

*The effect of emotional intelligence
awareness-raising activities on L2 motivation*

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Abstract

This article reports a study investigating the effect of emotional intelligence (EI) awareness-raising on Iranian university students' overall as well as variable-specific L2 motivation. The 136 participants (107 males, 29 females) were divided into a control group and an experimental group, both of which completed the same motivation questionnaire at the beginning and end of the study, with the latter receiving EI awareness-raising in seven sessions over a seven-week period. The results of paired and independent sample *t* tests showed that EI awareness-raising did not have any statistically significant positive effect on Iranian university students' overall L2 motivation, but they had a statistically significant positive effect on the Instrumentality-prevention aspect of L2 motivation. The study highlights the importance of becoming familiar with and applying three motivational strategies which may be considered as universal motivational strategies.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, L2 motivation, universal motivational strategies

Emotional Intelligence

The term *emotional intelligence* (EI), first propounded by Salovey and Mayer (1990), has now lost the appeal of novelty and has in fact enjoyed the status of a buzzword among psychologists, especially after the publication of Goleman's (1995) book, *Emotional Intelligence*. Based on the works of many scholars (inter alia, Bar-On, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2006; Gardner, 1983, 1985; Goleman, 1995; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Thorndike, 1920), it is now evident that EI can play a decisive role in occupational and educational success.

Bar-On (2006), who believes that the term *emotional-social intelligence* (ESI) can better represent the construct because the term *emotional intelligence* fails to sufficiently focus on the social aspect of this construct, defines EI or ESI as "a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands" (p. 3). For ease of understanding, in this study, competencies, skills, and facilitators have been considered as the same concepts under the name of *skills*. Similarly, ESI and EI have been considered as the same concepts under the name of *emotional intelligence*. In Bar-On's (2006) model of EI, there are fifteen skills which are categorized according to five main macro-skills or components. The five macro-skills of this model on the basis of which micro-skills have been conceptualized are intrapersonal emotional quotient (EQ), interpersonal EQ, stress management EQ, adaptability EQ, and general mood EQ. Table1 (taken and adapted from Bar-On, 2006, p. 21) summarizes the components and their corresponding skills as well as what they assess.

Table 1 The EQ inventory (EQ-i) scales and what they assess

EQ-i scales	The EI skills assessed by each scale
<i>Intrapersonal</i>	<i>Self-awareness and self-expression</i>
1. Self-regard	To accurately perceive, understand and accept oneself
2. Emotional self-awareness	To be aware of and understand one's emotions
3. Assertiveness	To effectively and constructively express one's emotions and oneself
4. Independence	To be self-reliant and free of emotional dependency on others
5. Self-actualization	To strive to achieve personal goals and actualize one's potential
<i>Interpersonal</i>	<i>Social awareness and interpersonal relationships</i>
6. Empathy	To be aware of and understand how others feel
7. Social responsibility	To identify with one's social group and cooperate with others
8. Interpersonal Relationships	To establish mutually satisfying relationships and relate well with others
<i>Stress management</i>	<i>Emotional management and regulation</i>
9. Stress tolerance	To effectively and constructively manage emotions
10. Impulse control	To effectively and constructively control emotions

<i>Adaptability</i>	<i>Change management</i>
11. Reality-testing	To objectively validate one's feelings and thinking with external reality
12. Flexibility	To adapt and adjust one's feelings and thinking to new situations
13. Problem-solving	To effectively solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature
<i>General mood</i>	<i>Self-motivation</i>
14. Optimism	To be positive and look at the brighter side of life
15. Happiness	To feel content with oneself, others and life in general

Emotional Intelligence and Learning

It is to be expected that EI can affect learning because emotions can affect learning in a variety of ways. For example, Oatly and Nundy (1996) found that when learners feel secure and excited, their learning is facilitated. This is probably because learning can better take place in an anxiety-free environment. On the other hand, if learners feel anxious about, say, their homework, it may be difficult for them to benefit from doing their homework because they may not be able to concentrate (Ellis, Ottaway, Varner, Becker, & Moore, 1997). Therefore, the way we feel about different aspects of learning a particular skill may influence the way and the extent to which we learn it.

More specifically, according to Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000), learning has three main aspects, namely, "cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence" (p. 88). They stated that emotional expression is inherent in social presence in the sense that learning often involves interaction with peers and this interaction by itself often involves influencing our peers and also being influenced by them emotionally. Furthermore, Goleman (1995, p. 27) portrayed the connection between emotion and cognition as a battle in which, as Joseph LeDoux (1996, p. 243) put it, "sometimes stress helps in formation of explicit memories but it can also devastate explicit memory." In other words, stress may serve learners' memory negatively or positively. Consequently, stress can be both beneficial and debilitating and, therefore, distinguishing the debilitating kinds of stress from the beneficial ones can be of paramount importance. This suggests the need for studies investigating EI in order to have a better understanding of our emotions (such as stress), intensify the beneficial ones (such as beneficial kinds of stress) and weaken or decrease the debilitating ones (such as debilitating kinds of stress). Because stress is an emotion which can be common among language learners, any motivational strategy which deals with stress may be used in a variety of contexts. Therefore, the present authors assume that diminishing language anxiety which, according to Dörnyei (2001), is one motivational strategy, can be considered as a *universal motivational strategy*. It deals with debilitating anxiety or stress and focuses on the ways we can decrease this kind of anxiety (for elaboration on this see Dörnyei, 2001).

Emotional Intelligence and Language Learning

Many people who have experienced learning a new language may recall times when they felt particular emotions during different periods of language learning such as excitement, disappointment, desperation, disenchantment, motivation or demotivation. Since EI is concerned with emotions and the central role of emotions in success has already been highlighted, it is worth exploring the role of EI in L2 learning. Fortunately, this has already been investigated in part by some scholars such as Fahim and Pishghadam (2007) and also Pishghadam (2009), who found that there is a positive correlation between having higher levels of some EI skills (such as stress tolerance) and success in language learning. However, an under-researched area is the interaction between EI and other emotional aspects of language learning. In other words, although it is worthwhile to find out that there is a positive relationship between some aspects of EI and language learning, simply highlighting this relationship may not be as important as knowing the *way* in which EI is related to and can influence language learning. Moreover, the term *language learning* is so general that it may be impossible to investigate the relevance of EI to all of the aspects of language learning in one study. Therefore, in the present study, the relevance of EI to only one aspect of language learning, namely L2 motivation, has been addressed. This is mainly because some of the aspects of L2 motivation may be emotion-based and therefore related to emotional intelligence.

L2 Motivation

Success in language learning depends on and is influenced by numerous factors, one of which is motivation. Motivation can be among the most important prerequisites of successful language learning. There are numerous theories propounded during different periods of the history of L2 motivation research (for a comprehensive account of the periods of L2 motivation see Dörnyei, 2005 and also Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). However, in order to motivate language learners, the theories of motivation may not be of practical use if they are not accompanied with practical suggestions, which can be called motivational strategies. In this regard, Dörnyei (2001) has provided the most comprehensive account of motivational strategies yet developed, many of which can be related to the emotional aspects of language learning.

Motivational Strategies

According to Dörnyei (2001, p. 28) "motivational strategies refer to those motivational influences that are consciously exerted to achieve some

systematic and enduring positive effect." Dörnyei (2001) presents a framework for motivational strategies which consists of four facets: creating the basic motivational conditions, generating motivation, maintaining and protecting motivation, and finally, encouraging positive self-evaluation (for a discussion of these categories see Dörnyei, 2001 and also Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). For a number of reasons, language learners' emotions may play a determining role in each of these four phases. For example, creating the basic motivational conditions may necessitate successful interpersonal relationships (between the teacher and learners, and among learners themselves); generating motivation may require self-confidence; maintaining and protecting motivation may need perseverance and patience; and finally encouraging positive self-evaluation may require a language learner to be optimistic. As interpersonal relationships, self-confidence, perseverance, patience, and optimism are prevalent emotions discussed in the area of EI and as they can be influential in L2 motivation, it is worth investigating the relationship between EI and L2 motivation in order to establish emotion-based universal motivational strategies.

Universal motivational strategies. The "how" of motivating language learners can vary from context to context and a particular motivational strategy which can be suitable for some learners may not be so for some other learners. Dörnyei (2001) claimed that it is not a logical practice to try and apply all kinds of motivational strategies because many of them may not work for us and may not be appropriate for particular language learners. When a motivational strategy is context-specific, it is suitable for a limited number of contexts and not for all contexts. On the other hand, if a motivational strategy is universal, it can be used in a variety of contexts successfully.

The difficult choice of suitable motivational strategies is a problem for some teachers who are not sure whether a particular motivational strategy is applicable to their context or not. In other words, some language teachers search for and have difficulty in finding some cure-all motivational strategies suitable for almost any context. Finding *universal motivational strategies* necessitates an investigation of what is common between language learners. Since humans are emotional beings and as emotions can be universal and common between people, there are probably a number of universal motivational strategies dealing with the emotions of language learners. Therefore, in this study the researchers tried to propound a number of universal motivational strategies based on the links between EI and L2 motivation.

The Relationships between EI and L2 Motivation

Learning in general and language learning in particular can be emotion-based (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Goleman, 1995; Oatly & Nundy, 1996). Knowing the way we can comprehend and take notice of our emotions (such as knowing when we are happy, angry, satisfied, jealous, disenchanted, jaded, disappointed, and so on), diminish debilitating emotions (such as insecurity, and feeling that we cannot reach a goal, say, in language learning) and intensify beneficial emotions (such as patience, perseverance, persistence, and self-confidence) can be of great significance for learning in general. This can be more important in language learning because language learning can be a long process, necessitating long-term motivation and persistence which can be supported by encouraging positive attitudes and beneficial emotions, and fighting debilitating emotions. Consequently, L2 motivation should be maintained over a long period of time, and one of the criteria that can keep L2 motivation high is successfully dealing with emotional aspects of it.

It is worth highlighting that L2 motivation can be emotion-based (for example, intrinsic motivation can be about likes and dislikes), and generating and maintaining L2 motivation may be influenced by beneficial and debilitating emotions. Therefore, it is logical to postulate that EI and L2 motivation can be related to each other in the sense that both of them are among the prerequisites of successful L2 learning and both of them are related to emotions. For this reason, by investigating the relationship between EI and L2 motivation, we may be able to have a better understanding of those aspects of L2 motivation that can be emotion-based such as the way language learners feel about their teachers, the way they control their debilitating emotions such as stress, and the way they evaluate their own successes and failures.

EI and Emotion-based Motivational Strategies: The Interrelated Links

Motivational strategies can be so diverse that it may not be feasible to investigate the relationship between EI and all the possible motivational strategies in one study. Therefore, in this study three interrelated links between the skills of EI (based on Bar-On's 2006 model) and a selection of motivational strategies (based on Dörnyei's 2001 work) have been investigated. Three particular motivational strategies were selected as the focus of this study because the present researchers, based on their own personal experience, believed that these were the most emotion-based. However, it should be noted that the relationships between EI and motivational strategies are not limited to these three strategies

and, consequently, the area of research in this regard is open and the relationship between EI and other motivational strategies is worth exploring.

Developing a personal relationship with your students. One important emotional aspect of language learning can be the way language learners feel about their teachers. In this regard, Dörnyei (2001) elaborates on the strategy of *developing a personal relationship with students*: "Show students that you accept and care about them, pay attention and listen to each of them, and indicate your mental and physical availability" (p. 39). Dörnyei (2001), who underlines the ability to listen to students and show that we care about them, gives some examples of the behavior that can show this caring and listening:

greeting students and remembering their names, smiling at them, noticing interesting features of their appearance (e.g., new haircut), showing interest in their hobbies, expressing in our comments that we've thought about them and that their individual effort is recognised, moving around in class, and sending notes/homework to absent students. (pp. 37-38)

What this strategy involves is comparable to the skills of *empathy*, and *interpersonal relationships* in the context of EI. One of the skills involved in empathy is the ability to listen to others attentively. Moreover, showing that we care about our addressee is of paramount importance for having satisfying interpersonal relationships. Therefore, interpersonal relationships in Bar-On's (2006) model of EI and "developing a personal relationship with students" in Dörnyei's (2001) list of motivational strategies are comparable and can be considered as dealing with overlapping concepts.

Diminishing language anxiety. This strategy involves, among other things, avoiding social comparison and promoting cooperation instead of competition (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 94). It can be a good idea to ask language learners to compare themselves with themselves and not with other language learners. Moreover, there is a considerable body of knowledge about the benefits of cooperation (for a summary of these benefits see Dörnyei, 2001, pp. 99-102). The link between this strategy and EI skills is more tangible when we think of social responsibility, interpersonal relationships and stress tolerance. As Hughes, Patterson, and Terrell (2005, p. 73) state, for competition, IQ can be very beneficial, but for cooperation, it is EQ that plays the decisive role. Competition by nature can be anxiety-provoking and stressful because it is like struggling for existence, but cooperation is like progressing and making headway based on the factor of *help*. Language learners who are good at the skills of social responsibility and interpersonal relationships are able to cooperate well with their peers and therefore

can learn a new language in an anxiety-free environment. This can be complemented by considering the skill of stress tolerance. When language learners' stress tolerance increases and when cooperation is encouraged, language learners will be more motivated to learn a new language because it does not involve being continuously exposed to stressful situations.

Promoting effort attributions. "Promoting effort attributions in language learners" involves "encouraging learners to explain their failures by the lack of effort and appropriate strategies applied rather than by their insufficient ability, refusing to accept ability attributions, and emphasizing that the curriculum is within the learners' ability range" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 108). This strategy is based on attribution theory, first propounded by Heider (1944, 1958) and later developed by Weiner (1992). According to Williams and Burden (1997, p. 104), "a central aspect of Heider's theory was that it was how people *perceived* events rather than the events in themselves that influenced behaviour." Similarly, Covington (1998, p. 75), when talking about the underlying assumption of attribution training, maintains that "it is not so much the event of failure that disrupts academic achievement as it is the meaning of failure."

Concerning academic achievement, Weiner's (1992) conceptualization of attribution theory has been very influential in the field of motivation. He maintained that people attribute the reasons for their successes and failures to four main sets of attribution: ability, effort, luck, and the perceived difficulty of the task they went through. In this regard, two well-known terms are *locus of control* and *locus of causality*, both of which refer to the internal and external factors that attributions belong to. On the whole, ability and effort have been considered as the internal factors, and luck, and the perceived difficulty of the task have been considered as external factors.

From another perspective, attributions can be related to particular emotions. For example, people generally tend to attribute the causes of their failures to external factors, and their success to internal factors as means of protecting their self-esteem (Williams & Burden, 1997). This can be similar to the skill of *self-regard* in Bar-On's model of EI, which requires people to value their success in order to increase their self-regard. Moreover, specific emotions can often accompany internal and external attributions. For instance, pride, shame, and guilt can be prevalent in controllable, internal attributions (such as effort) because people generally feel proud when they succeed, and they may feel shameful and guilty when they fail (Williams & Burden, 1997).

The link between attribution theory and EI is stronger when we think of optimism. Optimism is related not only to what we think about the future, but also to our understanding of the present and what we attribute the current

situations and experiences to. Martin Seligman's (1990) ideas of *permanence*, *pervasiveness*, and *personalization* are comparable to Heider's (1958) attribution theory. In Martin Seligman's discussion of optimism, permanence refers to the fact that we think of the causes of events to be either permanent or temporary and knowing the causes of unpleasant events as temporary is, in most cases, based on emotionally intelligent behavior. In a similar vein, in attribution theory, when we attribute failures to temporary and controllable factors, such as effort, we avoid considering those failures permanent.

Personalization refers to whether we attribute the causes of failures to external factors or to internal factors. Emotionally intelligent behavior is to attribute them to external factors as long as it is based on *reality testing*. Reality testing is important here because when we fail in a task due to insufficient effort and we know this, reality testing prevents us from fooling ourselves by attributing our failures to external factors (see Hughes, Patterson, & Terrell, 2005 for a discussion of the relationship between reality testing and optimism).

Optimism is also postulated in attribution theory since without being optimistic, how can one hope that effort will pay off? Valuing and emphasizing effort and perseverance while refusing to play down aptitude (but not focusing on it in the case of failure) can be compatible with both attribution theory in the field of L2 motivation and optimism in the field of EI.

Emotional Intelligence Awareness-raising: A New Motivational Strategy?

For a number of reasons, EI awareness-raising activities may be considered as new motivational strategies. This is because some aspects of L2 motivation can be emotion-based such as the way language learners feel about their teachers (requiring successful interpersonal relationships), the way they control their debilitating emotions like stress (requiring stress tolerance), and the way they evaluate their own successes and failures (requiring positive attributions). This calls for a study in which both EI awareness-raising and L2 motivation are addressed. However, there are very few studies, if any, especially in the Iranian context, which have dealt with EI and L2 motivation at the same time. Therefore, in this study, this relationship has been addressed by conducting EI awareness-raising and investigating its effects on L2 motivation. More specifically, the purpose of the present study was to investigate whether EI awareness-raising has any statistically significant effect on Iranian university students' overall as well as variable-specific L2 motivation (for an explanation of overall and variable-specific, see the instrumentation section).

Method

Participants

The participants of this study were 136 students at the Iran University of Science and Technology who were studying English as either English for general purposes (EGP) or English for specific purposes (ESP). The students of the EGP course (comprising four groups) were mainly sophomores who were studying different majors, and the students of ESP course (comprising the other four groups) were mainly seniors. Every one of the four ESP classes included the students of the same major: computer engineering, mechanic engineering, ceramic, and railroad. The participants were of both genders (107 males and 29 females) and their ages ranged from 19 to 26 years with a mean of 21. The number of participants at the beginning of the study was 208 (160 males and 48 females), but the study had an attrition of about 34 percent (30 participants in the experimental group and 42 participants in the control group were absent from the second data collection), and, at the end of the study, 136 participants took part in the study.

Instrumentation

The instrument of this study was the same questionnaire that Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009) used in their study, that is, the Persian-translated Iranian version of the motivation questionnaire designed by Dörnyei and Taguchi (see Dörnyei 2010). The original questionnaire was designed in the Japanese language and was later adapted for use in China and Iran. All the three versions of the questionnaire (Japanese, Chinese and Iranian) use Likert scales and the total number of items in the Iranian version of the questionnaire is 76.

The Iranian version of the motivation questionnaire includes fourteen variables or aspects. In this study, the researchers considered every one of these aspects as a *variable-specific motivation*, and all the fourteen *variable-specific* kinds of motivation together are considered as the *overall motivation*. The fourteen variables and their abbreviations are as follows (see Dörnyei 2010, p. 126 for their Cronbach Alpha reliability):

1. Attitudes toward L2 Community (AtC), measuring interest in communicating with L2 native speakers and knowing their culture.
2. Attitudes toward Learning English (AtL), measuring interest in the English language itself and also English classrooms/courses.

3. Criterion Measures (CM), measuring the learners' intended endeavor to learn L2 and the effort put into this learning.
4. Ideal L2 Self (IL2S), measuring the attributes related to language learning that one likes and desires to possess.
5. Ought-to L2 Self (OL2S), measuring the attributes related to language learning that one thinks one must possess to live up to expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes.
6. Instrumentality-Promotion (IPro), measuring the postulated reason for L2 learning as a means for occupational and educational advancement.
7. Instrumentality-Prevention (IPre), measuring the motive for learning L2 to avoid negative outcomes of not learning it (such as failing an exam or being considered as a weak learner).
8. Cultural Interest (CI), measuring the learner's interest in the L2 culture and its manifestations in the media (English-speaking films or TV programs) as well as English books, magazines and so on.
9. Integrativeness (Int), measuring the desire to become similar to the valued members of L2 community and generally having a positive attitude towards L2 native speakers.
10. English Anxiety (EA), measuring how anxious or nervous one gets in language learning classrooms or when talking with native speakers (which can be a demotivating factor for language learning).
11. Ethnocentrism (Eth), measuring the viewpoint that one's race, nation, group, language, and the like is better than any others (which can be a demotivating factor for language learning).
12. Fear of Assimilation (FA), measuring the idea that learning a new language and becoming an accepted member of the new community cause devaluing and forgetting one's own culture and values (which can be a demotivating factor for language learning).
13. Parental Encouragement/Family Influence (Par), measuring the encouragement and/or pressure exerted by parents or family.
14. Travel Orientation (TOr), measuring the necessity of knowing L2 for travelling abroad.

Procedure

At the beginning of the study, the researchers included eight university groups in their study. As these eight groups were the only groups the researchers had easy access to, the study is based on convenience sampling. Four of these groups were considered as the experimental group and the other four groups as the control group, with each of these two groups consisting

of two EGP classes and two ESP classes (mechanics and computer for the experimental group, and ceramics and railroad for the control group). Then, the motivation questionnaire was administered to all the participants in both the experimental and control groups so as to determine the quality and extent as well as the homogeneity of the participants' L2 motivation at the outset. The control group participants did not receive any treatment and they studied their general English textbook in EGP classes and an English-for-students-of-engineering textbook in ESP classes. Although the textbooks used in EGP and ESP classes of the experimental group were the same as the textbooks used by the control group, the participants of the experimental group received the treatment of EI awareness-raising in seven sessions during seven weeks (one session every week). In the first six sessions two EI skills were subject to treatment and in the last session three EI skills were presented (overall fifteen EI skills). This awareness-raising was presented by one of the researchers of this study who was not the teacher of any of the participants. It was not possible for the researchers to be the teachers of the university students who participated in study and also it was not feasible for them to conduct the study at private language institutes. Therefore, the researchers were limited to the presentation of the EI awareness-raising in the manner outlined below.

By *awareness-raising* we mean providing a technical definition for every one of the fifteen skills of Bar-On's model of EI, explaining what they involve, elaborating on their definitions and explanations, providing some examples of the manifestations of these skills in real life, and, finally, talking of and suggesting the ways by which one can learn and internalize these skills. Therefore, the treatment was mainly input, and although EI skills were also discussed by the participants at times, the treatment did not involve any kind of practice.

The allotted time for presenting and discussing every one of these skills was around 10-15 min and therefore approximately the last 20-30 minutes of every class were allocated to this aim. Finally, all the participants were given the same motivation questionnaire again at the end of the study so as to determine whether or not EI awareness-raising may have any statistically significant positive effect on overall as well as variable-specific L2 motivation.

Results

As the aim of the study was to investigate the effect of EI awareness-raising on L2 motivation by comparing two groups (experimental and control) at the beginning and at the end of the study, *t* tests were applied. One paired samples *t* test was used to compare the L2 motivation of the experimental group at the beginning and at the end of the study, and another paired sam-

ples *t*-test was used to compare the L2 motivation of the control group at the beginning and at the end of the study. Moreover, one independent samples *t* test was used to compare the L2 motivation of the experimental group with that of the control group at the beginning of the study so as to determine the homogeneity of the participants' L2 motivation, and another independent samples *t* test was used at the end of the study to compare the L2 motivation of the experimental group with that of the control group.

In the data analysis procedure, first of all the motivation questionnaire was unscrambled and sorted for data analysis purposes so that all the questions related to any variable could be seen and scored together. However, for data collection, the questionnaire was administered in its original version whose items concerning every motivation variable were scrambled and randomly distributed. Then, every Likert scale item was given a mathematical value, and the items related to English anxiety, ethnocentrism, and fear of assimilation were scored reversely because the more fear of assimilation and anxiety about L2 learning language learners have and the more ethnocentric they are, the less L2 motivation they have. For the purpose of working with percentages, final scores were proportioned to one hundred. These percentages were then used to conduct *t* tests.

The first paired samples *t* test was conducted to compare the experimental group participants' variable-specific (AtC, AtL, etc.) and overall L2 motivation at the beginning and end of the study (before and after receiving the treatment). For the experimental group, there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores for overall L2 motivation at the beginning of the study ($M = 69.15$, $SD = 0.89$) and at the end of the study ($M = 67.20$, $SD = 2.70$), with $t(3) = 1.63$, $p = .202$. Therefore, EI awareness-raising probably does not have any statistically significant positive effect on Iranian university students' overall L2 motivation.

However, in regard to variable-specific L2 motivation, the results show that none of the variables reached the .05 point of significance except for instrumentality-prevention motivation, which, as it was said previously in the instrumentation section, measures the motive for learning L2 to avoid negative outcomes of not learning it. For instrumentality-prevention motivation of the experimental group, there was a statistically significant difference between the scores for IPre at the beginning of the study ($M = 56.41$, $SD = 1.89$) and at the end of the study ($M = 60.48$, $SD = 3.06$), with $t(3) = 4.01$, $p = .028$. This result can be compared with the instrumentality-prevention aspect of motivation in the control group, which was not significantly higher ($p = .293$).

Although there can be many reasons for this increase, such as course materials, the interaction between the teacher and students, group dynamics

and so on, EI awareness-raising may also be considered as an influential factor. In other words, it may not be far-fetched to consider that the experimental group participants' instrumentality-prevention aspect of L2 motivation increased partly because of the probable effect of the EI awareness-raising.

The second paired samples *t* test was conducted to compare the control group participants' variable-specific and overall L2 motivation at the beginning and end of the study. The results show that for the control group there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores for overall L2 motivation at the beginning of the study ($M = 69.40$, $SD = 1.69$) and at the end of the study ($M = 68.49$, $SD = 2.77$), with $t(2) = 0.815$, $p = .501$. Concerning variable-specific kinds of L2 motivation, the results showed that the scores for the variables of fear of assimilation and integrativeness were significantly decreased. First, there was a statistically significant difference between the scores for fear of assimilation at the beginning of the study ($M = 75.77$, $SD = 2.71$) and at the end of the study ($M = 73.51$, $SD = 3.18$), with $t(2) = 5.003$, $p = .038$. Secondly, there was a statistically significant difference between the scores for integrativeness at the beginning of the study ($M = 76.20$, $SD = 2.53$) and at the end of the study ($M = 75.32$, $SD = 2.65$), with $t(2) = 7.79$, $p = .016$. The differences for other variable-specific kinds of L2 motivation for the control group at the beginning and end of the study were not statistically significant. Table 2 constitutes a summary of the paired samples *t* tests and includes only their *p* values.

Table 2 Significance (*p*) values for paired samples *t* test for the experimental group and the control group

	Experimental group	Control group
AtC	.115	.583
AtL	.317	.548
CM	.522	.478
CI	.148	.308
EA	.374	.871
Eth	.275	.175
FA	.258	-.038*
IL2S	.816	.641
OL2S	.509	.469
IPre	.028*	.293
IPro	.077	.688
Int	.201	-.016*
Par	.323	.570
TOr	.376	.582
Overall	.202	.501

* $p < .05$

In regard to independent samples *t* tests, the first one was conducted to compare the experimental group participants' variable-specific and overall L2 motivation with that of the control group at the beginning of the study. There was not a statistically significant difference between the experimental group participants' overall L2 motivation ($M = 69.15$, $SD = .89$) and the control group participants' overall L2 motivation ($M = 69.24$, $SD = 1.42$), with $t(6) = 0.113$, $p = .914$. Concerning variable-specific kinds of L2 motivation, there was not a statistically significant difference between the experimental group participants' variable-specific kinds of L2 motivation and those of the control group participants' at the beginning of the study. The results of the first independent samples *t* test showed that the control group and the experimental group participants were homogeneous in relation to their L2 motivation.

The second independent samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the experimental group participants' variable-specific and overall L2 motivation with those of the control group at the end of the study. There was not a statistically significant difference between the experimental group participants' overall L2 motivation ($M = 67.20$, $SD = 2.70$) and control group participants' overall L2 motivation ($M = 68.49$, $SD = 2.77$) at the end of the study, with $t(5) = 0.617$, $p = .564$. Concerning variable-specific kinds of motivation, the results show that there was not a statistically significant difference between the experimental group participants' variable-specific kinds of L2 motivation and those of the control group participants' at the end of the study.

Discussion

Concerning the first finding of the study, which was that EI awareness-raising did not have any statistically significant positive effect on Iranian university students' overall L2 motivation, a number of issues can be highlighted. First of all, a word of caution should be mentioned when dealing with psychological and emotional functioning of human beings because these kinds of functioning can be under the influence of so many factors that it is difficult to confidently ascribe any emotional change to any one particular factor. Consequently, although the L2 motivation of the participants of this study did not improve, it may not be logical to completely question the value of EI awareness-raising. In a similar vein, if, hypothetically, the participants' overall L2 motivation had increased, it would not have been logical and scientific to claim EI awareness-raising as the sole reason for it.

Although metacognition and awareness-raising are worthwhile, they are not devoid of weaknesses. One undeniable weakness of awareness-raising is that, as its name suggests, it is aimed at increasing the participants' awareness

of a particular issue. This is a weakness because becoming aware of something may not necessarily be enough to ensure dealing with it in a successful manner. For example, if a person becomes aware that one of the techniques of anger management is to count to five before reacting to the anger-provoking stimulus, it does not necessarily mean that this person will be able to control his/her anger in this way. What is necessary in addition to awareness-raising is practicing what we have become aware of. This may ultimately lead to the development of what is under practice. Mathematically speaking, awareness plus practice equals development. Regarding this, Hughes, Patterson, and Terrell (2005, p. 116) state that "it takes concrete experience to make change. . . . behavioral change is based on a repeatedly reinforced experiential process." Similarly, Panju (2008, p. 56) lays emphasis on practice by stating that "learners cannot learn EI skills by hearing lectures about them; they acquire them by repeatedly practicing these skills in the supportive environment of the classroom." Since becoming motivated to learn a new language can be an emotional change and since change, in most cases, cannot happen without practice, it is of vital importance to lengthen the period of the treatment of EI awareness-raising and to accompany it with practice. The difficult part is that effective practice, which can take the form of life experience, can mainly be gained in real life situations and therefore researchers may not be able to achieve what they desire by accompanying awareness-raising activities with superficial simulation of real life situations.

However, if awareness-raising is not enough and practice is also needed, it does not mean that awareness-raising should not be done if there is no or little chance of practice. In other words, although the present researchers were able to predict that awareness-raising may not be enough, they deemed it rational that awareness-raising may be worthwhile by itself even if there is no chance of practice, since the chance of practicing EI skills may occur in the future lives of the participants.

Additionally, the quality of awareness-raising is of vital importance. One of the greatest limitations of this study was that EI awareness-raising was presented by one of the researchers who was not the teacher of the participants and who was their peer. These two factors could have reduced the receptivity of the participants because awareness-raising, however skillfully and eloquently it may be presented, takes the form of lectures and participants may feel that they are being sermonized. Moreover, young people (such as the participants of this study) may be more receptive to the ideas of their teachers because (in many cases) they consider their teachers as more experienced and mature than someone who is their peer. Thus, the quality and effectiveness of the awareness-raising in this

study may not be comparable to the quality and effectiveness of similar teaching presented by actual teachers of particular language learners.

Concerning EI lectures and workshops, another factor which may cause Iranian university students to be less receptive can be the fact that most of them may be under pressure to struggle to provide for their basic economic needs (especially in Iran's today economic crisis and political chaos). When someone's basic needs are not met, they may be less receptive to any talk related to abstract concepts (such as EI skills) and they may be more interested in money-making ideas or whatever that leads to improving his or her financial or economic situation. However, as the participants' socio-economic background and status were not controlled, this must remain a mere speculation at present.

In relation to the second finding of the study, which was that the instrumentality-prevention aspect of the participants' L2 motivation was statistically significantly increased, two issues are worthy of discussing. The first one is that EI awareness-raising may be effective in positively influencing only some of the aspects of L2 motivation (such as the probable positive effect of EI awareness-raising on the instrumentality-prevention aspect of L2 motivation in this study).

The second issue becomes clearer and more tangible if one considers the social milieu in which Iranian university students have to live. By considering the questionnaire items related to the instrumentality-prevention aspect of L2 motivation, most of which measure the motive for learning L2 to avoid negative outcomes of not learning it, such as failing an exam or being considered as a weak learner, one can understand that although gaining higher scores for this factor means that university students are motivated in this way, it can also show that these students are increasingly pressurized by external forces and social pressures. Thus, it is possible that the participants' increased instrumentality-prevention aspect of L2 motivation may not be a desirable kind of L2 motivation and, in the eyes of university students, may be seen even as an imposed kind of L2 motivation. The question of whether the instrumentality-prevention aspect of L2 motivation is an imposed and undesirable kind of L2 motivation calls for further research. In other words, it is worth investigating whether or not Iranian university students wish to be forced to study English and like this external force or not, and if so, whether pressuring them to study English can positively contribute to their language learning.

All in all, if EI awareness-raising may not be considered as a motivational strategy, as this study suggests, it may be considered as the foundation and precondition for promoting EI.

Conclusion

The first conclusion of this study is that EI awareness-raising alone is not enough to increase the overall L2 motivation of Iranian university students and therefore exposure to the situations in which EI skills can be practiced and actualized is probably required to successfully increase these learners' overall L2 motivation. However, as this awareness-raising has been effective in having a statistically significant positive effect on the instrumentality-prevention aspect of L2 motivation, it is possible that EI awareness-raising can be effective with respect to only one aspect of L2 motivation or some of the other aspects. However, allotting a considerable amount of class time to EI awareness-raising may not be reasonable because teachers already have enough work to do trying to cover their pre-specified (usually integrative) syllabuses. Finding the time for talking and discussing EI skills in language classes depends on teachers' ability to await, notice and create this opportune time. Similarly to the concepts of *focus on form* and *focus on forms*, which, concisely put, refer to whether the focus on a structure is incidental (focus on form) or pre-planned (focus on forms), the present researchers suggest that language teachers practice EI awareness-raising in a focus-on-form manner, when, for example, the situation, topic of a discussion activity and the topic of a unit or lesson are pertinent to any of EI skills. In this way and by explaining to learners how EI skills are relevant to language learning (see the section "EI and Emotion-based Motivational Strategies: The Interrelated Links"), teachers may be able to arouse their learners' curiosity and enthusiasm as well as their L2 motivation.

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