

Emotion as a Tool in the Classroom

RAMAKRISHNA BISWAL, Ph.D

Asst. Professor of Psychology, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
National Institute of Technology, Rourkela, INDIA

Abstract

Successful academic involvement requires regulation of emotion to extract the maximum benefit from the teaching-learning process. Emotions facilitate and control much of our cognitive processes, classroom motivation and social interaction. The school curriculum being overtly cognitively loaded undermines the importance of emotion in the classroom. Two prerequisites to motivate children in the classroom are to develop an interest and inquisitiveness among them. However, the monotony of the classroom situation derails the young mind to achieve the optimum academic benefit. The role of a teacher in the classroom hence, is vital in the exchange process. The failure to realize the importance of emotions in the classroom owing to factors like completing the syllabus in time, other co-and extra-curricular activities and a cut-throat competition among the students to score high grades in school subjects etc. proves to be detrimental for both the teacher and the taught. Despite these challenges, it is possible to effectively engage children in the classroom through leveraging classroom communication. The 'how' is vital than the 'what' in the communication process and the classroom situation is no exception. Barring individual differences in the experience and expression of emotion, it is also possible to develop helpful strategies to manage emotion in the classroom. Researching the importance of emotion as a tool in classroom may prove beneficial not only for teacher's own emotion regulation, but also in their ability to facilitate healthy emotion development of their students for a successful academic engagement.

Keywords: Emotion, Emotion-regulation, Experience and Expression of Emotion

JACOBS
FOUNDATION



South East Asian INTERNATIONAL REGIONAL WORKSHOP

27 February – 1 March 2017



Emotion as a Tool in the Classroom

RAMAKRISHNA BISWAL, Ph.D

Asst. Professor of Psychology
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
National Institute of Technology, Rourkela
INDIA

Abstract

Successful academic involvement requires regulation of emotion to extract the maximum benefit from the teaching-learning process. Emotions facilitate and control much of our cognitive processes, classroom motivation and social interaction. The school curriculum being overtly cognitively loaded undermines the importance of emotion in the classroom. Two prerequisites to motivate children in the classroom are to develop an interest and inquisitiveness among them. However, the monotony of the classroom situation derails the young mind to achieve the optimum academic benefit. The role of a teacher in the classroom hence, is vital in the exchange process. The failure to realize the importance of emotions in the classroom owing to factors like completing the syllabus in time, other co-and extra-curricular activities and a cut-throat competition among the students to score high grades in school subjects etc. proves to be detrimental for both the teacher and the taught. Despite these challenges, it is possible to effectively engage children in the classroom through leveraging classroom communication. The 'how' is vital than the 'what' in the communication process and the classroom situation is no exception. Barring individual differences in the experience and expression of emotion, it is also possible to develop helpful strategies to manage emotion in the classroom. Researching the importance of emotion as a tool in classroom may prove beneficial not only for teacher's own emotion regulation, but also in their ability to facilitate healthy emotion development of their students for a successful academic engagement.

Keywords: Emotion, Emotion-regulation, Experience and Expression of Emotion

Presentation Overview

- Introducing the Context
- Emotion Regulation
- Objectives
- Rationale
- Sample, Instrument and Procedure
- The Perspectives
- Implications



INTRODUCTION

- Next to family, school is the place for socialization, personality development and academic achievement (in that order but gradually reverses)
- In school, the foundation of an adult career and life is established
- Formal Education (Pre-school/Primary School), is the first and foremost method of socialization
- Surprisingly, formal education appears to miss the mark for training the young in socialization skills in today's education system

- Media, Peer Influence and Mounting pressure from parents to perform well in academics may be attributed for poor socialization skills among children
- Socialization skills involve higher levels of intra-and interpersonal relationship and better emotional regulation
- Emotional regulation sets the stage for future socialization
- Sadly, the term emotional regulation rarely finds its way into conversations on education policy, school reform, or even best teaching practices.

- In an academic setting poor emotional regulation can affect a child's ability to learn new material, interact with peers and adults, begin and complete tasks, and take tests.
- Poor emotional regulation can be seen in a child's impulsive behavior, procrastination, and difficulty with flexible thinking

(Ann-Bailey Lipsett, LEARNing Landscapes, Vol. 5, No. 1, Autumn 2011)

- Preventing Bullying (any form), Abuse (any form), Problem Behaviors, School/College Drop Out, Intolerance, Low self-esteem requires (early) school education to focus on emotion regulation of children.



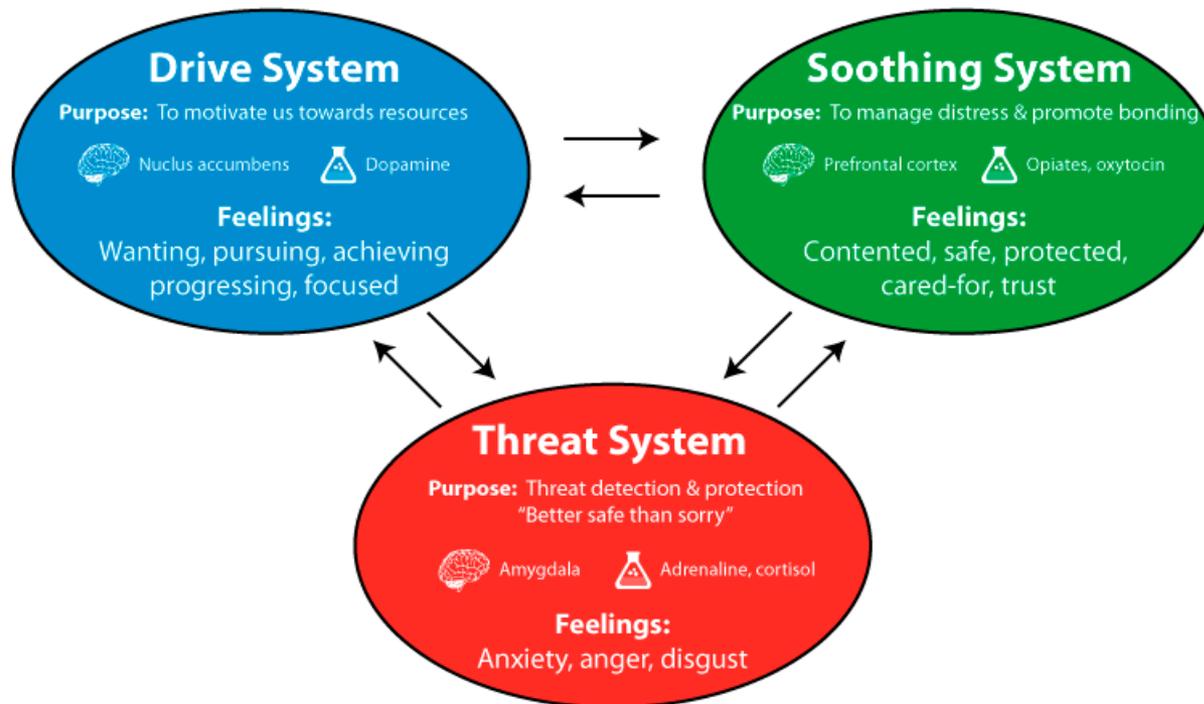
Emotion Regulation

- Emotion regulation is a complex process that involves **initiating, inhibiting, or modulating** one's state or behavior in a given situation – for example the subjective experience (**feelings**), cognitive responses (**thoughts**), emotion-related physiological responses (for example **heart rate or hormonal activity**), and emotion-related behavior (**bodily actions or expressions**).
- Functionally, emotional regulation can also refer to processes such as the tendency to **focus one's attention to a task and the ability to suppress inappropriate behavior** under instruction. Emotional regulation is a highly significant function in human life.

Emotional Regulation System

Emotional Regulation Systems

Paul Gilbert's evolutionary model proposes that human beings switch between three systems to manage their emotions. Each system is associated with different brain regions and different brain chemistry. Distress is caused by imbalance between the systems, often associated with under-development of the soothing system.



OBJECTIVES

- To examine the contextual dynamics of pre-school children's emotion regulation
- To assess the need of developing a curriculum on emotion regulation for pre-school children
- To develop a teacher's training manual on emotion regulation of the preschoolers



RATIONALE

- Both as a cause and an effect in itself, emotional dysregulation results in Bullying (any form), Abuse (any form), Problem Behaviors, School/College Drop Out, Intolerance, and Low self-esteem
- Educational practices rarely address emotional regulation in the classroom; a key precursor to effective and successful academic as well as social output

- The absence of any manual or guideline for the teachers on how to manage emotion in the classroom
- Mapping Emotion in the context of Child Development, Brain and Behavior to develop Academic Curriculum
- Contextual and Cross-cultural validation of the Assessment and Evaluation Tool for Emotional Regulation

SAMPLE, INSTRUMENT AND PROCEDURE

- **Sample**

The Pre-School Children

- **Instrument**

To be developed based on the theories and practices of child development and educational psychology

- **Procedure**

Home and/or school based observation (mixed method approach) of behavior of children



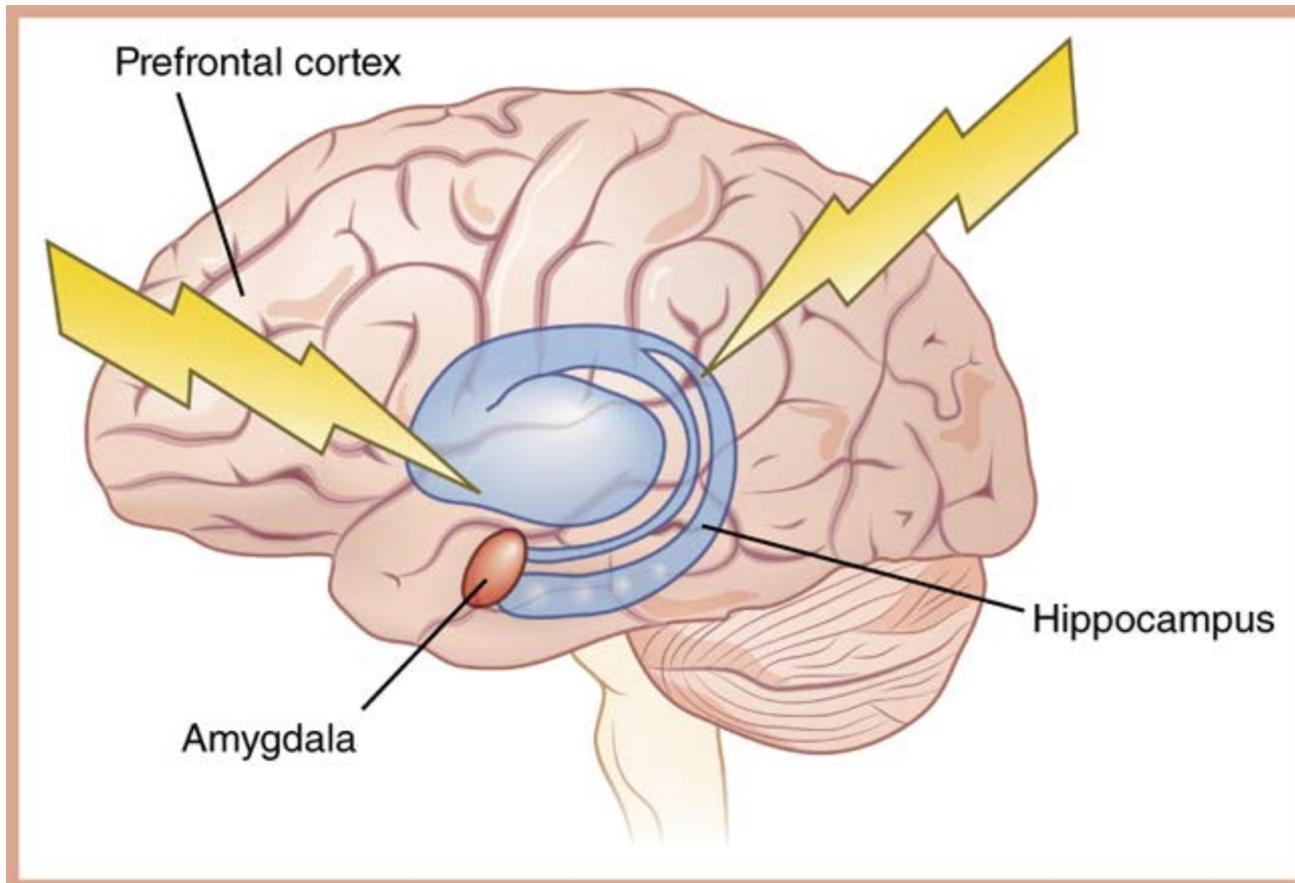
THE PERSPECTIVE

Behavior is complex, so is the analysis

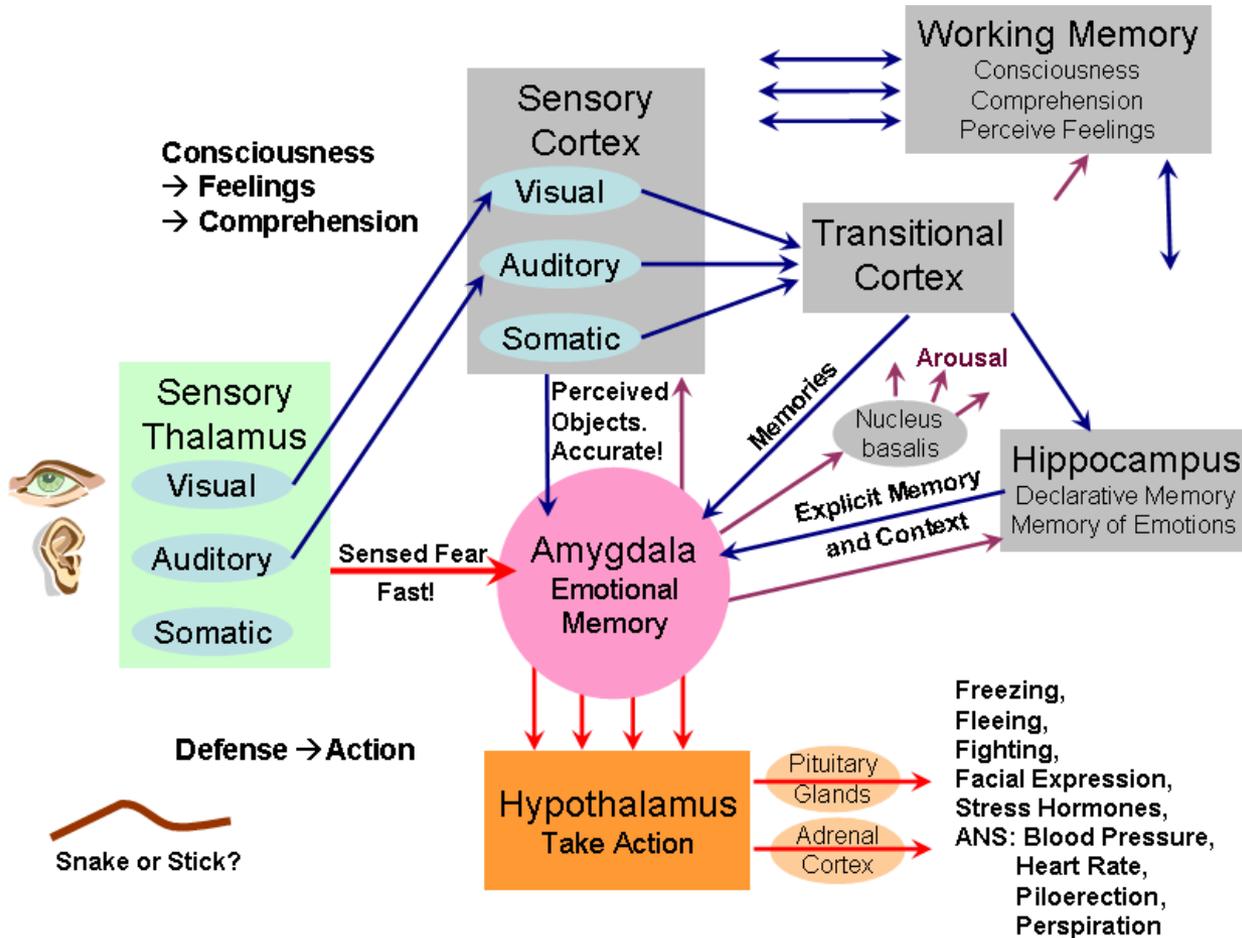
Multiple Perspective helps in understanding the behavior from its origin to manifestation in order develop intervention methods for problem behavior

Neuro-Bio-Psycho-Social-Cultural Perspective

Three regions of the brain, the **amygdala**, the **orbitofrontal area** of the prefrontal cortex, and the **hippocampus**, all play a role in how emotion is processed (Gazzaniga et al., 2009)



Joseph LeDoux's Emotion Pathways



IMPLICATIONS

- Schools may come up with training manuals to deal with socially and emotionally disturbed kids especially designed and standardized contextually.
- Teachers would learn the skills to deal with emotional outbursts or emotional apathy by making the child emotionally ready (much like mental/cognitive readiness) for the class.
- Emotional readiness/Emotional first – aid/Emotional balm(soothing the child) can be administered to the child at school as a preventive measure to reduce anxiety and phobia associated with strangers, new language, environment etc.
- Help teachers to regulate their own emotions
- Develop socially and emotionally healthy behavior among children



Thank you