Interplay and Predictive Roles of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Buoyancy in Relation to Iranian EFL Learners' Language Proficiency

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Abstract

Psychological attributes are vital to success in language learning. This study explored the interplay between emotional intelligence (EI), academic buoyancy (AB), and general language proficiency (GLP) among Iranian EFL learners. Additionally, it examined the extent to which EI and AB can predict learners' language proficiency. Using a descriptive-quantitative design, a random sample of 59 learners out of a total of 70 participated in the study. Data were collected through Bar-On's Emotional Intelligence Inventory (1980), Jahedizadeh's Academic Buoyancy Scale (2019), and a standardized ETS TOEFL Practice Test. After confirming data normality, Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were performed. The results revealed significant relationships between EI and GLP, AB and GLP, and also between EI and AB. Furthermore, both EI and AB significantly predicted language proficiency, with academic buoyancy emerging as the stronger predictor. These findings suggest that learners with higher levels of EI and AB are more likely to attain greater language proficiency. The study highlights the importance of fostering psychological traits to enhance EFL learning and recommends future research into intervention strategies aimed at developing EI and AB among language learners.

تحلیل هوش هیجانی، سرزندگی علمی، و مهارت عمومی زبان‌آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی: با تمرکز بر تعامل و پیش‌بینی متغیرها

ویژگی‌های روان‌شناختی نقش مهمی در موفقیت در یادگیری زبان دارند. این پژوهش به بررسی تعامل میان هوش هیجانی، تاب‌آوری تحصیلی، و مهارت کلی زبان انگلیسی در میان زبان‌آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی پرداخت. همچنین نقش پیش‌بینی‌کنندگی هوش هیجانی و تاب‌آوری تحصیلی در سطح زبان عمومی زبان‌آموزان بررسی شد. این مطالعه با استفاده از یک طرح توصیفی-کمّی و با نمونه‌ای تصادفی شامل ۵۹ نفر از میان ۷۰ زبان‌آموز انجام شد. داده‌ها از طریق پرسش‌نامه هوش هیجانی بار-آن (۱۹۸۰)، پرسش‌نامه تاب‌آوری تحصیلی جاهدیزاده (۲۰۱۹)، و یکی از نسخه‌های آزمون تمرینی تافل ETS گردآوری شد. پس از تأیید نرمال بودن داده‌ها، تحلیل‌های آماری با استفاده از ضریب همبستگی پیرسون و رگرسیون چندگانه انجام گرفت. یافته‌ها نشان‌دهنده روابط معنادار میان هوش هیجانی و مهارت زبانی، تاب‌آوری تحصیلی و مهارت زبانی، و نیز میان هوش هیجانی و تاب‌آوری تحصیلی بودند. علاوه بر این، هر دو متغیر هوش هیجانی و تاب‌آوری تحصیلی توانستند مهارت کلی زبان را پیش‌بینی کنند، اما تاب‌آوری تحصیلی پیش‌بینی‌کننده قوی‌تری بود. این نتایج حاکی از آن است که زبان‌آموزانی با سطوح بالاتر هوش هیجانی و تاب‌آوری تحصیلی، احتمال بیشتری برای دستیابی به مهارت‌های زبانی بالاتر دارند. پژوهش حاضر بر اهمیت پرورش ویژگی‌های روان‌شناختی برای بهبود فرایند یادگیری زبان تأکید می‌کند و پیشنهاد می‌دهد پژوهش‌های آینده به بررسی راهکارهای مداخله‌ای برای ارتقاء این ویژگی‌ها در زبان‌آموزان بپردازند.

کلیدواژه‌ها: تاب‌آوری تحصیلی، تاب‌آوری، هوش هیجانی، مهارت کلی زبان، زبان‌آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی

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Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is typically understood as an individual's capability to identify, manage, and express emotions, while also handling interpersonal relationships with empathy and sound judgment (Tripathy, 2018). Numerous studies have demonstrated a strong connection between improving emotional skills and major success in a variety of life areas, such as effectiveness in teaching procedure, effective learning, relationship quality, and academic performances (e.g., Brackett & Salovey, 2004; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010; Mayer et al., 2004; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Essentially, EI involves harnessing emotions intelligently through using the information that emotions provide to make informed decisions (Alzoubi & Aziz, 2021).

The advancement of English language learners at various proficiency levels is influenced by a multitude of factors. Nonetheless, certain elements may subtly impede or enhance the development of these learners. Emphasizing emotional intelligence within educational frameworks has been proved to be highly beneficial. Learners often face crucial challenges, related to the learning environment, instructional conditions, and the content they engage with. A teacher's focus on integrating closely EI into the process of pedagogy can significantly facilitate learners' progress.

Researchers such as Thorndike (1920), Goleman (1995), Mayer, et.al, (2000, 2004), and Bar-On (1977) have examined various aspects of cognitive intelligence, including EI, concerned with one's capability to regulate and realize various emotions not only in oneself but also in others. Mayer and Salovey (1990) described EI as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to differentiate between them, and to use this information to guide thinking and actions" (p. 189). EI can be highly influential and can be more predictive of success than IQ in different life scenarios. According to Goleman (1995), "EI is a better indicator than IQ in determining who will excel in roles such as top salespeople, team leaders, or high-ranking executives" (p. 34).

Researches such as (Brackett & Salovey, 2004; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010; Mayer & Salovey, 1990; Mayer et al., 2004; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003) have revealed that the learners having greater degree of EI usually have stronger social skills, better interpersonal relationships, and greater sensitivity to others, while those with lower EI are more prone to conflict and social maladjustment. Higher EI is linked to better social outcomes, while lower EI is often associated with interpersonal difficulties. Consequently, EI takes on an active role in improving the learners' social interactions.

It is essential for instructors to focus on their students' emotional and psychological states during the learning process. Psychological dimensions such as happiness, problem-solving abilities, stress management, self-confidence, emotional communication, and autonomy play critical roles in developing the interactions between teachers and learners, inevitably leading to the effectiveness of instruction.

Another key concept, investigated in the current study, is buoyancy referred to as one's capability to cope with everyday challenges and setbacks effectively. What Martin and Marsh (2008) described as "everyday resilience." Academic buoyancy (AB), a term developed within the

positive psychology approach, reflects students' capacity to navigate the major academic setbacks, encountered in school life (Martin & Marsh, 2007).

The success of English language learners is contingent on academic buoyancy, pertaining to the one's capability to successfully face diverse academic challenges. Thus, it has a prominent role in language acquisition. Learners are frequently confronted with diverse challenges, related to the learning environment, teachers' behavior, and classroom dynamics. Through improving language learners' buoyancy, their sense of adaptability is considerably developed, leading to successful outcomes.

Despite the various scales and methods researchers have used to measure buoyancy, these tools have often included only a small number of items, leaving many aspects of students' buoyancy underexplored. In the academic environments such as schools where the students hold diverse goals and perspectives, applying more valid and reliable instruments are needed. This highlights the need for a comprehensive and focused instrument, which fully addresses academic buoyancy (Ghanizadeh et al., 2018).

Addressing the key psychological factors such as learners' buoyancy and emotional intelligence allows educators to identify potential barriers in learning English, offering possible solutions. A substantial body of research (e.g., Brackett & Salovey, 2004; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010; Mayer & Salovey, 1990; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003) underscores the significant correlation between the language learning process and emotional intelligence, highlighting it as a crucial psychological construct. Thus, the concurrent development of learners' EI alongside linguistic competence is of paramount importance. In other words, focusing solely on the enhancement of linguistic skills does not necessarily ensure success in language learning.

A fully comprehensive realization of the role of EI in language learning, coupled with a high level of academic buoyancy, can significantly influence educational outcomes, contributing to the attainment of desirable results in the language acquisition process. Hence, the current study is a systematic attempt to explore the role of emotional intelligence as well as academic buoyancy in improving general language proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. In this study, not only the interplays between the EFL learners' EI, academic buoyancy, and general language proficiency have been probed, but also the predicting roles of academic buoyancy as well as emotional intelligence for general language proficiency of the learners have been explored, providing profound insights into the way language is psychologically and linguistically processed.

The outcomes of this research can offer novel insights into the often-overlooked non-linguistic psychological factors, influencing second language learning process. Through examining the connection between language learners' EI and their language proficiency, the psychological barriers, hindering language learning process, can be identified, which enable language teachers to develop effective teaching strategies to enhance language learning. Additionally, analyzing the relation between learners' academic buoyancy and language proficiency can provide valuable information for educators on adopting effective pedagogical methods, ultimately fostering students' success in language learning. This research underscores

the essence of the high levels of EI and academic buoyancy in facilitating the second language learning process. Moreover, the study highlights the necessity of balancing linguistic and non-linguistic factors, as their interplay is crucial for successful language learning .The findings are of great importance for language teachers and syllabus designers , enabling them to develop language teaching paradigms , focusing on linguistic and nonlinguistic psychological paradigms, the combination of which leads to effective language learning process.

The research also emphasizes the importance of implementing teacher- training programs to improve instructional quality. By reviewing the results, researchers can explore previously unidentified aspects of the intersection between psychology and teaching methodologies.

Concerning the mentioned points, the major purpose of the current study is to probe the potential significant relation between the Iranian EFL learners' general language proficiency and two key psychological variables of emotional intelligence and academic buoyancy. Additionally, the current study sought to probe the degree of predictive role, which emotional intelligence and academic buoyancy may play in determining language learners' overall language proficiency. The following research questions are formulated accordingly.

RQ1. Is there any significant relation between the Iranian EFL learners' EI and general language proficiency?

RQ2. Is there any significant relation between the Iranian EFL learners' academic buoyancy and general language proficiency?

RQ3. Is there any significant relation between the Iranian EFL learners' EI and their buoyancy?

RQ4. Does emotional intelligence significantly predict the Iranian EFL learners' general language proficiency?

RQ5. Does academic buoyancy significantly predict the Iranian EFL learners' general language proficiency?

Review of Literature

Academic Buoyancy

Academic buoyancy (AB) is concerned with a learner's capability to effectively deal with the daily pressures of academic life, in which they are involved. Martin and Marsh (2008) asserted that buoyancy involves handling setbacks like poor test scores, difficult coursework, or the stress of assignments. This concept is crucial for helping students stay motivated and engaged, even when faced with minor academic difficulties. Buoyancy is concerned with overcoming minor everyday challenges. It helps learners maintain consistent progress in the face of common, low-level academic setbacks (Martin, 2013).

Academic buoyancy plays a crucial role in educational settings, empowering students to navigate the ongoing pressures of school and examinations. The learners with high degrees of AB approach setbacks and challenges with a positive outlook, quickly bouncing back and persevering in their efforts. This resilience is especially valuable in certain fields like language learning, where

learners often encounter minor frustrations due to grammatical errors or difficulties in understanding new concepts. The studies conducted by Martin and Marsh (2006) suggested that buoyant students are less susceptible to prolonged stress or anxiety, enabling them to stay engaged and motivated throughout their academic journey.

Studies on Academic Buoyancy (AB) in Language Learning

Several studies have explored buoyancy among different learners (e.g., Malmberg et al., 2013; Martin & Marsh, 2008b, 2009; Martin et al., 2010; Martin, 2014; Phan, 2014; Putwain, 2008). One particular study, conducted by Comerford et al., 2015, focused on identifying certain features of AB among youth in Irish secondary schools. The findings showed that students with high degree of buoyancy possessed a considerable capability to analyze their own experiences and compare and contrast them with other individuals in community.

Further research, conducted by Yun et al. (2016), aimed to probe the underlying basis of buoyancy to provide a conceptual framework. This study investigated the buoyancy level of a number of university students in the South Korea. Through utilizing a highly valid and reliable questionnaire, the researchers identified six key predictors of buoyancy, some prominent of which are the relation between the teacher and students, L2 academic self-efficacy, and self-regulating power.

In terms of academic achievement, research indicates some positive correlations between AB and performance in some subjects including English, mathematics, literacy, and numeracy (e.g., Miller et al., 2013; Martin, 2013). A study conducted by Yun et al. (2018), involving 787 college students, aimed to probe the connection between AB and the students' achievement. The related findings demonstrated that the learners' buoyancy acted as a significant predicting factor for their academic performance. These findings collectively suggest that student s' buoyancy contributes to effective learning outcomes. Despite the existences of several studies done on buoyancy, most of the studies have primarily probed the young students in school settings. Therefore, academic buoyancy has been scarcely investigated among university students, particularly within a definite EFL context. Consequently, the current study probed the probable significant relation between the AB and general English language proficiency of Iranian English students.

Emotional Intelligence in Language Learning

The investigation of psychological traits in the complicated process of learning a foreign language is not something recently discovered. Various approaches, such as Suggestopedia, have been developed specifically to probe the psychological emotional elements involved in learning a second language, many of which are influenced by Krashen's Monitor Model, particularly its emphasis on the affective filter. However, there exist relatively few studies, having probed how EQ directly exerts a significant impact on the complicated process of language learning. One significant study in this field was conducted by Fahim and Pishghadam (2007), having examined the relation between IQ, EQ, and the verbal intelligence of the Iranian English learners with

reagard to their academic performance. The reported results indicated high positive correlation between some of the learners' competences with their academic performance. Furthermore, they concluded that verbal intelligence, rather than IQ, had a stronger relation with academic success.

In another experimental study, Pishghadam (2009) examined how emotional and verbal intelligences impacted the leaning success of Iranian English students. He probed both the product outcomes and the processes of learning in order to get a complete perspective of the probable essential role of these intelligences. The findings of the product-based phase revealed the essence of emotional intelligence in acquiring new skills, particularly practical ones. Additionally, the process-based phase demonstrated the influence of EI and verbal intelligence on some factors such as error rates and writing skills.

Methodology

Study Design

To probe the probable significant relation between emotional intelligence, academic buoyancy, and general language proficiency, a quantitative data collection method was employed, utilizing a test and two questionnaires. As the correlation coefficients between the variables were examined two by two, a correlation design was employed in this study. In addition, to probe the significant predicting roles of academic buoyancy and emotional intelligence for general language proficiency, multiple regression analysis were used.

Participants

The target participants were 59 Iranian EFL learners, aged between 20 and 25. They comprised unequal proportions of both males and females, studying English at Jahad Daneshgahi Institute in Mashhad- Iran. The target sample was randomly selected from the initial population of 70 learners, with regard to sample size table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

Instruments

L2 Academic Buoyancy (AB) Questionnaire

To probe L2 academic buoyancy, the designed and validated questionnaire by Jahedizadeh et al. (2019) was applied, comprising 27 items, measuring four dimensions of sustainability (SUS) with 7 items, regularity adaptation (REG) with 4 items, positive personal eligibility (PPE) with 8 items, and positive acceptance of academic life (PAAL) with 8 sentences. The questionnaire follows a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The reliability indexes are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Reliability Indexes of L2 Buoyancy Scale

Factor	Item number	Sample Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Sustainability	1 - 2 - 3 -4 5- 6 - 7	If I face a failure while learning the language (such as a low grade or a negative reaction from my teacher), I deal with it well and do not get disappointed, but learn from it.	0.52
Regularity Adaptation	8 - 9- 10 - 11	While learning a language, I first plan and then act on it.	0.67
Positive Personal Eligibility	12- 13 – 14- 15- 16- 17- 18- 19	I have the ability to rely more on myself than on others to learn the language.	0.79
Positive Acceptance of Academic Life	20- 21- 22- 23- 24- 25- 26- 27	I am friendly and honest with myself while learning the language.	0.69
Overall			0.83

Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire

To assess emotional intelligence, the original questionnaire, designed and validated by Bar-On (1997), as the Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EQ-I), was employed. The questionnaire contains 133 short statements items, measuring 15subscales, utilizing a one to five point likert scale. Approximately 40 minutes were given to the participants to complete it.

In terms of the reliability and validity and of the EI questionnaire, Meshkat and Nejati (2015) reported a "relative goodness-of-fit" of 1.96, with *RMSEA* = 0.4, yielding a 90% confidence interval. The construct validity was supported by an expected comparisons index of 18.24, with a confidence range of 17.70 to 18.79, proving a high degree of "convergence" and acceptable validity of the questionnaire.

In addition, Gholamreza and Saber (2016) utilized Cronbach's alpha and the internal correlation coefficient to establish the reliability of the questionnaire. They also applied factor analysis to confirm its validity. The internal correlation between items and scales demonstrated that the grouping of questions was appropriate for each subscale.

TOEFL Practice Test

The paper-based ETS TOEFL Practice Test was utilized to assess the participants' general language ability. It comprises 50 multiple-choice listening comprehension questions, 50 multiple-choice reading comprehension questions, and 40 multiple-choice structure and written expression

questions. In addition, it comprises one topic for writing. The standard dedicated time to answer listening comprehension part was 40 minutes, reading comprehension part was 55 minutes, structure and written expressions section was 25 minutes, and writing section was 30 minutes.

Data Collection Procedure

The present study was done from May to July 2023 at Jahad Daneshgahi English Institute in Mashhad-Iran. Initially, the researcher explained the participants the research objectives and invited them to participate. The participants were briefed on the study purpose and the importance of honest responses. They were then asked to answer the questionnaires and the proficiency test. Afterwards, the completed forms were collected for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

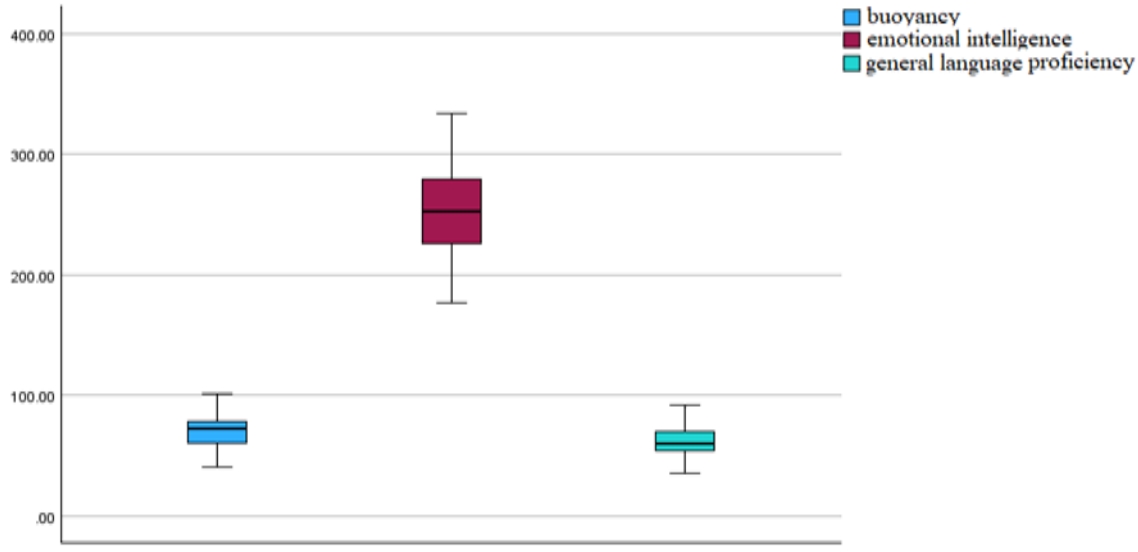
After collecting the data through answering a general language proficiency test and two questionnaires, they were entered into SPSS software for analysis. First, the Smirnov-Kolmogorov test was applied to probe the data normality. Then, related descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients were utilized to probe the relation between the study variables. Additionally, a multiple regression analyses were applied to probe the significant predictive roles of emotional intelligence and buoyancy for general language proficiency.

Results

To probe the research questions, first, the normality of the data was probed to identify whether to use parametric statistical analysis or not. Data was screened before statistical analysis. No missing values were observed in the data. Univariate outliers were checked with a box plot and corrected by considering the mean and ±1 standard deviation. The box plot is given in Figures 1.

Figure 1

Box Plot to Check Univariate Outliers



The descriptive indices of the research variables are also listed in Table 2 below:

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	Std.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Buoyancy	41.00	101.00	70.32	13.34	.023	-0.24
EQ	142.00	362.00	255.01	43.15	.02	0.06
GLP	35.00	95.00	62.98	13.26	.0.53	-0.02

Concerning the degrees of Kurtosis and Skewness for each variable, the distribution of variables is normal.

Tolerance and variance inflation indices are utilized in the investigation of non-Multicollinearity assumption. According to Stevens (2012), if the tolerance index is smaller than 1 and larger than 0.40, and the variance inflation index is smaller than 10, the assumption of non-Multicollinearity has been fulfilled. The results indicated that the tolerance coefficients of grit and mindset, as predictive variables of the model are in the range of 0.41 to 0.72. The variance inflation index is also in the range of 1.39 to 2.44.

Durbin-Watson's statistic was also utilized to check the assumption of independence of errors. It is believed that coefficients between 1.5 and 2.5 of this statistic demonstrate the independence of errors. This coefficient in this research was equal to 2.07.

Exploring Research Questions

The first question is concerned with the significant relation between Iranian EFL learners' EI and general language ability. To probe the question, Pearson correlation coefficients were utilized .The results are demonstrated in Table3.

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Coefficients between EI Subcategories and General Language Proficiency Skills

Variables		General language proficiency				
		Listening	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Total
EQ	problem solving	0.463**	0.483**	0.437**	0.351**	
	happiness	0.543**	0.387**	0.338**	0.536**	
	independence	0.469**	0.345**	0.331**	0.467**	
	tolerating mental stress	0.398**	0.326**	0.463**	0.433**	
	self-actualization	0.376**	0.427**	0.344**	0.422**	
	emotional self-awareness	0.389**	0.475**	0.314**	0.521**	
	realism	0.376**	0.287**	0.294**	0.462**	
	interpersonal relationships	0.476**	0.224**	0.534**	0.376**	
	optimism	0.364**	0.498**	0.552**	0.366**	

self-esteem	0.512**	0.215**	0.288**	0.492**	
impulse control	0.386**	0.362**	0.324**	0.423**	
flexibility	0.369**	0.487**	0.561**	0.312**	
social responsibility	0.470**	0.279**	0.367**	0.366**	
empathy	0.364**	0.442**	0.465**	0.378**	
self-expression	0.463**	0.473**	0.388**	0.289**	
Total					0.365**

P<0.01 **

Regarding the findings shown in the table, there exist significant relation between the learners' EI and general language ability as well as the sub components of two variables. The lowest significant correlation was reported to be between self-esteem and writing (r = 0.215), while the highest correlation index was reported to be between happiness and listening (r = 0.543).

The second research question is concerned with significant relation between Iranian EFL learners' academic buoyancy and general language proficiency. Pearson correlation coefficients were utilized to check the question. The relevant findings are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Academic Buoyancy Subscales and General Language Proficiency

Variables		General language proficiency				
		Listening	Writing	Speaking	Reading	Total
Buoyancy	resilience	0.453**	0.412**	0.467**	0.661**	
	compatibility	0.358**	0.667**	0.375**	0.614**	
	optimism	0.493**	0.442**	0.448**	0.413**	
	acceptance	0.653**	0.668**	0.465**	0.610**	
	Total					0.556**

Referring to table above, there exist significant relation between the learners' academic buoyancy and general language ability as well as the subcomponents of two variables. The highest significant correlation value was reported to be between acceptance and writing (r = 0.668), while the lowest correlation coefficient value was reported to be between listening and compatibility (r = 0.358).

The third research question is concerned with significant relation between Iranian EFL learners' EI and their academic buoyancy. Pearson correlation coefficients were utilized to probe the question. The relevant findings are as described in Table 5.

Table 5

Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Buoyancy Subscales

	Variables	Buoyancy				
		Resilience	Compatibility	Optimism	Acceptance	Total
EQ	problem solving	0.305**	0.487**	0.534**	0.432**	
	happiness	0.276**	0.524**	0.514**	0.375**	
	independence	0.336**	0.440**	0.557**	0.355**	
	tolerating mental stress	0.386**	0.376**	0.487**	0.389**	
	self-actualization	0.436**	0.577**	0.439**	0.436**	
	emotional self-awareness	0.361**	0.416**	0.503**	0.367**	
	realism	0.446**	0.485**	0.437**	0.497**	
	interpersonal relationships	0.457**	0.456**	0.523**	0.442**	
	optimism	0.417**	0.538**	0.447**	0.375**	
	self-esteem	0.397**	0.341**	0.587**	0.442**	
	impulse control	0.447**	0.486**	0.552**	0.415**	
	flexibility	0.521**	0.413**	0.475**	0.352**	
	social responsibility	0.335**	0.438**	0.448**	0.475**	
	empathy	0.280**	0.486**	0.586**	0.327**	
	self-expression	0.317**	0.496**	0.564**	0.446**	
	Total					0.401**

P<0.01 **

Referring to table above, there exist significant relations between the learners' EI and their academic buoyancy along with the subscales of two variables. The highest significant correlation value was reported to be between optimism and empathy (r = 0.586), while the lowest correlation value was found to be between resilience and empathy (r = 0.280).

The fourth research question is concerned with whether the learners' EI emotional acted as a significant predicting variable for their general language proficiency or not. The fifth research question is also concerned with whether Iranian EFL learners' buoyancy is a significant predictor of their general language proficiency or not.

To probe the fourth and fifth research questions, multiple regression analyses were used. The summarized results are demonstrated in Table 6.

Table 6

Multiple Regression Analyses of Emotional Intelligence, Academic Bouyouncy, and General Language Proficiency

Variables	B	Standard beta	T	Sig.	R	R2
EQ	0.034	0.044	53.4	0.001	0.895	0.891
Buoyancy	0.877	0.896	41.1	0.001		

The results show that two variables, EQ and Buoyancy, can significantly predict general language proficiency ($p<0.05$). Considering that the standard beta coefficient for the Buoyancy (0.896) is higher than the standard beta coefficient of the EQ (0.044), the academic buoyancy is a better significant predictor for general language proficiency.

Discussion

Based on the statistical findings, a significant relation existed between the EFL learners' EI and general language ability. The findings align with the prior conducted study by Shakib and Barani (2011). EI entirely covers the capability to identify and control not only an individual's own emotions but also control the other individuals' emotions. Effective emotional regulation can enhance language learning outcomes by mitigating anxiety and stress, which are known to impede language acquisition. Furthermore, the learners with higher EQ may have stronger perseverance in language learning activities, enabling them to handle setbacks and challenges and continue practicing language skills even in the face of difficulties.

Additionally, EQ includes certain skills concerned with communication, empathy, and social awareness, which can significantly improve learners' engagement in meaningful social interactions. These interactions—whether through conversations with native speakers or collaborative discussions in language classes—are crucial for language development. The learners with higher EQ usually adopt effective learning strategies, such as goal-setting, seeking feedback, and adjusting their learning methods based on emotional insights and experiences. These strategies can enhance the efficiency of the learning process, leading to sustained improvements in language proficiency over time.

Based on the statistical findings, a significant relation also existed between the EFL learners' buoyancy and general language ability. These results are in accord with the findings of Jahedizadeh et al. (2019). To explain this relation, prior research indicates that the learners with higher buoyancy levels usually represent greater academic engagement. In other words, the learners who exhibit higher buoyancy are more likely to invest additional time in completing academic tasks, which in turn increases their likelihood of achieving better academic outcomes. Additionally, it can be argued that learners with higher buoyancy not only complete more academic tasks but also execute them with greater quality. This suggests that both the quantity and quality of academic work are superior in learners with higher buoyancy compared to those with lower buoyancy. Consequently, the observed correlation between buoyancy and general language

proficiency may be attributed to the more efficient and effective completion of academic tasks by language learners with higher buoyancy.

Furthermore, the statistical findings indicated a significant relation between the EFL learners' EI and their buoyancy. These results are in accord with the related findings of Thomas and Allen (2021), who believed that emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in developing learners' buoyancy , which is related to the learners' emotional regulation, resilience, self-efficacy, social support, and a positive mindset. These components of emotional intelligence collectively enhance learners' capacity to effectively manage academic challenges and setbacks, leading to higher levels of buoyancy.

According to the statistical results, both emotional intelligence and buoyancy are significant predictors of general language proficiency of the EFL learners. The findings are in accord with Zarafshan and Ardeshiri (2012). Emotional intelligence and buoyancy play pivotal roles in shaping learners' motivation, coping strategies, communication skills, self-regulated learning, and social interactions, all of which contribute to general language proficiency. Thus, these factors served as significant predictors of language proficiency in Iranian EFL learners.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study reveal a strong relation among EI, buoyancy, and general language proficiency of the EFL learners. Compelling evidence was gathered, illustrating how these constructs interrelate and impact language learning outcomes.

Firstly, the findings demonstrated that the learners with higher levels of emotional intelligence achieve greater proficiency in the English language, which can be concerned with their increased ability to regulate emotions, control stress, and maintain motivation and persistence throughout the language learning process. Additionally, emotionally intelligent learners tend to have stronger communication skills, which are critical for proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the essence of the academic buoyancy, acting as a significant predictor of language proficiency among Iranian EFL learners. Buoyant learners exhibit resilience in dealing with severe challenges, have a positive mindset, and persevere in their language learning efforts despite setbacks. This resilience enhances their overall proficiency by fostering motivation, self-regulated learning, and effective coping mechanisms.

Moreover, the findings underlined the interrelationship between EI and buoyancy in influencing language proficiency. The learners with high EQ demonstrate more buoyant traits, such as resilience, optimism, and adaptive coping strategies. Conversely, buoyant individuals often possess greater emotional intelligence, allowing them to effectively manage emotions and overcome language learning challenges.

In general, this study highlights the significant role of EI and buoyancy in predicting general language proficiency among Iranian EFL learners. Educators, policymakers, and language instructors can benefit from these insights by incorporating strategies to enhance learners' emotional intelligence and buoyancy, thereby facilitating more effective language learning

experiences and promoting higher proficiency in English language skills. Further research into these constructs and their effects on language learning outcomes is warranted to inform targeted interventions and support mechanisms for EFL learners in Iran and beyond.

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