

DECIPHERING THE EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE IN AN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASS

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Abstract

The present study anchored its investigation into students' verbal communication and emotional aspect. Expressly, the major aim was to establish the potential relationship between Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) among 45 Third year EFL learners, at Biskra University, who were engaged in the study through convenience sampling. Methodologically, a quantitative approach with an explanatory sequential design was adopted. In order to gather the necessary data, two data collection instruments were employed, namely, the Instructional Willingness to Communicate test (IWTC), and a Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SEEIT). After obtaining the raw data, IBM SPSS software version 28 was used to process the scores into interpretable forms. The statistical results of the correlation analysis indicated that there is a moderate positive relationship between EI and WTC. In all respects, the findings of the current inquiry can encourage syllabus designers and EFL teachers to consider the effectiveness of EI in mediating classroom communication impediments. Thus, it is a call for the integration of EI skills and abilities in the foreign language teaching program and classroom activities of Oral expression course in particular.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, EI-based activities, foreign language teaching, Oral Expression students, willingness to communicate

1. Introduction

With the growing tendency towards focusing on learners' differences in teaching, language learners are no longer neglected in learning but unique and exceptional, especially in the way they perceive their learning process. One cannot deny the fact that the wide range of learners' differences ultimately influences the learning outcomes. Despite the complexity of the issue, the probability of success can be higher when teachers embrace these differences and use them to learners' advantage. However, learners do not only differ in the ways they deal with learning, but also in their emotions during the learning process in general.

In the Algerian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, the focal interest in learning is gaining more knowledge about language structure and use. Authentic communication is marginalized in EFL pedagogy and the emotional aspect, as well as affective factors, are not being familiarized in educational settings. In spite their importance in shaping the overall language learning progress, they are still not given much attention.

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In other words, emotions have long been regarded as irrational factors. Students are generally evaluated based on mathematical and linguistic intelligences. However, EI is increasingly playing a pivotal role in learning, and academic intelligence is no longer considered as the only contributing factor to success, day to day adaptability, and problem-solving. According to the available literature, EI is defined as the ability to understand and manage one's emotions, to understand and form healthy relationships with others. It is rendering intentions to actions, accessing and managing emotions to support thoughts. Most importantly, embracing one's emotions can help him/her cope with difficulties, develop a positive attitude, initiate and take part in different communicative settings.

This problem has been aggravated mainly with the arranged Oral Expression sessions in the curriculum at the university level (which primarily address practicing speaking). That is, these sessions are mostly based on free chosen topics resulting in mere presentations. The latter hinder the involvement of students on regular basis in classroom interactions, as presentations are most often a group work within a limited period, once in a whole semester. Needless to mention that not all students get proper parts to discuss while presenting nor were they given the chance to practice the language outside the classroom. The same goes for EFL teachers who struggle with classes of mixed abilities guided by no syllabus, working towards the same goal of instruction despite students' levels and individual differences.

As a result, the lack of discussion in these assigned sessions turned them to passive listening settings. If the basis is mere recitation of what has been prepared to be presented, teachers are indeed obliged to ignore students' emotional side and individual differences. Students, as a result, would not be eager to engage or initiate any classroom discussions which will, eventually, lead them to experience communication apprehension. Despite all of this, the major problem is that even when students are offered opportunities to communicate, not all of them would speak up and discuss what they think; they would only remain silent. Therefore, learner's unwillingness to communicate poses a major problem in language learning classrooms.

Therefore, this research seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the EI level of Third Year EFL learners?

RQ2: To what extent are Third Year EFL learners willing to communicate?

RQ3: Is there any significant relationship between Third Year EFL learners' EI and WTC?

Based on the abovementioned research questions, we propose the following research hypotheses:

RH1: Third Year EFL learners at Biskra University have average to high levels of EQ.

RH2: Third Year EFL learners are not willing to communicate inside the classrooms.

Concerning the third research question, we assume the null hypothesis:

H₀: There is a no significant relationship between Third Year EFL learners' EI and WTC.

The general aim of this study is to determine the relationship between EI and WTC in the Algerian EFL context. More specifically, this research work aims to: (a) Spotlight the concepts of EI and WTC by introducing them to both students and teachers; b) Determine Third Year EFL students' EI level; (d) Ascertain how much Third Year EFL students are willing to communicate in language learning classrooms; and (e) Establish the relationship between Third Year EFL learners' EI and their WTC.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Emotional Intelligence

EI is a relatively new concept in the field of psychology and education. Like intelligence, EI has been perceived differently in different domains by various researchers. Thus, different definitions, models, measures have been established. Moreover, the most prominent researchers who laid the foundations for EI are Salovey and Mayer, Goleman, and Bar-On.

Bar-On (1997) has coined the term Emotional Quotient (henceforth EQ). He considered it a parallel term to Intelligence Quotient (IQ). Bar-On (1997) defines EI as “an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influences one’s ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures” (p. 14, as cited in Mayer et al., 2000). Bar-On attempted to identify the skills and abilities that aid people in coping with everyday environmental demands, believing that the higher the level of EI, the more successful an individual is. After 17 years of research, Bar-On could finally develop the very first scientifically validated measure of EI (EQ-i); after experimenting on thousands of people around the globe (Maree & Eiselen, 2004, as cited in, Bencke, 2006).

2.1.1 Models of emotional intelligence

Researchers, initially, have perceived the nature of EI from different perspectives. As the concept of EI is controversial; it was not clear whether to qualify it as an ability or trait. Thus, many models have been developed in order to specify and explain the different skills and abilities encompassing EI. The works pertaining to this area have been split into three main categories: Ability, trait, or ability-trait mixed model EI. According to the *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology* (Spielberger, 2004), there are three major models of EI:

- The Mayer-Salovey ability model which defines this construct as the ability to perceive, understand, manage and use emotions to facilitate thinking.
- The Goleman mixed model which views it as an assortment of emotional and social competencies that contribute to managerial performance and leadership.
- The Bar-On mixed model which describes EI as an array of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and behaviours that impact intelligent behaviour.

2.1.2 Studies related to emotional intelligence

With the publication of the groundbreaking book by Daniel Goleman (1995) “Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ”, the concept of “intelligence” has been redefined. The author addressed the fact that many people seem to be academically brilliant, possessing high Intelligence Quotient (IQ) levels but fail to succeed in different aspects of life. Thus, the notion of IQ determines that success has been reconsidered by shifting the focus to emotions and how they can limit or improve a person’s mastery of skills and decision making. Hence, ever since Emotional Quotient (EQ) has been introduced, many studies have spotlighted EI over the years obtaining valuable findings.

The potential relationship between negative emotions and EI has been examined in multiple contexts, particularly in Applied Linguistics. Thus, Li (2020) explored the influence of trait emotional intelligence (TEI) on academic achievement and its correlation with foreign language enjoyment (FLE). For data collection, composite questionnaires were administered to 1307 Chinese second-year senior high school students. The questionnaire included a section for demographic information followed by a 10-point question for perceived achievement and two well-established psychometric scales for measuring TEI and FLE. An English test was used to evaluate students’ actual English achievement. The findings

demonstrated that students' TEI has a significant correlation with positive emotions and can predict learning achievement. Meanwhile, most of the participants had moderate to high EI scores and one-third of them have shown little or no enjoyment in English language learning.

Adopting a mixed-methods approach, Resnik and Dewaele (2020) examined Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) positive and negative emotions of 768 secondary and tertiary level students in German language L1 and English language LX. After opting for snowball and convenience sampling techniques to access participants who lived in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and South Tirol in Italy, the respondents were asked to answer an online questionnaire through a web survey application termed as "Lime Survey". The findings demonstrated that high levels of TEI were significantly linked to more enjoyment and less anxiety in both L1 and LX classes. Therefore, this study stressed teachers' awareness towards students' emotions for the ultimate goal of enhancing overall academic performance.

In order to explore the correlation between EI and motivation, Niroomand et al., (2014) conducted a study on 59 participants majoring in English teaching at an Iranian University. After explaining the objectives, both questionnaires of the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) and the Motivated Strategies for Learning (MSL) were administered to participants in two separate sessions. The findings revealed that all components of motivation correlated positively and significantly with Iranian EFL students' EI subscales. It was also indicated that students who have significant control over themselves and their learning tend to be self-motivated and have higher degrees of management over their emotions. Based on the results, it was concluded that both EI and motivation play a pivotal role in expanding EFL learners' linguistic knowledge and in facilitating the process of language learning.

Despite the fact that EI is a new concept of research, the body of literature arrived at interesting findings. These numerous studies reflect the importance of EI and provide a great deal of data necessary to improve students' engagement in the course of learning and education as a whole. However, deep investigations need to be conducted to explore the outcomes of implementing EI programs within schools' curricula; not just EI relation with different variables.

2.2 Willingness to Communicate

WTC has been the subject of various research studies since the 1980s. Hence, McCroskey and Baer (1985) first introduced WTC as a concept to explain how individual traits affect L1 communication. In the 1990s, after the concept of WTC was extended from the L1 communication domain to the L2 acquisition domain, it was incorporated into L2 education (Lee & Drajerati, 2020).

Based on McCroskey and Baer (1985) study, WTC has its roots in the works of Burgoon (1976) on unwillingness to communicate, Mortensen et al., (1977) on predispositions towards verbal behavior, and McCroskey and Richmond (1982) on shyness. Therefore, WTC emerged as a trait-like conceptualization that refers to an individual's inclination or apprehension towards communication (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). Later, MacIntyre et al., (1998) defined WTC in the L2 as "A readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2" (p. 547).

For Bernales (2016), WTC does not inherently require actual acts of communication, as long as students intend to communicate and are willing to act on that desire. He states that WTC could, therefore, reside in learners who simply raise their hands to engage within the lesson, irrespective of whether they say anything loudly. Nevertheless, as claimed by Heidari (2019), the common concept of WTC emphasizes learners' participation in any way and in any manner. Even if this was not the intention of the scholars who defined the notion of

WTC, such an inference is probable and plausible. It is a commonly-occurring issue that learners may encounter with no specific purpose in mind.

2.2.1 MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels's (1998) pyramid model of WTC

L2 WTC studies have been largely based on MacIntyre et al.'s (1998) model (six-layered pyramid), which is composed of dynamic, situation-specific (the top three categories) and stable, trait-like variables (the bottom three layers). The former variables tend to be dynamic and inconsistent, usually they are contingent on specific communicative contexts; whereas the latter often signify stable, trait-like variables that influence L2 WTC behaviours that are consistent across time and space.

Layer I is concerned with Communication Behavior which, in turn, incorporates L2 use, the latter is described as “the result of a complex system of interrelated variables” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547). As for Behavioral Intention (Layer II), it comprises the concept of WTC which is defined as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (MacIntyre et al., 1998, p.547). Layer III is related to Situated Antecedents which comprises two tendencies; the desire to communicate with a specific person and the state of communicative self-confidence. The former is a product of inter-individual and intergroup motivations.

Motivational Propensities (Layer IV) are concerned mainly with three clusters that seem to be of major significance namely: inter-individual motivation, intergroup motivation, and L2 confidence. Layer V (the Affective and Cognitive Context) deals with variables that are somewhat distant from the specific scope of language learning and communication. It is concerned with intergroup attitudes, social situation and communicative competence. The societal and individual context (Layer VI) involves mainly intergroup climate and personality. Principally, societal context involves intergroup climate. The latter is presented in relation to two fundamental aspects related to the community's structural characteristics and their perceptual and affective correlates.

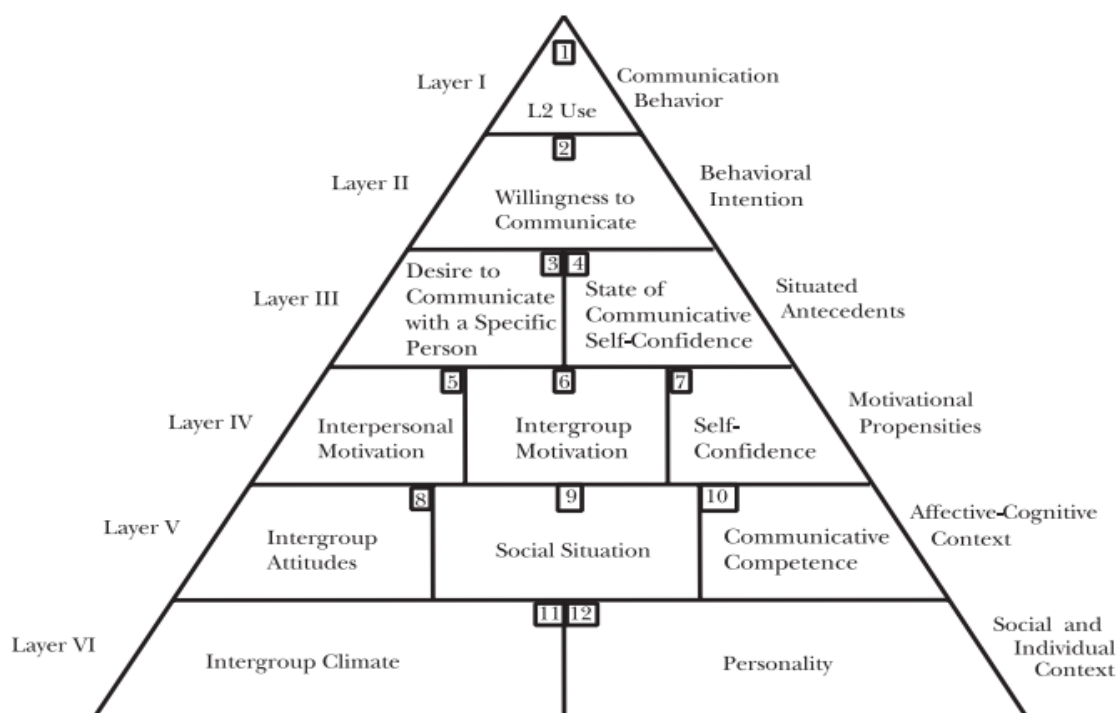


Figure 2. 1: Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC

(Source: MacIntyre et al., 1998, p. 547)

Note. Reprinted from “Conceptualizing willingness to a L2: Communicate in confidence model situational”, by P. D. MacIntyre, Z. Dörnyei, R. Clément, & K. A. Noels, 1998, *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(4), 545–562, p. 547.

2.2.2 Studies related to WTC in L2 and EFL context

Numerous studies have associated WTC with different variables adopting different approaches. In a study analyzing the Power of Openness to Experience, Extraversion, L2 Self-confidence, Classroom Environment in predicting L2 Willingness to Communicate (WTC), a sample of 234 EFL undergraduate university students was randomly selected to answer a questionnaire consisting of demographic information, L2 WTC, affective factors (perceived communicative competence (PCC), L2 speaking anxiety), personality factors (openness to experience, extraversion), and situational variable (English classroom environment). To analyze the data, both Pearson’s Correlation and Regression analyses were run. The results indicated that the most substantial predictors for L2 WTC were PCC and L2 speaking anxiety.

In another study, where the focal interest was individual differences in the Chinese EFL context, Zhang et al., (2020) compared L1 WTC and L2 WTC by examining their link with Big-Five personality dimensions (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience). The researchers opted for an experience sampling method (ESM) to assess how 103 university students think, feel, and behave shortly and repeatedly within a four-month semester. The findings indicated that L2 WTC correlates best with openness to experience, unlike L1 WTC that was related to extraversion and talkativeness.

Adopting a qualitative approach, Alenezi (2020) carried out a research on 30 EFL undergraduate students’ perception of the factors affecting in-class WTC. The data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews developed by the researcher. After audio recording and transcribing the data manually, the analysis was done using Thematic Content Analysis. The findings demonstrated that the lack of confidence is the number one factor influencing in-class WTC along with Perceived Communicative Competence and Communicative Anxiety, respectively.

From another perspective, 500 EFL learners answered the twenty-item WTC scale, a revised version of Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences (MI) and a biodata questionnaire to obtain demographic information about students. For data analysis, the Pearson formula was run to calculate the correlation between MI and WTC. The results revealed that MI factors (Linguistic, interpersonal and musical intelligences) can determine students’ WTC. Both MI and WTC were affected by gender. Mohammadzadeh and Jafarigohar (2012) implied several suggestions among which the development of EI can be achieved by underscoring the awareness of gender differences in educational settings.

3. Methodology

3.1 Context

In this study, the researchers adopted a quantitative approach due to the nature of their study. Specifically, they attempted to reveal students’ EI level along with the degree to which they are willing to communicate mostly in the instructional context. The correlational nature of this non-experimental investigation entails using both quantitative measures. Thus, the explanatory sequential design was chosen. Accordingly, we intended to measure both students’ EI and WTC through two self-report tests. Hence, the use of quantitative data collection methods enriched the interpretation of the results and contributed at drawing logical conclusions.

3.2 Participants

Third year EFL students of the academic year 2020/2021 at Biskra University comprised the population of this study. This population had been chosen for the reason that the third-year students are expected to be aware of their psychological constructs and the factors influencing their WTC along the three years of their engagement in Oral Expression sessions. The sample encompassed 45 students engaged in the study through convenience sampling technique.

4. Results

4.1 Results of the Instructional Willingness to Communicate Test (IWTC)

In order to determine the extent to which Third year students are willing to communicate in different situations, the IWTC test has been employed. The scores of all elements have been summed and displayed in Table 4.1.

Table 1.

Participants' IWTC Total Scores

Participant Number	Total IWTC Score
1	86
2	84
3	108
4	99
5	97
6	62
7	109
8	120
9	122
10	95
11	88
12	105
13	110
14	77
15	74
16	105
17	108
18	123
19	91
20	110
21	128
22	107
23	92
24	135
25	87
26	93
27	64
28	82
29	115
30	110
31	100
32	126

33	78
34	119
35	107
36	92
37	108
38	120
39	97
40	120
41	100
42	96
43	135
44	106
45	84

As it is indicated in Table 4.1, there is a significant variation in scores. In this respect, Descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the average IWTC score and the widespread of data from the mean. The results demonstrated a statistically low standard deviation with a value of SD=17.47 comparing to the mean ($X=101.64$). Table 4.2 presents the calculated data:

Table 2.

General Descriptive Statistics of IWTC

	N	Min	Max	X	SD
IWTC	45	62	135	101.64	17.47

Based on the obtained data, the results were fairly equal in value as 51% of participants were willing to communicate while 49% of them displayed resistance and less inclination towards communication. Thus, it can be concluded that Third year EFL students are willing to communicate.

Respectively, the 27 items have been reordered and classified into six categories in accordance with the major factors of the test. The detailed descriptive data of each item are represented in Table 4.3. Subsequently, it is evident that these statistics did not provide us with the reasons behind the responses; however, further elaboration and interpretation of the results will be discussed.

Table 3.
Descriptive Statistics of IWTC Items

Factor	Items	Mean	SD
Communicative Self-confidence	speak even if other students laugh at your language mistakes	3.51	1.44
	speak even if you know your classmates are better than you at speaking English	4.09	1.08
	give a presentation in front of your classmates	4.11	1.19
	speak even if your language mistakes are frequently corrected by the teacher	4.04	1.09
	talk in group-work language-learning activities	4.09	1.00
Integrative Orientation	have a group discussion about the marriage tradition in English cultures	3.24	1.37
	talk about the lifestyle of English people in a whole-class discussion	3.67	1.22
	talk to your classmates about the history of English countries	2.80	1.31
	discuss cultural differences between English and Algerian people in a group	4.07	1.16
	talk to your teacher about English literature	3.29	1.50
Situational Context of L2 Use	speak more when a discussion is related to your own personal experiences	4.11	1.13
	speak more when you are in the class of the same language teacher over several terms	4.02	1.14
	find opportunities to speak no matter how crowded the classroom is	2.96	1.45
	speak even if you are seated at the back of the classroom	3.93	1.23
	talk to your classmates about movies and series	4.20	1.01
Topical Enticement	talk about great artists you know in a group discussion	3.60	1.42
	talk to your classmates about computer games	3.09	1.50
	talk about your favorite sport in a whole-class discussion	3.38	1.40
	ask your classmate about the correct pronunciation of a word	4.04	1.24
Learning Responsibility	ask another student to explain a grammatical point to you	4.11	1.23
	ask your teacher to repeat what he or she has just said if you did not understand it	3.09	1.50
	raise your hand to ask or answer questions	4.07	1.21
	talk to your classmates outside of the classroom	4.20	0.99
Off-instruction Communication	talk to the student sitting next to you before the teacher enters the classroom	3.93	1.12
	talk to your classmates when the teacher leaves the classroom for a few moments	4.07	0.91
	talk with your classmates about your weekends	2.84	1.43
	talk to strange students from other classrooms	3.42	1.34

As exhibited in the table above, the first factor of IWTC is communicative self-confidence. It includes items 7, 16, 14, 21, and 6, respectively. Students demonstrated high self-confidence when giving presentations in front of their classmates ($M= 4.11$). The high mean value, relevant to this item in particular, might be recurrent due to the fact that the Third-year students got familiar with the idea of presentations throughout their three years (on average) experience. Presentations are an indispensable part of EFL learning, i.e., students seem to have developed their high self-confidence as this activity is a part of the evaluation and frequently considered as an obligation by many teachers.

Thus, this familiarity resulted in students being more comfortable and confident when presenting. Resting upon the reported data, participants also displayed high confidence in group-work language learning activities ($M= 4.09$). The preference for group-work activities is rooted in the fact that students would feel less intimidated sharing different ideas, expanding their perspectives, and learning in a cooperative environment. Additionally, students had less self-confidence when it comes to speaking even if the teacher frequently corrects their language-related mistakes. Hence, teachers' feedback plays an important role in the students' engagement, as it has to be constructive and less frequent. Likewise, students seek comfort and motivation from the attitudes of their friends and classmates, learning in a rather supportive environment. Consequently, teachers need to reinforce students' self-confidence by frequently implying that mistakes are an indication of progress, as they are an integral part of the learning process.

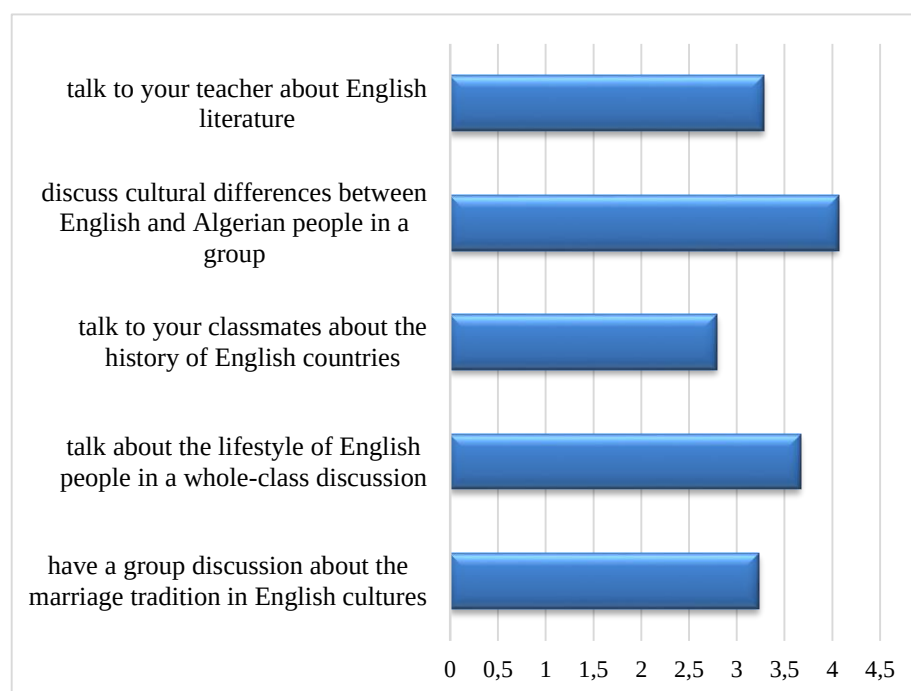


Figure 1: Communicative Self-confidence Average Response

For the second IWTC factor, integrative orientation, participants displayed the highest degree of willingness when asked about discussing the cultural differences between English and Algerian people in a group ($M= 4.07$), as compared to having a group discussion about the marriage tradition, literature, and lifestyles of English people, where students were less oriented towards joining these communicative situations in particular. On the other hand, students were mostly less willing to talk about the history of English countries with their classmates ($M= 2.80$). Taking into consideration the aforementioned findings, students seem to be more inclined to elaborate topics they are accustomed to discuss. The case of exhibiting more willingness when it came to the discussion of the cultural differences between English and Algerian people could be due to two reasons; the degree of familiarity and the amount of knowledge.

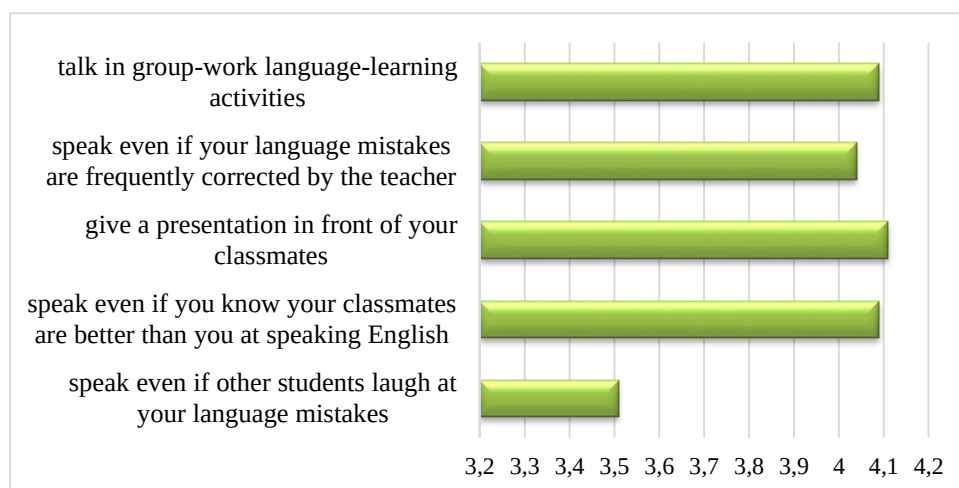


Figure 2: Integrative Orientation Average Responses

Thus, having adequate information and experience about the topics in addressed talks and sessions boosts students' WTC. As indicated by Yashima (2002), the degree of integrativeness is strongly linked to one's readiness to engage in communication with the members of the L2 group. Hence, students' posture towards the targeted culture community is reflected in their WTC. To sum up, teachers need to incorporate more group work activities based on students' degree of familiarity and amount of knowledge about the targeted language socio-cultural aspects simply because integrative orientation is directly related to these factors.

Corresponding to the third IWTC factor, the situational context of L2 use, the findings revealed that students are predominantly eager to discuss issues related to their personal experiences ($M= 4.11$) along with speaking more when being in a class with the same language teacher over several terms ($M= 4.02$). It is assumed that being taught by the same teacher over a long period would contribute to students experiencing less anxiety. As it was empirically proved by Hill and Jones (2018), student-teacher familiarity contributes to increased academic performance. Similarly, students seem to relate more when it is something they have experienced before. Thus, infusing subjective encounters makes the topics discussed more appealing to students; as the statistics have reported. Apart from these communicative situations, it was found that students are unwilling to speak when the classroom is crowded and when they are seating at the back of the classroom. Overcrowded classrooms have always been a major obstacle in Algerian universities. This drives us to one of the factors contributing to this issue that is the criteria of admission. In recent years, students' levels decreased dramatically as the standards of acceptance are lowered either in Bachelor or Masters' degrees. Therefore, limiting the number of students is deemed an

absolute necessity as it is getting harder for teachers to properly manage fruitful instructions. Same goes for students as they demonstrated less willingness to communicate which, in turn, affect their overall achievements. Likewise, WTC is also influenced by the seating arrangement as students probably feel marginalized or unheard from the part of the instructor. However, teachers can opt for different arrangements as U-Shape or clusters that are considered to be advantageous, especially in language learning classrooms.

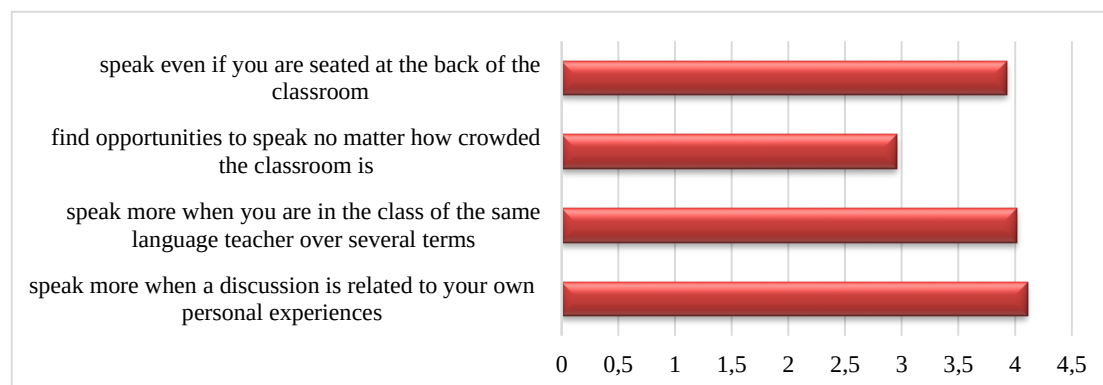


Figure 3: Situational Context of L2 Use Average Responses

Regarding the fourth component of IWTC, which tackles topical enticement, it was revealed that students were mainly willing to talk about movies and series with their classmates (M= 4.20). However, they were less prone to talk about their favorite sports (M= 3.38) and computer games in a whole-classroom discussion (M= 3.09). As 60% of the respondents were females, it was anticipated that they were not leaning towards discussing any of these topics. This is an indicator of interest and gender influence. Generally, students are able to express more when the issue of focus is quite popular and related to what they mostly give attention to.

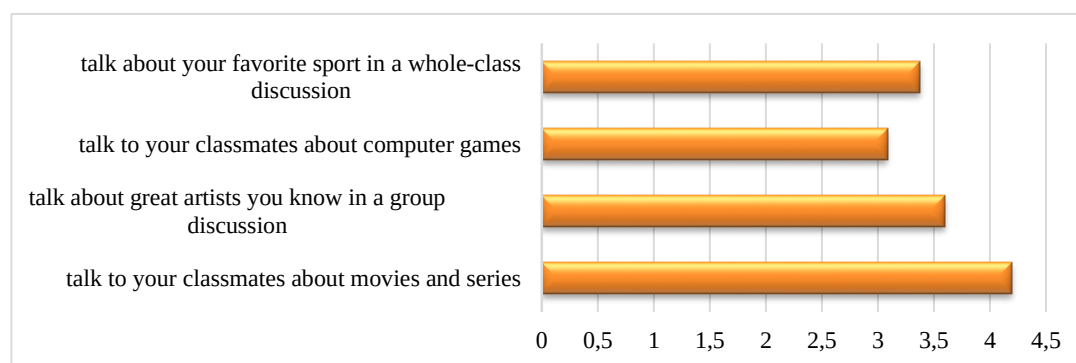


Figure 4: Topical Enticement Average Responses

As these communicative situations were only samples of what students might prefer, teachers can consider more up-to-date intellectual themes. It may be claimed that taking into consideration each individual's inclinations is difficult; however, teachers can opt for group interests or let students suggest and decide with the whole class. Accordingly, instructors are ought to be more selective and flexible when it comes to choosing topics or designing activities that are supposed to be appealing to students; taking into account both the gender and preferences of their students.

Concerning the fifth IWTC component, learning responsibility, participants delineated high willingness when it came to asking their classmates to explain a grammatical point they did not understand ($M= 4.11$). In addition, students were less willing to ask the teacher to repeat what he or she said if they did not understand ($M= 3.09$). Students would think that they have missed the point or they just did not pay enough attention to the explanation provided. Thus, it is more likely for them to prefer asking their friends first before asking the teacher as it seems less intimidating. Teachers can take benefit of this aspect by including peer assessment.

The latter helps students to connect, develop their feedback skills, and promote learners' autonomy. However, instructors have to prompt students or give them the opportunity to ask relevant and logical questions to fill the gaps of knowledge and clear misunderstandings. Generally, students showed a high level of learning responsibility as they were willing to seek help from their peers and answer questions during the lesson, i.e., participating when they are given a chance ($M= 4.07$).

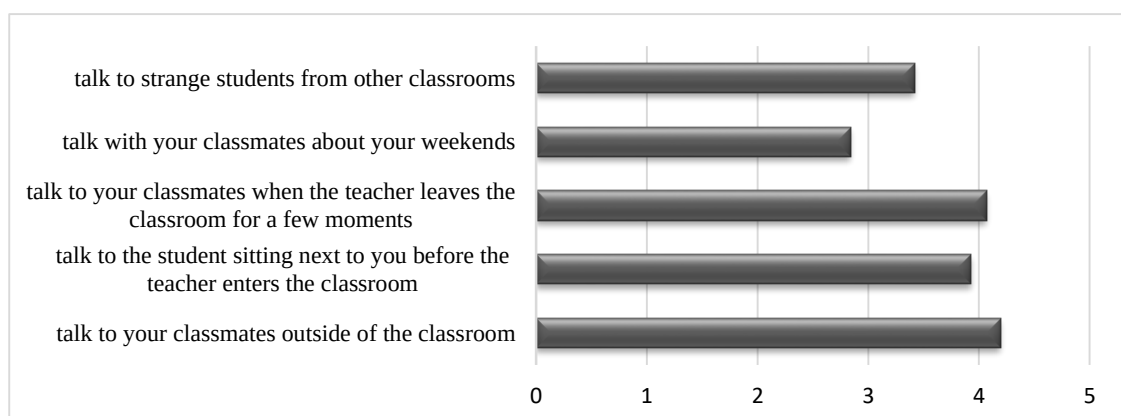


Figure 4.5: Learning Responsibility Average Responses

Finally, the highest mean value regarding the sixth IWTC factor, off-instruction communication, was reserved to talking to classmates outside the classroom ($M= 4.20$). Even with the absence of the instructors' commands and guidance, students were still keen to communicate. Communicating in the target language without any instructions is considered an indicator of students taking responsibility for their learning. On the other hand, the statistics indicate that students were less willing to talk to their classmates about their weekends ($M= 2.84$). It can be said that talking about something like weekends is considered personal and students would not share it with acquaintances but friends. Apart from this, learning outside the classroom is as equally important as learning inside the classroom. Thus, teachers can help improve students' WTC by assigning tasks in which practice with others outside the classroom is the focal point.

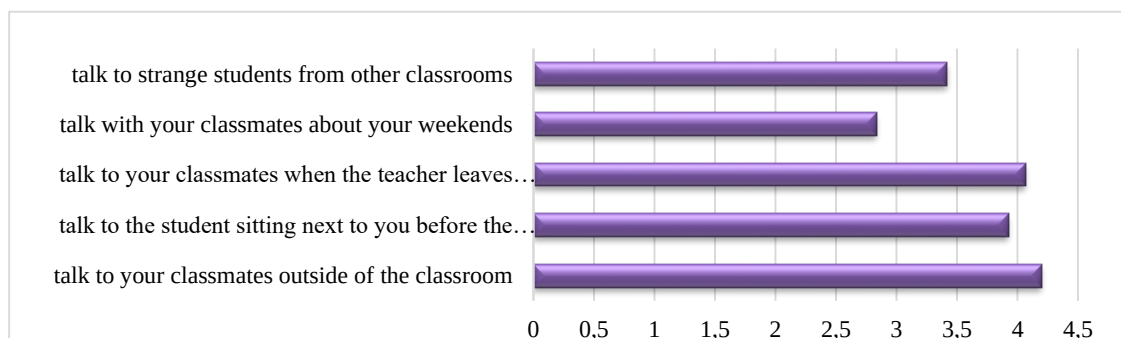


Figure 4.6: Off-Instruction Communication Average Responses

4.2 Results of the Correlational Analysis

Correlation is a numerical measurement that proves the degree to which two or more variables are associated. It is essentially a measure of covariance; it does not establish a causal relationship (Chalil, 2020). Correlation is measured by a statistic termed as “Correlation Coefficient”. The latter is commonly represented by the symbol r and ranges between -1 and 1. Little or no relationship between two variables is indicated by a correlation coefficient close to zero. A positive relationship between the two variables is denoted by a Correlation Coefficient close to one, with an increase of the values of one variable associated with an increase in the values of the other. A negative correlation between two variables is expressed by a Correlation Coefficient close to minus one, with an increase in one variable followed by a decrease in the other (*Association Between Variables*, n.d.).

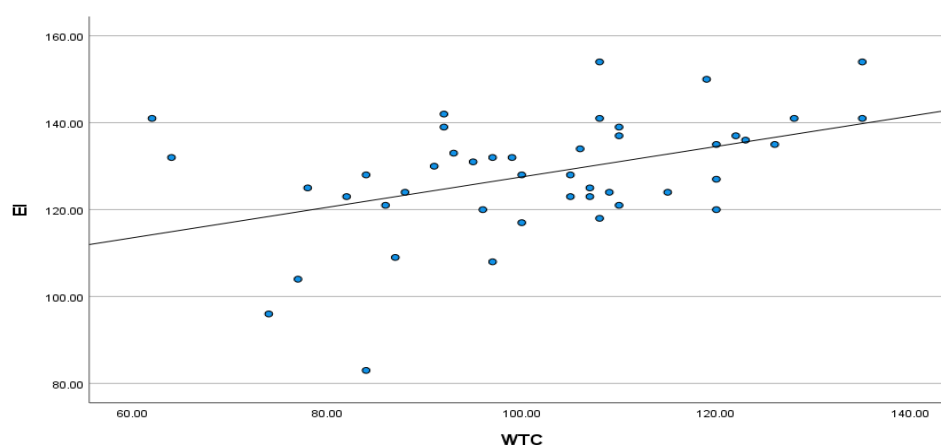


Figure.7: The Correlation between EI and WTC

Table 4.
The Correlation between EI and WTC

		WTC	EI
WTC	Pearson Correlation	1	.444**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	45	45
EI	Pearson Correlation	.444**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	45	45

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

In this regard, the present inquiry sought to test the null hypothesis which claims that there is no significant correlation between EFL students’ EI level and their WTC. Therefore, Pearson Correlation Bivariate was applied to the scores obtained from both tests using IBM SPSS. As Table 3.10 demonstrates, Pearson $r(45) = 0.444$ and the two-tailed significance value, which is $p = .002$ at the level of $p=0.01$, indicate that our correlation is significant and

is not a result of a chance. The scatterplot (figure 3.9) depicts the relationship between the two quantitative variables that have been measured for the same individuals. The horizontal axis represents the values of IWTC, while the vertical axis displays the values of the SEEIT. Each person in the data is demonstrated by a point on the graph. Following the guidelines of Mindrila and Balentyne (2013) concerning scatter plots' analysis. The form, strength, and direction denote that the two variables have a moderate positive linear association. Based on the data obtained, the null hypothesis is rejected as the results are statistically significant. In conclusion, there is a moderate positive relationship between EFL students 'of Biskra University EI and WTC.

5. Discussion

In accordance with the obtained results, the three major research questions were addressed employing the quantitative approach. Moreover, the data collected from the two main instruments, namely SSEIT and IWTC, are going to be further discussed.

RQ1: What is the EI level of third year EFL learners?

The most striking point that was revealed was that participants had a great command over the utilization of emotions. Reflecting this on the educational context, students can benefit a great deal from possessing such ability when being exposed to emotional-based learning. Correspondingly, making use of students' positive emotions would definitely lead them to achieve better results and mediate negative emotions gradually within the process. Nevertheless, in reference to the data obtained, there should be more emotional awareness, in self and others, and also self-management as a way to optimize the use of emotions properly. Both strengths and weaknesses were highlighted in order to precisely identify what to focus on when aiming to develop students' EI in general. On that account, the findings were of great significance.

RQ2: To what extent are Third Year EFL learners willing to communicate inside the classrooms?

Highlighting the aspect of verbal communication, a valid standardized test was adopted to assess students' degree of WTC. The IWTC was selected for the reason of being compatible with the EFL context. Accordingly, environmental factors (such as the traditional seating arrangement with overcrowded classrooms), and frequent interruption on the part of the teachers (destructive feedback), play a critical role in hindering students' WTC. Those who suffer from low levels of confidence would automatically feel alienated. On the other hand, the degree of familiarity and the amount of knowledge about the topics discussed, teacher-student familiarity, interest and gender influence, infusion of subjective encounters, and the nature of the activities (e.g., group work and presentations) are more likely to boost students' WTC when being considered carefully prior to designing the lessons.

RQ3: Is there any significant relationship between Third Year EFL learners' EI and WTC?

Shifting to the central question of the present inquiry, the potential correlation between EI and WTC was sought to be established. Relying on the obtained data from the SSEIT and IWTC, all the scores have been processed by means of IBM SPSS version 28. After employing Pearson Correlation Bivariate to process the scores obtained, the results displayed were statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. In light of this, it was determined that there is a moderate positive relationship between EFL EI and WTC.

Overall, it can be concluded that the results we arrived at are of substantial importance. Third year EFL students' EQ levels were reported to be moderately high with a dominant percentage of students displaying inclination to verbal communication. Yet, a considerable number of students were neither emotionally intelligent nor were they willing to communicate. The factors contributing to such low levels were interpreted and discussed. Predominantly, the potential correlation between EI and WTC was confirmed to be significant. It is established that correlation does not equal causation; yet, an increase of EI corresponds with an increase in WTC. Thereby, it is valid to suggest the implementation of EI based instructional activities for the amelioration of both EI and WTC.

6. Conclusion

In sum, the results in this study revealed that the Third year EFL students at Biskra University have a moderately high level of EQ level. Additionally, they demonstrated more willingness than reluctance to Oral communication. We did not stop the analysis of the results at this level but we also provided an account of the possible factors that may act as an incentive.

For the null hypothesis, there is a no significant relationship between the Third Year EFL learners' EI and WTC. In view of this, the null hypothesis was successfully refuted. Hence, the present research confirms that there is a moderate significant relationship between the Third year EFL learners' EI and WTC at the level of $p= 0.01$.

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