

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

Shreemayee Pati^{1*}, Sthitaprajna²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (Deemed to be University), Bhubaneswar, Odisha,
India.

ORCID ID: 0009-0007-3486-4068, shreemayee.pati@gmail.com

²Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,
ITER, Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (Deemed to be University), Bhubaneswar,
Odisha, India.

Abstract: The construct of psychological safety has become a relevant factor in the field of educational and organizational studies, because of its effect on learning, participation, collaboration and well-being. The existing research primarily conceptualizes psychological safety as an individual perception or as a climate in which there is the reduction of interpersonal risk. Although this perspective has informed understanding of the causes and consequences of psychological safety, it does not provide much insight into the communicative processes in which psychological safety is formed, maintained, and felt in the day to day interactions in education. This theoretical paper presents a Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety based on Emotional Intelligence Theory, Social Constructionism, Discursive Psychology, and Communication as Constitutive Organization. The paper theorizes that psychological safety is not just a cognitive evaluation of interpersonal conditions but a socially constructed reality that becomes salient in the repetition of communicative practices. Specifically, emotional intelligence is considered to be a foundational ability that facilitates empathic communication and results in Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices, a proposed construct that describes communication practices involving the validation of perspectives, emotion regulation, participation encouragement, and relational trust. In inclusive education environments, these communicative processes constitute and maintain the psychological safety. The proposed framework is an extension of the previous research on psychological safety, which merges the emotional, relational, and discursive components of psychological safety in a single theoretical model. This article adds to inclusive education literature by providing a novel discussion on the role of emotionally intelligent and empathic communication practices in creating psychologically safe learning environments that support participation, belongingness, collaboration and student well-being. Future empirical research directions and implications for inclusive education practice are also discussed.

Keywords: Psychological Safety, Emotional Intelligence, Empathic Communication, Inclusive Education, Discursive Practices, Collaborative Learning

1. Introduction

Creating inclusive, equitable and psychologically supportive learning environments is a significant issue in today's education systems. Educators and practitioners in schools, colleges and universities are increasingly aware that meaningful learning is not just about cognitive attainment, but also about emotional health and well-being, and about social participation and belonging. Equitable participation and belonging are core elements of educational quality and social justice in inclusive education frameworks (Ainscow, 2020; UNESCO, 2020). The aim of inclusive educational systems is to offer access to education and to ensure meaningful participation of all learners, irrespective of their ability, background or identity (Booth & Ainscow, 2011; UNESCO, 1994). This focus is linked to a global move towards inclusive education, which sees diversity as a learning resource and believes in learning environments where participation, belonging and achievement for all learners is supported (Ainscow, 2020; Slee, 2018). In inclusive educational settings, where students have varying abilities, cultural backgrounds, identities, and learning needs, the quality of interpersonal relationships has a major impact on educational outcomes, especially in such settings. Thus, research into what conditions facilitate students to be truly involved in their learning, to show uncertainty, to ask questions, and to learn together has become very important.

A construct that has received considerable research interest around this is psychological safety. Psychological safety is the collective sense of safety to take interpersonal risks in a specific setting, and to express oneself freely without the risk of embarrassment, rejection or punishment (Edmondson, 1999; Newman et al., 2017). Psychological safety allows for a person's voice to be heard, for feedback to be offered and received, for errors to be admitted and ideas shared, without interpersonal threat. Studies have found that psychologically safe workplaces or classrooms foster learning behaviors, innovation, engagement, collaboration, and performance in both the organizational and educational context.

In recent years, research has emerged on psychological safety as a robust and well-developed field that presents strong evidence for its impact on learning, work experience, leadership, and organizational effectiveness. Psychological safety has been identified as a growing concern in complex and interdependent situations, where learning, working together, and problem-solving with adaptation are key (Edmondson and Bransby, 2023). They believe that psychological safety is essential for timely sharing of information, opinions, questions and concerns that is critical to collective learning and effective performance.

In an educational setting, psychological safety is especially important since learning is a very vulnerable process. Students often find themselves in situations where they have to admit lack of knowledge, acknowledge gaps in their understanding, ask questions, obtain help, and risk publicly making mistakes. These include interpersonal risk and are likely to be inhibited when students feel judged, excluded or evaluated negatively. As a result, psychologically safe learning environments foster intellectual risk-taking, engagement, thoughtfulness, and collective knowledge building.

Although the field of psychological safety research has become more prominent in recent years, there remains a critical theoretical gap. Existing literature tends to view psychological safety as a psychological state, climate or a perception. Though the antecedents, outcomes and boundary conditions of psychological safety have been examined extensively, comparatively limited attention has been paid to the communicative processes through which psychological safety is built and sustained. Although leadership behaviors, interpersonal relationships, and supportive interactions are recognized as important factors in the creation of psychological safety, the role of communication as a mechanism for the development of psychological safety is often presented as an antecedent rather than as a constitutive mechanism of psychological safety.

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

Psychological safety has received a considerable amount of theoretical research in the fields of organizational, healthcare, and team-based settings, but there is not much theorizing on how psychological safety is communicatively shaped in inclusive educational settings. This restriction is crucial as classrooms are inherently communicative environments where participation, learning and belonging manifest through interaction.

Current definitions of psychological safety focus on the individual perception or climate outcome of psychological safety, and are limited in their attention to how psychological safety is created and maintained in the communication dynamics. In addition, theories of emotional intelligence, empathy, and communication have been studied separately, and there has been a lack of studies that attempt to combine these concepts within a comprehensive model of psychological safety. The lack of this is a major conceptual gap in the literature, especially in the context of inclusive education, where participation, belongingness and collaboration are grounded in communication.

This paper fills this gap by proposing a Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety. The paper draws on Social Constructionism, Discursive Psychology, Emotional Intelligence Theory, Communication Accommodation Theory, and Communication-as-Constitutive Organization (CCO) scholarship and suggests that the concept of psychological safety should not be conceived solely as a perceived reality, but rather as a socially constructed reality through communication. In this view, psychological safety arises from the repeated communicative behaviours that help to develop trust, inclusion, validation and emotional awareness.

Emotional intelligence and empathic communication are key elements in this argument. Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to perceive, understand, control and use emotions effectively. Those with higher levels of emotional intelligence are typically better equipped to handle interpersonal relationships, adjust to emotional signals and to promote positive communication. These capabilities are vital in fostering empathic communication practices that recognise and validate the experiences, perspectives, and emotions of others.

Empathy also is an important aspect in inclusive education practice. There is a growing body of research that suggests that empathy has a positive impact on attitudes toward inclusive education and on supportive learning environments. When teachers and students engage in empathic communication, it is more likely that they can promote mutual understanding, respect differences, and make students with diversified learning needs participate in their learning activities.

The present paper builds upon these insights and proposes the concept of Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices (EIDPs). EIDPs are repeated communicative actions that recognize emotions, manage interpersonal relationship, validate other views, invite participation, and build relationship trust. The proposed construct is used as the communicative pathway by which emotional intelligence and empathy influence the development of psychological safety.

This article has three main contributions. First, it moves beyond the psychological safety theory by changing the focus from psychological safety as a perception to psychological safety as a communicatively created phenomenon. Secondly, it brings together existing information on emotional intelligence, empathy, communication and psychological safety in an integrated conceptual framework. Third, it helps advance inclusive education scholarship by examining the ways that communicative practices can help to establish psychologically secure learning spaces that encourage diverse learners and inclusive participation.

2. Theoretical Foundations

2.1 Psychological Safety: From Perception to Participation

Psychological safety is a concept from organizational psychology that has emerged as one of the most influential concepts and constructs in the field of understanding learning and collaboration. While early conceptualizations can be traced to Kahn (1990), the work that has come after is firmly rooted in Edmondson's (1999) definition of psychological safety – a shared perception that it is safe to take interpersonal risks. Psychological safety occurs when people feel safe taking risks to share their ideas, admit to mistakes, ask questions and challenge assumptions without fear of being embarrassed, rejected, or punished.

Psychological safety is important because it enables behaviours that are crucial for learning and innovation. Newman et al. (2017) suggest that psychological safety leads to voice behaviour, feedback seeking, collaboration, experimentation and organizational learning. However, interpersonal threat environments discourage participation, and dampen learning-oriented behaviors.

The same type of processes can be seen in educational contexts. Students should show uncertainty, demonstrate gaps in understanding, and make an effort to learn. These activities require interpersonal vulnerability, and thus require psychological safety. These activities require interpersonal vulnerability, and thus require psychological safety. Research in the field of Higher Education is increasingly emphasizing psychological safety as a key ingredient for engagement, participation, reflective discussion and collaborative learning. Psychological Safety allows students to move beyond self-protection towards active participation in intellectual exploration. Research further indicates that psychological safety promotes learning-oriented behaviors through high-quality interpersonal relationships and supportive social interactions (Carmeli et al., 2009). Similarly, psychological safety has been linked to voice behavior, enabling individuals to express ideas, concerns, and suggestions without fear of negative interpersonal consequences (Liang et al., 2012). Recent research further demonstrates that psychologically safe environments encourage speaking up, information sharing, and collaborative learning by reducing concerns associated with interpersonal risk and negative evaluation (O'Donovan & McAuliffe, 2020). Most of the prevailing conceptualization, however, sees psychological safety as an outcome or There has been less focus on the collective processes of building psychological safety through interaction. This restriction opens the door for theoretical development, especially in the field of communication-based education.

2.2 Emotional Intelligence as a Relational Capability

Emotional intelligence (EI) is one of the most important models of emotional functioning in interpersonal relationships. Mayer and Salovey have defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, understand, use and regulate one's emotions effectively. There are three major conceptions of emotional intelligence that are generally recognized in the contemporary literature; ability-based models, trait-based models, and mixed models. While there are distinct differences in emphasis, all of these perspectives agree that emotionally intelligent people are more emotionally aware, self-regulated, sensitive to others, and effective in managing interpersonal relationships. Emotional intelligence is consistently linked to better interpersonal functioning, leadership effectiveness, teamwork and communication quality. EI allows people to understand the meanings of emotions accurately, regulate their emotions appropriately, and adjust their interpersonal communication accordingly. These skills are especially significant in educational settings where the teacher and student are constantly engaged in emotionally charged interactions.

Most significantly, emotional intelligence can't be regarded just as a personal trait. It is through interaction that its significance comes to light. Emotional intelligence is socially consequential when it is put into action through communicative practices that impact relationships, participation, and

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

inclusion. In addition to emotional regulation, emotional intelligence plays a significant role in developing empathy, perspective-taking and relationship management skills, which are all central elements in inclusive and cooperative learning environments (Mayer et al., 2016; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). This observation is an important bridge between emotional intelligence and communicative approaches of psychological safety.

2.2.1 Empathy as a Foundation for Inclusive Communication

Empathy is an intrinsic process by which emotional intelligence affects interpersonal interaction. Davis (1983) developed an approach to conceptualizing empathy as a multidimensional construct consisting of perspective-taking, empathic concern, fantasy, and personal distress. In a similar way, Decety and Jackson (2004) define empathy as the ability to comprehend and experience the emotional condition of another person without losing one's sense of self and other. In the education setting, empathy can help to create a responsive learning environment, an inclusive classroom, and positive relationships (Cooper, 2011). In addition, empathy has been found to foster positive attitudes towards inclusion and to facilitate educational practices that value learner diversity (Gerdes et al. 2010; Jiang et al. 2025).

2.3 Social Constructionism and the Communicative Nature of Educational Reality

A key challenge with the current psychological safety literature is the focus on psychological safety being an individual or collective perception as opposed to a socially-created phenomenon. Explanations based on perception have yielded valuable insights, but have limited understanding of how psychological safety is created and maintained in the daily experience of interaction. To overcome this limitation, the present article aims to use social constructionism as a base theory. Social constructionism promotes a social view of reality, which suggests that social realities are not simply there, but rather are constructed and sustained through interaction and communication. The meanings, identities, and shared understandings are produced by relational practices that help individuals interpret and experience their social world (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 1985, 1994). In this view, educational spaces are not just physical or organizational; they are communicatively formed realities that are created in the continuous interaction between teachers, students, and other education stakeholders. Adopting this lens to psychological safety brings about a significant theoretical shift.

However, rather than psychological safety being a psychological state before communication, social constructionists propose that psychological safety is constructed within the process and through the process of communication. Students are made aware of the safety of participation through repeated interactional experiences. Communicative encounters set and strengthen classroom norms related to questioning, disagreeing, lack of certainty, giving some input, and making mistakes. This is especially important in the context of inclusive education, where participation and belonging is a relational accomplishment. This means that psychological safety is not an individual phenomenon, but one that is socially created. This is especially important in inclusive education settings where participation and belonging is a relational accomplishment. Communicative practices recognise students' identities, respect their views, and support their participation in ways that lead to inclusion. In keeping with inclusive education scholarship, which highlights participation and belonging as socially negotiated experiences (Booth & Ainscow, 2011; Slee, 2018), psychological safety is not only a psychological state, but also an interactional accomplishment that is constructed through communicative processes.

2.4 Discursive Psychology and the Construction of Psychological Experience

Complementary to this perspective on the communicative constitution of psychological safety is

the discourse psychology of discursive psychology. Discourse psychology is provided as a complementary perspective of how psychological safety is communicatively constituted. Discursive psychology focuses on the discursive construction, negotiation, and display of psychological phenomena as a means of moving beyond the exclusive focus on emotions, attitudes and beliefs as internal mental states (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Potter, 1996). In this view, language is not just a reflection of reality, but also a social and psychological tool that is used to create and influence social relationships and psychological phenomena. Psychological safety can be viewed from a discursive perspective as not just an internal state of a person. It is seen in communicative acts like questioning, uncertainty, admitting errors, asking for clarification, contradicting statements and providing other perspectives. These behaviors reinforce and perpetuate a psychological safety culture. This perspective provides a strong explanation of the development of psychologically safe educational settings. By responding positively to students' questions, accepting that uncertainty is part of the learning process and that respect for disagreement is a fundamental element to the learning process, teachers are not only reacting to students' psychological security, they're building it. In this way, discursive psychology moves away from psychological safety, which is an internal perception, and instead focuses on the communicative practices which enable safety to be enacted, negotiated and reproduced. This lens reinforces the current structure and provides an understanding of how the use of emotionally intelligent and empathetic communication practices support the building of psychologically safe learning environments.

2.5 Communication Accommodation Theory and Inclusive Interaction

Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), developed by Giles (1973) provides further support for the communicative explanation of psychological safety. CAT describes the changes in communication style that occur when people tend to adapt in order to meet the needs, expectations and qualities of the partner(s) in their communication. Communicators regulate social distance, negotiate understanding, and negotiate relational identity through process of convergence and divergence. In an educational context, the need for communication accommodation is especially significant due to the diversity of learners' cultural backgrounds, linguistic skills, cognitive abilities, emotional needs, and learning preferences. The inclusive communication thus demands adaptive communicative behavior and not standardized interaction. This principle is especially important in inclusive classrooms where learners have a variety of ways of communicating, cultural backgrounds, and learning needs. Effective accommodation can minimize the interpersonal barriers, promote understanding and enable meaningful participation of various categories of students (Sharma et al., 2012). Communication accommodation in contexts of integrated education refers to adjusting interactional style to respond to the communicative, emotional, and educational needs of learners who are linguistically and culturally different. These accommodations help to minimize interpersonal obstacles, ensure participation, and convey respect, understanding and inclusion, which fosters psychological safety. Communication accommodation is also a critical bridge between the emotional intelligence and psychological safety. So EI helps people to identify emotional and relational cues and communication accommodation is the ability to reflect that awareness into appropriate communicative action. Emotional intelligence therefore does not directly impact on the psychological safety, but is manifested in the communicative practices that allow for the inclusion and support of diverse learners.

2.6 Communication-as-Constitutive Organization (CCO): Psychological Safety as Communication

Among the most important theoretical bases of the contemporary framework, a major theory developed in this domain was in the field of CCO. The CCO view rejects the notion that communication persists only inside organizations/institutions. Rather, it posits that communication remains pertinent organizations and social systems (Putnam & Nicotera, 2009).

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

CCO theory argues that communication is more than a conduit whereby information is passed. Communication shapes identities, relationships, norms, structures, and collective realities. This view falls in line with the more general tradition of communication theory that characterizes communication as a process of creation, maintenance, and change of social realities, and not just representation (Craig, 1999). Thus, organizational phenomena emerges in the process of communication, but they are not created in isolation from it.

Despite being created within organizational communication scholarship, the concepts are also equally applicable to the educational context. Communication serves as a medium through which schools, classrooms, and learning communities are constituted. Communicative interaction serves as a base for the formation of educational norms, structures of participation, collaborative relationships, and inclusion practices. Applying the CCO theory to psychological safety generates significant theoretical propositions:

In addition, communication doesn't merely influence psychological safety; it plays a pivotal role in its constitution. This norm serves as the central argument of the present article. The traditional model generally goes through the following medium:

Psychological Safety → Communication → Learning Outcomes

In contrast, the current framework proposes:

Communication → Psychological Safety → Learning Outcomes

The reversal in approach embodies important implications. It suggests that psychological safety is a static condition, it doesn't serve as an antecedent of communication. However, it emerges through recurring communicative practices which collectively creates expectations on interpersonal risk, trust, respect, and inclusion. Subsequently, communication serves as the primary mechanism through which psychologically safe educational environments are established and sustained.

Table 1: Theoretical Foundations Underpinning the Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety

Theory	Theorist	Core Assumption	Contribution to Proposed Framework
Emotional Intelligence Theory	Mayer & Salovey (1990); Mayer et al. (2016)	Emotions can be perceived, understood, and regulated	Provides the emotional capability foundation
Psychological Safety Theory	Kahn (1990); Edmondson (1999)	Individuals engage when interpersonal risk is reduced	Explains the outcome construct
Social Constructionism	Berger & Luckmann (1966); Gergen (1985, 1994)	Reality is socially constructed through interaction	Explains how psychological safety emerges socially
Discursive Psychology	Potter & Wetherell (1987);	Psychological phenomena are	Explains interactional

	Potter (1996)	constructed through discourse	production of safety
Communication Accommodation Theory	Giles (1973)	Communication adapts to relational and contextual needs	Explains empathic and inclusive communication
Communication-as-Constitutive Organization (CCO)	Putnam & Nicotera (2009)	Communication constitutes social systems	Provides the central theoretical mechanism

3. Developing a Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety

3.1 Distinguishing the Proposed Theory from Existing Psychological Safety Models

While psychological safety has received significant attention in the fields of organizational and educational psychology, most efforts to define or examine psychological safety have focused on how it is experienced at the personal level, or how it exists as a collective climate in relation to interpersonal risk (Edmondson, 1999; Newman et al., 2017). Such views have led to considerable empirical research, but they offer little insight into the communication processes by which psychological safety is created.

The proposed Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety (CCTPS) builds on previous research by moving the concept of communication from an antecedent of psychological safety to the constitutive process that enables psychological safety. The present theory does not assume that communication is a factor that affects psychological safety, but instead that psychological safety is continually enacted, negotiated, and maintained through interaction. The change redirects the focus of academic discourse from being about psychological safety as a psychological state to psychological safety as a communicatively effective social reality.

Table 2: Distinguishing Existing Psychological Safety Models from CCTPS

Existing Models	CCTPS
Psychological safety is a perception	Psychological safety is communicatively constructed
Communication influences safety	Communication constitutes safety
Focus on climate	Focus on interaction
Focus on outcomes	Focus on emergence processes
Psychological safety explains participation	Communication explains psychological safety

3.2 The Need for a New Theoretical Perspective

While there is significant research on psychological safety (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023; Newman et al., 2017), the current body of literature is still largely psychological and organizational-based. Previous research focuses on leadership, trust, organizational climate and interpersonal relationships as antecedents and learning behaviour, voice behaviour, innovation, engagement and performance as outcomes of the study. Although these studies provide valuable insights, they leave an important question unanswered:

How does psychological safety actually come into existence?

Current explanations tend to focus on the factors related to psychological safety but fail to describe the interactional mechanisms by which psychological safety is created in ongoing educational

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

work. For instance, emotionally intelligent educators are often related to supportive learning settings. Likewise, empathic communication is associated with student engagement and inclusion. Theoretically, however, the precise communicative processes underlying the relationship between emotional intelligence, empathy, and psychological safety are underdeveloped. To fill this gap, the present article introduces a communicative construction theory, which puts communication as the key driving force for the establishment of psychological safety.

3.3 Introducing Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices (EIDPs)

In order to describe how psychological safety is communicated, a new theoretical construct is introduced: Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices (EIDPs)

Definition:

Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices are the common communicative practices that involve the recognition, regulation, validation and response to emotional experiences that create a sense of psychological safety, inclusion and collaborative participation.

While emotional intelligence is usually conceptualized as a personal skill or attribute, EIDPs are more likely to be described as the observable interactional practices that make emotional intelligence socially consequential. The construct connects the concept of emotional intelligence as an individual resource to psychological safety as a collective experience.

Table 3: Distinguishing EIDPs from Related Constructs

Construct	Nature	Function
Emotional Intelligence	Individual capability	Emotional perception and regulation
EIDPs	Discursive practice	Translating emotional capabilities into observable communication
Empathy	Relational disposition	Understanding others' experiences
Empathic Communication	Interactional process	Expressing empathy through communication
Psychological Safety	Collective outcome	Reduced interpersonal risk

The EIDP construct is the key mechanism that connects emotional intelligence and empathic communication with psychological safety.

4. Conceptual Framework and Theory Development

The proposed framework builds on the previous theoretical underpinnings, including Emotional Intelligence Theory (Mayer et al., 2016); Social Constructionism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gergen, 1985); Discursive Psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987); Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 1973); and psychological safety scholarship (Edmondson, 1999; Edmondson & Bransby, 2023; Newman et al., 2017).

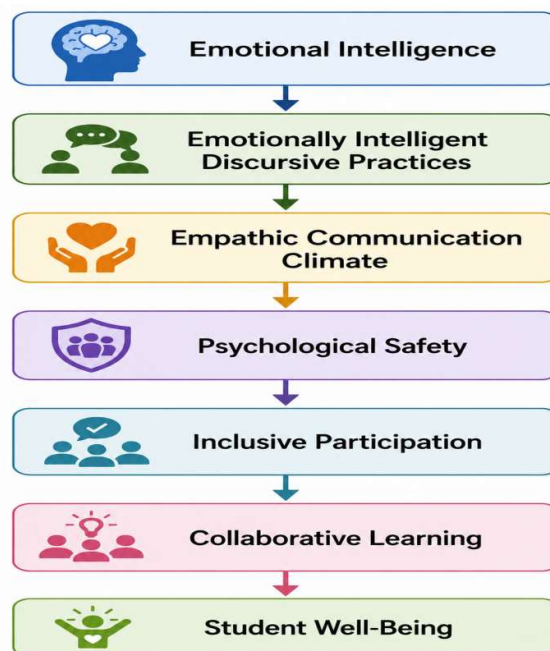


Figure 1: Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety

Source: Author's own construct

4.1 Emotional Intelligence as the Foundation of Discursive Practice

Psychologically safe communication is a capability that is grounded in emotional intelligence. The ability model of Mayer and Salovey (2016) describes emotionally intelligent people as ones that can perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions effectively. Emotional intelligence affects interpersonal relations through the ability to perceive and understand emotional signals, regulate emotional reactions, and adjust communication to the relational setting.

In the educational setting, emotional intelligence aids in fostering positive relationships between educators and learners. Higher levels of emotional intelligence in teachers are associated with greater sensitivity to learners' emotional needs, effective conflict management and relational competence. Likewise, students with emotional intelligence possess a better ability to engage in collaborative learning and interpersonal situations.

But emotional intelligence, solely cannot create psychological safety. Emotional skills need to be expressed in terms of observable interactional skills. Thus, emotional intelligence is considered as an antecedent, not a direct determinant in the context of psychological safety.

Proposition 1 (P1)

Emotional intelligence positively influences Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices in inclusive educational contexts.

4.2 Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices as a Constitutive Mechanism

The main contribution of the present theory is the introduction of EIDPs. Most studies on emotional intelligence have concentrated on identifying individual emotional abilities. EIDPs, on the other hand, focus on the socially relevant aspects of emotional intelligence in communication. It involve reoccurring communicative actions that: recognize emotional experiences; validate multiple viewpoints; promote engagement; promote relational trust; regulate interpersonal conflict; and encourage collaborative discussion. These practices are able to enrich emotional intelligence from

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

individual capability to a collective communicative resource.

Table 4: Dimensions of Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices

Dimesion	Defination	Example in Inclusive Education
Emotional Recognition	Identifying and acknowledging emotional expressions	Teacher recognizes student frustration and responds supportively
Perspective Validation	Communicating respect for diverse viewpoints	Student opinions are acknowledged even when incorrect
Responsive Empathy	Demonstrating understanding and care	Teacher responds sensitively to learner concerns
Relational Regulation	Managing emotional tensions constructively	Respectful handling of disagreement
Inclusive Voice Facilitation	Encouraging participation from all learners	Inviting contributions from quieter students

In discursive psychology terms, these practices serve as interactional devices which permit educational participants to negotiate with each other on the norms for interpersonal expectations. Over time, the shared assumptions about interpersonal safety slowly take shape as a result of repeated exposure to supportive discursive practices. Thus, EIDPs are the most important constitutive mechanism of psychological safety.

Proposition 2 (P2)

Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices positively influences the development of empathic communication climates.

4.3 Empathic Communication Climate

Empathy is a key relational process in inclusive education. Empathy has been defined as a cognitive and affective process through which individuals can better understand and respond to the experiences of others (Davis, 1983; Decety & Jackson, 2004). Additionally, researchers claim that engagement through empathy is important for students' achievement, belonging, and relational trust (Cooper, 2011). Empathic communication is understanding, acknowledging and responding to the emotions and experiences of others. Empathy has been shown to have positive effects on attitudes towards inclusive education and create a positive learning climate (Jiang et al., 2025).

The present theory builds on this literature, and introduces empathy as a collective communication climate, rather than simply an individual disposition. Empathic Communication Climate is a communicative climate that is characterized by: active listening; perspective taking; emotional responsiveness; supportive feedback; respectful dialogue; and interpersonal understanding. In these climates, participants feel that their experiences and views are valued and understood. Thus, interpersonal encounters are less threatening and more collaborative.

Empathic communication climates are especially crucial in inclusive educational contexts because students have a wide range of learning needs, cultures, learning abilities, and communication styles. Empathy helps bridge these differences by promoting accommodation and understanding.

Proposition 3 (P3)

Empathic communication climate positively influences psychological safety.

4.4 Psychological Safety as a Communicatively Constructed Reality

Central to the Communicative Construction Theory is that psychological safety is grounded in communication. Traditional psychological safety studies have defined psychological safety as a perceived sense of interpersonal risk (Edmondson, 1999; Newman et al., 2017). This definition is not opposed by the present framework. Instead, it extends it by providing an account of how such perceptions come into existence. A social constructionist view of perception suggests that perceptions are developed as a result of repeated social interaction. Students are taught about the safety of participation by communicative means rather than by abstract assessments. Psychological safety is cultivated when participants repeatedly experience: respectful responses to questions; constructive reaction to mistakes; supporting feedback; participation opportunities; empathic engagement; and relational trust. As a result, psychological safety is understood as a socially constructed reality that is interactionally achieved. This view is in accordance with recent research that highlights interpersonal risk reduction in learning environments (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023).

Proposition 4 (P4)

Psychological safety positively influences inclusive participation in educational settings.

4.5 Psychological Safety and Inclusive Participation

The aim of inclusive education is to provide meaningful participation opportunities for every learner, irrespective of their ability, identity or background. Participation is considered one of the key aspects of inclusive education as seen in contemporary inclusive education frameworks (Ainscow, 2020; Booth & Ainscow, 2011). Likewise, the Salamanca Statement outlines participation as a key goal of inclusive education systems (UNESCO, 1994). Thus in educational settings there should be emphasis on access and active participation. But interpersonal risk-taking is often a requirement for participation. Students will be required to ask questions, identify misunderstandings, share ideas and participate in collaborative learning. These behaviors are less likely when students are afraid of being judged, excluded from, or negatively evaluated by others. Psychological safety helps lower these perceived risks, and helps to support authentic participation. Psychologically safe classrooms encourage students to: contribute ideas; seek help; engage in discussion; challenge assumptions; collaborate with peers; and participate in learning activities. These behaviours are especially significant for multilingual students and students at risk of marginalisation. Therefore, psychological safety is a prerequisite to inclusion in participation.

Proposition 5 (P5)

Inclusive participation positively influences collaborative learning.

4.6 Collaborative Learning and Student Well-Being

One of the most important benefits of creating a psychologically safe environment is the opportunity for collaborative learning. Educational research studies have repeatedly shown that learning is improved when learners interact, converse, give feedback and share knowledge. According to social interdependence theory, cooperative learning environments foster academic achievement, interpersonal development, and positive peer relationships (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Similarly, sociocultural theories focus on learning as a process of social interaction and the construction of meaning together (Vygotsky, 1978). Collaborative learning environments are thus crucial settings for psychological safety and participation (Dillenbourg, 1999). Psychological safety helps these processes

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

by mitigating barriers to participation between people. Edmondson and Bransby (2023) state that learning behavior is one of the prevailing themes in the scholarship of psychological safety. Psychological safety fosters questioning, experimentation, sharing information, and collaborative problem solving. Inclusive participation, paired with collaborative learning, results in students experiencing stronger belongingness, increased engagement, increased self-efficacy, increased social connectedness, and improved academic outcomes. These outcomes directly impact on the well-being of the students. Increasingly, research has been conducted to identify belongingness as a universal human need and a key factor in determining educational outcomes (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Strayhorn, 2018). The evidence shows that students who feel a sense of belonging in the classroom are more motivated, engaged, persistent, and successful academically (Allen et al., 2018; Goodenow, 1993).

Proposition 6 (P6)

Collaborative learning positively influences student well-being.

4.7 Mediation Processes within the Framework

The proposed theory contains two key mediation mechanisms.

First Mediation:

Emotional intelligence indirectly affects psychological safety through: Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices; and Empathic Communication Climate.

Thus:

Proposition 7 (P7)

Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices and empathic communication climate sequentially mediate the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological safety.

Second Mediation:

Psychological safety indirectly affects student well-being through: Inclusive Participation; and Collaborative Learning.

Proposition 8 (P8)

Inclusive participation and collaborative learning sequentially mediate the positive relationship between psychological safety and student well-being.

Table 5: Summary of Theoretical Propositions

Proposition	Statement
P1	Emotional intelligence positively influences Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices in inclusive educational contexts.
P2	Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices positively influence the development of empathic communication climates.
P3	Empathic communication climate positively influences psychological safety.
P4	Psychological safety positively influences inclusive participation in educational settings.
P5	Inclusive participation positively influences collaborative learning.

P6	Collaborative learning positively influences student well-being.
P7	Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices and empathic communication climate sequentially mediate the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological safety.
P8	Inclusive participation and collaborative learning sequentially mediate the positive relationship between psychological safety and student well-being.

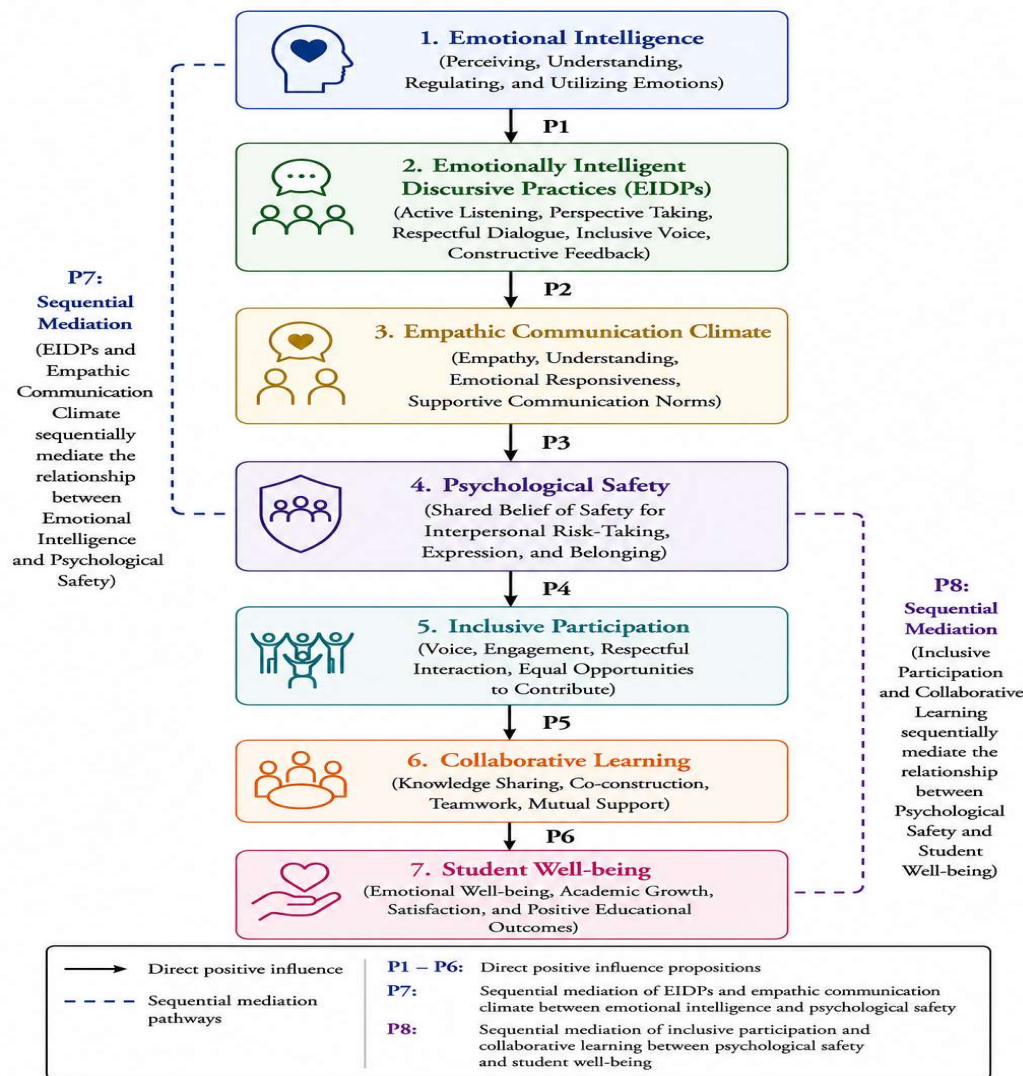


Figure 2: Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety in Inclusive Educational Contexts.

Source: Author’s own construct

5. Theoretical Contributions

The Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety advances scholarly knowledge in four ways:

First Contribution: It moves the psychological safety field from a perception-based approach to a communication-based explanation.

Beyond Perception: A Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic Communication in Inclusive Educational Contexts

Second Contribution: Combines emotional intelligence, empathy, communication theory and psychological safety into one model.

Third Contribution: It presents the novel concept of EIDPs.

Fourth Contribution: It takes psychological safety research further into the areas of inclusive education, where communication is a key factor in participation and belonging.

6. Discussion

This article aimed to theorize the development of psychological safety in an inclusive educational environment. Based on the theories of Emotional Intelligence, Social Constructionism, Discursive Psychology, Communication Accommodation Theory, and Communication-as-Constitutive Organization, the Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety suggests that psychological safety is not just perceived but is communicatively constructed through emotionally intelligent and empathic interaction.

The key contribution of the Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety is to question an underlying assumption in psychological safety scholarship. Previous studies most often describe psychological safety as a perception of interpersonal risk (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023, Newman et al., 2017). This view has received significant empirical validation but offers little understanding of the interactional processes that lead to these perceptions.

The present theory suggests that psychological safety is not a perceptual phenomenon of individuals or groups, but an accomplishment achieved through communication. Recurring communicative experiences, such as responding to queries, handling errors, voicing disagreements and allowing for participation, teach students whether participation is safe or not. The understanding of psychological safety, therefore, needs to be a dynamic social reality that is continually negotiated rather than a static psychological state.

The second contribution is related to the integration of previously disjointed theoretical claims. Theories of emotional intelligence describe emotional capabilities, empirical studies of empathy describe interpersonal understanding, and theories of communication describe interactional processes. The proposed framework illustrates how these perspectives come together in EIDPs and allows a more holistic understanding of the ways in which psychologically safe learning environments can develop.

The framework is also a key element to developing inclusive education scholarship, as it foregrounds communication as a key mechanism of participation and belonging. Access, accommodation and participation are traditional themes of inclusive education. According to the present theory, such outcomes rely considerably on communication practices that validate perspectives, promote voice and establish relational trust. Thus, inclusion should not only be interpreted as a structural aim, but also as an interactional success that is realised through the process of everyday communication.

Collectively, these contributions shift the focus from communication being a contextual element affecting psychological safety to the primary driver of creating and maintaining psychological safety. This rethinking presents new pathways for research on the communicative bases of learning, engagement, and inclusion in educational settings.

Although this is a theoretical contribution, it is still in a conceptual stage and has not been empirically tested. The relationships suggested between emotional intelligence, emotionally intelligent discursive practices, empathic communication climate, psychological safety, and educational

outcomes, therefore, need to be systematically empirically examined within different educational contexts. The framework should therefore be considered as a theoretical guide for future testing, modification and contextualization.

7. Implications for Inclusive Education

The proposed Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety has relevant implications for creating inclusive education environments. The framework proposes a pathway for inclusion that goes beyond equitable access and institutional policies to include communicative practices that foster psychological safety. The theory focuses on and emphasizes emotionally intelligent and empathic communication, offering a framework to understand how trust, participation and belonging can be reinforced with daily classroom interaction.

7.1 Implications for Student Participation

The suggested framework proposes that when students are permitted to communicate in a psychologically safe way, they are willing to ask questions, be uncertain, seek input, and engage in group learning without fear of negative evaluation. These environments foster belongingness, engagement and meaningful participation of learners with diverse cultural backgrounds, identities and learning experiences. This view further extends inclusive education by focusing not just on structural arrangements which facilitate participation, but also on communication as a mechanism for enabling participation (Ainscow, 2020; Booth & Ainscow, 2011).

7.2 Implications for Teacher Education

Emotional intelligence and empathic communication must be part of teacher preparation and professional development together with pedagogical knowledge. Studies show emotional intelligence contributes to effective communication, empathy, classroom management, and relationship building (Bru-Luna et al., 2021; Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). Therefore, acquiring these skills could help teachers to foster respectful conversations, promote engagement, and establish psychologically safe supportive learning cultures.

7.3 Implications for Inclusive Classroom Practice

The proposed theory places communication as a key mechanism to promote inclusion. Classroom practices that promote open dialogue, respectful feedback, perspective validation, and active listening should be encouraged by educational institutions, as these communicative norms enhance empathic communication climates, mitigate interpersonal barriers, and facilitate collaborative learning among diverse learners (Jiang et al., 2025). Inclusive classroom practice should also be consistent with internationally accepted frameworks that focus on participation, equity and learner diversity (Ainscow, 2020; UNESCO, 2020).

7.4 Implications for Educational Leadership

Educational leaders have a significant influence in creating organizational cultures that are built on trust, empathy and open communication. Collaborative teaching and learning environments can be fostered through leadership practices that support psychologically safe communication, and inclusive learning environments. Incorporating emotional intelligence and empathic communication into institutional culture can allow educational leaders to enhance student involvement, cooperative learning, and educational well-being.

8. Future Research Direction

A handful of opportunities for future research emerge from the Communication Construction

Theory of Psychological Safety.

8.1 Validation of Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices

The urgent need is to develop and validate the proposed EIDPs construct. There exists a substantial need to develop measurement instruments assessing: Emotional Recognition, Perspective Validation, Responsive Empathy, Relational Regulation, Inclusive Voice Facilitation. In addition, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses could be used to establish construct validity.

8.2 Structural Equation Modeling, Multilevel Modeling, and Social Network Analysis

This particular framework is categorically essential for empirical testing using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Using this approach, researchers could examine the hypothesized links between Emotional Intelligence, Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices, Empathic Communication Climate, Psychological Safety, Inclusive Participation, Collaborative Learning, Student Well-Being. Following the SEM approach can enable the examination of both direct and indirect effects.

Multilevel modeling techniques, which take into account individual, classroom, and institutional variables as level, can be utilized in future research to explore the psychological safety at both these levels. Social network analysis can also provide insights into how social communicative relationships pave the way for development and spread of psychological safety in the educational communities.

8.3 Longitudinal Research

Psychological safety systematically develops over time through repeated interactions. Longitudinal studies could examine how emotionally intelligent and empathic communication contributes to psychological safety and inclusion across academic semester or school years.

8.4 Classroom Discourse Analysis

Discursive approaches provide opportunities to examine psychological safety at the interactional level. Key phenomenon like classroom observation, interaction coding, discourse analysis, and conversation analysis may be utilized for the future studies. These methods would provide direct evidence of the communicative creation of psychological safety.

8.5 Cross-Cultural Research

The communicative construction of psychological safety tends to vary across the key cultural contexts. Comparative studies undertaking a close examination of educational environments in different countries can explore how cultural norms influence communication practices, emotional expression, empathy, participation, psychological safety.

8.6 Inclusive Education Contexts

Future research should also examine the processes through which psychologically safe communication supports inclusive efficacy, among the teachers, given the evidence that the efficacy of teachers significantly influences the implementation of inclusive practices (Sharma et al., 2012). In addition, future studies should specifically investigate on the key areas: students with disabilities, neurodiverse learners, multilingual learners, and the marginalised population. Besides, a holistic understanding of the ways in which psychological safety is constructed across different educational settings also serves as another pathway to further inclusive education knowledge.

9. Conclusion

This article proposed the Communicative Construction Theory of Psychological Safety – an

essential theoretical model to explain the emergence of psychological safety through emotional intelligence and empathic communication in inclusive education settings.

Based on the theory of Emotional Intelligence, Social Constructionism, Discursive Psychology and Communication as Constitutive Organization perspectives, the theory enables in offering an explanation for how the recurring communicative practices enable in transforming emotional capabilities into interactional conditions that pave the way for ensuring psychological safety within inclusive education settings.

Occupying the central position of this model is the concept of Emotionally Intelligent Discursive Practices. This approach explains how emotional intelligence is translated into communicative behaviors that foster empathic communication climates and psychological safety. Adhering these processes, psychologically safe educational environments enable inclusive participation, collaborative learning as well as student well-being.

The framework also makes a significant contribution to psychological safety scholarship by critically repositioning communication from an antecedent of psychological safety to its constitutive mechanism. Besides, it also adds on to the body of inclusive education literature by showcasing how communicative practices enable efficient participation, belongingness, and meaningful engagement among the diverse learners.

Subsequently, the theory puts forward a simple and powerful idea: Psychological safety is not just merely experienced within educational environments; its something that is gradually and continuously created through communication..

References

- Ainscow, M. (2020). Promoting inclusion and equity in education: lessons from international experiences. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 6(1), 7–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2020.1729587>
- Allen, K., Kern, M. L., Vella-Brodrick, D., Hattie, J., & Waters, L. (2018). What Schools Need to Know about Fostering School Belonging: A Meta-Analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 30, 1-34. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-016-9389-8>
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), 497–529. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497>
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Anchor Books.
- Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2011) *Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools*. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (3rd ed.). Bristol.
- Bru-Luna, L. M., Martí-Vilar, M., Merino-Soto, C., & Cervera-Santiago, J. L. (2021). Emotional Intelligence Measures: A Systematic Review. *Healthcare*, 9(12), 1696. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare9121696>
- Carmeli, A., Brueller, D., & Dutton, J.E. (2009). Learning behaviours in the workplace: The role of high-quality interpersonal relationships and psychological safety. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 26, 81-98. <https://doi.org/10.1002/SRES.932>
- Cooper, B. (2011). *Empathy in Education: Engagement, Values & Achievement*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Coronado-Maldonado, I., & Benítez-Márquez, M.-D. (2023). Emotional intelligence, leadership, and work teams: A hybrid literature review. *Heliyon*, 9(10), e20356.

Beyond Perception: A Communicative
Construction Theory of Psychological Safety
Through Emotional Intelligence and Empathic
Communication in Inclusive Educational
Contexts

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e20356>

Craig, R. T. (1999). Communication Theory as a Field. *Communication Theory*, 9(2), 119-161. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2885.1999.tb00355.x>

Davis, M. H. (1983). Measuring individual differences in empathy: Evidence for a multidimensional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44(1), 113-126. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.44.1.113>

Decety, J., & Jackson, P. L. (2004). The functional architecture of human empathy. *Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Reviews*, 3(2), 71-100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534582304267187>

Dillenbourg, P. (1999). *Collaborative Learning: Cognitive and Computational Approaches*. Advances in Learning and Instruction Series. Elsevier Science, Inc., New York, NY.

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350-383. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2666999>

Edmondson, A. C. (2019). *The fearless organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*. Wiley.

Edmondson, A. C., & Bransby, D. P. (2023). Psychological Safety Comes of Age: Observed Themes in an Established Literature. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 10, 55-78. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-120920-055217>

Edmondson, A. C., & Lei, Z. (2014). Psychological Safety: The History, Renaissance, and Future of an Interpersonal Construct. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1, 23-43. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091305>

Edmondson, A. C., Dillon, J. R., & Roloff, K. S. (2007). Three perspectives on team learning: Outcome improvement, task mastery, and group process. In A. Brief and J. Walsh (Eds.), *The Academy of Management Annals*, 1, 269-314.

Gerdes, K. E., Segal, E. A., & Lietz, C. A. (2010). Conceptualising and Measuring Empathy. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(7), 2326-2343. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcq048>

Gergen, K. J. (1985). The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40(3), 266-275. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.40.3.266>

Gergen, K. J. (1994). *Realities and relationships: Soundings in Social Construction*. Harvard University Press.

Giles, H. (1973). Accent mobility: A model and some data. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 15(2), 87-105.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.

Goodenow, C. (1993). Classroom Belonging among Early Adolescent Students: Relationships to Motivation and Achievement: Relationships to Motivation and Achievement. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 13(1), 21-43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431693013001002>

Jiang, N., Li, H., Ju, S.-Y., Kong, L.-K., & Li, J. (2025). Pre-service teachers' empathy and attitudes toward inclusive education — The chain mediating role of teaching motivation and inclusive education efficacy. *PLOS ONE*, 20(4), e0321066. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0321066>

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An Educational Psychology Success Story: Social Interdependence Theory and Cooperative Learning. *Educational Researcher*, 38(5), 365-379. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X09339057>

Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4), 692-724. <https://doi.org/10.2307/256287>

Kolbe, M., Eppich, W., Rudolph, J., Meguerdichian, M., Catena, H., Cripps, A., Grant, V., & Cheng, A. (2020). Managing psychological safety in debriefings: a dynamic balancing act. *BMJ Simulation and*

- Technology Enhanced Learning, 6(3), 164–171. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjstel-2019-000470>
- Liang, J., Farh, C. I. C., & Farh, J. L. (2012). Psychological Antecedents of Promotive and Prohibitive Voice: A Two-Wave Examination. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55, 71-92. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0176>
- Mayer, J. D., Caruso, D. R., & Salovey, P. (2016). The Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence: Principles and Updates. *Emotion Review*, 8(4), 290–300. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073916639667>
- Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R. (2008). Emotional intelligence: New ability or eclectic traits? *American Psychologist*, 63(6), 503–517. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.63.6.503>
- Newman, A., Donohue, R., & Eva, N. (2017). Psychological safety: A systematic review of the literature. *Human Resource Management Review*, 27(3), 521–535. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2017.01.001>
- O'Donovan, R., & McAuliffe, E. (2020). Exploring psychological safety in healthcare teams to inform the development of interventions: combining observational, survey and interview data. *BMC health services research*, 20, 810. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-020-05646-z>
- Potter, J. (1996). *Representing reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction*. Sage.
- Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour*. Sage.
- Putnam, L. L., & Nicotera, A. M. (Eds.). (2009). *Building theories of organization: The constitutive role of communication* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9(3), 185–211. <https://doi.org/10.2190/DUGG-P24E-52WK-6CDG>
- Sharma, U., Loreman, T. and Forlin, C. (2012), Measuring teacher efficacy to implement inclusive practices. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 12, 12-21. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-3802.2011.01200.x>
- Slee, R. (2018). *Inclusive Education isn't Dead, it Just Smells Funny* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429486869>
- Strayhorn, T.L. (2018). *College Students' Sense of Belonging: A Key to Educational Success for All Students* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315297293>
- UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2020). *Global education monitoring report 2020: Inclusion and education: all means all*. UNESCO.
- VYGOTSKY, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (M. Cole, V. Jolm-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjf9vz4>