ON THE CORRELATION BETWEEN IRANIAN UNDERGRADUATE EFL LEARNERS’ EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, MOTIVATION AND VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT
The present study was conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, motivation and vocabulary knowledge in undergraduate students. To fulfill the purpose of the study, 59 undergraduate English as a Foreign Language students took part in this study. The investigation was done through using two tests and one questionnaire including Vocabulary Size Test (VST) (Nation, 2007), the Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (Schutte et al., 1998), and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) developed by Pintrich, Smith, Garcia and McKeachie (1991). Using the Vocabulary Size Test (VST), the participants were divided into three groups of high, mid, and low. To analyze the data, One-Way ANOVA and Multiple Comparisons (Scheffé) were used. To check the correlation, Pearson correlation coefficient was run. Considering the participants’ levels, it was found that motivation had a positive and significant correlation with emotional intelligence in high, mid, and low groups. The findings, furthermore, indicated that all components of motivation had positive and meaningful correlation with all subscales of emotional intelligence in high, mid, and low groups. That is, by increasing vocabulary knowledge, students become motivated to use information consisted in emotion to make effective decisions. In other words, those who are more emotional intelligent and motivated can produce positive emotions in their own and others to ask their questions and expand their vocabulary knowledge.

KEYWORDS: Emotional intelligence, Motivation, Vocabulary Knowledge

INTRODUCTION
In today’s educational system, learner is an active participant. In other words, Learners are being asked what they want to learn and are encouraged to set their own goals for pedagogical attainment. Even though these instructional methods add value to the student and his will, these methods may put students who are unable to function well at a disadvantage. That is the instructor’s duty and art to handle the class in such a way that neither of the groups feel frustrated, and he should use different teaching methods which meet the needs of both groups of
In the last decade or so, a tremendous amount of facts has been discovered on the role emotions play in our lives. Researchers have found that “even more than IQ, one’s emotional awareness and abilities to deal with feelings will determine success and happiness in all walks of life, including family relationships” (Gottman & DeClaire, 1998, p. 20). In other words, Goleman (1995), and Salovey and Mayer (1990) asserted that research has demonstrated that EQ can explain success in education and life more than IQ. Salovey and Mayer (1990), also, introduced the term Emotional Intelligence (EI) as the ability to perceive, understand, and manage one’s own and others’ emotions. In the same year, they defined EI as a type of social intelligence including the ability to manage and control one’s own and others’ emotions and to make use of the information to lead thinking and acting. It is the potential to perceive and understand the feelings of others and create interpersonal interactions. Then, Goleman (1995) stated 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” (p. 43).


Vocabulary has long been considered as a prerequisite and strong determinant of reading achievement. In this regard, Hui (2004) stated that “without enlarging vocabulary size or breadth, students do not have real reading ability and communicative competence” (p. 477). “It is clear that a large and rich vocabulary is the hallmark of an educated individual. Indeed, a large vocabulary repertoire facilitates becoming an educated person to the extent that vocabulary knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency in particular and school achievement in general” (Beck, Mckeown & Kucan, 2002, p. 1).

LITERATURE REVIEW
Previous study demonstrated that emotional intelligence is connected with success in many domains, including enhancing performance in interviewing (Fox & Spector, 2000), contextual performance, work settings (Carmeli, 2003), student learning (Brackett & Mayer, 2003), effective
teaching (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010), classrooms (Petrides, Frederickson, & Furnham, 2004), academic performance (Gil-Olarte, Palomera, & Brackett, 2006), and cognitive tasks (Schuttes, Schuetplez, & Malouff, 2001). The concept of intelligent was initially identified by Spearman (1904) as Dickens (2007) asserted:

Spearman (1904) first accounted for the observation that people who perform well on one type of mental ability also tend to do well on many others. For instance, individuals who are good at identifying patterns in chains of abstract drawings are also good at quickly sequencing and arranging pictures to tell a story, telling what three dimensional shapes drawn in two dimensions will resemble when rotated, tend to have large vocabularies and are quick at arithmetic. This pattern of moderate to strong positive mutual relations across the whole spectrum of mental abilities led Spearman to hypothesize the existence of a general mental ability similar to the usual notion of intelligence (p. 1). Thus, vocabulary breadth of EFL learners might be a good predictor of their general intelligence.

Gardner (2001) studied the roles of the student, the teacher and the language researcher in understanding the motivation to learn another language. He highlighted the socio-educational model of second language acquisition. Vaezi (2008) in her research, Language Learning Motivation among Iranian Undergraduate Students, explored that Iranian EFL learners had very high motivation and positive attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language and that they were more instrumentally motivated. Thus, she supported the idea of some researchers who believe that in a foreign language setting learners are instrumentally motivated. Ghanizadeh and Moafian (2010) investigated the relationship between EFL teachers’ emotional quotient (EQ) and their pedagogical success in language institutes. In addition, the role played by their years of teaching experience in their EQ and the relationship between their age and EQ were also studied. Subsequent data analyses revealed that there was a credible and meaningful relationship between teachers’ success and EQ. Furthermore, significant correlations were found between teachers’ EQ, their teaching experience, and their age. The results also revealed the teacher’s emotional intelligence to be a critical factor in the process of teaching. Skourdi and Rahimi (2010) compared two models of emotional intelligence based upon the ideas proposed in Salovey and Mayer (1990), and Saklofske, Austin, and Miniski (2003) to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, linguistic intelligence, and vocabulary learning, especially receptive breadth of vocabulary, among EFL learners. A correlational analysis revealed that there was an interesting pattern of significant relationship between emotional intelligence and first language, between emotional intelligence and vocabulary knowledge and between first language and vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, emotional intelligence was found to be a potential predictor for first language acquisition. Parsa, Jahandar, and Khodabandehlou (2013) studied the effect of verbal intelligence on pre-intermediate learners’ knowledge of lexicon. The correlation done on the data indicated a positive relationship between verbal intelligence and knowledge of lexicon. Besides, the analysis of the results revealed that participants who had higher verbal intelligence also had higher marks in vocabulary test, and the participants who had lower verbal intelligence had a lower mark in the vocabulary test.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As this review has demonstrated, there are a lot of interesting and challenging works on about emotional intelligence, motivation, and vocabulary knowledge. All in all, considering the aforementioned studies, this paper addresses the following research question:

Q. Is there any profound relationship between emotional intelligence and motivation at different levels of vocabulary knowledge for Iranian EFL learners?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were 82 male and female senior students, majoring in English Teaching at Islamic Azad University. Two classes were randomly chosen at English Language Department of Shiraz University; in one selected class, there were 36 female and 13 male participants, and in the other one, there were 26 females and 7 males ranged from 21 to 29 years of age. Out all of 82 tests and questionnaires distributed, 78 were returned. After being screened for usability, 59 responses were found to be complete and proper for analysis purposes. The respondents, finally, were 44 female and 15 male participants. Seniors who had passed all reading comprehension courses were selected for this study as it was assumed that they should enjoy some vocabulary knowledge.

Instruments

Two tests and one questionnaire were employed in this research. The first test was the Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (Schutte et al., 1998), the first was the Vocabulary Size Test (VST) (Nation, 2007); the second one was Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia & Mckeachie, 1991), and the last one was the Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (Schutte et al., 1998) consists of a 33 item self-report measure of emotional intelligence. The items in the SSEIT are prepared on a five-level Likert scale. In this kind of test, Petrides and Furnham (2000), Ciarrochi, Chan and Bajgar (2001), and Saklofske, Austin and Minski (2003) identified some factors. The factors are Perception of Emotions (PE), Managing Emotions in the Self (MES), Managing Other’s Emotions (MOE) and Utilizing Emotions (UE). The reliability index of the test was calculated, and it was found to be 0.91.

Procedure

First, Nation's Vocabulary size Test (2007) was given to subjects to determine their vocabulary size, and the level of their vocabulary knowledge. Second, the Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test was administered. They were asked to show the extent to which they agreed with the statements by checking one of the five responses in the answer sheet. The responses to this questionnaire ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Finally, the Motivation Strategies for Learning Questionnaire was used. In order to complete these tests and questionnaire, there was no time restriction.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Having a glance at the related literature in the area of EI, motivation and vocabulary knowledge, it was showed a clear need to undertake a study in this regard. Thus, the present study focused on the role of emotional intelligence, motivation, and the vocabulary knowledge of EFL learners. It was hypothesized that no relationship exists between emotional intelligence and vocabulary knowledge at different levels of vocabulary knowledge of EFL undergraduate students.

Based on the students’ scores of the vocabulary knowledge test, they were divided into three groups of high, mid, and low. At first, the median was calculated to find two midpoints and the mid scores turned out to be 55 and 39. Then, they classified in three groups. Those who got scores 55 or higher were put in the high group, those whose scores were between 39 and 55 were considered as the mid group, and the students with the scores of 39 or lower were put in the low group. In order to see if the difference in the performance of all three groups was significant; in other words, if the cutoff scores for dividing the participants into three groups were appropriate, a One-Way ANOVA was run. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1: One-Way ANOVA to Compare the Participants’ Vocabulary Mean Scores in the Three Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Knowledge</td>
<td>10819.673</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5409.836</td>
<td>109.037</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>2778.429</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>49.615</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13598.102</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 1, there was a significant difference in the performance of all the groups of high, mid, and low. Moreover, in order to observe the vocabulary mean scores between the performances of the three groups, a Scheffé test was carried out. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Differences in Vocabulary Knowledge among the Three Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocabulary Knowledge</th>
<th>(J)Vocabulary Levels</th>
<th>(I)Vocabulary Levels</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Confidence Bound</th>
<th>Confidence Bound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>21.718*</td>
<td>2.233</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>27.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>13.125*</td>
<td>2.196</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>7.60</td>
<td>18.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>-34.843*</td>
<td>2.382</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-40.83</td>
<td>-28.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

As shown in Table 2, the results indicate a significant difference in vocabulary knowledge scores among the high, mid, and low groups with the level of significance set at P < 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the three groups performed differently. In other words, the cut points to classify the participants into three groups were truly selected. Then, the correlational analysis was run for all these three groups. The results of the relationships among the different components of emotional intelligence and motivation in the high group are reported in Table 3.
As it can be observed, the correlational findings of the above table indicate that in the high group, the correlation between two of six components of motivation including Intrinsic Goal Orientation and Control of Learning Beliefs, and all the emotional intelligence subscales is high and significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 levels. Moreover, there exists positive and significant correlation between the other components of motivation and all the emotional intelligence subscales. But Test Anxiety has no significant correlation with Managing Emotions in the Self (MES) (.034).

According to Table 4, in the mid group, there exists positive significant correlation among all the components of motivation and all the emotional intelligence subscales. Moreover, there are
moderate significant correlations between Control of Learning Beliefs and all the components of emotional intelligence in the 0.01 and 0.05 levels in this group. The results of the analysis in the low group are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlations among Different Components of EI and Motivation in the Low Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intrinsic Goal Orientation</th>
<th>Extrinsic Goal Orientation</th>
<th>Task Value</th>
<th>CLB</th>
<th>SELP</th>
<th>Test Anxiety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.513*</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>.525*</td>
<td>.630**</td>
<td>-.194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>.277</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.244</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.724**</td>
<td>.690**</td>
<td>-.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>.503</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.463</td>
<td>.332</td>
<td>.611**</td>
<td>.581*</td>
<td>.471*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UE</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.637**</td>
<td>.385</td>
<td>.268</td>
<td>.559*</td>
<td>-.179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level  *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

The outcomes of correlational analyses in Table 5 show that in low group, there are positive and significant correlations among all components of motivation except Test Anxiety and all the components of emotional intelligence. Test Anxiety has no significant correlation with emotional intelligence subscales. The correlational analysis between total emotional intelligence and total motivation was also run. The results can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Correlation between Total EI and Total Motivation in the Three Groups of Vocabulary Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total Emotional Intelligence</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Total Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Group</td>
<td>Total Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.868**</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Group</td>
<td>Total Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.742**</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Group</td>
<td>Total Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.707**</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

As it can be observed in Table 6, the correlational findings revealed that in the high group, the correlation between total emotional intelligence and total motivation was high and significant at the 0.01 level ($r=0.86$, $P<0.1$). It means that with an increase in emotional intelligence, students' motivation will be higher. Moreover, there existed a positive and significant correlation between total emotional intelligence and total motivation in the mid group ($r=0.74$, $P<0.1$). In the low group, also, the correlation between total emotional intelligence and total motivation was high and significant at the 0.01 level ($r=0.70$, $P<0.1$). Thus, the total emotional intelligence...
scores of the students in the three groups, high, mid and low correlated highly and significantly with the total motivation. That is to say, a credible and meaningful relationship between Iranian EFL university learners' emotional intelligence and motivation mean scores was observed, which implies that those who are more emotional intelligent and motivated can produce positive emotions in their own and others to ask their questions and expand their vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, the results rejected the hypothesis of the study, which assumed that there was no relationship between emotional intelligence and motivation at different levels of vocabulary knowledge. The findings of this study are in line with those of Aki (2006), who figured out that language learning is a concept that depends on both the learner and the instructor when it comes to human psychology and interpersonal communication. According to Aki (2006), “what is important in language learning is not high intelligence values; rather, it is being emotionally intelligent or at best, having the ability to recognize, employ, comprehend and manage emotions” (p. 66). On the other hand, these results are in conflict with what was reported by Vali-Mohammadi and Bagheri (2011). They reported that there was no significant and meaningful relationship between emotional intelligence, motivation and vocabulary size. But there existed some relationship between them when the students were divided into three groups of high, mid and low based on the scores of the vocabulary size test.

CONCLUSION
This study was an attempt to investigate the possible bond between emotional intelligence, motivation and vocabulary knowledge of EFL university students. Based on the results obtained in this study, one can conclude that there is a significant relationship between students' emotional intelligence, motivation and vocabulary knowledge which indicates that students with greater emotional intelligence and motivation have greater power of learning vocabulary. Specifically speaking, a profound relationship between EFL students’ emotional intelligence and motivation was observed which indicates that those who are more emotional intelligent and motivated can produce positive emotions in their own and others to ask their questions and expand their knowledge. In addition, among all components of motivation, it was the Control of Learning Beliefs (CLB) which had the highest contribution. This may be due to the fact that those students, who have a greater control over themselves and their learning, benefit from a higher degree of motivation. They can easily motivate themselves to learn new materials. Besides, those students with a greater ability of managing their emotions have greater power of learning.

Since the outcome of the present study proves a significant relationship between EFL college students' emotional intelligence, motivation and their academic achievement in expanding vocabulary knowledge; therefore, more appropriate courses which aim at improving students' vocabulary knowledge in foreign language should be included in the curriculum so that students' academic achievement will promote as a result.

Limitation of the Study
Like many other studies, the present study had some limitations which could hinder the generalization of the results to other situations. First and foremost, if a larger sample size were
considered, the obtained results could have been more significant and reasonable than they are now. Second, the present study was conducted on the relationship between emotional intelligence, motivation and vocabulary knowledge, and the results of this study may not be applicable to the other language skills and sub-skills such as grammar, but it can be helpful in conducting other research to explore the relationship between other language skills and personality factors.

REFERENCES


