



The Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Language Learning Strategy Preference among EFL Students

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ABSTRAK

Dalam konteks EFL Indonesia, hanya ada sedikit diskusi mengenai studi kecerdasan emosional pembelajar dan apakah hal tersebut memengaruhi preferensi strategi pembelajaran bahasa mereka. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis apakah kecerdasan emosional berpengaruh terhadap preferensi belajar bahasa di kalangan pelajar EFL Indonesia. Desain utama penelitian ini didasarkan pada survei. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini terdiri dari dua kuesioner yaitu TEIQue-SF dan SILL. Untuk mencapai tujuan ini, tiga puluh siswa EFL Indonesia berpartisipasi dalam pengisian kuesioner. Teknik pengambilan sampel yang digunakan adalah convenience sampling. SPSS 25 digunakan untuk melakukan analisis data. Temuan deskriptif penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa strategi yang paling umum digunakan oleh siswa EFL adalah strategi kognitif, sedangkan strategi yang paling tidak disukai adalah strategi afektif. Terungkap bahwa terdapat korelasi yang signifikan antara kecerdasan emosional dan strategi belajar bahasa ($p < 0,001$). Peserta didik yang memiliki tingkat kecerdasan emosional lebih tinggi menggunakan strategi yang lebih beragam dibandingkan siswa yang memiliki tingkat kecerdasan emosional lebih rendah. Ada perbedaan besar antara kedua kelompok dalam hal strategi yang mereka pilih untuk diterapkan. Kesimpulannya, implikasi pedagogis serta temuan diperiksa.

ABSTRACT

In the Indonesian EFL context, there has been little discussion regarding the study of learners' emotional intelligence and whether it influences their language learning strategy preferences. The purpose of this research was to analyze whether emotional intelligence has any effect on the language learning preference among Indonesian EFL learners. The main design of this research was based on survey. The instrument used in this study consists of two questionnaires namely TEIQue-SF and SILL. To achieve this goal, thirty Indonesian EFL students participated in the completion of the questionnaires. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. SPSS 25 was used to perform the analysis of the data. The descriptive findings of the study showed that the most common strategy utilized by EFL students was cognitive strategies, while the least preferred strategy was affective strategy. It was revealed that there is a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and strategies for learning languages ($p < 0.001$). Learners who have a higher level of emotional intelligence use a wider variety of strategies than students who have a lower level of emotional intelligence. There were considerable disparities between the two groups in terms of the strategies that they chose to implement. In conclusion, pedagogical implications as well as findings were examined.

1. INTRODUCTION

The process of learning is a multifaceted and intricate one that is influenced by a variety of factors. These factors include but are not limited to intelligence, motivation, the presence of a conducive environment, familial circumstances, social dynamics, the caliber of educational institutions, and the quality of teachers (Rahimi & Yadollahi, 2017; Winarno et al., 2022). Learning strategies are an essential component of effective learning. These strategies refer to the various techniques and approaches that students employ to enhance their learning experience. According to previous study learning strategies are the steps that students take to facilitate their own learning in ways that are more manageable, pleasurable, independent, and long-lasting (Licorish et al., 2018; Pawlak, 2018). In other words, learning strategies are the tools that students use to make learning easier, more enjoyable, and more effective. By utilizing learning strategies,

students can take control of their own learning and achieve better academic outcomes. Previous study refined the definition of learning strategies that had been previously established (Barnwell et al., 1991). Their updated definition was more precise and detailed. When it comes to individuals who are learning a second language, they are often identified as having a diverse range of techniques for retaining and recalling linguistic material. An essential part of learning strategies is language learning strategies (LLSs). One of the first researchers on this issue, previous study described LLSs as actions, procedures, or strategies used by language students to advance their knowledge (Ehrman et al., 1990). LLSs, as described as routine behaviors that students often engage in to improve their L2 learning capacities. They may facilitate the target language's internalization, storage, retrieval, and application.

Various researchers have attempted to classify LLSs. Oxford's LLS classification, however, is the most comprehensive, precise, and systematic of the ones now in use (Lee & Heinz, 2016; Tam, 2013; Zare, 2012). As far as Oxford is concerned, there are two broad categories of LLSs namely direct and indirect approaches. Direct strategies refer to language learning techniques that use the target language directly. Strategies like remembering things, thinking differently, and making up for mistakes are all examples of such strategies. All these methods directly engage the brain's capacity for language processing. In contrast, metacognitive, emotional, and social tactics, such as mindfulness, planning, evaluation, opportunity seeking, anxiety reduction, encouraging collaboration and empathy, and so on, indirectly aid language acquisition.

In the direct strategies, there are three categories of LLSs. Firstly, memory strategies. Learners use memory strategies for storing scores and retrieving new information (Goleman, 1995; Murphy & Janeke, 2009). Each memory-related action that students take must have personal significance for them. In general, this umbrella term refers to four distinct sets of strategies namely making associations in one's mind, using visuals and audio, evaluating thoroughly, and taking action. Secondly, cognitive strategies. In this category, learners typically alter or distort the target language. It entails exercising, thinking critically and logically, and structuring input and output. Lastly, compensation strategies. They assist students in applying the new language for production and comprehension. It entails making educated guesses when reading and listening and overcoming obstacles in speaking and writing to make up for a limited vocabulary and grammar. In the indirect strategies, there are also three categories of LLSs. The first one is metacognitive strategies, which give pupils the ability to direct their own learning beyond the scope of simply cognitive tools. This category has three subsets namely managing learning, assessing, and centering learning. The next one is affective strategies. It alludes to a learner's feelings, attitudes, motivation, and values. According to previous study affective strategies allow students to gain control over the previously listed components (Dawadi, 2017). Social strategies are the final one. It describes how students interact with speakers of the target language. This category has three subsets namely asking questions, working with others, and showing empathy for others.

The available literature presents ample proof that academic achievement among students is not solely dependent on their IQ. The realm of literature has introduced diverse forms of intelligence, including notion of social intelligence and proposition of multiple intelligences (Sultan & Bancong, 2017; Wiyono et al., 2019). The concept of emotional intelligence was initially introduced by previous study. Emotional intelligence, commonly referred to as EI, has been defined as a component of social intelligence that encompasses the capacity to observe and comprehend both personal and others' emotional states, and to utilize this awareness in personal and interpersonal decision-making (Mayer et al., 2009). Other study assert that Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a skill that has the potential to modify students' capacity for advancement, progress, and positive outlook (Barkhordari et al., 2016). According to previous study EI is a more dependable indicator of social adaptation and achievement in academic and professional settings in comparison to overall intelligence (Shatalebi et al., 2012; Thompson et al., 2020).

Evidence suggests that EI is positively related to academic success. Emotional intelligence, which includes the ability to use and regulate one's emotions to improve one's thinking, focus, impulsivity, and performance under pressure, is a hallmark of intellectual growth (Shatalebi et al., 2012; Zafari & Biria, 2014). Higher levels of EI are related to greater psychological and emotional health, including lower levels of anxiety and sadness, which in turn improves learning and academic accomplishment. Consequently, there is observable proof that EI contributes to the formation of academic practices. Appropriate responses to the learning environment are essential for the successful application of learning strategies, which include cognitive, physiological, emotional, and effective behavior (Hau et al., 2020; Ramadani & Khaferi, 2020). Students that are well-equipped emotionally do better in school, in interpersonal, and in the classroom. But few research have looked at the connection between EI and the strategies pupils use to study.

Given the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) and language learning strategies (LLSs) to student achievement, educational practitioners and teachers have a responsibility to take them into account in the classroom to support students in making use of their full potential in their learning process (Barkhordari et al., 2016; Khurshid et al., 2018). In 2012, previous study conducted research on the

relationship between EI and learning style among B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. students in Khorasgan University (Shatalebi et al., 2012). It reveals that there was no relationship between other components of emotional intelligence and learning styles. Furthermore, other study conducted research on the relationship between EI and LLS among one hundred English advanced learners of Iran Language Institute (ILI) at Shiraz branch (Taheri & Jadidi, 2016). It indicates that there were positive significant relationships between some components of the two variables.

However, in Indonesian EFL context, there has been little discussion about the study of learners' emotional intelligence and whether it has any effect on their language learning strategies preference. Therefore, the relationship between these two variables is an important issue that needs to be investigated and become the novelty of this study. Further, the present study aimed to analyze the relationship between these two variables among novice English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners enrolled in an Islamic junior high school in Yogyakarta. It is worth noting that this topic has not been previously addressed in any research.

2. METHOD

This main design of this study was based on survey. The sampling technique used in this study was convenience sampling. It is the most prevalent form of non-probability sampling, and its purpose is to collect data from participants (the sample) who are "convenient" to the researcher in terms of accessibility (Braun et al., 2021). The sample of this study was comprised of thirty Indonesian EFL students. Participants were ninth graders from one of Yogyakarta's Islamic junior high schools. In the present study, the students were informed that their participation was voluntary and that their anonymity would be protected. Additionally, it was made clear to the students that their responses would be utilized exclusively for research purposes. This was done to ensure that the data collected was reliable and could be used to draw accurate conclusions. Furthermore, these measures were taken to ensure that the research was conducted in an ethical and responsible manner. In this study, surveys in the form of questionnaires were employed to collect data. Two instruments were utilized to perform the investigation. The first one is Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF). The next one is Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). It consists of 50 items and adopts a 5-point Likert-scale. In SILL, LLSs grouped into six categories of assessment: 1) memory strategies (9 items), 2) cognitive strategies (14 items), 3) compensation strategies (6 items), 4) metacognitive strategies (9 items), 5) affective strategies (6 items), and 6) social strategies (6 items). To prevent misinterpretation, the questions were also translated into Indonesian. The analysis of the data yielded several quantitative findings. The data presented in this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. The results of this analysis were then used to generate scores for both emotional intelligence (EI) and life satisfaction (LLS). These scores were subsequently displayed in the study's findings. The utilization of three criteria developed by Oxford (1990) was employed to quantify the frequency with which students utilized the methods.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

To answer the first study question, descriptive statistics on English-learning strategies were generated. Table 1 provides a ranking of the strategies based on their frequency of deployment.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Strategy Category	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Type
Memory Strategies	2.67	6.222	3	Medium
Cognitive Strategies	4.66	8.775	1	High
Compensation Strategies	2.03	4.011	4	Low
Metacognitive Strategies	2.80	7.032	2	Medium
Affective Strategies	1.88	1.802	6	Low
Social Strategies	1.96	3.846	5	Low

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that the category of cognitive strategy was the most preferred among the students, with a mean score of 4.66, followed by metacognitive, memory, compensation, and social strategies. With a mean frequency of 1.88, the affective method was the least prevalent. To evaluate the relationship between EI and LLSs, Pearson Product correlation was employed in this study. Table 2 demonstrates that EI is significantly correlated (p .001) with overall LLSs. Moreover, Table 3 demonstrates that the correlation is positive and statistically significant.

Table 2. Regression Coefficient Result

Model	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	8.173	31.120		0.280	0.782
TEI	1.252	0.250	0.668	5.011	0.000

Table 3. Correlation Result

		TEI	SILL
TEI	Pearson Correlation	1	0.688**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	30	30
SILL	Pearson Correlation	0.688**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	30	30

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test was done to see whether there is a difference in the utilization of different LLSs between students with high and low EI. Students were separated into two categories based on their EI test results: those with high EI (group 1) and those with low EI (group 2). The average EI value was used as the dividing line (4.69). Fifteen students were classified as having lower emotional intelligence in this research (group 2), whereas the same number were classified as having higher emotional intelligence (group 1). The results of MANOVA show in Table 4 reveal that there is a statistically significant difference in LLS use between the two groups (wilks' lambda= 0.284, F(6,23)=9.672, P=.000).

Table 4. MANOVA Test for Differences Between Two Groups in the Use of LLSs

Group	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
	Pillai's Trace	0.716	9.672	6	23	0.000
	Wilks' Lambda	0.284	9.672	6	23	0.000
	Hotelling's Trace	2.523	9.672	6	23	0.000
	Roy's Largest Root	2.523	9.672	6	23	0.000

For the extra MANOVA test, an ANOVA was run on each group of learning methods. Table 4 demonstrates that neither the high nor low emotion groups significantly differed from one another in their use of cognitive nor affective strategies. There were, however, significant differences seen in areas including memory, compensation, metacognition, and social tactics. It suggests that students with high emotional intelligence are more likely to use methods including memory, compensation, metacognitive, and social strategies.

Discussion

Use of LLSs by Indonesian EFL Learners

This study found that cognitive strategy was the most preferred category, with a mean score of 4.66. Learning English for students with a cognitive strategy involves activities such as drilling and practicing formulas and patterns, grasping the central idea rapidly, dissecting expressions, and synthesizing content. Instead of relying on memory, this method encourages deeper thinking and linguistic usage (Parlato-Oliveira et al., 2020; Sadiku, 2015). This remark supported the notion that the students in this study had an interest in English culture, as they demonstrated a desire to use the language. They observed and attempted application of what they had learned. The greatest barrier that prevented them from using it in daily communication was that they lived in an EFL environment where it was difficult to practice the language (Ampera et al., 2021; Santosa, 2017).

The results suggest that employment of affective strategies is relatively infrequent among language learners. The implementation of affective strategies allows students to effectively manage their emotions, drive, and disposition towards the learning process. According to previous study individuals can engage in various strategies such as regulating their emotions, enhancing their motivation, and monitoring their affective states to manage their psychological well-being (Hafeman et al., 2020). The findings of this research indicate that individuals studying English do not consider their personal emotions, motivations, or viewpoints. The pedagogical approach employed by an educator, or the lack of emotionally stimulating instructional materials, may be a contributing factor to this phenomenon.

Within the context of Indonesian LLSs studies, a preponderance of previous research has indicated that Indonesian learners employ metacognitive strategies with notable frequency (Mattarima & Hamdan, 2011). Nevertheless, the study indicated that metacognitive strategies were ranked fourth. The employment of cognitive strategies is favored by learners to augment their vocabulary, including but not limited to activities such as viewing English films, listening to English music, and perusing English literature (Alfian, 2021; Santihastuti & Wahjuningsih, 2019). According to previous research, proficient language learners employ cognitive strategies to acquire mastery over vocabulary (Alasmari, 2020). Other study asserts that the implementation of cognitive strategies can be advantageous in improving learners' proficiency in pronunciation and grammar (Mulyani, 2020). Furthermore, the results of this study are corroborated by previous study investigations into English as a Second Language (ESL) learning contexts, which revealed that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners employed learning strategies at the high and medium levels (Amjah, 2014; Ramsin & Mayall, 2019). Nonetheless, this deduction is in opposition to subsequent research that suggests that the employment of strategies by students in the situation is only moderately present (Ramsin & Mayall, 2019; Zafari & Biria, 2014).

Relationship between EI and LLSs

In recent times, there has been a growing inclination towards the inclusion of emotions as a novel aspect of individual differences among students in research studies. This trend is indicative of a shift in the academic community's focus towards a more holistic understanding of the factors that influence student performance and behavior. By recognizing the role of emotions in shaping student experiences, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes. As such, there is a need for further exploration of the potential impact of emotions on student learning outcomes and the development of effective strategies to support emotional regulation and well-being in educational settings (Eldridge, 2014; Fatimah & Santiana, 2017). Academic achievement is a crucial aspect of education that is highly valued by educators and students alike. However, the learning process can often be accompanied by anxiety and negative emotions, which can hinder academic performance. Therefore, it is important to explore ways in which academic achievement can be enhanced while reducing these negative emotions. One approach to achieving this goal is to focus on creating a positive learning environment that is conducive to academic success. This can involve providing students with the necessary resources and support to help them succeed, such as access to tutoring and academic counseling services. The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between EI and LLSs (Kanesan & Fauzan, 2019; Khurshid et al., 2018). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis reveals that there exists a positive and significant correlation between EI and overall LLSs. The second research question's results align with the findings of Zafari and Biria's study conducted in 2014. The study discovered that there was a notable and advantageous correlation between the emotional intelligence of Iranian students and their overall learning strategy.

High Emotional Intelligence Learners' Usage Of Certain Lls

In an effort to investigate whether emotionally intelligent students employ particular learning strategies, a study was conducted wherein students were separated into two groups based on their EI scores (Enz et al., 2007; Philippe et al., 2020). The purpose of this division was to determine whether students with higher emotional intelligence utilize different LLSs than those with lower EI scores. The data highlights the differences in preferences among these groups. In statistical analysis, the null hypothesis is a statement that assumes there is no significant difference between two variables. However, if the results of a study show that there is a significant difference between the variables, the null hypothesis is rejected. In the case of the third question, the null hypothesis has been rejected, indicating that there is a significant difference between the variables being studied. This finding has been found to have a significant impact on the strategies that students use to learn. In fact, research has shown that emotionally intelligent students tend to choose different techniques than those who are less emotionally intelligent. Specifically, emotionally intelligent students are more likely to use memory, compensatory, metacognitive, and social techniques (Enz et al., 2007; Kurniansyah & Daveta, 2018). This suggests that emotional intelligence is an important factor to consider when examining the learning strategies that students use. By understanding the role of emotional intelligence in learning, educators and researchers can better support students in developing effective learning strategies that are tailored to their individual needs. The study conducted did not find any noteworthy variations between the two groups in terms of their utilization of cognitive and emotive techniques. The findings of the study suggest that students who possess emotional competence tend to use LLSs more often. This implies that emotional competence plays a significant role in the effective utilization of LLSs.

There are two limitations of this study that should be noted. First, participants of this study were from ninth graders of junior high school which means that the findings reported here might not predict the general trend of all Indonesian junior high school learners. Future research could include larger-size participants with a broader range of language proficiency levels. Last, the instrument used in this study was only questionnaire. Further investigation may benefit from incorporating interviews with both students and instructors to obtain more comprehensive data.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that the cognitive strategy is the most frequently employed LLS. It indicates that in the process of learning English, learners prefer to memorize through the use of imagery, repetition, summarizing meaning, and determining meaning from context. In contrast, affective strategies were the least frequently employed by Indonesian EFL learners. Furthermore, emotionally intelligent students were found to choose memory, compensation, metacognition, and social strategies more frequently than emotionally less intelligent students. In addition, students with a higher EI employed language learning strategies more often than those with a lower EI. It suggests that students' EI should be enhanced and developed. Numerous modern theorists have shown that policymakers and teachers in the field of language teaching should provide students enough opportunities to acquire and refine the language. The nation's top universities should make significant investments to strengthen these competencies. Teachers may take use of a wide range of strategies, including the incorporation of ESL games, simulations, and other pleasant activities, to aid their students in developing EI while studying a foreign language.

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