

Criteria and Indicators for Assessing the Level of Emotional Intelligence Development in Academic Lyceum Students

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Abstract: This article substantiates the criteria, indicators and levels for assessing the development of emotional intelligence in academic lyceum students. It offers a comparative analysis of the potential and limitations of ability-based tests (MSCEIT), self-report questionnaires (EmIn, EQ-i:YV, TEIQue, SSEIT) and pedagogical observation as methods of measuring emotional intelligence. Drawing on the cognitive approach, the study identifies four criteria (cognitive-awareness, appraisal-interpretive, regulatory and communicative-social) and specifies concrete indicators and diagnostic instruments for each. The article further describes low, intermediate and high levels of emotional intelligence development and formulates principles for the application of a comprehensive diagnostic system.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, assessment, criterion, indicator, level of development, academic lyceum students, MSCEIT, EmIn, cognitive approach, emotion regulation.

Introduction: Developing a methodology for enhancing emotional intelligence among academic lyceum students, and demonstrating its effectiveness, first requires a reliable assessment of students' baseline level of this quality. Pedagogical intervention that is not grounded in diagnosis tends to remain speculative and does not allow its outcomes to be evaluated objectively. Consequently, the scientific substantiation of criteria, indicators and diagnostic instruments for determining the level of emotional intelligence constitutes an essential stage of the research.

In pedagogical research, a criterion is understood as a feature that serves as the basis for evaluating the level of development of a given phenomenon, whereas an indicator is the concrete, observable and measurable manifestation of that criterion. Each criterion is therefore expressed through several indicators, which in turn are recorded by means of specific diagnostic instruments.

The literature distinguishes two principal approaches to measuring emotional intelligence. The first relies on

ability-based tests. The best-known instrument in this tradition is the MSCEIT, developed by J. Mayer, P. Salovey and D. Caruso, which assesses through performance tasks the abilities to perceive emotions, use them to facilitate thought, understand them and manage them [5]. A Russian-language adaptation of the test was prepared by E.A. Sergienko and I.I. Vetrova [3]. The advantage of an ability-based test lies in the fact that it measures actual task performance rather than students' perceptions of themselves.

The second approach relies on self-report questionnaires, including D.V. Lyusin's EmIn questionnaire [1], the youth version of R. Bar-On and J. Parker's EQ-i:YV [6], K. Petrides's TEIQue [7] and the SSEIT scale developed by N. Schutte and colleagues [8]. Such instruments make it possible to survey large groups within a short time. Their results, however, depend on students' self-evaluations and may be distorted by social desirability bias. A study by M. Brackett and J. Mayer showed only weak correlations between the results of ability tests and self-report

measures [11], indicating that the two types of instruments capture different aspects of emotional intelligence.

This finding suggests that diagnosis should not be confined to a single instrument. The present study

therefore adopts a comprehensive approach combining an ability-based test, a self-report questionnaire and pedagogical observation. The criteria were defined in accordance with the components of emotional intelligence identified on the basis of the cognitive approach, and are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Criteria, indicators and diagnostic instruments for emotional intelligence development

Criterion	Indicators	Diagnostic instruments
Cognitive-awareness	accuracy in perceiving and differentiating emotions; breadth of emotional vocabulary	MSCEIT (sections A, E); EmIn ("understanding one's own emotions" scale)
Appraisal-interpretive	understanding the causes of emotions; reinterpreting situations from alternative perspectives; identifying automatic thoughts	MSCEIT (sections C, G); case-based tasks; reflective essays
Regulatory	use of cognitive reappraisal; stress tolerance; self-control	ERQ questionnaire; MSCEIT (sections D, H); pedagogical observation
Communicative-social	empathy; taking others' emotions into account; constructive conflict resolution	Davis's Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI); EmIn (interpersonal scale); observation during role-play

The cognitive-awareness criterion reflects how accurately students perceive their own emotions and the emotional states of others. One of its key indicators is the breadth of emotional vocabulary, that is, a student's ability to name emotions with precise terms rather than generic labels such as "good" or "bad". The appraisal-interpretive criterion, in turn, captures a student's understanding of the causes of emotions and the capacity to view a situation from alternative perspectives. Case-based tasks focused on analysing the "thought – emotion – behaviour" chain are an effective means of assessing this criterion.

The regulatory criterion is central to the cognitive approach. It can be assessed using the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire developed by J. Gross and O. John [9], which distinguishes between two strategies: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. A predominance of reappraisal is regarded as a marker of well-developed emotional intelligence. The principal indicator of the communicative-social criterion is empathy, which can be measured with M. Davis's multidimensional empathy scale [10].

On the basis of the results obtained for these indicators, three levels of emotional intelligence development were identified.

Low level. The student is unable to name emotions precisely and attributes their causes mainly to external factors. In stressful situations, the student tends either to suppress emotions or to act impulsively, and pays little attention to the states of others.

Intermediate level. The student distinguishes basic emotions and understands some of their causes. Cognitive reappraisal is used only partially and mostly with the teacher's support. Empathy is displayed in familiar situations.

High level. The student names emotions precisely and in a differentiated manner, and is aware of their connection with thoughts. In complex situations, the student applies reappraisal strategies independently and communicates constructively while taking others' emotions into account.

The age-related characteristics of academic lyceum students must also be considered in the diagnostic process. As L.I. Bozhovich emphasises, self-awareness and self-evaluation develop intensively during this period [4]. Adolescents may therefore overestimate or underestimate their abilities on self-report questionnaires. This risk is controlled by comparing self-report data with the results of ability testing and

pedagogical observation.

The application of a comprehensive diagnostic system should adhere to the following principles: each criterion is measured by at least two different instruments; results are used to support development rather than to compare or grade students; diagnosis is conducted with the same instruments at the beginning and end of the experimental intervention; and students' confidentiality and voluntary participation are ensured. As I.N. Andreeva notes, emotional intelligence is a quality that can be developed [2]. Diagnostic results should therefore serve as the basis for planning subsequent pedagogical work.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the assessment of emotional intelligence development among academic lyceum students rests on cognitive-awareness, appraisal-interpretive, regulatory and communicative-social criteria. A comprehensive approach that combines ability-based testing, self-report questionnaires and pedagogical observation overcomes the limitations of any single instrument and increases the reliability of the results. The proposed criteria, indicators and levels provide a foundation for evaluating, through experimental research, the effectiveness of the methodology for developing emotional intelligence.

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