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Social-Emotional Learning in English Language Education:  
Mapping the Landscape and Reflecting on the Way Forward

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **Luis Javier Pentón Herrera**

Introduction to Social-Emotional Learning in English Language Education:  
Mapping the Landscape and Reflecting on the Way Forward . . . . . 5

## **Kathleen R. McGovern and Vahdat Yeganeh**

Devised Drama as Social-Emotional Learning . . . . . 19

## **Wafa Hiwari, Anwar Abdel Razeq and Luis Javier Pentón Herrera**

A New Frontier: Palestinian English Teachers' Experiences and Needs  
for Social-Emotional Learning Integration in EFL Classrooms . . . . . 43

## **Fares J. Karam and Eleni Oikonomidou**

Fostering Social-Emotional Learning during Resettlement:  
Learning with a Multilingual Refugee-Background Family . . . . . 67

## **Siobhan O' Brien, Mark Vicars and Jordan González**

Investigating Problems that Matter for Young People: Reauthoring Possibilities  
for Social-Emotional Learning in English Language Education . . . . . 89

## **Edward Rutledge and Marni Manegre**

An Emotionally Intelligent, Ecolinguistic Approach to Content and Language  
Integrated Learning . . . . . 109

## **Mohammed Elmeski and Adil Bentahar**

Exploring Social-Emotional Learning in EFL Pre-Service Teacher Preparation  
in Morocco: A Mixed-Method Study . . . . . 125

## **Anna Pereszlényi and Rita Divéki**

I Felt "Safe and Heard": Nurturing English Majors' Social-Emotional Skills  
through the Discussion of Controversial Issues in the Hungarian University  
Context . . . . . 151

## **Gilda Martínez-Alba**

Afterword: Building on Global Perspectives to Move Forward with SEL . . . . . 179

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## **Introduction to Social-Emotional Learning in English Language Education: Mapping the Landscape and Reflecting on the Way Forward**

### **Preamble**

How can educational systems develop physically and mentally healthy members of society? This question, albeit in different shapes and forms, has always been present in social and academic discourses around the world. This is evident in publications by philosophers and educators across various cultures and centuries. From the reflections on moral principles in Confucius's *Analects* in Ancient China (Confucius 1997) to Jan Amos Komenský's (also known as Comenius) advocacy for universal schooling, lifelong learning, and holistic approach to education across Europe in the 1600s (Comenius 1907), the concern for well-being as an interconnected element of learning transcends temporal and geographical boundaries. The continuum of this discussion advanced into the early 20th century with Maria Montessori in Italy, who emphasized the holistic development of the child (Montessori 1964), and was echoed in the United States by John Dewey's advocacy for experiential learning, which spotlighted a pedagogy that nurtured both the intellectual and emotional development of students (Dewey 1997). In a similar vein, Rabindranath Tagore in India, through his establishment of Santiniketan in the early 1900s, sought to create an educational environment that nurtured the mind, body, and spirit, emphasizing a harmonious relationship with nature as essential for learning (Tagore 1917).

In the mid-20th century, Dr. Ana Echegoyen de Cañizares advanced Cuban education by emphasizing the integration of civic and moral values in formal schooling. Her work highlighted the essential bond between family upbringing and classroom instruction in the holistic development of students (Aguayo Sánchez and Echegoyen de Cañizares 1938). Similarly, Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy in late 20th-century Brazil underscored the deeply intertwined connection between

students' social context and well-being in the process of education (Freire 1970). These educators, among many others worldwide, have contributed to a profound landscape of insights that underscores a universal quest: to craft educational systems that promote the holistic well-being of individuals, equipping them not solely with academic prowess but also with the emotional intellect to make constructive contributions to society. The endeavors and works of these pioneering philosophers and educators have laid a significant foundation for what we now recognize as social-emotional learning (SEL). Their collective insights predate and presage modern-day SEL practices, underpinning the critical integration of emotional well-being and educational attainment.

## 1. Introduction

I begin this Editorial with a preamble and a brief historical overview because, although SEL – as we know it and operationalize it today – was introduced in 1994 by Elias et al. (1997), the reality is that philosophers and educators have been proponents of education for a better world for centuries. The integration of the concepts *social* and *emotional* within educational frameworks is deeply rooted in history, reflecting a continuous effort to balance cognitive development with social and emotional growth. Positioned within research-based frameworks and approaches, SEL pragmatically applies these enduring philosophies in face-to-face and virtual spaces, both within and beyond school spaces (Kovats Sánchez et al. 2022; O'Conner et al. 2017). By aiming to equip students with the skills necessary for both academic and life success (International Commission on the Futures of Education 2021), SEL builds on the legacy of those who have advocated for a comprehensive approach to learning. It is this rich heritage that informs our current understanding and application of SEL, guiding our exploration of its transformative potential within English language education.

## 2. What is social-emotional learning?

SEL is a teaching approach that focuses on supporting the development of social-emotional skills that individuals need to be healthy, happy, successful, and responsible (Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba 2021). Although different definitions exist, throughout this thematic issue (TI), SEL is understood as the process by which individuals of any age develop and apply competencies to recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve beneficial goals, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle personal and interpersonal situations constructively. This means that SEL processes and applications are different in diverse contexts, depending on

the factors and population interacting with them. Also, throughout this TI, SEL is understood as an umbrella term for various strategies in English language education that support the social-emotional development of students and teachers, including but not limited to restorative practices (e.g. Pentón Herrera and McNair 2021), drama-based instruction (e.g. McGovern and Yeganeh this issue), and virtues and moral education (e.g. Karam 2021), among many others.

As explained by Pentón Herrera and Darragh (2024), it is not unusual for the terms *SEL frameworks*, *SEL competencies*, and *SEL activities* to be used interchangeably; however, they are distinct. *SEL frameworks* establish the structural blueprint that supports the embedding of social-emotional learning within educational contexts. They provide a foundational set of principles and guidelines for seamlessly incorporating SEL across teaching and school culture. For example, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) offers a well-regarded framework, and it is the most well-known framework around the world. *SEL competencies*, on the other hand, denote the precise skills and capacities targeted by teachers or institutions. These competencies are the focal points for SEL teaching efforts, aiming to cultivate qualities like resilience, empathy, and effective communication among students, which are crucial for their overall success and well-being. Lastly, *SEL activities* represent the practical, interactive strategies that educators employ to nurture these competencies within their students. Characterized by their engaging and reflective nature, these activities encourage students to practice SEL skills in real-life scenarios. Examples might range from group problem-solving challenges to expressive art projects, each designed to reinforce SEL learning objectives in a hands-on manner.

The visibility of SEL has become even more critical in education after the COVID-19 pandemic (Kardambikis and Donne 2022). This heightened focus is partly due to the realization that educational systems worldwide were (and are!) unprepared to fully equip individuals with the social-emotional skills essential for navigating the complexities of our current world – a landscape transformed by rapid technological advances, increasingly favored remote interactions, and ongoing global uncertainties. Practitioners of SEL understand that emotions are powerful drivers of actions and behaviors and exert “a substantial influence on the cognitive processes in humans, including perception, attention, learning, memory, reasoning, and problem solving” (Tyng et al. 2017, 1). Furthermore, we recognize the integral role of well-being in educational success, with evidence suggesting that both teachers’ and students’ well-being are closely linked to academic performance, motivation, and the enhanced ability to cope with stress (Hossain et al. 2023; Mercer and Gregersen 2020; Pentón Herrera et al. 2023). For this reason, advocates of SEL underscore the importance of fostering an educational environment that not only addresses intellectual growth but also prioritizes students’ and teachers’ social, emotional, and psychological health, thereby creating a more resilient and adaptive learning community (Cristóvão et al. 2017).

### 3. What social-emotional learning is not?

In the initial planning stages of this Editorial, the inclusion of a section delineating “what SEL is not” was not on my agenda. However, recent developments have underscored the importance of such clarification, given the prevalent misconceptions about SEL in our field. Upon disseminating the Call for Proposals for this TI in 2023, I received numerous submissions centered around researching emotions, emotion labor, identity, and other affective domains within English language teaching (ELT) and applied linguistics that have recently enjoyed a surge in scholarly interest. Additionally, a misunderstanding became evident in a recent dialogue with an editor from a leading journal in our field. This editor conflated an unrelated TI proposal I had developed with two colleagues – focusing on researching emotions in digital spaces – directly with this SEL TI, stating that both topics “are the same.” The editor’s response highlighted the existing confusion and emphasized the need for clearer distinctions within our community. Further, this particular encounter illustrates just one of several misconceptions: SEL is not about analyzing emotions or identities in isolation; it involves a holistic approach to teaching and learning. My experience with the proposals received for this TI, and my interaction with that journal editor are but two instances that exemplify the ongoing ambiguities surrounding SEL, a topic that, despite its increasing prominence, remains ripe for further exploration and elucidation (Pentón Herrera 2019 and 2020; Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba 2021).

It is imperative to clarify that, different from research exploring teachers’ and students’ emotions, identity, and other affective aspects of teaching and learning, SEL is distinctively centered on pedagogical approaches and strategies aimed at fostering social-emotional skills (with)in and beyond educational settings. SEL focuses on the implementation of structured, evidence-based methods that support students and teachers in developing competencies such as emotional regulation, identity affirmation, empathy, collaborative problem-solving, and ethical decision-making, to name a few. These competencies are crucial pillars for both personal well-being and a thriving educational atmosphere, thereby enhancing the overall outcomes for everyone involved (Osher et al. 2016; Pentón Herrera 2024). The focus on pedagogical practices is what makes SEL “too focused on teaching and instruction,” as a peer reviewer of a top-tier journal in our field pointed out after rejecting an action research study about SEL that I had submitted because it was “too practical.” Indeed, English teachers are highly aware of the importance of SEL in our lives inside and outside learning environments, but it is necessary for academic gatekeepers, who control the literature produced and allowed in our field, to also learn about it and recognize it.

My purpose in making the aforementioned points and sharing anecdotes in this section of the Editorial is to exhort the academic community to learn from and with SEL. Shifting our focus towards appreciating SEL in action offers a vital

lens through which we can observe and foster the development of competencies essential for navigating the complexities of modern life and education. Gaining insight into the practical implementation of SEL can illuminate the methodologies through which educators acquire and apply SEL strategies, thereby enriching our pedagogical toolkit. Adopting this stance diversifies our research focus and empowers teachers with evidence-based practices that foster a supportive and innovative learning environment. Ultimately, embracing the practical aspects of SEL encourages a more comprehensive approach to ELT education – one that is responsive to the complex social-emotional needs of our students and teachers alike. I guess, what I am proposing, after all, is that scholars in our field embrace SEL as a research lens in the same way that we, practitioners, embrace SEL as our pedagogical and philosophical lenses. Embracing SEL in all facets of our practice will allow our field to better appreciate the full spectrum of human development and its critical role in educational success.

#### **4. Social-emotional learning in English language teaching? A brief literature review**

In ELT, SEL represents an essential yet underexplored domain. While the field has long recognized the multifaceted challenges faced by language learners, including linguistic and academic obstacles, there has been a tendency to overlook their emotional, social, and cultural struggles within teaching and learning interactions (Cuocci and Arndt 2020). This oversight underscores the need to embrace SEL as humanizing practices within ELT with the purpose of addressing the holistic needs of students and teachers alike. Despite SEL gaining considerable traction in general education scholarship, the adoption of SEL within ELT remains sparse, with only a few studies delving into its application and some not even explicitly employing the term ‘SEL’ (Bai et al. 2024; Karam 2021; McNair and Pentón Herrera 2022; Pentón Herrera 2019 and 2020; Pentón Herrera et al. 2022; Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba 2022; Pentón Herrera and McNair 2021; Yeh et al. 2022). This limited attention to SEL in ELT highlights a significant gap in research and practice.

Available scholarship in the field documents the beneficial effects SEL practices have on students’ and teachers’ academic and personal growth in ELT spaces. Research has consistently shown that integrating SEL into ELT curricula not only enhances students’ emotional intelligence and resilience but also improves their interpersonal skills (Soodmand Afshar et al. 2016), which are essential for effective communication in a second language (Heineke and Vera 2022; Pentón Herrera and Darragh 2024). Furthermore, the introduction of SEL is associated with higher levels of student engagement and reduced anxiety and antisocial proclivities, significantly contributing to a more conducive learning environment (Adams and Richie 2017; McBrien 2021; Pentón Herrera 2024). This is particularly vital in



language learning, where emotional barriers can impede language acquisition and retention. SEL initiatives also enhance students' self-efficacy, leading to increased motivation and persistence in language learning tasks, ultimately supporting better academic outcomes (Bai et al. 2024; Melani et al. 2020). These publications highlight the critical role of social and emotional competencies in language education and suggest that SEL supports academic achievement and fosters an inclusive and supportive learning atmosphere.

The impact of SEL on teachers within ELT contexts also warrants attention. Research by Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba (2022) shows that teachers who engage with SEL principles in teacher preparation programs reported positive changes in their teaching identities. These teachers noted an enhanced awareness of the role of emotions in teaching, which facilitated personal and professional growth, leading to a more fulfilling teaching experience and contributing to reduced feelings of burnout. Similarly, Yeh et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of a culturally responsive approach to SEL that accommodates the diverse cultural backgrounds of international students in higher education. Their study supports the development of a culturally responsive teaching SEL model (i.e. CRT-SEL model) that addresses the needs of a diverse student population by enhancing faculty and staff awareness and skills in creating supportive SEL environments. The findings from both Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba (2022) and Yeh et al. (2022) highlight the transformative impact of SEL as a professional development tool in ELT to foster and promote environments that prioritize social-emotional well-being and cultural responsiveness. Thus, by integrating SEL in ongoing teacher preparation programs and professional development opportunities, educational institutions can better support both the academic success and the social-emotional health of their diverse student bodies, contributing to more holistic educational outcomes (Vera et al. 2018).

Despite the recognized benefits, the implementation of SEL in ELT has been uneven, highlighting a significant gap between theory and practice. The reality is that the applications of SEL remain sporadic and unsystematic in most ELT teaching contexts around the world (Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba 2021). This gap is frequently attributed to a lack of training resources, insufficient institutional support, and the undervaluation of the social-emotional aspects of language learning in curriculum development (Mahfouz and Anthony-Stevens 2020; Megawati et al. 2022). Overcoming these challenges is crucial for the effective integration of SEL into ELT. The field needs strategic policy revisions and enhanced professional development programs that prioritize SEL, thereby ensuring that both teachers and students benefit from its implementation. Moreover, the cultural dimension of SEL in ELT (see Kovats Sánchez et al. 2022) presents both challenges and opportunities. Effective SEL implementation in diverse cultural contexts requires understanding how emotional expressions and social interactions vary across cultures. Culturally responsive SEL approaches must be developed to be respectful of and responsive to

the diverse backgrounds of language learners. Such approaches should tailor SEL strategies to meet the specific social and emotional needs of learners in culturally congruent ways that support their identity formation. By integrating culturally sensitive SEL practices, educators can better address the unique challenges faced by language learners, enhancing both their learning experience and their social and emotional outcomes.

#### **4.1. Social-emotional learning and politics**

I would be remiss if I did not mention in this Editorial the politicization of SEL; thus, I devote a section to it. In recent years, SEL has found itself at the center of a heated debate, particularly in the United States, but also in various contexts globally. This controversy stems from a growing pushback by some conservative groups who view SEL as a vehicle for political and ideological indoctrination rather than an educational tool aimed at fostering well-being and essential life skills in students. Critics argue that SEL oversteps the traditional boundaries of academic education, encroaching into the personal and emotional development of students in ways they deem inappropriate for school settings. In response to these criticisms and policies blocking SEL initiatives, educators and institutions have sometimes sought refuge in alternative terminologies, such as *student-centered instruction* or *21st-century skills education*, to navigate the politicized landscape and continue the essential work of fostering emotional intelligence and resilience in students without attracting controversy. These alternative labels serve not only as a linguistic strategy but also as a testament to the adaptability of educational practitioners committed to teacher and student well-being, albeit under a different banner to mitigate backlash.

However, it is crucial to recognize that the fight against SEL is not just a debate over educational content or methodologies; it is a broader battle against the acknowledgment and prioritization of well-being for both students and teachers (with)in educational systems and (with)in societies at large. This resistance inadvertently undermines efforts to create supportive and empathetic learning environments where social, emotional, and psychological health is considered foundational to academic and personal success. Particularly for teachers, who already navigate a landscape marked by challenges such as undervaluation, disrespect, high stress, and burnout (Pentón Herrera et al. 2023), the politicization of SEL further exacerbates the disregard for their well-being and professional autonomy. By casting SEL in a contentious light, its detractors challenge a set of educational practices and contest the importance of recognizing and nurturing the well-being of educators and learners alike.

A final point that I want to make here is that ongoing tensions with the (un)acceptance of SEL reflect a broader cultural and political divide over the role of education in society and what constitutes appropriate subject matter for classroom

instruction. Yet, as I illustrated at the beginning of this Editorial, the roots of SEL in educational philosophy and practice are both deep and wide, transcending contemporary political fault lines. The ongoing debate over SEL underscores the need for a continued dialogue on how best to equip our students and support our teachers in a rapidly changing world, where social and emotional competencies are increasingly recognized as critical to navigating life's challenges. It is at this juncture, with ongoing conversations in favor of teacher and student well-being and success (with)in and beyond educational spaces, that this TI situates itself, providing a state-of-the-art empirical foundation for SEL research in the field of ELT.

## 5. Articles in the Thematic Issue

This TI comprises a total of seven manuscripts representing various geographical contexts and an afterword masterfully crafted by **Gilda Martínez-Alba**. In the first article, "Devised Drama as Social-Emotional Learning," **Kathleen R. McGovern** and **Vahdat Yeganeh** explored SEL in an extracurricular drama program in the US where adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students collaboratively devised a play. Devising is a form of drama in which an entire company (e.g. actors, designers, directors, writers or, in this case, student-actors) create a play together through a process of improvised rehearsals. The students in this program devised a play based on their own experiences, which they performed for a public audience. This study explored how this approach served as an SEL process for adult ESOL learners, drawing from an interdisciplinary lens and CASEL's (2020) SEL framework. Findings from this study illustrate how devised drama engaged learners in activities that cultivated awareness of the self and others, created space for students to explore their emotions in a supportive community, and centered learner voices. This research points to devised drama's potential as an innovative SEL pedagogy within and beyond traditional learning spaces.

In the second article, "A New Frontier: Palestinian English Teachers' Experiences and Needs for Social-Emotional Learning Integration in EFL Classrooms," **Wafa Hiwari**, **Anwar Abdel Razeq**, and **Luis Javier Pentón Herrera** delve into the pressing challenges and imperative needs surrounding the integration of SEL in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings within Palestinian educational institutions. Based on interviews with ten Palestinian EFL teachers, this qualitative case study illuminates the critical recognition of SEL's importance alongside a stark gap in its effective implementation. The findings reveal significant barriers, such as insufficient knowledge, curriculum constraints, and a lack of professional development opportunities, which hinder embedding SEL in teaching practices. This study highlights the enthusiasm among teachers to adopt SEL and underscores the essential support and resources required to foster

an educational environment conducive to comprehensive SEL integration, taking into account the unique socio-political contexts of Palestinian education.

In the third article, “Fostering Social-Emotional Learning During Resettlement: Learning with a Multilingual Refugee-Background Family,” **Fares J. Karam** and **Eleni Oikonomidou** examine the role of SEL approaches in the resettlement and language learning efforts of two refugee-background parents. They draw on ethnographic data collected during the authors’ weekly visits to the family to provide English tutoring sessions. The study documents how critical mindfulness and critical peace education were two important SEL practices that informed the participants’ resettlement and language learning experiences. Findings suggest that these SEL practices were interlinked with the family’s values and identities. For example, the study introduced *mujamalah* as an SEL practice that is in line with peace education. *Mujamalah*, inspired by the participants’ Muslim faith, calls for adopting a peaceful and respectful attitude toward others and avoiding judgment. The authors emphasize the importance of SEL approaches in supporting multilingual refugee-background families and creating mindful and peaceful spaces to listen, reflect, and learn with and from families on how they negotiate resettlement and language learning in a new country.

In the fourth article, “Investigating Problems that Matter for Young People: Reauthoring Possibilities for Social-Emotional Learning in English Language Education,” **Siobhan O’Brien**, **Mark Vicars**, and **Jordan González** examine the application of developmental bibliotherapy as an SEL tool in English language education for young English as an additional language (EAL) students. This qualitative case study focuses on year 3–4 classrooms in metropolitan Melbourne, Australia, and explores how reading books can help children make life-to-text and text-to-life connections, particularly regarding body image, resilience, and self-esteem. The study demonstrates how developmental bibliotherapy, through a transactional reader response approach, supports language acquisition. The findings highlight the pedagogical implications of using books as a medium for emotional healing and language development. This research provides insights into effective strategies for integrating SEL, more specifically bibliotherapy as an SEL strategy, into English language education for culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms.

In the fifth article of this thematic issue, “An Emotionally Intelligent, Ecolinguistic Approach to Content and Language Integrated Learning,” **Edward Rutledge** and **Marni Manegre** delve into how ecolinguistics and social-emotional learning (SEL) principles can be effectively integrated into the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) framework. Focusing on climate change education for 14- and 15-year-old students in Catalonia, Spain, this quantitative study assesses the shifts in students’ beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge about climate change after a series of targeted lessons. The findings suggest that the incorporation of ecolinguistics and SEL not only enhances linguistic and subject matter learning but also bolsters students’ social-emotional resilience when dealing with pressing existential

issues. This article underscores the significance of a holistic educational approach that does not shy away from the emotional dimensions of learning about global challenges.

In the sixth article, “Exploring the Integration of Social-Emotional Learning in EFL Pre-Service Teacher Preparation in Morocco: A Mixed-Method Study,” **Mohammed Elmeski** and **Adil Bentahar** share empirical findings from a study examining a topic that has yet to be further explored in Moroccan higher education contexts, i.e. social-emotional learning. Morocco’s educational policy documents underscore social-emotional competence as an important learning outcome. This study examines how the prominence of SEL in Morocco’s educational reform policy is reflected in the pre-service preparation of EFL teachers. The study examined SEL integration in pre-service teacher preparation programs, and the extent to which student teachers report evidence of social-emotional learning associated with these pre-service preparation programs. Findings indicate that while two-thirds of EFL student teachers reported that their pre-service preparation programs incorporate SEL skills aligned with the CASEL framework, responding to stress, managing anxiety and emotions, and collaboration stood out as areas requiring further strengthening in EFL teacher education programs in Morocco.

In the seventh and last article of this TI, “I Felt ‘Safe and Heard’: Nurturing English Majors’ Social-Emotional Skills through the Discussion of Controversial Issues in the Hungarian University Context,” **Anna Pereszlényi** and **Rita Divéki** investigate how SEL can be fostered in EFL classes through discussions of controversial topics. Conducted at a university in Budapest, the study involved two groups of students engaging in a language seminar that addressed complex issues like pandemics, wars, and social conflicts. The findings suggest that structured discussions on such topics not only enhanced students’ language skills but significantly contributed to their emotional growth and interpersonal skills. The research underscores the importance of SEL in higher education settings, highlighting its role in developing students’ abilities to manage emotions, establish empathy, and engage in thoughtful dialogue on sensitive issues. This study points to the potential for implementing SEL-focused curricula to better prepare students for the emotional and social challenges of the modern world.

## 6. Final thoughts

So, what is the way forward for SEL in English language education? This TI has shed light on the transformative potential of integrating SEL into ELT, drawing on diverse studies that underscore its significance. For instance, we learned that integrating SEL profoundly impacts formal and informal language learning experiences, supporting collaboration, creativity, and healing (McGovern and Yeganeh this issue; O’Brien et al. this issue). Further, findings shed light on the potential

of SEL in expanding possibilities in ELT classrooms, such as incorporating an emotionally intelligent ecolinguistic approach to content and language integrated learning (CLIL) (Rutledge and Manegre this issue), and the exploration of controversial issues in language seminars (Pereszlényi and Divéki this issue). In addition, findings educated us on the fact that SEL practices should consider and recognize learning traditions embedded in cultures and beliefs from around the world, demonstrating how community and familial interactions can enhance language learning and social-emotional development (Karam and Oikonomidou this issue). Similarly, we became aware of teachers' need and enthusiasm for SEL despite significant implementation barriers, which underscores a critical need for professional development and institutional support (Elmeski and Bentahar this issue; Hiwari et al. this issue).

Collectively, the manuscripts included in this TI emphasize the necessity of championing SEL not only as a classroom practice but as a cornerstone of initial teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development in ELT. Looking ahead, future research in SEL within ELT should address several key areas. First, understanding teachers' and contexts' ideologies toward SEL is crucial for tailoring approaches that resonate with diverse educational settings. Advocacy efforts must also be strengthened to promote SEL's benefits and secure institutional buy-in. Additionally, the intersection of SEL with the digital world presents a fertile ground for exploration, particularly in integrating SEL with AI and virtual learning environments. Importantly, we should make visible the diversity of SEL within ELT, showing how SEL is implemented in various formal and informal ELT learning contexts. Moreover, examining the influence of SEL on English language teachers' well-being is essential. Teachers' social-emotional health directly impacts their effectiveness and job satisfaction, as evidenced by the positive changes reported by teachers who engaged with SEL principles in their preparation programs (Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba 2022). Incorporating SEL into ELT teacher preparation and professional development programs can equip educators with the tools necessary for fostering supportive learning environments.

I would like to end this Editorial by recognizing that, in the ELT field, we have extensively advocated for, discussed, and promoted various forms of pedagogies that are considered inclusive, such as culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP), culturally relevant pedagogies (CRP), culturally responsive teaching (CRT), among many others. However, to achieve true inclusivity, it is imperative to build up from the *cultural* element and encompass the social and emotional dimensions of learning as well. SEL, as a teaching approach, represents a culturally, socially, and emotionally (CSE) relevant practice that aligns with this broader vision of inclusivity we hope to achieve in ELT. By integrating SEL, we not only address the cognitive and linguistic needs of learners but also nurture their holistic development, ultimately creating more emotionally capable, responsible, and successful individuals equipped to navigate the complexities of our interconnected world.

The future of ELT lies in embracing SEL as an integral component of education that honors the full spectrum of human development and learning, one which equally respects and acknowledges the social, emotional, and cultural dimensions of all teachers and learners.

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