

**Investigating the Relationship Between L2 Learners’
Metaphorical Competence and Emotional Intelligence**

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Abstract

Being a successful L2 learner/communicator involves the ability to apply not only linguistic and communicative competences, but also metaphorical competence as well as fundamental cognitive abilities like emotional intelligence (EI). In fact, EI can act as a predictor of one's success in life. Furthermore, because metaphors are the main means of helping to understand abstract concepts and to act upon abstract interpretations, L2 teachers, being aware of their learners' EI profiles, should make them aware of their L2 metaphorical competence of the conceptual world. In spite of the importance given to L2 learners' metaphorical comprehension/usage and their individual differences, almost no systematic attempt has been made to investigate the issue. Therefore, this study intended to scrutinize relationship between L2 learners' metaphorical competence and EI among 126 upper-intermediate L2 learners (51 males and 75 females). First, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to investigate the (possible) relationship between the participants' metaphorical competence and their EI. Second, standard multiple regression analysis was carried out to see the best predictors of the participants' metaphorical competence level. The results demonstrated that, first, there was a medium positive correlation between the participants' metaphorical competence and their EI. Second, the participants' EI and gender were the 2 predictors of their metaphorical competence level, but EI was a stronger predictor than gender. The findings have implications for L2 pedagogy, suggesting the incorporation of an account of L2 learners' metaphorical competence development and a report of their individual differences such as a profile consisting of their EI into L2 teachers' class agendas.

Keywords: Metaphorical language, Metaphor, Metaphorical competence, Emotional intelligence (EI)

1. Introduction

The notion of *metaphorical competence* refers to an individual's knowledge that represents the language concepts reproduction via metaphorical structuring (Danesi, 1992). Thus, metaphorical competence seems to be advantageous to individuals in representing abstract and unknown concepts in a language. The line of inquiry investigating metaphorical competence, as a crucial building block of awareness in the use of language with regard to L2 teaching/learning, is quite young and deserves further research.

To interact appropriately with people possessing special linguistic and cultural variations, L2 learners should be able to use culturally suitable metaphorical language (Danesi, 1994). In this regard, Winner (1982) claims that if L2 learners are acutely restricted to literal language, they will communicate in a terminated or extremely curtailed manner in an L2. Hence, in the process of L2 learning, gaining metaphorical competence is of prime importance. To be an L2 learner being marked by a favorable outcome in L2 learning and communication, the L2 learner should take his or her metaphORIZING capacity into consideration. Due to its importance, in recent times, metaphorical competence has become an essential issue in L2 teaching and learning and a theme of L2 inquiry (Azuma, 2005; Hashemian & Talebinezhad, 2007; Littlemore & Low, 2006). More to the point, during the last few decades, it has been revealed that the comprehension side of the figures of speech such as metaphor is usually more concentrated than the production side in L2 research (e.g., Cacciari & Glucksberg, 1994; Gibbs, 1994). L2 learning without any knowledge of or interest in metaphor appears to be practically the same as to learning futile symbols or symbols with the erroneous meaning.

The concept of metaphorical competence looks to be conceptually linked to individual differences. Besides, such teaching methods as the silent way, the natural approach, and suggestopedia concentrate commonly on L2 learners and their feelings (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). L2 teachers using the preceding teaching methods endeavor to consider L2 learners' individual differences so as to apply the most appropriate activities and tasks in L2 classes (Wu & Alrabah, 2009). The individual variable of *emotional intelligence (EI)* has been found to considerably account for language learning success (Dörnyei, 2001; Ehrman, 2000; Wenden, 1991). EI can be simply considered as the convergence of individuals' emotions and cognition

(Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2007). EI can play an influential role in L2 learning and teaching (Goleman, 1995a). Furthermore, Goleman (1997) claims that a successful life does not just depend on intelligence quotient, but on EI that is a metaskill being in charge of other skills. Thus, EI may act as a predictor of L2 learning in which L2 learners attempt to overcome a new language ornamented with metaphor that is influential in L2 learners' capacity to tie the new knowledge to the old one. In a similar vein, being a successful L2 learner and communicator involves the ability to apply not only linguistic and communicative competences but also both metaphorical competence and the fundamental cognitive abilities such as L2 learners' EI.

Considering the importance given to L2 learners' metaphorical comprehension and usage as well as their individual differences, the present study aimed at investigating the (possible) relationship between these two variables. Also, the study was intended to scrutinize the (possible) relationship between L2 learners' metaphorical competence and EI. Moreover, gender differences, as an individual differences factor, seem to have an important role in outlining L2 learners' metaphorical competence as well as their EI. Therefore, this research focused on how metaphorical competence can be explained by gender differences.

2. Literature review

Employing culturally suitable metaphorical language assists L2 learners in becoming skilled at communicating in an L2 (Danesi, 1994). In accordance with Danesi (1995), L2 learners can reach the fluency level of native speakers as long as they are aware of whether ciphering or expressing different concepts in an L2 due to metaphorical reasoning. Consequently, over the years, several attempts have been made in the literature to emphasize L2 learners' metaphorical language capacity (e.g., Cameron & Low, 1999; Roberts & Kreuz, 1994; Steen, 2004). Abrams (1999) defines metaphorical language as "a conspicuous departure from what users of a language apprehend as the standard meaning of words, or else the standard order of words, in order to achieve some special meaning or effect" (p. 96). For instance, the statement *Grace is as sharp as a tack* describes a person who is very smart. Therefore, metaphorical language extends beyond the literal or surface meaning of the expressions and intertwines their intended meaning in a specific context. Metaphorical language is made up of simile, alliteration, personification, idiom, metaphor, and so on to produce a sublanguage within an ordinary language. In recent times,

metaphor has been seen as the study of metaphorical language, and it includes all the metaphorical devices that are specific varieties of metaphor (Hashemian, 2007). Metaphor is the euphony of natural language and a kind of fashionable raiment that makes a text pleasant. In the process of learning an L2, learners run into a new language equipped with a new culture; thus, if they do not consider learning the L2 culture, they will imperil “becoming a fluent fool” (Bennett, Bennett, & Allen, 2003, p. 237). L2 learners should extend their knowledge of metaphor to be interculturally competent and have a proficient communication; the world is gradually more interconnected, and metaphor gains more momentum because it is capable of enriching intercultural communication. Several scholars (e.g., Danesi, 1992, 1995; Johnson & Rosano, 1993) generally draw attention to a practical communicative competence and affirm that metaphors should be evident in L2 curricula.

There are two views towards metaphor. The classical view of metaphor regards metaphor as a device of the poetic thought and a decorative device for discourse. On the contrary, the contemporary view considers metaphor as a matter of ordinary language (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980); hence, it is not solely a matter of poetic but a device used in daily language. For example, the primary intention of a speaker saying *Peter is a lion* is that Peter is a courageous person. As such, the metaphorical use of language can be seen in different disciplines like biological sciences (Moore, 2002), economics (Henderson, 1982), business (Skorcynska, 2001), and psychology (Gentner & Grudin, 1985; Witztum, Dasberg, & Bleich, 1986).

In practice, the importance of metaphorical competence emerged from the first writings of educated humanity, and it has been recognized as a teaching device playing an imperative role in learning an L2 (Ortony, 1975). In English as the L2 circumstances, L2 learners’ metaphorical competence level has an effect on their different skills (Azuma, 2005). Having a yen to be a successful communicator, L2 learners should put more efforts in expanding their metaphorical knowledge. Likewise, Winner (1982) puts emphasis on the fact that if “people were limited to strictly literal language, communication would be severely curtailed, if not terminated” (p. 253). Metaphorical competence can be simply defined as the knowledge of the way a language that employs metaphorical structuring procreates different notions, and it is as essential as the linguistic and communicative competences (Danesi, 1992). Besides, it takes in both the

awareness of and ability to apply metaphor and the most required skills to apply it well (Littlemore & Low, 2006).

Kecskes (2000) examined conceptual fluency and the utilization of situation-bound utterances in an L2. The participants were 88 nonnative speakers and 33 native speakers of English. Three kinds of tests including two discourse completion tests, a problem-solving test, and a dialog interpretation test were administered among the participants. In addition to different findings of the survey, it was concluded that the native speakers habitually planed their discourse in a metaphorical manner, so metaphorical competence was the fundamental characteristic of their speech production.

Hashemian and Talebinezhad (2007) scrutinized the development of conceptual fluency and metaphorical competence in Persian learners of English studying English as an L2 for several years. Using a group of L2 learners including 95 freshmen, 92 sophomores, 139 juniors, and 90 seniors, they demonstrated that by incorporating metaphorical expressions in L2 textbooks and methodologies, it is possible to increase L2 learners' use of metaphors and also help them trigger their passive lexical knowledge. Moreover, their results showed that the presence of pictures beside metaphor instruction can boost conceptual metaphor meaning comprehension. L2 learners, thus, should face the task of using proper metaphorical expressions in order to be more proficient in an L2.

With respect to L2 teaching and learning, the present study deems it instructive to make an effort to relate the concept of metaphorical competence to one of the most dominant individual differences variables in L2 research and pedagogy, that is, EI. The part and parcel of L2 teaching is mostly an endeavor to organize L2 classes in a way that can apply special and motivating facets of L2 learning according to L2 learners' different characteristics (McDonouch & Shaw, 2003). L2 teachers having the knowledge of L2 learners' individuality can offer help to L2 teaching and learning in personalizing the process (Keefe, 1987). Likewise, if metaphorical competence is evidenced to be at all related to L2 learners' achievement, different individual mechanisms and cognitive variables such as EI can be influential and their variability should be investigated. In principle, metaphorical language has a certain disposition towards emotional

communication that divulges individuals' general conceptual elucidations derived from their emotional experiences (Gibbs, Leggitt, & Turner, 2002).

The magnitude of individual's EI has been recognized in individuals' everyday events. Several researchers (e.g., Goleman, 1995a; Rosete & Ciarrochi, 2005) argue that EI is not enough but essential for communication effectiveness. Higher levels of EI deal with higher self-confidence, more attentiveness, and successful life, so EI plays an imperative role in communication effectiveness and even job opportunities in organizations (Ganjeh Khosravi, Manafi, Hojabri, Haj Aghapour, & Gheshmi, 2011). Individual's EI is linked to psychology (Langley, 2000) and even to their progress in performance (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2003). Enhancing EI competences can also help the growth of personal features (Davis, 2009), that is, individuals with good level of EI can be more successful in work situations, education, and their individual life. As noted earlier, EI is of great importance in the mainstream of L2 learning. L2 teaching has lately witnessed growing interest in the function of EI either in endorsing or stopping L2 learners' autonomy in L2 learning process (Dörnyei, 2001; Ehrman, 2000). Moreover, it is believed that EI, as the ability with many facets, can surpass cultural borders as well as help individuals to adjust themselves to different conditions (Cherbosque, Gardenswartz, & Rowe, 1991).

In the 1990s, the term EI emerged by Goleman (1995a) in his book entitled *Why It Can Matter More Than IQ for Character, Health, and Lifelong Achievement*. Defining EI meticulously, Mayer and Salovey (1990) finally pioneered a complete model of it (Bar-On, 1997b). Since the formal introduction of EI in 1990, EI has been seen as a key variable due to its potentiality in combining learners' cognition and emotion and their predicted educational success to help learners make efficient decisions (Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2007). Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999) demonstrated EI as the ability to reason in four branches: perceiving emotions, facilitating thought, analyzing emotions, and managing emotions. In line with Goleman (1995a), Matthews, Zeinder, and Roberts (2002) claimed that EI has a pivotal role in individuals' perception of how they get in touch with others and express themselves. The individual's EI level can also reveal the extent to which communication with others takes place (Matthews, et al., 2002).

In terms of the influence of EI on L2 research, Stottlemayer (2002, as cited in Roohani, 2009) attempted to probe any association between L2 learners' EI and their L2 success. They were 200 eleventh and twelfth grade Texas L2 learners. It was revealed that, in academic success, EI could be considered as a good predictor.

In a similar vein, Pishghadam (2007) put his effort in finding any association between Iranian L2 learners' EI and their L2 success. The outcome indicated that the effect of L2 learners' EI levels mirrored in their classrooms, especially it could be seen in their grade point average (GPA).

Aghasafari (2006) tried to explore the relationship between EI and L2 learning strategies. She utilized Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i; Bar-On, 1997b) and a revised version of the Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) among 100 sophomore participants at Iranian universities. The results showed a positive relationship between L2 learners' EI and their L2 learning strategies.

The gender differences factor has been frequently presented in research on language learning. For instance, some researchers (Grant & Rong, 1999; Jiménez Catalán, 2005; Wong, Lam, & Ho, 2002) assert that L2 academic achievement can be determined by L2 learners' gender. With regard to gender as a predictor of L2 learners' learning, contradictory results have been reported. Several studies (e.g., Anderson, 2001; Lowe, Mayfield, & Reynolds, 2003) call attention to the superiority of females' verbal and language skills over those of males. On the contrary, some other studies report almost no difference between the memory performance of males and females (e.g., Hyde & Grabe, 2008). Schmenk (2004) points out that L2 teachers, material developers, and researchers should try to consider L2 learners' gender differences in their attempts. As Kövecses (2005) states, L2 learners' metaphorical competence with regard to their gender can be hypothetically reckoned as different. Metaphorical competence, hence, as a language skill may be affected by gender differences. Further research is, thus, required to sustain whether or not gender is a good predictor, if any, of L2 learners' metaphorical competence, and the results will most hopefully contribute to L2 pedagogy.

Should this new phase of research bear fruit, the questions we pose must be accurate. As stated above, the current study intended to investigate the (possible) relationship between metaphorical competence and EI among Iranian L2 learners. Furthermore, the study investigated whether gender (which is largely explored in research on discourse, communication, cognition, and language learning in Iran with its special sociocultural milieu) or EI may be a good predictor for L2 learners' metaphorical competence. Simply put, the present study addressed the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant association between Iranian upper-intermediate L2 learners' metaphorical competence and their EI?
2. Is EI or gender the better predictor of upper-intermediate L2 learners' metaphorical competence?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

For the main phase of the study, a total of 126 upper-intermediate L2 learners were selected based on their performance on the OPT. They were 51 males and 75 females, aged 20-30, upper-intermediate B.A. students majoring in English literature and translation and M.A. students majoring in TEFL at Shahrekord University and the University of Isfahan. The participants' demographic information consisting of their gender and age, extracted from a form attached to the questionnaires, is displayed in Table 1:

Table 1. The Upper-Intermediate L2 Learners' Demographic Information

Participants	Age	Gender	
		Male	Female
B.A.	20-28	41	56
M.A.	20-30	10	19
Total	20-30	51	75

3.2 Instruments and procedure

In the first step, to ascertain the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their English language proficiency, 270 EFL learners took the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). Consistent with

Allen's (2004) scoring guidelines, 126 participants who had scored higher than 68 out of the total possible score were considered as the upper-intermediate participants for the main phase of the study. The Cronbach's alpha for the test was 0.81. Therefore, the OPT showed a very good internal consistency and was reliable. Measuring proficiency knowledge, the OPT with 100 multiple-choice items assessed the participants' grammatical knowledge.

Then, the Bar-On's EQ-i (Bar-On, 1997a) was administered to the same participants. This questionnaire is a self-report measure of emotional and social intelligence with 133 items in the form of short sentences evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from "very seldom" to "very often"). The Persian version of EQ-i reduced by Samoei (2002) with 90 items was used in the present study. The translated Persian adaptation of this questionnaire was tested in the Iranian context and proved to have a suitable internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and construct validity (Dehshiri, 2003). The questionnaire enjoyed an acceptable reliability estimate ($\alpha = 0.84$), using Cronbach's alpha and possessed the sustained factor analysis results.

Besides, a multiple-choice metaphor test with 100 items was developed and administered to the participants to assess their L2 (here, English) metaphorical competence level. The test was designed based on *Idioms Organiser* (Wright, 1999) and *136 American English Idioms* (Collis, 2004), which exposed the participants to 136 idioms. At first, a pilot study was conducted and 10 L2 learners examined the appropriateness of the metaphorical competence test items. The results pointed to its high reliability ($\alpha = 0.86$). Then, one TEFL professor and two knowledgeable L2 teachers verified its validity. At last, the metaphor test with 100 multiple-choice items was administered to the participants from the aforementioned universities to be answered in about 120 minute.

4. Results

To analyze the data and to test the hypotheses of the present study, the following analytic procedures were implemented using SPSS (version 17). In order to explore the (possible) relationship between metaphorical competence and EI among the upper-intermediate L2 learners, a Pearson product-moment correlation was computed. Further, preliminary analyses were

performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Table 2 shows the results of the correlation:

Table 2. Results of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation for Metaphorical Competence and EI

	EI	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Metaphorical Competence	*.36	.00**	126

Note. * $p < .05$ (2-tailed).

As Table 2 shows, there was a medium positive correlation between the upper-intermediate L2 learners' metaphorical competence and their EI level, $r(126) = .36$, * $p < .05$, indicating that the high levels of EI correlated with the high scores on the metaphor test.

To deal with the second research question regarding the best predictor of metaphorical competence, a standard multiple regression analysis was carried out. Preliminary analyses were also conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. To find out the more powerful predictor, EI and gender were considered as the predictor (i.e., independent) variables, and metaphorical competence level was taken as the criterion (i.e., dependent) variable. The summary results for this regression analysis are shown in Tables 3-5:

Table 3. Model Summary of Multiple Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.42	.18	.17	1.34

Table 4. ANOVA Results of the Metaphor Score

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	48.36	2	24.18	13.40	.00
Residual	221.94	123	1.80		
Total	270.30	125			

Table 5. Results for Regression Analysis of EI and Gender

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	11.04	1.45		7.60	.000
EI	.02	.00	.28	3.14	.002
Gender	.69	.26	.23	2.64	.009

As displayed in Table 3, the *R* Square was .18, indicating that the model which includes EI and gender explains 17.9% of the variance in metaphorical competence. According to Tables 4 and 5, the values for both of the independent variables (i.e., EI and gender) were significant, but the largest Beta coefficient was 0.28, which was for EI. Therefore, EI made a unique, and statistically significant, contribution to the prediction of the upper-intermediate L2 learners' metaphorical competence level. EI per se explained 28% of the variance in metaphorical competence. The Beta value for gender was slightly lower (Beta = 0.23, $*p < .05$), so it made less of a statistically significant contribution [$R^2 = .05$, $F(2, 123) = 13.40$, $*p < .05$].

5. Discussion and conclusion

Metaphorical competence, as a key feature of communication, enjoys an immense didactic value. In order to touch upon the issue of contribution of L2 learners' metaphorical competence and their individual differences in paving the way for L2 learning, the current study focused on the relationship between metaphorical competence and EI as an important cognitive ability in L2 investigations. As noted above, the correlation results indicated a medium positive correlation between the upper-intermediate L2 learners' metaphorical competence and their EI level. Thus, it can be argued that the high levels of EI are related with the high scores in the metaphor test. EI is "an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (Bar-on, 1997a, p. 14). EI has been considered as a key contributing factor in L2 learning and communication, so it can be perceived as a variable that affects L2 learners' capability in dealing with new necessities and

anxieties of the L2 such as understanding and using metaphors. Moreover, individuals' EI level shows their different cognitive and affective processes that help them in the process of learning an L2.

According to the findings, it can be said that L2 learners benefiting from high scores on EI questionnaire may be seen as successful L2 communicators because they have high levels of metaphorical competence and are enthusiastic about being educated mostly in an L2. Although Meshkat (2011) noticed that there was no significant relationship between the L2 learners' EI and academic success, Pishghadam (2007) pointed out that the L2 learners' EI scores were correlated with their GPAs. Possibly, such a divergence might be due to the fact that the participants' fields of study were different in those investigations; for instance, in Meshkat's study, they were learners of physical education, chemistry, mathematics, English, and medicine that led to the participants' different backgrounds and even different feelings caused by their fields of study. Consequently, as it was found in the current study, EI could have a pivotal role in L2 academic success. Simply put, the results suggest that L2 learners who possess a proclivity to cope with environmental demands and pressures are more metaphorically competent L2 learners and communicators.

Furthermore, the results proposed that EI and gender can be two factors affecting the upper-intermediate L2 learners' metaphorical competence level. Language learning is influenced by various demographic factors such as gender (Horwitz, 2008). Therefore, the role of gender as a biological and cultural factor on language learning, particularly SLA, has been more scrutinized during the history of education (Grant & Rong, 1999; Wong, Lam, & Ho, 2002). Gender differences also interact with the brain that plays an important role in language learning (Tatarinceva & Blumenau, 2007). Thus, in this study, gender is suggested as a factor that can affect the metaphorical competence level of Iranian upper-intermediate L2 learners. Indisputably, this result demands further study applying more meticulous methodology; more effort should be put into practice on this issue in different macro sociocultural milieus with their particular sociocultural and geopolitical characteristics. On the other hand, in line with Stottlemayer (2002, as cited in Roohani, 2009), EI was also found to be a good predictor of academic achievement. EI endows SLA with pristine perception on the influence of internal factors. Indeed, according to the

findings of Goleman (1995b) and MacIntyre (2002), cognitive and physiological processes can be highly affected by emotions, so L2 learners' metaphorical competence may be affected by their EI. In SLA, emotional and psychological factors are dealt with in several methodologies (e.g., suggestopedia). In sum, research on learners in an L2 context shows managing L2 learners' individual differences such as their EI and gender results in a puissant competence in L2 learning and achievement.

In conclusion, the results of the current study indicated the subsequent findings: First, a medium positive correlation was found between the upper-intermediate L2 learners' metaphorical competence and their EI. Second, the upper-intermediate L2 learners' EI and gender were two predictors of their metaphorical competence level, but gender made less of a statistically significant contribution than EI.

Based on the fact that metaphorical language is widespread, there is a need for L2 learners to increase their knowledge of using and understanding different metaphorical expressions. As MacLennan (1993) stated, explicit considerations of metaphorical statements and patterns should be considered in an L2 classroom so as to make preparations for L2 learners' vocabulary and grammar learning. On the whole, L2 learners' semantic and pragmatic competence, capability of reasoning through logical thinking, and language repertory and cognitive pliability can appropriately assist them to be successful L2 learners. Success in L2 learning can be achieved through both good levels of metaphorical competence and EI as affective factors being parts of the emotional features of individual manners.

Accordingly, some theoretical and pedagogical implications can be extracted from the findings of this study: First, it is common that L2 learners are not aware of their EI and the role of their metaphorical competence level in L2 success. As stated by McDonouch and Shaw (2003), knowing L2 learners' characteristics make several suggestions for L2 classrooms regarding controlling specific aspects of L2 classroom. Therefore, it is the responsibility of L2 teachers to motivate L2 learners to consciously pay attention to their EI profiles and to enhance their metaphorical competence level. According to Chapelle and Green (1995), L2 teachers are responsible for helping L2 learners to be alert to the strategic and independent learning.

Secondly, L2 teachers should take L2 learners' EI profiles and gender into account and facilitate their metaphorical comprehension through designing and using special teaching methods and techniques that call more attention to the features related to metaphorical competence. As a suggestion, they might provide activities intended to develop L2 learners' metaphorical competence level. Thirdly, adapting new cheering teaching materials to L2 learners with different EI levels and different genders can also help teachers in the process of teaching the metaphorical language of an L2. Fourthly, a report of L2 learners' metaphorical competence development during their educational classes should be included in L2 teachers' classroom timetable. Finally, L2 materials developers may have an impartial share of the implications of the current study. They can develop materials that emphasize motivating techniques and tools for L2 learning in general and activities that help understanding metaphorical statements in particular. To sum up, we hope the findings of the current study help L2 teachers and researchers pursue better techniques and methods in moving towards metaphorical language and developing L2 learners' metaphorical competence through making use of EI as a contributing factor.

Although the present study was an attempt to provide new information and findings in the world of individual differences, especially EI and metaphorical language for L2 teachers and learners, some limitations and delimitations were seen. Due to the fact that the field of metaphor research is encircled by lots of problems, the findings of the current study should be carefully dealt with. A major limitation in the present study was the type of selected metaphorical expressions in the metaphor test. The present study did not use metaphor classifications and used metaphor as a term for all the metaphorical devices. Thus, further studies can make use of various kinds of metaphor. Additionally, the reliability of the data relied more on the sincerity of the participants because the EI questionnaire was self-report. Taking the limitations of this study into consideration, further research is needed to examine whether similar results can be achieved.

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