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Juan Rodríguez Prieto

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Emotional Intelligence, Motivational Orientations, and Motivational Learning Effort and Achievement in Spanish as a Foreign Language

Juan Pablo Rodríguez Prieto
Ball State University

1. Introduction

There is a general feeling that the role of emotions has not been well studied yet in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and, as a consequence, there is a growing interest to include the role of emotions as a new source of students' individual differences (IDs) in the research agenda. MacIntyre (2002) argued that emotion "just might be the fundamental basis of motivation, one deserving far greater attention in the language learning domain" (p. 45). Dörnyei & Skehan (2003) listed some basic challenges that most motivation theories have failed to address adequately, including "integrating emotional influences into the primarily cognitive paradigms" (p. 616). Similarly, Dewaele (2005) argued in favor of broadening the field of instructed SLA by including the emotional dimension in research in order to provide crucial theoretical insights into SLA that are now absent.

One concern is whether SLA researchers should concentrate on the relevance of isolated emotions, or if a broader construct capable of integrating all possible feelings might have a greater predictive power. Happiness, embarrassment, anxiousness, nervousness, depression, euphoria, humiliation, and anger are some examples of the emotions students can exhibit in the language learning classroom. In fact, MacIntyre (2002) stated that "to some extent language learning itself is prone to creating intense emotion" (p. 67). Studying emotions one at a time would require an agreement on the definition of what differentiates a given emotion from a similar one if, for example, both of them are members of the same family. In the field of psychology some theorists propose basic families, though not all agree on them. Grief, sorrow, cheerlessness, gloom, melancholy, self-pity, loneliness, dejection, despair, and even severe depression had been included under the family entitled sadness. However, there is a recent theoretical construct that incorporates all possible feelings as well as emotional skills into a unified framework, by following the expansion of the scope of traditional intelligence proposed by Gardner (1983). This construct is the theory of Emotional Intelligence (EI).

2. What is Emotional Intelligence?

Gardner (1983) proposed that each individual has multiple intelligences such as linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, or the personal intelligences. The personal intelligences include intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. Gardner (1983) described intrapersonal intelligence as the capacity to discriminate among feelings, label them, and draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's behavior, while the interpersonal intelligence is the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals' moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions (p. 239).

The theory of EI amplifies and is heavily based on Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences, in particular on the personal intelligences just mentioned. The term "Emotional Intelligence" was coined by Salovey & Mayer (1990) and popularized by Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence* in 1995. Salovey & Mayer (1990) defined EI as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the *ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions*" (original emphasis, p.189). Goleman (1995, 1998)

expanded the definition of EI into five basic emotional and social competencies: (1) knowing one's emotions, or 'self-awareness'; (2) managing emotions, or 'self-regulation'; (3) motivating oneself; (4) recognizing emotions in others, or 'empathy'; and (5) handling relationships, or 'social skills'. Mayer & Salovey (1997) revised their original definition of EI to include a subdomain for thinking about feelings and their revised definition stated that EI "involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 10).

Motivation and EI are not significant predictors in L1 acquisition since all normally-developing children achieve native-like competence in an L1 given regular, normal input. The situation for L2 is different, because the level of ultimate attainment is not uniform from person to person, success is not guaranteed, and near-natives are the exceptions rather than the rule. A search of related SLA literature found little application of EI to the field of SLA. The SLA/EI connection has been the topic of at least one unpublished dissertation that explored the relationship of foreign language (FL) classroom anxiety and EI skills in the interpersonal, leadership, self management, and intrapersonal levels (Chuan-Ta, 2003). When Goleman (1995) listed the basic families of emotions, anxiety was a member of the fear family, and Chuan-Ta (2003) found that his 311 Taiwanese participants showed a high level of anxiety to study English. More importantly, those students with higher FL anxiety tended to have more EI problems and less developed EI skills, while students with lower FL anxiety had fewer EI problems and better EI skills (Chuan-Ta, 2003).

The study of EI in SLA may provide fresh insights into the impact of internal factors in the acquisition of a second or foreign language. The way an individual reacts in a given context is governed in large part by the intensity of the emotional reaction (MacIntyre, 2002). Indeed, strong emotions can either facilitate or block cognitive and physiological processes (MacIntyre, 2002; Goleman, 1995). This is similar to Krashen's Monitor Model that considered the role of an "affective filter" in preventing input from passing through, consequently obstructing acquisition (Gass & Selinker, 2001). Emotions can enhance our ability to think and plan, to solve problems, or to continue training for a distant goal (Goleman, 1995). Having control over one's emotions, for example, can determine how we do in life at large. If we are unable to weigh options and we lack an awareness of feelings, it might be ruinous (Goleman, 1995) if we consider life events such as whom to marry, where to live, or what career to pursue. In the second or foreign language realm, EI might help students acquire a language more easily if they have the ability to anticipate how talking in a FL in front of group of students might feel. If they know anxiety is a high-arousal state which can be minimized with relaxation techniques and anticipatory strategies, they may control it accordingly and effectively if they have the necessary EI skills. In fact, anticipatory anxiety can motivate students to prepare well for an upcoming test for example, thereby performing better (Goleman, 1995). Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter hypothesis was limited in that it centered for the most part in the role of anxiety to prevent input from passing through the language acquisition device. No information was provided about the role of additional emotions and, more importantly, the hypothesis did not account for what emotional skills enhance SLA, how social skills can help learners attend to input or seek for more input, among the wide variety of topics the theory of EI covers.

The main purpose of this study was to test whether the EI construct can be applied to formal instruction in SLA to influence students' IDs. Specifically, this study explores the relationship between the theory of EI and language learners' motivational orientations, motivational learning effort and achievement in the FL because it has been posited that moods may be used to motivate persistence towards challenging tasks, especially in the face of obstacles (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p.200).

3. Motivational orientations

An important distinction to note is the one between motivation and orientation because "orientations refer to reasons for studying a second language, while motivation refers to the directed, reinforcing effort to learn the language" (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1995, p. 207). In fact, orientations do not necessarily reflect motivation in the sense of reinforcing effort (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Since the selection and definition of orientations is context-dependent (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998), only three motivational orientations will be considered for the present

study because they have frequently appeared in studies conducted in instructed settings. What follows is a brief definition of each motivational orientation as they will be considered in this study:

(1) An integrative orientation refers to the desire to learn an L2 in order to know more about the foreign cultural community to the extent of being accepted as a member of that other group (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

(2) An instrumental orientation refers to the utilitarian value and the advantages of learning a new language, such as getting a job, a better CV, or better career opportunities. Perhaps the biggest difference between the integrative and instrumental orientations is that the latter does not imply any interest in getting closer socially to the language community (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). It has been hypothesized that instrumental motivation is a central component of L2 motivation but only *where it is relevant* (original emphasis, Dörnyei, 1994), i.e. if there are some short-term utilitarian benefits for the learners such as higher salaries. The problem with this type of motive is that it facilitates learning until the goal is achieved, at which moment it seems to lose its potency (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1995). As long as there is a clear external reward, learners will make an effort to learn the new language.

(3) The need to fulfill a requirement usually emerges in instructed contexts even as the major motivational orientation (Antes, 1999; Ely, 1986; Mandell, 2002; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Warden & Lin, 2000), but especially in the absence of any other motivational orientation and if students are at the beginning levels. The FL requirement is not always perceived negatively. Students are generally optimistic about using their language skills in the future and especially within the US (Antes, 1999).

4. The study of motivation in SLA

In the recent history and evolution of the study of motivation, three phases have been identified (Dörnyei, 2005): (a) the social psychological period; (b) the cognitive-situated period; and (c) the process-oriented period. Each phase will now be discussed in respect to the current study.

The first phase is the psychological period (1959-1990). Gardner & Lambert (1972) proposed that learning a FL is different from other school subjects because it is affected by a variety of sociocultural factors such as the attitudes towards the FL or the stereotypes about the speakers of that language. Gardner found motivation to be a new factor associated with L2 achievement, aside from linguistic aptitude. This factor was “*characterized by a willingness to be like valued members of the language community*” (original emphasis, Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p. 196). This integrative motive was also found to be important for the development of communicational skills, due to the student’s desire to integrate and become part of the L2 community.

The second phase is the cognitive-situated period developed during the 1990s. The main characteristic of this period was the willingness to expand the motivation research and the recognition of other motivations distinct from the canonical integrative/instrumental split. Another goal during this period was to advance the understanding of L2 motivation from an educational perspective. Some researchers suggested an exhaustive list of relevant theories to be included in the study of motivation and development, such as: need theories, expectancy-value theories, equity theories, reinforcement theories, the mastery approach, and cognitive developmental theory (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). The main limitations with most of the so-called “reform” articles of the 1990s for an expansion of the L2 motivation construct were that they had not fully developed their proposals, nor had they provided empirical evidence to support them. This statement from Dörnyei (1994) still holds true today for some of the proposals.

The third phase is the process-oriented period developed within the past five years. Researchers included dynamic character and temporal variation within the study of motivation (Dörnyei, 2003; Dörnyei, 2005; Scizér & Dörnyei, 2005b). The process model of L2 motivation distinguished three phases: (1) the preactional stage, or ‘choice motivation’; (2) the actional stage, or ‘executive motivation’; and (3) the postactional stage, or ‘motivational retrospection’. The first stage is characterized by initial wishes or desires that are transformed into specific goals and intentions to which effort is employed so as to accomplish them in the second stage, and, later on, the whole process is evaluated in the last stage (Dörnyei, 2003). This model captures the ups and downs of motivation to learn an L2 and emphasizes the changing nature of motivation.

Working under the current process model of L2 motivation, EI might provide SLA with interesting new ways to look at variation in achievement, even if EI has been previously neglected in

this field. As previously mentioned, emotions can enhance or impede cognition at challenging tasks and the EI construct provides a framework to include a set of abilities that are related to some L2 acquisitional factors such as autonomy, self-confidence, or the use of the monitor, among others. At the same time, the EI construct eliminates the burden of studying the impact of emotions one by one by focusing on a set of abilities that are related to all possible emotions.

5. The current study

The present study aimed to examine the types of motivational orientations shown by adult L2 Spanish students at two levels of formal instruction and to compare their responses with those on an EI scale. More specifically, the study posed the following null hypotheses:

- (1) There are not significant differences on the overall EI score, on any EI subdomain, or on the motivational orientations for studying Spanish between beginning and intermediate students.
- (2) Within each group, there is no relationship between the students' motivational orientations for taking Spanish and their total EI score or their score on any EI subdomain.
- (3) There is no relationship between the students' class participation or final grade, as indexes for motivational learning effort and achievement in this study, and their total EI score or their score on any EI subdomain within each group.

5.1. Participants

144 college-level students of L2 Spanish enrolled in two Spanish courses at the University of Florida participated in the study. 66 were beginning learners of Spanish enrolled in the second semester of first-year Spanish, the last semester of instruction for those students taking the course to fulfill the university FL requirement. The remaining 78 participants were intermediate learners of Spanish enrolled in the first semester of second-year Spanish, the first semester of instruction beyond the FL requirement. Participants' ages in the beginning group ranged from 18 to 32 with a mean age of 21.1 years. The average age of the participants in the intermediate group was 19.6 years, ranging from 18 to 26. These data show that students beyond the FL requirement are younger than those at the beginning level. In fact, students in the beginning group seem to postpone fulfilling the FL requirement, even until right before graduation. Although gender and L1 were not controlled in the design of the study, 96.5% of the participants reported speaking English as their L1. In addition, there was a similar distribution by gender in both groups. Of the beginning participants, 26 were males and 40 females, whereas in the intermediate group there were 29 males and 49 females.

5.2. Instruments / Materials

Two paper-and-pencil questionnaires were used in the study for the participants, and one short questionnaire for the participants' instructors. All instructions and materials were written in English.

Participants' level of EI was measured by the Emotional Intelligence Scale. It is a 33-item self-report questionnaire created "for those who are seeking a brief self-report measure of global emotional intelligence" (Schutte & Malouff, 1999, p. 14). The scale measures the ability to adaptively recognize emotions, express emotions, regulate emotions, and harness emotions in the self and in others. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale on which a "1" represents "strongly disagree," a "2" represents "somewhat disagree," a "3" represents "neither agree nor disagree," a "4" represents "somewhat agree," and a "5" represents "strongly agree." Schutte & Malouff (1999) proposed that the sum of all items comprises the total scale score, being referred to as the EI score in this study, which can range from 33 to 165. Higher scores will indicate greater levels of EI. According to the authors, the internal consistency of the scale, measured by Cronbach's alpha, was .90 in a community sample of 328 participants. In this study the reliability coefficient was .89.

The second questionnaire (see Appendix A) was prepared by the researcher and motivated by other batteries to gather information on types of motivational orientations as well as on some personal information such as age, gender, plans to continue studying Spanish, etc. The motivational orientations were measured by an 18-item self-report questionnaire made up of three subscales, six statements each: (a) integrative motivational orientation (statements 6, 8, 10, 14, 15, and 17); (b) instrumental

motivational orientation (statements 1, 2, 4, 7, 12, and 13); and (c) required motivational orientation (statements 3, 5, 9, 11, 16, and 18). This questionnaire also uses a 5-point Likert scale on which a “1” represents “strongly disagree” and a “5” represents “strongly agree.” For each subscale, students can obtain a score ranging from 6 to 30. Higher scores on each subscale will indicate that the student is taking the course for the reason the subscale is assessing. As expected, when a participant obtained a high score on a subscale, which in this study is taken as to be the major reason for motivation, s/he obtained lower scores on the other subscales. The internal consistency of each subscale was measured by Cronbach’s alpha and the reliability coefficients were .64 for the integrative, .81 for the instrumental, and .77 for the required orientation subscale.

At the end of the semester, the course instructors completed a short questionnaire with three 5-point Likert items to evaluate the overall motivational learning behavior and effort of the participants during the semester. Only the following statement will be kept in further analyses¹: “This student participated voluntarily and showed a great interest in the class. Very active.” This questionnaire was also used to obtain the participants’ final letter grades.

5.3. Data collection procedure

The study was conducted by the researcher, who was not personally acquainted with any of the participants, in the regular participants’ classrooms in a single session. Each class completed both questionnaires during the last two weeks of instruction, which ensured the two proficiency-level groups were one semester apart. Participants’ instructors were asked to leave the classroom. In doing so, the researcher ensured that the participants were not intimidated when completing the questionnaires, especially when expressing their true reasons for taking the course. The students were informed that participation was voluntary, that it would not affect their course grades, and that their names would not appear on any report. They read and signed the informed consent form if they agreed to participate. Even though there was no compensation, all students in all classes agreed to participate. Upon completion of the consent form, participants received the two questionnaires stapled together. Students were encouraged to be very sincere in their responses, and they were reminded that nobody else, including their instructor, would have access to their responses. For each class, the session lasted no more than 25 minutes.

At the end of the semester, shortly after grade submission, the researcher contacted all instructors whose classes participated in the study. The main reason was twofold: to obtain the final letter grades of all participants in writing and to ask instructors to complete a quick questionnaire for their overall impression of every student’s participation and involvement in the Spanish class during the semester.

5.4. Data analysis

Most of the data consisted of scores on 5-point Likert items measuring the three types of motivational orientations as well as the students’ results on the EI scale and EI subdomains. The latter were determined by analyzing the loadings of the optimal number of factors yielded by an exploratory factor analysis, with the help of a scree test. The 5-point Likert items used in all questionnaires were considered continuous data for the present study. All statistical analyses were carried out with SPSS, v. 13.0. for Windows. The alpha level for significance was set at $p < .05$, although any statistical result at $p < .01$ will also be reported. A series of independent-samples *t* tests were used to address the first null hypothesis and to compare the participants’ response on the EI and motivational orientations scales, taking level of formal instruction as the grouping variable. For the last two null hypotheses, Pearson bivariate correlations were run to test the linear relationships between participants’ scores on the EI scale and its subdomains, the motivational orientations, participants’ final grades, and their class participation.

¹ The other two statements were: “This student was generally on task and only participated whenever he/she was called on” and “It seems this student is in class because he/she has to. Did not show interest at all.” Only the statement that applied best to the aim of this study was kept since instructors who selected a ‘5’ to one statement, usually selected a ‘1’ or ‘2’ to the others.

6. Results

6.1. EI scores and motivational orientations

The first null hypothesis examined whether L2 learners differ in their EI score, or in any subdomain of the definition of EI at two levels of formal instruction. It also examined whether these learners show different types of motivational orientations for taking the Spanish class.

But first of all, I need to pull the main subdomains of the EI definition out of the EI scale. In order to determine the best items for each EI subdomain, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted using the maximum-likelihood extraction technique followed by Varimax rotation. The analysis strategy involved was similar to the one employed by Noels, Pelletier, Clément, & Vallerand (2000) whereby any item that did not contribute appreciably to the solution (operationalized as those loadings < .30 or that crossloaded on other factors) was eliminated. The initial solution yielded 8 factors accounting for 60.2% of the variance. A Scree Test helped me determine the optimal number of factors retained. Since the last big drop occurred between the second and third factors², only the first two factors were retained, which accounted for 32.9% of the variance. The rotated matrix, sorted by factor, using a loading greater than .30 as a criterion of factor salience (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991) is shown in Table 1. The Cronbach alpha index of internal consistency was acceptable for both subdomains, .80 and .75 for factors 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 1: Factor analysis summary of the Emotional Intelligence Scale: Varimax rotated factor matrix, communalities (h²), and initial eigenvalues.

	Factor		h ²
	1	2	
4. Other people find it easy to confide in me.	.705	-.035	.498
13. I arrange events others enjoy.	.579	.197	.374
30. I help other people feel better when they are down.	.578	.198	.373
11. I like to share my emotions with others.	.559	.221	.361
14. I seek out activities that make me happy.	.468	.034	.220
10. I expect good things to happen.	.385	.143	.169
24. I compliment others when they did something well.	.374	.091	.148
6. Life events led me to re-evaluate what is important.	.369	.273	.211
16. I present myself making a good impression on others.	.343	.023	.118
1. I know when to speak about my problems to others.	.329	-.050	.111
23. I imagine a good outcome to tasks I take on.	.323	.150	.127
7. When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.	.248	.664	.502
20. When optimistic, I am able to come up with new ideas.	.105	.626	.403
27. If my emotions change, I come up with new ideas.	.082	.575	.337
8. Emotions make my life worth living.	.192	.514	.301
17. When optimistic, solving problems is easy for me.	.013	.488	.238
Initial eigenvalues:	7.882	2.968	
Percentage of variance accounted for by factor:	23.89	8.99	

Factor 1=Regulation; Factor 2=Utilization

As can be seen in Table 1, Factor 1 receives appreciable loadings from 11 items ($\alpha = .80$), the four most prominent of which relate to the interpersonal intelligence as described by Gardner (1983). This factor corresponds to the ability to handle feelings in the self and in someone else, to help others

² In an earlier version of the manuscript, the last big drop was hypothesized to occur between the third and fourth factors. However, the third factor (awareness subdomain, defined by items 5, 18, 22, 25, 29 and 32) never showed a significant correlation with any other variable in subsequent analyses.

soothe their emotions, to have positive thoughts, and to keep optimistic and happy. Therefore, this factor seems best labeled as the *Regulation of Emotions* subdomain.

Factor 2 is defined by 5 items ($\alpha = .75$) which concern the use of emotions to facilitate thinking in terms of flexible planning, creativity, and problem-solving. For that reason, this factor is best labeled as the *Utilization of Emotions* subdomain.

In order to compare the scores on the EI Scale and each EI subdomain of both groups, I ran a series of independent-samples *t* tests using SPSS. The means on the EI Scale and on each EI subdomain are very similar for the beginning and intermediate students, as shown in Table 2. The results indicate that there are not significant differences between beginning ($M = 129.29$, $SD = 13.75$) and intermediate ($M = 127.72$, $SD = 12.87$) students on the EI score ($p = .480$). Students at the intermediate level obtained a higher mean on the regulation ($M = 44.47$, $SD = 5.48$) and utilization ($M = 19.01$, $SD = 2.80$) subdomains than beginning students ($M = 44.06$, $SD = 5.34$ in the regulation, and $M = 18.85$, $SD = 3.02$ in the utilization subdomain). However, these differences are not significant either ($p = .649$ and $p = .735$ respectively).

A new series of independent-samples *t* tests were run in order to compare students' results on the motivational orientations scale. Contrary to what happened with the findings on the EI Scale, this time there are significant differences between the groups in all motivational orientations scales ($p < .000$). Table 2 shows that beginning students obtained higher scores than intermediate students only in the required motivational orientation scale ($M = 23.73$, $SD = 5.12$ and $M = 13.76$, $SD = 4.23$ respectively), while intermediate students obtained higher scores on the integrative ($M = 23.36$, $SD = 2.88$) and instrumental ($M = 24.35$, $SD = 3.60$) motivational orientations scales than beginning students ($M = 20.14$, $SD = 4.54$ in the integrative and $M = 19.91$, $SD = 4.73$ in the instrumental).

Table 2: Independent-samples *t* test results for EI score, EI subdomains, and motivational orientations: Comparison between beginning and intermediate students (N = 144).

Variable	Group and N	M	SD	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
EI Score	Beginning (N = 66)	129.29	13.746	142	.707	.481
	Intermediate (N = 78)	127.72	12.868			
Regulation Subdomain	Beginning (N = 66)	44.06	5.343	142	-.457	.649
	Intermediate (N = 78)	44.47	5.479			
Utilization Subdomain	Beginning (N = 66)	18.85	3.019	142	-.339	.735
	Intermediate (N = 78)	19.01	2.798			
Integrative Orientation	Beginning (N = 66)	20.14	4.540	142	-5.160	.000**
	Intermediate (N = 78)	23.36	2.883			
Instrumental Orientation	Beginning (N = 66)	19.91	4.725	142	-6.388	.000**
	Intermediate (N = 78)	24.35	3.600			
Required Orientation	Beginning (N = 66)	23.73	5.116	142	12.810	.000**
	Intermediate (N = 78)	13.76	4.225			

** $p < .01$, two-tailed, equal variances assumed.

Overall, these results suggest that adult L2 Spanish learners at two different levels of formal instruction obtained virtually identical scores on the EI Scale and all subdomains of the EI definition. These results partially confirm the initial part of the first null hypothesis. Arguably, participants from both proficiency levels seem to belong to a homogeneous group if we consider that all of them are college-level students, have a similar age range, and all are studying Spanish as a FL in a formal instruction context. Conversely, the last prediction of the first null hypothesis was rejected because results indicated that more beginning students take Spanish to fulfill the language requirement while more intermediate students showed greater interest in the Hispanic culture and/or valued the practical use for taking the class. Results indicated that intermediate students got greater scores on the integrative and instrumental motivational orientations scales while beginning students obtained higher scores on the required one.

6.2. Relationship between EI and motivational orientations

The second null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between the EI score and the types of motivational orientations for taking Spanish shown by adult L2 students at the two levels of formal instruction investigated. It also stated that there is no relationship between any EI subdomain and the motivational orientations.

Bivariate correlation analyses using a Pearson product-moment technique were used to assess the initial linear relationships between the six variables under analysis: (1) EI score; (2) regulation subdomain of EI; (3) utilization subdomain of EI; (4) integrative orientation; (5) instrumental orientation; and (6) required orientation. These correlations were run independently for each proficiency group of students, and they were calculated using SPSS computer software. Table 3 presents the correlation coefficients separately for the students at the beginning and intermediate levels.

Table 3: Correlation matrices of EI and motivational orientations by beginning and intermediate students (N = 144).

Variable Type by Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Beginning Students (N = 66)								
1. EI total score	1.00							
2. Regulation	.830**	1.00						
3. Utilization	.741**	.532**	1.00					
4. Integrative	.148	.210	.217	1.00				
5. Instrumental	-.039	.089	-.032	.621**	1.00			
6. Required	.024	.057	-.137	-.442**	-.503**	1.00		
7. Participation	.047	.110	.117	.380**	.275*	-.264*	1.00	
8. Final grade	-.138	-.030	.097	.373**	.420**	-.391**	.336**	1.00
Intermediate Students (N = 78)								
1. EI total score	1.00							
2. Regulation	.869**	1.00						
3. Utilization	.616**	.360**	1.00					
4. Integrative	.205	.248*	.251*	1.00				
5. Instrumental	.253*	.200	.284*	.460**	1.00			
6. Required	-.058	-.043	-.058	-.105	-.087	1.00		
7. Participation	-.002	-.101	.137	.233*	.041	-.139	1.00	
8. Final grade	-.094	-.131	-.116	-.157	-.064	-.144	.296**	1.00

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

For both groups, a greater integrative orientation was associated with a greater instrumental orientation. Other research studies have previously reported a similar pattern (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Shaaban & Ghaith, 2000). Results of the correlation analyses also revealed that a stronger required orientation for taking Spanish was negatively associated with more integrative or instrumental orientations, ($r = -.442$ and $r = -.503$, respectively, $p < .01$, $n = 66$), but only with beginning students.

The main findings for the present investigation are the moderate but significant positive correlation coefficients between some motivational orientations and the score on the overall EI and on both subdomains of the EI definition. These findings are only present with students at the intermediate level. As presented in Table 3, there is a significant positive correlation between EI and instrumental orientation ($r = .253$, $p < .05$, $n = 78$); however, this type of correlation is absent with the first-year students. Examining the correlations for each subdomain of the EI definition individually yielded some interesting findings. For example, a stronger ability to regulate emotions was associated with a stronger desire to take the class for more integrative reasons ($r = .248$, $p < .05$, $n = 78$), even when the relationship between the overall EI score and the integrative orientation was not significant ($r = .205$, $p > .05$, $n = 78$). On the other hand, the greater the scores on the utilization of emotions subdomain the greater the scores on the integrative and instrumental motivational orientation questionnaires ($r = .251$

and $r = .284$, respectively, $p < .05$, $n = 78$). The remaining results show that higher scores on the required orientation questionnaire were never associated with EI.

In sum, results indicated that intermediate students with higher scores on the EI Scale are the ones taking the Spanish class for a more practical and utilitarian reason, like the opportunity to obtain a better paying job. The higher the scores on the utilization subdomain the higher the scores on the integrative and instrumental orientations subscales. The same holds true for the regulation subdomain but only in relation to the integrative orientation. These results apply only to the intermediate group because no significant correlations were found for the same variables with the beginning group.

6.3. Relationship between the motivational learning effort and achievement variables and EI as well as motivational orientations

The third null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between the EI score and the class participation and final grades obtained by adult L2 Spanish students at two levels of formal instruction. It also stated that there is no relationship between any EI subdomain and the two motivational learning effort and achievement variables just mentioned.

From the questionnaire the participants' instructors completed at the end of the semester, two motivational learning effort and achievement variables were included for the present analysis. The first variable was the final grade students got in Spanish at the end of the semester. It is based on a composite of several assessments made throughout the semester. For students at the beginning level they included: class participation and homework (10%), 3 tests (35%), workbook and lab manual activities (10%), 2 compositions (8%), 2 writing activities (2%), 2 oral exams (10%), and a final cumulative exam (25%). For students at the intermediate level the letter grade was based on: class participation and preparation (15%), 3 tests (25%), a final cumulative exam (15%), workbook and lab manual activities (10%), 3 compositions (15%), and 2 oral exams plus a cultural presentation (20%). The final grade scale used for both courses was as follows: 90-100 = A, 87-89 = B+, 80-86 = B, 77-79 = C+, 70-76 = C, less than 70 = D+/D/E³. All letter grades were transformed to the University of Florida grade point average (GPA) scale as follows: A = 4.0, B+ = 3.5, B = 3.0, C+ = 2.5, C = 2.0, and D+ = 1.5. The second variable was the instructors' perceptions of students' overall participation and involvement in class during the semester. As mentioned in section 5.2. only one statement was considered, the one singling out the most active students.

Again, bivariate correlation analyses using a Pearson product-moment technique were used to assess the initial linear relationships between: (1) EI score; (2) regulation subdomain of EI; (3) utilization subdomain of EI; (4) class participation; and (5) final grade in Spanish. These correlations were run independently for each proficiency group of students, and they were calculated using SPSS.

The results largely confirmed the third null hypothesis because the EI variables (EI total score as well as regulation and utilization subdomains) were never associated with class participation or final grades. This pattern of results was similar between the beginning and the intermediate groups, as shown in Table 3. The only significant positive correlations found for both groups were the ones between the students' class participation and their final grades ($r = .366$, $n = 66$, $p < .01$ for the beginning and $r = .296$, $n = 78$, $p < .01$ for the intermediate students). The greater a student gets involved in the FL class by participating voluntarily while keeping active in the daily classroom dynamic was always associated with greater final grades, even though class participation never accounted for more than 15% of the final grade, as established in the students' Spanish syllabi.

Even though the motivational orientations were variables not mentioned in the third null hypothesis, they will be discussed in relation to the students' class participation and final grades because they showed some significant correlations worth mentioning. As shown in Table 3, the greater the intermediate students' participation the greater their integrative orientation ($r = .233$, $n = 78$, $p < .05$), in addition to the greater their final grades, as previously discussed. For the beginning group, there were significant correlation coefficients between the three motivational orientations and the students' class participation as well as their final grades. The greater the beginning students' required orientation was negatively associated with their final grades ($r = -.391$, $n = 66$, $p < .01$) and class participation ($r = -.264$, $n = 66$, $p < .05$). However, the greater their motivational learning effort and

³ Only two students obtained D+ and none D or E, that is why these letter grades were not considered separately.

achievement in Spanish was always positively associated with a greater integrative orientation ($r = .380$ for class participation and $r = .373$ for final grades, both $p < .05$, $n = 66$) or with a greater instrumental orientation ($r = .275$, $n = 66$, $p < .05$ for participation and $r = .420$, $n = 66$, $p < .01$ for final grades).

Overall, results showed that higher scores on the EI Scale or on any EI subdomain was never a predictor of greater effort or achievement in the Spanish class. For both proficiency groups, a greater involvement in the classroom dynamic was positively associated with a greater integrative orientation as well as greater final grades. Only for the beginning group, the two motivational learning effort and achievement variables increased the greater their integrative or instrumental orientations but decreased the greater their required orientation.

7. Discussion

The findings of this study indicated that adult Spanish students at two different levels of formal instruction did not differ significantly in their total score on the EI Scale or on any subdomain of the EI definition considered in the analyses. Finding no differences on the EI scores among the groups does not seem to be that unexpected because of the way participants were assigned to each group. All participants were college-level students taking Spanish in an instructed context, they had a similar age range, most of them were monolingual speakers of English, and they were living in the same country. These characteristics should not be underestimated when explaining the results of the first null hypothesis. It seems we can easily think of them as belonging to a single group because proficiency level in the FL did not affect their EI scores. In fact, a single semester of instruction separated students from the beginning and intermediate groups. We may have found significant differences on participants' EI scores if we had compared students from instructed settings versus natural ones; or if we had investigated learners from a wider variety of contexts such as college students, business people, or immigrants in a foreign country, all of them studying a FL; or even if we had considered a wider range of proficiency levels.

Although significant differences in the EI skills were not found in relation to students' proficiency levels, these differences appeared across all three orientations. Most beginning students obtained higher scores on the required orientation because their main goal for taking the FL class was to fulfill the university requirement. In fact, from the personal information questionnaire, 27.3% (18/66) of the beginning students reported to have plans to continue studying Spanish, as opposed to the 96.2% (75/78) of the intermediate students. Additionally, beginning students were usually older than intermediate students. That was an indication that the tendency for most beginning students is to delay completing the FL requirement until close to their graduation. Intermediate students obtained higher scores on the integrative and/or instrumental orientation. At that proficiency level, students were not forced to continue studying a FL, and the fact that they were younger than those at the beginning level shows that intermediate students were the ones taking the FL class during their first semesters of study at the university. The findings suggest that some students will put off the FL requirement as long as possible.

Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels (1994) found that linguistic self-confidence played a role in SLA in contexts in which direct interaction with the other language community was not available. Tremblay & Gardner (1995) proposed that valence, goal salience, and self-efficacy mediated the relationship between language attitudes and motivational behavior. In the process model of L2 motivation (Dörnyei, 2003; Dörnyei, 2005), self-regulation and sense of autonomy were included as two motivational influences that affect executive motivation during the actional stage. The definition of EI explored in this study considered these motivational influences but specifically from an emotional point of view, a frequently neglected variable in SLA.

This exploration focused on those emotional abilities that are useful in regulating feelings to enhance one's own and others' emotions, to manage emotions to keep motivated toward a goal, to assist performance at complex intellectual tasks, to be responsible for one's own emotional stability, to promote flexible planning and creative thinking, and so on. The current results indicated that for the intermediate group the regulation subdomain of EI correlated with greater desires to learn the FL in order to know better the FL community. However, this correlation was absent with intermediate students taking the class for more practical reasons. From the factor analysis used previously, Factor 1 yielded appreciable loadings from 11 items and, in fact, most of those items dealt with empathy or the

reading and interpreting of signals of feelings from another person. For students who are willing to communicate with members of a FL community to the extent of being accepted as a member of that other group (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), our study predicted that it was useful that they be skilled at regulating emotions in the self but, more importantly, in others. It was a reasonable result to find that intermediate students with higher scores on the integrative orientation were the ones more skilled at understanding and regulating emotions in others. If they were open enough to understand and learn about a FL community, they were also skillful at understanding emotions others feel, even if those emotions are different from their cultural background.

In their conceptualization of EI, Salovey & Mayer (1990) proposed that emotions “may be used to motivate and assist performance at complex intellectual tasks” (p.199). This may hold true in the FL classroom at the higher the level of instruction. Although causal claims cannot be made in interpreting the correlations of the current study (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991), they seemed to corroborate Salovey & Mayer’s prediction, but only if students did not show a default required orientation. In our study the utilization subdomain of the EI definition started to show a positive relationship with higher scores on the integrative and/or instrumental orientation scale, but only with those students who decided to continue studying Spanish past the university requirement. Most beginning students, on the other hand, showed a required orientation for taking the Spanish class and, at that FL proficiency level, the utilization subdomain of EI and the whole EI construct did not correlate with any motivational orientation. It may be the case that the higher the degree the student is pursuing the greater the relevance EI is going to have. The significant differences on the utilization subdomain of EI from the beginning to the intermediate group may be an indication that students with higher levels of stress and anxiety and less EI skills quit studying a FL before continuing for higher degrees. This hypothesis may prove to be relevant in the FL class given higher demands and expectations for subsequent levels such as speaking with more fluency and less pauses, having a greater vocabulary knowledge, problem-solving skills, creativity when using the FL, and alike.

MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan (2002) found that students with high levels of anxiety about communicating were prone to underestimate their L2 communicative competence. Anxiety was negatively correlated with willingness to communicate in the L1 and L2. Again, this is another example of the role of emotions, in this case interfering behavior to the extent of preventing students to communicate in an L2. Rintell (1984), as mentioned in Dewaele (2005), already mentioned that being able to judge the interlocutor’s emotional state is essential for successful communication. However, this study indicated that in the FL classroom, and in relation to students’ motivation, knowing how to keep positive emotions as well as how to deal with negative moods, and also knowing how to use emotions to promote other cognitive abilities may be more important than simply being aware of one’s own and others’ emotions at a given point in time. As mentioned in section 6.1., the awareness subdomain factor never showed a significant correlation with any other variable in this study, and that is why it was not included in the results section.

Students’ higher scores on the EI Scale were never a conditioning factor for greater effort or achievement in the Spanish class. There was not any significant relationship between these variables. It seems EI was only related to class participation for the intermediate group, but in an indirect way, i.e. as long as the students are integratively motivated. Since there was a significant relationship between an integrative orientation and the utilization as well as the regulation EI subdomains, and since there was also a significant relationship between the integrative orientation and students’ participation, claims can be made that some EI skills are related to better class participation through the mediating variable of an integrative orientation. Hernández (2006) found that integrative motivation was a significant predictor of his 130 intermediate students’ desire to continue studying Spanish and their SOPI scores. This study showed that an integrative orientation is also associated with higher involvement in the classroom dynamic, as perceived by the participants’ instructors. Based on these results, a line of research focusing on specific emotional regulatory abilities might be a good start in the study of integrative motivation.

The results of the present study indicated that those subdomains of EI that are related to abilities of self-efficacy or autonomy are important in the study of L2 motivation. If there is a gap in the SLA literature that this study can fill, it is the inclusion of a set of emotional abilities that can affect students’ performance in the FL classroom. Specifically, EI might be included as a new main motivational influence in the actional stage of the process model of L2 motivation as described by Dörnyei (2003, 2005). In fact, the model already included sense of autonomy, ongoing appraisal, and

knowledge and use of self-regulatory strategies as main motivational influences. These abilities are part of the definition of EI, but the EI construct also contains other emotional skills, such as knowing how to regulate emotions in the self or using emotions to facilitate thinking, which were proved to be related to some types of motivational orientations in the intermediate group. The EI construct used in this study could easily be included in the actional stage of the current process model of L2 motivation if future research results with more advanced students on a variety of learning contexts keep showing that the regulation and utilization subdomains of the EI definition are related to some motivational orientations. Future research studies may look at these and additional new predictions that stem from the present investigation. The results of the present study can also be applied to curriculum planning, can be used to understand and meet the needs of beginning versus intermediate (and even advanced) level students, or even point to the feasibility of some types of classroom “intervention” techniques to improve the EI of beginning-level FL students taking the language for a requirement. These are just a few examples of the implications that this type of investigations can have in the field of pedagogy. Undoubtedly, the study of students’ emotional skills may be a fruitful new line of research in SLA as well as in pedagogy.

8. Conclusion

This study was based on the premise that the motivation to learn a FL is related to EI. The study was exploratory in nature and a necessary first step, and it provided an interesting new way to look at variation in achievement. The results of the current study offer an important contribution to the motivational research field given that few previous studies have considered the role of emotional skills. The two proficiency groups differed in their reasons for taking the FL but their EI level was similar. Since most of the significant results were only present for the intermediate group, i.e. the correlations between some EI skills and some motivational orientations, this may be an indication that the role of EI in SLA increases as proficiency level increases. Nevertheless, the greater the students’ proficiency level, the smaller and the more homogeneous the group becomes, which could have favored those correlations since students with increasing proficiency represent a more limited subset of the college population, as they are increasingly self-selected. As a consequence, stronger correlations between some EI skills and some motivational orientations would almost certainly be found if data are collected from more advanced students, or even near-natives. This initial exploration on the role of EI in SLA is an important step towards a better understanding of a set of abilities students possess or lack which may ultimately facilitate or hinder the acquisition of a FL. For example, it was suggested that the regulation and the utilization subdomains of the EI definition explored in this study were indirectly related to class participation as long as students have an integrative orientation at the intermediate level. Greater involvement in the classroom dynamic was positively correlated to higher final grades in the course for that group of participants. This study was important in helping to frame the possible connection between EI and motivation in SLA through mediating variables such as classroom participation and it offered baseline information to move forward.

Appendix A. Motivational Orientations Scale and Personal Information Questionnaire

Each of the following items asks you about your reasons for taking this class. After deciding whether a statement is generally true for you, use the 5-point scale to respond to the statement. Please cross out number...

- 1 = if you **strongly disagree** that this is like you.
- 2 = if you **somewhat disagree** that this is like you.
- 3 = if you **neither agree nor disagree** that this is like you.
- 4 = if you **somewhat agree** that this is like you.
- 5 = if you **strongly agree** that this is like you.

There are no right or wrong answers. Your answers are anonymous and your Spanish instructor will not have access to this questionnaire at all. Please be sincere and give the response that best describes you, not what you think should be the best answer for me!!!

1. Knowing Spanish could help me obtain a raise in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
2. This class will be important in my career.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I chose this class because a language is obligatory.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Knowing Spanish will not affect my ability to change jobs more easily.	1	2	3	4	5
5. This class has nothing to do with my major.	1	2	3	4	5
6. This class will be useful to talk to friends and family members.	1	2	3	4	5
7. This class will be useful for my curriculum vitae.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I don't like using Spanish with native speakers.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I chose Spanish to fulfill a requirement.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Speaking Spanish will help me gain social prestige in Florida.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am happy in a few weeks I will not be in a Spanish class anymore.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I can obtain better job opportunities if I know Spanish.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Spanish will help me obtain a higher paying job.	1	2	3	4	5
14. This class will help me better understand movies, books, and/or magazines in Spanish.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Knowledge of Spanish will be useful when I travel overseas.	1	2	3	4	5
16. This class will help me complete my present degree.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I am interested in the Hispanic culture, like food, music, art, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I do not need to take this class if I want to graduate.	1	2	3	4	5

● Sex: Male Female

● Age:

● Your current rank is (circle one):

Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate

● What is your native(s) language(s)? _____

● Have you ever studied Spanish before entering the University of Florida?

Yes No

➤ If yes: Where? _____
For how long? _____

● After this class, do you have plans to continue studying Spanish?

Yes No

● Do you usually socialize with anyone outside the class (friends or family members) who only speaks Spanish with you?

Yes No

➤ If yes: How often? _____
Where do they live? _____

● Have you lived in a Spanish-speaking country?

Yes No

➤ If yes: Where? (country/s) _____
For how long? _____

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