is related to acquisition and consists in complete exposure to the language and participation in communicative interaction, leaving aside any explicit teaching or explanations about the language. In contrast, the second approach highlights the necessity of learning the grammatical rules of a language and its vocabulary to be able to communicate, thus considering learning as the appropriate manner of knowing a language. Lastly, the third one constitutes a mixture of the other two, as it promotes direct exposure to the language and a conscious learning of the rules to really get to know the language. However, the *CFER* does not show its preference for any of them and leaves in hands of the teacher the selection of the most appropriate for each case.

Of course, dealing with the concepts of acquisition and learning makes compulsory to refer to a scholar that has already been mentioned in this dissertation: Stephen Krashen. In fact, his conception of acquisition and learning does not differ significantly from what is stipulated in the *CFER*. Specifically, he considers the former to be a subconscious process “similar to the way children develop ability in their first language,” while the latter is a “conscious knowledge of the second language” and its rules (Krashen, 1982, p. 10). In other words, acquisition puts emphasis on actual communication and reception of input, whereas learning puts emphasis on knowing the grammatical rules of a language. Nevertheless, in contrast to the neutrality present in the *CFER*, Krashen takes sides and affirms that “acquisition is more important than learning” (Krashen, 1982, p. 32). As he precisely verbalizes in his work *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom* (co-authored with Tracy D. Terrell), “language is best taught when it being used to transmit messages, not when it is explicitly taught for conscious



learning” (Krashen & Terrell, 1995, p. 55). This preference is reflected by his five hypothesis of second-language acquisition, namely the *acquisition-learning hypothesis*, the *input hypothesis*, the *natural order hypothesis*, the *monitor hypothesis* and the *affective filter hypothesis*; this last one has already been illustrated in the Justification section of this dissertation. Let us condense in a few lines what the other four propose. First, the *acquisition-learning hypothesis* defends that both children and adults can acquire a second language in the same way they acquired their mother tongue, and that it is the exposure to language what improves the speaker’s competence and fluency on the language (Krashen, 1982). Secondly, the *input hypothesis* manifests that we acquire structures beyond our competence only after having perceived them in actual communication, instead of learning the structures and then using them in communicative interaction (Krashen, 1982). Therefore, the acquisition of new structures cannot be fruit of learning. Thirdly, the *natural order hypothesis* states that language users acquire the grammatical structures in a certain order, something that cannot be changed by formal instruction (Krashen, 1982). Lastly, the *monitor hypothesis* suggests that learning only has a function after having acquired a structure, and that is the function of supervising (Krashen, 1982). Consequently, Krashen proposes that the process of teaching a second language must revolve around acquisition and not learning, a fact that the present dissertation will take into consideration.

#### **4.2. Psychological Concepts**

Having considered the main aspects that influence the process of acquiring or learning a second language, we will now move to psychological aspects that this dissertation proposes to integrate in the English as a foreign language classroom. Firstly, we will approach the main characteristics and implications of the term emotional intelligence, which is the principal cognitive ability in which this dissertation will focus. Secondly, Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences will be examined, paying special attention to the interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. Thirdly, a critical view of neuro linguistic programming will be presented, so that we can find which of its components may serve our purpose. Accordingly, through the views of the main representatives of each field, this section will provide a general vision of the terms emotional intelligence, multiple intelligences – focusing on interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences – and neuro linguistic programming.

#### 4.2.1. Emotional Intelligence

Without further ado, this dissertation will now focus on the term **emotional intelligence**. Despite the concept had already been used in 1964 by Michael Beldoch, it was in 1995 that the term spread and became popular due to the publication of the book *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman. Indeed, this is one of the principal references that this dissertation has in the psychological field and in the creation of our approach. With the help of Goleman and other influential psychologists of the field, this section will bring to light what lies beneath the popular term emotional intelligence.

First of all, it is necessary to become aware of the precise definition of the term emotional intelligence. In particular, the psychologists Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer – from the Universities of Yale and New Hampshire – define emotional intelligence as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (1990, p. 189). However, it should be specified that they do not consider this ability as an independent intelligence, but as a part of the wider term social intelligence. In other words, emotional intelligence for them consists in being able to identify your emotions or other people’s in order to act accordingly and carry out the most appropriate actions. To this definition we can add Pérez de las Heras’s (2016) idea that emotional intelligence is what allows us to recognize our emotions, utilize them appropriately and guide them towards our objectives. In order to complete this definition, let us discover Daniel Goleman’s conception. First of all, he considers emotional intelligence to be independent from rational intelligence, even though it has been popularly regarded that there is at least a weak relation between them (Goleman, 1996). As well as that, she also mentions a set of specific characteristics that define emotional intelligence, such as the ability of regulating your emotions, of motivating yourself, of controlling your impulses, of delaying gratifications, and of impeding that anguish controls your rational faculties, among others. In brief, Goleman (1996) states that those who keep control of their emotions and their consequences manage to be more satisfied, efficient and productive, while those who do not show to be incapable of thinking clearly and carrying out their enterprises.

Once we have a general idea of what emotional intelligence is, it is compulsory to further deepen in the factors that this term comprises. Particularly, Salovey and Mayer (1990) consider emotional intelligence to be made up of three main elements: appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion, and utilization of emotion; let us analyze each of them



individually. In the first place, appraisal and expression of emotion consists in two main elements: evaluating and perceiving your feelings accurately, and being able to communicate properly your emotions. Two are also the manners in which we can carry out this process, as emotions can be expressed verbally (through language) and non-verbally (through facial expressions and non-verbal language). In fact, this is applicable to other people's feelings as well, as appraisal and expression of emotion also deals with identifying correctly others' emotional reactions and responding emphatically depending on their feelings. Again, it is through two different ways that this is achieved. On the one hand, nonverbal perception of emotion allows us to identify people's feelings thanks to their facial expressions. On the other hand, empathy is what permits us to re-experience the other person's feelings and to respond with socially accepted behaviors. The second main element that makes up emotional intelligence is regulation of emotion, which is also related to the self and to others. Specifically, this one consists in finding out what situations provoke specific moods, be them positive or negative. In the case of positive feelings, the individual analyzes the concrete factors that provoke it to bring them back in the future; similarly, the self tries to discover what are the causes of negative emotions, so that they can be avoided he/she or any other person are facing them. In the last place, Salovey and Mayer consider utilization of emotion as the last element present in emotional intelligence. This one deals with being able to use emotions to solve one's or others' issues. Essentially, this third element is based on the thought that an individual in a positive mood is more likely to resolve a challenging task, being necessary to motivate yourself or refocus your attention when you are affected by negative moods. A visual representation of Salovey and Mayer's conception of emotional intelligence can be found in Figure 1 in the following page.

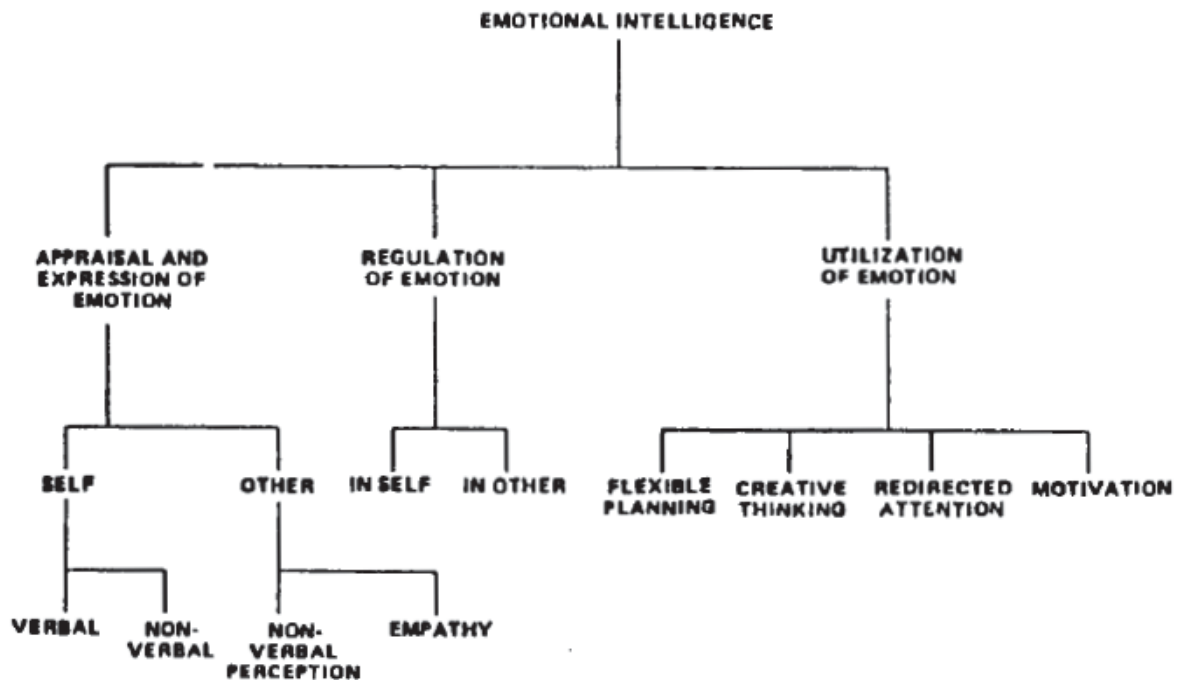


Figure 1: Conceptualization of emotional intelligence by Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 190)

A further distinction within emotional intelligence is made as well, and that is the one accounted by Pérez de las Heras (2016). Specifically, this author distinguishes between intrapersonal emotional intelligence and interpersonal emotional intelligence. Starting with the former, it refers to a person's relation with himself/herself. Concretely, intrapersonal emotional intelligence involves self-knowledge, which helps us not only to be cognizant of our emotions and of our virtues and defects, but also to trust ourselves (self-confidence). Moreover, intrapersonal emotional intelligence comprises self-regulation as well, an ability dealing with controlling your emotions, adapting yourself to the changes and being honest. In addition to that, being motivated and committed to an enterprise is part of the third element belonging to intrapersonal emotional intelligence: motivation. Referring now to interpersonal emotional intelligence, it refers to our relation with the others and implicates empathy and social abilities. In the case of empathy, it involves not only being aware of other people's emotions, but also of fulfilling the needs that those feelings may generate. Furthermore, social abilities refer to the capacity of interacting appropriately with other individuals. Among others, these abilities are the responsible of communicating and receiving information adequately, of cooperating and developing bonds with others.

Taking into account everything discussed in this section, we can finally state that emotional intelligence is a cognitive ability that involves:

- Being cognizant of the self's and other people's moods and emotions.
- Comprehending the reasons behind those feelings.
- Controlling your emotions and avoiding that they affect your reasoning.
- Being able to turn away from negative emotions.
- Managing to find the usefulness behind negative emotions.
- Being capable of adopting and making other people adopt a positive mood.
- Using the emotions as a guide and a tool to achieve an end.
- Motivating and encouraging oneself and others.
- Avoiding behaviors that might harm oneself or others.
- Expressing appropriately your emotions.
- Keeping a high self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Interacting appropriately with others.

#### **4.2.2. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences: Intrapersonal and Interpersonal**

The theory of multiple intelligences will be covered in this second of part of the framework dedicated to emotional intelligence. Indeed, this theory was proposed by American psychologist Howard Gardner in 1983 in his work *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. According to his line of thinking, intelligence is comprised by a set of independent modules that work cooperatively to solve problems. In fact, Gardner states the existence of eight types of intelligence, of which the intrapersonal and interpersonal ones are the most relevant for the purposes of the present dissertation. Accordingly, this section will provide a general illustration of this theory, focusing on those aspects that result to be more significant in terms of emotional intelligence.

As it has been mentioned, Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences is presented in his book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Nevertheless, this dissertation will utilize as a main reference his work *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice* – in this case, the Spanish edition *Inteligencias múltiples: La teoría en la práctica* (2005) –, as it presents a more updated version of his theory and more education-oriented. Bearing this in mind, let us start approaching Gardner's concept of intelligence. Specifically, an intelligence

implies the necessary ability to solve problems and elaborate products which are significant in a cultural context or in a specific community (Gardner, 2005, p. 37). As well as that, despite their interdependence, these “intelligences” work together to reach a capacity that is bigger than “the sum of the parts” (Gardner, 2005, p. 50-51). Additionally, an intelligence is not a fixed mental capacity, but a module that is modifiable and has potential to be developed. In fact, training or the cultural context are some of the elements that influence the development of the different intelligences, without forgetting the genetic and biological factors (Gardner, 2005). Therefore, the nature of an intelligence depends both on biological and socio-cultural factors. Gardner also relates this findings to the field education, which will be illustrated in Section 5 of this dissertation.

Although this dissertation is especially interested in interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences – which together form what is called emotional intelligence –, it is mandatory to provide at least a quick account of the rest of intelligences; after all, all the eight intelligences work together and all of them represent potential tools to achieve a greater control of the emotional intelligence. Again, we will make use of what is verbalized in the book *Inteligencias múltiples: La teoría en la práctica* (2005). In the first place, we have linguistic intelligence (also called verbal-linguistic), which represents the ability to use effectively words both in oral and written form. Secondly, logical mathematical intelligence deals with solving problems involving the logic capacity and numbers. Thirdly, the capacity to recreate a mental model of spatial reality and working with it is the main characteristic of visual-spatial intelligence. Fourthly, musical intelligence is the responsible of perceiving, discriminating, transforming and creating musical forms and expressions. Fifthly, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence deals with using the body to solve problems or create products. Lastly, the ability to observe and identify natural systems and working with them is included within naturalistic intelligence. Let us now analyze in greater detail the nature of both interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences.

Starting with interpersonal intelligence, this is the one related to identify and comprehend other people’s feelings, emotions, moods, or motivations, among others (Gardner, 2005, p. 47). In particular, here is where we find a concept that has already been explored in this dissertation: empathy. Therefore, interpersonal intelligence is what allows not only to identify properly how other people feel, but also to put yourself in their shoes and act accordingly for their benefit. This intelligence lies on human natural necessity of solidarity, group cohesion and organization (Gardner, 2005, p. 47). Accordingly, we can sum up interpersonal intelligence as the ability to empathize and communicate appropriately with

others, involving this the capacity of forming part of groups of people and collaboration for their proper development.

Moving now to intrapersonal intelligence, it deals with being able to understand our own internal aspects, such as emotions, conducts, strengths and weaknesses, or reactions (Gardner, 2005). In other words, it is what allows to have an actual knowledge of ourselves as human beings. As this is a private form of intelligence, it needs of the expression through linguistic or musical intelligences to be actually observed by others (Gardner, 2005, p. 48). Furthermore, concepts like self-esteem or self-discipline are part of this intelligence. Consequently, we can describe intrapersonal intelligence as the ability to identify or internal emotions, reactions or motivations and to solve the difficulties that they may arise.

As it can be noticed, the characteristics of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences equal those presented in the previous section as part of the emotional intelligence. What is more, it has been illustrated how both involve the identification and solving of a specific type of problems, so they fall prominently within the definition of intelligence stated by Gardner. Hence, these findings give green light to the inclusion of the theory of multiple intelligences as part of an approach that aims to integrate emotional intelligence in the foreign language classroom.

#### **4.2.3. Neuro-linguistic Programming**

This theoretical framework is concluded with a general approach to concept of Neuro-linguistic Programming. Specifically, this term appeared in the United States in the 1970s thanks to the linguist John Grinder and the mathematician Richard Bandler (Pérez de las Heras, 2016), and has since then acquired a huge popularity in fields like education, business or therapy. However, the quick expansion of this approach has resulted in the emergence of certain methods that are far from being scientific and accurate. Therefore, this dissertation will only make use of those techniques based on solid scientific basis, and proved appropriately in the psychological field. Without further delay, let us find out what Neuro-linguistic Programming is about.

According to Pérez de las Heras (2016), Neuro-linguistic Programming is the science that allows us to know how our brains (neuro) work (programming), and how we express what we think (linguistics) (p. 62). In other words, it tries to elucidate the relation between our cognitive processes, the language we use and our behavior. To put it in a simpler way, it deals with how our language – including non-verbal language – and our behavior reflect our inner

thoughts. As well as that, it is also concerned with the manner in which people see the world and how that is reflected by thinking, language and behavior. Through the study of these elements, Neuro-linguistic Programming aims to give us the tools to change the ways in which we communicate and interpret other people's messages so that we can communicate more efficiently.

One of the main instruments that Neuro-linguistic Programming offers is that of calibration. In particular, it is a technique that permits us to understand and comprehend how a person is feeling taking into account his/her body language. The body parts and elements that transmit it involves have been accounted by Pérez de la Heras (2016):

- Body posture: sitting, standing, with the back straight or curved.
- Macrogestures: head positioning, arms and legs colocation, use of the hands.
- Microgestures: movements of the parts of the face.
- Gesticulation: hands movements when talking.
- Voice: volume, pitch, speed, pauses or silences.
- Breathing: thoracic, abdominal, smooth, fast.
- Skin: pale, red, flushed.
- Pupils: dilated or not.

As it can be observed, these factors are in direct relation to what has stipulated in the non-verbal communication section of this dissertation. Accordingly, this allows to being aware of how non-verbal language does not only serve to transmit a linguistic or pragmatic language, but also an emotional one. Therefore, the approach that this dissertation will propose will make use of Neuro-linguistic Programming as a tool to let the students know of the different uses of body language both in the realms of the foreign language and in the field of emotional intelligence.

## **5. Methodological Bases**

Since the aim of this dissertation is precisely that of creating a methodological approach, we will not follow a straightforward methodology that guides us step by step as it is the case in academic papers of a dissimilar nature. Conversely, we will take as a reference and starting point those foreign language teaching methodologies that may provide tools that facilitate the integration of emotional intelligence in the English classroom. Thereupon, we will look at the specific emotional intelligence techniques and methods that main psychologists and

scholars of the fields propose, and that can be implemented in secondary school classrooms. Finally, we will take all those elements into consideration to create a new approach that integrates second language acquisition and emotional intelligence in Compulsory Secondary Education.

### **5.1. Foreign Language Teaching Methodologies**

As it has been just pointed out, this section will make an account of those foreign language teaching methodologies that the present dissertation will take as a reference in the creation of our own methodological approach. In particular, we will pay special attention to those techniques may serve us in our intention of integrating emotional intelligence in the foreign language classroom. Particularly, six are the methods that will be illustrated: Community Language Learning, the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Communicative Language Teaching, Total Physical Response, and the Task-based approach. In order to fulfill this purpose, Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers' work *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (2001) and Diane Larsen-Freeman's work (2000) *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* will be the principal references that this section will utilize.

In the first place, let us begin with the **Community Language Learning** method. Specifically, this method was created by Charles A. Curran, who was heavily influenced by Carl Rogers' humanistic psychology. This method takes into consideration every aspect of the student as a human being, since it pays attention to students' feelings, motivations, relations and fears in the process of learning. Hence, it aims to construct a social and psychological healthy environment that fosters students learning, something that shows a clear relation with the field of emotional intelligence. In terms of language acquisition, this method focuses on the communicative use of language, which is regarded as a vehicle for expression, creativity and critical thinking. Nonetheless, the students' native language also plays a fundamental role. In particular, students are allowed to use their first language at the beginning of the class to deal with any conversation topic of their interest. Afterwards, the message in that conversation is utilized to work with the foreign language; as an illustration, that conversation is translated into the foreign language to deal with grammar, pronunciation, or creating new pieces of language. Accordingly, it is the students the ones who decide what are they going to learn and eventually become responsible for their own learning. With the passing of time, students become more independent and the teacher evolves into a guide that tries to solve any linguistic or personal issue that may arise during the process. Among the activities utilized in this method, we mainly



find tasks that focus on students' own experiences and issues. In other words, the object of study is the students' production in their native language or in the foreign language, being group work nearly always the habitual procedure. To sum up, Community Language Learning is a method that tries to create a healthy environment to foster students' learning and that uses their own experiences and language productions as subject to work with the foreign language.

The following method that we are going to take as a reference is **The Silent Way**. This one was designed by Caleb Gattegno, who shares many of the principles of cognitivism. Similarly to the Community Language Learning, language in this method becomes a tool to express thoughts or feelings; to put it another way, the goal is using language in actual contexts. As well as that, pupils learn by themselves and have a principal role during the classroom, as the teacher is mainly silent. The teaching-learning process can be described as follows. First of all, the teacher provides a series of tables that allow students to discern the differences in terms of sounds and pronunciation between their native language and the foreign language. Subsequently, the teacher prepares situations that focus on specific structures, being the students guided towards the construction and pronunciation of the structures. If errors are committed, the teacher uses as a matter of study with final intention of the students correcting themselves, but he does not judge in any manner. Eventually, pupils start investigating on their own the structures that they find more useful to communicate, having them feedback sessions with the teacher to work out any negative feelings that may appear. Furthermore, the fact the teacher remains mainly quiet during the lessons provokes that the students work cooperatively and help each other to reach a common end. Regarding the language employed, the native language is only employed to provide certain instructions, and translations are not used. In brief, The Silent Way is a method in which the students acquire a primary role and in which the teacher remains silent during the teaching-learning process, which focuses on pronunciation and on learning grammatical rules implicitly.

The next method we are going to approach is the **Suggestopedia**. Particularly, this method intends to eliminate the psychological barriers that stop our process of learning. In fact, George Lozanov created with the purpose of getting rid of the students' negative feelings towards languages. Furthermore, students are wanted to use language unconsciously in daily communication, even though it is acceptable to use their native language at the beginning. During the teaching-learning process, the work is carried in a cheerful and illuminated place surrounded by materials in the foreign language – such as posters – and the pupils are allowed to adopt an imaginary role with which they feel safer. Additionally, dialogues are the main



matter of study, as students are provided with long dialogues (translated in the native language as well) with lexical and grammatical indications; in fact, vocabulary is emphasized in this method, while grammar has a less important role. This is actually due to the thought that grammatical rules and structures are acquired unconsciously and deep explanations are not required. Referring to emotions, it is an essential goal that of the pupils being relaxed and motivated, since only then will they be fully receptive. With that purpose in mind, the teacher always corrects politely and trying to gain their confidence. In short, the Suggestopedia intends to foster language acquisition through the creation of a safe and motivating environment, and through the constant exposure to dialogues in the foreign language.

Let us now continue with the fourth method that we are going to discuss. In this case, we are going to deal with the **Communicative Language Teaching** method, which started to be utilized in the 1970s when teachers began to realize that students were not able to use what they had learnt in class in real life situations. As we have seen in the theoretical framework of the present dissertation, the main aim of a foreign language classroom is to foster the communicative competence, and that is precisely what this method aspires to achieve. Therefore, pupils need to be aware of the various linguistic forms, functions and meanings in order to be able to convey the precise message that they want to share. Accordingly, the teacher's main role is that of creating an environment that promotes communication among the students, who are somehow responsible for their own learning. Being group work usually the common procedure, activities are based on real materials and addressed to achieve a specific communication goal, such as fulfilling an information gap. Other activities may include role-playing tasks, educative games and the use of images to encourage creativity. In terms of emotions, motivation and individuality are fostered, as pupils actually feel that they are able to communicate in a foreign language. Moreover, language teaching is focused on functions rather than on structures, since it is more important to use the language than simply having knowledge of it. Lastly, it has to be mentioned that the five main skills are worked and that the native language is only employed in very specific occasions. To conclude, Communicative Language Teaching is a method that focuses on actual communication and language use, being preferred knowing how to use the language instead of merely being aware of its structures and rules.

We will now focus on a method that receives the name of **Total Physical Response**. Specifically, it is based on the idea that students must enjoy the educative experience so that anxiety or stress do not interfere with their learning. At first, the teacher gives the students

instructions in the foreign language that they have to follow, which then have to be put into practice through reading or writing. These instructions are based on body movements and use specific structures that the pupils have to acquire. Once they are familiar with them, they can start producing input and formulate their own instructions. Apart from this, other tasks such as role-playing activities or more complex series of instructions are also utilized. Regarding its manners of reducing anxiety or stress, the teacher does not force students to speak until they feel ready and tries to make the process as funny and pleasant as possible. As well as that, both vocabulary and grammar – especially the imperative form – are the areas given more attention, even though there are not explicit explanations as such. Additionally, oral language is emphasized, being the native language not allowed most of the time. Speaking of errors correction, the teacher only corrects the more serious mistakes and always gently. In brief, Total Physical Response is a methodology that uses physical movements and instructions to let the students know the language in a natural way, as structures are taught always in an implicit manner.

The last one we are going to analyze is the **Task-based approach**. In this case, this one is focused on the process rather than on the linguistic content or the functions as other methods. In fact, it involves the students in tasks that require the use of the language to fulfill them and therefore activate the process of acquisition. As an illustration, students may be asked to solve a riddle, to write a letter or to read instructions, and these processes themselves will force them to use the language with an actual end. Speaking of the teacher, he/she has the main tasks of creating the tasks and prepare and guide the students during the process. In the case of the pupils, they may act as supervisors, innovators or just as a member of the group. Tasks are usually carried using the following sequence. Firstly, the teacher introduces the task and provides some guidance, being this a good moment for the students to start acquiring vocabulary. Secondly, having always the teacher's help, the pupils work in groups to solve the task using the necessary linguistic elements. Thirdly, the students prepare a report in the foreign language in which the whole process is verbalized. Fourthly, the report is shared orally with the rest of the class, while the teacher analyzes it and enunciates some questions. Lastly, the teacher locates those linguistic elements that had resulted to be more problematic to practice in class with the pupils. Apart from that, it is also relevant that the native language is never used, and oral language receives the center of attention. Referring to the areas of language studied, the process focuses on those structures and words that the students actually need, what fosters a natural acquisition of the linguistic elements. Accordingly, the Task-based approach can be

described as one in which the students are involved in specific activities that demand a natural use of the foreign language, so it is the process of using the language what matters and not a mere knowledge of the grammatical structures.

By and large, this section has made a general account of the foreign language teaching methodologies that this dissertation will take as a main reference and influence. In particular, we have focused on those methods that present tools that seem more suitable for the integration of emotional intelligence techniques in the foreign language classroom. In the following sections, some of these tools will be utilized as a starting point and will be used in conjunction with methods used to improve emotional intelligence, resulting this in the new approach that this dissertation aims to create.

## **5.2. Application of Emotional Intelligence**

Moving now to the field of emotional intelligence, let us bring to light the methods and techniques that the psychological discipline offers in order to deal with our emotions and improve our mental health. Indeed, these methods are not only a tool to create our approach, but also a set of resources that can be put into practice in any other educational context. In fact, it seems reasonable to suggest that any educator – or any person – should be cognizant of all the information that is going to be elucidated in this section, as what is going to be illustrated is applicable to people in general. Specifically, this section will be divided in five main parts. First of all, we will approach the manners of handling the principal negative emotions, which are anger, anxiety and sadness. Afterwards, the center of attention will be on the perception of other people's emotions, commonly known as empathy. Thereupon, being motivation an immensely important element in education, the ways of increasing people's motivation will be elucidated. Subsequently, the fourth part will cope with the proper manners of giving feedback appropriately, a matter that will fall within the term evaluation in the field of education. Thereafter, the psychological concept of flow will be analyzed, and the convenience of incorporating it into secondary schools will be demonstrated. Without further ado, let us immerse ourselves fully in the most psychological part of this dissertation.

### **5.2.1. Dealing with Emotions**

In the first place, it is necessary to verbalize some essential statements that can be applied to any emotion or feeling. In particular, it must be stated that the main objective when dealing with anyone's emotions is creating a balance among them, and never trying to repress them (Goleman, 1996). In other words, when facing negative emotions, the goal has to be that

redirecting that energy towards more productive purposes, since muting the emotions creates “dullness and distance” (Goleman, 1996, p. 48). As well as that, considerable research work has led to the conclusion that emotional intelligence programs result to be really effective when they not only provided general information about emotions, but also when they out into actual practice those techniques (Goleman, 1996).

#### **5.2.1.1. Anger**

Starting now with the specific emotions themselves, the first one we are going to deal with is **anger**. According to the *Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health* (2003), anger can be defined as “a feeling of tension and hostility, usually caused by anxiety aroused by a perceived threat to one's self, possessions, rights, or values.” Professor Dolf Zillman (1983) from the University of Alabama does not differ significantly from this description of anger, as it points to the sensation of feeling threatened as the universal cause of anger. In fact, this may include not only a physical threat, but also a threat to our self-esteem or perceptions. Anxiety – with which we are going to deal later on – is also responsible for the appearance of anger, as stressed people are more predisposed to feel irritation (Goleman, 1996).

Keeping that in mind, the center of attention will be placed in the solutions that the field of psychology provides for handling our anger. In the first place, the psychologists Diane Tice and Roy Bausmeister (1993) stated that one of the simplest and most powerful tools to put an end to anger is to approach the issue from a different perspective. To put it another way, sometimes it is only required to step back and analyze the matters with a little of objectivity. Furthermore, Tice and Bausmeister also recommend distractions as a way to reduce anger, as they put an end to the chain of negative thoughts that feed anger. Moreover, they suggest walking away from the cause of our anger and staying alone until we cool down. Conversely, they found that one of the worst manners to deal with anger is to express it openly, as this action increases the brain's emotional excitation and increases the person's irritation. Hence, it seems more reasonable to wait until having cooled down to then express our thoughts in an assertive and constructive way.

Apart from that, Professor Dolf Zillman verbalizes the existence of two main possibilities of taking action during the process. On the one hand, he proposes to focus on the precise feelings that cause our anger, something which is more useful in the first moments of the process (Zillman, 1983). In other words, this technique consists in comprehending the

nature of the chain of thoughts that makes us feel that way so that we can cut it as soon as possible. In fact, our anger is mostly caused by thinking constantly and repeatedly in what annoys us and, since this only increases our irritation, it is advisable to analyze those feelings objectively and shift the focus of attention to less harmful thoughts. On the other hand, the second manner of managing anger consists in reducing the physiological excitation felt by the body in a situation of irritation. Specifically, what Zillman proposes walking to an environment or situation in which the person or reason of the anger do not have presence. Indeed, this is in direct relation to the technique of getting distracted and participating in activities that produce enjoyment, as distractions serve to end the chain of thoughts and it is difficult to remain angry while you are experiencing joy. Similarly to Tice, Zillman also states that showing overtly the anger, although may produce a temporary satisfaction, does not suppose a meaningful tool to end the situation.

Daniel Goleman makes significant contributions to this topic as well. Particularly, he proposes two manners of reducing the physiological excitation provoked by anger: relaxation methods and physical exercise. In the case of the former, “relaxation methods such as deep breathing and muscle relaxation [...] change the body’s physiology from the high arousal of anger to a low arousal state” (Goleman, 1996, p. 53), without forgetting that they help to divert the attention from what originated that mood. Referring to physical exercise, this activity provokes “high levels of physiological activation” that naturally “rebound to a low level once it stops,” which results in the disappearance of the anger’s excitation (Goleman, 1996, p. 53). To these methods we can add the recommendations of Redford Williams and Virginia Williams (1993), psychiatrists from the University of Duke. Specifically, their technique consists in becoming aware of the irritating thoughts immediately after they appear to then writing them down. Accordingly, this results to be a much healthier manner of expressing these emotions and of noticing the reasons behind our moods.

#### **5.2.1.2. Anxiety and Stress**

The second emotion presented in this section is **anxiety**, which is undoubtedly linked to **stress**. As it was the case with anger, let us start by looking at their definitions. In the case of anxiety, *Dorland's Medical Dictionary for Health Consumers* (2007) defines it as “a feeling of apprehension, uncertainty, and fear without apparent stimulus, associated with physiological changes.” Regarding stress, the same dictionary – *Dorland's Medical Dictionary for Health Consumers* (2007) – defines it as “a state of physiological or psychological strain caused by

adverse stimuli, physical, mental, or emotional, internal or external, that tend to disturb the functioning of an organism and which the organism naturally desires to avoid.” In fact, the initial manifestation of anxiety is not negative in itself, as it warns us about a potential danger and initiates the search for solutions. The problem appears when it becomes chronic and reiterative, which is the moment in which we lose control of this emotion (Goleman, 1996). This vicious circle results in a constant mental thinking of the problem that leads to no solution, so it needs to be ended; these are the manners to do it according to the psychological literature.

Lizabeth Roemer and Thomas Borkovec, psychologists from the Pennsylvania State University, have thoroughly investigated the nature of anxiety, and have designed a method to face it that can be illustrated as follows. Similarly to what was the case with anger, the process starts by becoming aware of the stressful thoughts as soon as possible. To this aim, they propose training people to notice the physical signs of anxiety, as well as the situations and thoughts that trigger it (Roemer & Borkovec, 1993). As well as that, they also recommend the practice of a relaxation technique daily to master it, so that the person is able to utilize it efficiently when anxiety appears (Roemer & Borkovec, 1993). Thereupon, the next step consists in adopting a critical stance on the beliefs that keep the person stressed. In other words, an objective analysis of the situation will probably lead to the conclusion that it not worthy to maintain those harmful thoughts constantly. Finally, changing the focus of attention will allow the mind to drift away from that vicious circle, which will help the individual to not take as important those mental deliberations (Roemer & Borkovec, 1993).

In a like manner, Pérez de las Heras takes this idea of shifting the focal point of our attention, but she verbalizes it in a dissimilar way. Specifically, she considers that people perceive reality in three different forms: through visual senses (visual system), hearing (auditory system) and corporal senses (kinesthetic system) (Pérez de las Heras, 2016). From this understanding, emotions and moods would be part of our kinesthetic internal system and, therefore, reducing its influence would be a consequence of changing from a kinesthetic perception to a visual or auditory perception of reality. Accordingly, a way of escaping from the vicious circle of speculations that cases anxiety is to engage an activity that requires a full attention of our sight and hearing senses (Pérez de las Heras, 2016).

Additionally, the former head of the department of psychology at the University of Chicago Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi contemplates that there are two manners of facing stress, being one of them positive and the other negative. The former receives the name of *mature*



*defense*, which relates suppressing temporarily the feelings of anxiety in order to portray a logical analysis of the issue (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This strategy also receives the name of “transformational coping,” as it handles the issue with the real intention of transforming and improving the situation. On the contrary, the negative strategy of dealing with stress is named “neurotic defense” or *regressive coping* (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In a nutshell, this one consists in avoiding finding solutions for the issue and adopting instead a reckless attitude, such as alcohol abuse. Indeed, people should be trained to adopt the mature defense strategy.

### 5.2.1.3. Sadness and Depression

This section will deal with the human emotion of **sadness**, including its highest degree – **depression**. The former is defined by *Farlex and Partners' Medical Dictionary* (2009) as “a normal emotional feeling of dejection or melancholy that one may experience after an unhappy event.” The latter is described by the *Mosby's Dictionary of Complementary and Alternative Medicine* (2005) as “a condition identified by loss of energy and ability or desire to function, poor sleep or appetite, and/or exaggerated feelings of hopelessness and discouragement.” As it was the case with other emotions, sadness does not have to be negative in itself. In fact, it allows to focus on what really matters in the hardest times and to renew energies to start again. However, depression does not have positive aspects, as it provokes intellectual marks such as “confusion, failure of mental focus and lapses of memory” (Goleman, 1996, p. 57). Accordingly, this section will elucidate the manners in which the negative aspects of sadness and depression can be minimized.

The strategies to face depression are analogous to those related to anger or anxiety. As a matter of fact, that vicious circle of negative thoughts mentioned in the previous section is also the origin of the depressed mood. Consequently, Goleman (1996) verbalizes a proposal of two strategies to face this condition. Firstly, he proposes “to challenge the thoughts at the center of the rumination, to question their validity and think of more positive alternatives” (Goleman, 1996, p. 58); that is to say, looking objectively at the negative mental deliberation to realize of their lack of usefulness. Secondly, participating in a set of activities that detract the individual’s attention from the depressed mood. In other words, this is as strategy that has already been discussed in this dissertation: distraction. As well as that, Goleman also points out that the common belief of the benefits of a “good cry” is misleading, as crying “reinforces the rumination” and “only prolongs the misery” (Goleman, 1996, p. 59). Again, the best alternative



to crying would be a distraction “to break the chain of sadness-maintaining thinking” (Goleman, 1996, p. 59)

Psychologists Diane Tice and Roy Baumeister (1993) share relevant findings in this matter as well. In the first place, aerobic and physical exercise result to be appropriate tool to eradicate a negative state of mood. In fact, their effectiveness lies on the efficacy of physical exercise to change the physiological condition provoked by depression, since depression is related to a low arousal state, while aerobics to the opposite – a high arousal. Furthermore, other of their discoveries is the benefit of accomplishing an activity that may reward us with an easy triumph, such as carrying out a task the person has postponed in several occasions. Finally, helping people who are actually in need is pertinent manner of dealing with a negative state of mood. Indeed, the mental deliberations and preoccupations associated to depression revolve around the own self, so focusing on others places the focal point in a dissimilar situation.

### **5.2.2. Empathy**

Once we are cognizant of the main negative moods, it is the moment now to deal with those emotions belonging to other people. Indeed, the fact of perceiving other people’s emotions receives the common name of empathy, which can be defined in the following manner. Particularly, *Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health* (2003) defines it as the “intellectual and emotional awareness and understanding of another person's thoughts, feelings, and behavior, even those that are distressing and disturbing.” In simple terms, it is what is commonly known as to put yourself in the other person’s shoes. As we have discovered in previous sections of this dissertation, empathy is an essential part of emotional intelligence, so let us find out the ways in which we can handle other people’s feelings.

Finding out how empathy is developed is a crucial part of this question, being necessary to move towards the childhood period to learn more about it. Indeed, Manan Radke Yarrow and Carolyn Zahn-Waxler (1984) from the National Institute of Mental Health discovered that degree of empathy shown by a child depended mainly of how they have been educated by their parents. In other words, what allows a kid to start acknowledging other people’s feelings is the emphasis that the parents had put on the effect of the child’s actions on other people. Therefore, the actual expression of the emotional effects of someone’s conduct on others is the starting point to the development of empathy. As well as that, empathy also influences the way in which

someone's emotional intelligence is strengthened. To put it another way, if parents fail to show empathy towards his child's emotions, the kid will stop to express himself/herself emotionally and, hence, will stop to pay attention to his and others' emotions in general (Goleman, 1996). Lastly, we have to take into consideration one of the reasons because of which an individual ceases to feel empathy towards others: prejudices. Prejudices are formed from a very early age and they may end up leading to a total rejection of the other person as an emotional being. In this regard, Goleman proposes a daily collaboration between the two individuals to break these prejudices. In his own words, "when students have worked together as equals to attain a common goal [...] their stereotypes break down" (Goleman, 1996, p. 119), what reopens the doors again to the share of feelings.

One of the main means through which we can discern emotions is non-verbal communication. In fact, Daniel Goleman shares the finding that more than 90 per cent of the emotional messages are transmitted through non-verbal communication. What is more, this type of messages are usually sent and received unconsciously, so being able to perceive them consciously requires an effort. In this sense, Pérez de las Heras findings (2016) can be significantly useful to us. Specifically, she illustrates the emotions that lie behind some of the most common gestures. As an illustration, moving compulsively one of the limbs represents nervousness, while the sitting position reflects someone's interest or lack of it. To this we can also add the facial gestures or the tone of voice, among others. She also points out three important elements to keep in mind when analyzing someone's gestures. First, gestures must be analyzed as a whole. Second, verbal and non-verbal communication may transmit contradictory messages, so it is necessary to analyze both to achieve a complete comprehension of the emotional information. Third, gestures have to be analyzed within a specific context. In order to carry out this analysis, she offers an additional method, receiving it the name of active listening. In brief, this method consists in listening with the five senses, since we receive information through multiple channels. Additionally, active listening is useful as well in the sense that a person conveys more details when he/she perceives that the interlocutor is actually paying full attention to the exchange. Undoubtedly, though never thought in schools, recognizing this type of information is crucial and should be included in any methodological approach that aims to incorporate the important matter of emotional intelligence.

### 5.2.3. Motivation

One of the factors that allows an active participation in the classroom and fosters a positive mood is **motivation**. Of course, motivation is linked to feelings and states such as enthusiasm, self-confidence and perseverance, so cultivating it in schools seems fundamental. In words of the *Farlex Partner Medical Dictionary* (2012), motivation is “the aggregate of all the individual motives, needs, and drives operative in a person at any given moment that influence the will and cause a given behavior.” Accordingly, motivation is the responsible of leading someone’s behavior and keeping him/her interested in particular enterprise. Let us now discover how motivation can be fostered.

The theory of multiple intelligences has a great deal to say in this regard. Specifically, Howard Gardner (2005) proposes that the manner of keeping students involved consists in letting them find out which intelligences or abilities are the ones that they have more developed. Therefore, being a person aware of his/her potential abilities, his determination and motivation to pursue certain activities and goals are increased. Gardner shows us a way to achieve this that receives the name of Project Spectrum. In particular, one of its methods consists in surrounding the students with attractive and interesting materials related to all the types of intelligence (Gardner, 2005). Thus, students have the chance of discovering which subjects arouse their interest and which intelligences they seem to have more articulated. During the academic year, teachers pay attention to the areas in which the pupils are more efficient and in which they are weaker. This is put into a report that permits the students to decide the areas in which they to focus.

As well as that, Gardner (2005) also finds relevant that people find vocational activities that complement their complement their academic and professional attitudes. This is achieved in a similar form to what has been mentioned above. That is to say, the person has to be offered the opportunity to experience activities related to multiple fields, so that the individual can be cognizant of the one with which he/she feels more comfortable. In any case, the person must not be forced to choose a specific area and the process has to flow naturally. In brief, allowing a person to find out his/her potentialities will surely increase his/her motivation, provoking a positive effect in his/her emotional state. Nonetheless, there is another crucial element that has a significant influence on people’s motivation, and that is the manner in which people are assessed and evaluated. The following section focuses on the process of providing feedback in a productive manner.

#### 5.2.4. Feedback

An important element that influences someone's motivation and involvement in a task is the manner in which **feedback** is provided. Certainly, there are inadequate forms of giving feedback that affect directly an individual's emotional state, what highlights the necessity of being cognizant of the ways of sharing this information appropriately. Prior thereto, let us find out the specific definition of the term feedback. According to the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (2016), feedback is "the return of information about the result of a process or activity; evaluative response." If we apply this to the educational field in which we are involved, the term would be in direct relation to the evaluation of process, which consists in letting the students the level of achievement that they have reached in the competences and contents that they have to acquire. Therefore, this section illustrates the more pertinent manners of providing feedback so that motivation and emotional mood remain in a positive state; later on, we will use this information to create an evaluation method for the methodological approach that this dissertation aims to create.

According to Pérez de las Heras (2016), the objective for giving feedback appropriately is not to harm the person that we are giving it to, a task that she puts in direct relation with empathy. With that purpose in mind, she illustrates a set of elements that have to be taken into account when providing feedback. First of all, it is necessary to separate the errors that the person has made to his/her cognitive capacities; in other words, informing that an activity carried out unsuccessfully does not mean that the student is incompetent or unsuccessful. Additionally, showing how the person providing the feedback feels also results to be useful, as it allows the individual being assessed to empathize with him/her. Moreover, it is fundamental to leave a space of silence so that the other person feels he/she can express his/her point of view. In the last place, we also have to be open to accept the excuses claimed by the individual, since there may be actually solid reasons behind his/her bad performance. Apart from that, Pérez de las Heras affirms that a teacher should be prepared to both providing feedback and to receiving it.

Referring now to Daniel Goleman's views on this topic, he considers feedback as the essential tool to keep people in the right direction. In fact, he argues that, when critiques are given in form of accusations and personal attacks, they only provoke "defensiveness, dodging of responsibility or stonewalling" (Goleman, 1996, p. 114). As a result, this causes a loss of motivation and confidence in the assessed person. In order to avoid this, Goleman states various

circumstances that have to be regarded when assessing. In the first place, providing feedback properly involves that a similar amount of positive and negative actions, instead of the common process of assessment that only includes points of improvement. As well as that, feedback should not suggest that people's "failures are due to some unchangeable deficit in themselves," as "they lose hope and stop trying" (Goleman, 1996, p. 115). In contrast, a constructive critique must be specific and offer concrete solutions, so that the individual has some clues on how to work on the solution of the issue. Finally, it has to be considered that critiques "are most effective face to face and in private" (Goleman, 1996, p. 116). In brief, an inappropriately expressed critique may lead to defensiveness, lack of interest and negative effects on mood.

The theory of multiple intelligences also pays attention to the students' process of evaluation. In particular, Howard Gardner (2005) points out to several factors that must be taken into account when assessing the pupils. Firstly, the emphasis must be placed in the evaluation itself and not in the evaluation instrument – usually an exam –, as evaluation should always be present in the entire process of learning and not only in the final part. To put it another way, we should avoid teaching students "how to pass the exam" so that the process results to be genuinely useful. Thus, assessment actually has to serve to help students to improve and learn from their mistakes. In direct relation with is the use of multiple means of evaluation, meaning this not only that several methods of evaluation should be utilized, but also that they have measure different competences. In fact, Gardner proposes that the assessment tools should be neutral with regard to the intelligence, as the most of these instruments measure mainly the linguistic or the logical-mathematical intelligences. Therefore, it should be found an evaluation tool that treats equally regardless of the intelligences that they have more articulated and automated. Furthermore, when providing feedback it is also necessary to bear in mind the dissimilarity of levels and abilities among the students, being essential to be aware of the fact that each student learns in a different manner. Lastly, the evaluation tool should be made up of materials that are intrinsically interesting and motivating (Gardner, 2005). This means that students will do their best only if the means used to evaluate suppose a real motivation and keep their interest and enthusiasm during the assessment process. In other words, the valuation instrument should be a learning experience in itself.

### **5.2.5. Flow**

A term that has to be approached in this dissertation is the psychological concept of *flow*. Having the former head of the department of psychology at the University of Chicago

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi as the main scholar studying this concept, the state of flow – or the zone – represents a situation in which the person is so focused and concentrated in a task that not only he/she loses conscience of everything surrounding him/her, but also his/her ability to carry out that activity is at its highest level. According to the *Dictionary of Sport and Exercise Science and Medicine by Churchill Livingstone* (2008), flow is “in psychology, a state of complete involvement and focus on a task that occurs when there is a perfect match between one's skills and the demands of the task.” Indeed, the benefits of this state in education are obvious, as the goal is always that of the students being completely focused on the task and motivated by it. In words of Daniel Goleman, “students who get into flow as they study do better, quite apart from their potential as measured by achievement tests” (Goleman, 1996, p. 73). Hence, this section will analyze the necessary conditions for this ideal state of mind to occur.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2000) makes an account of the elements required to reach the state of flow. There is a clear set of goals in the activity, and the feedback on how it is done is received simultaneously. Besides, the amount of challenge the activity requires is balanced with the skills that person has. To put it another way, the individual possess the right amount of skills to fulfil the task; this relation can be observed in Figure 2 below this paragraph. As well as that, all the distractions and elements surrounding the person are ignored by his/her consciousness, allowing this a full attention and dedication to the activity. Moreover, the individual has to be aware that failure is not a negative outcome; only when the person loses his/her to fear to failing and being judged will be able to achieve flow. Furthermore, the activity is so rewarding that becomes an end in itself; that is, the main motivation to carry it out is enjoying the activity. Only when all this elements work together the individual will reach the state of flow, characterized by a distortion of the sense of time, a feeling of full control on the activity, a loss of the conscious of the self, and an entire concentration on the task.

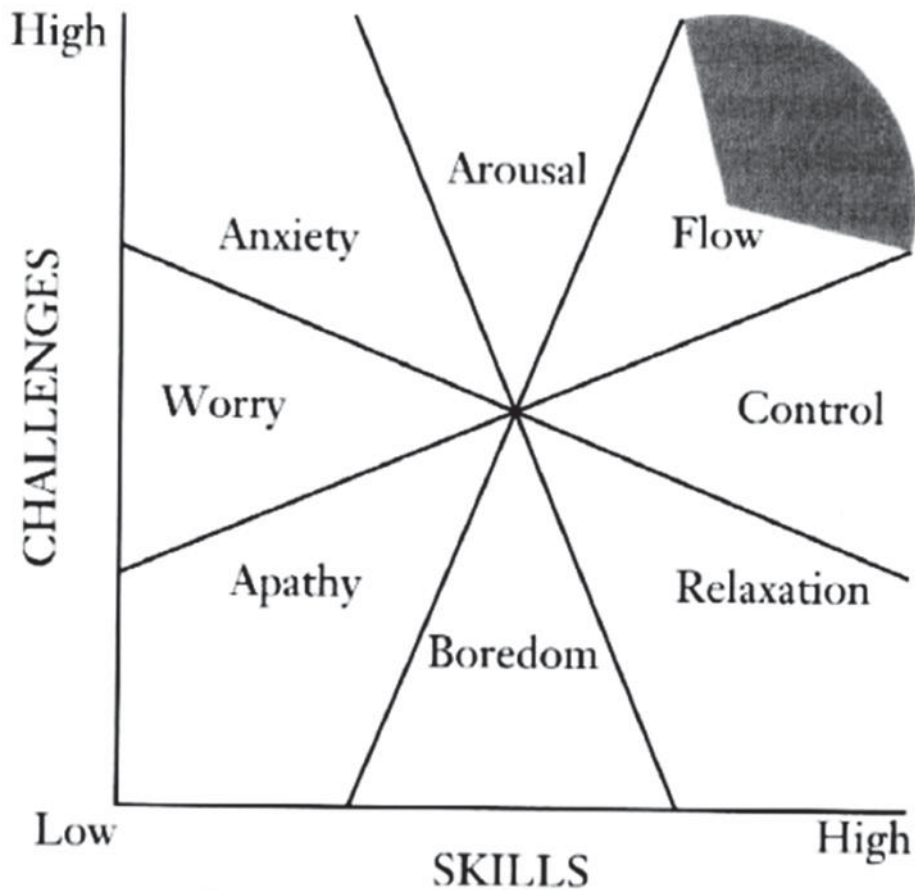


Figure 2: Relation between the level of challenge and skills to achieve *flow* (Massimini, Delle Fave & Carli, 1988, p. 294)

## 6. An Approach to Integrate Emotional Education into the Foreign Language Classroom

With the help of all the elements that have been dissected in the previous sections, this part of the dissertation will present the methodological approach that has been created in order to integrate the acquisition of a foreign language – focusing on oral skills – and emotional intelligence. In particular, this approach will aim to foster the following areas:

- Getting to know the language through acquisition and not through learning, which has been proven to be most appropriate manner.



- Cultivating oral interaction and public speaking so that the students may be able to participate in actual communication.
- Discovering the individual differences and potentialities that each student possess and cultivating them.
- Achieving mutual respect and collaboration between students, being also desired that students participate in the process of acquisition of their partners.
- Helping the students to be aware of the main negative emotions (their own feelings or other people's feelings), as well as providing them with tools to control them.
- Increasing students' motivation and involvement in the process of language acquisition, being this a crucial element both in the acquisition process and the emotional field.
- Encouraging students to participate in public interaction and speaking through a reduction of the fear and anxiety that these activities may provoke.
- Using non-verbal communication as a way to increase the students' competence not only in the foreign language, but also in the emotional field.
- Creating evaluation methods that actually help students to progress and that do not decrease their motivation.

Without further ado, let us show the methods and activity typologies that our approach presents, taking always into account that we are not dealing with a rigid methodology that has to be followed step by step. In fact, what we propose here can be integrated into any other methodology – either wholly or partially – and each education professional is free to decide which elements of this approach may be more beneficial for his/her pupils.

### **6.1. Preparing the Ground: the Classroom Environment**

In this section, the previous measures that have to be taken before putting into practice our approach will be illustrated, including this the classroom organization and the main tools and conceptions that can be applicable to the whole approach. Particularly, we will analyze the role of the teacher in this approach and the general typology of the activities carried out. As well as that, the nature of the materials utilized will be presented, without forgetting how students will be grouped. In general, this section will regard all those elements that have to be taken into consideration when putting into practice our approach.

The first factors that are going to be described are the classroom arrangement and the nature of the materials. Starting with the former, the traditional manners of organization will be avoided. In fact, chairs, desks and other school furniture will be disposed replicating real-

life situations and environments. In other words, the classroom will represent the communicative situation that the students are dealing with. As an illustration, let us imagine that the lesson is related to communicating in a cafeteria situation; in this case, the classroom furniture would be organized similarly to how an actual cafeteria is organized. The reason behind this organization is that the Theoretical Framework of the present dissertation has brought to light not only that language should be utilized in actual life communication, but also that similar to real-life situations result to be more motivating for students. Indeed, one of the methodologies taken as a reference – Communicative Language Teaching – also supports this utilization of real environments and materials. Following the same argument, all the materials employed during the lessons will be authentic and related to the specific communicative situation. Going back to the cafeteria example mentioned above, the teacher could provide the students with real restaurant menus or even with cups and plates. Again, it has been shown in this paper that this is a factor that increases students' motivation, which is one of the aspects that our approach aims to foster.

This utilization of actual materials can also be related to the elements surrounding the pupils in this classroom. As it is stated by the Suggestopedia methodology, a good manner of increasing the students' exposure to the language is decorating the classroom with items in the foreign language, such as posters or pictures. The approach proposed in this dissertation suggests going beyond. Specifically, it has already been seen that the theory of multiple intelligences states that a fruitful way of motivating someone is allowing him/her to find which are the capacities – or intelligences – that he/she has more articulated. Indeed, this is usually carried out by giving the person access to materials related to the eight intelligences, so that he/she can discover which result to be more appealing to him/her. Therefore, we propose surrounding the pupils with materials in the English language that allow a constant exposure to the language, being these materials also related to the eight types of intelligence. However, this does not simply mean putting posters in the English language related to mathematics or art. In fact, providing a student with a text in the English language that deals with the history of the mathematical discipline, for instance, would not produce an effect on his/her logical-mathematical intelligence. Actually, reading a text about mathematics will only affect the individual's linguistic intelligence. Hence, it is compulsory to make sure that we utilize items that actually suppose a challenge for the other seven intelligences. In the case of the logical-mathematical intelligence, instead of merely using a text about mathematics in the English language, we could make use of riddles or mathematical problems in the foreign language that

truly demand the use of logical and mathematical skills. Thus, we allow students not only to find out which of their mental abilities are more articulated and automatized, but also to acquire the language due to recurrent exposure. The same is applicable to the rest of intelligences.

Let us now focus on how students will be grouped in the proposed approach. As it is proposed by the Communicative Language Learning method, activities will be mainly carried out in groups; in particular, these groups will be made up of four pupils, as larger teams usually result in issues such as unequal work distribution, conflicts among members or creation of subsets within the group that impede global collaboration. As well as that, the members of each group will change after completing every didactic unit or project, which usually last around two or three weeks; that is, new teams will be formed every time a new topic is addressed. The reasons behind promoting both team work and changing groups are the following. First of all, mutual collaboration and constant interaction seem to be a proper manner of fostering social skills and interpersonal intelligence, being the latter one of the main components of emotional intelligence. Through working towards a common goal, we manage to let the pupils empathize with their colleagues and be aware that an individual's issue is everyone's issue. As well as that, it has been pointed out in previous sections that the most pertinent way of breaking someone's prejudices towards other people is to make them work hand in hand to achieve a common goal. Therefore, since the composition of the groups will change after a couple weeks, all the students will have to cooperate even with those individuals with whom they do not have a positive relationship, being this the manner of reducing the aversion that they feel. Apart from that, working in small groups is also a way of decreasing the fear and anxiety that public speaking provokes in some students, as they will probably feel more predisposed to speak if only three of their colleagues are listening. Again, as they will eventually share teamwork with all the pupils, the passing of time will show them that none of their colleagues manifests a negative reaction towards their speaking.

Moving to the role of the teacher in this approach, we can also point out to different aspects that will be present in most of the activities. First of all, our approach gives the students the main role during the sessions, meaning this that the teacher is not always the center of attention. In other words, what we propose is that the acts more as a guide than as an instructor as such. This means that the teacher will be in charge of preparing the activities and guide the pupils throughout them, but it is the students who will take a more active role. Hence, the role of the teacher consists in explaining the nature of the activities and being always available when students need him/her. Nonetheless, during a significant amount time, he simply remains

as an observer to analyze the pupils' progress and decide which improvements should be made. In this sense, this aspect is highly influenced by the role of the teacher in The Silent Way method. As well as that, although depending on the activity the pupils will look for their own materials, the teacher is also in charge of providing the students with the materials and tools that are indispensable to start a certain task, without forgetting that he/she has to arrange the materials surrounding the classroom that have been previously mentioned. Moreover, as we are dealing with an approach that aims to foster language acquisition, it is also the educator's work to produce the necessary language output so that the students can infer the nature of the foreign language structures. That is to say, in this approach the teacher does not provide long and complex theoretical explanations to let the students be cognizant of the structures of the language. In contrast, when a pupil encounters difficulties with a specific part of the language, what the instructor does is showing several examples of use so that the student is able to understand the linguistic items. Apart from that, this approach also gives the educator the role of detecting the emotional and coexistence issues that may arise among the students; the specific ways of acting in these cases will be illustrated in conjunction with the description of the activities typology and in Section 6.8.2. of this dissertation. In the last place, evaluation and assessment are of course the teacher's tasks. Specifically, he/she is in charge of discovering each student's handicaps and finding out a solution for them. By the same token, the educator has to infer as well the strong points of his/her pupils in terms of foreign language acquisition, more articulated intelligences and emotional skills; the description of the evaluation methods can be found in Section 6.8.1. of this paper.

The last aspect that is going to be covered by this first contact to our approach is the psychological concept of *flow*. As we have already seen, this concept is characterized by a state of full concentration in which the individual achieves his/her optimal performance in a task and becomes entirely focused on it. As this state not only increases students' motivation, but also allows them to temporarily forget all the difficulties that they may have in their personal life, it is found essential that the activities that make up our approach permit to achieve this state of mind. Hence, all the proposed tasks must manifest a balance between the skills that the activity requires and those of the students and a clear and motivating goal to achieve that mental state. In order to make sure that the activities match the students' level, we will pay attention to the objectives established by the Spanish and regional curricula. In particular, these documents do not demand a complete mastery in any aspect of the oral skills during Compulsory Secondary Education, so it would be unproductive to involve the pupils in tasks

that require language proficiency. Additionally, activities have to be motivating in themselves and it has to be clear that failure is not a negative outcome, being the latter a fundamental requirement to allow the pupils to be relaxed and free of anxiety and fear.

## **6.2. Combining Role-Playing and Task-Based Processes to Foster Language Acquisition and Interpersonal Intelligence**

The first technique that our approach proposes to integrate foreign language acquisition and emotional intelligence is based on a combination a role-playing and a task-based learning method. In fact, this first type of task is based somehow on those methodologies who give the students the main role and put them actually in charge of conveying the contents; indeed, the Communicative Language Teaching and The Silent Way methods are an important reference in this sense. Since it has already been established that this approach will foster acquisition over learning, the main task of the students in this activity will be to produce linguistic output so that their classmates have a source for naturally acquiring the structures of the foreign language. Conversely, the role of the teacher consists not only in providing materials and guiding the process, but also in solving doubts and intervening in the conflicts that may appear among students. We can summary the main objectives of this task as follows:

- Increasing students' motivation by allowing them to work with topics related to their own interests.
- Developing students' speaking and oral interaction skills.
- Cultivating interpersonal intelligence, empathy and mutual collaboration.
- Fostering acquisition over learning through a direct exposure to the other students' output in the foreign language.

Bearing these general points in mind, let us illustrate in depth the process attached to this type of activity; taking as a reference the Task-Based method, the process is divided in the following parts.

### 1) Pre-task

First of all, the pupils are given information about the process so that they know exactly what they have to carry out. Specifically, the teacher explains that during the following days they will work in groups to prepare and finally perform a scene proper of an English-speaking country. Indeed, each group is free to decide which scene they may want to represent, being the only requirement that it can be observed in an English-speaking environment; specifically,

the Communicative Language Learning method suggests that working with topics create interest in the students is an appropriate way of motivating them. As an illustration, pupils may choose from performing an important meeting at NASA to representing an informal conversation in a cafeteria. Furthermore, students have complete freedom to choose the role that they want to play within that scene, and not the typical roles of supervisor or participant, which end up leading to an unnecessary hierarchy among students. Particularly, we are taking as a reference here the Suggestopedia method, which remarks that pupils should be able to choose a role with which they feel safer. Hence, this is manner of increasing students' motivation and reducing the discomfort associated to playing a role that they not feel content with.

Apart from that, students are also explained that they have to utilize in this theatrical performance the main components that make up communicative competence. In other words, their representation has to include linguistic, socio-cultural and pragmatic structures. First of all, within the linguistic competence, pupils must show mastery of a grammatical structure of their choice and of some lexical and semantic concepts associated to their scene. Moreover, socio-cultural elements such as register differences, dialect and accent or linguistic markers of social relations have to be observable by the audience – the rest of the class – when the scene is being performed. On top that, this part can even include proxemics, which is the distance between speakers when communicating. The reason behind including this non-verbal communication item is that it mainly depends on social and cultural factors, and it is therefore a significant aspect to regard when fostering communicative competence. In the last place, the pragmatic competence is also aimed to be developed in this role-playing task. In this case, students have to clearly show that they are using linguistic functions to achieve a specific purpose through language. Nonetheless, this arises the doubt of how students will be able of putting into practice a set of communicative elements they are probably not cognizant with. Indeed, this matter is solved in the following part of the process: planning.

## 2) Planning

Once the different groups have decided the scene that they want to perform, it is the time to start preparing the representation. In particular, each team occupies a part of the classroom and starts preparing the script and details of their theatrical representation. To this end, all the groups have access to at least one electronic device with access to the Internet – a tablet or a laptop – so that they can research and look for materials related to their topic. This

search for materials is based on the following premises. In the first place, students have to look for real materials in the foreign language that are in direct relation to their specific topic. Thus, we manage to foster not only the much mentioned nowadays use of the Information and Communication Technologies, but also the recently incorporated sixth skill of thinking. As well as that, the teacher also provides the pupils with different materials, being these also related to the different intelligences to fulfill again all what this dissertation has stated about the role of the multiple intelligences theory. In fact, the decision of the teacher also giving additional materials is due to the possibility that the students may not find materials appropriate to their own level or that may be useful to work with specific linguistic structures. As soon as every group has gathered its materials, the pupils are free to choose which structures and elements result to be more important and necessary. Even though the most common procedure is that the teacher selects which structures the students should approach, our decision is to change this situation. Specifically, this choice was made taking into consideration Krashen's *natural order hypothesis*, which claims that we acquire structures in a certain order and this cannot be changed by formal instruction. Therefore, from a language acquisition point of view, it has been decided that students work with the structures which they subconsciously are willing and ready to acquire. If further explanations are required, the teacher will respond providing multiple examples of use of that structure. Indeed, this is a manner of trying that the students naturally acquire the use of the structures, as theoretical explanations have proven to be not so useful to foster language acquisition. In brief, during this planning stage pupils have to search for real materials that help them to select the communicative elements – linguistic, socio-cultural and pragmatic – that they have to incorporate into their theatrical performance.

Nevertheless, since this activity tries also to foster emotional intelligence in general and interpersonal intelligence in particular, other considerations must be borne in mind. First of all, groups are compulsorily required to make an equal division of work; it is not only a matter of each pupil having a similar amount of responsibilities, but also that each student is assigned a labor that results to be fundamental for the whole process. In other words, if a member of the team does not complete his/her task, the whole group will be negatively affected in a significant manner. What we are trying to achieve through this method is the fostering and development of empathy. If a person sees that his/her actions have led to a negative emotional state of his/her classmates, this individual will understand that an inappropriate conduct has undesirable psychological effects on his/her self and the rest of people. Apart from that, the teacher has also to make sure that there is always a fluent and beneficial communication among the group



members using the foreign language, which serves to cultivate both oral interaction skills and interpersonal intelligence; however, we are cognizant of the fact that they will feel obligated sometimes to use their mother tongue. Furthermore, interpersonal intelligence will also be fostered among the members of different teams. Particularly, there will be moments in which the materials that every team has gathered will not be enough to understand the specific structures. In this case, the teacher will provide that necessary information to a different group, so that all the teams feel the need of global collaboration. As an illustration, if Group A has trouble finding out the use of a socio-cultural structure, the teacher will give that information to Group B. Afterwards, members of both Group A and Group B have to share that information through oral interaction; for this purpose, they have to use the variety of oral interaction named as *transactional talk* (the one that has the intention of getting something from the interlocutor), in which we will focus on section 6.3. of this dissertation. Through this sharing of information, the goal is to emphasize the importance of social interaction and the necessity of mutual collaboration. Moreover, as it has already been pointed out, everyday cooperation results to be an optimal tool to eliminate the prejudices that people may feel and that can be an impediment to the proper development of empathy.

### 3) The Theatrical Performance: Role-Playing

After a few days working in groups with the materials and preparing the performance, the students are ready to put it into practice. This third stage could be described as follows. First of all, the furniture materials are arranged to simulate the scene that each team is going to represent. Additionally, the members of the other groups are also present in the scene as secondary characters. For instance, if a cafeteria scene is going to be performed, the other classmates would act as other customers of this business. Moreover, real materials related to the topic are spread through the classroom, so that everyone involved can use them as resource. Utilizing the cafeteria example again, menus or advertising posters can be placed in different places of the room. Once everything is prepared, each of the teams performs the scene that they have prepared, in which linguistic, socio-cultural and pragmatic elements must be discerned. Clarity and comprehensibility are definitely required, because this scene is what serves to the other groups as an input and exposure to language to acquire the structures that are being used. In this case, students are asked to produce *structured output* (the one that requires grammatical correction), as they have had a sufficient amount of time to prepare it. To involve everyone in the process and foster both language acquisition and interpersonal intelligence, the team performing the scene implicates the rest of the class through oral interaction. That is, if the

members of the performing group are acting as waiters of the cafeteria, they can involve their classmates starting informal conversation or asking what are they going to have in this fictitious cafeteria. Thus, through a direct involvement in the process, we manage to achieve that everyone is going to both receive input in the foreign language and produce output as well as utilizing those new structures. Indeed, this idea is based on Krashen's *input hypothesis*, which suggests that we acquire communicative structures only after having perceived them in actual communication. For the oral interaction stage, communicative output is given more importance, being preferred that students can communicate over a perfect knowledge of grammar; again,, we are following the Communicative Language Teaching method idea it is more important using the language than having a perfect theoretical knowledge about it. Needless to say, this whole stage is done using the foreign language.

After the theatrical performance has ended, teacher and students create a small debate to discuss what they have learnt and solve doubts. If a pupil does not understand yet some of the structures utilized, the performing team provides more examples of use to continue fostering acquisition over learning. Afterwards, the members of the other groups evaluate their classmates representation, always following the rules of constructive feedback to cultivate emotional intelligence. In other words, students have to provide a similar amount of strong and negative points, making the teacher always sure that no harmful comments are made and that empathy is preserved (see Section 6.8.1. to find further considerations that students have to follow when providing feedback).

#### 4) Final considerations

Once each group finishes its theatrical performance, the teacher provides an evaluation in private and individually to every team; this is carried out following the evaluation and feedback criteria verbalized in Section 6.8.1. of this dissertation. Additionally, as the probability of conflicts among pupils appearing is significantly high when working in groups, Section 6.8.2. provides some guidelines to be followed to deal with this from in an appropriate emotional intelligence point of view. Furthermore, in order to this activity continue to be interesting and attractive throughout the whole year, it is necessary to make some changes each time it is put into practice. For instance, the setting can be moved sometimes outside the classroom or the representation can be done with larger collaboration among groups.

### 6.3. Transactional Talk as a Means to Achieve *Flow*

This section will describe an approach to cultivate oral interaction that is not a type of activity in itself, but a type of practice that can be part of any other activity or task. As the title of the section enunciates, we will utilize for this purpose the conversation category named as *transactional talk*. As it has already been pointed out, this is a type of oral interaction with a specific function, which is obtaining something from the interlocutor. This type of conversation has been chosen for a particular reason. Specifically, our experience has shown us that oral interaction activities in most of the Spanish secondary schools consist in talking to your nearest classmate without any specific purpose. On top of that, the teacher is not usually monitoring each conversation, so pupils normally turn to their native language to discuss any other matter. In other words, students do not have any motivation to maintain a conversation with their classmates, which decreases the usefulness that the activity may have. Therefore, we propose *transactional talk* as a manner of increasing students' motivation, as oral interaction will be offered to them as a communicative tool to achieve specific goals. Indeed, the usefulness of this relies on the instructor's ability to set a goal that pupils actually desire to accomplish. Additionally, this is in fact also a tool to foster empathy, as students can observe the influence that their actions have on other people and vice versa. In other words, this serves to show them that tasks cannot be carried out if we do not take into account other people's necessities and difficulties, since not doing their best to convey the information in a way that their interlocutor can understand it means a global failure.

Before moving to the actual implementation of this idea, let us first consider the other concept that we want to integrate in oral interaction. In previous sections, we have already talked about the nature and utility in education of the psychological concept of *flow*. In brief, this is the state of mind in which someone develops a full concentration on the activity he/she is carrying out, achieving thus an optimal performance. As well as that, the benefits of the state of *flow* in education also lie on the fact that the complete focus on a task provokes that any negative emotions or moods – such as fear, anxiety or tension – end up disappearing from the individual's mind. Hence, it has been decided to use oral interaction as one of the tools to achieve this state of mind. The reasons behind this choice are the following. In the first place, the amount of information that someone has to process to participate in a conversation is near the limit of information that a human being can process at once; that is why we cannot maintain two conversations at the same time. Consequently, there is a balance between the level of challenges and skills that this task requires, something which is precisely the main requirement

to achieve the mental state of flow. Additionally, utilizing especially *transactional talk* we make sure that pupils will necessarily have to pay full attention to conversation, as the opposite would mean not obtaining the information that they need. In the last place, in order to this process to be successful, it is mandatory that the instructor makes sure that the oral interaction task is adapted to the pupils' concrete level of English, as imbalance between the students' skills and the abilities that the conversation demands will reduce any motivation arisen by the activity. In particular, having a higher level of English than needed would provoke boredom and apathy, while having a lower level would lead to worry and anxiety; to put it another way, both cases would have the consequence of a loss of interest and lack of motivation.

Let us start illustrating the diverse ways in which we can put this into practice. First of all, it has already been shown that the task described in the previous section made use of *transactional talk*. In particular, students could turn to other teams' members to get information needed to carry out their task. In this case, the motivation is clear, as they need use oral interaction to continue working in their theatrical performance. The issue that this would provoke is that the teacher could not make sure that the pupils were actually using the foreign language and that the conversation was being carried correctly. In order to solve this, we propose the creation of the *meeting point*. Specifically, this will be a specific space of the classroom in which all significant exchanges of information will take place, and in which the instructor will be present. Thus, the teacher will always be able to check that conversations are carried out properly. As well as that, this space will be separated enough from the work area, so that interlocutors can actually concentrate on the interaction and focus on the task. This *meeting point* will also be useful in teacher-student interactions for the following reasons. On the one hand, there might be moments in which the pupils might desire to communicate the instructor an issue of personal or negative nature, so having a private space to conduct these type of exchanges is also beneficial from a psychological point of view. On the other hand, some activities will require the teacher to convey some knowledge to all the groups, but simply transmitting it aloud would leave out the oral interaction practice that we are trying to cultivate. Therefore, the *meeting point* will be a suitable tool to provide information individually, allowing this that the teacher can adapt his/her level in the foreign language to each pupil needs.

Moreover, there is a further manner in which we can utilize *transactional talk* to achieve the state of *flow*. Particularly, we propose to include assiduously in the foreign language classroom conversations with native speakers. At present, technology has made communication between citizens from different countries much easier than ever before,

something that education should take advantage of. Accordingly, it is suggested having some minutes each week in which pupils can contact students from other countries thanks to the use of the Information and Communication Technologies that the Spanish curriculum aims to foster. Once again, we will mainly make use of *transactional talk*, as it is the one that manages in a best manner to achieve students focus and concentration. Hence, these conversations could become a tool to obtain information for the group work tasks, being the instructor in charge of previously giving the information to the English language native speakers. Furthermore, this would be also be a tool to acquire some of the socio-cultural aspects that make up communicative competence, such as politeness conventions, linguistic markers of social relations and gestures proper of each country, without forgetting the linguistic aspect of pronunciation; indeed, these elements would be assimilated through acquisition in actual communication. Apart from that, it has already been stated that full concentration and motivation requires of a balance between the abilities required to fulfill the task and the individual's skills. In this case, it is quite probable that pupils do not have a sufficient level of English to participate in a full conversation with a native speaker, so the instructor and the rest of the classmates will act as a support during this task. In fact, this is not an inconvenient, as the Spanish curriculum verbalizes that secondary school students are not required of a perfect understanding of the language. In this manner, it is managed not only to balance the level of challenges and skills demanded by the task, but also to cultivate empathy and the necessity of mutual collaboration in every aspect of life. Finally, although *transactional talk* is given the center of attention, pupils are also encouraged to use *interactional talk* – the one used to socialize – at specific times. This is a matter of developing interpersonal intelligence and social skills, as students need to be cognizant of the fact that the other individuals are not just means to achieve a goal. Consequently, they are required to show real interest in the other pupils' circumstances before trying to obtain any academic knowledge.

#### **6.4. Using Oral Production to Eliminate the Taboos Associated to Expression of Emotions**

The next task that is going to be proposed takes the form of a short everyday activity with which lessons can be started or ended. Specifically, what we propose is that pupils have a place in which they can express their moods and emotional situations. Indeed, psychological problems such a depression have their origin in the perception that the individual has no one to turn to. As well as that, a person affected by such issues does not usually have the ability to analyze his/her emotions objectively, what arises the need of communicating these feelings to

other people who can examine them detachedly. In fact, this dissertation's Theoretical Framework has shown that one of the best manners of dealing with anger, anxiety or depression is an oral analysis of the processes attached to them. On top of that, the Spanish and regional curricula highlight the notion of transversal topics and of integrating general matters of life in every subject. Therefore, this task aims to incorporate the important matter of emotions into the foreign language classroom. What is more, we desire to finally break with the taboos that consider public expression of emotions as an inappropriate conduct or a sign of weakness.

In order to do that, students would gather in groups of four as explained in Section 6.1. – groups whose members would change after a couple weeks. The decision of making this activity in groups lies on the fact that students will probably not dare to express their feelings comfortably in front of the whole class. The process can be described in the following manner. During five minutes a day, each team looks for a quiet place within the classroom and settle there. Afterwards, one of the team members will take the floor to express using the foreign language any emotional or personal matters they may feel to share. As an illustration, the pupil could describe – without getting into details – his/her chain of negative thoughts; as it has been explained in the Theoretical Framework section, the chain of thoughts is the constant repetition of negative thoughts that leads to psychological states such as anxiety or depression. Meanwhile, the rest of the members of the team pay attention using the method of active listening explained in the Theoretical Framework as well, which consists in being attentive not only to words, but also to other forms of communication such as non-verbal language; the tools that students will be given to analyze non-verbal language can be observed in Section 6.7. of this paper. After the speaker has finished his/her oral discourse, the group creates a small debate using oral interaction to try to find the origins of the speaker's negative emotions and plausible solutions. However, we have to bear always in mind that we are dealing with teenagers, so students need to be aware of the fact that it is not necessary to deepen excessively in non-positive accounts. As well as that, no pupil is forced to talk about emotional matters if he/she does not feel comfortable with that. Conversely, the individual is invited to speak about any other topic of his/her choice, so that this person also has the chance to foster his/her oral production skills. In fact, this still manages to fulfill the objective of the students feeling that have people to turn to and who listen to them.

As in most of the cases this oral production will take the form of a logic process, students' output must be expressed with coherence and cohesion, two of the fundamental parts that make up most of the different conceptions of communicative competence. Furthermore,



pupils may also need to utilize linguistic structures that they do know yet or to use vocabulary which is unfamiliar to them. Two solutions are proposed to solve these issues. In the case of coherence, cohesion or linguistic structures, the instructor would be the one helping them, but not through theoretical explanations. In contrast, what the teacher would be offering several instances of those structures in use or even showing them audiovisual materials from which coherence and cohesion techniques can be inferred. Speaking of the vocabulary doubts, it would be the rest of the members of the group the ones who would be in charge of solving these doubts. In particular, each member of the team is assigned a different mood – anger, anxiety or depression, among others – and is responsible of using the tool he/she finds convenient (normally a dictionary) to discover the appropriate English term that should be utilized. Indeed, this is a manner of avoiding that old resource of making students learn long vocabulary lists, as we consider to be most useful to acquire those that they actually need to communicate. Apart from that, this role assignment for solving vocabulary doubts is a way to cultivate both interpersonal intelligence and social skills, as mutual collaboration is one of the best manners to achieve this. Moreover, it is considered that this activity is also useful to increase motivation, since all the participants feel that they have an important role, and not only the speaker.

In brief, we consider this task to be a suitable manner of incorporating the important matter of emotions to the students' everyday routine. In fact, carrying out this activity everyday will show the pupils that the expression of feelings is as normal as any other school subject. Additionally, the fact of utilizing teams whose members vary constantly tries to achieve that the students feel comfortable sharing their views to any classmate, what fosters empathy and elimination of prejudices. In the last place, it must be highlighted that the nature of this task makes more convenient that students produce *communicative output* – the one which gives preference to content over linguistic correction. That is to say, we prefer that pupils try to express themselves even if they do not have mastered some aspects of the language yet.

### **6.5. Speaking with Change of Sensory System**

As the psychological part of this dissertation's Theoretical Framework has manifested, one of the ways by which we can get rid of a negative mood consists in shifting our focus of attention to a different stimulus. Indeed, a method that can help us to achieve this is changing the main sensory system that we are employing. In other words, negative moods usually affect our internal kinesthetic internal system (we feel these emotions in our chest or in our belly), so



a manner of reducing their impact would be moving the center of attention to an external sensory system, such as the visual or the auditory system. Since public speaking is the skill that probably provokes in the students a larger amount of negative sensations (fear of being judged, tension or anxiety), we propose to join these two elements in the same task. Specifically, we suggest combining oral production with constant shifts in the pupils' main sensory system. Thus, the objective will be that a continuous change in their focus of attention will allow them to stop paying attention the negative feelings that public speaking originates.

Let us explain how this activity would be developed. First of all, as one of the main factors that impedes students producing oral output in a relax manner is the fear to their minds going blank, we consider appropriate to let pupils know in advance the topic that they are going to discuss. However, these topics will not be chosen by the instructor, but by the rest of the classmates. Hence, the only way that the students have to prepare their oral presentation is finding out their classmates' interests and asking them directly. If we also desire this stage to be done using the foreign language, we can make them ask their colleagues in the *meeting point* that has already been discussed in Section 6.3. of this dissertation. Through this process of information exchange, we aim to foster pupils' empathy, since they have to really get to know their colleagues and discover their personal motives. Moreover, social skills and interpersonal intelligence are also cultivated, as the students need to find out the ways of establishing a relationship of trust with their interlocutors so that they are willing to share their personal likes. What is more, this is a manner of breaking prejudices as well, because getting to know those people that they do not really like will show them that the motives of that rejection were not actually based on solid ground. Finally, being the rest of the classmates aware of the fact that a topic of their interest will be discussed during the lesson, it seems reasonable to suggest that their motivation and engagement will probably increase.

Apart from that, it needs to be mentioned that the teacher is always at the students' disposal to solve any linguistic doubts they may have. Indeed, to continue fostering acquisition, the instructor will try to solve the doubts showing actual examples of use, reducing theoretical explanations to the minimum. Additionally, the teacher communicates the students that are not obligated to use any particular structures; they only have to use those grammatical structures and vocabulary that they find convenient. Thus, it is tried to achieve that students use the different structures with mere communicative purposes and that naturally assimilate the ones the find to be more useful. Nonetheless, the pupils are required to make use of *structured output*, because they have enough time to prepare it and to accomplish linguistic correction.

After this previous process of preparation, the pupils are ready to carry out the public speaking task. Particularly, each student will receive in form of visual or auditory stimuli the different topics they have to speak about. That is, the speaker will be shown a picture or a video regarding one of his/her colleagues' interests, which will later change to a dialogue or a song related to the preferences of other of his/her classmates: Along this process, the students have to create a coherent discourse about what is being perceived in form of visual or auditory stimuli; following again The Silent Way method, neither the instructor nor the classmates will interrupt the discourse, since this only provokes an increase of anxiety and fear and a decrease of self-confidence. Moreover, as the pupils will have to change the sensory system employed in a very fast manner, it is rational to assume that very little attention will be paid to those negative feelings attached to public speaking. What is more, as the quantity of information they will receive will need of their full attention, it is quite probable that they can reach that state of full concentration and optimal performance that we wish to incorporate to all the activities – the state of *flow*. In this case, it is crucial that the instructor is aware of what the curriculum requires for the speaking skill in that particular stage and of what the capacities of student are, because we already know that the state of *flow* is only achieved if there is a balance between the challenges demanded by the task and the individual's abilities. Apart from that, it was also stated in our Theoretical Framework that a good manner of changing the focus of attention and getting distracted from non-positive thoughts is simply walking, so students will be allowed to walk throughout the class while they produce oral output.

The last stage of this activity consists in the rest of classmates providing feedback to the speaker's performance. Again, it is crucial that students follow the principles of constructive feedback illustrated in Section 6.8.1. of this paper, since a bad evaluation can decrease someone's motivation and affect his/her emotional well-being. With this last step, the task would reach its end. As it has been shown, this activity aims to eliminate the harmful emotions that students may feel when facing public speaking through a constant shift of the sensory system utilized and the focus of attention. Furthermore, empathy and interpersonal intelligence are also fostered, as the task cannot be carried out without paying attention to others' concerns or without mutual collaboration. On top of that, the main objective of this activity is indeed fostering oral production skills.

## 6.6. From Relaxation to Physical Activity

Psychologists Daniel Goleman, Lizabeth Roemer and Thomas Borkovec have stated the usefulness of both relaxation techniques and physical activity to deal with non-positive moods and states of mind. Particularly, the two of them represent valuable tools to modify the physiological state which moods such as anger or anxiety cause in our bodies. However, although several of these methods have already been included in schools, we consider that this is not enough. In fact, our aim is to integrate these techniques into the foreign language contents, focusing again on the oral skills. Accordingly, this section is going to propose some activity typologies to accomplish this purpose.

First of all, the previous section has also shown how that the simply act of walking is a useful way of getting distracted and relaxing. Therefore, something as easy as carrying out an activity while the students walk can have significant benefits. On the one hand, leaving the classroom for a few a moments to walk through the playground while the contents are taught will probably help to avoid monotony and increase motivation. On the other hand, we have already brought to light that walking permits a shift in the sensory channel, without forgetting that any form of physical exercise is valuable to change a negative physiological condition. In fact, what we are proposing here is by no means a revolution or an experimental method. Indeed, the Ancient Greece's Peripatetic school– the one that followed Aristotle's ideas – is the clearest example of how lessons can be imparted while walking.

Without moving from the field of physical activity, let us illustrate a different manner of incorporating it into the foreign language classroom. Undoubtedly, the main reference in this sense is the Total Physical Response methodology, which we will keep in mind when designing this task both in terms of physical activity and in the sense of prioritizing oral language. Nevertheless, it will be only utilized as a starting point, as we desire to create something new. In short, this activity follows the model of the classic TV show *The Amazing Race*, which shows how participants explore a city to gather clues and complete tasks. This is what we students to do. Grouped in teams of four again, the teacher will take the pupils to the playground to complete a challenge. This will usually consist in finding some elements previously hidden in the area or solving any kind of mystery. With that purpose in mind, pupils need to gather several clues, which can be obtained in the following ways. First, we can make use again of *transactional talk* to give the students clues, in a way that pupils have to utilize oral interaction in the foreign language to ask the teacher for guidance. As well as that,

materials in the foreign language (authentic materials if possible) can also be employed to guide the students. Specifically, it is recommended to use materials related to the eight intelligences proposed by the theory of multiple intelligences, being this a form of adapting the task to the individualities and diverse forms of understanding reality that each student has. As an illustration, maps can be used to develop the visual-spatial intelligence or riddles to appeal the logical-mathematical intelligence. Of course, we can relate this task to a different aspect of language every time: specific vocabulary, a concrete grammatical structure (like commands) or even socio-cultural elements. All in all, this task combines the fostering of oral interaction with the physical activity related to outside activities, which is indeed a suitable way of getting rid of a negative state of mind. Additionally, group work and clear goals serve to cultivate both interpersonal intelligence and social skills and motivation.

Referring now to the inclusion of relaxation techniques, our aim continues to be their integration with the foreign language contents. Even though the usual practice is that teachers or external professionals guide the relaxation sessions, this dissertation proposes giving this role to the pupils. Indeed, this would require a previous preparation period, which can be described as follows. In the first place, the teacher will guide a meditation session in the foreign language so that the students can get a general idea of the nature of this process. Afterwards, maintaining team work as the way to go, the students will prepare collectively their own meditation/relaxation session. If any doubts regarding the process or the language arise, the teacher is always available to assist them. Again, fostering acquisition over learning is still the objective, so the instructor will provide actual examples of use or audiovisual materials containing guided meditations or relaxation techniques. If we analyze the process up to this point, what the students are doing is actually preparing an oral exposition collaboratively. Consequently, it can be appreciated that it has been decided to integrate relaxation and mediation techniques through the cultivation of the oral production skill. After having prepared the meditation session, pupils are informed that they can put it into practice whenever they decide. In other words, there will not a specific schedule to point out when relaxation techniques should be put into practice. Conversely, the teacher or any student are free to decide when the emotional situation of the rest of the pupils requires of a moment of relaxation. To put it another way, if any conflicts or frustration appear, anyone is entitled to start a brief mediation session. In particular, it will be one of the members of the team the one who will guide the process, being each time a different person adopting this role. Hence, all the pupils will have the chance of fostering their oral production skills through this task. In terms of

emotional intelligence, the whole class would benefit of a healthier and calmer state of mind, something that will provide profits in both academic and social relations terms. On top of that, meditation is a process that helps to increase awareness about the own moods, what would allow the students to know when they need to resort to any of the techniques that this dissertation has illustrated to deal with anger, anxiety or sadness, among others.

### **6.7. Non-verbal Communication as a Tool to Foster Empathy**

Although our approach has focused on oral production and interaction, we would also desire to introduce the importance skill of non-verbal communication. In fact, a significant amount of the information related to emotions and feelings is conveyed through non-linguistic language, what arises the need of including it in the approach presented in this dissertation. Without further ado, let us illustrate the ways in which we can combine non-verbal communication and emotional intelligence.

The first type activity that we are going to propose is related to images description. Particularly, the description of images or pictures is a recurrent means in the foreign language classroom to foster oral production and fluency, but we are going to use this with slight changes. Specifically, what students will be required to describe will not be places or situations, but human behaviors and actions. Hence, the pupils will be shown images of people representing different emotions and they will be asked to both identify the precise feeling and point out to its concrete gestural characteristics, focusing on microgestures. Of course, the teacher will complete the description providing further information on the gestures associated to each feeling, following what has been stipulated in the Neuro-linguistic Programming section of this paper. Thus, the main objective of this activity is fostering the understanding and recognition of messages transmitted through non-verbal communication. In fact, this is a crucial element in order to develop empathy, as the first step to put ourselves in other people's shoes is actually finding what they are feeling. As well as that, despite not being the primary purpose, this activity serves to practice oral production as well.

The next task deals also with the non-verbal language attached to human emotions. However, this activity will serve not only to recognize the diverse feelings, but also to put into practice the expression of messages through non-verbal communication. Specifically, we will take as a reference the classic game of the "dumb charades", in which the players have to guess the name of a movie through the gestures and mimicry of one of the participants. As we wish to increase aware in the field emotions, we will change the topic of movies for that of feelings.

Therefore, the procedure is the following; two teams compete against each other, having again four members each group. One of the members of a group is told an emotion by the teacher, and the students is asked to represent that emotion through non-verbal language. In this case, the pupil is permitted to utilize both microgestures and macrogestures; that is, he/she can employ his whole body. Meanwhile, the rest of the members of his/her group try to guess what feeling their colleague is representing, being them only allowed to use the foreign language. Afterwards, the team is asked to describe – in the foreign language as well – which gestures were the ones that helped them to guess the answer. During most of the activity, the teacher adopts an observant role and only intervenes if his/her assistance is needed; again, a role similar to that of the instructor in The Silent Way method seems to be most appropriate, as constantly interrupting the students may have adverse effects on the students' self-esteem and self-confidence. Accordingly, this task aims to continue increasing pupils' knowledge on non-verbal communication and emotion recognition; while the former is a tool to improve their communicative competence, the latter serves to foster interpersonal intelligence and empathy. Moreover, both oral production and interaction are subconsciously cultivated, without forgetting the acquisition of emotion-related vocabulary (lexical and semantic competence).

In the last place, this section will be concluded proposing a variation of the task illustrated in Section 6.2. of this paper. In particular, we are referring the combination of role-playing and a task-based method to integrate language acquisition and emotional intelligence. Let us specify in which these variations consist. In general terms, the procedure of working in groups to prepare a theatrical performance will be maintained, but the objectives will be maintained. In this case, students are not allowed to use words, being hence their performance something similar to a silent film. Consequently, grammatical structures will not be put into practice, but non-verbal communication instead; the requirement of introducing socio-cultural and pragmatic structures is still compulsory, but now they have to do it through non-verbal language. Therefore, students have to prepare a scene in which they convey a message using only gestures (both microgestures and macrogestures), which can belong to the following categories. On the one hand, they can utilize body language associated to particular emotions, similarly to what a mime artist does. On the other hand, they have to use socio-cultural gestures proper of English-language countries, as knowing the specific body language of a region is also mandatory to master communicative competence. To this end, pupils will follow a research process similar to the one employed in the original version of this task, in which they resort to real materials to naturally acquire this information. As well as that, students may also make use



of paralinguistic sounds, since these are also a form of non-verbal communication and vary from one culture to another. On top of that, pragmatic competence has to be fostered as well, so non-verbal language has to be utilized with a clear communicative function. Apart from that, the performing group is also required to involve the whole class in their representation, being the rest of the classmates only allowed to use non-verbal communication as well. Finally, the role of the teacher is to guide the activity and to assist in the issues that may arise during the preparation, although he/she is also allowed to participate in the theatrical performance. Through this activity, the main intention is to foster non-verbal communication in three main ways: emotional, socio-cultural and pragmatic. Furthermore, teamwork and dealing directly with emotions can permit a development of interpersonal intelligence and empathy. Lastly, being this activity quite dissimilar to what it is usually observable in a foreign language classroom, it seems reasonable to suggest that it may also help to increase motivation.

## **6.8. Providing Feedback and Solving Conflicts**

The last part of our approach will not deal with the description any type of activities. Conversely, this last section will elucidate the evaluation methods proposed to help the students optimize their acquisition process and maintain a high motivation. In addition, since constant group work and direct exposition to emotions may result in issues among the pupils, we will also pay attention to the manners in which conflict can be solved from an emotional intelligence point of view.

### **6.8.1. Evaluating and Providing Constructive Feedback**

As it has already been pointed out, the ways in which we evaluate our students has a crucial effect both on their academic progress and on their emotional health. Indeed, a poorly transmitted feedback may have adverse consequences such as a decrease of the pupils' motivation or emotional issues such as a low self-esteem. Accordingly, this section will illustrate the process that the teacher should follow when evaluating his/her students. As well as that, some of the elements proposed by this section have also to be followed by students when they are required to provide feedback to their classmates.

First of all, it is compulsory that the act of evaluation is present throughout the entire process. This dissertation will not formulate an argument against or for exams or other written texts, but will show its rejection towards having a single moment of evaluation – usually an exam – during the process. Consequently, the evaluation methods that we are about to describe have to be put into practice in every session, although it is not mandatory to carry them out



after each single activity; hence, it is the teacher's task to decide which activities will benefit more of a piece of feedback. Furthermore, the main objective of evaluating can never be giving the students a mark, but helping them to progress. Therefore, the instructor does not need to make explicit the specific grade that students have obtained after each activity. Besides, the person evaluating should always maintain a calm and respectful tone, because pieces of feedback in the form of reproaches or personal attacks may have the consequence of the evaluated person refusing to accept what he/she is being told.

Keeping that in mind, the first point to consider is that feedback is more useful when given in private, as pupils may feel ashamed and embarrassed if their classmates are aware of their handicaps. Additionally, making public someone's evaluation will make unavoidable that students start creating comparisons among them, which will have a negative impact on the confidence and motivation of several of them. Hence, when the instructor decides to provide feedback to a single student or to a work group, he/she is required to do it in a space that permits privacy. Afterwards, the teacher may elucidate both the strong and weak points of the pupils' performance. It is highly relevant that the amount of positive and negative results is balanced, as informing only about the points to improve may lead to a feeling of failure and demotivation. In the case of the points to improve, the educator must offer specific manners in which the students can make progress in the aspects that they have not mastered yet. Particularly, these solutions may be alternative activities or real materials that may help to foster particular areas. The objective of this recommendation is that pupils feel that their difficulties are not due to an irremediable lack of cognitive abilities, but to a lack of practice. In other words, students have to be aware that they have not reached the goals yet, but they will end up accomplishing them.

Apart from that, the instructor has also to inform each student individually about the intelligences he/she shows to have more developed. As we already know, the students in this approach have access to materials belonging to the eight different intelligences, so it is the instructor's task to let them know which of them they seem to have more articulated. The reasons of this are both increasing their motivation by letting them know which their strengths are and helping them to choose the aspects of life which they may feel more comfortable with; the latter has indeed a huge importance in terms of emotional well-being. Be that as it may, the global evaluation that pupils receive in reference to the contents of the foreign language subject must be independent to the intelligences that they have more developed, as it would be unfair to reward the students depending on their innate capacities. For instance, our approach gives significant importance to the interpersonal intelligence and social interaction, but we must

make sure that we evaluate students in the same way regardless of their natural abilities to socialize. This leads us to the fact that not every person learns in the same manner or at the same rhythm, so it would be unproductive to set the same goals for all of them. In other words, the instructor must provide feedback take into account the actual capabilities that a student has to master a specific content.

In the last place, we will verbalize a couple of considerations that the educator must regard after evaluating his/her students. On the one hand, the teacher must leave a space so that students can express themselves. In particular, pupils can have legitimate motives that explain their performance, so it is the instructor's task to pay attention to them and analyze them – making use of the active listening method accounted in Section 5.2.2. of this paper. On the other hand, it is also recommendable that the teacher expresses how the students' results make him/her feel, especially in the case of positive outcomes. Indeed, this is a way to let the pupils empathize with the teacher and feel that someone has positive expectations about them.

### **6.8.2. Conflict Resolution**

It is unavoidable that everyday hand in hand work will eventually lead to conflicts among students. As these events have a crucial effect on an individual's emotional state, it is mandatory to verbalize the process that has to be followed in order to reduce the social and emotional impact that these issues may originate. First of all, it is the teacher's task to ensure the proper development of the activities and monitor the appearance of possible conflicts. As well as that, students are also told to turn to the teacher if they feel to be in an uncomfortable situation. Whatever the manner of discovering the issue is, the procedure to dealing with it would be the following. Broadly speaking, the main consequence of an argument between two or more people is the emergence of anger, anxiety or sadness. Accordingly, the best manner of dealing with these situations is using the techniques to handle these emotions stipulated in the theoretical framework of this paper.

In the first place, the first movement has to be separate the people involved until they have cooled down, as expressing openly the anger to the other person only increases irritation and emotional excitation. Therefore, the teacher has to find temporal distractions for the students before moving to the next step so that the negative chain of thoughts can be stopped. Specifically, the affected pupils may collaborate for a while with other groups or utilize as a distraction many of the materials related to the eight intelligences present in the classroom. If this does not seem to be enough to handle this negative mood, students may turn to methods

directly focused on changing the physiological state associated to anger, anxiety or sadness. In particular, the teacher may guide the students in a brief meditation or relaxation activity or allow them to participate temporarily in a Physical Education class to improve their mental and physical state. Additionally, students may express their points of view in a written form, so that they can show their feelings without hurting the other person; indeed, this has to be done in the English language.

Once the individuals' mood is a little bit more positive, they are ready to speak to each other directly. Of course, this has to be done outside the class and with the teacher's supervision and guidance. In this case, the techniques that have to be followed are those associated with empathy and feedback. Keeping that in mind, the teacher invites the students to share their points of view in a respectful and objective way, being always necessary that both interlocutors have a similar amount of time to express themselves. The objective here is to make the other person be aware of the emotional effects of their actions, fostering thus empathy and social skills. Furthermore, the teacher has to make sure that pupils not only state negative critiques, but also point out to positive actions of the other person involved. This is based on the idea that constructive and motivating feedback needs of both strong points and points to improve. After this process, students are allowed to work in the same group again, only if the teacher makes sure that the conflict has been solved. If not, a longer period of distraction and cooling down is required.

## **7. Conclusions**

To sum up, let us elucidate the main findings that the present dissertation has brought to light. Indeed, the process of creation of a methodological approach has allowed us to be cognizant of several and significant elements regarding the field of education. As it has been the case in most of this paper, these outcomes can be divided into two areas: emotional intelligence and foreign language teaching. Let us give a closer look to these discoveries.

Regarding the psychological field, it has been illustrated the imperative necessity of including emotional education in our Compulsory Secondary Education. In fact, the fostering of emotional intelligence has proven to be essential in the proper growth and development of any individual, as mental illnesses are nowadays one of the main threats to human health. What is more, the investigations and research dissected have shown us that a mental and emotional well-being are indispensable for the process of learning in general and the acquisition of a language in particular. Apart from that, the creation of our own approach has been a valuable

tool to find out that the incorporation of emotional education in the foreign language class does not imply a reduction of the linguistic and socio-cultural contents taught or a delay in the development of the course. In contrast, the cultivation of emotional skills not only permits a more efficient acquisition of the socio-linguistic contents, but also manages to make the process more motivating and pleasant.

In the case of the foreign language teaching area, significant discoveries have been carried out as well. First of all, all the documents and theories analyzed have led us to the conclusion that the most effective manner of teaching a language is fostering acquisition over learning. That is, the students should assimilate the foreign language in a like manner that their mother tongue. To this end, the foreign language class must encourage the use of the language in real situations and with actual communicative purposes, resembling this the utilization of the language in the real world. As well as that, this dissertation has also found out that the communicative competence that the foreign language subject tries to cultivate is actually much more than becoming aware of the linguistic aspects of a language, since assimilating the socio-cultural and pragmatic elements associated to the language is also mandatory to master it. In addition to that, including non-verbal communication in the English classroom has also been proven to be essential, as it is not only a fundamental part of the above mentioned communicative competence, but also a valuable vehicle to emotions expression. Consequently, we consider that the best way to teach a foreign language consists in allowing the pupils to utilize the language with specific communicative purposes to reach a goal, avoiding thus tedious theoretical lessons that only foster mechanical learning.

In brief, the present dissertation has created a methodological approach that aims to integrate all these findings attached to emotional education and language acquisition. Thus, it is tried to fulfill a double objective. On the one hand, our approach intends to cultivate emotional awareness and control, which is a key element in an individual's personal growth and process of learning. On the other hand, it is intended to solve all those that cause our country to have one of the lowest levels of English of the European continent. In other words, we want students to have an active role that allows to handle the language and activities that increase their motivation through a purposeful use of the foreign language, topics close to their interests, and that respect and regard each student's individualities and characteristics.

## 8. Proposed Improvements

After finishing the research effort and the creation of our own approach to be applied in the foreign language classroom, it is mandatory to adopt a critical stance and point out to the elements that can be improved or added in subsequent research papers on this topic. In particular, this section will focus on the improvements that can be carried out to achieve a more effective application of our methodological approach.

In the first place, the first enhancement would consist in an enlargement of the number of activity typologies so that our approach can cover all the skills that the foreign language subject aims to foster in our Compulsory Secondary Education system. Specifically, while our approach already comprises the oral interaction and oral production skills (and the *thinking* skill indirectly), it should be expanded to include the written production and the oral and written comprehension skills. Indeed, one of the main purposes would continue to be the fostering of emotional intelligence through these remaining skills as well. Furthermore, these other skills should be taught avoiding the obsolete teaching methods that have been utilized during the last decades, as they only cultivate the mechanical learning of linguistic structures. Therefore, the objective would be again to use these skills to promote the natural acquisition of the foreign language through the utilization of real-life situations, being this a way of helping the students to use the language with actual communicative purposes. In short, the first form of improving our approach would be adapt it to include the *reading*, *listening* and *writing* skills and use them as tool to foster both emotional intelligence and language acquisition.

As well as that, the practical application of our approach can also be enhanced by designing a formation course that teachers could take before putting into practice these methods. Although this dissertation does provide an extensive theoretical and practical background on emotional intelligence that is sufficient to put into practice our approach, further training on the subject would definitely improve the teachers' capability to deal with the pupils' psychological formation. To this end, we would propose the creation of a practical course that could be taken both through classroom training or online, so that any educator can be able to attend it. Particularly, this course would revolve about the psychological changes that take place during the process of adolescence, focusing on both the aspects related to proper emotional growth and to the forms in which teenagers learn. Nonetheless, this formation would be mainly practical and regarding the real-life situations that a person could face when working with teenagers. Hence, we do not want teachers to acquire an extensive background on the field

of psychology, but to be able to handle the specific problems that adolescents face during that period of life. Accordingly, our second proposal to improve this implementation of our approach consists in training the teachers on developmental psychology during the period of adolescence, being the main goal that instructors are prepared to help their pupils to achieve an adequate psychological development.

In the last place, we consider that an additional way of improving our approach would be the adaptation of our approach's activity typologies to the different grades of the Compulsory Secondary Education. Even though our approach can be put into practice in very year of the secondary education, it would probably benefit if each type of activity were given some variations to adapt it to the specific level of the pupils. In other words, the difficulty of the tasks could be improved in the higher grades to convert them in more challenging activities, or vice versa when the students' level is not as high and we want to avoid frustration and demotivation. This thought of adapting the methods to the age of the students is also applicable in the emotional field. Specifically, the psychological issues that a person faces varies depending on his/her age, so it would be convenient to associate the activities to those emotional intelligence's aspects that are more relevant at a particular age. Be that as it may, the psychological concepts that have been proposed in this dissertation are applicable to all age ranges, but adapting the methods to the peculiarities and individualities of the students is certainly an enrichment. Accordingly, our last proposal to improve the implementation of our methodological approach deals with the adaptation of our methods and activities to the specific age, proficiency level and necessities of each group.

## 9. References

- Aguilar, A. M. (2017, January 10). El inglés, la gran tarea pendiente de los españoles: doblajes, miedo a hablar y fallos educativos. *20 Minutos*. Retrieved from <http://www.20minutos.es/noticia/2927553/0/ingles-tarea-pendiente-espanoles/>
- Anger. (2003) *Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health* (Seventh Edition). Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/anger>
- Anxiety. (2007) *Dorland's Medical Dictionary for Health Consumers*. Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/anxiety>
- Bono, E. (2004). *How to Have a Beautiful Mind*. London: Vermilion.
- Brown, G., & Yule, G. (1983). *Teaching the spoken language*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Byrnes, H. (1998). Reading in the Beginning and Intermediate College Foreign Language Class. In Stovall Burkart, G. (Ed.), *Modules for the Professional Preparation of Teaching Assistants in Foreign Languages* (pp. 227-260). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied linguistics*, 1(1), 1-47.
- Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (2017). Barómetro de Enero 2017. *Barómetro del CIS*, 3164. Retrieved from [http://datos.cis.es/pdf/Es3164mar\\_A.pdf](http://datos.cis.es/pdf/Es3164mar_A.pdf)
- Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). *Fluir: Una Psicología de la Felicidad*. Barcelona: Kairós.
- Depression. (2005) *Jonas: Mosby's Dictionary of Complementary and Alternative Medicine*. Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/depression>
- Ellis, R. (2017, March 26). Mental health problems rife among teenagers but teachers lack skills to help. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/mar/26/mental-health-teenagers-teachers>



- Empathy. (2003) *Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health* (Seventh Edition). Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/empathy>
- European Commission (2015). Europeans and Their Languages. *Special Eurobarometer, 386*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_386\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_386_en.pdf)
- Extremera Pacheco, N., & Fernández-Berrocal, P. (2004). El papel de la inteligencia emocional en el alumnado: evidencias empíricas. *Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa, 6*(2). Retrieved from <http://redie.uabc.mx/redie/article/view/105>
- Feedback. (2016). *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (Fifth Edition). Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/feedback>
- Flow. (2008) *Dictionary of Sport and Exercise Science and Medicine by Churchill Livingstone*. Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/flow>
- Gardner, H. (2005). *Inteligencias múltiples: la teoría en la práctica*. Barcelona: Paidós.
- Gil-Olarte Márquez, P., Palomera Martín, R., & Bracket, M. A. (2006). Relating emotional intelligence to social competence and academic achievement in high school students. *Psicothema, 18*, 118-123.
- Goleman, D. (1996). *Emotional Intelligence*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Hadley, A. O. (2001). *Teaching Language in Context*. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On Communicative Competence. In Pride, J.B., & Holmes, J. (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269-293). Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Junta de Castilla y León. (2015). ORDEN EDU/362/2015, de 4 de mayo, por la que se establece el currículo y se regula la implantación, evaluación y desarrollo de la educación secundaria obligatoria en la Comunidad de Castilla y León. *Boletín Oficial de Castilla y León, 86*, 32051-32480.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Krashen, S. D., & Terrell, T. D. (1995). *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall Europe.

- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and Principles in language Teaching* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lendoiro, G. (2014, April 10). ¿Por qué hablamos los españoles tan mal el inglés?. *ABC*. Retrieved from <http://www.abc.es/familia-educacion/20140405/abci-hablar-varios-idiomas-201404041054.html>
- Massimini, F., Delle Fave, A., & Carli, M. (1988). Flow in everyday life: A cross-national comparison. In Csikszentmihalyi, M. & Selega Csikszentmihalyi, I. (Eds.) *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness* (pp. 288-306). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Matthews, A., Spratt, M., & Dangerfield, L. (1991). *At the Chalkface: Practical Techniques in Language Teaching*. Edinburgh: Nelson.
- McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte. (2015). Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, 3, 169-546.
- Morley, J. (1991). Listening comprehension in second/foreign language instruction. In Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.), *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (pp. 81-106). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Motivation. (2012) *Farlex Partner Medical Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/motivation>
- Non-verbal communication. (2004). *Collins Dictionary of Medicine*. Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/non-verbal+communication>
- Osborn, M., & Osborn, S. (2014). *Public Speaking: Finding Your Voice*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Pérez de las Heras, M. (2016). *PNL para Maestros y Profesores: Aplicación de la Inteligencia Emocional y la Programación Neurolingüística a la Educación*. North Charleston, SC: Createspace Independent Publishing Platform.

- Radke-Yarrow, M., & Zahn-Waxler, C. (1984). Roots, Motives and Patterns in Children's Protosocial Behavior. In Staub, E. et al. (Eds.) *Development and Maintenance of Protosocial Behavior* (pp. 81-89). New York, NY: Plenum.
- Richards, J. & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (1983). Listening comprehension: Approach, Design, Procedure. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17, 219-240.
- Roemer, L., & Borkovec, T. (1993). Worry: Unwanted Cognitive Activity That Controls Unwanted Somatic Experience. In Wegner, D., & Pennebaker, J. (Eds.) *Handbook of Mental Control* (pp. 220-238). Englewoods Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Sadness. (2009) *Farlex and Partners' Medical Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/sadness>
- Salovey, P. & Mayer. J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9, 185-211.
- Savignon, S. J. (1997). *Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Schwartz, A. M. (1998). Listening in a Foreign Language. In Stovall Burkart, G. (Ed.), *Modules for the Professional Preparation of Teaching Assistants in Foreign Languages* (pp. 193-225). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Stovall Burkart, G. (1998). Spoken Language: What It Is and How to Teach It. In Stovall Burkart, G. (Ed.), *Modules for the Professional Preparation of Teaching Assistants in Foreign Languages* (pp. 162-192). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Stress. (2007) *Dorland's Medical Dictionary for Health Consumers*. Retrieved from <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/anxiety>
- Tice, D., & Bausmeister, R. (1993). Controlling Anger: Self-Induced Emotion Change. In Wegner, D., & Pennebaker, J. (Eds.) *Handbook of Mental Control* (pp. 393-421). Englewoods Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Williams, R., & Williams, V. (1993). *Anger Kills*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial.

World Health Organization (2011). Global burden of mental disorders and the need for a comprehensive, coordinated response from health and social sectors at the country level. *World Health Organization Executive Board*, 8. Retrieved from [http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB130/B130\\_9-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB130/B130_9-en.pdf)

World Health Organization (2014). *Health for the world's adolescents*. Retrieved from [http://apps.who.int/adolescent/second-decade/files/1612\\_MNCAH\\_HWA\\_Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://apps.who.int/adolescent/second-decade/files/1612_MNCAH_HWA_Executive_Summary.pdf)

Zillman, D. (1983). Arousal and Aggression. In Geen, R. G., & Donnerstein, E. I. (Eds.) *Aggression: Theoretical and Empirical Reviews* (pp. 75-101). New York, NY: Academic Press.