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ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

The Predictive Power of Emotional Intelligence Components on Listening Comprehension Task of Male vs. Female EFL Learners

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The present study sought to investigate the feasible association between EFL learners' emotional intelligence and listening comprehension performance. To attain the goals of the research, a number of English learners were chosen through purposive sampling from some private English institutes in Iran. The participants were asked to answer the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) and the TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and listening proficiency and T-test was used to compare male and female participants in listening and emotional intelligence. The results of the study indicated that there was no significant difference between males and females in listening and EQ. Furthermore, significant and meaningful relationships were found between the students' listening skill and emotional intelligence in total and its components in specific. Furthermore, the results of the multiple regression analyses for the predictability power of emotional intelligence for listening comprehension performance revealed that EI is a proper predictor of learners' listening task, and among the EQ subscales 'adaptability' had the strongest power on EFL learners' listening comprehension performance. The results of this study can make the teachers, researchers, test developers, material designers aware of how emotional intelligence could influence language proficiency, which proves the potential of the learners. This encourages them to take into a more careful consideration the necessity of using a variety of ways in teaching. Teachers are expected more likely to care about the strength and weakness of learners' feelings when teaching.

Keywords: Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I), Emotional intelligence, Listening comprehension, Gender differences, EFL learners.

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Introduction

The Nature of Emotional Intelligence Skills in Life and Education

In spite of the controversy over a unified definition or model for emotional intelligence, there is a general agreement that emotional skills are related to success in many areas of life. Goleman (1998) considers emotional intelligence as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationship" (p. 317). Also, he maintains that "emotional intelligence consists of knowing what you are feeling, recognizing what others are feeling, managing the feelings in relationships, and using your feelings to motivate yourself--even in the face of frustrations" (Goleman 1995, 43). Bar-On (2006) states that emotional intelligence matures over time and that it can be improved through programming, training, and therapy. Moreover, Bar-On assumes that those people who have EQs higher than average are more successful in dealing with environmental demands and pressures, in general. He also mentions that a dearth in emotional intelligence can mean a lack of success and the existence of emotional problems thought to be especially common among those people are deficient in the subscales of reality testing, problem solving, impulse control, and stress tolerance. Consequently, Bar-On regards emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence to contribute equally to an individual's general intelligence, which then offers a manifestation of one's potential to succeed in life (Kluemper, 2008).

Furthermore, emotional intelligence is emerging as an important factor in high performance at academic settings even though it was commonly assumed that learning implies intellectual and cognitive processes. In this case, Goleman (1995) argued that "the emotional mind is far quicker than the rational mind, springing into action without even pausing to consider what it is doing. Its quickness precludes the deliberate, analytic reflection that is the hallmark of the thinking mind" (p. 291). Therefore, engaging in any activity is directly concerned with the emotional state of the learner, i.e., how he feels about himself, and his motivation, or how he feels about the subject. As a matter of fact, emotional intelligence is recognized as an essential component to the success of individual learning processes (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1995). Following Salovey and Mayer's continuing research, the initial definition of EI was amended to "the ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand emotions and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth" (Salovey & Mayer 1990, 187). Moreover, Salovey and Mayer (1997) proposed a revised model of emotional intelligence and made a distinction between four components of emotional intelligence, i.e., perceiving emotions (the ability to detect and interpret emotions in faces, pictures, voices, and cultural artifacts); using emotions (the ability to control emotions to facilitate various cognitive activities such as thinking and problem solving); understanding emotions (the ability to comprehend emotion language and solve emotional problems and understand the similarities and differences between emotions); and managing emotions (the ability to regulate emotions in both ourselves and in others). Also, Goleman (1998) introduced a mixed model focused on emotional intelligence as a wide variety of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance. This

model is on the basis of performance, integrating an individual's abilities and personality, and applying their parallel effects on performance in the workplace (Goleman, 2001). Bradberry and Greaves (2009) asserted that Goleman's model outlines four main emotional intelligence constructs, including self-awareness (the ability to read one's emotions and recognize their effect while using instinctive feelings to guide decisions), self-management (the ability to control one's emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances), social-awareness (the ability to sense, understand, and react to others' emotions while comprehending social networks) and relationship management (the ability to inspire, influence, and develop others while managing dispute). Likewise, Bar-on (as cited in Pishghadam, 2009) defined emotional intelligence as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (p. 33). He suggested a model in which interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators have an impact on intelligent behavior. His model of emotional intelligence consists of five broad areas of skills including intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. The first type, intrapersonal (self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence and self-actualization) is the ability to understand emotions as well as express our feelings and ourselves. The second construct, interpersonal (empathy, social responsibility and interpersonal relationship) includes the ability to understand others' feelings and relate with people. The third type, stress management (stress tolerance and impulse control) involves the ability to manage and control our emotions. The fourth construct, adaptability (reality testing, flexibility and problem solving) is the ability to manage change and solve problems of an intrapersonal and interpersonal nature, and finally general mood (optimism and happiness) includes the ability to generate positive mood and be self-motivated. In this regard, Nelson and Low (2003) posit that emotional intelligence can be considered as a series of interrelated skills and competencies of interpersonal skills like assertiveness in communication, self-management skills such as time management, goal achievement, etic commitment, and personal responsibility, and also the intrapersonal skills of self-efficacy and stress management. Furthermore, Bar-On (2005) believes that emotionally intelligent people are more aware of what other people want; so, they are able to establish cooperative relationship with others. Dehshiri (2006) has also stated a significant relationship between the emotional and verbal and Psychometric intelligence with the educational achievement. Among the studies dealing with the feasible repercussions of EQ for speaking skill, mention can be made of Pishghadam's (2009) investigation, in which the researcher supported the influential role played by EI in speaking performance of academic learners. With regard to listening obtains resulting from possessing high EI levels, Badakhshan's (2008) scrutiny came up with a meaningful relationship between participants' listening performance and their emotional intelligence. Likewise, Ghanizadeh and Moafian (2010) conducted a search to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' emotional quotient (EQ) and their pedagogical success in language institutes. The results revealed that there was a credible and meaningful relationship between

teachers' success and EQ. In addition, significant correlations were found between teachers' EQ, their teaching experience, and their age. They also reported that the teacher's emotional intelligence was a critical factor in the process of teaching. Another ubiquitous orientation in research on EQ is thought to be the one dealing with correlational analysis. In this line of scrutiny, for instance, Hashemi and Ghanizadeh (2011) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among Iranian EFL university students. They regarded emotional intelligence as one of the determinant factors influencing self-efficacy. The findings of the study revealed that there was a credible relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy beliefs. Moreover, subsequent data analysis indicated that among the components of emotional intelligence, self-actualization and stress tolerance are the positive predictors of the students' self-efficacy. Returning to a high correlation between emotional intelligence and lexical knowledge, Asadollahfam et al. (2012) investigated the feasible relationship between emotional intelligence and vocabulary knowledge of language learners. The results indicated that English language learners with high levels of emotional intelligence possessed a high level of vocabulary knowledge. In order to determine whether emotional intelligence strategy had any effect on EFL learners' writing performance ability, Abdolrezapour (2013) conducted experimental research. The results indicated that the experimental group made some improvement in their writing performance. However, the control group showed no improvement in their post-tests. Moreover, the results were evidence to the fact that introducing emotional intelligence strategy had a considerable effect on the learners' writing performance. Most recently, Banimohamadi and Poordaryaienejad (2014) demonstrated a significant relationship between EI and self-efficacy among EFL learners. They also found that among fifteen sub-scales of EQ-I, Self-Awareness, Problem Solving and Flexibility were positive predictors of self-efficacy and also there was not any significant difference between men and women regarding their emotional intelligence.

The Impact of Listening Comprehension Performance on Language Learning Process

Listening comprehension performance is the primary channel and critical skill in language learning. However, among the four dominant macro-skills, including listening, speaking, reading and writing, it is often difficult and inaccessible for second or foreign language learners due to its implicit process. Speaking, the secondary skill, proceeds listening cognitively. Regarding Krashen's model of comprehensible input and its focal role in learning, Rost (1994) holds that "listening is vital in the second language classroom because it provides input for the learner; without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin. Listening is thus fundamental to speaking" (pp. 141-142). Moreover, Nunan (1991) points out that

Among language skills, listening has often been referred to as the 'Cinderella skill', overlooked by its elder sister, speaking. In most people's opinion being able to claim knowledge of a second language means being able to speak and write in that language, with this regard, listening and reading are viewed as secondary skills which serve as means to other ends rather than end in themselves (p. 199).

To put it in another word, aural/oral skills precede the graphic skills, such as reading and writing, as they form the circle of language learning process. Yet, despite the significant correlation with other language skills, listening comprehension performance is treated lightly in the applied linguistics research. Half of our daily conversation and three quarters of classroom interaction are virtually devoted to listening task. In one probe into the role of EQ in determining the language proficiency level, Shakiba and Barani (2011) indicated that there was a significant relationship between language proficiency and emotional intelligence. Besides, the relationship between students' emotional quotient level and their level of language proficiency was more powerful and stronger in females than males. Among the skills-oriented and componential studies addressing the relationship between EQ and performance on varied areas of language, reference can be made to the work done by Badakhshan (2012) regarding the possible bonds between emotional intelligence and listening. She has reported a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and listening skill. Moreover, she stated that there was a meaningful difference between the listening and EQ of the male and female EFL learners and that correlation in male learners was stronger than female learners. Besides, among educational issues which have received scant attention in the light of listening comprehension lies the would-be relationship between learners' listening performance and other language skills, Bozorgian (2012) proves the close correlation between listening comprehension and the overall language proficiency among 1800 Iranian participants undertaking International English Language Testing System (IELTS) in Tehran. Furthermore, Valizadeh and Alavinia (2013) launched an investigation to probe the potential correlation between emotional intelligence, foreign language listening anxiety (FLLA), and listening comprehension performance of Iranian EFL learners. They found a significant relationship between listening comprehension performance of the EFL learners and their emotional intelligence scores, with the strongest correlation belonging to the self-awareness subscale of EI. In addition, a strong negative correlation was found between FLLAS and listening comprehension performance. The results also revealed that a meaningful negative relationship between learners' FLLA and their emotional intelligence, with the strongest correlation belonging to the happiness component. Furthermore, based on multiple regression analysis FLLA was supposed to be a proper predictor of listening comprehension performance of EFL learners.

Despite the fact that the role of emotions has not been well studied yet in second or foreign language acquisition, there is a growing interest to include the role of emotions as a new source to measure the learners' individual differences in the research agenda (Rodríguez Prieto, 2010). In other words, though abilities associated with emotional competencies have increasingly gained attention in research related to effectiveness and achievement in EFL contexts (Aghasafari, 2006; Fahim & Pishghadam, 2007; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010), a little attempt has been made to examine this main affective factor - emotional intelligence - pertaining to English achievement of Iranian EFL learners. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to probe into the nature of the relationship between emotional intelligence and listening

proficiency among Iranian EFL learners. To this end, the following research questions were raised:

Q1. Is there any significant relationship between EFL learners' emotional intelligence and listening proficiency?

Q2. Does emotional intelligence predict the EFL learners' listening comprehension performance?

Q3. Which of emotional intelligence components have stronger power on EFL learners' listening comprehension ability?

Q4. Does the degree of emotional intelligence have any effect on EFL learners' listening test performance?

Q5. Is there any significant difference between males and females regarding their emotional intelligence and listening proficiency?

Method

Participants

The present study was carried out with 102 upper-intermediate level learners of English as a foreign language (39 males and 63 females) between the ages of 21 to 38 assigned from some private language institutes in Iran. Three classes were randomly chosen from a Listening and Speaking course as it was assumed that learners should enjoy some lexical and grammatical knowledge so as to interact with each other in English properly. To test the research assumptions, the researchers made an attempt to choose the participants from a language institute in order that listening skills would not teach due to the predominant use of the traditional Grammar Translation Method (GTM) which focuses only on reading and writing skills at school level in Iran, and also reading skills are mainly taught for 3-5 hours per week for each term regarding the field of study at university level. Thus, listening skills are taught only in language institutes which have a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach.

Instruments

Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I)

Bar-On (1996) developed an instrument to measure a more comprehensive concept of emotional intelligence which he labeled emotional quotient (EQ). The most popular used measure of this concept is the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (the EQ-I). It is a self-report tool to assess those personal qualities that enable some individuals to possess better emotional well-being than others. In other words, the Bar-On conceptual model of emotional-social intelligence provides the theoretical basis for his psychometric model and approach to measuring this construct. Moreover, Bar-On (1988) mentions that the Likert-type questionnaire comes into view from the question why are some people more successful than others? The test used in this study consists of 90 items with a five-point Likert scale, and each item has a value in the range of 1 to 5. Furthermore, in order to eliminate cultural differences and avoid any misunderstanding regarding the content of the questionnaire on the part of the learners, a Persian version of EQ-I test was employed. Furthermore, the Persian version adapted in Iran and its Cronbach's alpha coefficient was reported to be 0.76 and the inventory's hypothesized structure was supported by the results of the factor analysis (Dehshiri, 2003).

TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test

The listening part of TOEFL test comprised of three sections with a total of 50 questions in multiple choice format: 30 items in part A, 8 in part B, and 12 in part C. The time was controlled by the tape, and learners had 35 minutes to complete the entire section. To put it in another word, there were three parts in the listening comprehension test: Answering the one question that follows a short conversation between two speakers (part A). Responding to several questions about a longer conversation between two speakers (part B). Answering specific questions about information contained in a short lecture, which is similar to the task learners have to perform when listening to a professor in a lecture class (part C). The speaker on the tape used American English with American pronunciation.

Though instruction of listening comprehension skill is being specified in the syllabus of many English language institutes, instructors do not teach listening skills but test it in the EFL classrooms in Iran. Recently, listening skill is taught through vocabulary introduction in pre-listening to the learners and they examine correct responses in post-listening comprehension questions. "The process of explicitly teaching listening skill is overlooked, but the product of listening skill is measured through exams involving multiple-choice or true/false comprehension questions, which are a regular feature of classroom practice" (Bozorgian 2012, 660).

Procedure

Two questionnaires were employed in this study. First, the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) was administered to measure the participants' emotional intelligence. They were asked to demonstrate the extent to which they agreed with the statements by checking one of the five responses in the answer sheet. To complete the questionnaire, there was no time restriction. Then, the TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test was run. Besides, in order to receive the reliable data, the purpose of filling out the test and questionnaire was explained to the participants and they were assured that endeavor would be made to observe the confidentiality and anonymity considerations. In addition, the participants' test and questionnaire were coded numerically and they were asked not to write a name on them.

Results and Discussion

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in the process of learning English as a foreign language. Hence, the study contributes to literature on how emotional intelligence of students become important resources for enhancing students' achievement in a foreign language. Accordingly, this study investigated whether there was a credible and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and listening proficiency and that if emotional intelligence predicted the EFL learners' listening comprehension performance and if so, which of emotional intelligence components had stronger power on listening skill. Furthermore, an attempt organized to find whether the degree of emotional intelligence had any effect on listening test performance and there was any significant difference between males and females regarding their emotional intelligence and listening skill or not. In other words, the null hypotheses stated that there was not any significant relationship between EFL learners' emotional intelligence and listening skill and that emotional intelligence did not predict the learners' listening comprehension performance.

Furthermore, it was assumed that none of emotional intelligence components had stronger power on listening skill and also the degree of emotional intelligence had no effect on listening test performance. For the last null hypothesis, it was assumed that there was not any significant difference between males and females regarding their emotional intelligence and listening.

To answer the first research question of the study, the students' scores of the TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test and Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) were calculated and analyzed to find out their level of emotional intelligence and listening skill. Table 1 demonstrates the descriptive results of the variables.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics on Emotional Intelligence and Listening Proficiency

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	102	181	320	245.74	37.968
Listening Performance	102	37	50	43.30	3.617

As Table 1 illustrates, the mean of students' emotional intelligence scores is 245.74 and the standard deviation is 37.968. Moreover, their mean scores of listening are 43.30. To check the correlation between total emotional intelligence and listening proficiency, Pearson product-moment correlation was run. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Listening Performance

		Listening Skill
Emotional Intelligence		.656**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		102

***** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).***

As it is shown in Table 2, the upshots of correlational analyses showed that there was a positive and meaningful correlation coefficient between total scores on Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) and scores of the TOEFL Listening Comprehension Test ($r= 0.65$, $P < 0.1$). It means that with an increase in the learners' emotional intelligence, one can expect a higher listening proficiency, or vice versa. In other words, EFL learners' emotional intelligence tends to enhance their beliefs in their capabilities to organize and accomplish the courses of action required for successful performance. Accordingly, based on the result of Table 2, the first null hypothesis of the study which assumed that there was no meaningful relationship between emotional intelligence and listening of Iranian EFL students was refuted. The results of the correlation between the participants' emotional intelligence components and listening task are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Pearson Moment-product Correlation Coefficient between Components of Emotional Intelligence and Listening Performance

	Listening Comprehension	Sig.
Intrapersonal	.610**	.000
Interpersonal	.394**	.006
Adaptability	.620**	.000
Stress Management	.546**	.000

	Listening Comprehension	Sig.
General Mood	.506**	.000

***** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).***

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).***

To see if there was any relationship between the students' listening and the components which compose the total EQ test, another Pearson-product correlation was run. As it can be seen, Table 3 shows that all components of emotional intelligence had significant and positive correlations with learners' listening. It means that the students' listening comprehension is related to their emotional intelligence. In other words, having more emotional intelligence results in higher listening proficiency. Besides, the strongest relationship belonged to Adaptability subscale of EQ and listening comprehension (r = .62). According to Cohen (1988), the relationship was a moderate, direct, and positive one. Therefore, the results rejected the second null hypothesis of the study that emotional intelligence did not predict the learners' listening comprehension performance. Moreover, in order to answer the question which components of emotional intelligence could be the best predictor for listening performance, R Square was calculated. In other words, multiple regression analysis showing the joint effect of emotional intelligence components on the listening performance of the participants are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. R Square Table for Components of Emotional Intelligence as the Predictors of Learners' Listening Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.620a	.384	.370	2.871

a Predictors: (Constant), Adaptability

To investigate which components of EQ might have more predictive power in predicting learners' listening and how these variables contribute in this study, a stepwise regression analysis was employed. As shown in Table 4, among the five subscales of EQ, 'Adaptability' was found to be the best predictor of the dependent variable (listening comprehension skill). Its square value was 0.38 and its adjusted square was 0.37. This means that 37% of the total variance in learners' listening could be explained by 'Adaptability' subscale. As this is an overall upshot of the strength of relationship, a more specific analysis must follow.

Table 5. The ANOVA Table of Regression

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	231.019	1	231.019	28.035	.000b
	Residual	370.811	100	8.240		
	Total	601.830	101			

a Dependent Variable: Listening test scores

b Predictors: (Constant), Adaptability

Considering Table 5, it was found that 'Adaptability' had significant effect on the learners' listening performance. Specifically speaking, the p-value (sig.) less than 0.1 indicates that the finding is statistically significant. This signifies that the predictors predict the dependent variable (F = 28.035, df = 1, and P < 0.1). It can be implied that the predictive power of the learners' 'Adaptability' over their listening performance was significant.

Table 6. Relative Contributions of the Independent Variable on listening Performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	29.850	2.574		11.597	.000
	Adaptability	.296	.056	.620	5.295	.000

a Dependent Variable: Listening test scores

The data in Table 6 provide us with a better picture of how well this component of EQ - Adaptability - could predict the dependent variable (listening proficiency). Statistically, Table 6 indicates for the component of EQ the unstandardized regression weight (ß), the standard error of estimate (SEß), the standardized coefficient, the t-ratio and level at which the T-ratio is significant. Adaptability made the highest contribution (ß = .620, T = 5.295, P < 0.5). That is, the value of Beta (ß) in standardized coefficients = 0.62 shows that an increase of one standard deviation in the predictor (Adaptability) will result in a change of 0.62 standard deviations in the listening ability. Thus, the third hypothesis, which said that none of emotional intelligence components had stronger power on listening skill, was rejected. Furthermore, to determine if the degree of emotional intelligence had any effect on listening test performance, Paired samples T-test was run. For doing this statistical procedure the participants were divided into two groups: one group with high EI and the other group with low EI. The total score of EQ in this study was 450 and the scores above 225 was considered as high and those were below 225 was regarded as low. Out of 47 participants, 29 students belonged to the first group and the other 18 belonged to the second one.

Table 7. Paired Samples Tests for the Pair 1 (High Emotional Intelligence & Listening test scores) and Pair 2 (Low Emotional Intelligence & Listening test scores)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Pair 1 High Emotional Intelligence & Listening Test Scores	225.172	24.463	49.569	47	.000
Pair 2 Low Emotional Intelligence & Listening Test Scores	165.833	12.748	55.193	36	.000

As can be seen in Table 7, high and low emotional intelligence affected listening test performance significantly and positively. Findings of this study support the

literature, confirming the importance of EFL learners' emotional intelligence about language learning. Therefore, the upshots rejected the hypothesis of the study, which assumed that the degree of emotional intelligence had no effect on listening test performance. Besides, in order to find out whether learners' listening and EQ differ among males and females, independent t-test was run. The results of the t-test are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Descriptive Statistics and T-test Results Combined

	Gender Differences	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	df	Sig.
Emotional Intelligence	Male	39	241.56	36.599	9.150	-.538	100	.593
	Female	63	247.90	39.070	7.017			
Listening Skill	Male	39	42.88	3.096	.774	-.572	100	.570
	Female	63	43.52	3.889	.698			

Based on what is briefed in Table 8, it can be maintained that the difference between the listening and emotional intelligence of male and female subjects was not significant ($t = -.538$, $p>.05$ and $t = -.572$, $p>.05$). As (p) value was not less than .05, it means that there was not a meaningful difference between the listening and EQ of the male and female EFL learners in this study. Accordingly, based on the result of the table 8, the fifth and last null hypothesis of the study which was assumed that there was not any significant difference between males and females regarding their emotional intelligence and listening was retained.

To sum up, the study aimed at investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and listening comprehension. Indeed, as an interactive process, learners' listening comprehension performance is thought to be affected by a multitude of factors, possible example of which is postulated to be emotional intelligence in the current study. To determine whether emotional intelligence in its totality could predict the changes in listening comprehension, and if so which of the components of emotional intelligence could better predict any changes in the listening comprehension performance of the learners. The results of simple linear regression analysis showed that emotional intelligence was a significant predictor of the listening comprehension. Results of multiple regression analyses showed that the 'Adaptability' subscale of the emotional intelligence had statistically the strongest relationship with the listening comprehension of learners. Closely aligned with the finding, this study made an attempt to provide evidence to support the idea that enhancing emotional intelligence tends to promote listening performance in both male and female EFL learners. Hence, the yielded result that corroborates the findings of the studies by Chan (2007); Hashemi and Ghanizadeh (2011); as well as Talebinezhad and Banihashemi (2013), mention that individuals with high emotional intelligence have high listening comprehension performance. In addition, many findings through this study turned out to be quite congruent with those of Goleman (1995), Salovey, Mayer and Bar-on studies, and findings led the mentioned scholars

to believe that individuals especially learners with high degree of EQ, are more successful in learning processes, life and education. Furthermore, it is in contrast with the idea that females are emotionally more intelligent than males. Some previous studies concluded that individuals' emotional intelligence changes with the gender differences. Perry et al. (2004) and Day and Carroll (2004), for example, postulated that females reported higher emotional intelligence than did males. In addition, this finding is in line with the argument that effective listeners need to be aware and conscious of their needs, purposes, emotions, and their successful management of their emotions and those of others. The obtained upshot for the first research question is in line with the findings of other scholars (e.g., Badakhshan, 2008; Pishghadam, 2009). Badakhshan (2008) found that in addition to the total emotional intelligence, its components except for empathy were correlated with the students' listening comprehension. The study by Pishghadam (2009), also, came up with similar findings in the sense that emotional intelligence components were found to be influential over the listening performance of learners. Thus, there is a very strong body of support for syllabus designers and English language instructors to frame the domain of listening skill attention in the classroom instruction. Though this study provided a focus on EFL listening comprehension performance relationship without examining the impact of EFL listening comprehension instruction, the results are strong enough to guarantee further research looking at the impact of learning strategy on EFL language proficiency.

Conclusion

Since affective factors play a larger role in developing second or foreign language skills than does the cognitive, the present study sought to investigate the possible association between EFL students' emotional intelligence and their listening comprehension task. According to Celce-Murcia (2001), most language teaching approaches lack an emphasis on learners' feelings, attitudes, and autonomy. Thus, the findings of this study not only have implications for effective teachers to look for and find ways to motivate their students, encourage and teach them ways to continue learning outside the classroom and away from the teacher, but to help their students recognize their emotions and lower their affective filter when it is interfering with learning. In other words, if teachers identify and support learners who need to develop their emotional intelligence before they engage in learning tasks, it may lead to a crucial intervention in the learners' language learning experiences. Moreover, understanding the effective role of students' emotional intelligence and listening skill will enable teachers and researchers to design appropriate materials and activities to help students enhance their achievement in learning a foreign or second language (Cotterall, 1999). Though every learner comes to the classroom with different motivation, psychological trait and personality, it is worthwhile to consider the universal human traits in pedagogical processes. Based on the results obtained in this study, it can be predicted that students who inherit a greater emotional intelligence perform better on enhancing their academic performance.

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قدرت پیش‌بینی مؤلفه‌های هوش‌هیجانی در عملکرد درک شنیداری زبان‌آموزان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی: مقایسه جنسیتی

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پژوهش حاضر به بررسی ارتباط احتمالی بین هوش‌هیجانی زبان‌آموزان انگلیسی و عملکرد درک شنیداری آنان پرداخته و برای دستیابی به اهداف پژوهش، تعدادی از زبان‌آموزان به روش نمونه‌گیری هدفمند از چند مؤسسه خصوصی زبان انگلیسی در ایران انتخاب شدند. از شرکت‌کنندگان خواسته شد تا به پرسشنامه هوش‌هیجانی بار-آن (EQ-I) و آزمون درک شنیداری تافل پاسخ دهند. داده‌ها با استفاده از آمار توصیفی و استنباطی تحلیل شد. ضریب همبستگی گشتاوری پیرسون برای بررسی رابطه بین هوش‌هیجانی و مهارت شنیداری به کار رفت و از آزمون تی برای مقایسه شرکت‌کنندگان مرد و زن در درک شنیداری و هوش هیجانی استفاده شد. نتایج مطالعه نشان داد که بین مردان و زنان در مهارت شنیداری و هوش هیجانی تفاوت معناداری وجود ندارد. علاوه بر این، رابطه‌ای معنادار و قابل توجه بین مهارت شنیداری دانشجویان و هوش‌هیجانی کل و به طور خاص مؤلفه‌های آن یافت شد. همچنین، نتایج تحلیل رگرسیون چندگانه برای بررسی قدرت پیش‌بینی هوش‌هیجانی در عملکرد درک شنیداری نشان داد که هوش‌هیجانی پیش‌بین مناسبی برای عملکرد درک شنیداری زبان‌آموزان است و در بین خرده‌مقیاس‌های هوش‌هیجانی، «انعطاف‌پذیری» قوی‌ترین قدرت را در پیش‌بینی عملکرد درک شنیداری زبان‌آموزان دارد. نتایج این مطالعه می‌تواند مدرسان، پژوهشگران، توسعه‌دهندگان آزمون و طراحان مواد آموزشی را نسبت به چگونگی تأثیر هوش‌هیجانی بر مهارت زبان که بیانگر قابلیت‌های زبان‌آموزان است، آگاه سازد. این امر آنان را برمی‌انگیزد تا با دقتی بیشتر به ضرورت استفاده از روش‌های متنوع در تدریس بیندیشند. انتظار می‌رود معلمان بیشتر به نقاط قوت و ضعف‌هیجانی زبان‌آموزان هنگام تدریس توجّه نشان دهند.

واژه‌های کلیدی: پرسشنامه هوش‌هیجانی بار-آن (EQ-I)، هوش هیجانی، درک شنیداری، تفاوت‌های جنسیتی، زبان‌آموزان انگلیسی.

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