

EMPATHY AS A PEACE NEGOTIATION STRATEGY IN AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: THE CASE OF SOME SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAROUA

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ABSTRACT: *This paper investigates Empathic Teaching Practices by English Language teachers during their English language classes as a strategy to achieve better teaching goals thereby negotiating peace within them and enhancing development in their students. Using well-known principles of Rogers' client-centered therapy as theoretical framework, a questionnaire was designed and administered to some 19 English Language teachers from two secondary schools in Maroua to illicit data which later generated discussion on the subject matter. Findings revealed teachers lack of knowledge on empathy and differentiation. Further findings depicted English Language teachers lack of cognitive knowhow of the various background and deficits of learners they have in class and thus fail to constantly adopt empathic strategies that include all category of learners when planning language lessons, designing and developing classroom materials and assessment tasks and thus responsible for underachievement in language teaching and antagonism in the language classroom.*

KEYWORDS: empathy, differentiation, impaired learners, teaching goals, peace negotiation.

INTRODUCTION

Language teaching entails meeting stated goals and for an English Language teacher (ELT), this is achieving peace. Achievement of stated learning outcomes by the teacher is not limited only to smart students. It covers all students in class and for any effective teacher; its attainment is achieving peace and enhancing development. For every successful ELT, the "how" is as "important" as the "what". That is, the character trait adopted by the teacher while teaching is as important as the subject matter being taught. Thus, it takes the manner and matter for language teaching to be successful and for peace to be gained. In Cameroon, this peace achievement is difficult to come by seen through the poor performance of students in English Language at various levels.

At the end of primary education, we still find pupils who cannot read nor write English - what they are expected to achieve at lower primary. At the end of the secondary education, many students cannot gain admission into state Universities because they failed in English language which is a pre-requisite for their admission into most state Universities. The Higher Education circle is not left out of this situation. During teaching practice internships of student-teachers from teachers training colleges in

Cameroon, one will still find teachers who are not proficient in English, the language they are teaching. Due to the falling standards evident in students, there has been a change from the structuralist approach to language teaching to objective based and currently the Competency-Based Education in Cameroon. Despite these measures, indicators of underachievement in language learning are glaring. This worrying situation makes one to wonder what can be the possible solution. A lot of research has been carried out in Cameroon about the teachers' mastery of the subject matter and very little has been done on the manner of teaching which inspires this research.

Currently in Cameroon, it is no new knowledge that teachers especially language teachers are being stabbed to death by their students for reasons related to teachers mannerism. Teachers' inappropriate behaviour towards students is visible as testified by students. Last semester during my lectures on inclusive language teaching, two of my students testified how they were always sleeping in class and at times copying from their bench partners because it was difficult for them to hear the teacher well and see the board (hearing deficit and sight deficit) respectively. Once as a student in the University of Yaounde 1, I was sent out from class during a continuous assessment in English Literature because I was given a position to sit behind the class during the test where I could not see the chalkboard (where the questions were written by the lecturer) and I changed my seat and moved to the front seat to see better. This change of sitting position was frowned at by the course master who did not consider my act as a way to better my sight situation from the board. Even my explanation that I cannot see the board from behind as justification for my change of sitting position fell on deaf ears and I was scored zero for that course. Listening to the various instances of the feeling of exclusion raised by my students and I, one begins to ponder if teachers' character traits and attitude towards the other students (students with minor impairments) can be responsible for lack of peace and unachievable learning outcomes in English Language Teaching in Cameroon. These also spur my research curiosity.

With the above in mind, this study aims at investigating Empathic Teaching Practices (ETP) used by English Language Teachers (ELTs) to achieve greater learning outcomes and peace. The aim is broken into three objectives.

- It investigates teachers' knowledge of empathy and differentiation in language classes.
- It explores teachers' cognitive awareness of the existence of learners with various background and impairments in their English Language classes (ELCs).
- It examines the frequency of the use of affective empathic classroom practices by ELTs as a way of achieving better learning outcomes and negotiating peace.

The big questions that this study seeks answers to are:

- Are ELTs aware of the role of empathy and differentiation in teaching?
- Do ELTs have a cognitive awareness of the existence of learners with various background and impairments in ELCs?
- Do ELTs adopt affective ETP to enhance better learning outcomes while teaching?

Based on the above, this study argues that ELTs cannot achieve better learning outcomes and peace in teaching because they are not apt in using empathic practices that involve majority of students during teaching and thus, responsible for underdevelopment in English Language Learning.

This paper is partitioned into seven parts namely: introduction, literature/theoretical framework, methodology, results and discussion, implication to research and practice, conclusion and proposals for future research. The previous portion focused on the introduction while the subsequent section will dwell on literature and theoretical underpinning.

LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This part of the paper constitutes review of literature and theoretical framework for the study. The literature section defines empathy, takes a stand on what the concept mean in this study and equally reviews the role of character trait and empathic strategies in enhancing learning. The theoretical portion presents the theory that inspires the study.

Review of Literature

The concept of empathy is reviewed in this portion of the study to show how it will be viewed by the researcher. It equally reviews the role of character trait and ETP in enhancing learning. It finally shows how the current study converges and diverges from previous studies.

Empathy is often cited as a very important characteristic of teachers as it enable adequate communication between the participants during the educational process. Emotional competencies are essential for successful teaching. There is no universally agreed view of the term empathy. The view of the term depends on the focus of the researcher. According to Rogers (1959: 210), it is the ability or process of placing self in others shoes “as if one was the other person” In the same light, many other definitions of “empathy” refer to a set of efforts and initiatives emphasizing feeling or thinking ‘with’ the other, rather than feeling ‘for’ or thinking on behalf of that person (Davis, 1996; Goldman, 1993; Strayer & Robert, 2004; Wiseman, 1996).

Hoffman (1978) holds that empathy covers a broad spectrum, ranging from caring for other people and having a desire to help them while for Davis (1980), it is experiencing emotions that match another person's emotions and knowing what the other person is thinking or feeling. Being preoccupied by the thoughts and feelings of other people, putting oneself in their place, trying to think like them is also empathy. According to Baron, Cohen & Wheelwright (2004), empathy is about spontaneously and naturally tuning into the other person's thoughts and feelings. Empathy is a construct, grounded in humanist psychology advocating human needs and interests with the intent of providing some all-round basis for personal growth and development, to go on throughout life in a self-directed manner (Burger, 2006: 423-429).

Stojiljkovic', Stojanovic' & Doskovic' (2011) assert that there are two major elements of empathy. The first is its cognitive component (understanding the others feelings and the ability to take their perspective), the second one is the affective component (an observer's appropriate emotional response to another person's emotional state). The Stojiljkovic', Stojanovic' & Doskovic' view of empathy ties in with this current

research paper. This paper investigates language teachers cognitive (Knowing learners, their feelings and putting themselves in their shoes buttress by Stein, 1989; Wiseman, 1996) and affective (taking appropriate measures or actions to suit the state and feeling of learners supported by Allport, 1961; Feshbach, 1982; Eisenberg, 2005) strategies put in force to achieve greater learning outcomes and achieve satisfaction in teaching.

The current trend in classroom-based research deals with the personal role and character trait of teacher in enhancing learning. Many foreign researchers have taken interest in this trend (Handley, 1973; Ryans, 1970; Petrovi - Bjekic', 1997; Bjekic 1999 and UNICEF, 2001). The language teacher in addition to their role in the narrow sense, perform several roles in the course of teaching such as: motivator, evaluator, cognitive-diagnostic role, social relations manager and partner in the emotional interaction (Stojiljkovic, Djigic & Zlatkovic (2012). While Beltran (2011) distinguishes the social side of teaching (creating learning conditions) and the task-oriented side of teaching, Harden & Crosby (2000) pinpoint twelve traits of teachers grouped into six areas: 1) the information provider, 2) the model, 3) the facilitator, 4) the assessor, 5) the planner, and 6) the resource material creator and Ivic' et al (2001) insist that teacher nowadays should cooperate with parents and other partners in local community and wider social environment. Other researchers opine that there are some personal characteristics of successful teachers, such as personality traits or some dynamic dispositions (Handley, 1973; Ryans, 1970; Petrovi -Bjekic', 1997). Research has proven that successful teachers pose certain character traits and that the teacher is much more than a lecturer, and therefore should have a number of competencies to carry out his/her professional roles. There are structure of competencies such as abilities, knowledge, skills, personality traits and emotional characteristics of teachers which are often cited as very important in creating the overall atmosphere in the classroom. Among the stated traits above other researchers (Morgan 1977; Bjekic' 2000, Stojiljkovic', Stojanovic' & Daskovic' 2011) assert that, emotional stability and empathic sensitivity are the most important in the classroom. According to Watkins & Wagner (2000), Djigic' & Stojiljkovic' (2011) and Bru et al (2002), the way of pedagogical classroom leadership determines the learning outcome in a class. Thus, creating safe and stimulating learning environment encourage the development of students' capacity for learning, directs learners' capacities to the required educational standards and enable high academic achievement.

This study is related to the above studies in the sense that they all focus on teachers' classroom character traits and how it promotes teaching. However, this study is new in the sense that it is the first time a study on cognitive and affective classroom practices by teachers is being carried out in Cameroon and more especially with English language teachers.

Theoretical Framework

The amplification of creating empathetic climate in educational settings based on well-known principles of Rogers' client-centred therapy reframing concepts like empathy, congruence, and positive regard constitute the theoretical framework for this study. He extended these principles, later to education which then have been put to use in a number of educational settings and proved to be successful on the measured variables;

self concept of students, academic performance, altruism, creativity and fewer acts of vandalism (Crenshaw & Mordock, 2005; Hoffman, 2000; O’Ferrall, Green & Hanna, 2010; Rogers, 1983). This frame inspires the designing of teachers’ questionnaire and analyse of data for the study.

METHODOLOGY

This section handles the population for the study, instrument and reliability. Participants for this study were 19 ELTs from two secondary schools in Cameroon (10 from GTHS Maroua and 09 from GHS Domayo-Maroua). They were made up of 7 male and 12 female teachers currently teaching atleast four classes and having above 60 students per class. In terms of educational level, the teachers where holders of at least the BA degree both trained and untrained teachers.

The Instrument and reliability of the instrument constitute the forthcoming concern. A questionnaire was designed and administered to ELTs constituting three parts: identification of informants, knowledge of empathy and use of ETP in the classroom. The identification of informants constituted five items ranging from affiliation to sex, academic status, class size and number of classes taught. Part two of the questionnaire based on Yes or No questions focussed on teachers’ knowledge of empathic teaching and constituted 14 items. In this section, teachers indicate if they have done any training on empathic teaching and differentiation. Their views of disabilities in the classroom were equally examined at various levels. The third section measures teachers’ use of either cognitive or affective empathic strategies in teaching English classes. It consists of 24 items for self-assessment on a five-level scale from 5 to 1 (5.Always, 4.Usually, 3.Sometimes, 2.Seldom, 1.Never). In this section of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to indicate the extent of their **agreement** or **disagreement** by putting a tick mark on the most appropriate answer based on their actual experiences of teaching English at the moment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and discussion are based on data collected using the questionnaire instrument administered to some 19 ELTs from GTHS Maroua and GHS Maroua-Domayo. While part one of the questionnaire had to do with the profile of the target teachers and helps in describing the population, part two had 14 Yes or No questions inquiring ELTs participation in empathic teaching and differentiation workshop and their opinion about impairment and part three had 24 questions investigating ETP by language teachers. Results and discussion are based on part two and three of the questionnaire. It has been partitioned into three main sections namely: teachers’ knowledge of empathy and differentiation, cognitive awareness of the existence of different category of impaired students in the ELCs and affective empathic strategies adopted by ELTs to include all learners during teaching.

Teachers’ Knowledge of Empathy and Differentiation

For ELTs to use empathy during their ELCs, they should know what the concept is all about and its practices especially through differentiation. Differentiation practices in a

language classroom shows consideration to students with various background and deficits and this competence is acquired most of the time through workshops. This explains why Question 1 and 2 of the teachers' questionnaire inquired teachers' participation in workshops on empathic teaching and differentiation. The table below presents the results.

Table 1: Participation in workshop on empathic teaching and differentiation

Schools	Total	Yes	No
GTHS Maroua	10	00	10
GHS Maroua-Domayo	09	00	09
% scores	19(100%)	00 (00%)	19(100%)

The above results from question 1 and 2 of the questionnaire show that teachers of the target schools have never participated in any workshops empathic teaching and differentiation. Teachers' zero participation on workshops on empathic teaching and differentiation is an indicator that teachers will exercise lack of knowledge of the target concept. It equally shows that teachers will not developing the character trait competency needed in showing empathy to students and using differentiation techniques when dealing with students in class. It presupposes their lack of competence in varying classroom tasks with different category of students with deficit. As we progress in presenting the results and generating discussions from it, the next point, we will find out if there exist students with different background and impairments in ELCs.

Teachers' Cognitive Awareness of the Existence Students with Different Background and Impairments in Classes

For teachers to empathise with students in an ELC, they should know and think about learners in class, they should be able to identify learners' background and learners with deficit in their classes so as to think about them and include them while preparing lessons, instructional material and teaching. These cannot be effective if teachers do not understand what impairment is all about, cannot identify various minor deficit that learners can have in class and know that various category of students exist in all classes. This explains why this section checks ELTs understanding of impairment, learners' background and the whether there exist students with minor impairments in ELCs.

Teachers' Understanding of Impairment and Learners' Background

Question 3 and 4 of the questionnaire investigated teachers' understanding of impairment. 06 out of 10 said to be impaired means to be disabled in GTHS Maroua for question 3 while 07 said to be impaired means to be rendered less effective for question 4. In GHS Maroua-Domayo 01 out of 09 said to be impaired means to be disabled while 06 said to be impaired means to be rendered less effective. The responses given by the teachers point to the fact that a handful of teachers think that to be impaired means to be disabled and thus will never think of learners with minor deficits and thus exclude them while planning their lessons and during teaching thereby not achieving their learning outcome and failing in enhancing development.

Question 5 questioned teachers' understanding of background in relation to language teaching. For a handful of them (11 out of 19), background in relation to language teaching is limited to linguistic background. Meanwhile background covers, culture, social, economic, linguistic, political, religion, family, community etc. The fact that most of them are not conscious of the role of social, cultural and religious standings have in language teaching is an indicator that learners will suffer from deficit because of their socio-cultural background and would not be considered during the teaching and learning process.

Teachers' Identification of Learners with Deficits in Class

Question 6 to 14 of part two of the questionnaire asked informants to confirm or refute the existence of learners with various deficits and backgrounds in their current ELCs. The results have been summarized on table 2 below.

Table 2: Identification of learners with various backgrounds and deficits

Schools	Number of Q	Yes	No
GTHS Maroua	80	42	38
GHS Maroua-Domayo	72	50	22
Total	152	92	60
% scores	100%	60.52%	39.48%

To get the total number of responses in GTHS Maroua, the number of questions (Q 7 to 14= 8) was multiplied by the number of informants (10) making a total of 80. In GHS Maroua-Domayo, the number of questions (Q 7 to 14= 8) was multiplied by the number of informants (09) making a total of 72. Results show that 60.52% of the teachers identified various types of learners with different background and impairment in their language classes. Figure 1 below captures the situation.

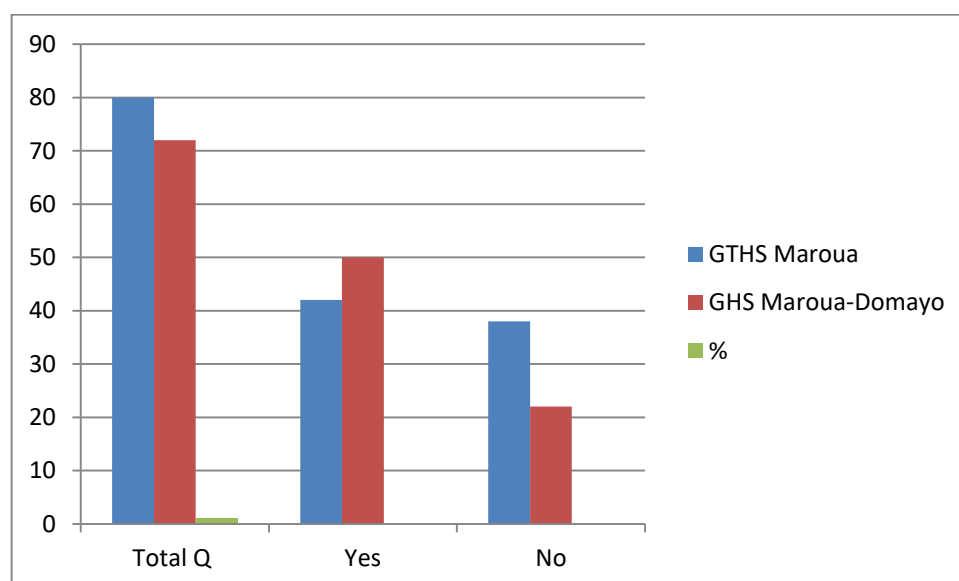


Figure 1: Existence of learners with various deficits in class

In GTHS Maroua, out of the 10 teachers, 07 indicated that they have students with visual, hearing, speech, action, understanding, attention and participation deficits. In GHS Maroua-Domayo, the 05 out of 09 teachers attest having impaired students by identified various types of deficit that their students exercise in class.

The results shows that majority of students in ELCs come from various background and suffer from one deficit to another make training on empathic teaching and differentiation paramount to our Cameroonian ELTs for the achievement of better learning outcome, peace and development. It is important to note that the results is a pointer that some teachers do not know that there are minor impairments that learners have which warrants their attention during teaching which deserves differentiation while teaching. This means that such teachers do not think about such learners while preparing their lessons, selecting instructional material and teaching. Such behaviour by teachers does not give room for achievement of learning outcomes and thus hamper development of students with deficit and thus responsible for underachievement in language teaching. The above findings lead us to results and discussion ETP by ELTs in class.

Affective Empathic Classroom Practices by English Language Teachers

Teachers' empathic behaviour, whether cognitive or affective; help language teachers to progress together with their learners during their language lessons and this is peace and satisfaction for a teacher. It makes learners to feel a sense of belonging and renders teaching inclusive. There are several empathic practices that ELTs can adopt for greater achievement of learning outcomes and development. Part three of the teachers' questionnaire investigated empathic behaviour by language teachers as they were asked to scale their classroom emphatic practices from 5-1 representing always, usually, sometimes, seldom and never respectively. The practices had to do with the following:

- Carrying out regular diagnosis to know learners and to remembering the different types of learners when planning lessons, designing materials and giving tasks.
- Varying method, material, task, example and assessment to suit learners with deficit.
- Preparing alternative material, task, example and assessment to accommodate learners with deficit.
- Giving more time and attention to impaired learners.
- Encouraging cooperative learning through mix ability groupings.
- Building language communities in the classroom.

The results were summarily calculated per scale and reported on table 3 below.

Table 3: Emphatic classroom practices by teachers

School	Total	5. Always	4. Usually	3. Sometimes	2. Seldom	1. Never
GTHS Maroua	240	30	15	39	45	111
GHS Maroua-Domayo	216	27	15	35	66	73
Total	456	57	30	74	111	184

To get the total number of responses in GTHS Maroua, the number of informants (10) was multiplied by the number of questions (24) making a total of 240. In GHS Maroua-Domayo, it was the number of informants (09) times the number of questions (24) making a total of 216 while $240 + 216 = 456$ gives the total responses for the two schools. If one focuses on the total figures on the table above, the results show that only 57 out of 456 responses selected always, 30 usually, 74 sometimes while 111 said seldom and 184 opted for never. To better appreciate the situation, the five scales on table 3 above has been reduced to three with always and usually united as one, sometimes standing alone while seldom and never also united as one. Figure 2 below depicts the situation.

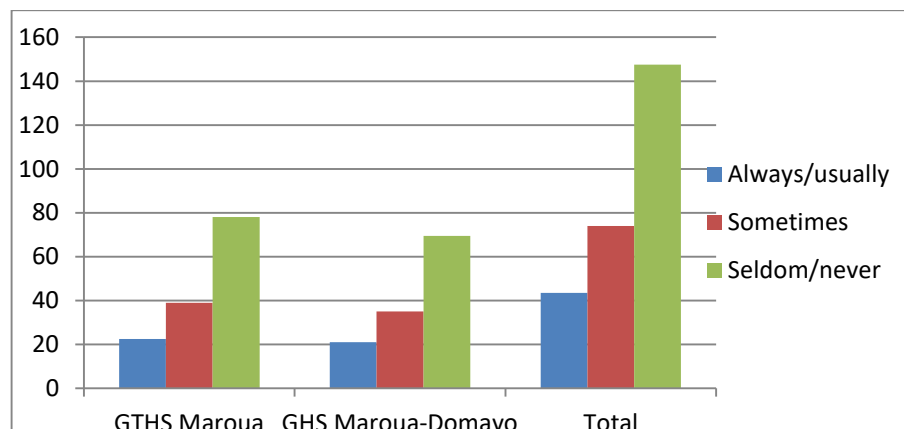


Figure 2: Scale of empathic practices in class

If one spotlights the total on the figure, you will notice that an extremely high number 147.5 ($295 \div 2$) of answers were seldom/never, barely 74 opted for sometimes while an exceptionally low number 43.5 ($87 \div 2$) selected always/usually. The findings show that majority of ELTs seldom/never adopt empathic classroom practices during their ELCs. It presupposes that an exceptionally high number them do not frequently show cognitive and affective concern to learners during language teaching is a pointer to the fact that many students feel lonely and excluded in class and as such, will acquire very little knowledge thereby leading to underachievement, underdevelopment and the absence of peace.

Implication to Research and Practice

The results from this study are implicational to classroom based research and policy decision on English Language Teaching in Cameroon. While reading literature on the topic, I found out that there is no previous study carried out on empathic practices by teachers in Cameroon and thus, this study will open the way for further research on this area which seems to be neglected by researchers on classroom based research.

Another finding shows that teachers in Cameroon are not trained on empathy and differentiation strategies in the classroom and thus, cannot fully put it to practice mannerisms of empathy which implicates the ministries in charge of education to step up teachers training through organisation of workshops on empathy and differentiation to arm them with character traits which are empathic for better achievement of learning outcome and development. The above finding further incriminates teachers training

colleges who are advised to expand their pedagogic course content to include issues on empathic practices, and differentiation.

Further discovery shows that majority of ELTs hardly adopt cognitive and affective empathic practices during ELCs thereby excluding learners with various backgrounds and deficits. This convicts ELTS. While expecting the ministries of education to organise workshops, language teachers should strive to know more on the subject matter and adopt classroom behaviours that are in line with them. Some of them are given below:

- Teachers should know that the “how” is as “important” as the “what”. Hence, the teaching-learning approaches that are compatible with empathy are holistic, participatory, cooperative, experiential and humanist.
- Holistic education does not confine itself to the parameters of facts and concepts. Instead, it promotes cognitive, affective and behavioural goals of learning. Often, the focus of learning is the transmission of concepts meanwhile it covers the building of concern and the development of the values of empathy, compassion, hope and social responsibility. Harris and Morrison (2003) call it the development of moral sensivity culminating in the building of the capacity of the learners to care for others. It is the call to action beginning with the decision to change personal mindsets and attitudes and doing something concrete about the other person.
- Participatory approach is another empathic strategy that teachers should use in a language classroom. It is about allowing learners to inquire, share, be democratic and collaborate in class. It allows learners to engage in dialogue with the teacher or with their co-learners. In participatory learning, teacher acts more as a facilitator rather than an authority figure. Even teachers have definite stands on issues; they should encourage students to articulate their own perspectives before inviting them to take appropriate action on the issues discussed. Participatory approach also means veering away from the traditional indoctrination style. The observance of democratic processes in the classrooms can contribute to the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for democratic citizenship (Harris and Morrison, 2003).
- Another empathic technique important in a language classroom is encouraging cooperative learning. It is giving opportunities for participants to work together and learn, rather than compete with each other. Cooperative learning, aside from increasing motivation to learn, improves relations among student; challenges individualism; and lessens divisiveness and feelings of prejudice. It reverses feelings of alienation and isolation and promotes more positive attitudes. In a cooperative classroom, students learn to rely on each other, and the success of learning activities depends upon the contributions of each one (Harris and Morrison, 2003). Many of the problems of unachievable learning outcomes ELTs encounter today in the language classroom can be solved if people cooperate. If students experience cooperative processes in the classroom, such habit will motivate them to learn and thus reducing the rate of underachievement of learning outcomes.
- ELTs should start building classroom communities in their classes from the start of classes by carrying out investigations on the different background of learners, their learning deficits and their preferably learning and evaluation style so as to remember they while planning classes, designing materials, teaching and assessments. Building a

humanistic classroom is showing empathy to learners. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow are proponents of a type of education that is humanist. A humanist classroom emphasizes the social, personal and the affective growth of all the learners. In a humanistic classroom, individuals are accepted for what they are. It develops the notions of the self to promote a sense of self –esteem. It sends the message that all are valuable and gifted. McKinney (2017) and McGinnis et al (1984) hold that without a positive self concept or self-image, no one takes a stand, ‘goes public,’ or works for change. He also posits that the more aware students are aware of their giftedness, the more willing they become to share their gift with others. Teachers in a humanist classroom are empathetic and affirming. They encourage care and respect for each other in the classroom. They also encourage sensitivity to diversity in the classroom. Such approach will help breed in learners, the seeds of love and compassion-values that are necessary in development.

- Given that one key manner of showing empathy to students during language classes is inclusive teaching, the general educator's attitude and willingness to accommodate students with disabilities is showing concern for such category of learners. The issue of inclusion tends to be more demanding due to the disproportionate number of students identified with special needs in the target schools corroborating particularly the diagnoses of mental retardation and emotional disturbance as deficits by Patton & Townsend (1999) and Gardner (2001).
- Mix ability Pair shares and group tasks is another way of showing empathy to the other students in ELCs. Proponents of empathy suggest that pair task provides children with special need an opportunity to learn by example from non-disabled peers. Since schools are a social arena, empathy allows exceptional learners to be a part of their school community and identify with peers from whom they would otherwise have been segregated (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2004). It allows students with deficits more opportunity for social acceptance and friendships, in addition to the benefits of higher learning (Salend & Duhaney (1999). Vaughn, Elbaun, Schumm, & Hughes (1998) and Freeman & Aikin, (2000) found that students with learning disabilities made significant gains on peer ratings of acceptance and overall friendship quality after being placed in mix ability groupings.

Many other strategies like re-dos, differentiation, monitoring learners and getting appropriate feedback through inclusive tasks are important for teachers to attain their objectives.

CONCLUSION

All in all, this study that sets out to investigate the use of empathic practices by ELTs in Maroua as a way of enhancing better learning outcomes and negotiating peace; has endeavoured to justify the following:

- ELTs have never participated in workshops on empathy and differentiation teaching techniques.
- ELTs are not cognisance of the different background of students and that majority of students suffer from various impairments in their language classes and therefore fail to often think about such category of learners while planning language lessons, designing material, assigning tasks and teaching.

- ELTs do not often adopt cognitive and effective empathic practices during their classes which are detrimental in achieving better learning goals and negotiating peace. The above justifications go further to confirm that ELTs cannot achieve better learning outcomes and peace in teaching because they are not apt in using empathic practices that involve majority of students during teaching in their ELCs and thus, responsible for underdevelopment in language learning. It is hoped that the findings, recommendations and the conclusions arrived at in this study will help to give a face-lift in ELTs classroom practices for better achievement of learning goals and negotiate peace. More importantly, the findings will hopefully push further research actions and enhance policy decision on English language teachers training in Cameroon.

Future Research

Given that the area of empathy and teaching is under exploited by researchers in Cameroon, it will be interesting if other disciplines carryout research on empathy and its pedagogic implication. Given that it is common today in Cameroon to hear that a student has stab a teacher in the classroom, further research can be done on empathic behaviour by teachers and its role in minimizing tension and vandalism in the classroom. Since finding from this current study shows that teachers in Cameroon are no trained on differentiation, it can be interesting for another study to be carried out to investigate inclusive teaching strategies by teachers and its impact on classroom participation.

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Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear Respondent:

This questionnaire is prepared to illicit data for an enquiry on '**Empathy as a peace negotiating strategy in a language classroom: The case of some secondary schools in Cameroon**'. Specifically it is intended to study how language teachers negotiate peace in their language classroom through the use of empathy strategies to achieve better outcomes.

The genuine responses provided in this questionnaire are confidential and will be used only for research purpose. There is need for you to provide genuine information in the questionnaire as it will contribute a lot to the successful completion of this study. You do not need to write your name.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

PART ONE

Please put a tick mark in the appropriate box which represents your response and by writing the necessary information.

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Current academic status: DIPES, B.A., above B.A., A.L., below A.L.
3. Secondary school affiliated to:
4. How many classes do you teach currently?.....
5. Number of students in one class (average).....

PART TWO

Please put a tick mark in the appropriate option which represents your response.

No.	Questions	Yes	NO
1	Have you got any training on empathic strategies in teaching?	Yes	NO
2	Have you got any training on differentiation before?	Yes	NO
3	To be impaired means to be disabled.	Yes	NO
4	To be impaired means to be rendered less effective.	Yes	NO
5	Background in relation to language teaching is limited to linguistics.	Yes	NO
6	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with sight deficit?	Yes	NO
7	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with hearing deficit?	Yes	NO
8	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with reading deficit?	Yes	NO
9	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with speech deficit?	Yes	NO
10	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with action deficit?	Yes	NO
11	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with understanding deficit?	Yes	NO
12	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with attention deficit?	Yes	NO
13	Have you ever taught in a class where you have some students with participation deficit?	Yes	NO
14	Have you ever taught in a class where you have students from various backgrounds?	Yes	NO

PART THREE

For each of the statements below, please indicate the extent of your **agreement** or **disagreement** by putting a tick mark in the most appropriate answer box. Your choice should be based on your actual experience of teaching English at the moment.

The response scale is as follows:

5.Always 4.Usually 3.Sometimes 2.Seldom 1.Never

No .	Statements(practice) Scale	5	4	3	2	1
1	When I plan a lesson, I consider the needs of impaired students in my class.	5	4	3	2	1
2	When I teach I always consider the presence of impaired students in class.	5	4	3	2	1
3	I give available materials to impaired students to make them perform equally with other students.	5	4	3	2	1
4	I carry out regular diagnosis of students in my class in order to plan on how to give them concern during my classes.	5	4	3	2	1
5	I devote more of my time to support impaired students.	5	4	3	2	1
6	I closely follow-up the participation of impaired students in class.	5	4	3	2	1
7	I regularly assess impaired students differently during my classes.	5	4	3	2	1
8	I vary teaching material to accommodate impaired students' needs. For example using written descriptions instead of pictures.	5	4	3	2	1
9	I vary assignments based on the category of learners I have in class.	5	4	3	2	1
10	. I communicate with parents and concerned bodies about the progress of students.	5	4	3	2	1
11	. I encourage cooperative learning through pair/group exercises to make all students support each other.	5	4	3	2	1
12	I allow low vision students to sit in front.	5	4	3	2	1
13	. I use large font while writing on the chalkboard.	5	4	3	2	1
14	I assign sighted students to help visually impaired students do different activities in class.	5	4	3	2	1

15	I prepare alternative assignments/ activities to make impaired students work better.	5	4	3	2	1
16	I prepare alternative assessments/exams taking into consideration impaired students.	5	4	3	2	1
17	I read what I have written on the board while teaching.	5	4	3	2	1
18	I adopt suitable methods that reach out to learners with different disabilities.	5	4	3	2	1
19	I make sure that there is an atmosphere free of stigma and discrimination in my class.	5	4	3	2	1
20	I use multi sensory approach while teaching.	5	4	3	2	1
21	I use different concrete examples to facilitate the way impaired students understand the concept.	5	4	3	2	1
22	I build language classroom community from my first day in class.	5	4	3	2	1
23	I take time to know my students on a personal level.	5	4	3	2	1
24	I build trust with my students in my classroom.	5	4	3	2	1