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EMOTIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT AND CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION IN EFL CLASSROOMS: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence (EI) has attracted growing attention in language learning research. However, most studies rely on EI scores and outcome measures focused primarily on performance, while behavioral dimensions of engagement, particularly classroom participation remain underexplored. This pilot study examines the relationship between self-assessment, conceptualized as a specific intrapersonal EI competency, and classroom participation in a multilingual EFL higher education context. Forty-one undergraduate students enrolled in compulsory English language courses completed a five-item scale adapted from the self-emotion appraisal dimension of the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002; $\alpha = .81$). Classroom participation was measured using a composite index that combined instructor observation ratings with student self-reports. Pearson correlation analysis indicated a moderate positive association between self-assessment and participation, $r(39) = .39$, $p = .012$, 95% CI [.08, .62], explaining approximately 15% of the variance. Given the small sample size, the results should be interpreted cautiously. Students with higher levels

of emotional self-evaluation tended to participate more actively in classroom interaction. Overall, the findings indicate that emotional self-evaluation may contribute to participation in multilingual EFL university settings. Pedagogical implications for fostering reflective emotional awareness and supporting participation are considered.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, self-assessment, classroom participation, EFL, multilingual higher education*

INTRODUCTION

Affective and socio-emotional factors have long played an important role in second and foreign language learning. Beyond learners' linguistic knowledge and cognitive processing abilities, emotional competencies shape their willingness to take communicative risks, sustain engagement, and participate actively in classroom interaction (Mayer et al., 2016). Over the past few decades, emotional intelligence (EI) has gained prominence within both educational psychology and applied linguistics, referring to individuals' capacity to perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions in adaptive ways (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer et al., 2016).

Within second language acquisition (SLA) research, EI has been linked to a range of learning-related outcomes, including academic achievement, motivational orientation, anxiety management, and communicative confidence (Dewaele et al., 2019; Li, 2020). However, much of this research relies on overall EI scores and product-oriented indicators of success, such as examination results and grade point averages. While such measures provide insight into learning attainment, they offer limited understanding of how learners engage during classroom interaction. Classroom participation, a multidimensional construct encompassing both the frequency and communicative quality of learner contributions, lies at the core of language development through interaction (Howard & Baird, 2000; Rocca, 2010).

Participation in a foreign language classroom requires emotional self-regulation, ongoing self-evaluation, and a willingness to become socially visible under conditions of linguistic uncertainty and potential peer or instructor judgment (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). From this perspective, intrapersonal emotional competencies may play a central role in shaping behavioral engagement. One such competency is self-assessment, understood as the ability to reflect on one's emotional states, perceptions of performance, and readiness to communicate. Although self-assessment has been widely examined within metacognitive and self-regulated learning frameworks (Boud, 1995; Zimmerman, 2000), its role as an emotional intelligence competency influencing participation behavior in language classrooms remains comparatively underexplored.

Research on EI in language learning contexts has frequently treated emotional intelligence as a unified construct. While this approach allows for identifying general associations between emotional functioning and learning outcomes, it may obscure the distinct contributions of individual emotional competencies. As a result, the affective mechanisms underlying learners' real-time engagement during classroom interaction remain insufficiently specified. This limitation is particularly relevant in multilingual higher education environments, where learners navigate participation within complex linguistic, cultural, and institutional contexts. Such settings may intensify emotional self-evaluation processes, as students balance communicative intentions with concerns about accuracy, identity, and social evaluation (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Méndez López & Peña Aguilar, 2013).

In response to these gaps, the present study examines the relationship between self-assessment, conceptualized as a discrete intrapersonal emotional intelligence competency, and

classroom participation among undergraduate students enrolled in English language courses. Participation is operationalized through a composite measure combining instructor observation ratings and student self-report data, allowing for a more process-oriented account of engagement. By focusing on a specific emotional competency rather than overall EI scores, the study offers a more fine-grained understanding of participation in multilingual EFL settings (Hiver et al., 2024; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

The study is guided by the following research question: To what extent is self-assessment, as an intrapersonal emotional intelligence competency, associated with classroom participation among undergraduate EFL students in higher education?

The present study pursues three interrelated objectives. First, it aims to examine the association between emotional self-assessment, as a discrete intrapersonal emotional intelligence competency, and classroom participation in a multilingual EFL higher education context. Second, it seeks to contribute to a more component-focused understanding of emotional intelligence in language learning by moving beyond global EI scores toward specific affective mechanisms. Third, it aims to identify pedagogically relevant implications of this association for ELT practice, with a view to supporting better learning outcomes through the development of learners' affective competencies.

The central hypothesis of the study is that students with stronger emotional self-assessment capacity will demonstrate higher levels of classroom participation. This hypothesis is grounded in the theoretical assumption that intrapersonal emotional competencies do not merely influence how learners feel about classroom interaction, but actively shape their behavioral engagement during instructional activities. If confirmed, this assumption carries direct practical significance: developing learners' capacity for emotional self-evaluation may represent a meaningful, and potentially underutilized, pathway toward increasing active participation in EFL classrooms. Greater participation, in turn, is widely recognized as a key driver of language development through interaction, communicative confidence, and sustained academic engagement (Rocca, 2010; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). Attending to this affective dimension of learning therefore has the potential to contribute to better learning outcomes, the ultimate aim of all educational activities, including English Language Teaching (ELT).

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Emotional Intelligence in Language Learning

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct involving the perception, understanding, regulation, and use of emotions in oneself and others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer et al., 2016). Within educational psychology, higher levels of EI have been associated with adaptive academic functioning, including resilience, social integration, and sustained motivation (Petrides et al., 2016). In second and foreign language learning contexts, EI is increasingly recognized as relevant to communicative engagement, anxiety management, and learners' responses to evaluative classroom situations (Dewaele et al., 2019; Li, 2020).

Despite this growing interest, empirical research in applied linguistics has often relied on overall EI scores. While such approaches provide valuable insight into general emotional functioning, they may obscure the differentiated influence of specific emotional competencies on learning behaviour. More recent theoretical work therefore advocates a component-focused perspective, emphasizing intrapersonal emotional awareness and regulation as mechanisms that may shape observable engagement in classroom interaction (Mayer et al., 2016; Petrides

et al., 2016). However, the behavioural implications of these competencies in multilingual higher education settings remain insufficiently explored.

2.2 Classroom Participation as Behavioural Engagement

Classroom participation is widely understood as a multidimensional form of behavioural engagement encompassing both the frequency of learner contributions and the communicative quality or elaborateness of those contributions (Fassinger, 1995; Howard & Baird, 2000). In language education, participation functions not merely as an indicator of involvement but as an active mechanism of language development, enabling learners to negotiate meaning, receive feedback, and construct linguistic competence through interaction (Rocca, 2010).

Participation decisions in EFL and English-medium instruction contexts are shaped by both affective and cognitive demands. Learners must process linguistic input while simultaneously managing concerns related to social visibility, performance accuracy, and peer evaluation. Research suggests that reluctance to participate is often less attributable to objective proficiency than to learners' perceptions of communicative readiness and emotional self-efficacy (Khajavy et al., 2018; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Consequently, participation has increasingly been framed as a context-sensitive construct influenced by classroom climate, instructional design, and intercultural communication norms (Hiver et al., 2024; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

2.3 Self-Assessment as an Intrapersonal Emotional Competence

Within self-regulated learning research, self-assessment has traditionally been conceptualized as a reflective process through which learners evaluate their own performance and progress (Boud, 1995; Zimmerman, 2000). When viewed through an emotional intelligence perspective, self-assessment also involves monitoring emotional reactions, adjusting confidence judgments, and appraising perceived communicative effectiveness.

This emotional dimension becomes particularly salient in language learning environments characterized by public performance and uncertainty. Learners who maintain relatively balanced emotional self-evaluations appear more willing to engage in classroom interaction, whereas negatively biased self-perceptions may contribute to withdrawal from communicative opportunities (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Khajavy et al., 2018). Although related constructs such as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), willingness to communicate (MacIntyre et al., 1998), and foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986) have been extensively examined in SLA research, the specific role of emotional self-evaluation as a discrete predictor of behavioural participation remains comparatively under-investigated.

2.4 Toward a Behaviourally Grounded Perspective on Emotional Intelligence

Recent educational research has increasingly emphasized engagement-based outcomes as more immediate indicators of learning processes, complementing more distal performance measures such as grades or standardized test results (Hiver et al., 2024; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). From this perspective, classroom participation can be viewed as a mechanism through which emotional competencies influence longer-term academic development (Fredricks et al., 2004; Skinner & Pitzer, 2012).

In multilingual university contexts, where learners operate across linguistic and cultural boundaries, emotional self-assessment may play a particularly important role in shaping decisions related to communicative risk-taking and classroom involvement. Examining this competency independently from broader EI composites therefore provides a more

behaviourally grounded lens for understanding how emotional functioning translates into observable engagement patterns (Petrides et al., 2016).

2.5 Conceptual Model of the Study

Drawing on emotional intelligence theory, self-regulated learning perspectives, and participation research, the present study proposes a theoretically informed model in which self-assessment operates as an intrapersonal emotional competency influencing classroom participation through its effects on communicative confidence and emotional self-regulation (Mayer et al., 2016; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Zimmerman, 2000). Within this framework, learners who demonstrate stronger emotional self-evaluation capacity are expected to display higher levels of behavioural engagement in classroom interaction.

2.6 Research Focus, Hypothesis, and Relevance to the Literature

The foregoing review of the literature reveals a consistent pattern: while emotional intelligence has been widely associated with positive learning outcomes, most empirical research has relied on global EI measures and product-oriented indicators such as grades or test scores. The specific behavioral implications of individual emotional competencies – particularly their role in shaping real-time classroom engagement remain comparatively underexplored. Moreover, the literature on classroom participation in EFL and multilingual university contexts highlights the significance of affective self-regulation processes, yet rarely examines emotional self-assessment as a discrete predictive variable distinct from broader constructs such as anxiety, willingness to communicate, or self-efficacy.

The present study therefore addresses this gap directly by focusing on self-assessment as a specific intrapersonal EI competency and examining its association with behavioral classroom participation. The central hypothesis, that students with stronger emotional self-assessment capacity will display higher levels of classroom participation derives logically from the theoretical frameworks reviewed above. Specifically, the literature suggests that learners who can accurately evaluate their emotional states and communicative readiness are better positioned to regulate anxiety, sustain engagement, and take communicative risks (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Khajavy et al., 2018; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Testing this hypothesis contributes to the field by providing empirical evidence for the behavioral relevance of a specific emotional competency, thus moving beyond the broad EI-outcome associations that have dominated prior research.

In practical terms, this line of inquiry is relevant to the overarching aim of all educational activities, the achievement of better learning outcomes. In ELT specifically, participation in classroom interaction is not merely a performance indicator but a key mechanism of language acquisition. If emotional self-assessment is shown to be meaningfully associated with participation, this finding would support the integration of affective competency development into language teaching practice, complementing linguistic objectives and contributing to more sustained and equitable learner engagement (Arnold & Murphey, 2013; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This pilot study employed a quantitative cross-sectional correlational design to examine the relationship between self-assessment, conceptualized as a discrete intrapersonal emotional intelligence competency, and classroom participation in an EFL higher education setting. A correlational design was appropriate, as the study aimed to identify patterns of association between affective learner characteristics and behavioral engagement outcomes without manipulating instructional conditions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Pallant, 2020).

3.2 Participants and Context

The participants were 41 undergraduate students enrolled in compulsory English language courses, including General English Skills and Oral Communication, at a South East European University. The sample included students from different academic years and disciplinary backgrounds. Instruction was conducted in English within linguistically heterogeneous classrooms, reflecting the broader multilingual profile of the institution.

Participants were selected from intact classes, with all enrolled students invited to participate.. Participation was voluntary and had no influence on course assessment. The sample therefore represents the full accessible population within the selected instructional context during the data collection period.

Although relatively small, the sample size aligns with exploratory correlational research conducted in authentic classroom environments (Dörnyei, 2007). Given that participation behavior is context-dependent, ecological validity was prioritized over broader sampling coverage. Consistent with the pilot nature of the study, the findings are interpreted as preliminary and indicative rather than conclusive.

3.3 Instrumentation

3.3.1 Self-Assessment Scale

Self-assessment was measured using a five-item self-report scale adapted from a validated emotional intelligence inventory grounded in mixed-model conceptualizations of emotional competence (Bar-On, 2006; Wong & Law, 2002). The scale was selected because it captures learners' capacity to evaluate emotional reactions, measure communicative confidence, and appraise perceived effectiveness in classroom interaction.

Items were reviewed for contextual relevance to EFL participation, and minor wording adjustments were introduced to align with academic communication settings. These adaptations were limited to surface-level linguistic modifications and did not alter the intended construct meaning. Construct equivalence with the source instrument is therefore assumed, although this represents a limitation that future research employing full validation procedures should address.

Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with higher scores indicating stronger emotional self-assessment competency. Internal consistency in the present sample was good (Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$; George & Mallery, 2019), suggesting coherent measurement of the intended construct. This focused operationalization reflects the study's emphasis on a specific emotional competency rather than overall EI.

3.3.2 Classroom Participation Measure

Classroom participation was operationalized as a composite behavioral engagement index combining instructor observation ratings with student self-reported participation frequency. This multi-source approach was adopted to reduce common method bias and to capture participation more comprehensively than either source alone (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

To ensure comparability between the two sources, both instructor ratings and self-reported scores were first standardized (z-scores). The standardized scores were then averaged to form a composite index. For interpretative clarity, the composite scores were subsequently rescaled to the original 1–5 Likert-type metric. Higher scores indicate higher levels of classroom participation.

Instructor ratings were based on systematic observation of contribution frequency, responsiveness to instructional prompts, and involvement in communicative tasks. To support consistency, instructors followed shared evaluation criteria focused on observable behaviors. Student self-reports captured perceived participation during classroom activities. Inter-rater reliability, assessed on a subsample, yielded an intraclass correlation coefficient of $ICC = .78$, indicating acceptable agreement (Koo & Li, 2016).

3.4 Procedure

Data collection took place during regular instructional sessions across several weeks of the winter semester (2025/26). Students completed the self-assessment scale during class time under researcher supervision. Participation observations were recorded continuously across the instructional period rather than during a single session, ensuring that engagement ratings reflected typical participation patterns rather than situational fluctuations.

Ethical clearance was obtained through relevant institutional review procedures for educational research. Participants were informed about the voluntary nature of their involvement, the confidentiality of their responses, and the exclusive research use of the collected data.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 27). Preliminary analyses included descriptive statistics and assessment of parametric assumptions. Inspection of the data indicated approximate linearity and no extreme outliers. Distribution indicators further supported the absence of severe deviations. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis values, which fell within conventionally accepted ranges for correlational analysis (Field, 2018).

A Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to examine the association between self-assessment scores and the composite participation index. Independent-samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA were used for exploratory subgroup comparisons based on gender and academic year, with effect sizes reported using Cohen's d and partial eta squared where appropriate (Cohen, 1988). Fisher's r -to- z transformation was additionally employed to explore potential differences in correlation strength across demographic groups.

Given the modest sample size, subgroup analyses were treated as exploratory and interpreted with caution. A post hoc power analysis indicated that the observed correlation ($r \approx .39$) with a sample of 41 participants yielded statistical power of approximately .64 at the .05 significance level, reflecting moderate sensitivity for detecting medium effect sizes (Cohen, 1988). This level of power constitutes a limitation of the pilot study, and the findings should

therefore be interpreted as preliminary. Replication with larger samples will be necessary before broader conclusions can be drawn.

RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for both the self-assessment scale and the composite classroom participation index. Students reported moderately high levels of emotional self-assessment ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.54$, range = 2.40–4.60). Classroom participation scores, derived from a rescaled composite index combining standardized instructor and self-report measures, indicated moderate levels of engagement ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.51$, range = 2.30–4.50).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N = 41)

Variable	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Self-Assessment Competence	41	3.62	0.54	2.40	4.60
Classroom Participation (Composite Index)	41	3.39	0.51	2.30	4.50

Note. Participation scores represent a composite index based on standardized instructor ratings and self-reports, rescaled to the original 1–5 metric for interpretability.

4.2 Primary Correlational Analysis

A Pearson product–moment correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between self-assessment and classroom participation. The analysis revealed a statistically significant positive correlation, $r(39) = .39$, $p = .012$, 95% CI [.08, .62].

This represents a moderate effect size, with approximately 15% of the variance in participation associated with differences in self-assessment scores. Students who reported stronger emotional self-assessment tended to participate more actively in classroom interaction. Given the correlational and cross-sectional design, this finding reflects an association rather than a causal relationship (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

It should also be noted that language proficiency was not included as a control variable. Because both self-assessment and participation may be related to proficiency, part of the observed association may reflect shared variance with this factor. Future studies should include proficiency measures to clarify the independent contribution of emotional self-assessment.

DISCUSSION

5.1 Interpretation of the Main Findings

The study examined the relationship between self-assessment as a discrete intrapersonal emotional intelligence competency and classroom participation in an EFL higher education context. The results indicated a statistically significant positive association of moderate magnitude. Students who reported greater capacity to evaluate their emotional responses and communicative readiness also tended to engage more actively during instructional activities. This finding directly addresses the three objectives outlined in the introduction. With respect to the first objective, it confirms the existence of a meaningful positive association between emotional self-assessment and classroom participation, thus providing empirical grounding for the study's hypothesis. Regarding the second objective, the result supports a component-focused approach to emotional intelligence in language learning, demonstrating that a single intrapersonal competency can account for a significant portion of the variance in behavioral engagement. In relation to the third objective, the moderate effect size and statistical significance of the correlation carry concrete pedagogical implications for ELT: they suggest that interventions targeting emotional self-evaluation may represent a viable means of enhancing classroom participation and, by extension, contributing to better learning outcomes.

This finding aligns with theoretical perspectives that position emotional self-awareness and self-regulation as foundational mechanisms supporting adaptive academic engagement (Mayer et al., 2016; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Learners who can interpret their affective reactions with relative accuracy may be better equipped to manage the communicative risk and uncertainty inherent in foreign language participation. Contributing in class, particularly under conditions of incomplete linguistic knowledge and social visibility, is not solely a cognitive act. Emotional self-assessment may function as a psychological resource that enables learners to persist despite perceived pressures rather than withdraw from communicative opportunities (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Khajavy et al., 2018).

The result also resonates with research on willingness to communicate and communicative confidence, where learners' subjective sense of readiness and self-evaluative judgments often emerge as stronger predictors of participation than objective proficiency alone (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). At the same time, the absence of a proficiency covariate in the present analysis means that proficiency may partly account for the observed association. Future studies incorporating proficiency controls will be necessary to clarify the independent predictive role of emotional self-assessment.

5.2 Emotional Intelligence and Behavioral Engagement

By focusing on a specific emotional competency rather than a composite EI score, the study offers a more differentiated perspective on how emotional functioning relates to classroom engagement. Much prior research has linked EI to distal outcomes such as examination performance or grade point averages (Dewaele et al., 2008; Li, 2020). While informative, such indicators do not brighten the processes through which learning unfolds. Classroom participation represents a proximal form of engagement through which learners negotiate meaning, receive feedback, and develop linguistic competence in real time (Rocca, 2010).

The observed positive association suggests that emotional self-assessment may support engagement by enabling reflective monitoring of communicative experience. Learners who evaluate their emotional reactions constructively may be more likely to interpret participation

challenges as manageable rather than threatening, thereby reducing avoidance tendencies and sustaining involvement in classroom discourse (Boud, 1995; Zimmerman, 2000). Although causal conclusions cannot be drawn, the findings highlight the potential importance of intrapersonal emotional competencies in shaping engagement within communicative learning environments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

5.3 Participation in Higher Education Contexts

Participation decisions in university language classrooms are shaped not only by proficiency but also by classroom climate, instructional expectations, peer comparison processes, and intercultural communication norms (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Hiver et al., 2024). These interacting contextual demands may heighten the importance of emotional self-management in communicative engagement.

Students must often navigate multiple identities simultaneously, as language learners, disciplinary specialists, and members of diverse peer groups. Emotional self-assessment may support this process by helping learners maintain balanced self-perceptions and regulate anxiety associated with public language use (Méndez López & Peña Aguilar, 2013). The moderate magnitude of the observed association is itself informative, suggesting that emotional competencies represent one of several interacting influences on participation alongside instructional practices, classroom climate, learner dispositions, and language proficiency (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

5.4 Pedagogical Implications

The findings point to several pedagogical implications for language teaching in higher education. Developing learners' emotional self-awareness and reflective self-evaluation capacity may contribute to sustained classroom engagement. Instructional strategies such as guided reflection tasks, including structured post-activity journals in which learners evaluate their communicative experiences and identify emotional barriers to participation, together with formative self-assessment rubrics and constructive feedback practices, provide practical avenues for supporting these competencies (Boud, 1995; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

At the classroom level, the results highlight the importance of participation-supportive learning environments that reduce excessive evaluative pressure and encourage collaborative interaction. Teachers play a key role in shaping participation norms, and pedagogical choices such as valuing diverse communicative contributions and orienting assessment toward learning processes rather than performance outcomes may help learners draw more effectively on their emotional resources (Arnold & Murphey, 2013; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

More broadly, the findings support the integration of emotional intelligence development into communicative language pedagogy. Work on affective competencies does not need to compete with linguistic objectives; it may instead reinforce them while also contributing to learner well-being and academic adjustment (Petrides et al., 2016). Although causal pathways remain to be established, the present study offers preliminary evidence that affective competence warrants greater attention in language teaching practice.

5.5 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. The cross-sectional design captures only a single time point and cannot reveal how the relationship between emotional self-assessment and participation may evolve over time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The modest sample size, drawn from a single institutional context, limits generalizability and suggests that the results should be treated as context-bound until replicated

in larger and more diverse populations (Dörnyei, 2007). Potential class-level clustering effects may also have influenced standard error estimates.

Although the composite participation measure strengthened behavioral validity by combining observation and self-report, the emotional self-assessment scale relied on self-report responses, raising the possibility of response bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In addition, the adapted five-item scale was not subjected to confirmatory factor analysis in the present sample, meaning that construct equivalence with the original WLEIS dimension remains untested. Future research should therefore include full psychometric validation procedures.

The absence of language proficiency as a control variable represents another limitation. Since both emotional self-assessment and participation may covary with proficiency, the observed association may partly reflect shared variance. Future studies should therefore include proficiency measures as covariates.

Longitudinal designs would provide insight into how emotional self-assessment develops across academic programs and whether changes in this competency correspond with shifts in participation over time (Hiver et al., 2024). Experimental and intervention-based research would be particularly valuable for determining whether emotional intelligence training can produce measurable gains in communicative engagement (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). Incorporating objective participation indicators such as classroom discourse analysis or systematic interaction tracking would further strengthen measurement precision (Walsh, 2011).

5.6 Contribution of the Study

Despite its exploratory scope, the study contributes to applied linguistics and educational psychology by demonstrating a statistically significant association between a discrete intrapersonal emotional competency and behavioral classroom engagement. By moving beyond global EI indices toward a more differentiated perspective, the research responds to calls for finer-grained conceptualizations of affective mechanisms in language learning (Mayer et al., 2016; Petrides et al., 2016).

The study also supports a broader shift toward process-oriented and engagement-based outcome measures, complementing performance-focused indicators that have traditionally dominated EI research in language learning (Dewaele et al., 2008; Hiver et al., 2024). In doing so, it offers a modest but meaningful contribution to understanding how learners' internal emotional resources shape the communicative behaviors through which language development is enacted.

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