

The Relationship of Emotional Intelligence Components in Learning English at a Public Malaysian University

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a vital role in determining language learning success and student motivation. This quantitative study explored the relationship between the four core components of emotional intelligence; Perception, Managing Own Emotions, Managing Others' Emotions, and Utilisation of Emotions within English as a Second Language (ESL) learning. A purposive sample of 84 undergraduate students at a public Malaysian university completed the 31-item Emotional Intelligence in English Learning Self-Report Test (EILELST). Descriptive findings revealed high emotional awareness among the students, particularly in two items; believing that they can succeed in English and that maintaining optimism stimulates creativity in English learning situations (both with the highest mean = 4.2). Pearson correlation analysis demonstrated statistically significant, strong positive relationships among all four emotional intelligence components. The strongest association was observed between Managing Own Emotions and Managing Others' Emotions ($r = .803, p = .000$). These findings indicate that higher self-regulation directly links to better collaborative language interactions. Pedagogically, the study suggests that integrating emotional literacy and positive reinforcement into the ESL curriculum can significantly enhance students' creativity and learning resilience.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, English learning, second language acquisition, Emotional Intelligence in English Learning Self-Report Test (EILELST), public Malaysian university, quantitative survey

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

Language learning, particularly second language acquisition, requires not only cognitive skills but also emotional intelligence (EI). According to Salovey and Mayer (1990) emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, express, and regulate emotions in oneself and others. They further argue that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to adapt to unfamiliar situations and respond effectively to challenges. This is particularly relevant in language learning where affective factors such as motivation and anxiety play a significant role in the learning process. EI allows learners to control and overcome related emotional problems such as low confidence and fear better as they progress (Hu & Chen, 2022). Consequently, learners with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to manage these emotional factors effectively, facilitating language acquisition.

Past studies reported the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and language learning outcomes (AbdAlgane et al., 2025; Yadav, 2025; Thao, 2023). Learning anxiety can be reduced when learners possess the ability to recognise and manage emotions which in turn enhances the classroom environment and contributes to increased proficiency (Thao, 2023). This is because negative emotional states impede learning and the ability to respond effectively. Learners with high EI are more willing to participate actively in language learning. Yadav (2025) revealed that learners that are equipped with strong motivational EI skills were more inclined to participate in extracurricular activities related to English which contributes to better language acquisition.

Similarly, AbdAlgane et al. (2025) highlighted that EI dimensions, particularly self-awareness and empathy led to greater involvement in classroom activities.

Conversely Arslan Degirmenci and Yavuz Mehmet (2024) found that there is no significant impact of EI. They suggest that learners' language proficiency is influenced by both cognitive factors such as intelligence and learning strategies, and non-cognitive factors, including motivation, anxiety, and classroom environment. These mixed differences in findings underscore a critical gap in understanding whether certain aspects of EI are more influential than others particularly in the context of language learning.

Focusing on the Malaysian educational context, past studies placed emphasis on non-cognitive and affective variables. The researchers focus on EI aspects that are related to motivation, attitudes and students' engagement in language learning (Huay & Ahmad Adzrie, 2026; Mohamed Taha et al., 2025; Teoh & Liao, 2021) in various settings. Huay and Ahmad Adzrie (2026) investigated the influence of emotional intelligence and attitude on English acquisition among pre-university learners. They suggested integrating both aspects in learning as it contributes to positive academic performance.

On the other hand, in the context of EI among distance learners, Teoh and Liao (2021) revealed that EI positively influences learners' experience in language learning by helping them manage their emotions, perceptions, and actions to navigate challenging situations. In a similar vein, Mohamed Taha et al. (2025) revealed Social and Emotional Learning programmes designed for primary students strengthened learners' EI by enhancing self-awareness and emotional regulation among others. They noted that students' engagement and classroom behaviour improved too. Hence, this study aims to explore learners' relationship of EI components in English language learning to understand the situation better.

Statement of Problem

Malaysian learners spend six years learning the English language at the primary level and another five years at the secondary level. Despite this extensive exposure, achieving English language proficiency remains a challenge for many, including undergraduates (Kassim & Maniam, 2025). Most previous studies investigating factors influencing English language learning have primarily focused on motivation, as emotional and affective factors are considered crucial in shaping English language learning in Malaysia (Mohd Akhir & Mohamed Mokhtar, 2024; Abd Razak et al., 2025). However, learners' EI is an overlooked factor that may significantly influence their motivation to learn the language (Mohamed Taha et al., 2025; Boon and Wei, 2021).

Furthermore, most existing studies on EI have examined its overall influence on academic achievement (AbdAlgane et al., 2025). Research investigating the relationship between EI and English language learning among undergraduates also remains limited, particularly within the Malaysian tertiary context. Consequently, there is a gap in understanding how EI relates to English language learning at this level. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by examining how the four dimensions of intelligence: perception of emotions, managing emotions, managing others' emotions and utilisation of emotions influence English language learning among Malaysian undergraduates.

Objective of the Study and Research Questions

This study is done to explore how four components of emotional intelligence influence the learning of English as a second language. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions;

- i. RQ 1 - How does the perception of emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?
- ii. RQ 2 - How does managing emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?
- iii. RQ 3 - How does managing others' emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?
- iv. RQ 4 - How does the utilisation of emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?
- v. RQ 5 - What is the relationship between all four components of emotional intelligence in the learning of English as a second language?

LITERATURE REVIEW

How Learners Learn English

Learning English as a second language is a multidimensional process influenced by learners' cognitive, behavioural, and affective characteristics. Although cognitive abilities remain important in acquiring linguistic knowledge, recent studies have increasingly recognised that successful language learning is equally dependent on learners' motivation, learning strategies, emotional engagement, and willingness to participate in language-related activities (Taheri et al., 2019; Peng & Shuhong, 2025). This shift reflects a growing recognition that language learners should be viewed holistically, as their success is determined not only by intellectual capabilities but also by how they approach learning opportunities and respond to challenges throughout the learning process. Consequently, learners who actively engage in classroom activities, demonstrate perseverance when encountering linguistic difficulties, and adopt appropriate learning strategies are generally more successful in developing their language proficiency (Taheri et al., 2019). Zolkapli et al. (2023) similarly emphasise that motivation serves as the driving force that encourages learners to continuously improve their English communication skills. According to the authors, motivated learners exhibit greater enthusiasm, commitment, and determination to achieve language proficiency, whereas demotivated learners often experience reduced engagement and difficulty sustaining their learning efforts. These findings suggest that successful English language learning depends not only on learners' intellectual ability but also on their willingness to actively participate, remain engaged, and persist despite the challenges encountered during language learning.

Besides motivation, learners' emotional experiences throughout the learning process also shape how effectively they acquire English. Taheri et al. (2019) found that emotional intelligence was significantly associated with language learning strategies and learning styles, indicating that learners who regulate their emotions effectively are better able to employ strategies that support language achievement. Likewise, Thao et al. (2023) reported that motivation, self-confidence, interpersonal skills, goal-oriented mindset, and emotional openness positively contribute to second language acquisition by promoting active participation, self-regulated learning, and effective communication. Similar findings were reported by Teoh and Liao (2021), who demonstrated that emotionally intelligent learners were better equipped to overcome learning barriers, adapt to challenging learning situations, and persevere despite personal and environmental constraints. In addition, Sadiqzade (2024) argues that emotionally supportive language learning environments foster confidence, collaboration, emotional regulation, and greater willingness to take risks when communicating in English, while Yadav (2025) highlights that learners with stronger emotional competencies demonstrate higher engagement, motivation, and participation in English learning activities. Supporting these individual findings, Peng and Shuhong's (2025) meta-analysis further confirmed that emotional intelligence has a significant positive relationship with language achievement across different learning contexts. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that learning English extends beyond mastering linguistic knowledge and requires learners to remain emotionally engaged, motivated, and resilient throughout the learning process. Such findings provide a strong foundation for examining emotional intelligence as an important factor influencing English language learning.

Learners and their Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as an important construct in education because learning is increasingly recognised as both a cognitive and emotional process. Salovey and Mayer (1990) define emotional intelligence as an individual's ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilise emotions in oneself and others. Unlike cognitive intelligence, which primarily reflects learners' reasoning and intellectual abilities, emotional intelligence determines how effectively learners respond to emotionally demanding situations, manage stress, maintain motivation, and interact with others. As language learning frequently requires learners to communicate in unfamiliar situations, cope with language anxiety, and overcome fear of making mistakes, emotional intelligence enables learners to regulate these emotional experiences and remain focused on achieving their learning goals. Consequently, learners with higher emotional intelligence are generally better equipped to demonstrate resilience, self-awareness, adaptability, and effective interpersonal communication, all of which contribute positively to the language learning process (Teoh & Liao, 2021; Sadiqzade, 2024; Yadav, 2025). Furthermore, Peng and Shuhong (2025), through a meta-analysis of 47 independent studies involving more than

18,000 participants, reported that emotional intelligence demonstrated a significant positive relationship with both subjective and objective language achievement. Their findings reinforce the growing consensus that emotional intelligence represents an important affective factor influencing successful second language acquisition.

Within the context of English language learning, emotional intelligence enables learners to manage the emotional demands associated with acquiring a second language while simultaneously promoting meaningful engagement in learning activities. Yadav (2025) explains that learners possessing higher emotional intelligence are better able to regulate emotions during challenging learning situations, demonstrate greater motivation, communicate more effectively, and actively participate in classroom activities, ultimately leading to improved language proficiency. Likewise, Thao et al. (2023) found that learners perceived motivation, self-confidence, interpersonal skills, goal-oriented mindset, and emotional openness as important emotional characteristics that facilitate second language acquisition by encouraging resilience, self-regulated learning, and effective communication. Taheri et al. (2019) further reported that emotional intelligence was significantly associated with learners' language learning strategies and learning styles, suggesting that emotionally intelligent learners are more capable of selecting appropriate approaches that enhance language achievement. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that emotional intelligence is not merely an individual personality attribute but an important educational resource that influences how learners perceive challenges, regulate their emotions, interact with others, and utilise emotional experiences to support language learning. These capabilities are reflected in the four core dimensions of emotional intelligence, namely perception of emotions, managing one's own emotions, managing others' emotions, and utilisation of emotions, which form the basis of the present study.

Studies on Emotional Intelligence in Language Learning

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the role of emotional intelligence in foreign and second language learning, particularly in relation to language achievement, learner motivation, communication skills, emotional regulation, and classroom engagement. Although these studies were conducted in different educational contexts, they consistently demonstrate that emotional intelligence contributes positively to learners' language learning experiences and outcomes. Among the earlier studies, Thao et al. (2023) investigated the influence of emotional intelligence on second language acquisition among 105 English-major students in Vietnam. The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach by administering questionnaires and conducting semi-structured interviews to explore learners' perceptions of emotional intelligence in language learning. The findings revealed that motivation, self-confidence, interpersonal skills, emotional openness, and goal-oriented behaviour significantly enhanced second language acquisition by encouraging learners to become more resilient, self-regulated, and actively engaged in classroom learning. The study therefore suggested that emotional intelligence should be incorporated into language curricula to enhance both learners' emotional well-being and language proficiency. Similarly, Taheri et al. (2019) examined the relationship between cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence, language learning styles, language learning strategies, and second language achievement among 188 Iranian EFL learners. The study utilised five instruments, namely Raven's Progressive Matrices, the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, Kolb's Learning Style Inventory, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, and an English achievement test. The researchers reported that emotional intelligence was significantly associated with language learning strategies and learning styles, while interpersonal relationships, optimism, and problem-solving were identified as emotional intelligence components that significantly contributed to language achievement. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that educators and curriculum developers integrate emotional intelligence and effective learning strategies into language instruction to improve learners' academic performance.

Apart from examining language achievement, several researchers have investigated how emotional intelligence assists learners in managing the emotional demands associated with English language learning. Teoh and Liao (2021) conducted a mixed-methods study involving 238 distance learners, followed by in-depth interviews with 18 participants selected based on their emotional intelligence scores. Quantitative data were collected using a composite questionnaire, while qualitative data were obtained through interviews to explore learners' emotional experiences in learning English through distance education. The findings demonstrated that learners with higher emotional intelligence were better able to regulate their emotions, overcome situational and institutional barriers,

adapt to challenging learning environments, and persevere until successfully completing their English courses. The researchers concluded that emotional intelligence should be intentionally nurtured to help learners cope with emotionally demanding language learning situations and achieve their academic goals. Likewise, Yadav (2025) examined the impact of emotional intelligence on English learning among EFL learners by investigating how emotional competencies influenced learners' academic performance and engagement. Using a quantitative research design, the study found that learners possessing stronger emotional intelligence demonstrated higher motivation, better emotional regulation, greater willingness to communicate, and improved language proficiency. Emotional intelligence also enabled learners to cope more effectively with academic challenges such as examinations, presentations, public speaking, and assignment deadlines. Consequently, the study emphasised that developing learners' emotional intelligence should become an integral component of English language instruction to improve both language proficiency and overall learning experiences.

Recent studies have also focused on strengthening learners' emotional intelligence as a pedagogical approach to improving language learning outcomes. Sadiqzade (2024) explored the importance of fostering emotional intelligence among language learners by examining how emotional competencies contribute to language development. The study highlighted that learners who possess stronger emotional intelligence demonstrate greater confidence, emotional regulation, collaboration, empathy, and willingness to communicate in the target language. These emotional competencies encourage learners to participate more actively in classroom activities while reducing negative emotions that may hinder language acquisition. The study, therefore, advocated integrating emotional intelligence development into language teaching practices to create supportive and emotionally responsive learning environments. Supporting these findings, Peng and Shuhong (2025) conducted a meta-analysis investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and language achievement across numerous empirical studies. Synthesising evidence from multiple learning contexts, the researchers concluded that emotional intelligence has a significant positive relationship with both subjective and objective language achievement. Their findings further indicated that learners with stronger emotional intelligence generally demonstrate higher motivation, better emotional regulation, and greater resilience when learning a foreign language. Based on these findings, the authors argued that emotional intelligence should be recognised as an important affective factor influencing successful language acquisition and should therefore receive greater attention in future language learning research.

Besides emotional intelligence itself, researchers have also explored related affective factors that influence learners' engagement in language learning. Zolkapli et al. (2023) investigated the factors contributing to learners' motivation and demotivation in learning English communication skills. The study employed a quantitative approach to examine learners' motivational experiences and reported that learners' motivation was strongly influenced by their emotional experiences throughout the learning process. Positive emotional experiences encouraged greater participation, confidence, and sustained engagement, whereas emotional exhaustion and negative learning experiences reduced learners' willingness to communicate and persist in learning English. The researchers therefore recommended that language educators create emotionally supportive learning environments capable of sustaining learners' motivation and encouraging continuous participation in English communication activities. Collectively, these empirical studies consistently demonstrate that emotional intelligence plays an important role in English language learning by enhancing learners' motivation, emotional regulation, resilience, communication skills, classroom participation, and overall language achievement. Nevertheless, most previous studies have primarily examined emotional intelligence as a single construct or investigated its overall relationship with language learning outcomes. Comparatively fewer studies have examined the individual dimensions of emotional intelligence and how each contributes to English language learning, particularly among Malaysian undergraduates. This gap therefore, provides the rationale for the present study, which investigates the relationship between the four dimensions of emotional intelligence and English language learning in a Malaysian public university.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. This study explores the relationship of all components of emotional intelligence presented by Schutte et.al. (1998) in Emotional Intelligence in English Language Learning Self-Report Test (EILELST). According to Rahmat and Thassanee (2024), there is a strong positive

relationship between how learners learn and their motivation. When learning, learners form their own emotions towards the learning. The outcome of their learning is influenced by learners managing these emotions. According to Schutte et. al (1998), there are four main components of emotional intelligence, and they are (i) Perception of Emotions, (ii) Managing Own Emotions, (iii) Managing Others' Emotions and (iv) Utilisation of Emotions. The following are definitions of the four dimensions:

- i. Perception of Emotions: The capability to possess an emotional radar that identifies how you and others feel within your surroundings.
- ii. Managing Own Emotions: The capability to possess self-control and self-regulation in managing your own feelings, whether you are in a negative or positive state.
- iii. Managing Others' Emotions: The capability to influence the emotions of people you communicate with, which results in changing their state of emotional being.
- iv. Utilisation of Emotions: The capability to use your emotions to your advantage as a form of motivation to achieve success and overcome hardship or challenges.

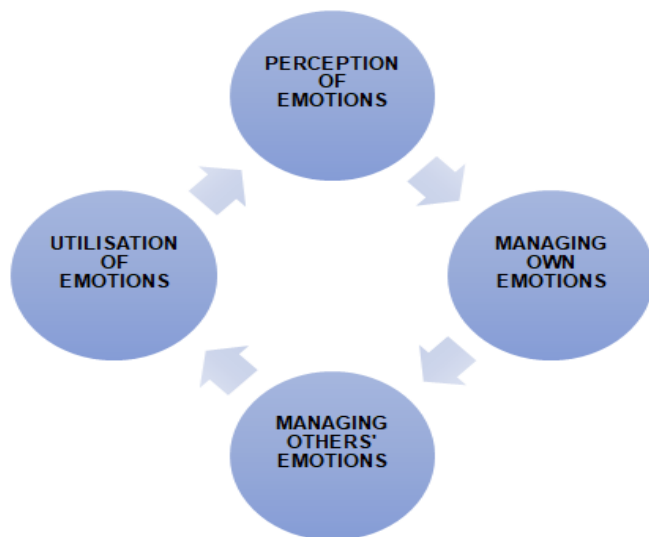


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study: Relationship of all components in Emotional Intelligence in Learning English

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study is done to explore motivation factors for learning among undergraduates. A purposive sample of 84 participants responded to the survey. The instrument used is a 5-point Likert-scale survey (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree) and is rooted in Schutte et.al. (1998) instrument (EILELST- Emotional Intelligence in English Learning Self-Report Test) to reveal the variables in Table 1 below. The survey has 4 sections. Section A has items on the demographic profile. Section B has 9 items on Perception of Emotions. Section C has 9 items on Managing Own Emotions. Section D has 8 items on Managing Others' Emotions, and Section E has 5 items on Utilization of Emotions.

Table 1. Distribution of Items in the Survey

SECTION	CATEGORY	NO. OF ITEMS	CRONBACH ALPHA
B	Perception of Emotions	9	.711
C	Managing Own Emotions	9	.915
D	Managing Others' Emotions	8	.879

E	Utilization of Emotions	5	.849
	TOTAL NO. OF ITEMS	31	.945

Table 1 also shows the reliability of the survey. According to Taber (2018), alpha values are categorized as excellent (0.93–0.94), strong (0.91–0.93), reliable (0.84–0.90), robust (0.81), fairly high (0.76–0.95), high (0.73–0.95), and good (0.71–0.91). The analysis shows that the Cronbach alpha for each category ranges between .711 and .915, with an overall Cronbach alpha of .945 for all 31 items; thus, revealing a fairly strong reliability of the instrument chosen/used. Further analysis using SPSS is done to present findings to answer the research questions for this study.

FINDINGS

Findings for Demographic Profile

i) Gender

Table 2. Percentage for Gender

1	Male	29%
2	Female	71%

Table 2 displays the demographic profile of the gender of the sample population. There were more respondents from female participants (71%) compared to male participants (29%).

ii) English Course Programme

Table 3. Percentage for English Course Programme

1	LG	37%
2	ELC	63%

Table 3 displays the percentages of participants from English course programmes. There were more respondents from the ELC programme (63%) compared to the LG programme (37%).

Findings for Perception of Emotions

This section presents data to answer research question 1 - How does perception of emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?

Table 4. Mean for Perception of Emotions

ITEM	MEAN
1. I find it challenging to interpret the body language and facial expressions of people speaking in English.	2.5
2. I am aware of my emotions as I encounter various English language learning situations.	3.8
3. I am attentive to the non-verbal cues that I show during English language interactions with others.	3.7
4. I can interpret the emotions of others by observing their facial expressions during English language interactions.	3.9

5. I understand why my emotions change when using or learning English.	3.8
6. I can easily identify various kinds of emotions as they arise while learning English.	3.8
7. I pay attention to the nonverbal cues displayed by others during English language interactions.	3.8
8. I can interpret people's emotions by listening to the intonation and tone of their speech in the English language	4
9. Understanding the emotions of others during English language interactions is challenging for me.	3.2

Table 4 shows the means for perception of emotions. Item 8, the respondents' ability to interpret people's emotions by listening to the intonation and tone of their speech in the English language has the highest mean at 4.0 while item 1, respondents finding it challenging to interpret the body language and facial expressions of people speaking in English, has the lowest mean with 2.5.

Items 2,5,6 and 7 which relate to respondents' awareness of their emotions when encountering various English language learning situations, their understanding of why their emotions change when using or learning English, their ability to identify various emotions while learning English as well as their attention to the nonverbal cues displayed by others during interactions share the same mean score of 3.8. Overall, the participants demonstrate a high awareness of their own and others' emotions which helps them during the English language learning process.

Findings for Managing Own Emotions

This section presents data to answer research question 2 - How does managing emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?

Table 5. Mean for Managing Own Emotions

ITEM	MEAN
10. When I encounter English language learning obstacles, I recall previous times I faced similar challenges and overcame them.	3.7
11. I believe I can succeed in learning the English language.	4.2
12. I approach English language learning with optimism, expecting progress and success.	4.1
13. When I experience joy or satisfaction from my English language progress, I continue to maintain this and build upon it.	3.9
14. I actively seek out English language learning activities that bring me joy and fulfillment.	3.8
15. I have the ability to manage my emotions effectively during English language learning tasks.	3.8
16. I motivate myself by envisioning successful outcomes when completing English language tasks.	4.1
17. When faced with English language learning challenges, I persist because I believe in my ability to overcome them.	3.9
18. I harness positive English language learning moods to maintain motivation when encountering obstacles.	3.8

Table 5 shows the mean scores for the items measuring how the learners manage their emotion and motivation in English language learning. The item with the highest level of agreement was Item 11, “I believe I can succeed in learning the English language” which recorded an overall mean score of 4.2. Meanwhile, Item 12 and 16 on learners’ optimism and motivation in language learning also showed a high level of agreement with a score of $M = 4.1$ for both aspects. Conversely, the lowest mean score in this category was for Item 10, “When I encounter English language learning obstacles, I recall previous times I faced similar challenges and overcame them.” ($M = 3.7$). Despite recording the lowest score, it still indicates a moderate-to-high level of agreement among participants. Overall, the participants demonstrate a high level of engagement and optimism.

Findings for Managing Others’ Emotions

This section presents data to answer research question 3 - How does managing others’ emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?

Table 6. Mean for Managing Others’ Emotions

ITEM	MEAN
19. I know when to express my English language learning difficulties to others. (e.g., classmates, instructors)	3.7
20. Others find it easy to communicate with me in the English language.	3.7
21. I enjoy sharing my English language learning experiences with others.	3.9
22. I can create English language learning situations that others will find enjoyable.	3.6
23. I strive to present myself in a way that fosters positive English language exchanges.	3.8
24. I praise and encourage others when they make progress in English language learning.	4
25. When someone shares a significant English learning experience, I can empathize with their feelings.	4
26. I offer support to others to boost their language learning confidence.	4

Table 6 shows the mean scores for the items measuring how learners manage others' emotions in English language learning. The items with the highest level of agreement were Item 24, “I praise and encourage others when they make progress in English language learning”, Item 25, “When someone shares a significant English learning experience, I can empathize with their feelings”, and Item 26, “I offer support to others to boost their language learning confidence”, all of which recorded a mean score of 4.0. Meanwhile, Item 21, on sharing English language learning experiences with others, also showed a high level of agreement with a mean score of 3.9. Item 23, which relates to fostering positive English language exchanges, recorded a mean score of 3.8, while Items 19 and 20, on expressing learning difficulties and communicating with others in English, both recorded a mean score of 3.7. Conversely, the lowest mean score in this category was Item 22, “I can create English language learning situations that others will find enjoyable”, with a mean score of 3.6. Despite recording the lowest score, it still indicates a moderate-to-high level of agreement among the participants. Overall, the participants demonstrated a high level of empathy, encouragement, and support towards others throughout the learning process.

Findings for Utilization of Emotions

This section presents data to answer research question 4- How does the utilisation of emotions influence the learning of English as a second language?

Table 7. Mean for Utilisation of Emotions

ITEM	MEAN
27. My English language learning experiences have made me reassess what linguistic skills are essential.	3.9
28. When my mood changes, I become more open to exploring different English language learning strategies.	3.8
29. Emotions play a vital role in my English language learning journey.	4
30. When I am in a positive language learning mood, overcoming English language challenges becomes easier.	4
31. Being in a positive mood helps stimulate creative ideas in English language learning situations.	4.2

Table 7 displays the item means for Utilisation of Emotions. Item 31, being in a positive mood helps stimulate creative ideas in English language learning situations, has the highest mean score with 4.2. Meanwhile, item 28, students become more open to explore different English language learning strategies when their mood changes, has the lowest mean score with 3.8. Item 27 (English language experience helps participants reassess that linguistic skills are essential), item 29 (emotions play a vital role in English language learning), and item 30 (being in a positive mood helps overcome English language learning challenges) all approximately share the same mean scores with 3.9 and 4.0, respectively. Overall, the participants demonstrate a high level of positive emotion utilisation to acquire linguistic skills, strategies, and overcome challenges throughout their English language learning process.

Findings for the Relationship Between All Components of Emotional Intelligence in Language Learning

This section presents data to answer research question 5 - What is the relationship between all components in emotional intelligence in the learning of English as a second language?

To determine if there is a significant association in the mean scores between metacognitive, effort regulation, cognitive, social and affective strategies, data is analysed using SPSS for correlations. Results are presented separately in tables 8, 9, 10 and 11 below.

Table 8. Correlation between Perception of Emotions and Managing Own Emotions

Correlations			
		PERCEPTION emotions	MANAGINGO WNemotions
PERCEPTIONemotions	Pearson Correlation	1	.640**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	84	84
MANAGINGOWNemotions	Pearson Correlation	.640**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	84	84

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8 shows there is an association between perception of emotions and managing one's emotions. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between perception of emotions and managing one's emotions ($r=.640^{**}$) and ($p=.000$). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and

positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between perception of emotions and managing one's emotions.

Table 9. Correlation between Managing Own Emotions and Managing Others' Emotions

Correlations

		MANAGINGO WNemotions	MANAGINGO THERSemotio ns
MANAGINGOWNemotions	Pearson Correlation	1	.803**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	84	84
MANAGINGOTHERSemotions	Pearson Correlation	.803**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	84	84

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 shows there is an association between managing one's emotions and managing others' emotions. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between managing one's emotions and managing others' emotions ($r=.803^{**}$) and ($p=.000$). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between managing one's emotions and managing others' emotions.

Table 10. Correlation between Managing Others' Emotions and Utilisation of Emotions

Correlations

		MANAGINGO THERSemotio ns	UITLISATION Nemotions
MANAGINGOTHERSemotions	Pearson Correlation	1	.781**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	84	84
UITLISATIONNemotions	Pearson Correlation	.781**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	84	84

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 10 shows there is an association between managing others' emotions and utilising one's own emotions. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between managing others' emotions and utilising one's own emotions ($r=.781^{**}$) and ($p=.000$). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between managing others' emotions and utilising one's own emotions.

Table 11. Correlation between Utilisation of Emotions and Perception of Emotions

Correlations		UTILISATION Nemotions	PERCEPTION emotions
UTILISATIONNemotions	Pearson Correlation	1	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	84	84
PERCEPTIONNemotions	Pearson Correlation	.592**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	84	84

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 11 shows there is an association between utilising one's own emotions and perception of emotions. Correlation analysis shows that there is a high significant association between utilising one's own emotions and perception of emotions ($r=.592^{**}$) and ($p=.000$). According to Jackson (2015), coefficient is significant at the .05 level and positive correlation is measured on a 0.1 to 1.0 scale. Weak positive correlation would be in the range of 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlation from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlation from 0.5 to 1.0. This means that there is also a strong positive relationship between utilising one's own emotions and perception of emotions.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings and Discussions

This section comprehensively summarizes the study's findings based on five primary research questions. The empirical evidence collected from the undergraduate sample elaborates how four dimensions of emotional intelligence play a crucial role in the acquisition process of English as a Second Language (ESL) within the Malaysian higher education system. In addition, the descriptive and correlational results will be compared to previous studies established in the body of literature and the introduction section.

For the first research question (RQ 1), which highlights the influence of perception of emotions on English language learning, the descriptive findings reveal that participants possess high emotional awareness in general while performing language tasks. Students were most highly competent at interpreting other people's intonation and tone of people speaking in English. The results correspond with frameworks created by Salovey and Mayer (1990) on the importance of emotional appraisal abilities playing a foundational role in language learning. Moreover, the results also align with current insights by Abdalgane et al. (2025) that connect high self-awareness values to classroom engagement.

The findings of the second research question (RQ 2), the influence of emotional management on English language learning, indicate that the participants exhibit great optimism and emotional self-regulation on achieving success in their English proficiency. Alternatively, they seldom reflected on past challenging experiences that helped them overcome English learning barriers. This strong sense of confidence supports the research conducted by Hu and Chen (2022) who stated that self-regulation of emotions controls learning anxiety. This also validates that high emotional control can conquer any learning obstacles as proven in the research findings of Teoh and Liao (2021). Furthermore, it parallels with the study done by Yadav (2025) which highlights that the stronger the emotional competencies of learners, the higher their engagement, motivation and participation will be when getting involved in English learning activities.

Concerning the third research question (RQ 3), the influence of managing others' emotions on English language learning, data analysis displays that participants show a highly significant level of empathy with a mature capability of praising, supporting and empathizing with their peers during their English learning progress.

However, they were less confident of their abilities to create fun English learning environments that others could find enjoyable. This type of supportive learning mirrors results by Abdalgane et al. (2025) which concurs that when empathy was positively present, it led to greater involvement in classroom activities. Moreover, the present findings also verify the collaborative learning principles advocated by Sadiqzade (2024) that student collaboration can be fostered through emotionally supportive and responsive learning environments.

The fourth research question (RQ4) emphasizes on the influence of the utilisation of emotions on English language learning. The findings reveals that the best way to stimulate creative English learning ideas was by exhibiting positive emotions. Conversely, if their mood changed they would be less likely to explore alternative English learning strategies. The results support the assertions by Yadav (2005) that learners' active participation can be enhanced when learners are in positive emotional states. Additionally, the results for RQ 4 also systematically aligns with findings by Taheri et al. (2019) which stipulated that students that demonstrated emotional perseverance were generally better at adopting appropriate language learning strategies.

Last but not least, the fifth research question (RQ 5) utilized correlational analysis to explain the relationship between all four components of emotional intelligence in English language learning. All four dimensions were found to be connected (as displayed in 2.4 Conceptual Framework). Each dimension showed a significantly strong positive correlation. The strongest correlation was found between the components of managing own emotions and managing others' emotions. Even the weakest correlation shared between the components of utilising one's own emotions and perception of emotions showed a significantly strong link between one another. The overall result of this correlational analysis validates Peng and Shuhong's 2025 meta-analysis argument that emotional intelligence holistically operates as one cohesive system.

Pedagogical Implications

The overall conclusion based on the comprehensive analysis of the present study is that emotional literacy should be actively integrated into the ESL curriculum. Language instructors are highly encouraged to design a methodology that incorporates systematic positive reinforcement and emotionally supportive language learning environments. By implementing this approach, it can significantly improve student learning resilience. Simultaneously, fostering student collaboration as classroom activities and focusing on nonverbal cue training can reduce students' speaking anxiety at a substantial level. In the long run, consistent emotional training can enhance successful English learning outcomes.

Suggestions for Future Research

There are several amendments that future researchers can make to generate possible different results. Firstly, emotional dimensions of individuals can be examined by employing a qualitative research design. As an example, conducting participant in-depth interviews, observations or classroom assessments will provide more detailed insights on the impact that emotional intelligence has on language learning. Secondly, if future researchers choose to use the quantitative research design, they should increase the current research sample that represents more diversified population groups or investigate the comparison between multiple universities and educational settings. And finally, researchers are recommended to include cognitive factors (IQ) to expand beyond the horizon of EQ alone to advance the body of literature for more future studies.

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