Emotional Intelligence and Foreign Language Proficiency: Relating and Comparing ESAP and TOEFL Performance

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Abstract

Research was conducted to evaluate the relationship between foreign language proficiency and Emotional Intelligence. A group of Iranian adult learners of English studying at Kish Language School, in Tehran, Iran at the advanced level were selected. The participants attended a version of PBT TOEFL in order for the researcher to gauge English proficiency. Participants were also given Emotional Skills Assessment Process (ESAP) which is a self-report instrument to measure the emotional skills. Descriptive statistics, comparison of mean scores, t test and Pearson Correlation analyses were applied to examine the relationship between the English proficiency score and Emotional Intelligence skills. The quantitative findings indicated a significant relationship between the TOEFL score and the EI skills total score, as well as seven individual EI skill scores. In addition, PBT TOEFL was negatively related with the EI Potential Problem Areas total score, as well as two of the problem area individual scale scores. According to the t test results, participants who achieved TOEFL scores above the sample mean were significantly different in terms of the EI patterns with those who gained lower scores in the TOEFL. In essence, the research demonstrated the existence of a link between foreign language proficiency and Emotional Intelligence skills among the Iranian adult learners of English as measured by the PBT TOEFL and the transformative model of EI.

Introduction

Emotional Intelligence is not a new concept; however there are very few studies on its contribution to the process of second language acquisition. In 1982 Krashen Presented Affective Filter Hypothesis that is a "mental block" which keeps comprehensible input from being fully used, slowing down the acquisition process. The affective variables Krashen (1981) postulates in the filter are all among the defined and measurable sub skills of Emotional Intelligence.

Recently research has shifted to a greater emphasis on practices that address factors in the classroom environment that impact learning.

The non-cognitive constructs of intelligence are changing the way classroom instruction is presented. The business world has embraced the concept of Emotional Intelligence for long and the body of research is growing in the potential applications of Emotional Intelligence in education. The present study aimed to find out whether Emotional Intelligence was an influential factor in the process of learning English as a foreign language.

Review of Literature

Traditionally, educational systems have emphasized on linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence or IQ as the single determiner of academic success. Unlike
References


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