

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE FUNCTIONS OF TURKISH PROVERBS

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As widespread products of folk culture, proverbs help people realize and interpret both their own and others' emotions. In this sense, they guide how people transform acquired knowledge into behavior. This function of proverbs is explained in terms of emotional intelligence. Turkish proverbs appear to be an extremely rich source in this respect. I therefore examined them using Goleman's (1995) model of emotional intelligence. Data were collected using two Turkish dictionaries and the findings were analyzed using semantic content analysis. I explored whether or not and how proverbs improve the mental abilities that form emotional intelligence. The effects of the emotional functions of Turkish proverbs on personal and social life are discussed.

*Keywords:* proverbs, emotional intelligence, Turkish proverbs, emotional intelligence competencies.

Proverbs emerge from a common mind within a community and have inter-generational mobility. Proverbs can be accepted as the literary product of human concerns and sensitivities. They have grown out of the practicality of life. They come to form part of a culture through language; appearing meaningful to the culture in which they originated and being transferred among the people who share this culture. *Proverbs are short and laconic utterances adopted by people, they reflect ancestral estimations based on feelings and observations and give advice in a stereotyped way* (Püsküllüoğlu, 1995, p. 7). Albayrak (2009) has defined *proverbs* as “*the anonymous, short and laconic utterances that reflect our ancestors' sentiments, which were rooted in long practices and observations, in the form of advice or statement*” (p. 3). Both definitions emphasize the

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following characteristics: depending on experience and observation; expressing advice or making a statement, being firm, and having anonymity. Dundes (1975) identified the most functional definition of *proverbs* as “*summing up a situation or recommending a course of action*” (p. 45).

A significant portion of a community’s accumulated experience is conveyed by proverbs. Onan (2011) considers *proverbs* to be a *fusion of interactions among the concepts of culture, language, and cosmogony that go back to ancient times*. Kurt (1991) notes that proverbs play an important part in representing public life, because they reflect people’s refined experiences. Mieder (2007) likens a proverb to a horse that is used to discover a truth when it has disappeared.

The aim in proverbs is not to teach knowledge or meaning. Rather, proverbs form an experience connected with the meaning they transfer. Their way of creating an experience is akin to creating a metaphorical meaning that depends on associations; thus providing the formation of images in the mind and creating an experience that one can compare with the situation one finds oneself in or a situation one might come across.

The metaphorical experiences, based on associations formed by proverbs, cognitively improve the individual through interaction with the culture in which he/she lives. This can be related to the experience that Piaget (as cited in Senemoglu, 2012) considered among the principles of cognitive development when he stated that experience is an effective method of acquiring cognitive development at all stages. It also explains why adolescents require maturity and interaction with his or her environment in order to acquire the qualities of the abstract stage (Senemoglu, 2012).

Meaning construction via proverbs coincides with the principles of Bandura’s (1976, 1986) social learning theory. Proverbs can play a vital role in realizing the forethought capability and self-regulatory capability of social learning theory.

Proverbs also guide the emotional needs of a community. *Emotion* is defined as *a fluctuation or movement of mind, feeling, and passion; an intense or stimulated mental state; and a feeling and its associated thoughts encompassing psychological as well as physiological states and subsequent behavior* (Goleman, 1995). Emotions are among human characteristics that have the function of setting one in motion as well as being a medium of communication. In this respect, “proverbs resemble coroner judges and psychologists who are able to understand others’ emotions by penetrating into them and to disclose one’s most unseen emotions by observing one’s personality plainly” (Kurt, 1991, p. 5).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) first defined the term *emotional intelligence* as “*being able to observe and arrange one’s own and others’ emotions and use them as a guide for thoughts and actions*”. This term was popularized by Goleman (1995). Being aware of oneself, controlling one’s feelings and being able to construe others’ feelings are all abilities related to emotional intelligence.

According to Goleman (1995), individuals who have well-developed emotional abilities, can acquire mental habits that will support their own productivity by allowing them to lead more satisfying and effective lives. These mental habits help individuals to lead a life without problems. Indirectly, emotional intelligence makes a favorable contribution to academic success.

Goleman (1995) argues that a high intelligence quotient (IQ) level does not ensure wealth, respect, or happiness; focusing on academic skills means that schools and culture ignore a set of personal qualities that might have a crucial role in determining one's future. Furthermore, Goleman points out that academic intelligence almost never brings about preparedness for the changes and opportunities one might encounter in life. According to Goleman, emotional ability is a meta-ability. In other words, it helps determine how well individuals can make use of their other abilities together with their innate intelligence.

My aim in this study was to determine how emotional intelligence (which emphasizes individual and social abilities and influences whether or not one leads a successful and happy life, both individually and in harmony with one's community) occurs in Turkish proverbs. In this paper, I have also discussed what kind of contribution proverbs can make to developing abilities related to emotional intelligence.

## Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence consists of a set of mental abilities that demonstrate personal and social characteristics. Salovey and Gardner (2005) categorized these abilities as self-consciousness, ability to control emotions, self-stimulation, sympathy, and ability in managing a relationship. Goleman (1995) used these abilities as a model of emotional intelligence and examined each one separately. The abilities related to emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995, 2000; Salovey & Grewal, 2005; Yeşilyaprak, 2001) analyzed in this paper were as follows.

### Self-consciousness

*Self-consciousness* is defined as *being aware of oneself and one's feelings, realizing one's feelings when they come into being, and being aware of one's emotions in every moment of life, evaluating oneself realistically, and having a feeling of self-confidence*. It can also be described as *knowing what others feel and being able to use that knowledge to guide one's decisions, having a realistic assessment of one's abilities, and having a sense of self-confidence that is based on good foundations* (Goleman, 2000).

Subcategories of self-consciousness are as follows:

**Emotional awareness:** *Knowing oneself and one's feelings and realizing the consequences of these feelings.*

**Evaluating oneself realistically:** *Knowing one's strengths and weaknesses as well as one's ability to determine emotional boundaries.*

**Self-confidence:** *Believing in one's own value and having confidence in one's abilities.*

### **Controlling Emotions**

*Controlling emotions can be defined as the ability to conduct one's feelings and avoid emotional depression (anxiety, pessimism, touchiness etc.), and the ability to suspend the satisfaction of a pleasure for the sake of the intended aim/s. Goleman (1995) additionally defined this quality of emotional intelligence as controlling emotions in such a way as to expedite, not slacken, the duties we have, or getting oneself out of an emotional jam. Subcategories of controlling emotions are as follows:*

**Self-control:** *Ability to control one's inner emotions and impulses.*

**Equilibrium and congruity:** *Ability to stabilize the equilibrium between emotions and mind, and ability to accommodate oneself to new situations.*

### **Self-stimulation**

*Self-stimulation can be defined as motivating oneself with specific intentions; having stability, determination, and entrepreneurship. Goleman (1995) defined this emotional ability as a faculty of putting our deepest choices into action, which is functional in guiding and directing us towards our aims, in making us use initiative, struggle for development, and persevere against failures and feeling of frustration.*

Subcategories of self-stimulation are as follows:

**Being successful:** *The struggle to be perfect and the intention to improve upon one's previous state.*

**Entrepreneurship:** *Feeling ready for the opportunities that one encounters and being disposed to take advantage of such opportunities.*

**State of flux and optimism:** *Standing up to difficulties and being determined and insistent.*

### **Empathy**

*Empathy can be defined as understanding what others feel and the ability to see others' perspectives. Goleman (1995) adds that empathy involves establishing good relations with people who are different from each other, and being able to harmonize with them.*

Subcategories of empathy are as follows:

**Understanding others:** *Correctly understanding people around oneself (depending on both verbal and nonverbal indications, including body language) and expressing one's understanding.*

**Being serviceable:** *Taking steps to satisfy the feelings and needs of other people after comprehending their needs and feelings.*

### **Social Abilities**

*Social abilities are defined as constructing and sustaining effective interpersonal relationships and having the ability to communicate (effective listening and persuasion), perceiving social conditions and connection of relations correctly, and having a tendency to cooperate or work as part of a team.*

Subcategories of social abilities are as follows:

**Effective communication and persuasion:** *Being able to establish interpersonal relationships by acquiring the ability to listen effectively and making use of persuasive techniques.*

**Comprehending social connections and problem solving:** *Detecting social connections in one's community and being able to solve the problems around oneself.*

**Coordination and team work:** *Working with other people with common purposes in mind and making a favorable contribution in every aspect of group work.*

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

I used the phenomenological method (a qualitative approach), which Creswell (1998) described as:

Researchers' search for essentials, invariant structure (or essence) or the central underlying meaning of the experience and emphasize the intentionality of consciousness where experiences contain both the outward appearance and inward consciousness based on memory, image, and meaning (p. 52).

### **Data Collection**

I collected data by reviewing existing documents (Miles & Huberman, 2000). As the dictionaries that were produced by Yurtbası (1994) and Albayrak (2009) constitute the most comprehensive Turkish dictionaries available, they were selected as samples. Yurtbası (1994) classified Turkish proverbs according to 172 themes. Albayrak constructed his dictionary by revising all the preceding studies on Turkish proverbs and he listed 18,834 different proverbs in alphabetical order. The proverbs in these dictionaries related to emotional intelligence were scanned and experts then made a selection of the most representative ones.

### Data Analysis

I used semantic content analysis to analyze and interpret the data. Semantic content analysis involves forming categories in order to reveal the essential subject domains and specific subdomains (Tavşancil & Aslan, 2001). In this paper, I used the categories in Goleman's (1995) model of emotional intelligence, and the emotional subcomponents that constitute each main category as subcategories.

### Reliability of the Study

To ensure effectiveness and reliability of the investigation, I consulted two experts working in the field of education. Independently of each other, I and each of the two experts chose five different proverbs for each category and arranged them in descending order from those that fitted in the category best to those that had the worst fit. For each of the categories my choices and those of the experts were compared and their congruity was considered. The congruity between my choices and those of the first expert was 82%, and the congruity between my choices and those of the second expert was 74%. In both cases, the congruity was over 70%, which shows that the analysis of the data is reliable (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

## Results

In this study, I treated basic personal and social capacities of emotional intelligence as the main categories; the components of these capacities constituted the subcategories. Turkish proverbs were examined within this framework and three proverbs were chosen for each subcategory. There were some other proverbs within the categories that were used in assessment and interpretation, but that are not shown in the tables.

### Self-consciousness

Proverbs that refer to self-consciousness and its subcategories are shown in Table 1.

All proverbs were taken from the works referred to above. The proverb "It is winter when it snows on little hills, it is better when you realize what is going on around you" (alçacık dağlara kar yağsa kış değil mi, kişi kendi hâlini bilse hoş değil mi), which is in the category of emotional awareness, comprises two propositions. The first proposition states that laying a heavy burden on weak or powerless people would be deadly, and the second that knowing oneself and one's own circumstances are pivotal. In the proverb "Whoever knows himself or herself wears silken dresses; whoever grows away from him or herself is trodden under foot" (benliğini bilen, bürümcekler bürünür; benliğini bilmeyen,

Table 1. Turkish Proverbs Referring to the Category of Self-consciousness

PERSONAL		SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS	
Emotional awareness	Knowing oneself and one's feelings and realizing the consequences that these feelings bring about.	It is winter when it snows on little hills, it is better when you realize what is going on around you. Whoever knows himself or herself wears silken dresses; whoever grows away from himself or herself is trodden under foot. When anger comes, eyes redden; when anger goes, face reddens.	
Realistic self-assessment	Knowing one's strengths and weaknesses and the ability to determine one's emotional boundaries.	Whoever admits weaknesses demonstrates competence. Whatever the way you look in the mirror, in that way you see your face. When a camel was told that its neck seemed uneven, it said that no part of it seemed even in practice.	
Self-confidence	Believing in one's own value and having faith in one's abilities.	He whose honey is sweeter, his bees fly from Baghdad. What makes a knife sharp is its fluid, what makes a man beloved is his temperament. Still waters run deep.	

ayakaltında sürünür), the benefits one might gain by knowing oneself and the difficulties one might encounter by not knowing oneself are expressed by example in a double-jointed proposition. The proverb “When anger comes, eyes redden; when anger goes, face reddens” (öfke gelir göz kızarır, öfke gider yüz kızarır) depicts physical symptoms of the feeling of anger, and suggests that one might be in a predicament just after feeling angry.

The proverbs “Whoever admits weaknesses demonstrates competence” (aczini itiraf eden ehlini/ehliyetini ispat eder) and “When a camel was told that its neck seemed uneven, it replied that no part of it seemed even in practice” (deveye boynun eğri demişler, nerem doğru demiş) are in the category of realistic self-assessment. They express the idea that one should come to realize one’s weaknesses. Being aware of one’s weaknesses is important if one is to lead one’s life realistically. The proverb “In what way you look in the mirror, in that way you see your face” (aynaya nasıl bakarsan yüzünü öyle görürsün) might be taken to signify that if you do someone a favor, you will find someone who is willing to do you a favor. It might also be taken to signify that the experiences we acquire in life are the results of our own choices.

Kurt (1991, p. 73) points out that one is expected to assess oneself not as one desires to be, but as one actually is. He notes that the proverbs “There is no wisdom as valuable as knowing one’s shortcomings” (kişi noksanını bilmek gibi arif olmaz) and “Boasting people lower their heads in the end” (övünge adam en sonunda önüne bakar) reflect this expectation. In these proverbs, knowing one’s shortcomings is described as wisdom, and unjustified boasting is taken to culminate in a feeling of embarrassment.

Tanrikulu (2011) admits that there are some proverbs in Turkish culture that emphasize the fact that one can only control one’s own behavior and one should therefore focus on oneself, instead of focusing on others’ problems. In this regard, he presents the following proverbs as examples: “He is one who catches sight of the chaff in others’ eyes, but who does not see the rods in his own eyes” (elin gözündeki çöpü görür, kendi gözündeki merteği görmez); “He is one who attributes blindness to the unfamiliar, but who does not notice his own humpback” (ellere körlük verir, kendi kamburuna bakmaz); “Prick a needle in yourself before pricking a packing needle in others” (iğneyi evvel kendine sok, sonra çuvaldızı başkasına); and “He tells of others’ momentary failings while he is unaware of his own lasting failures” (kendi ayıbını görmez de elin ayıbını söyler.)

The proverb “What makes a knife sharp is its fluid, what makes a man beloved is his temperament” (bıçağı kestiren kendi suyu, insanı sevdiren kendi huyu) is in the category of self-confidence, and expresses the idea that one’s value is connected with one’s personal characteristics. The proverb “Still waters run deep” (derin sular durgun olur) expresses the idea that sophisticated people are dignified and tranquil. Dignity and tranquility are related to one’s ability to have

control over one's feelings. The proverb "He whose honey is sweeter, his bees fly from Baghdad" (balı tatlı olanın, sineği Bağdat'tan gelir) expresses the idea that when one's characteristics are favorable, one is met with approval; however, this proverb might also be interpreted according to its literal meaning.

### Controlling Emotions

The proverbs specified for this category are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Turkish Proverbs Referring to the Category of Controlling Emotions*

PERSONAL ABILITY IN CONTROLLING EMOTIONS	Self-control	Ability to control one's inner emotions and impulses.	When one is patient, the wind dwells at one's hands.
			Whoever straightens up with anger, sits down with some loss.
			A camel loses its ears while it is searching for horns.
	Equilibrium and harmony	Ability to balance mind and emotions as well as the ability to adapt oneself to new situations.	One is required both to know how to lament at a funeral home and rejoice at a wedding house.
			You should carry out a task after thinking long and hard so that you do not regret afterwards.
			Wise thinks without saying, and unwise says without thinking.

The proverb "When one is patient, the wind dwells at one's hands" (kişi sabırlı olunca, avucunda yel durur) is in the category of self-control. It calls attention to the importance of self-control in overcoming difficulties. The proverb "A camel loses its ears while it is searching for horns" (deve boynuz ararken kulaktan olmuş) expresses the idea that impulses might harm one when they are not controlled. The results of a lack of emotional control are exposed by the proverb "Whosoever straightens up with anger, sits down with some loss" (öfke ile kalkan, ziyan ile [zarar ile] oturur). Emotional awareness is required for controlling emotions. An individual who is unaware of his or her own emotional state cannot control his or her emotions.

As an emotional state, anger has a negative value in Turkish proverbs. There are other proverbs that emphasize the idea that feelings of anger might cause harm, and so require control: "Anger is delightful but it has painful consequences" (öfke tatlıdır amma, sonu çok acıdır) and "The scrip of the angry beggar remains empty" (öfkeli dilencinin torbası boş kalır.) The proverb "One who is blinded by anger throws mud at one's dearest" (gözü kararan en sevdiğini karalar) also attracts attention. The proverbs "Anger has no reason" (öfkede akıl olmaz) and "When anger comes in, reason goes out" (öfke gelince akıl gider) indicate that

anger is a lack of emotional control and that it might be an obstacle in reasoning. The feeling of anger is trivialized in the proverb “One who has indignation is always a coward” (gazap olan daima korkaktır.)

The proverb “One is required both to know how to lament at a funeral home and rejoice at a wedding house” (ölü evinde ağlamayı, düğün evinde gülmeyi [oyynamayı] bilmeli) serves as a warning in the matter of displaying emotional states appropriate to the situation. The proverbs “You should carry out a task after thinking long and hard so that you have no regrets afterwards” (düşüne düşünme görmeli [bir] işi, sonra pişman olmamalı kişi) and “Wise thinks without saying, and unwise says without thinking” (akıllı söylemeden düşündür, akılsız düşünmeden söyler) express the idea that one’s reason should balance one’s emotions, otherwise one might fall into deeper emotional distress or depression.

### Self-stimulation

Table 3 shows the proverbs that refer to the category of motivation.

Table 3. *Turkish Proverbs Referring to Self-Stimulation*

PERSONAL SELF-STIMULATION- MOTIVATION	Being success-oriented	Struggling to improve oneself in order to get better.	When one is patient, the wind dwells at one’s hands.
			Whoever straightens up with anger, sits down with some loss.
			A camel loses its ears while it is searching for horns.
	Entrepreneurship	Feeling ready for the opportunities that one encounters, and being willing to utilize the opportunities.	One is required both to know how to lament at a funeral home and rejoice at a wedding house.
			You should carry out a task after thinking long and hard so that you do not regret afterwards.
			Wise thinks without saying, and unwise says without thinking.
	State of flux and optimism	Standing against difficulties and being determined and self-assertive.	Once I have leapt forward, thence I never backtrack.
			When there is no definitive presumption of death, there is a hope of revival.
			Where there is an activity, there is productivity.

The proverb “If you have a toothache, have your tooth out and relax; if your neighbor is an evildoer, move to another house and heave a sigh of relief” (dişin ağrıyor, çek kurtul; komşun kötüdür, göç kurtul) is in the category of being

success-oriented. It expresses the idea that one should throw off an unfavorable situation that continues. The toothache mentioned in the proverb is a situation that constitutes a persistent dilemma for the individual. On the one hand, the toothache itself becomes unbearable, and on the other hand, having the tooth out seems scary. This situation resembles other real life situations where people find themselves in a quandary. The proverb warns that temporary solutions are not always beneficial.

The proverb “Every instance of much is composed of an instance of less” (her çok azdan olur) invites us to make a move and tells us that getting a new start is profitable. As for the proverb “For one who manages there are five offerings, for one who wins through there is a chief offering” (becerene beş kurban, başarıya baş kurban), it expresses the idea that someone who has succeeded against the odds in a business deserves more respect and compliments than does someone who just managed to conduct a business well.

The proverb “A fox that is hanging around is preferable to a lion that sleeps” (yatan aslandan gezen tilki yeğdir) refers to the category of entrepreneurship. This saying invites one to take a new step. Although the proverb “Wrought iron sparkles (wrought iron does not rust)” (işleyen demir ışıldar [işleyen demir pas tutmaz]) particularly stresses a healthy life, it might be taken to support having the quality of entrepreneurship in general, since it encourages working and acting. The proverb “What might be needed some day should be laid down when it is not needed” (gerekliyi gerekmez iken saklamalı) tells us that it is better for one to foresee something that might be useful in the future and to make use of it before it is too late.

State of flux and optimism signifies being in a state of continuous awareness and determination. In order to be successful, being in this emotional state, determination and pertinacity are required. The proverb “Once I have leapt forward, thence I never backtrack” (attım adımı ileri, dönmem bir daha geri) is remarkable in that it expresses a sense of determination. The proverb “When there is no definitive presumption of death, there is a hope of revival” (çıkmadık candan umut kesilmez) expresses the idea that one should never lose hope and optimism in difficult times. Lastly, the proverb “Where there is an activity, there is productivity” (nerede hareket, orada bereket) notes that one might reach success with the help of continuous activity.

### **Empathy**

Establishing and conducting firm relations based on reciprocal tolerance to other people in a social environment is connected with empathy. Those who have this ability are crucially important to a society, as they help society to continue living peacefully. Turkish proverbs that recommend empathy are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *Turkish Proverbs Referring to the Category of Empathy*

SOCIAL	UNDERSTANDING OTHERS' FEELINGS (EMPATHY)	Understanding humans	Understanding other people correctly (with reference to both verbal and nonverbal indications, including body language) and expressing one's understanding.	If the person to whom you are paying a visit is blind, keep your eyes closed while you are speaking to him.
				Prick your own body before plunging a packing needle into others.
				Act as if you were thirsty when you are close by one who is thirsty; act as if you were lame when you are close by one who is lame.
		Being service-oriented	Taking the appropriate steps to satisfy others' feelings and needs when one detects them.	Do not dig the hole deeper than your height; someday you might fall into it.
				I have resembled you in time, why don't you try to be like me someday.
				Be good towards others: if they do not understand, do not worry, God surely will appreciate.

Understanding humans is the key quality of those who have the ability to empathize. The proverb “If the person to whom you are paying a visit is blind, keep your eyes closed while you are speaking to him” (vardığın kişi [yer] kör ise, gözünün birini kırp da bak) appears in this category. The recommendation in this proverb is that we understand and appraise the people whom we have encountered in the new environment, and to react appropriately to them. The proverb “Prick your own body before plunging a packing needle into others” (iğneyi kendine, çuvaldızı başkasına batır) expresses the idea that one should not treat others in a way one does not want to be treated. An exaggerated empathy that borders on sympathy is expressed by the proverb “Act as if you were thirsty when you are close by one who is thirsty; act as if you were lame when you are close by one who is lame” (susayanla susak, aksayanla aksak).

Empathetic feelings can motivate a person to action in order to help another. The proverb “Be good to others: do not worry if they do not understand, God will surely appreciate” (iyilik yap denize at, balık bilmezse Halik bilir) expresses the idea that one should try to provide others with what they need without expecting a positive response, with reference to God's approval of one's favorable acts. The proverb “Do not dig the hole deeper than your height, some day you might fall into it” (çukuru boyunca kaz, belki kendin düşersin) expresses the idea that

one should treat others' business as if it were one's own. The proverb "I have resembled you in time, why don't you try to be like me some day" (ben oldum sencileyin, sen de olursun bencileyin) expresses the idea that one might have others' personal characteristics in time, and that one might someday experience what others are currently experiencing.

### Social Abilities

Social abilities are among the components of emotional intelligence. Turkish proverbs that are specified in the category of social abilities are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. *Turkish Proverbs Referring to the Category of Social Abilities*

SOCIAL	SOCIAL ABILITIES	Effective communication and persuasion	Constructing and sustaining effective interpersonal relations by acquiring the ability to communicate (e.g. effective listening).	As long as I do not see your face, I am not inclined to use up my voice.
				Ears fall into love earlier than the eyes.
				A good talk makes us listen; a bad talk makes us yawn.
		Understanding social nets and problem solving	Being able to detect the social connections in the society in which one lives and being able to solve the problems that arise in one's environment.	A good talk makes us listen; a bad talk makes us yawn.
				When you entertain a guest, serve up whatever you find in your kitchen, but not with a face of woe.
				A nearby neighbor is preferable to a distant brother.
		Inclination to coordination and team work	Working with others in the direction of realizing common aims, and making a positive contribution to group tasks.	A tree roars with its leaves.
				A single mouth sings just a few songs, but two mouths give a concert.
				No wall is composed of a single stone.

The proverb "As long as I do not see your face, I am not inclined to use up my voice" (görmeyince yüzünü, harcedemem sözüümü), is in the category of effective communication and persuasion, and expresses the idea that good communication requires a face-to-face interaction. Direct contact in a communication is extremely important in that it allows for eye contact, a reciprocal perception of facial expressions and gestures that are physical reflections of emotions. The proverbs "Ears fall into love earlier than the eyes" (gözden evvel, kulak âşık olur) and "A good talk makes us listen; a bad talk makes us yawn" (iyi söz, dinletir, kötü söz esnetir) describe how words should be influential in making others reach an agreement.

The proverb “Greet people before chatting with them” (evvel selâm, sonra kelâm) tells us how to start a communication with an emphasis on a social code of conduct. The proverb “When you entertain a guest, serve up whatever you find in your kitchen but not with a face of woe” (misafire karşı evini yık, yüzünü yıkma) describes what sort of behavior is required in social relations. As for the proverb “A nearby neighbor is preferable to a distant brother” (yakın komşu, uzak kardeşten iyidir), it informs us that the people with whom we have more frequent contact are more advantageous than those with whom we make infrequent contact.

The proverbs “A single mouth can sing a few songs, but two mouths can give a concert” (bir [tek] elin nesi var, iki elin sesi var) and “No wall is composed of a single stone” (tek taştan duvar olmaz) are in the category of coordination-teamwork. They emphasize social coordination by reminding us that individuals cannot overcome every difficult situation on their own. Lastly, the proverb “A tree roars with its leaves” (ağaç dalı ile gürler) tells us that one can be successful together with one’s family.

### Conclusion and Discussion

I explored components of emotional experience, such as self-consciousness, controlling emotions, self-stimulation, empathy, and social abilities. I found that Turkish proverbs provide a rich source for creating emotional intelligence, increasing personal empathy and developing emotional literacy.

Proverbs are among the effective tools for arranging daily life activities, especially with the help of their expressive power. They are multifunctional and flexible instruments in reasoning in daily life (Lauhakangas, 2007). Some Turkish proverbs, such as, “Whoever stands up with anger, sits down with a loss” (öfke ile kalkan zararla oturur) use emotions as concepts. Other proverbs, such as “Don’t burn a quilt because of the plea for it” (pire için yorgan yakar) and “Acrid vinegar would harm its own container” (keskin [sarp] sirke kabına zarar[dır]) refer to emotions. The general purpose in the characteristics of the proverbs described in this paper is to create an emotional consciousness and prevent over-emotional reactions. This feature of proverbs can be seen in different cultures. In Chinese culture, there are some proverbs that encourage people not to express emotions too directly or react too excessively (Zhong, 2008).

Goleman (1995) stated that a high IQ does not always bring success and happiness. People who have developed emotional abilities can live more satisfying and effective lives than can people who do not have developed emotional abilities; they can also acquire mental habits that will feed their productivity. Proverbs can play an important role in acquiring emotional abilities.

The fact that proverbs are encountered in daily life can often have a positive effect on academic success (Hoffman, 2009).

Proverbs were generally used in a society in which verbal expression was dominant. Their use is becoming more infrequent in modern societies in which verbal expression has become a secondary culture (Ong, 1982). The facilities and opportunities that are presented to people by each different culture are changing because of a changing social structure; this limits the transfer of proverbs to the next generation (Giddens, 2000). The obstacle of infrequent use preventing the passing on of proverbs can also negatively affect the acquisition and improvement of emotional abilities.

First language education is an appropriate base for transferring proverbs to the next generation. Students can learn proverbs as they occur naturally in the texts used in the process of language education and thus also improve their emotional abilities. Therefore, using the proverbs, which are suitable for developing emotional abilities, should be considered and this practice should be taken into consideration when preparing course books.

Future curricula researchers could investigate predictions about transferring proverbs to the next generations, and research could be conducted on course books for language education, exploring how often students encounter proverbs. However, further research about how these proverbs can develop emotional abilities should be conducted.

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