STUDENTS' EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS CORRELATION TO THEIR LISTENING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

Didan Nugraha, Hariswan, P.J., & Fiftinova

English Education Study Program
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sriwijaya University
E-mail: fiftinova@fkip.unsri.ac.id

Abstract: Undergraduate students are expected to be independent learners, yet they are resourceful enough to have a good grade. Being independent means deciding what is good for themselves and what is not, academically or socially. In consequence, they had to have correct and proper ways of understanding their personality and emotion because each human has a different style of learning. Emotional intelligence has been a standard on providing sufficient information on the test takers on their personality and state of emotions. The objectives of this study were to find out the level of students' emotional intelligence, the level of students' listening comprehension achievement, and whether or not there was a significant correlation between students' emotional intelligence and their listening comprehension achievement. The study was correlation with Pearson-product moment. The population was 335 students of English Education Department, at Sriwijaya University, and with purposive sampling technique, 78 students of the sixth semester were chosen as the sample. To collect the data and to measure students' emotional intelligence level and students' listening comprehension achievement, both emotional intelligence questionnaire and listening comprehension achievement test were distributed. The Pearson correlation was used in data analysis using SPSS 21. The result revealed students' emotional intelligence level was "mid" and their listening comprehension achievement was "low". Furthermore, the correlation between students' emotional intelligence and students' listening comprehension achievement is positive and weak in which the r-obtained was lower than the value of r-table 0.033 < 0.22) at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). The value of probability (0.776) was higher than 0.05, so there was no significant correlation between students' emotional intelligence and students' listening comprehension achievement. It can be stated that emotional intelligence played a factor in determining students' listening comprehension achievement but not the determining ones.
Keywords: *Correlation, Emotional Intelligence, Listening Comprehension Achievement*

As one of the four fundamental skills in English, listening has a crucial role especially in the early acquisition of English. As a building block of mastering English, listening is the skill of understanding spoken language. Listening is an activity that cannot be separated from everyday conversation (Lindsay & Knight, 2006). Researchers also found out that listening provides a comprehensible input for learners in communication, which assists people's understanding of the communicational information (Gass & Selinker, 2008). Listening comprehension is a very important means of communication since the oral language mastery is impossible to be achieved without a good comprehension. However, there are still some problems in students' listening comprehension. According to Ummah (2012), some of Indonesian students' problems in listening comprehension are losing focus of what the speaker is talking about due to the speed of speech, being unable to catch many parts of speech due to the lack of vocabulary, being unable to concentrate on listening, being unable to comprehend verbal commands, and feeling unmotivated to study.

One of the students' problems in listening comprehension is a rejection to the subject which usually and in many cases starts from students' inner stances toward the lesson which depends on their emotional intelligence. Students who are not used to interact with their peers will have a different personality from their extroverted counterparts. These differences are shown in their ways to handle certain lesson in school. Language lesson, being straightforward and requires interactive processes makes it easy to analyze and understand (Garrod and Pickering, 2004). Goleman (1998) agrees that people with "low" emotional intelligence score tend to not have self-awareness and self-management. They will not know how to respond calmly and properly when faced with the certain condition thus making them anxious and concerning their answers. Students feel worried about the

reaction of teachers and friends if they are unable to understand what is said in English (Javed, Eng, & Mohamed, 2013). Ardila (2013, p. 78) states that by having high emotional control and emotional capacity to handle a subject, students will be able to contain the anxiety and self-rage which usually happen in certain parts on a subject. She also maintains the statement that mainly, students' problem lies on themselves, not on the subject or the test itself.

Listening comprehension achievement of the English Education department students is very important to be assessed since as the future English teachers they must have good listening comprehension skill. From the first until the fourth semester they have been taught listening courses. Therefore, it is highly crucial to see the result of their learning by giving them listening comprehension test to see how well they do in listening comprehension. An achievement test is given at the end of a period of the teaching and learning with the essential goal to find out whether the individual has reached the objective of the course taken (Brown, 2007).

Listening comprehension is one of the basic English skills that every student in English Education department, at Sriwijaya University, should master since there are mandatory courses of listening that every student must take. Each course is available from the first until the fourth semester, namely IEC (Intensive English Course) Listening, Listening 1, Listening II, and Listening III. Each course respectively has 4 credits, 3 credits, 3 credits, and 2 credits. In order to take the listening courses throughout the semesters, a student must pass each of the course. The listening comprehension achievement of the sixth-semester students is the subject of this study since all listening skills have been learned throughout the first until the fourth semester. Therefore, it is very crucial to see the achievement of their listening comprehension and how their emotional intelligence relates to it.

Emotional intelligence plays a major role in students' listening comprehension achievement. As preliminary study showed, from 27 responders, 17 (63%) of them felt that behavior and personality play influence their performance in TOEFL-like listening exam/exercise. Emotional intelligence influences listening comprehension achievement in a sense that lacking or weak on one or more aspects inhibits students' listening skill. Brown (2007) states listening comprehension is an interactive process which involves receiving sounds and constructing meanings in the brain. Cognitively, students need to have high input on how and the meaning of certainly produced sounds. Students with low self-awareness and self-management tend to easily underestimate their judgment on answering the test items. On the other hand, students with excessive social-awareness can easily be distracted while doing the test.

Since it is a very complex process, there are several factors that contribute to listening comprehension. Sylvester (1994) states that in order to concentrate well, emotion plays a big part to ensure students are attentive to the lesson and test. The higher the students' level of concentration, the better they will be to comprehend listening questions. Fujita (1984) found out that one affective aspect that gives influence towards listening comprehension is students' self-confidence. Another affective aspect is students' motivation. Hsu (2006) did a research that shows students with higher motivation to practice listening skill scored higher in listening comprehension test. Murphy (1985) investigates that there are several factors that make more proficient listeners far more superior in terms of physiological and cognitive aspects. This study specifically aims to find out whether there is any significant relationship between students' emotional intelligence (EI) and their listening comprehension.

Method

The correlation study, that involves collecting two sets of data in order to determine the relationship between them (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007), was used in this study. The explanatory research design was used since the objective was to find out the correlation between emotional intelligence and listening comprehension achievement. *Emotional Intelligence* (EI) refers to the way students feel about his/her outside stimuli to his/her feeling and personality it is also the way that someone controls his/her skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management to achieve his/her desired goals. *Listening Comprehension Achievement* refers to the result of students' listening comprehension test, in this case, TOEFL Preparation Guide is used.

The population of this study was 335 students of English Education department, at Sriwijaya

University, and purposive sampling technique was used to take only the students who have taken all listening courses as the sample. To collect the data, all the students were assigned to give some responses on emotional intelligence questionnaire by NHS London to figure out the level of emotional intelligence, and listening comprehension test was used in order to measure their listening comprehension achievement.

In order to measure students' listening comprehension achievement, the TOEFL Preparation Guide which consisted of 50 items in multiple-choice questions was used. Part A (Listening for gist) of the test contains 30 short conversations between two persons and after each conversation, students was given a question, students then must understand the main ideas and implications.

Table 1. Question Number Sub-section/ Emotional Intelligence Framework

Question Number	Sub-Section/ Emotional Intelligence Framework
1,6,11,16,21,26,31,36,41,46	**Self Awareness**
2,7,12,17,22,27,32,37,42,47	**Managing emotions**
3,8,13,18,23,28,33,38,43,48	**Motivating Oneself**
4,9,14,19,24,29,34,39,44,49	**Empathy**
5,10,15,20,25,30,35,40,45,50	**Social Skill**

Part B (listening in detail) contains 10 longer conversations, and for each conversation, students would be given several questions that demand students' ability to listen important details and to understand speakers' purpose. Part C (listening for specific information) contains 10 short talks, and after a talk, students would be given several questions. The students did not only need to demonstrate their ability in listening to important details, but also in understanding relationships between ideas, and the understanding the organization of information.

In order to measure the emotional intelligence level and type, the writer used Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire provided by leadership toolkit from NHS (National 22 Health Service) London, a government based institute in medical and psychological research subject and also providing financial medical assistance in England. NHS states that the self-assessment questionnaire was designed to get people thinking about the various competencies of emotional intelligence as they apply to the test taker. The questionnaire consists of 50 questions, which are divided into several sub-sections. The subsections are self-awareness questions, managing emotions questions, motivating oneself questions, empathy questions, and social skill questions. The following table is the in-depth division of the questions and subsection of the questionnaire.

Both instruments were valid and reliable. The Emotional Intelligence questionnaire used was ready-made by National Health Service, and it has been assessed using validity test Product Moment Pearson Correlation by correlating each item of questionnaire scores with the total score. The result of the validity test was rxy value of 0.786 with r table product moment of 0.312 with 5% significance with N=40 (Hasyyati, 2013). Thus the questionnaire was deemed valid and all of the 50 questionnaire items were considered valid to be tested. For listening comprehension test, the test was taken from the listening section of Longman TOEFL Preparation Guide (Deborah, 2003). Since it is a standardized test with high validity, this instrument was not tried out to non-population. The test consisted of 50 multiple choices questions, and each correct answer was given 2 points. The writer checked and scored the test based on the answer key from the book.

Dealing with the reliability of the test, listening comprehension test is considered reliable since it was taken from Longman TOEFL Preparation Guide. Conoley and Impara (1995) reported that the reliability of the test is high ($r = 0.95$). The listening comprehension section demands the testtakers to be able to understand conversations, long dialogue, and lectures in English and also to answer several questions related to what they hear (Kim, 2000). For Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, the test was reliable since it was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. Hasyyati (2013) reported that the questionnaire obtained the value of 0.820 which is considered highly reliable. Finally, the collected data were analyzed by using Pearson Correlation. Pearson correlation was used to analyze whether there was any significant correlation between students' emotional intelligence and their listening comprehension achievement.

Results and Discussion

Based on the data obtained from the EI questionnaire, students' emotional intelligence level ranged from a minimum of 2.98 to a maximum of 4.52 with the mean of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 0.35. For the emotional intelligence questionnaire, to determine the level of emotional intelligence, the students with mean less than 3.00 were considered as "low", while students with mean in between 3 and 3.99 were considered as "mid". Meanwhile, students with a mean score above 4.00 were considered as "high". For the emotional intelligence questionnaires, to determine the level of emotional intelligence the students with their average score less than 3 were considered as "low", while students with their average score between 3 and 3.99 were "mid". Students with their average score 4 and above were "high". Since it showed the students' averages ranging from 2.98 to 4.52, it is concluded that the level of emotional intelligence of the students of English Education department of Sriwijaya University varies across the board; from "low", "mid", and "high". It can also be interpreted since the average scores of the sample are 3.70 the level of emotional intelligence of the overall students is "mid"

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire

No. of Students	No. of Items	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
78	50	2.98	4.52	3.70	0.35

Moreover, as shown in figure 1, the majority of the students had a high score in self-awareness sub-section. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize what people are feeling, to understand their habitual emotional responses to events and to recognize how emotions affect behavior and performance. The total number of the students who considered themselves as having a high score on self-awareness subsection was 43 students. However, most of the students considered themselves as having weaknesses in managing emotions and motivating oneself. Managing emotions is the ability to stay focused and think clearly even when experiencing powerful emotions.

Being able to manage own emotional state is essential for taking responsibility for the actions, and can save people from hasty decisions that they later regret. Motivating oneself is the ability to use the deepest emotions to move and guide towards the goals. It seemed that the students who had strength in certain subsection were inversely proportional to their weaknesses. In this data, some of the students can have more than one sub-sections that he/she considered him/herself having a high value on.

Figure 1. Students' Emotional Intelligence Strength Distribution

	SELF-AWARENESS	MANAGING EMOTIONS	MOTIVATING ONESELF	EMPATHY	SOCIAL SKILL
Strong in:	43	9	9	18	15
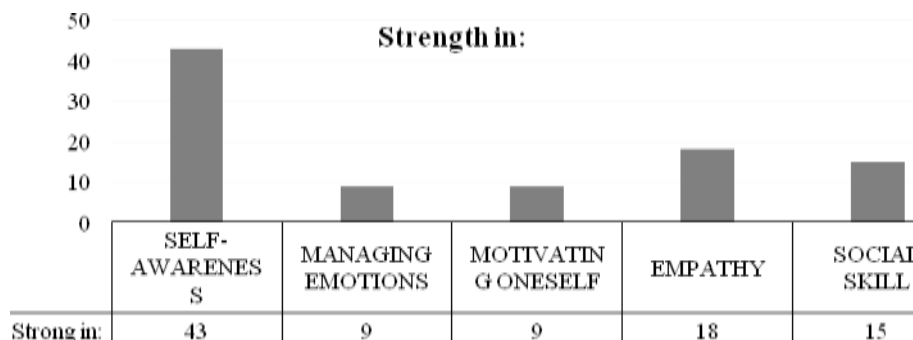
Based on the data obtained from the listening comprehension test, students' listening comprehension achievement level ranged from a minimum score of 22 (failed) to a maximum score of 84 (good), with the mean of 48.58 and a standard deviation of 16.71. There were 50 questions and each correct answer was scored 2 while the incorrect answer was scored 0. To determine students' listening comprehension achievement level, students with score lower than 41 were considered failed", those who score 41 to 55 were considered "low", those who score 56 to 70 were

considered "moderate", those who score 71 to 85 were considered "good", and those who score higher than 85 were considered as "very good". Since the students' scores ranged from 22 to 84, it is concluded that the level of listening comprehension achievement of the students was ranged from 'failed","low',"moderate", to 'good'. Since the mean score was 48,58, the students' listening comprehension achievement was categorized low.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Listening Comprehension Test

No. of Students	No. of Items	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
78	50	22	84	48.58	16.71

As shown in the table 4 above, the r-obtained value of Pearson correlation coefficient of emotional intelligence and listening comprehension achievement was 0.033. To make sure that there was a significant correlation between the two variables, the writer consulted the value of r-table to check the value of r-obtained. If the value of r-obtained is higher than the value of r-table and p (probability) is lower than 0.05, it means that there is a significant correlation between the variables and vice versa.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis: Emotional Intelligence and Listening Comprehension Achievement

Variables		r (Pearson Correlation)	p Sig (2-tailed) $p < 0.05$
Emotional Intelligence	Listening Comprehension Achievement	0.033	0.776

It was found that the r-obtained of 0.033 was lower than the value of r-table of 0.22 with df=76 and the p-value of 0.776 was higher than 0.05. It showed that there was no statistically significant correlation between the two variables. Therefore, H_0 was accepted, and H_1 was rejected. In conclusion, there was no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and listening comprehension achievement of the English Education department of Sriwijaya University.

From the findings above, the students' emotional intelligence was in the "mid" level, it was assumed that the students were able to control their own emotion, and the subject itself posed no threat to the students' emotion in and out of campus. The statistics also showed that the "low" level of emotional intelligence is lower that 1.5% of he sample. It means that overall sample was feeling good about their current emotion and their personality when the test took place. The writer noted that all students showed no suspicious or anxious behavior when the data were taken. However, on the listening part of the research, the students started to show nervousness and signs of no self-confidence. Emotional peak also showed in the parts where the speakers used in the test began to be not clear. Students started to be angry and showing bad moods. Nearing the ends of section B, which dealt with a longer conversation between two people, of a listening comprehension test, the students felt relieved when the speakers began to clear again.

However, the writer's concern about the listening comprehension test was proven when the statistics showed that overall students' listening comprehension achievement was "low". It means that there is something inhibited the true potential of the students. Emotional intelligence played a big part in students' learning capabilities as Rubin (2011) mentions that some factors affecting listening comprehension process include characteristics of the listener which in this part made emotional intelligence played a big role. However, there were many factors overshadowed by the writer and day-to-day lecturers. They are characteristics of the listening passage which dealt with the overall structure of the test items, characteristics of the speaker which dealt with the sounds produced by the given test audio file or the speakers used in the test, characteristics of the listening task which dealt with the type of the test whether it was daily listening test or listening comprehension test, and characteristics of the listening process which dealt with the way the test

was being done.

These problems of *phantom* factors underlying the students' English skills especially listening skills were already known internationally. Hamouda (2013, p. 114) mentions that many educational institutions paid too much attention to structural parts of English, i.e. grammar, reading, and vocabulary. This one-sided view of language teaching made students tend to underestimate listening comprehension, especially in the place where English is being taught as a foreign language.

Based on Pearson-product moment correlation analysis, it was found that the correlation coefficient was 0.033 between the two variables; the correlation was deemed positive even though it was not significant. A positive correlation means that if one variable increases, other variable increases as well. In other words, it can be concluded that when students' emotional intelligence increased, their listening comprehension achievement increased. The result of the correlation analysis proved that emotional intelligence was a factor in students' listening comprehension achievement but not too significant, making the correlation value not significant. However, emotional intelligence still plays a role in determining students' listening comprehension achievement as Boyle (1984) also classified the factors influencing listening comprehension and directly related to EFL listening into four inter-relating categories: listener, speaker, medium and environment factors. He discovered that bad listeners' emotion and environmental moods provided significant hindrances on students' listening skill. Hamouda (2013) adds that bad mood or bad personalities will hinder listening comprehension in a way that the students will feel anxious when faced with a problem they are not familiar with. He also mentioned that panic attacks often became the worst effect of bad mood or environment when faced with the difficult listening test. Furthermore, Vogely (1995, p.41) states, 'We still need research that documents empirically the relationship between what theory says and what learners actually know and more importantly do'.

Conclusion

Conclusively, this present study reveals that there were no significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and listening comprehension achievement. It was no surprise considering many obstacles were present when the test was taken and the students themselves agreed that listening comprehension subject is already a hard subject to learn and sometimes the process of understanding listening comprehension subject in the class was hindered by aforementioned factors. Other factors that made the result of the calculation so surprising is Indonesian students were not used to TOEFL type test, especially the listening section. This research did not represent the experts saying that emotional intelligence will positively influence general education, but more deeply elaborating that with no obstacles to achieving a high score.

The students should realize that each of them has different learning styles depending on their personality. They should be able to maximize their learning potential. Lacking proper facilities and instruments was not the reason not study harder after or before the class began. Furthermore, motivation is necessary to maintain the positive mood of the students, whether it was external motivation or internal motivation. Finally, more elaborative studies on psychology and education should be done by the future researcher which include more variable and find what other factors inhibiting students' personalities to achieve more in the class. Emotional intelligence was also rarely found in general education research, future researchers should plunge deeper into the usage of emotional intelligence on education especially on teaching English.

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