



Emotional Intelligence and Willingness to Communication in Speaking Ability: A Case Study

Nahmeh Bagheri and Samad Mirza Souzani

University, Department of English, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad Iran.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 16 March 2017;

Received in revised form:
10 May 2017;

Accepted: 22 May 2017;

Keywords

Emotional intelligence,
Willingness to communication,
Speaking ability.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated relationship between Emotional intelligence and willingness to communication in speaking ability. To this end, three types of instruments were applied to collect research data, i.e., McCroskey's (1992) Willingness to Communicate Scale, Baron's (1997) Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) as well as a final achievement exam administered at the end of the term to gather students English speaking grades. For the analysis of the data correlation and independent samples t- test to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance were used. The findings indicated that there was a relationship between speaking ability and emotional intelligence. Also, there was a positive relationship between speaking ability and willingness to communication. On the other hand, there was not a significant difference between females and males on the speaking task, emotional intelligence and willingness to communicate.

© 2017 Elixir All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

In countries like Iran that English language is considered as a foreign language and is being taught in this way, the second language or foreign language is rarely used in communities or even in multimedia. English is part of the medium instruction but it has not had suitable results and majority of the learners are not able to speak, write, listen and read in English. On the other hand, the shortage of vocabulary and unfamiliarity with the various grammatical elements in target language (English) seems to be one of the most significant problem among EFL learners especially in Iran although English language is taught in all schools' levels and universities during the education period. This problem can be an important obstacle in learning process and students always have a worry and fear in their speaking. Some students can write better in English, but they show weakness in speaking abilities. This may relate to emotional intelligence and willingness to communicate in speaking ability.

There is no shadow of a doubt that communication is considered to be integral to the development of human relationships (Richmond, 1991). Communication and language teaching are strongly related to each other. In fact, human beings acquire language through the medium of communication. The question may be raised as why some students are inclined to communicate, whereas others avoid second language communication. According to MacIntyre and Doucette (2010, p.162) "willingness to communicate can be perceived as a readiness to speak in the L2 at a particular time with a specific person, and as such, is the final psychological step to the initiation of L2 communication". Willingness to communicate is the most basic orientation toward communication. Almost anyone is likely to respond to a direct question, but many will not continue or initiate interaction.

McCroskey and Baer (1985) defined willingness to communicate as a stable tendency towards the communication, given the choice. WTC is considered to be of paramount importance to the realm of language teaching, and it is basically because of its realization as the final intention to the initiation of the communication. The primacy of WTC lies in the fact that it partly arises from the role it plays in the interaction which undoubtedly leads to development. McCroskey and Bear (1985) regarded self-esteem, introversion, communication competence, communication apprehension, and cultural diversity as the determining factors which lead to WTC. Furthermore, MacIntyre (1998) added other key elements such as motivation, personality, and context to the above mentioned model.

In second language learning, the effect of emotional intelligence has not been well studied yet. Therefore in the research agenda, incorporating the effect of emotional intelligence in order to measure the learners' individual differences is of great interest. Many studies have recently been conducted on the effect of EI on academic success in education. However in an EFL context, like Iran, where students do not have contact with English language outside the classrooms, very few studies have been conducted to discover the relationship of emotional intelligence and willingness to communication in speaking ability.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and willingness to communication in speaking ability will be investigated in the present paper. In this way, the study is also aimed to achieve other targets as the following:

- Determine gender in emotional intelligence and willingness to communication.
- Determine gender in speaking ability.
- Determine age in emotional intelligence and willingness to communication.

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were proposed:

-Is there any relationship between speaking ability and emotional intelligence among EFL learners?

-Is there any significant difference between males and females EFL learners in terms of speaking proficiency and emotional intelligence?

-Is there any significant difference between males and females in terms of willingness to communicate among EFL learners?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Theoretical Background

According to Goleman (1995) success depends on several intelligences and on the control of emotion. Specifically, he stressed that intelligence (IQ) alone is no more the measure of success. According to him intelligent account for only 20% of the total success, and the rest goes for Emotional and Social intelligences. Abisamra (2000) then queried that if this is found to be so, why the trainers don't begin to teach its components (i.e., emotional intelligence) to students at schools? He then concluded that if emotional intelligence affects student achievement, then it is vital for schools to integrate it in their curricula and thereby raising the level of students' success.

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), Emotional Intelligence is being able to track one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this to guide one's thinking and actions. Again, Salovey and Mayer (1993) wrote that an emotionally intelligent person is skilled in four areas: identifying, using, understanding, and regulating emotions. Similarly, Goleman also stressed that emotional intelligence consists of five components: Knowing one's emotions (self-awareness), managing them, motivating self, recognizing emotions in others (empathy), and handling relationships.

Later on Bar-On suggested that since EI is an important element in one's life showing and predicting success, there is a dire need to measure, operationalize and quantify this construct (Bar-On, 1997). He coined the term EQ for his measure. He defined EI as a collection of capabilities, competencies, and non-cognitive skills that have an effect on a person's abilities to gain success in the face of environmental pressures. In other words, he believed that EI is the ability to realize emotions and how such emotions influence interpersonal relationships (Baron, 2000).

Tracing the outset of research on WTC as a self-contained domain of scrutiny may take us back to 1970s when Burgoon (as cited in Zarrinabadi & Abdi, 2011, p.206) developed the notion of 'unwillingness to communicate' which she then delineated as "enduring and chronic tendency to avoid or devalue oral communication." Yet, as Peng (2007) asserts, the true naissance of the concept of WTC should be ascribed to attempts by McCroskey and his colleagues who aimed at capturing "the trait-like personality that individuals display in first language (L1) communication" (Peng, 2007, p. 34).

Among the definitions set forth for WTC, mention can be made of McIntyre, Clement, Dörnyei, and Noels' (1998) delineation where they characterize it as "a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person, or persons, using a L2" (cited in Riasati & Noordin, 2011, p. 75). Moreover, the definition of WTC proposed by MacIntyre, Baker, Clement and Donovan (2003) describes the term as "...the predisposition toward or away from

communicating, given the choice" (cited in Baghaei, Dourakhshan & Salavati, 2012, p. 55). Furthermore, Kang's (2005, p. 291) definition of WTC goes like this: "an individual's volitional inclination towards actively engaging in the act of communication in a specific situation, which can vary according to interlocutor(s), topic, and conversational context, among other potential situational variables." Different strategies have been proposed, throughout the history of research on WTC, to augment learners' willingness for communication, among which reference can be made to Freiermuth and Jarrell's (2006) probe in which the positive effect of online chat on furthering students' WTC is underscored, and Reinders and Wattana's (2011) scrutiny, which reports on the effectiveness of utilizing digital games as a means of enhancing learners' WTC.

Further evidence for the influence of playing games on boosting learners' WTC is provided by Wang and Erlam (2011) in a research performed in the Japanese context of education. Furthermore, in an attempt to gauge the possible effect of mode of communication on the amount of WTC, Lewis (2011) found that in spite of learners' ostensible preference for face to face communication, it is oral computer mediated communication that can produce more communication proclivity in individuals.

Despite the miscellaneous nature of studies conducted on WTC, the majority of research allotted to this area seems to fall within either correlational or exploratory research. Within the first body of research reference can be made to Peng's (2007) work which was after finding the potential relationship between learners' willingness to communicate and their motivation.

2.2. Empirical Background

Investigating the roll of emotional factors in L2 learning is not something new. A number of methodologies such as Suggestopedia exist which specifically addressed emotional and psychological issues in L2 learning, some of which were motivated by Krashen's claim in monitor model, specifically the part about the affective filter (Pishghadam, 2009). With regard to the roll of EQ in foreign language learning Fahim and Pishghadam (2007) explored the relationship between EQ, IQ, and verbal intelligence with the academic achievement of students majoring in English. They found that academic achievement was strongly associated with several dimensions of EI (intrapersonal, stress management, and general mood competencies). They also found that academic achievement did not correlate much with IQ, but it was strongly associated with verbal intelligence which is subsection of IQ test. Thus, this study highlights the vital role of EQ in comparison with IQ in academic success of EFL learners.

Skourdi and Rahimi (2010) proved that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and linguistic intelligence (LI), between EI & vocabulary knowledge and between LI & vocabulary knowledge. It was also found that EI can be a potential predictor for LI, and vice versa. The participants in this study were 103 junior students of English at Shiraz Azad University and Shiraz state university. Standard test were used to measure the participants EI, LI and vocabulary knowledge.

Second language learning is a complex phenomenon associated with many internal and external mechanisms. Accordingly, Gardner (1983) stated that language is not grammar specific, it is influenced by factors that are intelligence based.

He has expanded the traditional view of intelligence into the broader scope of Multiple Intelligence and emphasized that language is not limited to syntax, semantics, and phonology. Ellis (1994) maintained that the development of the second language learning is influenced by many other variables including affective factors such as anxiety and empathy, among other variables. The main variables that have been recognized to affect second language learning success are self-esteem, inhibition, risk taking, anxiety, empathy, and motivation (Brown, 1994).

Wolfardt, Felfe, Koster (2001) in two studies showed that emotional intelligence is mainly associated with personality traits (extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, self-perceived creativity), life satisfaction and thinking styles with only a low relation to verbal intelligence. In addition to, they state that people who benefit more from emotional intelligence dimension, are creative performers in comparing with those who are lower in this domain.

Stottlemayer (as cited in Rouhani, 2008) in a study of EQ and its relation to students' achievements among 200 eleventh and twelfth grade American students in Texas found that EI skills were significantly predictor of academic achievement.

In the field of second or foreign language learning, Pishghadam (2007) found a relationship between EQ and second language success among 528 Iranian university students in Tehran. Emotional intelligence scores were correlated with the students Grade Point Average (GPA) and the scores they obtained at the end of second year at the university in listening, reading, speaking and writing. The results showed that second language skills and GPA strongly correlated with stress management and intrapersonal skills in the EQ test.

Skourdi and Rahimi (2010) investigated the relationship among Emotional intelligence, linguistic intelligence and acquiring vocabulary among 66 junior students of Shiraz Azad University and Shiraz state university studying in three fields of language learning: English language teaching, English language translation, and English language literature. The finding revealed that there was a positive relationship between EI & LI, between EI and vocabulary knowledge, and between LI & vocabulary knowledge, EI was found to be a potential predictor for LI, and vice versa.

Rouhani (2008) investigated the relationship into EI, foreign language anxiety and empathy through a cognitive-affective course among 70 under graduate Iranian EFL sophomore and junior students. The results indicated that the cognitive-affective reading-based course in which literary readings were used significantly improved the participants' emotional intelligence scores from the Mayer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional intelligence test (MSCEIT) measure as well as Multi-Dimensional Emotional Empathy Scale (MDEES) scores, but significantly decreased their foreign language anxiety scores.

The exploratory research has mainly been concerned with pinning down the factors spawning WTC. As a case in point, running a probe into the major factors underlying Chinese learners' unwillingness to communicate, Liu and Jackson (2008) found that WTC correlates with factors like degree of foreign language anxiety and interest in learners, as well as learners' appraisal of their own language proficiency. The survey done by these researchers was a partially large-scale one conducted with 547 undergraduate non-English learners.

In like manner, Ghonsooly, Khajavy and Asadpour (2012) launched a probe into different potential factors underlying Iranian non-English learners' willingness to communicate. The findings of the study, which was carried out on 158 academic learners, provided the researchers with evidence concerning the go-togetherness between WTC and facets like learners' self-confidence and attitudes held toward target community.

In a later study conducted in the Chinese context of education, Fu, Wang and Wang (2012) set out with the aim of pinpointing the factors underlying learners' WTC. In so doing, 100 non-English institute learners were selected and through questionnaire administration, relevant data were gathered regarding the possible impact of facets like culture, personality, motivation, interest and confidence on participants' WTC. At the end, the researchers found that WTC correlates not only with these factors, but also with communicative tasks and topics applied to learners.

Finally, a more thoroughgoing hunt for the variables generating higher levels of willingness to communicate in learners led Cao and Philp (2006, p. 480) to maintain that "the group size, familiarity with interlocutor(s), interlocutor(s)' participation, familiarity with topics under discussion, self-confidence, medium of communication and cultural background" are among the principal factors giving rise to learners' WTC. As the brief glimpse through the literature on WTC helped reveal, the history of research on the concept enjoys a good amount of depth and breadth. Yet, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, no studies, to date, have attempted to link WTC to emotional aspects in individuals and hence to their emotional intelligence. Defined as "an array of non-cognitive abilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demand and pressures" (Baron, 1997, p.14) or "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (Goleman, 1998, p.375), emotional intelligence has been said to play a key role in learners' success both in academic (e.g. Matthews, Zeidner & Roberts, 2002), and life settings (e.g. Murphy, 2006; Palmer, Donaldson & Stough, 2002), and as the researchers in the current study discuss, in motivating learners to speak and communicate in classroom context.

3. Methodology

3.1. Design of study

This research was a quantitative research design in nature. The research was centered on the study of variables that captured these common features and which were quantified by counting, scaling, or by assigning values to categorical data.

3.2. Participants

The participants of the study were 50 undergraduate senior university learners majoring in TEFL and English translation at Marvdasht University. The total sample size represented participants of both genders (25 males and 25 females) selected through random sampling. Moreover, in terms of age, participants ranged between 22 and 30 years of age.

3.3. Instruments

Two types of instruments were applied to collect research data. The first one was McCrosky's (1992) Willingness to Communicate Scale. This scale contained 20 items.

The face validity of the instrument was strong, and results of extensive research indicated the predictive validity of the instrument. This scale gauged the respondent's tendency toward approaching or avoiding to initiate the communication. The reliability of the WTC scale was estimated to be .92 by McCroskey (1992). The second instrument was Bar-On's (1997) Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). The Emotional Quotient Inventory was used to measure the Emotional Intelligence of the participants. It included 133 Likert-scale items. To carry out the present study, the domestically standardized version of this questionnaire was used (Samoui, 2005). The reduced version of the questionnaire containing 90 Likert-scale items was applied that was conceived suitable based on the purpose of the research. The third instrument was an English final achievement exam which was administered at the end of the term by the instructor to gather students English speaking grades, these grades were quantitative numbers which were collected by interview with students. The interview was organized and we used the part of speaking IELTS.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

First of all, permission was obtained from the academic authorities of Marvdasht Islamic Azad University. Willingness to communicate questionnaire was distributed to the participants in the second half of the academic year. Participants were provided with the necessary instruction regarding the questionnaire's completion. Moreover, the purpose of administering the questionnaire was explained. Participants were required to complete the part allocated for the demographic information such as age, gender, etc. Afterwards, Bar-On's (1997) EQ-I was distributed to the same participants. The third instrument was an English final achievement exam which was administered at the end of the term to gather students English speaking grades, these grades were quantitative numbers which were collected by interview with students. The interview was organized and used based on the part of speaking IELTS.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

In order to analyze the collected data SPSS 22 (Statistical Package for the Social science) was run. Pearson's correlation analysis and the coefficient of each correlation were calculated to investigate any statistically significant relationship between learners' Willingness to communicate and their Emotional Intelligence in speaking ability. Moreover, two independent samples T-tests were calculated to determine the difference between speaking ability Willingness to Communicate and their Emotional Intelligence. Both descriptive (frequency tables, figures, graphs) and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected during data collection.

4. Findings and Results

This section relates to the descriptive and inferential statistics obtained through the questionnaires. The findings are displayed in the following tables, followed by their interpretations.

4.2. Correlation

4.2.1. Correlation between speaking ability and Emotional intelligence

In order to find out the main research question, which was "is there any relationship between emotional intelligence and willingness to communication in speaking ability?" the subordinate question had to be answered first.

The first subordinate question was "Is there any relationship between speaking ability and Emotional intelligence?" Thus, to determine the relationship between speaking ability and emotional intelligence, a Pearson product moment correlation was applied to data. The results are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 1. The correlation between speaking ability and Emotional intelligence.

		Speaking	Emotional Intelligence
speaking	Pearson Correlation	1	.762**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.762**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	50

$p < 0.01$ * $p < 0.05$

As displayed in Table 4.1, the observed Pearson R of 0.762 showed a statistically significant relationship between a Pearson's degree of Emotional intelligence and speaking ability ($P = .00 < .05$). This analysis revealed that emotional intelligence had significant relationship with speaking ability and one with higher emotional intelligence is more successful in his or her speaking ability. Thus the null-hypothesis as there is no relationship between speaking ability and emotional intelligence is rejected.

4.2.2. Correlation between speaking ability and willingness to communication

To determine the relationship between speaking ability and willingness to communication, a Pearson product moment correlation was applied to data.

As displayed in Table 4.2., the observed Pearson R of 0.886 showed a statistically significant relationship between a Pearson's degree of speaking ability and willingness to communication ($P = .00 < .05$). This analysis revealed that speaking ability had significant relationship with willingness to communication and one with higher willingness to communication is more successful in his or her speaking ability. Thus the null-hypothesis as there is no relationship between speaking ability and willingness to communication is rejected.

4.3. Independent sample t-test

4.3.1. Independent sample t-test for gender in terms of speaking ability

In order to determine whether there is any significant difference between speaking ability of male and female learners, an independent sample t-test was run.

Table 2. The correlation between speaking ability and willingness to communication.

		Speaking	Willingness to communication
Speaking	Pearson Correlation	1	.886**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Willingness to communication	Pearson Correlation	.886**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	50

Table3. Descriptive data on the role of gender on speaking.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Speaking	Male	15	7.1333	1.40746	.36341
	female	15	6.0667	1.90738	.49248

Table4. Independent sample t-test for the role of gender on speaking.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Speaking	Equal variances assumed	3.507	.072	1.743	28	.092	1.06667	.61205	-.18706	2.32039
	Equal variances not assumed			1.743	25.760	.093	1.06667	.61205	-.19199	2.32532

**p<0.01* p<0.05

The findings are presented in Table 4.3 and Table 4.4.

The Levine's test for equal variance yields a p- value of .07 which is more than 0.05 and indicate that there is not a significant difference between speaking ability of males and females. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between two means is (-.19199, 2.32532). Thus, the null-hypothesis as there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of speaking ability is accepted.

4.3.2. Independent sample t-test for gender in terms Emotional intelligence

To explore the existence of any significant difference between male and female learners' Emotional intelligence, another independent sample t- test was run. The findings are presented in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6.

The Levene's test for equal variance shows a p- value of .6 which is more than .05 and reveals that there is not a significant difference between emotional intelligence of males and females. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between two means is (-14.696, 21.416). Thus, the null-hypothesis as there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of emotional intelligence is accepted.

4.3.3. Independent sample t-test for gender in terms willingness to communication

To explore the existence of any significant difference between male and female learners' willingness to communication, another independent sample t-test was run.

The findings are presented in Table 4.7 and Table 4.8.

Table 7. Descriptive data on the role of gender on willingness to communication.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Willingness to communication	Male	25	71.31	15.847	3.169
	Female	25	64.17	20.675	4.135

The Levene's test for equal variance yields a p- value of .15 which is more than 0.05 and indicate that there is not a significant difference between willingness to communication of males and females. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between two means is (-3.348, 17.639). Thus, the null-hypothesis as there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of willingness to communication is accepted.

5. Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, the research questions and their respective hypotheses raised earlier were answered.

1. Is there any relationship between speaking ability and emotional intelligence?

As displayed in Table 4.1, the observed Pearson R of 0.762 showed a statistically significant relationship between a Pearson's degree of Emotional intelligence and speaking ability ($P=.00<.05$).

Table 5. Descriptive data on the role of gender on Emotional intelligence.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Emotional Intelligence	Male	25	312.24	31.903	6.381
	Female	25	308.88	31.597	6.319

Table 6. Independent sample t-test for the role of gender on Emotional intelligence.

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Emotional. Intelligence	Equal variances assumed	.246	.622	.374	48	.710	3.360	8.980	-14.696	21.416
	Equal variances not assumed			.374	47.996	.710	3.360	8.980	-14.696	21.416

Table 8. Independent sample t-test for the role of gender on willingness to communication.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
willingness.to. communication	Equal variances assumed	2.086	.155	1.371	48	.177	7.145	5.210	-3.330	17.620
	Equal variances not assumed			1.371	44.963	.177	7.145	5.210	-3.348	17.639

This analysis revealed that emotional intelligence had significant relationship with speaking ability and one with higher emotional intelligence is more successful in his or her speaking ability. Thus the null- hypothesis as there is no relationship between speaking ability and emotional intelligence is rejected.

2. -Is there any significant difference between males and females EFL learners in terms of speaking proficiency and emotional intelligence?

Based on the findings, the Levene's test for equal variance yields a p- value of .07 which is more than 0.05 and indicate that there is not a significant difference between speaking ability of males and females. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between two means is (-.19199, 2.32532). Thus, the null-hypothesis as there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of speaking ability is accepted.

According the findings, the Levene's test for equal variance shows a p- value of .6 which is more than .05 and reveals that there is not a significant difference between emotional intelligence of males and females. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between two means is (-14.696, 21.416). Thus, the null-hypothesis as there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of emotional intelligence is accepted.

3. Is there any relationship between speaking ability and willingness to communication?

As displayed in Table 4.6, the observed Pearson R of 0.886 showed a statistically significant relationship between a Pearson's degree of speaking ability and willingness to communication ($P=.00 < .05$). This analysis revealed that speaking ability had significant relationship with willingness to communication and one with higher willingness to communication is more successful in his or her speaking ability. Thus, the null-hypothesis as there is no relationship between speaking ability and willingness to communication is rejected.

According the findings in Table 4.8, the Levine's test for equal variance yields a p-value of .15 which is more than 0.05 and indicate that there is not a significant difference between willingness to communication of males and females. The 95% confidence interval for the difference between two means is (-3.348, 17.639). Thus, the null-hypothesis as there is no significant difference between males and females in terms of willingness to communication is accepted.

In general, based on the findings of the study, there is relationship between emotional intelligence and willingness to communication in speaking ability. Therefore, learners with higher emotional intelligence do better in speaking ability. Also, there is a positive relationship between willingness to communication and speaking ability.

On the other hand, there is no difference between gender in terms of Emotional intelligence, willingness communication and speaking ability. In addition, there is no difference between males and females in terms of Emotional intelligence, and their willingness to communication and speaking ability.

The results of the current study are in line with the previous findings, for example Birjandi and Tabatabaian (2012) who investigated the relationship between Emotional intelligence and willingness to communicate among EFL learners and indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between EI and WTC.

These results also confirm the findings of Mohammadzadeh and Jafarigohar's (2012) study in which linguistic, interpersonal, and musical intelligences were shown to have a direct relationship with WTC components. Also, findings of the present study were in line with a qualitative investigation which was done by Riasati (2012) and Birjandi and Tabatabaian (2012) in the area of WTC and emotional intelligence.

Ketabdar, Yazdani and Yarahmadi (2014) also investigated the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Willingness to Communicate among Iranian EFL Learners. Findings revealed that role of emotional intelligence in successful communication, as previously noted by various authors such as Armstrong (2003) and Gardner (1999b). A further interpretation may be that learners with high emotional intelligence need to learn in social settings rather than solitary ones. Therefore, their willingness to communicate is higher than those with low emotional intelligences.

The result of this study is in line with the findings of Hashimoto (2002) who found that WTC affects the frequency of L2 use in the classroom. In other words, it seems that the frequency of L2 use is the cause of higher proficiency. Findings of De Jong et al (2012) also support the results of this study. Their findings showed that language proficiency is a good predictor of oral fluency and has significant relationship with it.

Baghaei, Dourakhshan and Salavati's (2012) findings are also in line with the results of the present study in which they concluded that those who had higher English language proficiency were better in terms of their willingness to communicate. The results of this study are also in line with the findings of Valadi, Rezaee, and Baharvand (2015) whose results of correlational analyses revealed that there was a strong relationship between learners' WTC and their oral proficiency with no significant gender difference.

In the same vein, Tousi and Khalaj (2014) investigated the impact of willingness to communication on Iranian EFL learners speaking ability based on the obtained data, it was inferred that there was a statistically significant relationship

between Iranian EFL students' WTC and their speaking skills. Considering the fact that the mean scores of the groups who were exposed to treatment sessions were higher than those of the control group, it can be suggested that teachers should advocate encouraging and increasing willingness to communicate of their students.

6. Conclusion and Implications

EFL instructors should try to change their traditional method of teaching speaking and pave the way for more student-centered approaches language learning. In general, from what has been discussed above, it was demonstrated that increasing the students' willingness to communicate could improve their speaking skills.

The results and findings of this study can have some implications for language teachers, EFL students and managers of English language institutes. The results are hopefully advantageous to various individuals and organization, as they can benefit from findings of the research.

1. Educational policy-makers should consider the applicability of the emotional intelligence and willingness to communication in the context.

2. Students should be encouraged to speak the target language with their classmates.

3. Students should work in pairs and groups to promote their speaking skills.

4. English language teaching supervisors should facilitate the process of the speaking skills.

References

AbiSamra, N. (2000). The relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement in eleventh graders. *Research in Education*, FED.661.

Armstrong, T. (2003). *Multiple intelligences of reading and writing: Making the words come alive*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Baghaei, P., Dourakhshan, A., & Salavati, O. (2012). The relationship between willingness to communicate and success in learning English as a foreign language. *MJAL*, 4(2), 53-67.

Bar-On, R. (1997). *The emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i): A test of emotional intelligence*. Toronto: Multi-Health Systems.

Baron, R. (2000). Emotional and social intelligence. Insights from the emotional quotient inventory (EQ-I). In: Bar-On, R., Parker, J. D. (Eds.), *the Handbook of Emotional Intelligence*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 363-388.

Birjandi, P., & Tabatabaian, M.S. (2012). The inter relationships among emotional intelligence, foreign language anxiety, and willingness to communicate. *Journal of American Science*, 8(8), 725-730.

Cao, Y., & Philp, J. (2006). Interactional context and willingness to communicate: A comparison of behavior in whole class, group and dyadic interaction. *System*, 34, 480-493.

De Jong, N.H., Steinel, M.P., Florijn, A., Schoonen, R., & Hulstijn, J.H. (2012a). Facets of speaking proficiency. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 34, 5-34.

Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. New York.

Fahim, M., & pishghadam, R. (2007). On the role of emotional, psychometric and verbal intelligences in the academic achievement of university students majoring in English language. *Asian EFL journal*, 9, 240-253.

Freiermuth, M., & Jarrell, D. (2006). Willingness to communicate: can online chat help? *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 16(2), 189-212.

Fu, L., Wang, X., & Wang, Y. (2012). The Research on willingness to communicate in Chinese students' EFL study. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(1), 112-117.

Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: BasicBooks.

Gardner, H. (1999b). *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*. New York: Basic Books.

Ghonsooly, B., Khajavy, G. H., & Asadpour, S. F. (2012). Willingness to communicate in English among Iranian non-English major university students. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 31, 197-211.

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

Hashimoto Y. (2002). Motivation and willingness to communicate as predictors of reported L2 use: The Japanese ESL context. *Second Language Studies*, 20(2), 29-70.

Jong, N.H. (2012). L2 fluency: Speaking style or proficiency?

Kang, S. J. (2005). Dynamic emergence of situational willingness to communicate in a second language. *System*, 33, 277-292.

Ketabdar, Z., Yazdani, S., & Yarahmadi, M. (2014). The relationship between emotional intelligence and willingness to communicate among Iranian EFL learners. *European online journal of natural and social sciences*, 3(3), 637-650.

Lewis, A.L. (2011). *Learners' mode preferences and willingness to communicate in face-to-face versus oral computer-mediated communication (Master's thesis)*. San Diego State University.

MacIntyre, P.D., Clement, R., Dorneyei, Z., & Noels, K.A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *ModernLanguage Journal*, 82, 545-562.

MacIntyre, P.D., & Doucette, J. (2010). Willingness to communicate and action control. *System*, 38(2), 161-171.

MacIntyre, P. D. (1998). *Language anxiety: A review of the research for language teachers*.

In D. J. Young (ED), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning* (pp. 24- 45). Boston: McGraw- Hill.

Matthews, G., Zeidner, M., & Roberts, R.D. (2002). *Emotional intelligence: Science & myth*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

McCroskey, J. (1992). Reliability and validity of the willingness to communicate scale. *Communication quarterly*, 40(1), 16-25.

McCroskey, P.D., & Baer, J.E. (1985). Willingness to communicate: The construct and its measurement. Paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, Denver, CO.

Mohammadzadeh, A., & Jafarigohar, M. (2012). The relationship between willingness to communicate and multiple intelligences among learners of English as a foreign language. *English Language Teaching*, 5(7), 25-32.

Murphy, K.T. (2006). *The relationship between emotional intelligence and satisfaction with life after controlling for self-esteem, depression, and locus of control among community college students (Doctoral dissertation)*. University of South Florida.

Palmer, B., Donaldson, C., & Stough, C. (2002). Emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 33, 1091-1100.

Peng, J. E. (2007). Willingness to communicate in an L2 and integrative motivation among college students in an intensive English language program in China. *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*, 2, 33-59.

- Pishghadam, R. (2007). On the influence of emotional and verbal intelligence on second language learning. Ph. D. Thesis, Allameh Tabataba'ii University, Tehran.
- Reinders, H., & Wattana, S. (2011). Learn English or die: The effects of digital games on interaction and willingness to communicate in a foreign language. *Digital Culture & Education*, 3(1), 3-29.
- Riasati, M. J. (2012). EFL learners' perceptions of factors influencing willingness to speak English in language classrooms: A qualitative study. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 17(10), 1287-1297
- Riasati, M.J., & Noordin, N. (2011). Antecedents of willingness to communicate: A review of literature. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 3(2), 74-80.
- Rouhani, A. (2008). An investigation into Emotional intelligence, foreign language anxiety and empathy through a cognitive-affective course in an EFL context. *Linguistic online* 34, 2/08. pp.41 - 57.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J .D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, 9, 195-211.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1993). The intelligence of Emotion. *Intelligence*, 17, 433-442.
- Samouei et al., (2001). Baron's emotional intelligence test. English to Persian translated version. Tehran. Sina Research Institution on behavioral sciences.
- Samouei, R. (2005). Emotional intelligence test. Tehran: Sina Institute.
- Skourdi, S., & Rahimi, A. (2010). Relationship of emotional intelligence and linguistic intelligence in acquiring vocabulary. *California Linguistic Notes*, VXXXV, 1-24.
- Tousi, S.M., & Khalaji, H.R. (2014). The impact of willingness to communicate on Iranian EFL learners speaking ability. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 8 (11), 1866-1869.
- Valadi A, Rezaee A, Kogani Baharvand P. (2015). The relationship between languagelearners' willingness to communicate and their oral language proficiency with regard to gender differences. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*. 4(5): 147-153.
- Wang, Y.J., & Erlam, R. (2011). Willingness to communicate in the Japanese language classroom: An inquiry learning project in a year 7 classroom. *The New Zealand Language Teacher*, 37, 39-44.
- Wolfrad, U., Felfe, J., & Koster, T. (2001). Self _ perceived emotional intelligence and creative personality. *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, 21 (4), 293 _ 309.
- Zarrinabadi, N.,& Abdi, R. (2011). Willingness to communicate and language learning orientations in Iranian EFL context. *International Education Studies*, 4(4), 206-214.