

# The relationship between EFL teachers' trait emotional intelligence and their attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession

---

Lapornik, Matea

Master's thesis / Diplomski rad

2024

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences / Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Filozofski fakultet**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:170136>

Rights / Prava: [In copyright](#) / [Zaštićeno autorskim pravom](#).

Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-07-24**



Sveučilište u Zagrebu  
Filozofski fakultet  
University of Zagreb  
Faculty of Humanities  
and Social Sciences

Repository / Repozitorij:

[ODRAZ - open repository of the University of Zagreb  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#)



University of Zagreb

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English

TEFL Section

The relationship between EFL teachers' trait emotional intelligence and their attitudes toward  
their students, teaching practices and profession

Master's Thesis

Student: Matea Lapornik

Supervisor: Stela Letica Krevelj, PhD, assistant prof.

Zagreb, 2024

Sveučilište u Zagrebu

Filozofski fakultet

Odsjek za anglistiku

Katedra za metodiku

Odnos emocionalne inteligencije nastavnika engleskoga kao stranoga jezika i njihovih stavova o  
učenicima, nastavnim praksama i struci

Diplomski rad

Studentica: Matea Lapornik

Mentorica: dr.sc. Stela Letica Krevelj, doc.

Zagreb, 2024.

Committee:

Assoc. Prof. Renata Geld, PhD

Sr. Asst. Bojan Prosenjak, PhD

Asst. Prof. Stela Letica Krevelj, PhD

# Contents

Contents .....	i
Abstract .....	ii
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Trait emotional intelligence .....	4
2.1. Defining (trait) emotional intelligence.....	4
2.2. Measuring the construct .....	5
2.3. Trait emotional intelligence and (language) teachers .....	6
3. The present study .....	18
3.1. Aim.....	18
3.2. Research questions and hypotheses.....	19
3.3. Methodology .....	19
3.4. Participants.....	22
4. Results.....	24
5. Discussion.....	29
6. Conclusion .....	31
7. Limitations and suggestions for further research.....	33
References.....	35
Appendix A.....	43
Appendix B.....	44
Sažetak .....	45

## **Abstract**

There is growing interest in the relationship between trait emotional intelligence (TEI) and (language) teacher attitudes, as research has shown that these two factors impact student outcomes. This study explores the relationship between 334 Croatian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' TEI and their attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession. Quantitative data were collected via online questionnaires measuring TEI and attitudes. Spearman correlation and linear regression revealed significant positive correlations between higher overall TEI scores and positive attitudes about self-efficacy, job satisfaction and teacher-student relationships. Furthermore, distinct patterns of association were observed between the four TEI factors (well-being, emotionality, self-control and sociability) and specific attitudes. The results highlight the crucial role of emotional intelligence in shaping EFL teacher attitudes, offering implications for (future) teacher training and professional development initiatives.

**Keywords:** TEFL, teachers, trait emotional intelligence, attitudes

## **1. Introduction**

Language learning is a multi-faceted process that occurs as a result of the complex interaction of many variables that exist within the learner and their environment. In an attempt to unravel this intricate phenomenon, many of those variables – motivation, age of acquisition, interference and language learning aptitude, to name a few – have been thoroughly researched; however, the psychology of language teachers as a potential factor in language learning has remained somewhat unexplored. This is especially true when it comes to the Croatian learning context as there have only been a handful of studies investigating Croatian EFL teachers' attitudes, and the authors of those studies focused solely on teachers' attitudes toward aspects of their work inside of the classroom, such as online teaching (Martinović & Dumančić, 2022), vocabulary learning strategies (Feješ, 2018) or using translation in language teaching (Marinac & Barić, 2018). While the results of these studies offer valuable insight, they only make up a small part of the puzzle and it is necessary to further explore EFL teachers' attitudes in a broader sense within the Croatian learning context. The present study, therefore, expands the area of research and examines not only Croatian EFL teachers' attitudes toward their teaching practices, but also toward aspects of their work that are emotional (e.g., their relationships with their students), organizational (e.g., their satisfaction with their institution of employment), or both (e.g., their desire to continue their TEFL career).

Another concept from psychology, trait emotional intelligence (TEI) (Petrides & Furnham, 2000), has also been the subject of a growing number of studies within various educational contexts worldwide, both in relation to students and to teachers in the EFL classroom. Research on (trait) emotional intelligence in the Croatian educational context, however, has been scarce and has focused primarily on students, e.g. on the impact of trait emotional intelligence on students'

emotion management and their learning outcomes (Babić Čikeš, 2015) or the importance of developing students' emotional intelligence in the classroom (Eckhard, 2021). While there are a couple of studies analyzing Croatian foreign language teachers' trait emotional intelligence (Kostić-Bobanović, 2019) or the impact of preschool teachers' emotional intelligence in the classroom (Pejić, 2020), at the time of writing there were no studies specifically examining EFL teachers' trait emotional intelligence in the Croatian learning context. In order to bridge this gap, the present study aims to explore Croatian EFL teachers' trait emotional intelligence, especially as it relates to their attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession. By bridging said knowledge gap, this study provides a new perspective on an under-researched topic, which might prove useful not only for present and future (EFL) teachers, but also for those teaching, training and employing them.

Previous studies done in various contexts around the world have pointed to the positive effects of higher levels of emotional intelligence on teacher job satisfaction (Dewaele, 2019; Dewaele & Mercer, 2018; Ferdowsi & Ghanizadeh, 2017), as well as student outcomes (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2019; Roeser et al., 1996; Wentzel, 1998). Some studies suggest that teachers can benefit from becoming aware of the impact of emotional intelligence on their life and work (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009), and others have even demonstrated that (trainee) teachers may benefit from emotional intelligence training (Brackett et al., 2010; Vesely et al., 2014; Parvathi et al., 2016) which may cause similar effects as those mentioned above. In short, the present study focuses on EFL teachers' attitudes and trait emotional intelligence because of the "role of beliefs and emotions in the trajectory of language teachers' identities and in their decision-making process" (Barcelos & Ruohotie-Lythy, 2018, p. 119) and explores the connection between emotions and classroom behaviors, aiming to shed light on how TEI impacts not only the teacher



and the classroom atmosphere, but also the students' emotions and ultimately their academic performance. Highlighting this connection may also open up the possibility of incorporating this dimension into teacher training as it emphasizes the importance of raising future and current teachers' awareness of trait emotional intelligence when it comes to improving not only learner outcomes (which extend beyond academic achievement), but also teachers' mental health, job satisfaction, levels of burnout and turnover rates.

## **2. Trait emotional intelligence**

### **2.1. Defining (trait) emotional intelligence**

Since the birth of the idea that humans possess emotional intelligence (EI), i.e. the ability to utilize and regulate their emotions in order to enhance emotional, social and intellectual outcomes (Mayer et al., 1990; Salovey & Mayer, 1990), many models of emotional intelligence have been proposed. While early theorists, like Wechsler in the 1950s and Gardner in the 1980s, mostly “[aligned] the concept of EI with theories of general intelligence” (Boburka et al., 2020, p. 513), Salovey and Mayer’s conceptualization of 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 action” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189) was the first to separate these emotional factors from intellectual ones within the concept of intelligence. In 1995, Goleman popularized the concept when he emphasized the significance of emotional intelligence over IQ in predicting career success and overall well-being. He also outlined emotional intelligence as “self-awareness, self-control, and empathy, and the arts of listening, resolving conflicts, and cooperation” (Goleman, 1995, p. 20), stating that these are characteristics that can be acquired and developed.

The turn of the millennium then saw two revolutionary theories emerge. Firstly, Goleman proposed a mixed model of EI, which included a wide range of qualities – or so-called “emotional competencies” (Goleman, 1998, p. 13) – such as trustworthiness, adaptability, innovation and communication (Goleman, 1998). Secondly, Petrides and Furnham developed a model that differentiates between trait emotional intelligence and information-processing emotional intelligence – the latter of which would later become known as ability emotional intelligence

(Petrides & Furnham, 2000b) – thus “[taking] into account the different measurement approaches and operational definitions adopted by mixed and ability model theorists” (Petrides & Furnham, 2000: 314). Trait emotional intelligence has been “located at the lower levels of [the Big Five and the Giant Three]” (Petrides et al., 2007, p. 273) and has been shown to consistently integrate with the mainstream models of personality (Petrides et al., 2007). These findings demonstrate that TEI is not a cognitive ability, but rather a set of perceptions about one’s emotions and emotional abilities which can be scientifically investigated.

## **2.2. Measuring the construct**

In a later paper detailing TEI, Petrides & Furnham (2001, p. 426) define it as a concept that “encompasses behavioural dispositions and self-perceived abilities and is measured through self-report” and conclude that “its investigation should be conducted primarily within a personality framework”, i.e. through questionnaires and self-reports. This is why Petrides went on to create the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (Petrides, 2009a), or TEIQue for short, a self-report inventory of 153 items which yields scores on 15 facets, four factors and global TEI. The 15 facets of emotional intelligence that have been derived from the questionnaire are considered to be “narrower than the [four] factors” (Petrides, 2009b, p. 5) and they are as stated: adaptability, assertiveness, emotion expression, emotion management (others), emotion perception (self and others), emotion regulation, impulsiveness (low), relationships, self-esteem, self-motivation, social awareness, stress management, trait empathy, trait happiness and trait optimism (Petrides, 2009b). Thirteen facets are then grouped into four factors: self-control (emotion regulation, impulsiveness (low) and stress management), emotionality (trait empathy, emotion perception, emotion expression and relationships), sociability (emotion management, assertiveness, social

awareness) and well-being (self-esteem, trait optimism and trait happiness). The two remaining facets – self-motivation and adaptability – “are not keyed to any factor, but feed directly into the global trait EI score” (Petrides, 2009b, p. 9).

Alongside the long form of the TEIQue, there are various other instruments derived from it, such as the short form of the questionnaire, also known as the TEIQue-SF, which was created for “research designs with limited experimental time” (Petrides, 2009b, p. 13). This questionnaire contains 30 items – two from each of the 15 facets – and was designed to yield only a global trait EI score, although “it is possible to derive from it scores on the four trait EI factors [but] these tend to have lower internal consistencies (around 0.69)” (Petrides, 2009b, p. 13). Given that the present study is based on multiple questionnaires, the TEIQue-SF was chosen so as to reduce the response time and maximize the number of participants, since the research design is quantitative (more detail in Chapter 3.3).

It is important to note that there are multiple other instruments that can be used to measure TEI, such as the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (Salovey et al., 1995), the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-On, 1997), the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998) and others, many of which are succinctly summarized in Pérez et al. (2005). The choice to use the TEIQue-SF instead of another questionnaire is linked to the fact that the TEIQue-SF was used in Dewaele’s 2019 study on EFL teachers’ attitudes and their TEI, which served as inspiration for the current study (more detail in Chapter 3).

### **2.3. Trait emotional intelligence and (language) teachers**

As described in the previous chapters, TEI encompasses a wide variety of emotional competences, so its role is manifold. Thus, the question arises of how exactly TEI as a whole, as

well as its many constituents, impact different aspects of someone's personality and how they manifest in an individual's attitudes, beliefs, behavior, etc. In the last couple of decades, researchers have applied this question to the population of teachers – including EFL teachers – in various worldwide contexts, focusing on a variety of different phenomena that may somehow be related to an individual teacher's trait emotional intelligence. One topic of interest has been the relationship between TEI and EFL teachers' attitudes towards their students. Dewaele & Mercer (2018) collected data from 520 EFL teachers worldwide using the TEIQue-SF which yields TEI scores, as well as their two original closed questions which measured the teachers' attitudes towards their students: "What is your attitude towards your students?" and "Do you enjoy having lively students?" (Dewaele & Mercer, 2018, p. 185). They found that "increased levels of TEI are linked to more positive attitudes towards students and higher enjoyment of lively students" (Dewaele & Mercer, 2018, p. 186). Dewaele (2019) took a closer look at EFL teachers' attitudes and their potential relation to TEI, adding to the dataset from the previous study, Dewaele created an 11-item inventory of statements pertaining to EFL teachers' attitudes about their "love of the English language, attitudes towards the institution and the (lively) students) [as well as] habitual classroom practice and teacher profile" (Dewaele, 2019, p. 9). Statistical analysis showed significant positive correlation between both global TEI and the four separate factors of TEI and positive attitudes towards their students, institutions, classroom practices, etc. In other words, results suggested that EFL teachers with higher levels of TEI are "more likely to have positive attitudes towards different crucial aspects of their profession, namely the love of the English language, their institution, and their students" (Dewaele, 2019, p. 11).

Other research suggests that the more positive attitudes in teachers scoring high on TEI may in part be due to the fact that these teachers seem to be more resilient to occupational stress.

Jude (2011) gathered data from 392 Nigerian secondary school teachers who filled out the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998) and the Occupational Stress Scale (Hassan year). Statistical analysis revealed that teachers with higher EI scores were able to more efficiently deal with their emotions, which ultimately made them better at managing occupational stress (Jude, 2011). Ferdowsi and Ghanizadeh (2017) found a similar relationship in the Iranian context: 188 EFL teachers from private institutes and high schools completed the Teaching Satisfaction Scale (Ho & Au, 2006) which measures job satisfaction, the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002) which measures EI, as well as the Stress Coping Strategy Scale which measures “stress coping strategies in three dimensions – namely task-, emotion-, and avoidance-oriented coping” (Choi et al., 2017, p. 429). The results demonstrated that EI positively impacted job satisfaction. EI also positively impacted the adoption of task-oriented coping and negatively impacted the adoption of emotion-oriented coping. In other words, teachers with higher EI scores responded to stress by either actively resolving the issue at hand or by cognitively reframing the situation into a positive one, instead of feeling emotional distress. The importance of having this kind of stress response is manifold. Firstly, task-oriented coping may help avoid burnout from the emotional demands of teaching, which is one of the main reasons why teachers quit the profession (Metlife, 2004; Ingersoll, 2001; Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). Secondly, staying in control when stressed is crucial when it comes to maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere:

Essentially, a good language teacher needs to be in a position to manage the emotional tenor of the classroom. This means not only should they be able to harness the emotions of their learners, but they should also be able to regulate their own emotions to ensure they are in the right frame of mind to create positive rapport with learners, generate enjoyment and manage any anxieties. (Dewaele et al., 2018, p. 126)

Simply put, being in control of one's own emotions in the classroom reinforces a positive feedback loop wherein students recognize the teacher's emotions and subsequently experience similar emotions themselves. Of course, this is a phenomenon that extends beyond the EFL classroom: for example, Becker et al. (2015) collected data from 39 German mathematics teachers and 758 of their students over a total of 316 lessons. The data were collected in the form of diary entries in which teachers self-reported their appraisals and students self-reported their motivation and discipline. The results state that students felt more motivated and disciplined in classes where the teacher was more enthusiastic and vice versa: teachers who felt their students' motivation were more enthusiastic about teaching their classes. A study by Moskowitz and Dewaele (2019) explored the relationship between teacher happiness and students' attitudes and motivation. The authors administered the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (Gardner, 2004) to measure 129 adult EFL students' attitudes toward their teachers and their learning environment. The participants also reported their perceptions of their teachers' happiness by filling out the Oxford Happiness Inventory (Argyle et al., 1989). Statistical analysis showed a positive connection between the perception of teacher happiness and students' overall attitude and motivation, i.e. students "who think their teachers are satisfied with various aspects of their own lives [...] feel more positively towards learning English" (Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2019, p. 10). Furthermore, results showed that students had a more positive attitude toward teachers whom they perceived to be happy. The authors conclude that this is likely due to the fact that "teachers who seem more satisfied with their personal achievements express this satisfaction [...] through their behavior, which positively affects the atmosphere of the classroom" (Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2019, p. 10), ultimately creating the aforementioned positive feedback loop in which the teachers' and the students' positive emotions (re)enforce one another.

If emotion contagion occurs when it comes to positive emotions, then it is logical to assume that it may occur when it comes to negative emotions as well, which is precisely why emotion regulation skills play an essential role in the classroom. Emotion regulation also plays a big role in the formation of teacher-student relationships, which have been shown to heavily impact school outcomes, such as academic achievement, motivation, satisfaction, etc. Multiple studies have shown that positive relationships with teachers yield various positive outcomes. For example, Hamre and Pianta's 2001 longitudinal study followed 179 American children and their teachers from kindergarten until the end of eighth grade. The authors explored the connection between teacher-student relationships and students' academic performance (measured in grades and standardized test scores), work habits and disciplinary record. Teacher-student relationships were measured via teachers' responses to the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS; Pianta, 1992) and academic achievement via grades and the standardized test known as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS; Hieronymus & Hoover, 1978) which measures word analysis, vocabulary, reading, language, work study, mathematics, listening, social studies, science, and writing skills. Students' work habits were recorded in teachers' report cards using predetermined descriptors pertaining to behaviors like study habits, class participation, compliance, etc. Their disciplinary record was obtained from their schools and the infractions ranged from classroom disruption and unexcused absences to fighting and abusive language. Statistical analysis showed that "early teacher-child relationships, as experienced and described in kindergarten by teachers, are unique predictors" (Hamre & Pianta, 2001, p. 634) of not only their grades and test scores, but also their behavior and work habits throughout elementary and middle school.

Roeser et al. (1996) surveyed 296 American eighth-grade students on their perceptions of the school environment (whether they felt as if their school was understanding and believed in



students), mediating processes (such as goal orientation, being recognized by their teachers and parents for their abilities, and feelings of belonging), psychological and behavioral outcomes (whether students had confidence in their abilities, were happy or embarrassed in school, etc.) and academic achievement (measured by grade). The results suggest that “middle school environments that are perceived as supportive, caring, and as emphasizing individual effort and improvement are related to a more adaptive pattern of cognition, affect, and behavior” (Roeser et al., 1996, p. 417). The environments that were positively perceived had “teachers [who] cared about, trusted, and respected students” (Roeser et al., 1996, p. 417). Similarly, Wentzel (1998) explored the role of teachers in children’s social relationships, interest and motivation. The sample consisted of 167 American sixth-grade students and their teachers. Both groups completed questionnaires which, among other constructs, measured perceived support from teachers, psychological distress, interest in school, social goal pursuit, interest in class, etc. GPAs were also accumulated at the end of the academic year. The results show links between students’ “perceived support from teachers [and] outcomes most proximal to classroom functioning, interest in class and pursuit of goals to adhere to classroom rules and norms” (Wentzel, 1998, p. 207). Data also suggest that “student interest in academic activities may be driven by teacher characteristics that reflect social as well as curricular and instructional approaches to learning” (Wentzel, 1998, p. 207). The results of the studies mentioned in this paragraph clearly outline the importance of positive teacher-student relationships for academic achievement and much more. Since these positive relationships are mediated by teachers’ affective and social profiles (which may be categorized under the factors of emotionality and sociability, respectively, within the concept of TEI), it can be concluded that teachers’ TEI is an important factor to consider not only in the classroom, but in the wider context of the students’ lives. Clearly, teaching involves much more than simply transferring knowledge of the subject that

is being taught. Having to perform multiple roles in the classroom is taxing but little attention is paid to teachers' emotional states:

What we have been neglecting over the past years in the professional and managerial discourse is the TESOL teacher's well-being in terms of their personal and emotional investment into their practice. Good teachers are not well-oiled machines, and good teaching is not just a matter of knowing the subject matter, and being able to use all the latest techniques while teaching, or even being efficient. Good teaching is an emotionally charged event where teachers connect with each student as they passionately deliver their lesson in a pleasurable environment. (Farrell, 2018, p. vii)

Well-being – one of the four factors of TEI – is a pivotal factor both inside and outside of the classroom. As suggested earlier, teachers with high scores on TEI and comparable constructs are more resistant to stress and burnout, but are also more positively perceived by their students, which positively impacts the students' motivation, academic performance, etc. However, well-being is affected by external factors which are often outside of the teachers' control. De Costa et al. (2018) argue that a teacher's personality only explains certain aspects of their classroom behavior and that “critically-inflected teacher emotion research needs to take into consideration the social ecologies in which teachers are embedded” (p. 91), i.e. that it is important to take into account teachers' work environments and workplace policies. Afshar and Doosti (2016) looked into potential factors that contribute to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of 210 Iranian secondary school EFL teachers. For these purposes, an original Likert-scale questionnaire was developed which sought to determine factors contributing to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction related to the teachers' attitude toward their job and their place of employment, salary and job security, relationships with students and other employees of the institution, as well as their social and occupational status. The results

suggested that most teachers were satisfied with “the intrinsic aspects of their job, namely thinking of teaching as an interesting and stimulating job, having a positive internal feeling towards imparting knowledge and helping others learn, and feeling internally satisfied with serving their society” (Afshar & Doosti, 2016, p. 288); however, there were also many demotivating factors, such as low wages, lack of encouragement and feedback from colleagues, physical conditions of their institution (e.g., outdated equipment and furniture in classrooms and offices, poor air conditioning systems, hygiene, etc.), not being included in “decision-making, goal-setting and problem-solving processes at school” (Afshar & Doosti, 2016, p. 291), lack of appreciation and reward for hard work, as well as lack of autonomy in the classroom. Similar issues arose in the Turkish context. İpek and Kanatlar (2018) designed a qualitative study with two open-ended questions, asking 117 EFL teachers to state three motivating and three demotivating factors of their profession. Some of the most motivating factors were related to student motivation, success and participation. Conversely, lack of student motivation, negative student attitudes, unfavorable feedback and lack of participation in class were among the most demotivating factors. Other motivating factors include praise, support and appreciation by their institution, fair and consistent treatment, a sufficient amount of autonomy, up-to-date equipment, fair financial compensation, being able to attend conferences, seminars and other in-service training, positive relationships with other employees of the institution, as well as positive teacher-student relationships. Among demotivating factors mentioned were inadequate communication, praise, support and appreciation by their institution, unfair and inconsistent treatment, lack of autonomy, being restricted from attending in-service training or advancing their education, long class hours, changing regulations, poor coordination and decision systems, overbearing teaching loads, extra duties, inadequate equipment, unfair and/or late pay, poor relationships with other employees of the institution and

negative teacher-student relationships. Croatian data from 1,892 primary school teachers show a similar trend: levels of job satisfaction and burnout in teachers seem to be lower when there is adequate support from the principal and colleagues, students are motivated, the workload is not overwhelming and there are sufficient resources for the teachers to properly fulfill their teaching roles (Slišković et al., 2016a). A smaller qualitative study by Slišković et al. (2016b) shed further light on Croatian teachers' experiences: data from 29 primary school subject teachers show that they view their profession as demanding and extremely important but underappreciated, and they are demotivated by the low prestige of the profession, as well as the current education system in Croatia.

Clearly, there are many factors outside of the teacher's personality which heavily impact their well-being, job satisfaction, level of burnout and ultimately their performance in the classroom. Dewberry and Briner surveyed 24,200 teachers in the UK on their well-being, focusing on the following three aspects: "feeling valued and cared for; feeling overloaded; and job stimulation and enjoyment" (Dewberry & Briner, 2007, p. 2). After controlling for variables such as the percentage of students with special educational needs and the rate of student absence, the authors found a statistically significant positive correlation between teacher well-being and the students' results on standardized tests. More precisely, it was found that 8% of variance in the National Curriculum assessment results could be explained by teacher well-being. This may be related to multiple factors, such as the aforementioned emotion contagion which causes students to be more motivated and enthusiastic when their teachers "project cheerfulness and satisfaction with life, self-confidence and self-esteem, and optimism about students' ability to progress" (Cuéllar & Oxford, 2018). Another possible factor may lie in the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher self-efficacy. Caprara et al.'s (2006) longitudinal study included over

2,000 Italian teachers and found that teachers who self-reported high levels of self-efficacy (i.e., being able to effectively handle their professional obligations and challenges) worked in schools with academically successful and well-behaved students. Statistical analysis showed a positive correlation between teachers' levels of perceived self-efficacy and their job satisfaction. The aggregated scores of those two constructs were then also positively correlated with students' academic achievements. These results point to another positive feedback loop: teachers who felt like they were adequately performing at their job – because of their students' satisfactory academic performance, for example – were also more satisfied with the job itself, which transferred onto their students who enjoyed the lesson more not only because it was engaging (since the teacher had the resources and the motivation to make it so), but also because the teacher's satisfaction and enthusiasm was apparent, likely resulting in higher motivation and ultimately better academic performance. Bajorek et al. (2014) reached a similar conclusion: “A teacher with high job satisfaction, positive morale and who is healthy should be more likely to teach lessons which are creative, challenging and effective” (p. 6), which is highly likely to positively impact learner outcomes.

Given that many factors that influence learner outcomes can be linked to the teacher – and specifically to their TEI – the following question arises: Is there a way to improve teacher TEI in order to boost their job satisfaction, reduce their levels of burnout and positively affect students and their academic performance? Petrides states that “about 40% of [TEI's] variance can be attributed to genetic factors” (2017, p. 6), meaning that some aspects of TEI could be learned (and taught). Parvathi et al. (2016) created a so-called Emotionally Intelligent Teacher Workshop (or EI Teacher Workshop), a one-day seminar where Indian teachers were taught in-depth information about the four EI skills, how they impact various aspects of their job such as decision-making,

classroom management, stress management, relationships with colleagues and students, overall life quality and student achievement, as well strategies and tools to improve EI skills. Activities of the workshop included recognizing and verbalizing one's own emotions by writing a detailed description of events during a school day and the quality and intensity of emotions that arose during said events, attempting to assess others' emotions by paying attention to their verbal and nonverbal cues, writing about how certain aspects of the environment (e.g. lighting, sounds, etc.) affect their emotions and how they can alter their environment to positively impact their own mood and the moods of their students, etc. After the initial workshops in India in 2016, EI Teacher Workshops have been implemented around the US and the UK with promising results, as students and teachers alike have reported significant improvements when it comes to both personal and school-related outcomes (Parvathi et al., 2016). Martyniak and Pellitteri (2020) held three monthly full-day workshops, paired with short daily follow-up exercises five times per week, which targeted EI development in 60 Polish preschool teachers. The activities resembled those from the EI Teacher workshop, i.e. they focused primarily on emotion recognition and introspection to mitigate stress and improve interpersonal relationships. After the three workshops, the teachers who attended them had significantly higher scores than the control group on three of the four significant variables on the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT; Mayer et al., 2002). Vesely et al. (2014) wanted to explore the impact of EI training on pre-service teachers in Canada. They conducted a five-week training program with 49 pre-service teachers which consisted of a group session, workshop, group discussion, workbook exercises and home assignments. The authors used the TEIQue-SF and the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (WLEIS) to measure the participants' EI before and after the training program but found a statistically significant score increase only on the WLEIS, which the authors partially attribute to "a reduction

of power as a result of the small sample size” (Vesely et al., 2014, p. 84). Nevertheless, the authors recognize the importance of EI and subsequently the need for EI training in the teaching profession since there is an abundance of research showing that “EI is related to positive psychological factors and inversely correlated with stress, anxiety, and depression” (Vesely et al., 2014, p. 84), all of which may be caused by a stressful job such as teaching and may follow the teacher into the classroom, affecting not only the classroom atmosphere, but the students themselves.

### **3. The present study**

In an attempt to validate previous research findings, the present study partially replicates Dewaele's 2019 study titled "The relationship between Trait emotional intelligence and experienced ESL/EFL teachers love of English, attitudes towards their students and institution, self-reported classroom practices, enjoyment and creativity". Certain key elements of the original study were replicated while others were modified to be more relevant for the Croatian educational context. Both studies utilized online questionnaires and snowball sampling for data collection, with the only difference being that the present study also collected data via purposive sampling since the pool of potential participants was limited to Croatian EFL teachers, whereas the original study was worldwide. The only identical instrument used in both studies was the TEIQue-SF, while the demographic and attitude questionnaires used in the present study were inspired by Dewaele (2019)'s, but modified to better suit the Croatian context and the aim of the study. Dewaele (2019) also measured the participants' English proficiency using the LexTALE (Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012), which was omitted from this study so as to focus only on the relationship between teacher TEI and their attitudes. There are also differences in statistical analysis procedures which are explained in Chapter 3.3.

#### **3.1. Aim**

The literature review in Chapter 2.3 highlights the complex relationship between teacher (trait) EI, their attitudes and student outcomes. The present study aims to address the gap in research on the relationship between EFL teachers' TEI and their attitudes toward various aspects of their work, namely how they perceive their students and teacher-student relationships, their teaching skills, satisfaction with their career, as well as their place of employment. By providing



data from EFL teachers working in the Croatian learning context, this study also aims to shed light on a relatively unexplored piece of the language-teaching puzzle and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between teachers' psychological traits (which are partially due to genetics but can also be improved or even acquired) and their attitudes and behaviors in the classroom and outside of it.

### **3.2. Research questions and hypotheses**

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between Croatian EFL teachers' global TEI scores and their scores on items reflecting attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession?
2. What is the relationship between Croatian EFL teachers' scores on each of the four TEI factors (well-being, emotionality, self-control and sociability) and their scores on items reflecting attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession?

The hypotheses are the following:

1. Croatian EFL teachers with higher global TEI scores will report more positive attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession.
2. Croatian EFL teachers with higher scores on all four TEI factors will report more positive attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession.

### **3.3. Methodology**

The present study is quantitative. More precisely, the research design is correlational, as the aim is to explore the relationship between EFL teachers' TEI and their attitudes. For this purpose, three data collection instruments were used: a demographic questionnaire, a 15-item

questionnaire pertaining to EFL teachers' attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession, and the TEIQue-SF which measured the participants' TEI. Since the original version of TEIQue-SF is in English, the choice was made to design the other questionnaires in English as well instead of translating the TEIQue-SF into Croatian given that the participants were EFL teachers with advanced proficiency in English. The demographic questionnaire contained questions about gender, age, county of residence, number of years in the profession, and place of employment. The attitude and TEIQue-SF questionnaires can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B, respectively.

The attitude questionnaire was based on an 11-item questionnaire from Dewaele's 2019 study. In order to align with the aim and research questions of the present study, it was expanded to include 15 items and certain items from Dewaele's questionnaire, such as "I love the English language" and "I use English frequently in class" (2019, p. 9) were removed, while other items, such as "I do not feel responsible for my students' wellbeing" and "I do not see myself teaching English for many more years" were added. The Cronbach alpha was 0.68.

Since the present study was based on three questionnaires, the 30-item TEIQue-SF was used instead of the full 153-item TEIQue, like in Dewaele's 2019 study. The goal was to minimize participants' response time while still obtaining valid TEI data. The short response time was used to attract a large number of participants as the study is quantitative. The TEIQue-SF contains items as such as "Expressing my emotions with words is not a problem for me", "On the whole, I'm able to deal with stress" and "I often pause and think about my feelings" (Petrides, 2009c, p. 1) which yield a global TEI score. The Cronbach alpha for the TEIQue-SF as a whole was 0.89. The Cronbach alpha was also measured for each of the four factors of TEIQue-SF: for well-being it was 0.80, for self-control 0.66, for emotionality 0.69 and for sociability 0.70.

The three questionnaires were combined into a single open-access and anonymous online form. The questionnaires could only be accessed once participants had read the instructions and consented to their anonymous data being used for the present study, having been informed that they could withdraw their consent at any given moment. As mentioned earlier, data were collected through a combination of purposive and snowball sampling, both of which are forms of non-probability sampling. The online form remained active for three weeks, during which calls for participation were sent out via email to all Croatian primary and secondary schools, as well as to randomly chosen language schools and universities in Croatia, asking for the link to the questionnaires to be forwarded to EFL teachers working at their institutions.

When it comes to statistical analysis, Dewaele (2019) used the Spearman correlation to calculate correlations between each item from the attitude questionnaire and the overall TEIQue-SF score, as well as correlations between each item from the attitude questionnaire and scores for each of the four TEI factors. This procedure was replicated in the present study, but the way Bonferroni correction for p-values was applied differs from the original study. When calculating the significance of correlations in Table 1 (see Chapter 4), three different criteria were applied. Firstly, the standard  $p < 0.05$  was used (marked by a single asterisk in the table). Secondly, a p-value correction was applied because many hypotheses are being tested and each correlation corresponds to one hypothesis. The second significance cutoff value was determined by applying Bonferroni correction to the p-values by dividing them by the number of measured constructs, which is five – a sum of the overall TEI score and its four factors (marked by a double asterisk in the table). Finally, to show how robust some of the correlations are, a stringent Bonferroni correction was applied, i.e. the p-values were divided with the number of calculated correlations, which is 75 – the multiple of 15 items and five constructs (marked by a triple asterisk in the table).

It is important to note that almost a third of the correlations in the study were still significant even with this strict significance criteria.

Despite his large sample ( $n = 513$ ), Dewaele (2019) chose not to do linear regression because the data were not normally distributed; however, given that “linear regression [...] can perform well in moderately large samples [ $n > 100$ ] even from very non-Normal data” (Lumley et al., 2002, p. 152), linear regression was performed on the data in this study because of the large sample size.

### **3.4. Participants**

In total, 363 Croatian EFL teachers responded to the call for participation, with 334 completing the questionnaires. Given the large sample size, it was decided that only those who completely filled out the questionnaires would be included in the final participant count so as to simplify statistical analysis. Out of the 334 participants, 301 identified as female and 33 as male. With 90.1% of the participants identifying as female, the sample is not fully representative of the gender distribution in the Croatian Bureau of Statistics' 2022 data, which states that women account for “81.9% of the teacher population” in the country (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2022, p. 1). The mean age was 41.66 years ( $SD = 8.79$ ). The mean number of years of teaching experience was 15.66 ( $SD = 8.60$ ). The largest number of participants was in the City of Zagreb and Zagreb County ( $n = 77$ ; 23.06%), followed by Istria ( $n = 28$ ; 8.38%), Split-Dalmatia ( $n = 30$ ; 8.98%), Primorje-Gorski Kotar ( $n = 26$ ; 7.78%) and Osijek-Baranja ( $n = 23$ ; 6.62%). The 15 remaining Croatian counties were also all represented in the study to varying degrees, with Požega-Slavonia ( $n = 3$ ; 0.90%) and Šibenik-Knin ( $n = 1$ ; 0.30%) being the least represented. The majority of the participants reported working at a primary school ( $n = 203$ ; 60.78%), followed by secondary

schools ( $n = 123$ ; 37.47%), language schools ( $n = 19$ ; 5.69%) and higher education institutions ( $n = 7$ ; 2.10%). The total sum of institutions exceeds the number of participants because certain teachers reported working at multiple institutions simultaneously.

## 4. Results

To answer the first research question “What is the relationship between Croatian EFL teachers’ global TEI and their scores on items reflecting attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession?”, a Spearman correlation with Bonferroni correction was applied. Depending on the level of significance, 14, 11 or seven out of the 15 items of the attitude questionnaire were significantly correlated with the global TEI scores. The strongest relationship emerged between the global TEI scores and item 6 (“I consider myself a good English teacher”;  $\rho = 0.369, p < 0.001$ ), while the strongest negative correlation was found between the global TEI score and item 9 (“I am dissatisfied with my pedagogic skills”;  $\rho = -0.385, p < 0.001$ ). Only item 5 (“I do not feel responsible for my students’ wellbeing”) did not have statistically significant correlation with global TEI scores at all three significance levels. The other correlation coefficients ranged from 0.114 to 0.302, i.e. the effect sizes ranged from weak to moderate.

To answer the second research question “What is the relationship between Croatian EFL teachers’ four TEI factors (well-being, emotionality, self-control and sociability) and their scores on items reflecting attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession?”, a Spearman correlation with Bonferroni correction was applied. Out of the four TEI factors, **emotionality** was significantly correlated with the most items of the attitude questionnaire: only items 8 (“I believe a good English teacher stays up-to-date on TEFL trends”) and 12 (“I think my place of employment adequately supports my professional development”) were not significant to emotionality scores with all three significance levels. Item 4 (“I consider myself patient and empathetic in my approach to students”;  $\rho = 0.259, p < 0.001$ ) had the strongest positive correlation with emotionality scores, whereas item 9 (“I am dissatisfied with my pedagogic skills”;  $\rho = -0.286, p < 0.001$ ) had the strongest negative correlation with emotionality scores. **Well-being** and **sociability** scores were

both significantly correlated with 11 out of 15 items of the attitude questionnaire, with both factors having the strongest correlation with items 6 (“I consider myself a good English teacher”) and 9 (“I am dissatisfied with my pedagogic skills”). Once more, item 9 was negatively correlated with the TEI scores, and effect sizes for both factors on both items are between 0.319 and 0.385, i.e. they are moderate. Out of the four factors, **self-control** was correlated with the fewest items: a significantly positive relationship was found between self-control and seven out of 15 items of the questionnaire. Items 4 (“I consider myself patient and empathetic in my approach to students”) and 9 (“I am dissatisfied with my pedagogic skills”) had the strongest correlation with self-control scores, with moderate effect sizes of 0.217 and -0.296, respectively.

Among the 15 attitude items, six were significantly correlated with both overall TEI scores and scores on each of the four factors. More specifically, items 4 (“I consider myself patient and empathetic in my approach to students”), 6 (“I consider myself a good English teacher”), 11 (“My job as an English teacher is fulfilling”) and 15 (“I believe my academic education sufficiently prepared me for the challenges I face as an English teacher”) were significantly positively correlated with all TEI scores, while items 7 (“I rarely ask my students for feedback on lessons, materials, tests, etc.”) and 9 (“I am dissatisfied with my pedagogic skills”) were significantly negatively correlated with all TEI scores. Item 5 (“I do not feel responsible for my students’ wellbeing”) was found to be the least connected to TEI as it was significantly (negatively) correlated only with emotionality scores, and the effect size was weak ( $\rho = -0.108$ ,  $p = 0.048$ ). All the Spearman correlation coefficients can be found in Table 1 below:

**Table 1***Spearman Correlation Coefficients*

Items	TEI	well-being	self-control	emotionality	sociability
Item 1	0.114*	0.067	0.122*	0.123*	0.03
Item 2	0.122*	0.045	0.09	0.168**	0.157**
Item 3	0.153**	0.113*	0.1	0.187***	0.108*
Item 4	0.249***	0.154**	0.217***	0.259***	0.173**
Item 5	-0.054	0	-0.059	-0.108*	-0.095
Item 6	0.369***	0.374***	0.213***	0.183**	0.319***
Item 7	-0.237***	-0.128*	-0.158**	-0.253***	-0.261***
Item 8	0.143**	0.151**	0.079	0.077	0.03
Item 9	-0.385***	-0.305***	-0.296***	-0.286***	-0.358***
Item 10	0.133*	0.071	0.053	0.125*	0.115*
Item 11	0.302***	0.275***	0.168**	0.129*	0.232***
Item 12	0.164**	0.145**	0.083	0.081	0.061
Item 13	0.168**	0.164**	0.048	0.12*	0.17**
Item 14	-0.22***	-0.205***	-0.094	-0.134*	-0.131*
Item 15	0.249***	0.232***	0.17**	0.135*	0.16**

*Note.* The three significance criteria used when applying Bonferroni correction are marked by asterisks, with one asterisk denoting the least strict criterion and three asterisks the strictest one.

- \*  $p \leq 0.05$
- \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$
- \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$

When it comes to the first research question, linear regression (similarly to Spearman correlations) suggests that a model with gender, experience and all four TEI factors as predictor variables significantly predicts teachers' attitudes towards their students, teaching practices and profession ( $F(6, 327) = 14.13, p < .001$ ) with an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.19 which means that TEI factors explained 19% of variance in teachers' attitudes.

Regarding the second research question, the individual regression coefficients suggested that neither gender ( $t(327) = -0.64, p = 0.53$ ) nor experience ( $t(327) = 1.31, p = 0.19$ ) had



significant independent contributions to teachers' attitudes. Investigating further individual TEI factors' contributions, it can be observed that self-control ( $t(327) = .41, p = 0.68$ ) doesn't have a significant contribution, while emotionality ( $t(327) = 2.31, p < 0.05$ ), well-being ( $t(327) = 2.65, p < 0.01$ ) and sociability ( $t(327) = 3.69, p < 0.01$ ) do. Sociability showed the strongest connection to teachers' attitudes, with each point increase on the sociability scale corresponding to an on-average 0.10 increase on the attitudes scale. The regression data can be seen in its entirety in Table 2 below:

**Table 2**

*Regression Data*

term	b	SE	95%_CI_LL	95%_CI_UL	p
(Intercept)	2,481	0,169	2,149	2,813	0
Gender	-0,042	0,067	-0,173	0,088	0,525
Experience	0,003	0,002	-0,002	0,008	0,192
Well-being	0,075	0,028	0,02	0,13	0,008
Self-control	0,012	0,03	-0,047	0,071	0,684
Emotionality	0,079	0,034	0,012	0,145	0,022
Sociability	0,098	0,027	0,046	0,15	0

In addition to the regression analysis, model assumptions were tested. The residuals were normally distributed (Shapiro-Wilk  $W = 0.99, p = 0.33$ ), homoscedasticity was confirmed (Breusch-Pagan  $\chi^2 = 7.23, p = 0.30$ ), and the residuals appeared to be independent (Durbin-Watson  $D = 1.90, p = 0.18$ ).

In summary, the first hypothesis “Croatian EFL teachers with higher global TEI scores will report more positive attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession” was confirmed. The second hypothesis “Croatian EFL teachers with higher scores on all four TEI factors will report more positive attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession” was partially confirmed. It was found that higher scores on three of the four TEI factors – well-being, emotionality and sociability – correlated with more positive attitudes regarding students,

teaching practices and profession, but self-control had no significant independent contribution to teachers' attitudes. Spearman correlation coefficients first suggested this trend in the data as self-control was correlated with the fewest items, and linear regression provided adequate evidence for this conclusion.

## 5. Discussion

Croatian EFL teachers with higher overall TEI scores generally had more positive attitudes toward their students, teaching practices and profession. This is in line with the results from Dewaele's study (2019). Overall, more positive attitudes toward students may be explained by the fact that these teachers may be more tolerant and enjoy even lively students. It may also be due to the fact that they are more skilled at maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere, so their students are more motivated and cooperative, which facilitates the teachers' positive attitudes toward them. Interestingly, having higher overall TEI scores and scores on three out of the four TEI factors did not mean that teachers felt responsible for their students' wellbeing; it was only emotionality scores that correlated with this item. A possible interpretation may be that those teachers who generally experience emotions more intensely also develop stronger emotions when it comes to their students, therefore wanting to get to know them better and feeling responsible for them. Conversely, other teachers may distance themselves for various reasons, such as wanting to maintain personal boundaries, not wanting to overburden themselves with students' personal issues, etc., all of which may help them maintain a healthier work-life balance and avoid burnout – something teachers with higher TEI scores are better at doing. When it comes to believing it is important to get to know their students on a personal level, only teachers who scored high on emotionality and those who scored high on sociability had this belief to a statistically significant extent. Those with higher sociability scores may simply find this aspect of their work more salient, or they may feel a general desire to connect with others on a more personal level, which in turn leads to their willingness to build closer connections with their students.

When it comes to Croatian EFL teachers' attitudes toward their teaching practices, the results confirm previous research findings. Teachers with high scores on both overall TEI and on

each of its four factors consider themselves good English teachers, they are satisfied with their teaching skills and they regularly ask their students for feedback. In other words, they have a sense of self-efficacy, which is more commonly associated with higher TEI scores. Dewaele (2019) found that teachers with high scores on both overall TEI as well as sociability and well-being were more likely to consider themselves good teachers. While most scores had no significant correlation with item 10 (“My primary goal is to get my students to speak English, even if their grammar or spelling are not perfect”), a weak effect was found for those scoring high on emotionality.

Teachers with high scores on both overall TEI and its four factors find their TEFL careers fulfilling, which matches previous findings around the world. These teachers also believe their academic education sufficiently prepared them for the challenges they face in their work; however, only those with high overall TEI scores and/or high well-being scores believe they have sufficient support from their institution. This is similar to Dewaele (2019)’s results: teachers’ positive attitudes toward their institution were significantly positively correlated only with overall TEI scores. A possible explanation is that these teachers have a more positive outlook on the same situation (since well-being is related to more positive moods) or they feel a lesser need for external support as they can self-regulate more efficiently. Satisfaction with the amount of autonomy at work was significantly positively correlated with all scores except self-control. Self-control includes the ability to manage stress. Self-control scores were also the only ones not significantly positively correlated with wanting to teach EFL for the foreseeable future.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study aimed to explore the complex relationship between trait emotional intelligence and attitudes among Croatian EFL teachers. With its large sample of 334 participants, the study provides valuable initial insights into how TEI influences these teachers' perceptions of their students, teaching practices, and profession.

Statistical analysis revealed a series of significant correlations between TEI scores and teachers' attitudes. EFL teachers with higher TEI scores tended to view themselves as effective educators with good pedagogic skills and are generally satisfied in their TEFL careers. Emotionality emerged as a prominent factor, with higher emotionality scores correlating positively with attitudes related to empathy, responsibility for students' wellbeing, and satisfaction with teaching practices. Well-being and sociability also played significant roles, showing positive correlations with various aspects of teaching satisfaction and institutional support. However, the study also highlights the nuanced nature of the relationship between TEI and attitudes: the influence of self-control and sociability was less consistent across different aspects of teaching attitudes than well-being or emotionality.

By recognizing the important role that TEI plays in fostering positive teaching attitudes, educational stakeholders can implement targeted interventions to support teachers' well-being and enhance their professional performance, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students alike. Since the study was done within the Croatian educational context, where English has a special status (Vilke, 2007), its findings are especially relevant for Croatian EFL teachers and those training and employing them. As seen in Chapter 2.3, many interventions aimed at improving teacher TEI (and ultimately, their performance) can be applied throughout teachers' careers, starting from their university education. In practical terms, this means that learning about TEI

could, for example, be integrated into the mandatory psychology courses that teachers attend. Special TEI courses and workshops could also be created where trainee teachers would learn about burnout, managing stressful situations in the classroom or with colleagues, maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere, emotion regulation, work-life balance, etc. through a TEI lens. Raising trainee teachers' awareness about their own TEI while also demonstrating its practical everyday implications would provide them with a skillset that is crucial in such a stressful occupation. Making TEI an integral component of teacher education, much like public speaking or effective lesson planning, shows trainee teachers that they need to nurture these aspects of themselves throughout their careers to decrease their chances of experiencing burnout, job dissatisfaction and wanting to leave the profession. Croatian teachers who have already established themselves in their careers could also benefit from similar workshops and courses implemented within schools or on a wider scale, e.g. in their cities or counties. Given the harsh conditions that teachers face in the Croatian educational system (i.e. low pay, low prestige of the profession, feeling underappreciated, insufficient autonomy, etc.), improving their TEI may be one way of boosting their mental health and job satisfaction, which is bound to improve student outcomes and, once again, create a positive feedback loop where satisfaction and motivation keep growing in the classroom.

## **7. Limitations and suggestions for further research**

Though this study offers an important new perspective on the emotional dimension of Croatian EFL teachers' work, several limitations should nevertheless be acknowledged, with the largest one being the participants' profile. Even though the sample was large and data were collected countrywide via non-probability sampling so as to boost the study's ecological validity, the participants are still likely not completely representative of the entire population of Croatian EFL teachers. This may be due to the fact that the 363 teachers who wanted to participate in the study were likely more interested in topics related to emotional intelligence and attitudes than average and were perhaps more emotionally intelligent than the average Croatian EFL teacher. A similar study with a differently chosen sample may yield different results.

Another limitation is the use of short questionnaires. The primary goal of the study was to introduce the relationship between (EFL) teachers' emotional intelligence and their attitudes into the Croatian learning context as it is an unexplored topic, and the choice was made to maximize statistical power by obtaining a large amount of data. Since multiple questionnaires had to be administered due to the complexity of the topic, a compromise was made between quantity and quality: in order to attract a larger number of participants, the TEIQue-SF was chosen over the TEIQue, and the attitude questionnaire was designed to contain only 15 items. This meant that TEI could only be measured in overall scores and scores on the four facets (whereas the TEIQue also offers measurements of the 15 distinct facets of TEI), while attitudes could only be measured on the level of each individual item and overall scores (instead of being able to create distinct factors). Using the TEIQue and a more detailed attitude questionnaire which yields scores on factors would likely be more appropriate for such a nuanced topic. Additionally, an attitude questionnaire with more items could explore attitudes about more topics and explain more variance. Given the

subjectivity of the topic, adding qualitative data would certainly enrich the results as well; open questions where teachers could express which aspects of their job they find (de)motivating or (un)satisfying, detailed descriptions of how they view their teacher-selves, diary entries where they write down their emotions during the workday, etc. would offer another glimpse into this dimension of teaching.

Since questionnaires were used, another limitation is the use of self-reported data which may be exaggerated, biased, influenced by social desirability, etc. Though researching psychological phenomena often entails working with self-reported data, triangulation may be possible in this context as data on teachers can also be collected from their students, coworkers, etc.



## References

- Afshar, H. S., & Doosti, M. (2016) An investigation into factors contributing to Iranian secondary school English teachers' job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. *Research Papers in Education*, 31(3), 274-298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2015.1037335>
- Argyle, M., Martin, M., & Crossland, J. (1989). Happiness as a function of personality and social encounters. In J. P. Forgas & J. M. Innes (Eds.), *Recent advances in social psychology: An international perspective* (pp. 189–203). Elsevier Science.
- Babić Čikeš, A., & Buško, V. (2015). Emocionalna inteligencija u ranoj adolescenciji: korelati sposobnosti upravljanja emocijama i predikcija školskog uspjeha. *Društvena istraživanja: časopis za opća društvena pitanja*, 24(1), 21-45. <https://doi.org/10.5559/di.24.1.02>
- Bajorek, Z., Gulliford, J., & Taskila, T. (2014). *Healthy teachers, higher marks? Establishing a link between teacher health and wellbeing, and student outcomes*. The Work Foundation. [https://f.hubspotusercontent10.net/hubfs/7792519/healthy\\_teachers\\_higher\\_marks\\_report.pdf](https://f.hubspotusercontent10.net/hubfs/7792519/healthy_teachers_higher_marks_report.pdf)
- Barcelos, A. M. F., & Ruohotie-Lyhty, M. (2018). Teachers' Emotions and Beliefs in Second Language Teaching: Implications for Teacher Education. In J. de Dios Martínez Agudo (Ed.), *Emotions in Second Language Teaching. Theory, Research and Teacher Education* (pp. 109-124). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3_7)
- Bar-On, R. (1997). *The emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i)* [Measurement instrument]. Multi-Health Systems.
- Becker, E. S., Keller, M. M., Goetz, T., Frenzel, A. C., & Taxer, J. (2015). Antecedents of Teachers' Emotions in the Classroom: An Intraindividual Approach. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6(635), 1-12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00635>

- Boburka, R. R., Carducci, B. J., Nave, C. S., & Riggio, R. E. (2020). Emotional Intelligence, Assessment of. In B. J. Carducci, C. S. Nave (Eds.), *The Wiley Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences: Models and Theories* (pp. 513-517). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118970843.ch156>
- Brackett, M. A., Palomera, R., Mojsa-Kaja, J., Reyes, M. R., & Salovey, P. (2010). Emotion-regulation ability, burnout, and job satisfaction among British secondary-school teachers. *Psychology in the Schools, 47*(4), 406-417. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20478>
- Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C., Steca, P., & Malone, P. S. (2006). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs as determinants of job satisfaction and students' academic achievement: A study at the school level. *Journal of School Psychology, 44*(6), 473-490. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2006.09.001>
- Choi, Y., Moon, E., Park, J. M., Byung, D. L., Lee, Y. M., Jeong, H. J., & Chung, Y. I. (2017). Psychometric Properties of the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations in Korean Adults. *Psychiatry Investigation, 14*(4), 427-433. <https://doi.org/10.4306/pi.2017.14.4.427>
- Croatian Bureau of Statistics. (2022). *Osnovne škole, kraj šk. g. 2020./2021. i početak šk. g. 2021./2022.* <https://podaci.dzs.hr/2022/hr/29006>
- Cuéllar, L., & Oxford, R. (2018). Language Teachers' Emotions: Emerging from the Shadows. In J. de Dios Martínez Agudo (Ed.), *Emotions in Second Language Teaching. Theory, Research and Teacher Education* (pp. 53-72). Springer. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3\\_4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3_4)
- De Costa, P. I., Rawal, H., & Li, W. (2018). L2 Teachers' Emotions: A Sociopolitical and Ideological Perspective. In J. de Dios Martínez Agudo (Ed.), *Emotions in Second Language Teaching. Theory, Research and Teacher Education* (pp. 71-106). Springer. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3\\_6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3_6)

- Dewaele, J. M. (2019). The Relationship between Trait Emotional Intelligence and Experienced ESL/EFL Teachers' Love of English, Attitudes towards Their Students and Institution, Self-reported Classroom Practices, Enjoyment and Creativity. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 41(4), 468-487. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/cjal-2018-0034>
- Dewaele, J. M., Gkonou, C., & Mercer, S. (2018) Do ESL/EFL Teachers' Emotional Intelligence, Teaching Experience, Proficiency and Gender Affect Their Classroom Practice? In J. de Dios Martínez Agudo (Ed.), *Emotions in Second Language Teaching. Theory, Research and Teacher Education* (pp. 125-141). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75438-3_8)
- Dewaele, J. M., & Mercer, S. (2018). Variation in ESL/EFL Teachers' Attitudes towards their Students. In S. Mercer & A. Kostoulas (Eds.), *Language Teacher Psychology* (pp. 178-195). Multilingual Matters. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21832/9781783099467-015>
- Dewberry, C. & Briner, R. (2007). *Staff wellbeing is the key to school success*. Worklife Support. <https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/5902birkbeckwbperfsurveyfinal.pdf>
- Eckhard, V. (2021). *Emocionalna inteligencija u nastavi i učenju* [Undergraduate thesis, University of Osijek]. Dabar. <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:142:126623>
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2018). Foreword. In J. de Dios Martínez Agudo (Ed.), *Emotions in Second Language Teaching. Theory, Research and Teacher Education* (pp. vii-viii). Springer.
- Feješ, M. (2018). *EFL teachers' attitudes towards vocabulary learning strategies* [Master's thesis, University of Osijek]. Dabar. <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:142:250823>
- Ferdowsi, N., & Ghanizadeh, A. (2017). An exploration of EFL teachers' job satisfaction in the light of stress coping strategies and emotional intelligence. *International Journal of Research Studies in Psychology*, 6(2), 43-56. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5861/ijrsp.2017.1818>

- Gardner, R. C. (2004). *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery: International AMTB Research Project* [Measurement instrument]. The University of Western Ontario. <https://publish.uwo.ca/~gardner/docs/englishamtb.pdf>
- Gregersen, T., MacIntyre, P. D., Finegan, K. H., Talbot, K. R., & Claman, S. L. (2014). Examining emotional intelligence within the context of positive psychology interventions. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 4(2), 327–353. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2014.4.2.8>
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam Books.
- Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher–child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes through eighth grade. *Child Development*, 72(2), 625–638. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00301>
- Ho, C. & Au, W. (2006). Teaching Satisfaction Scale: Measuring Job Satisfaction of Teachers. *Education and Psychological Measurement*, 66(1), 172-183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405278573>
- Hieronimus, A. N., & Hoover, H. D. (1978). *Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Forms G and H* [Measurement instrument]. Riverside Publishing Company.
- Ingersoll, R. (2001). *Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools*. University of Washington. <https://www.education.uw.edu/ctp/sites/default/files/ctpmail/PDFs/Turnover-Ing-01-2001.pdf>
- İpek, H., & Kanatlar, M. (2018). Factors Affecting EFL Teacher Motivation. *Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi – Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, 6(2), 25-41. <https://doi.org/10.14689/issn.2148-2624.1.6c2s2m>

- Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 491–525. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308325693>
- Jude, A. M. (2011). Emotional Intelligence, Gender and Occupational Stress among Secondary School Teachers in Ondo State, Nigeria. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(4), 159-165. [https://www.academia.edu/3215066/Emotional\\_intelligence\\_gender\\_and\\_occupational\\_stress\\_among\\_secondary\\_school\\_teachers\\_in\\_Ondo\\_State\\_Nigeria](https://www.academia.edu/3215066/Emotional_intelligence_gender_and_occupational_stress_among_secondary_school_teachers_in_Ondo_State_Nigeria)
- Kostić-Bobanović, M. (2020). Perceived emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among novice and experienced foreign language teachers. *Economic Research - Ekonomska istraživanja*, 33(1), 1200-1213. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2019.1710232>
- Lumley, T., Diehr, P., Emerson, S., & Chen, L. (2002). The importance of the normality assumption in large public health data sets. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 23, 151-169. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.23.100901.140546>
- Martyniak, M., & Pellitteri, J. (2020). The Effects of Short-Term Emotional Intelligence Training on Preschool Teachers in Poland. *Psihologijske teme*, 29(1), 85-94. <https://doi.org/10.31820/pt.29.1.5>
- Martinović, A., & Dumančić, D. (2022). Can teach and prosper? EFL teachers' attitudes, well-being, and coping strategies in an online setting. *ExELL (Exploration in English Language and Linguistics)*, 10(2), 90-130. <https://doi.org/10.2478/exell-2023-0002>
- Mayer, J.D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. (2002). *Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) Users Manual*. Multi-Health Systems.
- Metlife. (2004). *The Metlife survey of the American teacher: Transitions and the role of supportive relationships*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED530021.pdf>

- Montgomery, C., & Rupp, A. A. (2005). A Meta-analysis for Exploring the Diverse Causes and Effects of Stress in Teachers. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 28(3), 458–486. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4126479>
- Moskowitz, S., & Dewaele, J. M. (2019). Is teacher happiness contagious? A study of the link between perceptions of language teacher happiness and student attitudes. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 15(2), 117-130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2019.1707205>
- Parvathi, J., Pavalakkodi, V., & Balaji, M. (2016). Augmentation of Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom: Skill-Based Teachers and Students. In P. S. Balaji., P. Pachaiyappan, & S. R. Kumar (Eds.), *Two Year B.Ed. Programme in the Cradle of Nurturance, Conservation for Quality Management: A Need for Achieving Excellence and Expertise* (pp. 141-146). Shanlax Publications.
- Pejić, L. (2020). *Važnost emocionalne inteligencije odgojitelja* [Undergraduate thesis, University of Zagreb]. Dabar. <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:147:412481>
- Pérez, J. C., Petrides, K. V., & Furnham, A. (2005). Measuring Trait Emotional Intelligence. In R. Schulze & R. D. Roberts (Eds.), *Emotional intelligence: An international handbook* (pp. 181–201). Hogrefe & Huber Publishers. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358416426\\_Measuring\\_trait\\_emotional\\_intelligence](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358416426_Measuring_trait_emotional_intelligence)
- Petrides, K. V. (2009a). *Technical Manual for the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaires (TEIQue)* (1st ed.). London Psychometric Laboratory.
- Petrides, K. V. (2009b). Psychometric Properties of the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue). In J. D. A. Parker, D. H. Saklofske, & C. Stough (Eds.), *Assessing Emotional Intelligence: Theory, Research and Applications* (1st ed., pp. 85-101). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-88370-0\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-88370-0_5)

- Petrides, K. V. (2009c). *The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire - Short Form* [Measurement instrument]. London Psychometric Laboratory. <https://www.psychometriclab.com/adminsdata/files/The%20TEIQue-SF%20v.%201.50.pdf>
- Petrides, K. V., & Furnham, A. (2000). On the dimensional structure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 29(2), 313-320. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(99\)00195-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(99)00195-6)
- Petrides, K. V., & Furnham, A. (2001). Trait emotional intelligence: psychometric investigation with reference to established trait taxonomies. *European Journal of Personality*, 15(6), 425-448. <https://doi.org/10.1002/per.416>
- Petrides, K. V., Pita, R., & Kokkinaki, F. (2007). The location of trait emotional intelligence in personality factor space. *British Journal of Psychology*, 98(2), 273-289. <https://doi.org/10.1348/000712606X120618>
- Pianta, R. C. (1992). *The Student Teacher Relationship Scale* [Measurement instrument]. University of Virginia. <https://education.virginia.edu/documents/ehdstrs-professional-manual.pdf>
- Roeser, R. W., Midgley, C., & Urdan, T. C. (1996). Perceptions of the School Psychological Environment and Early Adolescents' Psychological and Behavioral Functioning in Schools: The Mediating Role of Goals and Belonging. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 88(3), 408-422. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.88.3.408>
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J.D. (1990). Emotional Intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9(3), 185-211. <https://doi.org/10.2190/DUGG-P24E-52WK-6CDG>
- Salovey, P., Mayer, J. D., Goldman, S. L., Turvey, C., & Palfai, T. P. (1995). Emotional Attention, Clarity, and Repair: Exploring Emotional Intelligence using Trait Meta-Mood Scale. In J. W.

- Pennebaker (Ed.), *Emotion, Disclosure and Health* (pp. 125-154). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10182-006>
- Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., Hall, L. E., Haggerty, D. J., Cooper, J. T., Golden, C. J., & Dornheim, L. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25(2), 167–177. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(98\)00001-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(98)00001-4)
- Slišković, A., Burić, I., & Knežević, I. (2016a). Zadovoljstvo poslom i sagorijevanje na poslu kod učitelja: važnost podrške. *Društvena istraživanja*, 25(3), 371-392. <https://doi.org/10.5559/di.25.3.05>
- Slišković, A., Burić, I., & Macuka, I. (2016b). The voice of Croatian elementary school teachers: qualitative analysis of the teachers' perspective on their profession. *Teachers and Teaching*, 23(5), 518-531. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2016.1206521>
- Vilke, M. (2007). English in Croatia - A Glimpse into Past, Present and Future. *Metodika: časopis za teoriju i praksu metodikâ u predškolskom odgoju, školskoj i visokoškolskoj izobrazbi*, 8(14), 17-24.
- Wentzel, K. R. (1998). Social Relationships and Motivation in Middle School: The Role of Parents, Teachers, and Peers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 90(2), 202–209. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.90.2.202>
- Wong, C.-S., & Law, K. S. (2002). *Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)* [Measurement instrument]. APA PsycTests. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t07398-000>



## **Appendix A**

### **Attitude questionnaire**

1. I think positively of my students regardless of their knowledge of English.
2. It is important that I get to know my students on a personal level.
3. I believe each student has unique strengths that need to be considered in class.
4. I consider myself patient and empathetic in my approach to students.
5. I do not feel responsible for my students' wellbeing.
6. I consider myself a good English teacher.
7. I rarely ask my students for feedback on lessons, materials, tests, etc.
8. I believe a good English teacher stays up-to-date on TEFL trends.
9. I am dissatisfied with my pedagogic skills.
10. My primary goal is to get my students to speak English, even if their grammar or spelling are not perfect.
11. My job as an English teacher is fulfilling.
12. I think my place of employment adequately supports my professional development.
13. I am satisfied with the amount of autonomy I have at work (e.g. when choosing textbooks, teaching techniques, skills being taught, etc.).
14. I do not see myself teaching English for many more years.
15. I believe my academic education sufficiently prepared me for the challenges I face as an English teacher.

# Appendix B

## TEIQue-SF

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely Disagree							Completely Agree
1. Expressing my emotions with words is not a problem for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I often find it difficult to see things from another person's viewpoint.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. On the whole, I'm a highly motivated person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I usually find it difficult to regulate my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I generally don't find life enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I can deal effectively with people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I tend to change my mind frequently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Many times, I can't figure out what emotion I'm feeling.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I often find it difficult to stand up for my rights.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I'm usually able to influence the way other people feel.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. On the whole, I have a gloomy perspective on most things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Those close to me often complain that I don't treat them right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I often find it difficult to adjust my life according to the circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. On the whole, I'm able to deal with stress.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I often find it difficult to show my affection to those close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I'm normally able to "get into someone's shoes" and experience their emotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I normally find it difficult to keep myself motivated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I'm usually able to find ways to control my emotions when I want to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. On the whole, I'm pleased with my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I would describe myself as a good negotiator.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I tend to get involved in things I later wish I could get out of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I often pause and think about my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. I believe I'm full of personal strengths.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I tend to "back down" even if I know I'm right.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I don't seem to have any power at all over other people's feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I generally believe that things will work out fine in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I find it difficult to bond well even with those close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. Generally, I'm able to adapt to new environments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. Others admire me for being relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## **Sažetak**

Sve je veći interes za odnos između emocionalne inteligencije (TEI) i stavova nastavnika (jezika) jer istraživanja pokazuju kako ova dva faktora utječu na ishode učenika. Ovo istraživanje istražuje odnos između TEI i stavova prema učenicima, nastavnim praksama i struci kod 334 hrvatskih nastavnika engleskoga kao stranoga jezika. Kvantitativni podaci prikupljeni su putem internetskih upitnika koji mjere TEI i stavove. Spearmanova korelacija i linearna regresija pokazale su značajne pozitivne korelacije između većih rezultata na upitniku koji mjeri TEI i pozitivnih stavova o samoučinkovitosti, zadovoljstvu poslom i odnosima s učenicima. Također su primijećeni različiti obrasci povezanosti između četiri faktora TEI (dobrobit, emocionalnost, samokontrola i društvenost) i pojedinih stavova. Rezultati naglašavaju važnu ulogu emocionalne inteligencije u oblikovanju stavova nastavnika engleskoga kao stranoga jezika i nude implikacije za obuku (budućih) nastavnika i inicijative profesionalnog razvoja.

**Ključne riječi:** poučavanje engleskoga kao stranoga jezika, nastavnici, emocionalna inteligencija, stavovi