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**Investigating the Relationship Between Students'
Comprehension of Conversational Implicature and their
Levels of Emotional Intelligence in EFL Context. The case
of Master one students at M'sila University.**

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master**

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Statement of Originality

We hereby declare that this study entitled **“Investigating the relationship between students’ comprehension of Conversational Implicature and their levels of Emotional Intelligence in EFL context”** is entirely our own work. We certify that this research has not been previously submitted to any university or institution. All relevant sources and references used in this research have been appropriately acknowledged, both in the text and in the bibliography. This paper is to be submitted to the English department at M’sila University, Algeria.

Karima BENTERKI

Meroua HENDI

Dedication

This work is wholeheartedly

dedicated to

our beloved parents

our dear siblings

our respected tutors

and

our cherished close friends

for their unwavering support

and priceless collaboration

throughout

the journey of conducting this research

Acknowledgment

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Thank you all

Abstract

Emotional intelligence has been subject to correlation with numerous academic variables. Its impact stretches beyond the boundaries of the sphere of academia as developing this trait holds a monumental value in individuals' personal and professional realms. Therefore, the rationale behind the present research is to probe the relationship between students' comprehension of conversational implicature and their levels of emotional intelligence in the realm of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). To bring about this objective, 30 Master one EFL students at M'sila University were randomly selected to participate in this research, two quantitative data collection instruments were used: the Multiple Discourse Completion Test and the Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test whereby the former assessed students' comprehension of conversational implicatures and the latter measured students' levels of emotional intelligence. The findings revealed a positively moderate and significant correlation between EFL students' comprehension of conversational implicature and their emotional intelligence ($r=.458$) at a significance level of ($p=0.05$). Besides, Pearson's correlations tests showed that the three subscales of emotional intelligence: perception of emotions, managing own emotions and managing other's emotions were significantly correlated with the participants' comprehension of conversational implicature. Consequently, possessing high levels of emotional intelligence plays a facilitating role in comprehending conversational implicature in EFL discourse. It is then advocated that both emotional intelligence training and conversational implicature instruction can be integral parts of EFL classrooms.

Keywords : Conversational Implicature ; Emotional Intelligence ; Correlation ; EFL context.

List of abbreviations

EI: Emotional Intelligence

CI : Conversational Implicature

PC : Pragmatic Competence

CC: Communicative Competence

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second language

TL: Target Language

FL: Foreign Language

SL: Second Language

MDCT: Multiple Discourse Completion Test

EQ: Emotional Quotient

SSEIT: Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test

H: hearer

S: speaker

RQ: research question

M: mean

SD: standard deviation

+ >: implicates

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General Introduction

Background of the study

Humans, throughout history, have continuously developed various methods to effectively convey information and emotions, thereby facilitating communication with one another. That is, from using oral and nonverbal means such as gestures, sounds, facial expressions and body movements, to the emergence of written languages and finally the advancement of technology. Needless to say that during the process of developing communication, people from different countries came to have distinct beliefs, values, cultural practices, specific languages and different ways of thinking, this is due to a variety of geographical, historical, and social factors that have influenced their development over time.

Bearing in mind the linguistic and cross-cultural differences among language users, acquiring a language then, be it the second or the foreign language, does not entail only linguistic competence but also pragmatic knowledge of the target language (TL); possessing pragmatic abilities is substantial for effective and successful communication in international settings, as it enables individuals to exchange their ideas and emotions appropriately in different social and cultural contexts (Allami and Naeimi, 2011).

Being pragmatically competent requires “the ability to comprehend and produce meaning in context” (Taguchi, 2008, p.432); that is, the appropriate use of language to avoid inaccuracies and misunderstandings during communication. However, during conversations, what the speakers’ utterance implies can be totally different from what is explicitly stated. The receivers in turn have to be aware of the linguistic and contextual cues, as well as the cultural knowledge and norms of speakers’ native language in order to accurately interpret and comprehend their implicitly stated meaning. That is what Paul Grice (1975) referred to as “Conversational Implicature” (CI henceforth), this concept is

part of everyday interaction and one of the key aspects of pragmatic competence (PC) in which English learners need to develop skills for effective communication. Given the weight it carries, it deserves to receive considerable attention and deliberate investigation.

Emotional Intelligence (EI henceforth), by contrast, was conceptualized by the psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey (1990) as “the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions.” (P.189). In other words, highly emotionally intelligent people can utilize their emotions to think critically and direct their attention in order to attain their goals.

Extensive research on EI mirrors its role as a valuable asset for success in various areas of life, as numerous research studies have warranted the role of EI in ameliorating individuals' decision making, problem solving (Bar-On and Parker, 2000), interpersonal relationships (Schutte et al, 2001), professional and personal success (Goleman, 1995) and academic achievement (Elias, Arnold and Hussey, 2003). Furthermore, several empirical probes into EI have been carried out. Interestingly, EI was found to be significantly and positively correlated with multiple cognitive and educational-related variables such as, critical thinking (Afshar and Rahimi, 2014), language proficiency (Shakib and Barani, 2011), oral communication skills (Alghorbany and Hamzah, 2020), pragmatic performance (Domakani et al, 2014) and PC of apology speech act production (Saraoui, Dilmi and Cheriet, 2020). Overall, the growing corpus of research on EI reflects its significance as an area of academic investigation.

However, the reviewed literature on EI evidently reveals a gap in knowledge, as scant attention has been paid to CI; its nature of relationship with EI remains then insufficiently explored. Therefore, the researchers of the current investigation initiate the journey towards uncovering whether or not EFL students with well-developed EI skills are able to

appropriately discern and comprehend implicit meanings in contextualized exchange situations.

Research problem

In line with today's growth of globalization and multiculturalism, one of the main goals of second and foreign language education has been to help learners acquire the ability to communicate effectively in a global setting. For such urge, the mastery of both socio-cultural language use in its communicative context and pragmatic competence, ergo, becomes a prerequisite.

However, several studies in the area of pragmatics have conclusively indicated that FL/SL learners, despite the extended target language exposure, still encounter difficulties in acquiring pragmatic inferential abilities (Bouton, 1994; Ying, 2001; Cook and Liddicoat, 2002; Takahashi, 2010). Certainly, the researchers of the study noticed that, during pragmatics sessions, the majority of Master two EFL students majoring in Linguistics at M'sila university, who assumingly should have high English language proficiency, find it quite challenging to elicit and interpret CIs and fail to infer their intended meaning, this can stem from their limited sociocultural knowledge of English language. Lending further bolstering to this standpoint, the researcher Hamoudi (2021) likewise has underscored M'sila University EFL learners' insufficient sociopragmatic competence.

Hence, in light of the researchers' observation and given the significant correlation of EI with myriad academic variables, as mentioned in the literature review, the present study strives to address a gap in knowledge through examining the interplay between students' levels of EI and their comprehension of CI in the Algerian EFL context at M'sila university and predicting whether integrating the EI courses in teaching can promote EFL learners' accurate understanding of underlying meanings in conversations.

Aim of the Study

Drawing upon the previously reviewed studies, the main purpose of this investigation is to explore the kind of relationship between EFL students' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI in EFL context at M'sila University. Yet, the present study attempts to achieve further aims. First, to probe how well M'sila university EFL students can perform in a small-scale CI test. Second, to identify M'sila university EFL students' levels of EI. Finally, to investigate the correlation between EFL students' comprehension of CI and their subscales of EI.

Research questions

This research sets forth to answer the following questions:

1. How well can EFL students perform in the CI test?
2. What are EFL learners' different levels of EI?
3. Is there a statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI?
4. Is there a prominent statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and one of the subscales of EI?

Research hypotheses

The researchers put forward the following hypotheses concerning the previous research queries:

1. EFL learners of M'sila University may perform well in the CI test.
2. EFL learners of M'sila University may hold high levels of EI.
3. There might be a statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI.
4. There might be a prominent statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and the perception of emotions subscale.

Research Methodology

Research design

To address the research questions, the current investigation follows a quantitative correlational predictive research design due to its effectiveness and appropriateness; this design is efficient to explore the relationship between the two-targeted variables and provide insights into their potential influence on each other.

Population and Sampling

Accurate interpretation of CIs situations requires high language proficiency; for this reason, the participants involved in this study are 30 Master one EFL students majoring in Linguistics & literature and civilization at the department of language and English literature at Mohammed Boudiaf M'sila University. A simple random sampling technique is used to ensure the representativeness of the findings and reduce sampling bias.

Research Instruments

The main statistical instruments used to gather data were: The Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) to measure students' levels of EI, this self-report measure consists of 33 items. Informants rate the extent to which each item reflects their own emotional traits on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), and the Multiple Discourse Completion Test (MDCT) to test students' comprehension of CI. This test is a scenario-based task in which the participants were presented with various written scenarios containing different authentic extracts of CI in order to elicit the implied meaning behind each scenario by choosing the most appropriate response from multiple-choice options. These two tests proved to be valid and reliable in the previous research studies (see chapter two). Besides, the participants were given clear instructions to ensure accurate completion of the tests.

Data analysis

The data gathered from the above-mentioned tests were analyzed quantitatively using the statistical software of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 29. In order to answer the first and the second research questions, the collected data were processed using descriptive statistics to examine central tendencies of the variables. Regarding the third and the fourth research queries, correlational analyses were run using the Pearson correlation coefficient to report the direction and strength of the correlation.

Significance of the study

This study holds substantial contributions to the growing body of literature in the fields of both variables, as scarce investigations have been conducted to explore the correlation between CI comprehension and EI in the realm of EFL. Regardless of the outcome, it does provide valuable insights into the nature of relationship between the aforementioned variables and uncover how EI may influence the interpretation of CIs. Moreover, if the correlation analysis between CI and EI demonstrates a noteworthy positive correlation, it would carry numerous significant implications. However, if the results reveal no existed significant correlation between CI comprehension and EI, new research queries could be generated, leading to further future empirical probes into the underlying mechanism between EI and CI comprehension in different EEL settings.

Structure of the study

The overall structure of this study takes the form of two main chapters. Whereas the first chapter addresses the theoretical framework of the targeted variables, the second chapter is devoted to the fieldwork.

The first chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the origin and development of pragmatics. It delves into various aspects such as defining pragmatics, exploring some different theories in pragmatics and investigating pragmatic competence. Furthermore, it sheds light on CI, its types, properties and establishes its relationship with communicative competence (CC). Additionally, it presents a general overview about EI, its definitions,

theories, models, different tests and its link to CC. Finally, this chapter aims to uncover the theoretical interplay between CI and EI and review previous research studies concerning the two variables in EFL and ESL contexts.

The second chapter of this research covers the fieldwork process. It encompasses the methodological design including a detailed description of the chosen method, the target population, the sampling technique, the data collection tools and the investigation procedure. Moreover, it delves into the analysis of the accumulated data and the discussion of the key research findings.

Ultimately, this work is concluded with revisiting the main yielded findings regarding the correlation between students' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI in the realm of EFL at M'sila University. At the end, a set of recommendations and suggestions for additional investigations in the future are provided.

Key terms definitions

- **Conversational Implicature (CI):** Implicature is derived from the term "implicit.", it refers to the additional implied meaning that is conveyed by the speaker's utterance and interpreted by the listener in a particular situation, its interpretation relies on certain contextual and linguistic cues (Grice, 1975). It is tested using the MDCT.
- **Emotional Intelligence (EI):** The concept of Emotional intelligence can be broadly defined as the individuals' capacity to accurately perceive, understand, recognize and regulate emotions in the self and in others along with the competence to utilize emotions effectively, in order to foster the development of emotions and intellect (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). It is measured using the SSEIT.

Chapter One

Theoretical Framework of Conversational Implicature and Emotional Intelligence

Introduction

The objective of the current chapter is to provide an overview on the concepts of Conversational Implicature (CI henceforth) and Emotional Intelligence (EI henceforth). Initially, the historical origin and some popular definitions of the term pragmatics are briefly summarized. Additionally, the definition of pragmatic competence, its paramount role in FL and SL spheres as well as some theories in pragmatics such as: speech act theory, implicature theory and politeness theory are tackled. The highest priority and attention were given to CI; the researchers shed light on its types, properties, link to communicative competence along with the purposes behind producing CIs and the role of culture in interpreting CIs. After that, this chapter shifts focus to the second variable. It introduces readers to some definitions of EI as well as its different models, measurement tools and its role in enhancing L2 learners' communication skills. Eventually, the researchers review the previous studies regarding the comprehension of CI and EI in the realms of EFL and ESL. They attempt also to show how the first variable is linked theoretically to the second; that is, the interplay between CI and EI which is going to be examined through testing in the second chapter.

1.1 Background on Pragmatics

Most of the time, when people engage in conversations, they may mean considerably more than what their words actually convey and their utterance may hold completely the opposite of what their words say. The expression 'It's hot in here', for instance, maybe is a request for the hearer to kindly let the window opened, or do you mind if I open the window? Or you are squandering electricity! The concept that is considered as a gateway of implicit communication is called pragmatics, this latter was defined in different ways by several eminent researchers.

The term pragmatics, by origin, sprang from the philosopher Charles Morris' study of the science of signs or Semiotics (1938), this latter was divided into three branches, namely; syntactic or syntax, semantics and pragmatics. In Morris' words, pragmatics studies "the relation of signs to interpreters" (as cited in Levinson, 1983, P. 1); pragmatics, to his view then, is concerned with what the speaker's utterance means and how the listener interprets it.

In his book of *Pragmatics*, Levinson (1983) referred to pragmatics as a field of study that focuses on how language is influenced by the surrounding context and how it is shaped by the structure of the language itself; in other words, pragmatics studies the connection between the language and the specific situation in which it is used.

As far as pragmatics is concerned, Thomas (1995) views pragmatics as all those aspects that manifest through humans' interaction. She suggests that the process of making meaning entails negotiating and understanding meaning between interlocutors, and taking into account the social context, physical setting and the linguistic elements used in a conversation.

Next, one more definition of pragmatics is provided by Crystal (1997), who points out that pragmatics studies the language from the perspectives of its users, including the choices individuals make when using the language, the constraints they face in social

interactions and the impact of their language use on others involved in communication. This definition aligns with Morris' understanding of pragmatics, which addresses the connections between the language and its users.

Finally, as people's language use is governed by the premises of society, pragmatics which studies how individuals communicate and interact using language, bases itself then on delineating how such societal determinants affect their access to language. In this regard, Mey (2001) states that pragmatics examines "the use of language in human communication as determined by the condition of the society" (p. 6).

To conclude, the above-mentioned definitions of pragmatics show that pragmatics is chiefly concerned with language in use. It concerns the ability to produce and grasp indirect unexpressed meanings and covert intentions beyond the literal interpretation of the interlocutors' utterance. Hence, in order for individuals to perform pragmatically well in a specific context, they may need to be pragmatically knowledgeable and competent.

1.2 Pragmatic Competence (PC)

The notion 'pragmatics' is nowadays widely used in the realm of TL acquisition as 'pragmatic competence' (PC). This latter was first introduced and defined by the linguist Noam Chomsky (1980) as the knowledge of how to appropriately use the language in different situations and for various purposes. The interpretation of PC differs among theoreticians; leading to different understanding and perspectives on the concept.

Fraser (1983), for instance, stresses the listener's role and defines PC as grasping how a listener figures out what the speaker truly means and perceiving the subtle emotions or attitudes conveyed through the speaker's choice of words. Furthermore, PC is seen as the skill to use language effectively to attain a particular purpose and to comprehend language in its context (Thomas, 1983; Taguchi, 2009).

To be a competent communicator in specific TL, pragmatic knowledge consists of two main elements: Pragmalinguistic knowledge and Sociopragmatic knowledge. On the

pragmalinguistic aspect, learners need to concentrate on linguistic aspects like grammatical structures and vocabulary. The sociopragmatic aspect, in contrast, requires their focus on social conventions, cultural rules and contextual information of the TL such as the awareness of the difference in social distance and social power among interlocutors (Roever, 2005; Taguchi & Roever, 2017).

The significance of this competence in language learning has led to the emergence of various theories in pragmatics, which aim to explore and explain how language is used in context.

1.3 Theories in Pragmatics

Different theories of pragmatics for example, speech act, implicatures, and politeness have been developed depending on how researchers approached the concept in their suggested definitions of pragmatics.

1.3.1 Speech Act Theory (SAT)

Philosophers believed that statements can only describe or represent facts, whether true or false. Yet, grammarians discovered that not all sentences are intended to express statements, but rather requests, orders, exclamations, desires or questions (Austin, 1962). In his book 'How to Do Things with Words', Austin (1962) claimed that language is a form of social act, and words are not used only to utter things but to do things as well, or what it was termed by him as "Performative", that is, statements or expressions that people utter, perform acts. The expression "I promise", for example, performs the act of promising. Based on this, the theory of "speech act" was established by John Austin, and developed by John Searle to indicate what individuals do with language and what different kinds of speech acts speakers perform when they produce utterances.

Speech acts are defined as "the basic or minimal units of linguistic communication" (Searle, 1969, p.16); in other words, the smallest elements of human communication are not linguistic statements but rather the performance of specific acts such as, asking

questions, providing directions, apologizing, thanking, greeting, requesting, complaining, and other different speech acts.

Austin (1962) notes that utterances can be regarded in terms of three aspects: First, a locutionary act or the act of uttering something, i.e. generating a statement with sense and reference, Second, an illocutionary act or performing an action in uttering something," i.e., the act created by saying something, such as ordering, requesting or inviting and third, a perlocutionary act is what we accomplish by saying something, i.e., the impact of the speaker's words on the listener. Consider this example, a wife says, "I'm feeling under the weather" in response to her husband's invitation to go to the cinema, the locutionary act is the same as the utterance: "I'm feeling under the weather". The illocutionary act is declining the invitation and the perlocutionary act is for the husband to scrap the idea.

A few years later, Searle (1976) classified illocutionary acts into five major categories so that they can be distinguished, these categories are as follows:

Representatives: actions that represent situations or events in the world: binding the speaker/addresser to the truth of the expressed statement e.g., affirming, reporting, assessing, describing, etc.

Directives: the acts that endeavour to persuade the listener/addressee to do something e.g., warning, advising, requesting, begging, asking, etc.

Commissives: the acts that bind the addresser to do something in the future, e.g., promising, swearing, vowing, committing, etc.

Expressives: the acts taken by the speaker to demonstrate his own feelings about something, e.g., apologizing, condemning, congratulating, welcoming, thanking, etc.

Declarations: The acts which, when spoken, cause a condition to occur, e.g., declaring, christening, naming, etc.

In order for the listener to determine which speech act is intended by the speaker, Mey (2001, 2010) suggests resorting to the context in which the speech act is stated. To him,

there is no speech act without a situation (Mey, 2010). In addition, Searle (1969) states that when individuals engage in conversations, the meaning and purpose behind what they say can often be understood from the context without explicitly stating it.

Context can be subdivided into linguistic context and extra-linguistic context; the former refers to all linguistic component of an utterance; including semantic (i.e., word meaning, collocation, etc.) and syntactic (i.e., word order, type of sentence etc.). The latter, by contrast, refers to all non-linguistic factors that might help to comprehend the meaning of a speech, such as the setting, the historical and cultural background of the interlocutors and their relationship to one another. (Al-Owaidi, 2018)

Pragmatics researchers have been particularly interested in the issue of whether speech acts are universal or culture-specific. According to some scholars like Austin (1962), Grice (1975) and Searle (1969), the interaction among interlocutors and their use of Speech acts is governed by universal pragmatic norms and people across different cultures and languages almost use identical communication strategies. However, the opponents of universality (such as Rosaldo, 1982; Yu, 2005; Eelen, 2001) refute this claim, to them, speech acts realization varies across cultures and languages because of the differences in cultural conventions and assumptions. Consider the phrase “I divorce you” said by a husband to his wife in a Christian nation, both of them are Christians rather than Muslims. Nonetheless, he has not successfully divorced her in this situation; because unlike Muslims, Christians do not admit any verbal or nonverbal procedures for effective divorce. (Austin, 1962)

In summary, speech acts serve as the basic elements of communication; they allow people to perform acts through words, express ideas and emotions and shape their social interaction.

1.3.2 Grice's theory of Implicature

H. Paul Grice, an English philosopher, was interested in accounting for how humans act in daily conversations. Therefore, he developed the notion of 'Implicatures' which are implications derived by speakers during conversation. Grice's theory attempted to explain how a listener moves from what is said to what is meant, from explicit meaning to implied meaning i.e. the additional or different meanings. He differentiates between two categories of implicatures, namely conventional and non-conventional or conversational implicatures. While in the former, the listener makes inferences by relying on the conversation linguistic cues, the latter is more context-dependent to draw speakers' intended meaning (Grice, 1975).

1.3.2.1 Conventional Implicature

Conventional implicature is a concept in pragmatics proposed by (Grice 1975). According to him, conventional implicatures are additional meanings conveyed by language beyond the explicit interpretation of words and expressions. They are determined by the conventional meaning of the specific words being used. They differ from conversational implicatures in several ways; they are not based on the cooperative principle, are not restricted to occurring within the context of a conversation and are not interpreted by specific situations (Sofyan et al, 2022). That is to say, conventional implicature is directly associated to the literal meaning of the words being stated. In the sentence "John is poor but happy", for example, the conjunction 'but' conventionally implies a sense of contradiction between being poor and joyful; the implication is derived from the conventional meaning of 'but' in English.

1.3.2.2 Conversational Implicature (CI)

Grice (1975) initially introduced the term "conversational implicature" (CI) to describe the implicit meaning people infer from an utterance based on its context and their experience with how conversations works. He proposes the cooperative principle as an

underlying principle in his theory of CI. To him, the cooperative principle serves as an underlying guideline for an efficient communication. A listener expects a speaker to follow this principle and to shape his or her contribution around the four guiding maxims which are as follows:

Table 1. Grice's cooperative principle (Grice, 1975, p. 47)

1. The Maxim of Quantity:

- a. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
- b. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

2. The Maxim of Quality:

- a. Do not say what you believe to be false.
- b. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

3. The Maxim of Relation: Be relevant.

4. The Maxim of Manner:

- a. Avoid obscurity of expression.
 - b. Avoid ambiguity.
 - c. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
 - d. Be orderly.
-

When a speaker makes it evident that they are not adhering to the conversational maxims, this is referred to as flouting the maxims and creates an implicature (Grice, 1975). In other words, according to Grice's principle, individuals' utterances should be truthful, relevant, and informative enough as well as stated in a clear manner; in this way, listeners attempt to comprehend what is stated to them. However, In case one or more of the maxims is not followed, the hearer is required to infer the speaker's extra intended meaning; That is to say, a flouting or a violating of a maxim results in generating Grice's CI. For instance:

- Flouting Quantity

A: War is War

+> Terrible things happen in war. That's its nature and there's no use lamenting that tragedy.

- Flouting Relation

A: (Letter of Recommendation) What qualities does John have for this position?

B: John has nice handwriting.

+> John is not qualified for the job

- Flouting Quality

A: Tehran's in Turkey, isn't it, teacher?

B: And London's in Armenia, I suppose

+> Tehran is not in Turkey

- Flouting Manner

A: The Corner of John's lips turned slightly upwards

+> John did not exactly smile

According to G.P. Grice (1975), inferring a CI involves considering various factors. These include the flouting of a maxim, the cooperative principle, background knowledge and the linguistic context.

1.3.2.2.1 Types of Conversational Implicature

In his theory of implicature, Grice (1975) identified two main distinct kinds of CI: generalized and particularized implicatures. Generalized CIs, on the one hand, are implicatures that can be inferred without reference to a particular context, in other words, inferences like specific features of the context and background knowledge are not necessary in order to elicit the additional communicated meaning (Levinson, 1983). Generalized CI are commonly triggered by indefinite articles (a/an), the sentence "I walked into a house", for example, implicates that the house was not my house. (Grice, 1975). Particularized CIs, on the other hand, are the hearer's inferences that can only be

worked out and interpreted by drawing completely on the particular contextual cues and details of the utterances (Lakoff, 1993). The following schema captures the overall picture of Grice's theory of meaning.

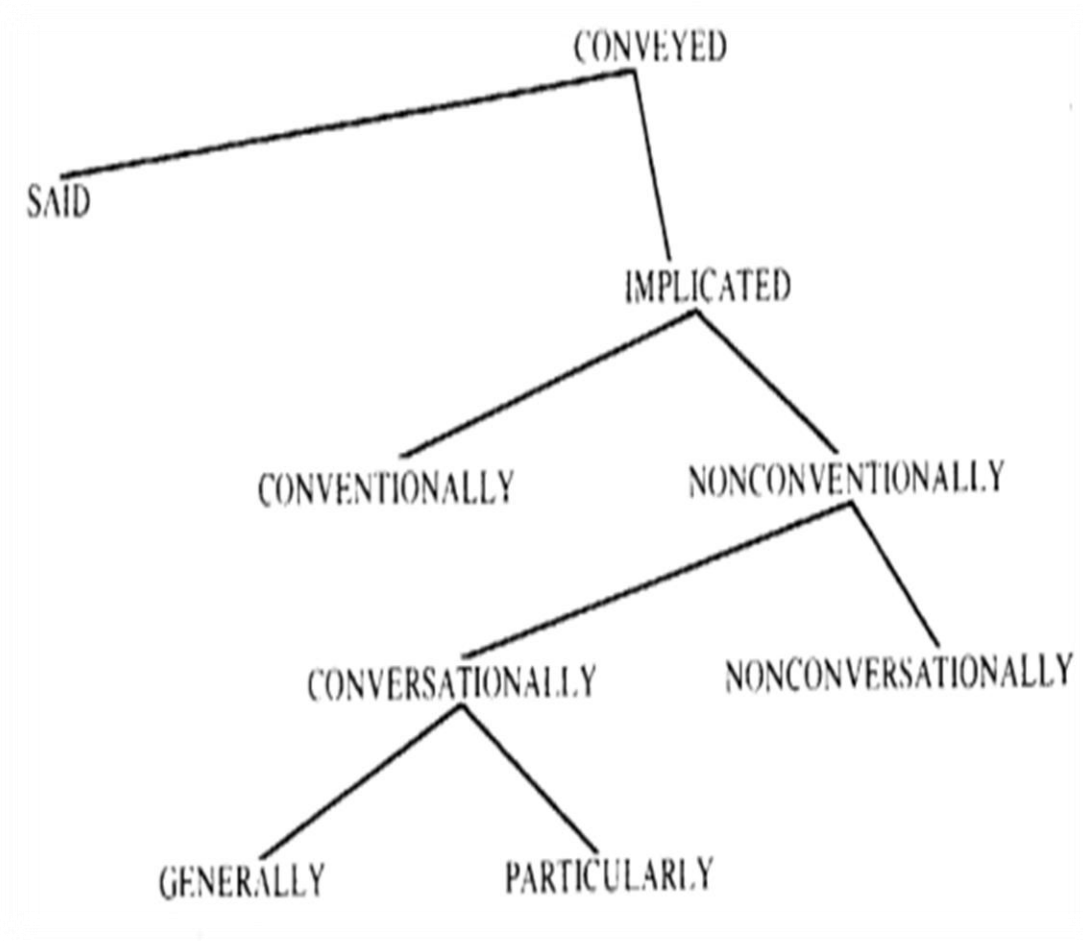


Figure 1. types of implicatures (adopted from Sadock, 1978, p.283)

1.3.2.2.2 Properties of Conversational Implicature

Grice (1975) assigns several properties to conversational implicatures, including calculability, cancelability, and non-detachability. Sadock (1978) summarizes these features as follows (as cited in Musa and Mohammed, 2022):

- **Calculability:** Conversational implicatures can be "worked out" through using Cooperation Principle, for example:

a. Nawaf has a flat. b. Nawaf has only one flat. c. Nawaf has one or more flats.

In this instance, (a) indicates (c), but means implicitly (b). The listener will assume that the speaker in (a) is adhering to the conversational maxims. Particularly the Maxim of a quantity which signifies that the speaker should be sufficiently informative. Thus, the listener will infer that if the speaker knew Nawaf had more than one flat, then he would have said so. And hence, the hearer will comprehend and deduce the speaker's intention that the speaker know the correct information about how many flats Nawaf has, As a result, the listener will infer (b) (Musa and Mohammed, 2022)

- **Cancelability:** This means that further information or context can cancel the implicature. Take the following example:

"Those cookies look good"

Implicates: I would like one or more

Compare it now with this utterance: "Those cookies look good, but I am on a diet" (implicature is defeated, it means I won't have any) (Musa and Mohammed, 2022).

- **Non-Detachability:** Conversational implicatures are nondetachable; in a fixed context, expressions with the same linguistic meaning should produce the same implicatures. for instance:

a. Can you lend me \$90 for a few days? b. Are you able to lend me \$90 for a few days?
c. Please, lend me \$90 for a few days.

The above example demonstrates that the three distinct language statements carry the same intended meaning. For illustration, Conversational implicatures are determined based on the content of what is said rather than its linguistic form, therefore changing the words

used will not remove them; if the literal semantic content remains the same, the implicatures will remain the same (Musa and Mohammed, 2022).

1.3.2.2.3 The Purposes Behind Producing Conversational Implicatures

Yudith, Natsir and Lubis (2021) mention five purposes behind the speakers' use of CI, namely to protect the speaker himself, to show power and politeness, to give information, to entertain the audiences (humorous) and to have lack of specific information. They explain these purposes as follows:

a. To protect the speakers' themselves

Speakers may take precautions and use the implicature even though they know the exact information. At a meeting, for instance, a teacher reported that about 200 students are taking the final exam. Although the instructor may count the attendees, he makes an approximation to implicate the true number of students so that he protects himself if he counts incorrectly. (Yudith, Natsir and Lubis, 2021)

b. To show power and politeness

In their phenomenal book of politeness, Brown and Levinson (1978) proposed the notion of Face which is a primary desire or need that everyone seeks to satisfy. According to them, speakers emotionally want their face to be continually considered; for this reason, people within informal contexts use CI in performing a face threatening act in order to avoid the responsibility for example indirect criticism implicatures. (as cited in Yudith, Natsir and Lubis, 2021)

c. to give information

Michael (1997) emphasized the role of using language to convey information both explicitly and implicitly. He provided an example of a talk show where a speaker says: "wow !somebody just has a brand ford on TV, what was that?". Here, the speaker knows that their friend mentioned a glasses brand supporting the talk show while on the air; and he attempted to implicitly convey a message to the listeners that they were prohibited to

mention any brand that is not supporting the talk show. This shows how individuals can convey hidden information to the listeners through the use of CI. (As cited in Yudith, Natsir and Lubis, 2021)

d. to entertain the audience (humorous)

According to Brown and Levinson (1978), joking is a basic form of positive politeness; it is a common technique to create an ambiance and a relaxed atmosphere in casual conversations, especially in western cultures. Additionally, jokes in movies serves as a means to convey indirect utterances for the purpose of amusement. (As cited in Yudith, Natsir and Lubis, 2021)

e. to have lack of specific information

Implicatures sometimes are produced by individuals to convey meaning when they lack the exact words and vocabulary to express a concept. For example, they may invent new words like “samiest” when the appropriate term is unavailable. (Yudith, Natsir and Lubis, 2021)

1.3.2.2.4 The Role of Culture in the Interpretation of CI

The universality of the cooperative principle (CP) has not been sustained; it was argued that the CP does not operate uniformly in various communities (Leech, 1983). Cultural differences and variations in their usage result in individuals’ misinterpretation of implicatures produced by individuals from other societies. In other words, cultures exhibit differences when it comes to applying these principles in specific contextualized situations, as well as in the interpretation of the cooperative behavior (Rose & Kasper, 2002). As a result, the utility of implicature as a conversational strategy for communicating across cultures may be diminished (Bouton, 1999). For example, Bouton’s (1988) cross-sectional study revealed that international SL learners exhibited variation in their understanding of implicatures when compared to native speakers. Bouton (1988)

specifically noted that among the six culture groups, Latin Americans were found to occupy the second closest position to the target group, which consisted of Americans.

1.3.2.2.5 The link between Conversational Implicature (CI) and Communicative Competence (CC)

Hymes (1972, 1974) was among the first researchers who used the concept communicative competence (CC), the introduction of CC by Hymes (1972) generally acknowledges that teaching and learning languages entails significantly more than focusing on grammatical or lexical systems. According to him, CC is defined not only as an intrinsic grammatical competence but also as the capacity to use grammatical knowledge in a range of communicative situations. Ergo, Hymes (1972, 1974) integrates the sociolinguistic perspective into Chomsky's linguistic notion of competence. That is, for him, the ability to communicate appropriately requires grammatical knowledge of a language as well as knowing what and how to speak in any situation.

Research on CC is chiefly based on these major models namely, the model of Canale and Swain (1980, 1981), the model of Bachman and Palmer (1990, 1996) and the model of Celce-Murcia et al. (1995). Perhaps the most comprehensive model of CC that was developed to meet both educational and assessment objectives is that of Canale & Swain (Taghizadeh, 2017), it was further developed by Canale in 1983, in his model, the CC is categorized into four parts: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic. these components refer respectively to linguistic knowledge regarding grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc., sociocultural knowledge of the language, the ability to arrange linguistic components to produce various sorts of cohesive spoken or written texts (e.g., political speech, poetry), and knowledge of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies.

Hymes' introduction of communicative competence, along with pragmatics researchers' ideas on the difference between the speakers' linguistic and implied meaning have inspired

many researchers to link PC to CC. For instance, PC in Canale and Swains' (1980, 1983) model of CC, is regarded a part of sociolinguistic competence since this latter is an important aspect of pragmatic knowledge. However, some researchers such as Schmidt and Richards (1980) attempt to use the word PC as a synonym for CC. Furthermore, according to Ellis (1994) CC involves both linguistic and PC. That is to say, having PC is essential for effective communication.

Relevant prior studies were reviewed concerning the influence of the comprehension of CI on ameliorating PC and language proficiency (see section three). Watts (2003) suggests that PC contains both the conversational maxims and politeness rules. That is, language users will not be pragmatically competent unless they have the ability to accurately understand and interpret the CIs.

Succinctly, based on what have been reviewed hitherto on the interplay among CC, CI and PC, it can be said that, the development of the comprehension of CI can considerably enhance both language users' and EFL learners' CC.

1.3.3 Brown and Levinson's Theory of Politeness

Politeness theory, a cornerstone in the fields of sociolinguistics and pragmatics, was proposed by the sociolinguists Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1978) in their influential book "Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage". Their pioneering work provided a comprehensive framework for analyzing and understanding how individuals manage to use different politeness strategies and social norms in their interactions.

In their theory, they define the term 'face' which was introduced by Goffman (1955) as the individual's public self image that needs to be protected during communication. They developed the notion of face as a social value that people maintain during their interaction and its relation to politeness. (Longscope, 1995)

According to Brown and Levinson (1978), the fundamental concepts of Positive Face, Negative Face along with face-saving act and face-threatening act offer valuable insights into how individuals effectively handle and manage politeness strategies during social exchange situations in order to preserve social harmony and interpersonal relations.

Negative face: Negative face pertains to an individual's desire to be free from imposition, it represents the need to have one's actions respected and not be obligated by others' face threatening acts such as direct commands or requests. (Tracy, 1990)

Positive face: Positive face refers to an individual's desire for social approval, acceptance and belongingness, it represents the need to be liked, valued, respected and included in social groups. Face-threatening acts that undermine the positive face include criticism, disagreements and rejections. (Tracy, 1990)

Face-saving act: Face-saving acts relate to the strategies undertaken to preserve an individual's face from face-threatening impact of particular actions or statements, and to lessen the potential social unease or conflict. These politeness strategies involve acts such as the use of indirect language and softening expressions (Brown and Levinson, 1978).

Face-threatening act: Face-threatening acts encompass behaviours, actions, verbal expressions that undermine either the positive or the negative face of an individual. Examples of these acts include making direct demands, expressing disagreements or conflicting opinions (Brown and Levinson, 1978).

The concept of PDR and Brown & Levinson's Politeness Strategy

Brown and Levinson (1978) outlines three variables namely, Power (P), Distance (D), and the absolute Ranking (R), which play influential roles in shaping an utterance. The three types of relationship denoted by P encompass the speaker, the hearer and their social status. The interplay between these three categories can be observed based on the hearer's social position, indicating whether it is higher, equal, and lower to that of the speaker. The variable D pertains to the social distance between the hearer and the speaker, shaping their

language and attitude. The degree of proximity influences their interaction and can be categorized as either distant or close. R represents the extent of imposition which can be categorized as large or small; for example when the speakers make a substantial or difficult request, the imposition level then is large. However, when they ask for something easy, the level of imposition is small (Brown and Levinson, 1978). When S intends to engage in a face-threatening act, he must consider the three above mentioned factors to determine the appropriate strategy to use (Longscope, 1995).

1.4 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

The concept of emotional intelligence entails the overlap between components such as emotion and intelligence. Consequently, it is important to consider their definitions and different theories.

1.4.1 Emotion

Several researchers have discussed numerous conceptualizations of 'emotion' depending on different points of view. Hence, there was a vigorous debate on how to define it and how to differentiate emotion from mood.

Emotions are valuable and useful tools for understanding ourselves and our reactions (Ekman, 2004) as they provide vital information about oneself and others. Therefore, the greater our understanding of emotion, the more effective we are at managing and processing emotions. In his book of *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animal*, Darwin (1872) notes that human expressions of emotion are both innate and universal that aid in communication. Accordingly, in his theory of emotion, Paul Ekman (2003) theorized six basic human emotions, which are fear, anger, disgust, sadness, happiness, and surprise as a result of extensive cross-cultural research conducted on the recognition of emotional facial expressions. He indicates that each of the basic emotions is not a single emotional state but a set (family) of related states, (referring to common characteristics).

In addition, each member of an emotional family shares certain characteristics; for instance, commonalities in expression, physiological activity, in the nature of the antecedent events which call them for and probably also in the appraisal processes (as cited in Ekman, 2004). Moreover, Ekman (2004) argues that each of us has the same emotions but experiences them in different ways.

As far as emotional behavior is concerned, there are two views. On one hand, Yong (1943) views an emotion as: “an acute disturbance of the individual, psychological in origin, involving behavior, conscious experience and visceral functioning” (p.51) this definition postulates that behavior, conscious experience, and changes within the body are parts of the emotional event. On the other hand, Mayer and Salovey (1990) define emotions as: “organized responses, crossing the boundaries of many psychological, cognitive, motivational, and experiential systems” (p.186). In other words, emotions are seen as complex (arranged) reactions that are integrated with various aspects of psychological, cognitive, motivational and experiential systems. Moreover, they add that usually, in response to an internal or external event, emotions are triggered in the individual, which can have a positive or negative connotation.

Furthermore, George (2006) suggests that emotions and moods are two main factors influencing behavior. However, emotions can be severalized from the concept of mood, Ekman (2003) agrees that emotions and moods are part of human nature, but they are distinct even if they both involve feelings in that emotions are much shorter than moods and a mood resembles a tenuous but persisting emotional state. He also assures that emotions are essential to human existence. However, he was less certain that moods might be an unintentional effect of our emotional structures. Similarly, Mayer and Salovey (1990) reveal that emotions are typically more strong and shorter.

To conclude, emotions are part of the human behaviour either are seen as organized process(Mayer&Salovey,1990) or a state of upset(Yong,1943).They affect overall well-being, relationships and decision-making.

1.4.2 Intelligence

Intelligence has been defined differently over time. To begin with, Alfred Binet developed the first intelligence test in 1905. Intelligence tests were then studied in detail. On the one hand, intelligence is viewed as a collection of abilities, including judgment, a sense of action, initiative, and the ability to adapt to situations (Wallace et al., 1992). Wechsler, on the other hand, believes that intelligence is the ability to act purposefully, rationally thinking and effectively dealing with the surrounding (as cited in Wallace et al., 1992). In addition, intelligence is a person's capacity to adjust suitably to relatively new life situations (Pinter, 1921).

Finally, Howard Gardner (1983) develops his most known theory of multiple intelligence which comprised eight intelligences: linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily kinaesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, and naturalist intelligence; that share the capability of learning from one's experience and adaptation to one's environment. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence suggests that test-based old theories of intelligence are too restrictive and need to be expanded to include a wider range of human potential (Bryant,2007).Gardner (1989) defines intelligence as " the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural settings (as cited in Gardner& Hatch,1989). Furthermore, he asserts that although all humans display a variety of intelligences, each person's present profile of intelligence varies, likely due to both inherited and environmental factors (Gardner, 1989).

To conclude, Gardner's theory provides approximately the basis for emotional intelligence models through intrapersonal and interpersonal bits of intelligence conception.

1.4.3 Defining Emotional Intelligence (EI)

In the late 1990s, the idea of “emotional intelligence” attracted the attention of many academics and researchers, particularly in the discipline of psychology. Although, EI term was mentioned before by Payne (1986) in his doctoral thesis “A study of emotion: developing emotional intelligence: self-intelligence; relating to the fear and desire”. However, it was not until the publication of Daniel Goleman’s (1995) “Emotional intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ” that the concept became widely known, as previously it had only been referred to by various names and terms.

EI roots can be traced back to the idea of “social intelligence” that was put forth by E.L. Thorndike (1920) claims that social intelligence entails knowing how to deal with people and managing interpersonal interaction (as cited in Petrides, 2011). In the 1970s, researchers began to explore the effects of emotions on cognition (Mayer, 1986).

Howard Gardner’s (1983) well-known theory of multiple intelligence, includes eight types of intelligence, among these, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence, sharing a strong relationship with EI. According to Gardner(1990), intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to understand human intentions, recognize the motivations and desires of others, and work effectively with them, whereas interpersonal intelligence includes the ability to understand, have oneself effective working model, including person’s desires, fears and skills and using such information effectively to adjust oneself.

Mayer and Salovey (1990) were the first coined and introduced the term of EI. Who they define it as the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions distinguishing them and use them to guide thoughts and actions. Since then the term has been developed and adopted by different disciplines such as business and education fields.

Bar-On (1997) defines emotional intelligence as “an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one’s ability to succeed in coping with environment demands and pressures” (p.14). Further, the term “emotion quotient” (EQ) was first used

by Bar-On in 1985 by proposing his independent emotional intelligence model and classifying it as a personality theory (Goleman, 2001).

Finally, the term emotional intelligence was introduced worldwide with Goleman's 1995 book including that EI refers to the ability to motivate oneself, to be persistent, when struck by frustrations, to delay gratification and control impulses, to keep stress from swamping and regulate moods of one's self, to hope and empathize (p.34). His theory recommends that social and emotional competencies are crucial in outstanding job performance (Emmerling & Goleman, 2003).

In general, EI raises a person's social efficacy. Better social relations result from stronger emotional intelligence. Mayer et al. (2004) states the following about the emotionally intelligent person: most importantly, a high EI person can notice emotions, utilize them in thought, comprehend their significance, and control emotions better than others control. For this person, solving emotional problems probably takes less cognitive work. In particular, if the person scored higher on The EI understands emotions section, the person tended to have slightly better verbal, social and other intelligence. The person is typically friendlier and more open than other people. The high EI person is more inclined to jobs that need social interaction, like teaching and counselling, than jobs that require clerical or administrative work.

1.5 Emotional Intelligence Models

Mayer's and Salovey's model, the Bar-On model, and the Goleman model of emotional intelligence each follow one of the paradigms of classifying emotional intelligence: the ability model or the mixed models. These models differ in their conceptualizing and measuring of emotional intelligence.

1.5.1 The Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence

The ability model is a four-branch emotional intelligence framework developed by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004). In this model, emotional intelligence is used to

perceive, access, and generate emotions to support reasoning, understand emotions and their emotional meaning, and modulate emotions in ways that promote emotional and intellectual growth. As well as, this model emphasized emotional information, recognition, and regulation of emotions in addition to the role of thinking and other cognitive functions in the accurate processing of this emotional information.

The emotional abilities can be divided into four classes or branches as follows:

- *Emotional perception: the ability to perceive the emotions within oneself and others.
- * Emotional facilitation: it reflects the emotional capacity to support thinking and problem-solving processes.
- * Emotional understanding: the ability to evaluate and think about emotions.
- * Emotional management: it includes the ability to control and coordinate emotions of self and others. (Mayer et al, 2004).

1.5.2 Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence

The mixed model incorporates abilities and skills, as well as personality traits in describing and measuring emotional intelligence. Generally, it includes two models; which are Bar-On's model and Goleman's model.

Bar-On (2002) affirms the adaptive function of emotional intelligence. In his view, EI enables individuals to behave well and sustain well-being (in being realistic and flexible) by adapting to people's environment, personal and social changes in certain ways. It includes abilities such as awareness of, understanding, and expression of oneself, awareness of, understanding and relating to others, dealing with strong emotions and controlling one's impulses, and adapting to change and solving problems of a personal or social nature. The five main domains in this model are as follows:

- *Intrapersonal skills: intrapersonal skills consisted of assertiveness, independence, self-actualization, emotional self-awareness and self-regard.

- * Interpersonal skills: interpersonal skills included empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal relationship.
- * Adaptability: included reality testing, flexibility, and problem solving.
- * Stress management: comprised of stress tolerance and impulse control.
- * General mood: covered optimism and happiness (Bar-On, 2006).

Goleman's initial model (Goleman, 1998) comprised of both personal competencies that include self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation; and social competencies that included empathy and social skills. Later, the model was re-structured to include four quadrants:

- * Self-awareness: which entails being conscious of one's own emotions and thoughts.
- * Self-management: the ability to manage one's own emotions and express the annoyance in a controlled manner.
- * Social awareness: the capacity to recognize, comprehend, and respond to the needs and emotions of others.
- * Relationship management: it is concerned with maintaining good relationships, conflict management, leadership skills (Boytazis et al., 2000).

1.6 Measures of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has different definitions and models; as a result, it has different measuring tools.

1.6.1 Bar-On EQ-i

Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) is based on the Bar-On model, it is a 133-item self-report measure of emotional intelligence and sub-skills, taking around 40 minutes to complete by individuals aged 17 and older, and consisted of descriptive sentences that an individual rates on a five-point Likert scale extending from "very seldom or not true of me" (1) to "very often true of me or true of me" (5). Average or above average EQ scores indicated that the respondent is likely to be effective in emotional and

social functioning. In use on the other hand, low scores indicated an inability to be effective with good results and the presence of a possible emotional, social, and/or behavioral problem. (Bar-On, 2006)

1.6.2 The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence scale was developed by Schutte et al. (1998) extracting 33 items proposed to be homogenous from a pool of 62 items based on Salovey's and Mayer's model of emotional intelligence (1990) by measuring the four dimensions which are: perception of emotions, managing emotions in self, managing others' emotions, and utilizing emotions; in which 346 rated themselves using the five-point response scale, where (1) represented "strongly disagree", (2) represented "disagree", (3) represented "disagree nor agree", (4) represented "agree", and (5) represented "strongly agree" to indicate the extent each item described them. (Schutte et al., 1998)

1.6.3 MSCEIT

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is an ability-based test designed to measure the four branches of the EI model of Mayer and Salovey, it was developed out of the first published ability measure specifically intended to assess emotional intelligence, namely Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS). The test consisted of 141 items taking approximately 30-45 to complete, it provides 15 main scores: total EI score, two area scores, four branch scores, and eight task scores. In addition to these 15 scores, there are three supplemental scores (Mayer et al., 2002).

1.7 Emotional Intelligence and Communication Skills

Emotional intelligence is about being able to take on board other people's emotions; as a result, the person will be able to communicate effectively. Henrici (1986) states that communication skills are the ability to use language in a specific way needed by other parties (as cited in Marzuki). Hence, emotional intelligence affects related fields of

communication such as learning language and cross-cultural communication as it includes the ability to establish interpersonal associations with others.

Communication skills are a modern concept (Mc Croskey, 1984), but its history goes back much further. The ability to communicate was recognized thousands of years ago. Little John and Jabush (1982) find that the process of understanding communication is related to cognitive abilities, feelings, and message interpretation, including indirectly emotional intelligence.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and aspects of communication skills, interpersonal communication, group communication, and public speaking are consistent with Goleman's (1995) view that an individual has two rational minds. One is used for thoughts and the other for feelings and emotions. Both help humans store information and transform it into communication responses, feedback, actions, and thinking.

There are several research studies on the relationship between emotional intelligence and communication skills. Barut (2015) reports a significant relationship between emotional intelligence, communication skills, and organizational culture, and explored a mediating role of organizational culture in this relationship. Similarly, Marzuki et al (2015) reveals a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and both communication and information technology skills. This study implies that students with high emotional intelligence will have better command of communication skills.

The primary role of emotional intelligence is to facilitate one's social and personal life. In addition, the ability to communicate effectively for positive interactions can represent examples of emotional intelligence in action.

1.8 The theoretical harmony between CI comprehension and EI

The interplay between CI comprehension and EI development may hold a noteworthy value in the sphere of language and communication. Delving into the theoretical harmony and the interplay between the aforementioned variables enables the researchers to gain a

profound comprehension of how they are interrelated and how they influence each other, not to mention that by understanding and establishing a relationship between them, one can make accurate predictions as well. Based on the reviewed literature, it is evident that the comprehension of CI and EI have three key factors and elements in common, which are: accurate reasoning, communication enhancement, and recognition of emotional cues.

One principle factor that may link CI comprehension to EI is accurate reasoning. As individuals in both processes are required to utilize rational and inferential thinking in order to elicit the intended and hidden meaning behind a given message. The comprehension of CI, on the one hand, can be seen as the outcome of reasonable thinking that takes the CP maxims into consideration. In this regard, Grice (1975) mentions that working out a CI is reliant on the certain conditions: “(1) the conventional meaning of the word; (2) the CP and the conversational maxims; (3) the linguistic context; (4) (the) background knowledge; (5) the fact that (1) to (4) are available to S and H.” paraphrase (as cited in Moeschler, 2012, p. 14). That is to say, it entails decoding linguistic and contextual clues and then using them to discern speakers' intended meanings behind the cues. As within the framework of EI, the concept pertains to “the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought” (Mayer et al, 2008, p.511). Accordingly, EI likewise is a form of mental abilities and entails accurate reasoning in elucidating the emotional clues expressed by others.

Drawing upon the previously reviewed literature, both CI comprehension and EI can contribute to communication improvement. CI is at the heart of PC which is deemed as crucial factor for successful communication within the field of Foreign and second language acquisition (Bachman, 1990). That is to say, individuals who have high levels of CIs comprehension are more capable of interpreting implied meaning embedded within verbal exchanges. This competence equips them with the ability to engage in effective

communication. Similarly, EI also holds a great importance in the realm of successful and proficient communication (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso 2000), as possessing well-developed EI skills allows individuals to understand and recognize the various emotions expressed by others.

As referenced previously, EI is dependent on the realization and interpretation of emotional cues which may play a vital role in both successful understanding and producing of CIs. For illustration, according to Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2004), EI refers to the capacity to perceive emotions; this might involve the nonverbal indicators such as facial expressions, body language, gestures and tone of the voice which may convey information about an individual's emotional mood and state. Accurate inferring of an implicit meaning, in contrast, relies as well on contextual cues (Grice, 1975) such as the previously mentioned emotional signals. A sarcastic expression, for instance, might be accompanied with a facetiously tone of voice or a waggish facial expression. Hence, it can be extrapolated that people who are emotionally intelligent, can recognize the emotional cues and adapt them into their overall comprehension and effective use of CIs.

Delving into the theoretical connection between CI comprehension and EI has given rise to the prediction of a potential and statistically significant correlation between them. That is to say, higher level of EI can be an indicator of an enhanced CI comprehension, and conversely. Hence, an empirical study should be undertaken to verify and explore the interplay between these two constructs.

1.9 Comprehension of CI in ESL/ EFL contexts

Several studies have been carried out to investigate L2 learners' comprehension of Implicature (see Bouton, 1992, 1994, 1999; Cook & Liddicoat, 2002; Roever, 2001, 2005; Taguchi, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011; Lee, 2002) and CI Instruction (such as, Tuan, 2012; Abdelhafez, 2016)

Bouton (1994) examined how well non-native English speaking international students were able to interpret CIs in comparison to native speakers as well as effects of explicit instructions on the development of NNS's capability to interpret the meaning of implicatures of different types. The participants completed a CI test in American English, they were asked to choose the correct interpretation from four choices after each dialogue. The results showed that non-native speakers performed significantly poorer than native ones, they also revealed that non-native speakers have made progress in interpreting the CI after explicit instruction.

Likewise, for an investigation of the relationship between the level of language ability and comprehension of implicature, Roever (2001) conducted a study of 181 German high school students, 25 Japanese university students in Japan, 94 ESL American college students and 14 native speakers. The participants were asked to choose one answer out of four choices that accurately reflect the meaning of the implied utterance. The results indicated a positive association with language ability levels.

Tuan (2012) investigated the impact of explicit instruction of CIs on the development of PC in 40 Taiwanese college EFL learners, as well as the link between PC and language proficiency. A web-based implicature test and a Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) test were among the tools used. The instruction took ten weeks. The results demonstrated a statistically significant difference in learners' implicature competence in favour of the post-test, as well as a positive significant correlation ($r=.82$) between learners' implicature competence and English language proficiency.

In an attempt to scrutinize the effect of CI instruction on developing TEFL students' PC and language proficiency, Abdelhafez (2016) selected a sample of 31 undergraduate TEFL students at the Faculty of Education in one of Egypt's state universities. The participants of the study took two tests: The test of PC consisted of 20 multiple-choice items to assess their ability to interpret non-literal utterances in 30 minutes. Whereas the TOEIC test,

consisted of two parts: listening comprehension and reading comprehension, was administered in his study to measure participants' language proficiency. The findings of the study indicated the significance of explicit instruction in CIs on improving TEFL students' PC and language proficiency, the study also demonstrated a significant positive correlation at the level of 0.730 between the participated students' PC and language proficiency.

Lee (2002) conducted a study that aims to determine how NNSs and NSs differ in their ability to interpret CI. A total of 30 students volunteered to take part in her research: 15 Korean ESL learners and 15 monolingual native speakers of English from U.S university. The data collection instrument was an adopted implicature test designed by Bouton (1988). Based on the results of her investigation, she concluded that high English proficiency influence the accuracy of pragmatic comprehension.

1.10 Emotional intelligence in ESL/ EFL contexts

In FL/SL sphere, numerous studies were conducted to investigate the link between EI and myriad academic variables. In a study by Alghorbany and Hamzah (2020), for instance, the researchers examined the interplay between EI, oral communication skills, and SL speaking anxiety among a total of 209 first and second-year undergraduate ESL students in Malaysia. The analysis of the obtained data indicated that EI was significantly and positively associated with oral communication skills; in other words, the findings elucidated that Malaysian ESL students' oral communication skills were positively influenced by their levels of EI.

Afshar and Rahimi (2014) attempted to explore the interrelatedness between critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and speaking abilities of Iranian EFL learners. To achieve that goal, one hundred learners took the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), filled out the Bar-On (1980) EI questionnaire, and sat for an interview. As a result, there

was a significant positive relationship between critical thinking and EI. Besides that, all components of EI correlated significantly highly with speaking abilities.

Due to the important role of EI in different aspects of life, .Shakib and Barani (2011) studied the relationship between 130 Iranian high school students' EQ and their level of language proficiency. The results proved that there was reliable and meaningful relationship between language proficiency and EI.

In an another probe into the connection between Iranian advanced EFL learners 'pragmatic performance and the different dimensions of their EI, in addition to the possible influence of gender on this association. Domakani, Mirzaei and Zeraatpisheh (2014) selected 80 advanced M.A. TEFL students from 2 Iranian universities. The main instruments used in the study were The Bar-On's EQ-i measure of EI and Liu's (2006) Test of pragmatic performance. The final results revealed that medium to strong positive associations were evidenced between pragmatic performance and intrapersonal, interpersonal; EI dimensions. Whereas, a small positive relationship was found between the participants' pragmatic performance and their stress management and adaptability. Findings also indicated that females with more EI and interpersonal skills performed better on pragmatics test than males.

In a recent study, Saraoui , Dilmi and Cheriet (2020) investigated the correlation between Algerians EFL learners' levels of EI and their PC of apology speech act realization at M'sila university among a sample of 30 EFL students. The findings revealed an existing statistically significant moderate positive correlation between EI and learners' PC of apology speech act production.

Conclusion

The present dissertation has thoroughly examined the preeminent concepts and issues related to the key concepts of “Conversational Implicature comprehension” and “Emotional Intelligence”. Additionally, it emphasized the interconnectedness between CI comprehension and EI and displayed the previous studies related to both variables in ESL and EFL discourses. Based on the reviewed literature, It was concluded that possessing high communicative abilities requires language users or learners to be aware of the role which CI and EI play in understanding and using the language effectively, as developing both EI and CI comprehension skills equips language users with the ability to communicate successfully and accurately in different exchange situations.

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology, Data Analysis and Discussion of the Results

Introduction

As the previous chapter reviews thoroughly the relevant body of literature on the variables of this study, namely conversational implicature and emotional intelligence, the subsequent chapter focuses then on the fieldwork and the process of accumulating and analyzing data. Initially, it is dedicated to cover the methodology of the investigation; it includes a description of the adopted method, the population, the sampling technique, the data collection tools, the investigation procedure and the statistical tools. Next, it deals with the data analysis process and presents a thorough discussion and explanation of the main yielded findings with regard to the raised research queries.

2.1 Research design and methodology

2.1.1 The Correlational Method

The choice of the method is an essential step for the success of any research study, as Robson (1993) says “the general principle is that the research strategy or strategies, and the methods or techniques employed must be appropriate for the questions you want to answer” (P.38). Therefore, in order to meet the research objectives and answer the research questions, the current investigation adopts a correlational method, its main objective is to identify and examine the relationships between variables, in a way that a change in one variable leads to a change in the other. This method of research is defined by several investigators, according to Creswell (2012), for instance, a correlational research is “a statistical test to determine the tendency of pattern for two (or more) variables or two sets of data to vary consistently”.

2.1.2 Sample and population

This investigation was assigned to the population of master one students in the Department of language and English Literature at Mohamed Boudiaf, M’sila University, The sample of the study consists of 30 students (i.e. 18.62%) who were randomly selected to take part in this study. The reason behind selecting this specific population is that the majority of master’s students have presumably high language proficiency. Among several researchers, Feng Xiao (2015) asserts that “higher proficiency participants may have more pragmalinguistic knowledge and be more sensitive to linguistic forms and their pragmatic functions” (p.570). Additionally, Labben (2016) proposes a set of requirements that informants need to have in order to properly fill out a DCT. To him, being able to read and comprehend certain situations in terms of grammar, vocabulary and syntactic structure and more importantly being able to realize the contextual factors of each situation, are prerequisites to complete a DCT. Hence, the adequate population for this inquiry is master’s students who are assumed to be advanced EFL learners.

Table 2. Population & sample of the correlational study

Major	Population	%	Sample	%
Literature & Civilization	71	44.10%	15	9.31%
Linguistics	90	55.90%	15	9.31%
Total	161	100%	30	18.62%

2.1.3 Sampling Technique

The researchers opted for a simple random sampling. According to Creswell (2012, p.143), “in simple random sampling, the researcher selects participants (or units, such as schools) for the sample so that any individual has an equal probability of being selected from the population”. This sampling technique allows each item of the population to have an equal chance of being chosen. It also helps the researchers to draw general conclusions about the population, to ascertain that data collected through the MDCT and the SSEIT is representative of the whole population and to avoid sampling bias.

2.1.4 Research Instruments

In order to accumulate appropriate data, this correlational study adopts two quantitative instruments, namely the Multiple Discourse Completion Test (MDCT) and the Schutte Self report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), the choice of each depends on the identification of the research design and objectives. Cohen et al. (2007, p. 414) describes this kind of data gathering tools as “a powerful method of data collection, an impressive array of tests for gathering data of a numerical rather than verbal kind”.

2.1.4.1 Multiple Discourse Completing Test (MDCT)

MDCT is a quantitative gathering data tool, the selection of this test was based on an extensive reading of the relevant literature, as Discourse Completion Test (DCT) was

proved to be the most useful technique that permits for the examination of different ways of producing and interpreting various pragmatic aspects.

The items of the MDCT were adopted from (AlSmari, 2020; Bouton, 1988,1994). This instrument is consisted of 15 multiple choice items : three indirect criticism items, three pope question items, four relevance items, two disclosure items and three verbal irony items, to test students' ability to interpret and understand conversational implicatures at M'sila University. The situations of these items were deliberately chosen based on the alternations of Power, Distance and imposition Rank (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and are as follows (see appendix A):

- Indirect criticism items: Situations 1, 7, 11.
- Pope question items: Situations 2, 8, 10.
- Relevance items: Situations 4, 5, 9, 13.
- Disclosure items: Situations 12, 15.
- Verbal irony items: Situations 3, 6, 14.

As far as the scoring system of the MDCT is concerned, the scale of scoring ranged from 0 to 150 where the informant was awarded 10 points for each correct answer. Concerning the situations adopted from (Bouton, 1988; 1994), the preferred multiple-choice answers were designed primarily according to actual native speakers' (NS) interpretations of speakers' meaning in a set of situations. The distractors, in contrast, were derived from the most prevalent NNS incorrect responses (Bouton, 1988). As for the situations selected from (AlSmari, 2020), the appropriate choices were determined by the researchers based on the implicatures types.

2.1.4.2 Schutte-Self report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

The Assessing Emotions Scales, also known as the Emotional Intelligence Scale, the Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test, or the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Test, was

developed based on Salovey and Mayer’s (1990) original model of EI. It is a 33 items self-report inventory focus on typical EI. Respondents take an average of five minutes to rate themselves on five point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).The total scale score is calculated by reverse coding items 5, 28 and 33, and then summing them together, scores range from 33 to 165, with higher scores indicating higher emotional intelligence(Schutte et al.,2009). The items comprising the subscales were based on perception of emotions, managing emotions in the self, social skills or managing other’s emotions, and utilizing emotions (Ciarochi et al., 2001) as follow:

- Perception of emotion: items 5, 9, 15, 18,19,22,25,29,32,33.
- Managing own emotions: items 2,3,10,12,14,21,23,28,31.
- Managing others’ emotions: items 1, 4,11,13,16,24,26,30.
- Utilization of emotions: items 6, 7, 8,17,20,27.

This measure was selected as it can be useful in educational settings for research purposes or to gain insight into individual differences in EI. (Schutte et al, 1998)

2.1.5 Piloting study

To ensure the feasibility and clarity of the research tools, the MDCT was piloted with five students from the main population before gathering data for the main study, the participants were asked to answer the pilot test and provide their comments concerning the clarity of the instructions, language, situations, test length and the time they spent to complete the test. The table below presents a summary of the participants’ comments:

Table 3. Piloting the MDCT

Participants	Completion Time	The clarity of language & situations	Test Length
P01	30min	The language and situations were clear	The test was a bit long
P02	15min	The language is clear, the situations are simple and easy	The test was short
P03	07min	Everything was clear	The test was short

P04	15min	The language and situations were clear	The test was a bit long to answer
P05	15min	Everything was obvious and clear	The test was short

Generally speaking, according to the participants' comments summarized in the above table, it can be said that the majority of them spent approximately 15 minutes to complete the test, which is a short period of time. Furthermore, the language and situations of the MDCT were seemingly clear enough and not complicated. Besides, the test was not too long to answer. Hence, the draft of the MDCT was not changed except for two situations of relevance items in order to vary the kinds of CI.

2.1.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research Tools

Reliability and validity are essentially used to assess respectively consistency and accuracy of the measurement instruments. Concerning the MDCT, the situations of CIs were adopted from already valid and reliable tests; whereas Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient in AlSmari's test (2020) was calculated to be .81, the reliability of Bouton's developed test was satisfactory as well at .73 (Bouton,1994). As to the SSEIT, Schutte et al. (1998) found the internal consistency of the emotional intelligence scale, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, to be .90. In addition, Schutte and her colleagues reported a two-week test-retest reliability of .78 for total scale scores.

2.1.7 Research Procedures

In order to accomplish the stated objectives, the research at hand underwent three essential stages namely, selecting the tools, collecting data and analyzing the collected data.

The first stage: Before conducting this quantitative investigation, the researchers' primary task was to find out valid and reliable measurement tools for EI and CI. Therefore, the process of selecting the appropriate tools entailed intensive deep reading of the

relevant literature which resulted in finding the MDCT to test CI comprehension (see Appendix A) and the SSEIT to measure EI levels (see Appendix B).

The second stage: The process of collecting data in this work took place within the English Language Department at M'sila University during the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023 on Sunday, March, 12th, 2023. To collect the necessary data, the two selected tests were distributed together successively on the same sample which was divided into two groups, and the participants were given 30 minutes to finish both tests.

The third stage: After collecting data through the aforementioned instruments, the following step includes data analysis. In this study, since the researchers collected quantitative data, the analysis of data requires then quantitative analysis. This latter is used in the current study in order to deal with data gathered through tests by using tables, graphs, scores, frequencies and percentages. According to Cohen et al (2007), numerical data obtained using various research instruments can be displayed and calculated using softwares such as SPSS, Minitab, and Excel. Hence, this investigation uses the software of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29 which refers to “a purely quantitative data analyzation program which provide various facilities to convert people's action and views to analytical form” (Gogoi, 2020, p. 2426)

2.1.8 Statistical tools

In this study, a quantitative research method is carried out. The used statistical tools for this research study are: the mean and the standard deviation were used to describe the obtained scores, whereas Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyze the correlation between SSEIT and MDCT scores as well as the correlation between MDCT and EI subscales. The statistical tools operations were calculated via SPSS V29.

*The mean is the average value of a group of numbers and values in a data set. It is calculated using the following formula:

$$\bar{x} = (\Sigma \mathbf{x_i}) / \mathbf{n}$$

Σ = add up

X_i = means “ all of the x-values”

n = means “ the number of items in the sample”

*The standard deviation is a measure of spread that indicates how much data scatter around the mean. Standard deviation formula is:

$$S = \sqrt{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2 / n - 1}$$

*Pearson’s correlation coefficient is a measure of linear correlation between two sets of data. It is calculated using the below formula:

$$r = \frac{N\Sigma xy - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma y)}{\sqrt{[N\Sigma x^2 - (\Sigma x)^2][N\Sigma y^2 - (\Sigma y)^2]}}$$

N= the number of pairs of scores.

Σxy = the sum of the procedures of paired scores.

Σx = the sum of x scores.

Σy = the sum of y scores.

Σx^2 = the sum of squared x scores.

Σy^2 = the sum of squared y scores.

2.2 Data Analysis

The main goal of the current investigation is to explore the nature of relationship between EFL students’ comprehension of CI and their levels of EI at M’sila University. That is to say, it seeks to determine if there is a statistically significant correlation between the two selected variables. Hence, this part presents the participants’ yielded results from the tests employed for answering the following research questions:

RQ1: How well can EFL students perform on the CI test?

RQ2: What are EFL learners’ different levels of EI?

RQ3: Is there a statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI?

RQ4: Is there a prominent statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and one of the subscales of EI?

2.2.1 Data Analysis for Research Question One

2.2.1.1 Data description and presentation

In order to prove that the stated problem in this investigation truly exists, it is necessary to report and analyze the accumulated data through the MDCT, This latter consists of 15 different situations of CI (see appendix A). Students were asked first to read carefully the context, the dialogue and the question in every situation. After that, they try to deduce the implicit meaning; that is, what is meant but not said, and choose spontaneously in a speedy manner their preferred answer among the four provided choices. This part contains a detailed analysis and explanation of every situation separately.

2.2.1.1.1 Indirect criticism situations

Indirect criticism is an indirect speech act; it occurs when the speaker's intent differs from the linguistic meaning of an expression and arises through flouting the maxim of quantity (Thomas, 1995). In this kind of CI, the speaker endeavours to provide damning remarks about something with indistinct praise (Bouton, 1988); for example: situations 01, 07 and 11.

2.2.1.1.1.1 Situation 01: Mrs. Jackson and Mrs. White, two teachers, are talking about a student's research project named Mark.

Mrs. Jackson: "how did you like Mark's project?"

Mrs. White: "well I thought it was well typed"

The question: What does Mrs. White probably mean?

In this situation, Mrs. Jackson asked her co-worker Mrs. White about her opinion on Mark's research project. Mrs. White would answer directly if she liked it in term of

content, but she did not. Hence, she attempted to softly criticize Mark’s research project in indirect way by mentioning that it was well typed which is not a feature of a good work; that is, the answer is (a). As shown in the below table, only 13.3% of the participants thought (a) was the best interpretation of Mrs. White’s indirect expression whilst 43.3%, 30% and 13.3% of the participants selected respectively (b) , (c) and (d). Figure (02) represents the percentages of the participants’ correct and wrong answers in the first situation; the majority of the respondents (86.67%) did not understand the intended negative evaluation and only 4 students (13.3%) could interpret it correctly.

Table 4. Participants’ preferred answers in situation 01

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. she didn't like Mark's research project.	4	13.3%
b. she doesn't really remember Mark's research project.	13	43.3%
c. she thought the topic Mark had chosen was interesting.	9	30%
d. she liked Mark's research project quite a lot.	4	13.3%
Total	30	100%

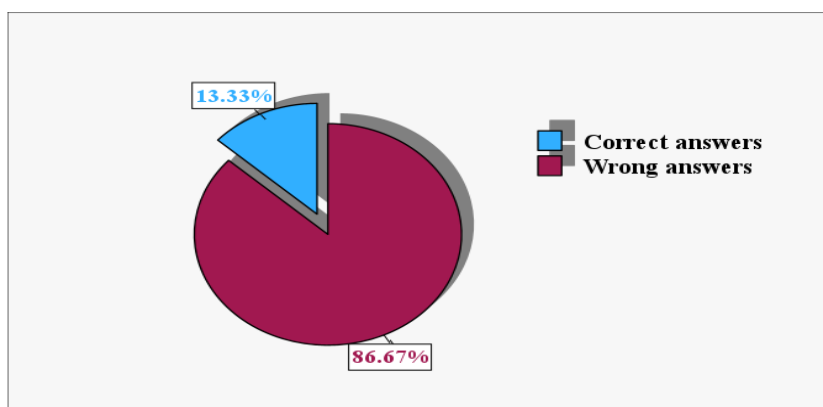


Figure 2. Percentages of the participants’ correct and wrong answers in situation 01

2.2.1.1.1.2 Situation 07: Two friends are looking over the various kinds of food at an international supper and trying to decide which kinds to try.

Nida: There are so many different kinds of food here that I can’t decide which to take first.

Which do you recommend?

Trixie: So far I've only had some of that one-the yellow one with the reddish sauce. Certainly is colourful, isn't it?

The question: Is Trixie recommending the dish to Nida? How do you know?

Here, Nida was confused and could not decide which food to take first at the international dinner, so she asked her friend Trixie who has already tried one to recommend her a dish, however, Trixie did not recommend any one but referring to the one she have had as “colorful” rather than by its taste and content. The answer then is undoubtedly (a).The respondents' answers differed widely in this situation. As demonstrated in table (5) and Figure (3), the majority of the respondents (66.67%) did not comprehend the implied criticism of Trixie's praise of the dish and few of them (30%) could elicit the understated criticism.

Table 5. Participants' preferred answers in situation 07

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. No, because Trixie talked only about how the dish looked, not about how it tasted.	9	30%
b. No, because Trixie hasn't tried any other dishes to compare the colourful one with.	3	10%
c. Yes, because dishes that are colourful and attractive usually taste good.	10	33.3%
d. Yes, since Trixie mentioned the dish, we know she thinks it's good.	8	26.7%
Total	30	100%

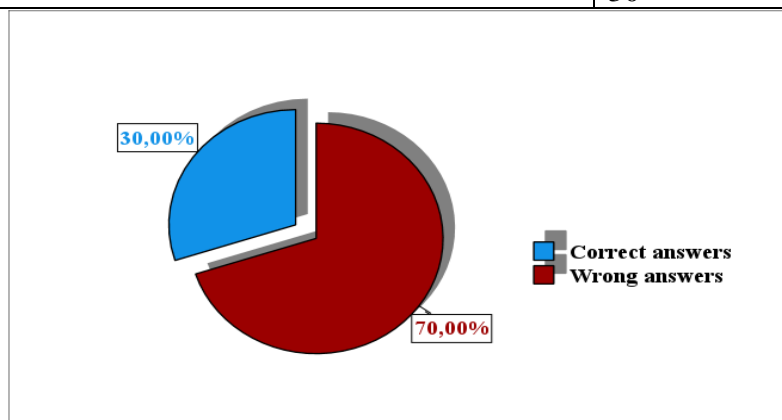


Figure 3. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 07

2.2.1.1.1.3 Situation 11: Brenda and Sally have lunch every Tuesday. As they meet on this particular day, Brenda stops and twirls like a fashion model, and the following dialogue occurs:

Brenda: I just got a new dress. How do you like it?

Sally: Well, there certainly are a lot of women wearing it this year. When did you get it?

The question: How does Sally like Brenda’s new dress?

In this scenario, Brenda bought a new dress and wanted to know Sally’s opinion on it, her body language and her way of speaking “...twirls like a fashion model” indicates that she was seeking a compliment from Sally. However, Sally’s comment was that a lot of women are wearing it; and this implies that the dress is not unique. According to Bouton (1988), native speakers’ preferred answer was (c); that is, Sally did not like the dress. As can be noticed in table (06) and Figure (4), most of the students (70%) didn’t succeed to choose the correct answer (70%), and only (30%) of the respondents could interpret sally’s utterance correctly.

Table 6. participants’ preferred answers in situation 11

Statements	frequency	Percent
a. We can’t tell from what she says.	4	13.3%
b. She thinks Brenda has good taste in clothes because she’s right in style.	3	10%
c. She likes the dress, but too many women are wearing it.	14	46.7%
d. She doesn’t like it.	9	30%
Total	30	100%

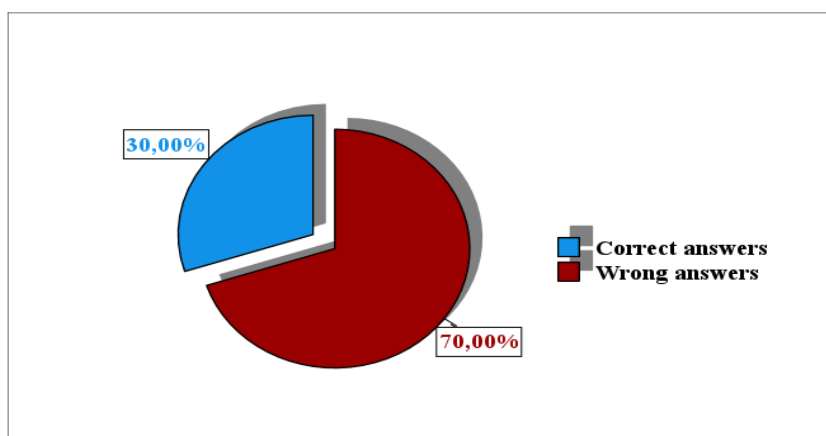


Figure 4. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 11

2.2.1.1.2 Disclosure situations

Disclosure is a type of implicature intended to keep embarrassing information from being revealed (Holtgraves,1998). It arises from replies that flout the maxim of relation. For instance: situations 12 and 15.

2.2.1.1.2.1 Situation 12: John's friend Mary asks him about their classmate Sally.

Mary: "You know. I've been curious to know if you went out with Sally."

John: "Um.... Sally's not really my type".

The question: What does John probably mean?

Here, Mary was curious to know if her friend John dated their classmate Sally. When she asked him, he avoided to provide her a clear reply, he just mentioned that Sally is not his type, which means that Sally is not the person John is attracted to. Hence, It can be understood then that they did not go out. As table (07) and figure (05) reveal, the results of this situation indicate that sixty percent of the informants selected the right choice and 40% of them did not as John's utterance may seem conversationally misleading.

Table 7. Participants' preferred answers in situation 12

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. He is not sure of his feelings.	3	10%
b. Mary is his type.	4	13.3%
c. He is talking bad about Sally as she refused him.	5	16.7%
d. They did not go out.	18	60%
Total	30	100%

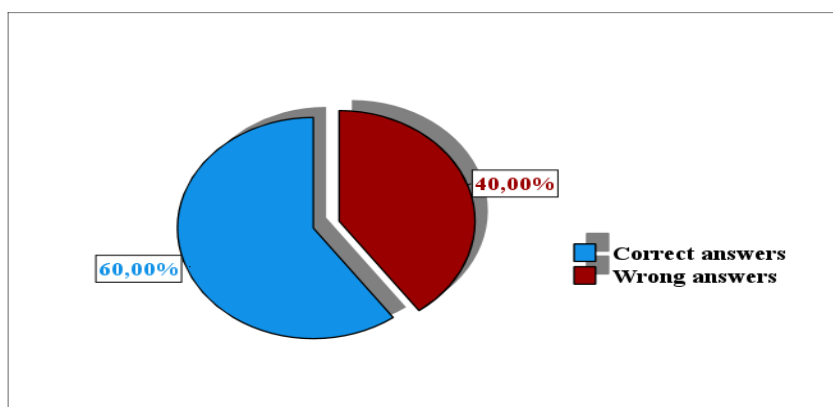


Figure 5. Percentages of the participants’ correct and wrong answers in situation 12

2.2.1.1.2.2 Situation 15: Susan and Tom, friends, are talking about what is going on in their lives. Susan knows Tom had a job interview recently.

Susan: “So how was your interview? Did you get the job you applied for?”

Tom: “Um ... I think I need to improve my interview skills”.

The question: What does Tom probably mean?

This scenario indicates another example of disclosure implicature, where Tom told his friend Susan that he needs to improve his interview skills when she asked him whether he got the job he applied for or not. Here, it’s clear that Tom’s indirect response intended to avoid disclosing an embarrassing information, he did not get the job then. Interestingly, as indicated in table (08) and figure (06), 73.33% of the students could work out Tom’s implicature whereas the remaining students (26.67%) could not infer what Tom exactly intended to say.

Table 8. participants’ preferred answers in situation 15

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. He did not get the job.	22	73.3%
b. He wants help from Susan to improve his interview skills.	3	10%
c. He will have the interview when he feels his interview skills are good enough.	2	6.7
d. They gave him the job with the advice that he should improve his interview skills.	3	10%
Total	30	100%

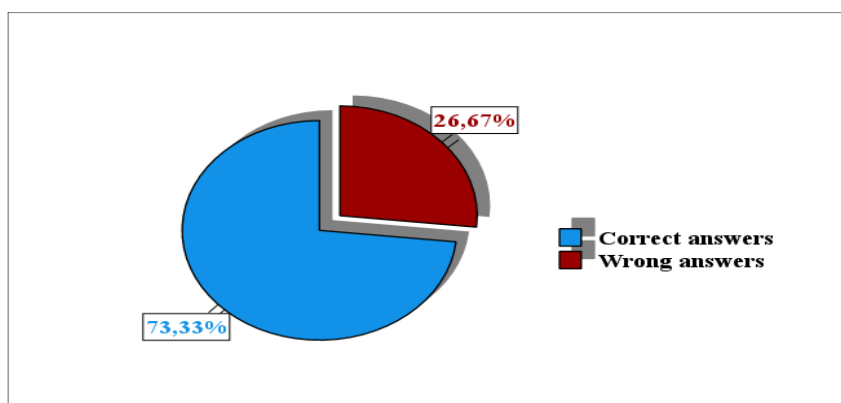


Figure 6. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 15

2.2.1.1.3 Pope question situations

This type of implicature gets its name from the prototypical rhetorical question, is the Pope Catholic? Which means that something is obvious. In situations of Pope Q implicature, a person assumes that the response to the second question is the same as the response to the first (Bouton,1994). Consider the below situations 2, 8 and 10:

2.2.1.1.3.1 Situation 02: Two roommates are talking about their plans for the summer.

Fran: My mother wants me to stay home for a while, so I can be there when our relatives come to visit us at the beach.

Joan: Do you have a lot of relatives?

Fran: Are there flies in the summertime?

The question: How can we best interpret Fran's question?

In this example of implicature, when Joan and Fran were discussing their summer plans. Joan asked her roommate Fran if she has a lot of relatives, Fran replied indirectly by posing a yes/no question: Are there flies in the summertime?. Assuming that Fran is adhering the cooperative principle, her reply gave rise then to an implicature that she has a lot of relatives. As can be seen from table (09) and figure (07), 56.67% of the participants understood that Fran's question does carry an implicature while 43.33% of them did not.

Table 9. participants' preferred answers in situation 02

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. Fran thinks her relatives are noisy.	1	3.3%
b. Fran is new to the area and is trying to find out what the summers are like.	1	3.3%
c. Fran has a lot of relatives.	17	56.7%
d. Fran is trying to change the subject; she doesn't want to talk about her relatives	11	36.7%
Total	30	100%

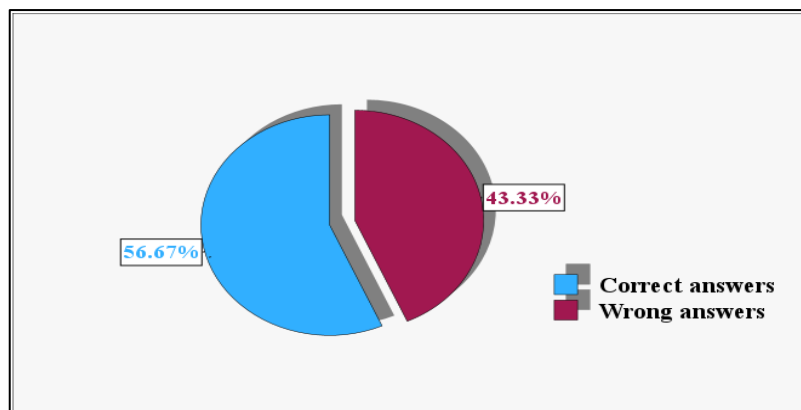


Figure 7. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 02

2.2.1.1.3.2 Situation 08: A mother and her daughter Jenny have been discussing the upcoming weekend. Jenny's parents are leaving town and this is the first time Jenny has been left at home alone.

Mother: Are you sure you can take care of yourself this weekend?

Jenny: Can a duck swim, Mother?

The question: What is the point of Jenny's question?

Here, a mother asked her daughter Jenny if she can look after herself when she stays home alone, Jenny's reply was a simple and clear question, the answer of which is exactly the same answer to her mother's question, that is, yes, she will be able to take care of herself. As far as this situation is concerned, the majority of the respondents (70%) could elicit the embedded implicature in this situation. However, only 33% selected irrelevant choices.

Table 10. participants' preferred answers in situation 08

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. She is doing homework about ducks and is asking her mother for help with one of the questions.	1	3.3%
b. She is trying to change the subject. She is a little nervous about being left alone and doesn't want to talk about it.	3	10%
c. She is asking her mother if she can go with her for the weekend.	5	16.7%
d. She is telling her mother that she will be able to take care of herself okay.	21	70%
Total	30	100%

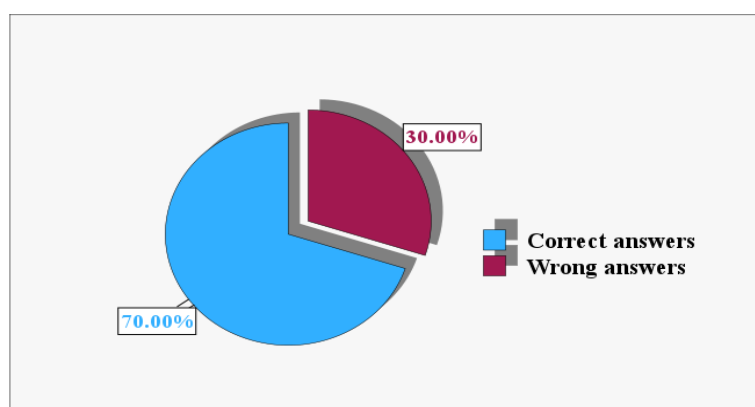


Figure 8. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 08

2.2.1.1.3.3 Situation 10: Susan and John, two officemates, are having lunch in a cafe and discussing their boss.

John: "So, do you think Mr. Davis will give me a raise?"

Susan: "Do pigs fly?"

The question: What does Susan probably mean?

As for this situation, John asked his officemate Susan if she thinks that their boss Mr. Davis will give him a raise, however, Susan's reply was irrelevant; she posed him a question whether or not pigs fly. If we consider that Susan's question is relevant to John's, then her answer is obvious and conveys that the boss will not give John a raise since pigs don't fly. Concerning the data gathered from this situation. Table (11) and figure (09)

indicate that most of the students (90%) succeeded to determine the right answer and only 10% of them failed to get the appropriate interpretation.

Table 11. participants' preferred answers in situation 10

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. She wants to change the topic.	1	3.3%
b. The boss will not give John a raise.	27	90%
c. She has seen outside a pig falling down from a high place.	1	3.3%
d. John will get a raise.	1	3.3%
Total	30	100%

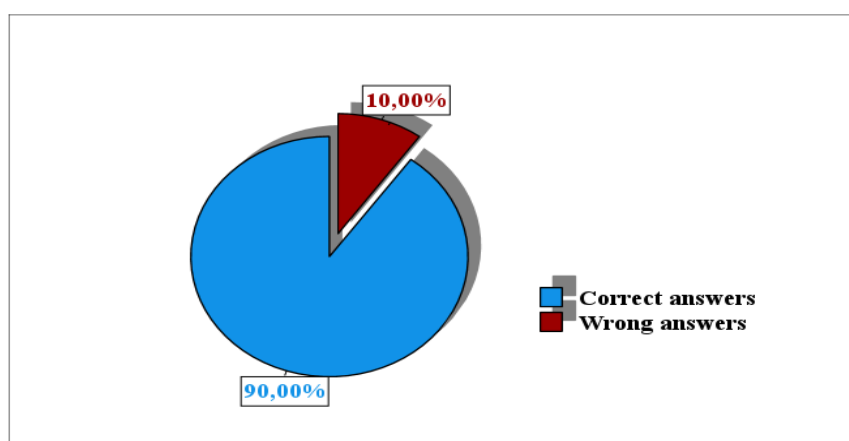


Figure 9. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 10

2.2.1.1.4 Relevance implicature

Relevance implicature refers to the implied meaning that arises from the speaker's violation of the maxim of relation, that is, the speaker tries to convey indirectly an additional meaning beyond the explicit one, however, in order to interpret this kind of implicature, the receiver should assume that the speaker is following the cooperative principle. (Grice, 1975). For example situations: 4, 5, 9, and 13.

2.2.1.1.4.1 Situation 04: Frank wanted to know what time it was, but he didn't have a watch.

Frank: What time is it, Helen?

Helen: The postman has been here.

Frank: Okay. Thanks.

The question: What message does Frank probably get from what Helen says?

Here, Frank asks Helen about time. However, Helen's response was not relevant to Frank's question, she flouted the maxim of relation. Helen might not know what time it was exactly, for this reason, she didn't want to provide him with an incorrect information but she tried to tell him approximately what time it was based on the regularity of the postman deliveries. The table(12)and Figure (10) below show that (76.7%) of the students were able to interpret it correctly and chose the choice (a), and only (23.3%) could not.

Table 12. Participants' preferred answers in situation 04

Statements	frequency	percent
a. She is telling him approximately what time it is by telling him that the postman has already been there.	23	76.7%
b. She thinks that Frank should stop what he is doing and read his mail.	3	10.0%
c. By changing the subject, Helen is telling Frank that she doesn't know what time it is.	1	3.3%
d. Frank will not be able to interpret any message from what Helen says, since she did not answer his question.	3	10.0%
Total	30	100%

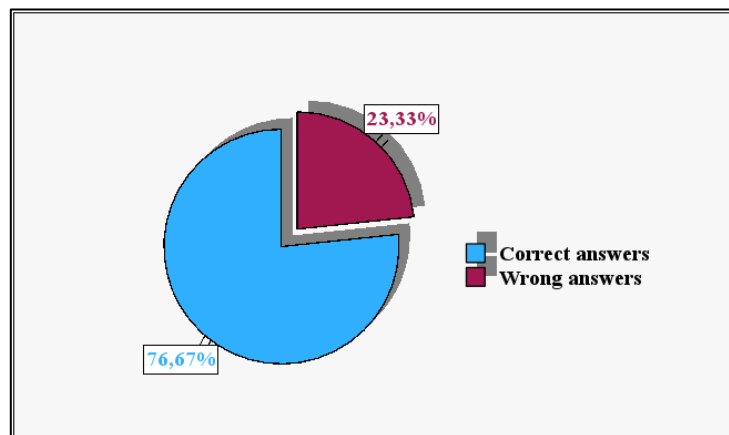


Figure 10. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 04

Situation 05:Two roommates are talking. One has just been talking on the telephone to a woman that he was going to take to see a play.

David: Darn it! Mandy just broke our date for the play. Now I've got two tickets for Saturday night and no one to go with.

Mark: Hey, David. Have you ever met my sister? She's coming down to see me this weekend.

David: No, I don't think so. Why?

The question: What was Mark's reason for mentioning that his sister was coming?

In this situation, the maxim of relation is violated; when David mentioned his issue of having two tickets and no one to go with to the play, his roommate Mark told him that his sister is coming; Mark's irrelevant reply implicates that he is indirectly suggesting his sister to accompany David to the play. That is to say, the answer is (c). 56.7% of the test takers successfully interpreted this implicature, as indicated in table (13) and figure (11), whereas 43.4% of them answered incorrectly.

Table 13. Participants' preferred answers in situation 05

Statements	frequency	percent
a. Mark is just thinking ahead to the weekend and can't remember whether David has met his sister or not.	2	6.7%
b. There is nothing Mark can do to help his friend, so he is mentioning a problem of his own.	3	10.0%
c. Mark is suggesting that David take Mark's sister to the play.	17	56.7%
d. Mark wants to be sure that David knows that the woman he is with this weekend is his sister and not a new girlfriend.	8	26.6%
Total	30	100%

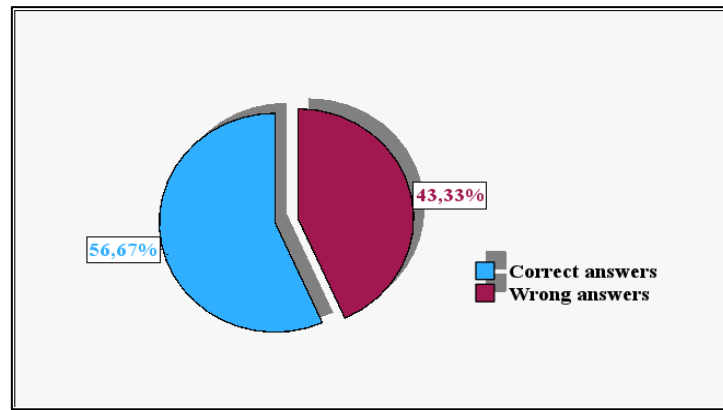


Figure 11.. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 05

2.2.1.1.4.3 Situation 09: When Abe got home; he found that his wife had to use cane in order to walk.

Abe: What happened to your leg?

Wife: I went jogging

The question: Another way the wife could have said the same thing is...

In this situation as well, the wife's response violates Grice's relevance maxim by giving an irrelevant response to Abe's question when he asked her what happened to her leg. Assuming that the wife's reply was relevant, it can be inferred then that Ape's wife wanted to convey that her leg injury was caused by jogging. From table (14) and figure (12), 46.7% of the students were able to interpret her utterance and selected the correct answer (b). However, half of the students (53.33%) were unable to answer correctly.

Table 14. Participants' preferred answers in situation 09

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. Today I finally got some exercise jogging.	3	10.0%
b. I hurt it jogging.	14	46.7%
c. It's nothing serious. Don't worry about it.	9	30.0%
d. I hurt it doing something silly.	4	13.3%
Total	30	100%

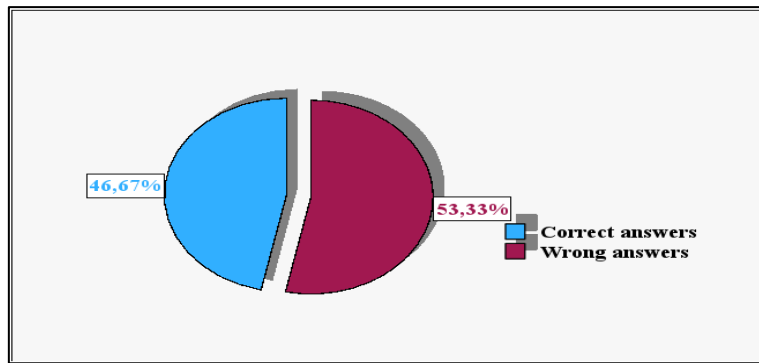


Figure 12. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 09

2.2.1.1.4.4 Situation 13: Jack is talking to his housemate Sarah about another housemate, Frank.

Jack: Do you know where Frank is, Sarah?

Sarah: Well, I heard music from his room earlier.

The question: What does Sarah probably mean?

As to situation 13, Sarah flouted the maxim of relation. When her housemate Jack asked her if she knows where the other housemate Frank is, she responded that she heard music came out of his room indicating implicitly that maybe he is in his room. Sarah replied indirectly because she was not sure and did not want to provide a wrong information. As illustrated in the below table(15) and from figure (13), the majority of students (80.0%) answered correctly and only (20.0%) of the students answered incorrectly.

Table 15. Participants' preferred answers in situation 13

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. Frank forgot to turn the music off.	1	3.3%
b. Frank's loud music bothers Sarah.	4	13.3%
c. Frank is probably in his room.	24	80.0%
d. Sarah doesn't know where Frank is.	1	3.3%
Total	30	100%

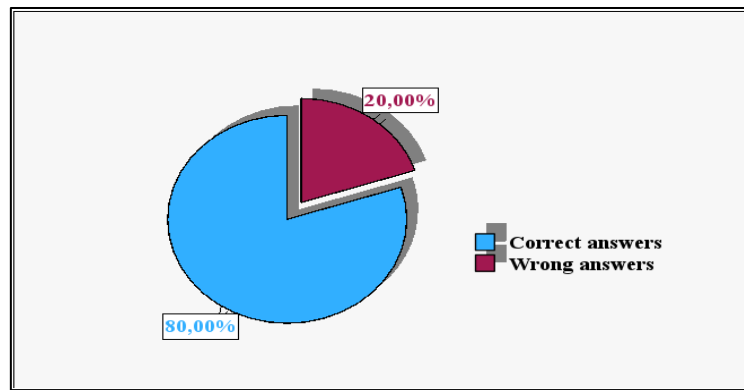


Figure 13. Percentages of the Participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 13

2.2.1.1.5 Verbal Irony

Verbal irony refers to “the figure of speech that conveys the opposite meaning of what is literally said. It is frequently used in daily discourse” (Sperber and Wilson 1986). Grice (1975) noted that an ironic utterance violates the maxim of quality, that is to say, an ironic statement is inferred pragmatically since the intended meaning is completely the opposite of what is expressed. For example, situations : 3, 6, and 14.

2.2.1.1.5.1 Situation 03: Bill and Peter have been good friends since they were children.

They roomed together in college and travelled Europe together after graduation. Now friends have told Bill that they saw Peter dancing with Bill's wife while Bill was away.

Bill: Peter knows how to be a really good friend.

The question: Which of the following best says what Bill means?

Situation 03 is a clear example of irony by flouting the maxim of quality. Bill said that Peter knows how to behave as a good friend as a response to the one who told him that he saw Peter dancing with his wife. here, Bill conveys an irony through saying the opposite of the truth, as Bill is not happy with Peter's behavior. Then the expected answer is (a). However, the participants found this situation difficult to interpret as only 30.0% of them selected (a) option. The majority of participants were unable to interpret the expected answer with a percentage of 70.0% as displayed in the pie chart graph (14) and the table (16) below.

Table 16. Participants' preferred answers in situation 03

Statement	Frequency	Percent
a. Peter is not acting the way a good friend should.	9	30.0%
b. Peter and Bill's wife are becoming really good friends while Bill is away.	4	13.3%
c. Peter is a good friend and so Bill can trust him.	13	43.3%
d. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with their friendship.	4	13.3%
Total	30	100%

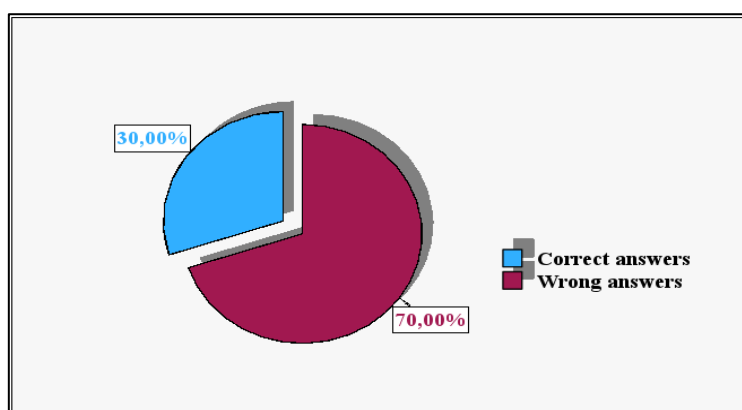


Figure 14. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 03

2.2.1.1.5.2 Situation 06: At a recent party, there was a lot of singing and piano playing. At one point, Sue played the piano while Mary sang. When Tom asked a friend what Mary had sang, the friend said:

Friend: I'm not sure, but Sue was playing 'My Wild Irish Rose'.

The question: Which of the following is the closest to what the friend meant by this remark.

In this situation, an ironic implicature is generated through the violation of the maxim of quality. The context of the dialogue indicates that when Mary was singing, Sue was playing on the piano, that is to say, they must be doing the same song. When Tom asked a friend about the song that Mary sang, the friend's stated remark implies an irony, as s/he mentioned only that Sue was playing 'My Wild Irish Rose' pointing out that Mary sang very badly. Then the right answer is (c). Table (17) and figure (15) below indicate that

most of the students did interpret it incorrectly with a percentage of 90.0 % whereas only 10% of them interpret it correctly.

Table 17. Participants’ preferred answers in situation 06

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. He was only interested in Sue and did not listen to Mary.	13	43.3%
b. Mary and Sue were not doing the same song.	8	26.6%
c. Mary sang very badly.	3	10.0%
d. The song that Mary sang was ‘My Wild Irish Rose’.	6	20.0%
Total	30	100%

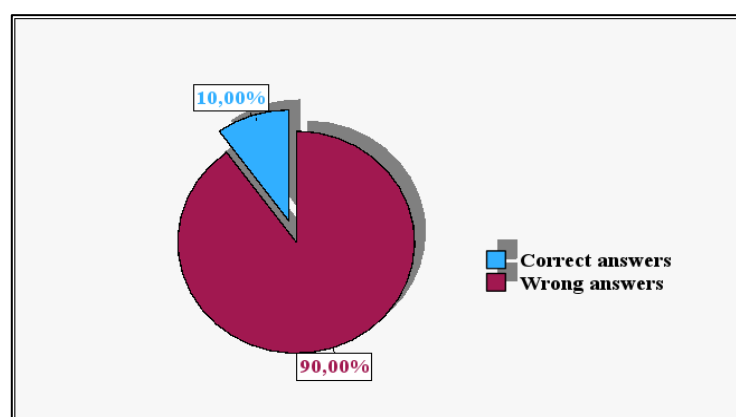


Figure 15. Percentages of the participants’ correct and wrong answers in situation 06

2.2.1.1.5.2 Situation 14: Peter promises his friend Mary to help her move to a new apartment. That day, he moves the clock on the wall while Mary moves the heavy boxes.

Mary: Thanks, you’ve been terribly helpful.

The question: What does Mary probably mean?

In this scenario, an ironic implicature can be derived; Mary’s utterance sarcastically implicates and emphasizes the fact that Peter was not helpful as he promised, because moving the clock on the wall is an effortless and trivial task unlike moving the heavy boxes which demands physical efforts. Table(18) and figure (16) illustrate that 60.0% of the students answered correctly while 40.0% of them did not.

Table 18. Participants' preferred answers in situation 14

Statements	Frequency	Percent
a. Peter helped her a lot.	9	30.0%
b. Moving the clock was really important as it needed special care.	2	6.7%
c. Peter is weak.	1	3.3%
d. Peter was not helpful at all.	18	60.0%
Total	30	100%

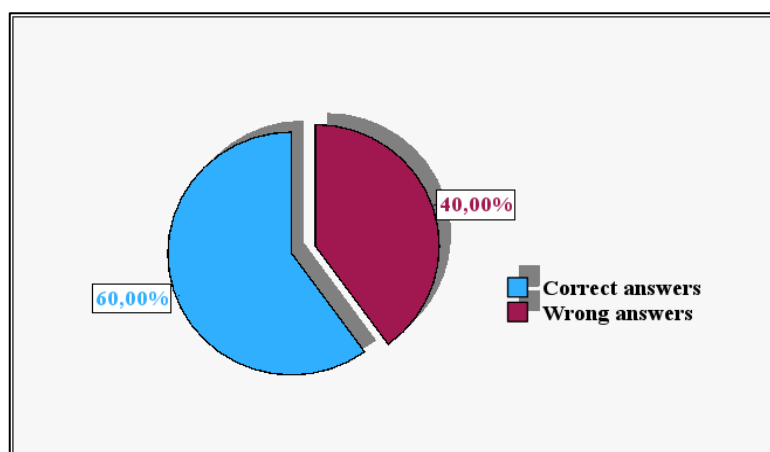


Figure 16. Percentages of the participants' correct and wrong answers in situation 14

2.2.1.2 Descriptive statistics

In order to probe how well the test takers can perform in the CI test, the obtained data and the descriptive analyses concerning the participants' performance in the MDCT were processed using SPSS version 29 and are displayed in the following table:

Table 19. General Descriptive Statistics for the collected data from the MDCT.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
CI	30	40	130	78.33	25.608

The results recapitulated in the above table represent the scores of 30 EFL participants and their performance in the MDCT. Accordingly, the analysis of the obtained data indicates that students' achieved scores ranged from 40.00 as a minimum score to 130.00

as a maximum score. Additionally, the value of the mean was estimated to be 78.33 with the standard deviation 25.608. From these results, it can be said that the value of the mean compared to the mid-value 75.00 proved to be average to weak. Furthermore, the low value of the standard deviation indicates that most of the scores are clustered around the mean. To by and large, the test takers' performance in comprehending CI can be described as average to weak.

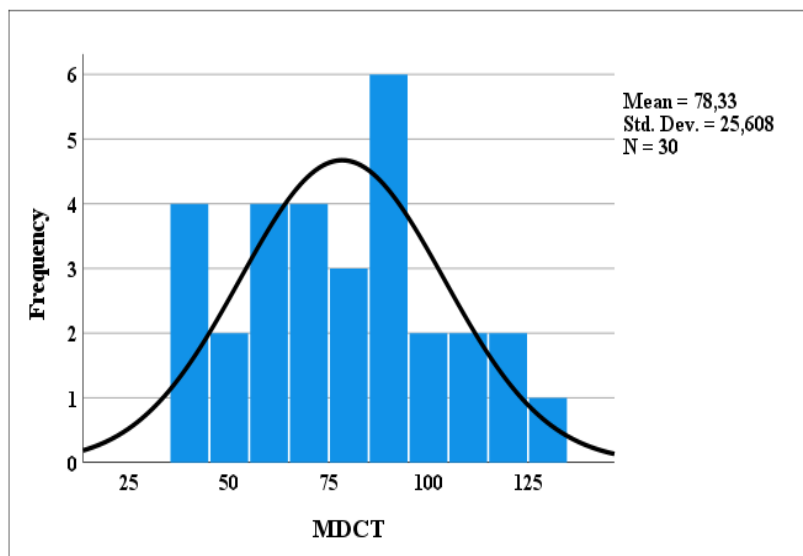


Figure 17. The MDCT total scores

The histogram in the figure above (17) determines the frequencies of the students' achieved scores in the MDCT, it indicates that most of the scores are centered around the mean (78.33), and the most repeated scores are 40.00; 60.00; 70.00 and 90.00. Besides that, 14 participants yielded below average scores. Hence, this confirmed the test finding that the participants' performance was average to weak.

2.2.2 Data Analysis for Research Question Two

The tables (20 and 21) below contain the SSEIT results exploring students levels of EI. In this test, the descriptive statistics displayed in table (20) demonstrate that the lowest score was 76.00 while the highest score was 154.00. In addition, The standard deviation

(SD=19.03) compared to the Mean (123.67) is low which indicates that most of the scores are around (M=123). Generally, EFL participants have shown above average EI levels.

Table 20. General descriptive statistics for EQ

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
EI	30	76	154	123,67	19,03

Table 21. Descriptive statistics for the SSEIT four subscales

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perception of emotions	30	27	50	36,37	5,85
Managing own emotions	30	17	45	34,40	6,49
Managing others' emotions	30	16	39	30,10	5,54
Utilization of emotions	30	12	30	23,20	4,52

The table above (21) reveals the students' scores obtained in each subscale of EI. According to the results shown in the table, the subscale of 'perception of emotions' has the highest mean value (M=36.37), with a standard deviation value of (SD= 5.85). It consists of 10 items. The second subscale 'managing own emotions', represented with 9 items, the mean value here was (M=34.40) with the highest standard deviation value of (SD=6.49). The third subscale is 'managing others emotions' including 8 items, its mean value was (M=30.10) and (SD=5.54). Besides, the utilization of emotions subscale has comparatively the lowest values of the mean (M=23.20) and the standard deviation (SD=4.52). To sum up, there is a moderate rate of EI subscales among the participants.

2.2.3 Data Analysis for Research Question Three

A correlational analysis was used to address the third RQ which aimed to scrutinize the relationship between EFL students' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI at M'sila University. As reported in table (22), the computed Pearson correlation coefficient ($r=.458$) shows, as expected, a statistically significant correlation between the participated students' comprehension of CI and EI scores. There existed a moderate positive correlation between the two variables at the level of significance ($p= 0.05$). That is, both variables tend to rise or decrease simultaneously. Therefore, the adopted alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. The graphical representation in the below figure (18) is a scatter plot that summarizes the results of the correlational analysis between CI and EI. It can be seen that most of the spotted scores in this graph are coming closer to form a line that goes up. Hence, the shape of the scatter plot is an indication which confirms the finding that there is a positive correlation between the two variables. In addition, The plot includes the coefficient of determination or R-squared which is a statistical measure that points out how strong the linear correlation is between two variables, it tells us to what extent one variable is dependent on another variable. Here, as it can be seen, the coefficient of determination is $r^2= 0.21$, this indicates that the variance of EQ scores can account for 21% of the variance of CI comprehension scores.

Table 22. Pearson Correlations for the Relationship between CI and EI.

		CI	EI
CI	Pearson Correlation	1	,458*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,011
	N	30	30
EI	Pearson Correlation	,458*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,011	
	N	30	30

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

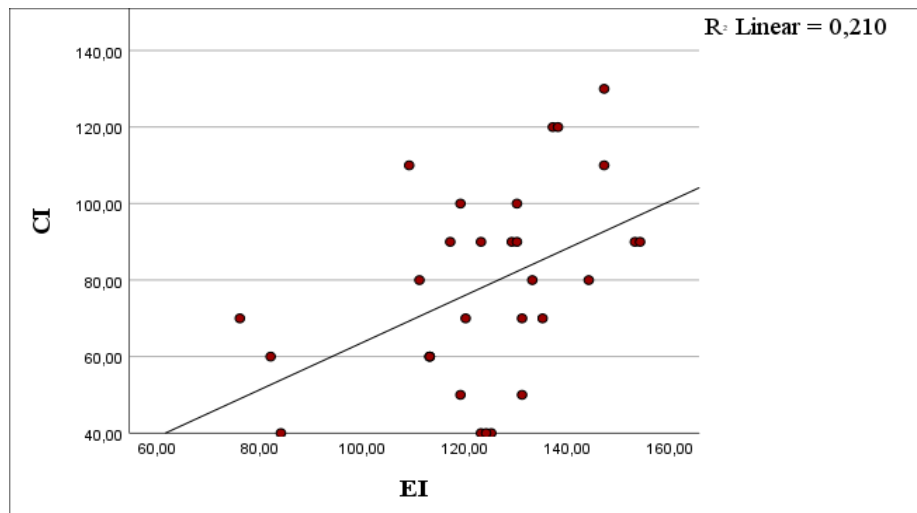


Figure 18. Scatter Plot with a Fit Line of CI by EI

2.2.4 Data Analysis for Research Question Four

As for the fourth hypothesis of the current investigation, Pearson correlations results are presented in the below table (23) in order to explore if there is a statistically significant correlation between EFL students' comprehension of CI and the EI subscales:

Table 23. Pearson Correlation for CI and the Four subscales of EI.

		CI	SC01	SC02	SC03	SC04
CI	Pearson Correlation	1	,366*	,398*	,550**	,283
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,047	,029	,002	,130
	N	30	30	30	30	30
SC01	Pearson Correlation	,366*	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,047				
	N	30				
SC02	Pearson Correlation	,398*		1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,029				
	N	30				
SC03	Pearson Correlation	,550**			1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,002				
	N	30				
SC04	Pearson Correlation	,283				1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,130				
	N	30				

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Note: SC01: perception of emotion; SC02: managing own emotions; SC03: managing others emotions; SC04: utilization of emotions.

In their attempt to determine which subscale of EI is connected with CI, the researchers run correlational analyses using SPSS software between students' comprehension of CI marks and their yielded scores of every subscale separately. Apparently, from table (23) above, the displayed findings indicate that all the subscales of EI significantly correlated with CI except for the fourth subscale: utilization of emotions ($r=.283$; $p= 0.13$). Whereas a moderate positive and significant relationship was found between EFL students' comprehension of CI and the subscale of managing others emotions ($r =.550$) at the level of ($p=0.01$), the subscales of perception of emotions ($r=.366$) and managing own emotions ($r=.398$) reveal weak positive correlations with students' comprehension of CI scores at the level of ($p= 0.05$).

2.3 Discussion of the findings

In this subsection, the yielded results are portrayed and interpreted with regard to the raised research queries. Evidently, the overall findings of this investigation support the current body of literature that exists in the realms of CI and EI.

First, although several researchers assert the paramount role that PC plays in EFL discourse (Among them: Tulgar,2015; Yan, 2022), the quantitative results obtained from The MDCT recorded average to weak Mean value (78.33) in interpreting CIs extracts from native conversations; this finding may mirror the participants' poor and insufficient pragmatic knowledge. This latter can be attributed to the learners' limited exposure to the target culture (Bouton 1992) and the lack of pragmatic based instruction in EFL discourse; as Bouton (1994) confirms that "Little attempt is made in the English as a second language (ESL)/English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom to make learners aware of implicature as a tool of communication or to give them practice at using it in English" (p. 157). Besides, based on the researchers' experience and observation, the nature of EFL

instruction at M'sila university can be one of the reasons why the sample of this study faces some challenges in interpreting CIs, as the CI comprehension is not taught neither explicitly nor implicitly. In line with previous research studies (Roever,2006,2010; Taguchi, 2002, 2005,2008), another factor that may influence the comprehension of implicatures is English proficiency; the fact that students with different language proficiency levels performed differently. However, a high level of linguistic proficiency does not automatically ensure a high level of pragmatic ability(Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Blum-Kulka& House, 1989; CelceMurcia et al., 1995). Hence, regarding PC as an essential part in language instruction is important (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996; Halenko & Jones, 2011; Ifantidou, 2013; Kasper, 1996; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Nguyen, Pham & Pham, 2012; Rajabi & Farahian, 2013; Takimoto, 2008; van Compernelle, 2011).

Additionally, the present study results reveal that the majority of the participants have not the ability to understand indirect criticism, relevance and verbal irony situations in the target language use. Pope question and disclosure implicatures, by contrast, were the easiest to understand for the participants, as most of them could interpret them correctly. It is worth highlighting that the findings related to the first research question accord with other research studies results such as the study of Pratama et al (2017). In sum, the language of scores confirms that EFL students of M'sila university do encounter some sort of difficulty to appropriately realize, comprehend and interpret CIs in the TL especially with indirect criticism and irony implicatures.

With respect to the second research question, it has been found that EFL learners of M'sila university hold above average levels of EI (M=123.67; SD=19.03); 53% of the participants scored above average levels of EQ, that is to say, EFL students of M'sila university are able to appropriately realize, manage their own and others' emotions and utilize their emotions effectively in solving daily encountered problems and challenges. In a comparison of the findings with the literature, the present findings corroborate the results

of the previous work by Saraoui, Dilmi and Cheriet (2020), using the SREI questionnaire, which also found that EFL students of M'sila University possess above-average EI levels. Some other studies have reported contrasting results; a study by Saud (2019) showed that EFL students at King Khalid University have high levels of EI. Furthermore, Derbal, Makri and Hamoudi (2021) studied the significance of EI to language achievement and found out that Master one students at M'sila University have good to high EI levels. According to the literature, being an emotionally intelligent individual entails the capacity to recognize, understand and manage both others' and one's own emotions besides making use of emotions; these skills can be acquired only through personal experiences and social interactions in daily life situations or through formal education. On that basis, the finding to the second research question can be attributed to some factors and sources that can supposedly influence and enhance one's EQ such as the usage of Facebook (Bektaş et al., 2014), the usage of multimedia as watching videos & films and listening to music (as mentioned in Berk, 2009), possessing social skills (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) and vocabulary knowledge (Asadollahfam et al, 2012; Skoudri et al, 2014) and reading books and novels (Batini et al, 2021). Though our sample proved to hold above average level of EQ, it does not mean that EI does not deserve to receive attention, because improving one's EI is one of the key factors that enhances communication in the target language use (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso 2000) and leads to personal health (Nelson& Low, 2011) and academic success (Elias, Arnold, & Hussey, 2003) as well. Given the previously mentioned advantages of EI, it is advisable that this latter can be improved, trained and educated (Elias et al., 1997).

With regard to the third query, The correlational analysis between M'sila university EFL students' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI scores reveals a moderate positive significant association ($r = .458$) at the level of ($p=0.05$). From this correlation, the researchers can predict that those who are emotionally intelligent are to some extent

able to perform well in understanding CIs, that is, when EFL learners' EI increases, their comprehension of CI increases as well and vice versa. One main interpretation might be given to this finding is that there is one factor in common between the two aforementioned variables which is accurate reasoning, the availability or the lack of which influences both one's level of EI and comprehension of CI simultaneously. More to the point, having pragmatic inferential skills and high levels of EI requires high cognitive abilities, that is, high comprehension proficiency and reasonable thinking; the concept of emotional intelligence, on the one hand, is based on the assumption that cognition and emotion are inextricably linked; humans use mental processes in order to recognize, comprehend and regulate their and other's emotions, CIs, on the other, need to be interpreted through reasoning rationally and taking account of both contextual and linguistic cues. The moderate correlation between CI and EI points out that when EFL students of M'sila university make sufficient improvement in their EQ skills, apply them to accurately perceive and understand others' emotions from their voice tone and facial expressions and know how to deal with them, they can considerably elicit CIs and infer what implied meanings and covered intentions the speakers include behind their utterances in a variety of situations. This explored finding aligns with studies in which significant correlations between EI and other aspects of pragmatics were found, namely pragmatic performance (Domakani, Mirzaei and Zeraatpisheh, 2014) and pragmatic competence of apology speech act realization (Saraoui , Dilmi and Cheriet 2020). As a consequence, EI as an independent variable can be a predictor of CI comprehension in the field of EFL.

Among the prominent findings of this investigation is that three subscales of EI, namely perception of emotions, managing own emotions and managing others' emotions appear to be positively correlated with EFL students' comprehension of CI. However, the subscale of the utilization of emotions was uncorrelated with CI comprehension. Besides, the regression analysis revealed that the three subscales of EI can predict a variance of 21% in

CI understanding. Hence, in order to ensure the latter, the three subscales of EI correlated to CI are the key factors that need most attention from both teachers and learners in EFL teaching-learning context. The results reveal a prominent moderate and positive correlation ($r=.550$) between CI comprehension and the subscale of managing others' emotions; that is to say the fourth hypothesis is rejected. This notable outcome suggests that EFL students at M'sila university must possess the capacity to effectively handle the emotions of others in order to accurately interpret implicatures. This obtained correlation can be justified by Mayer (1990) definition of EI as a form of intelligence that involves the ability to control and manage others' feelings. And when individuals can understand others' intentions and needs, they may show improvements in their comprehension of various CI types. According to the correlation findings, a weak positive correlation was found with the perception of emotions subscale ($r=.366$). In addition, the other subscale that was shown to be relevant to the comprehension of implicatures is managing own emotions, yet it has a weak correlation ($r=.398$); the ability to accurately identify emotions and monitor self-emotions led to be crucial skills to this correlation. As a conclusion, higher levels of these three subscales characteristics enable EFL learners to amend their comprehension of CI.

Conclusion

The second chapter was concerned with methodology, data analysis and discussion of findings. This quantitative research study described and presented the gathered data and obtained findings that contribute to understanding the linkage between CI and EI. The correlation analysis affirmed that a positively moderate significant correlation was found between EFL students' CI comprehension and their EI levels ($r = .458$) at a significant level ($p = 0.01$). In addition, there is a statistically significant correlation between the comprehension of CI and the three subscales of EI namely perception of emotions, managing own emotions and managing others' emotions. Finally, a discussion was carried out to provide adequate interpretations to the yielded findings.

General Conclusion

Within the field of implied meaning inferential process, EFL learners need to improve their ability for handling conversational meaning primarily indirect and non literal utterances. For this reason, the concept of implicature requires to receive deliberate attention, consideration and scrutiny. Yet, to the researchers' knowledge, much of the existed literature on implicatures pays particular attention only to cognitive aspects and ignores psychological factors such as motivation, emotions, stress etc ... In light of what have been mentioned, the main goal of the study at hand was to scrutinize the relationship between EFL students' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI. To accomplish this purpose, four main research questions were raised:

1. How well can EFL students perform in the CI test?
2. What are EFL learners' different levels of EI?
3. Is there a statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI?
4. Is there a prominent statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and one of the subscales of EI?

With regard to these queries, the researchers set out the following alternative hypotheses:

1. EFL learners of M'sila university may perform well on the CI test.
2. EFL learners of M'sila university may hold high levels of EI.
3. There might be a statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and their levels of EI.
4. There might be a prominent statistically significant correlation between EFL learners' comprehension of CI and the perception of emotions subscale.

To carry out this research and collect the required data, this investigation adopted a correlational method, through which the nature of relationship between two variables can

be investigated. The researchers administered two tests, namely the MDCT and SSEIT, to a randomly selected sample of 30 students Master one LMD students from M'sila University. The accumulated data from the two aforementioned tests were quantitatively analyzed and processed using SPSS version 29, and the results were reported through tables and graphs showing descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations and regression analysis.

The final results, as expected, reveal a moderate positive correlation between the comprehension of CI and EI among EFL students at M'sila University ($r = .458$); the result is significant at the $p = 0.05$ level. This suggests that students with high EI levels tend to achieve higher scores in comprehending CI. Additionally, the findings related to the first and second posed queries indicate that although the participants hold above average levels of EQ, their performance in the MDCT was average to weak. Besides, Pearson's correlations tests show that the three subscales of EI: perception of emotions, managing own emotions and managing other's emotions were significantly correlated with the participants' comprehension of CI. Further analysis shows that EI accounts for variance in CI comprehension with 21%. Taken together; these results confirm that the three subscales of EI namely perception of emotions, managing own emotions and managing others' emotions do contribute to the comprehension of CI with 21% within the realm of EFL at M'sila University, the remaining percentage may include other yet undiscovered factors.

Limitations

Even though this study has achieved all the set objectives, it does have some limitations that need be stated, The first limitation is the sample size; the present study involved only 30 participants, hence, it is not possible to generalize the findings for the entire population. The second limitation is that we examined only the learners' comprehension of CI and their performance on the MDCT, which examined the learners' ability to discern implicit meanings, without other instruments to assess their production ability such as WDCT, oral

DCT, or role plays. Finally, the last constraint is that the adopted SSEIT was based on self-evaluation, that is, test takers had to auto-report themselves; and this can provide biased results.

Recommendations and suggestions

After having identified the kind of correlation between CI and EI and based on the previous conclusions; a set of recommendations and suggestions for future research are offered:

✓ Based on the findings of this study, which indicate a correlation between CI comprehension and EI, it is recommended to incorporate instruction on both variables within the realm of EFL. By explicitly teaching CI, EFL learners can develop their ability to perceive, infer and respond to implied meanings in English conversations, thereby enhancing their overall communicative competence. Additionally, integrating activities and exercises that promote EI alongside the instruction of CI can further enhance learners' interpersonal skills and understanding of CIs in EFL contexts.

✓ CI has been recognized as one of the crucial elements for effective communication. Therefore, creating an authentic EFL learning context is required through using authentic learning materials, familiarizing EFL learners with authentic language and increasing time exposure to the contextual language and target culture.

✓ Raising the awareness of EFL teachers and learners alike about the importance of developing CI abilities in the field of EFL and the paramount role of EI in learning the English language and improving various aspects in life. Most importantly, raising EFL students' awareness of the consequence that possessing the ability to perceive and handle emotions has on improving their inferential pragmatic abilities.

✓ EFL learners are encouraged to foster their pragmatic competence as this latter has a substantial influence on their ability to understand the implied meaning conveyed by the

speakers' utterances, and that in turn would improve their social and communication abilities in actual life situations.

✓ All things considered, EFL teachers need to be trained in teaching PC; they are to design appropriate tasks containing primarily pragmatic aspects of the target culture.

✓ Given the significant relationship that has been identified between EI and CI comprehension, future studies should address the relationship between EI and other aspects of pragmatics such as politeness, conventional implicature or different types of speech acts (e.g., requests, refusals, complaints); understanding these relationships can provide insights into how EI influences the comprehension and production of various pragmatic elements in communication.

✓ As the findings of this work can be used as a reference for future research studies, researchers are invited then to undertake a longitudinal experimental comparative study to examine the effect of EI as an independent variable in enhancing EFL students' comprehension of CI as a dependent variable.

✓ In future research, it is suggested to conduct mixed methods or qualitative approaches, such as interviews to gain deeper insights into learners' understanding of CI and to explore teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of EI or CI instruction at the university level.

✓ Since EI, as supported by the existing literature, is considered essential for successful foreign language acquisition and plays a significant role in enhancing one's reasoning abilities, comprehension proficiency and communicative competence, additional studies in this field are strongly suggested to give more valuable insights into how to integrate EI in Algerian educational settings.

✓ Future investigations should consider exploring the impact of multimedia, such as video and audio materials that stimulate authentic conversational contexts, on the comprehension and production of CI. This may contribute to the advancement of

instructional practices and the enhancement of learners' pragmatic skills in language learning contexts.

This correlational research study gave birth to and introduced a significant interesting finding that contributes to the world of academia as scarce investigations have been conducted to probe the interrelatedness between students' CI comprehension and their EQ in the field of EFL. Hopefully, the reached finding from the correlation analysis will be taken into account in the future to improving the teaching and learning processes, and would inspire researchers and raise their attention to the need of further and well detailed researches into other factors by which the aforementioned variables could be enhanced in Algerian EFL community.

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Appendices

The Multiple Discourse Completion Test (MDCT)

Dear participants,

We are conducting a research study entitled: “Investigating the relationship between students’ comprehension of conversational implicature and their levels of emotional intelligence in EFL context”. Therefore, you are cordially requested to answer the test below. The purpose of this test is to probe students’ ability to elicit Conversational Implicatures in the realm of EFL. To do so, please put a cross (X) in the appropriate box. All the data gathered from your participation in this research study will be kept anonymous and confidential. Thank you in advance for your time, effort and collaboration.

Instructions:

Step 1) Read carefully the context and the dialogues.

Step 2) Read the questions.

Step 3) Choose the appropriate response in each situation.

01) Situation: Two teachers are talking about a student’s paper.

Mr. Ranger: Have you finished with Mark’s term paper yet?

Mr. Ryan: Yes, I have. I read it last night.

Mr. Ranger: What did you think of it?

Mr. Ryan: Well, I thought it was well typed.

+> **How did Mr. Ryan like Mark’s term paper?**

a	He liked it; he thought it was good.		c	He really hadn’t read it well enough to know	
b	He thought it was important that the paper was well typed.		d	He did not like it..	

02) Situation: Two roommates are talking about their plans for the summer.

Fran: My mother wants me to stay home for a while, so I can be there when our

relatives come to visit us at the beach.

Joan: Do you have a lot of relatives?

Fran: Are there flies in the summertime?

+> **How can we best interpret Fran's question?**

a	Fran thinks her relatives are noisy.		c	Fran has a lot of relatives.	
b	Fran is new to the area and is trying to find out what the summers are like.		d	Fran is trying to change the subject; she doesn't want to talk about her relatives.	

03) Situation: Bill and Peter have been good friends since they were children. They roomed together in college and travelled Europe together after graduation. Now friends have told Bill that they saw Peter dancing with Bill's wife while Bill was away.

Bill: Peter knows how to be a really good friend.

+> **Which of the following best says what Bill means?**

a	Peter is not acting the way a good friend should.		c	Peter is a good friend and so Bill can trust him.	
b	Peter and Bill's wife are becoming really good friends while Bill is away.		d	Nothing should be allowed to interfere with their friendship.	

04) Situation: Frank wanted to know what time it was, but he didn't have a watch.

Frank: What time is it, Helen?

Helen: The postman has been here.

Frank: Okay. Thanks.

+> **What message does Frank probably get from what Helen says?**

a	She is telling him approximately what time it is by telling him that the post-man has already been there		c	By changing the subject, Helen is telling Frank that she doesn't know what time it is.	
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b	She thinks that Frank should stop what he is doing and read his mail		d	Frank will not be able to interpret any message from what Helen says, since she did not answer his question.	
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05) Situation: Two roommates are talking. One has just been talking on the telephone to a woman that he was going to take to see a play.

David: Darn it! Mandy just broke our date for the play. Now I've got two tickets for Saturday night and no one to go with.

Mark: Hey, David. Have you ever met my sister? She's coming down to see me this weekend.

David: No, I don't think so. Why?

+> What was Mark's reason for mentioning that his sister was coming?

a	Mark is just thinking ahead to the weekend and can't remember whether David has met his sister or not.		c	Mark is suggesting that David take Mark's sister to the play.	
b	There is nothing Mark can do to help his friend, so he is mentioning a problem of his own.		d	Mark wants to be sure that David knows that the woman he is with this weekend is his sister and not a new girlfriend.	

06) Situation: At a recent party, there was a lot of singing and piano playing. At one point, Sue played the piano while Mary sang. When Tom asked a friend what Mary had sung, the friend said:

Friend: I'm not sure, but Sue was playing 'My Wild Irish Rose.'

+> Which of the following is the closest to what the friend meant by this remark.

a	He was only interested in Sue and did not listen to Mary.		c	Mary sang very badly.	
b	Mary and Sue were not doing the same song.		d	The song that Mary sang was 'My Wild Irish Rose'	

07) Situation: Two friends are looking over the various kinds of food at an international supper and trying to decide which kinds to try.

Nida: There are so many different kinds of food here that I can't decide which to take first. Which do you recommend?

Trixie: So far I've only had some of that one-the yellow one with the reddish sauce. Certainly is colorful, isn't it?

+> Is Trixie recommending the dish to Nida? How do you know?

a	No, because Trixie talked only about how the dish looked, not about how it tasted.		c	Yes, because dishes that are colorful and attractive usually taste good	
b	No, because Trixie hasn't tried any other dishes to compare the colorful one with.		d	Yes, since Trixie mentioned the dish, we know she thinks it's good.	

08) Situation: A mother and her daughter Jenny have been discussing the upcoming weekend. Jenny's parents are leaving town and this is the first time Jenny has been left at home alone.

Mother: Are you sure you can take care of yourself this weekend?

Jenny: Can a duck swim, Mother?

+> What is the point of Jenny's question?

a	She is doing homework about ducks and is asking her mother for help with one of the questions.		c	She is asking her mother if she can go with her for the weekend.	
b	She is trying to change the subject. She is a little nervous about being left alone and doesn't want to talk about it.		d	She is telling her mother that she will be able to take care of herself okay.	

09) Situation: When Abe got home, he found that his wife had to use cane in order to walk.

Abe: What happened to your leg?

Wife: I went jogging.

+>Another way the wife could have said the same thing is . .

a	Today I finally got some exercise jogging	c	It's nothing serious. Don't worry about it.
b	I hurt it jogging	d	I hurt it doing something silly.

10) Situation: Susan and John, two officemates, are having lunch in a cafe and discussing their boss.

John: "So, do you think Mr. Davis will give me a raise?"

Susan: "Do pigs fly?"

+ What does Susan probably mean?

a	She wants to change the topic.	c	She has seen outside a pig falling down from a high place.
b	The boss will not give John a raise.	d	John will get a raise.

11) Situation: Brenda and Sally have lunch every Tuesday. As they meet on this particular day, Brenda stops and twirls like a fashion model, and the following dialogue occurs:

Brenda: I just got a new dress. How do you like it?

Sally: Well, there certainly are a lot of women wearing it this year. When did you get it?

+>How does Sally like Brenda's new dress?

a	We can't tell from what she says	c	She likes the dress, but too many women are wearing it.
b	She thinks Brenda has good taste in clothes because she's right in style.	d	She doesn't like it.

12) Situation: John's friend Mary asks him about their classmate Sally.

Mary: "You know. I've been curious to know if you went out with Sally."

John: "Um.... Sally's not really my type".

+>What does John probably mean?

a	He is not sure of his feelings.	c	He is talking bad about Sally as she refused him.
b	Mary is his type	d	They did not go out.

13) Situation: Jack is talking to his housemate Sarah about another housemate, Frank.

Jack: ‘Do you know where Frank is, Sarah?’

Sarah: ‘Well, I heard music from his room earlier.’

+>What does Sarah probably mean?

a	Frank forgot to turn the music off.		c	Frank is probably in his room.	
b	Frank’s loud music bothers Sarah.		d	Sarah doesn’t know where Frank is.	

14) Situation: Peter promises his friend Mary to help her move to a new apartment. That day, he moves the clock on the wall while Mary moves the heavy boxes.

Mary: “Thanks, you’ve been terribly helpful.”

+>What does Mary probably mean?

a	Peter helped her a lot.		c	Peter is weak.	
b	Moving the clock was really important as it needed special care.		d	Peter was not helpful at all	

15) Situation: Susan and Tom, friends, are talking about what is going on in their lives. Susan knows Tom had a job interview recently.

Susan: “So how was your interview? Did you get the job you applied for?”

Tom: “Um ... I think I need to improve my interview skills”.

+>What does Tom probably mean?

a	He did not get the job.		c	He will have the interview when he feels his interview skills are good enough.	
b	He wants help from Susan to improve his interview skills		d	They gave him the job with the advice that he should improve his interview skills.	

Your collaboration is highly appreciated

The Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

Dear respondents,

The SSEIT is the instrument used to measure emotional intelligence, for a research work that aims at investigating the association between EFL students' comprehension of conversational implicature and their levels of emotional intelligence. Your collaboration is worth appreciating.

The Assessing Emotions Scale Directions: Each of the following items asks you about your emotions or reactions associated with emotions. After deciding whether a statement is generally true for you, use the 5-point scale to respond to the statement. Please circle the "1" if you strongly disagree that this is like you, the "2" if you somewhat disagree that this is like you, "3" if you neither agree nor disagree that this is like you, the "4" if you somewhat agree that this is like you .and the "5" if you strongly agree that this is like you.

There are no right or wrong answers.

Please give the response that best describes you.

1=strongly disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=neither agree nor disagree;4=somewhat agree; 5=strongly agree

1	I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.	1	2	3	4	5
2	When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I expect that I will do well on most things I try.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Other people find it easy to confide in me.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.	1	2	3	4	5
7	When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth	1	2	3	4	5

	living.					
9	I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I expect good things to happen.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I like to share my emotions with others.	1	2	3	4	5
12	When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I arrange events others enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I seek out activities that make me happy.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.	1	2	3	4	5
17	When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.	1	2	3	4	5
18	By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I know why my emotions change.	1	2	3	4	5
20	When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I have control over my emotions.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.	1	2	3	4	5
24	I compliment others when they have done something well.	1	2	3	4	5
25	I am aware of the non-verbal messages other people send.	1	2	3	4	5
26	When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I experienced this event myself.	1	2	3	4	5
27	When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
28	When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.	1	2	3	4	5
30	I help other people feel better when they are down.	1	2	3	4	5
31	I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.	1	2	3	4	5
32	I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.	1	2	3	4	5
33	It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you

Résumé

L'intelligence émotionnelle a fait l'objet d'une corrélation avec de nombreuses variables académiques. Son impact s'étend au-delà des frontières de la sphère académique car le développement de ce trait de caractère a une valeur monumentale dans les domaines personnel et professionnel. Par conséquent, la raison d'être de la recherche actuelle est d'étudier la relation entre la compréhension de l'implicite conversationnel (CI) par les étudiants et leur niveau d'intelligence émotionnelle dans le domaine de l'anglais langue étrangère (EFL). Pour atteindre cet objectif, 30 étudiants en Master 1 EFL de l'université M'sila ont été sélectionnés au hasard pour participer à cette recherche. Deux instruments quantitatifs de collecte de données ont été utilisés : le Multiple discours complétion test (MDCT) et le Schutte self-report Émotionnelle intelligence (SSEIT), le premier évaluant la compréhension des CI par les étudiants et le second mesurant les niveaux d'EI des étudiants. Les résultats ont révélé une corrélation positive modérée et significative entre la compréhension de l'CI par les étudiants en EFL et leur EI ($r=.458$) à un niveau de signification de ($p= 0.05$). En outre, les tests de corrélation de Pearson ont montré que les trois sous-échelles de l'EI : perception des émotions, gestion de ses propres émotions et gestion des émotions des autres étaient significativement corrélées avec la compréhension de l'CI par les participants. Par conséquent, le fait de posséder des niveaux élevés d'EI joue un rôle facilitateur dans la compréhension de l'CI dans le discours EFL. Il est donc recommandé que les instructions relatives à l'EI et à l'CI fassent partie intégrante des cours d'anglais langue étrangère.

Mots-clés : Implicature conversationnelle ; Intelligence émotionnelle ; Corrélation ; Contexte anglais langue étrangère (EFL).

الملخص

تم استكشاف العلاقة بين الذكاء العاطفي (EI) والعديد من المتغيرات الأكاديمية. ويمتد تأثيره إلى ما هو أبعد من النطاق الأكاديمي، إذ يحمل تطوير هذه الصفة قيمة هائلة في النواحي الشخصية والمهنية للأفراد. بناءً على ذلك، يهدف البحث الحالي إلى استكشاف العلاقة بين فهم الطلاب للاستلزام الحواري (CI) ومستوى الذكاء العاطفي (EI) في مجال اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL). لتحقيق هذا الهدف، تم إجراء هذه الدراسة على 30 طالبًا من طلاب الماستر في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة المسيلة للمشاركة في هذا البحث. تم استخدام أداتين لجمع البيانات الكمية: اختبار إكمال الخطاب المتعدد (MDCT) واختبار الذكاء العاطفي الذاتي لشوتي (SSEIT)، حيث استخدمت الأداة الأولى لتقييم فهم الطلاب للاستلزام الحواري، في حين استخدمت الأداة الثانية لقياس مستويات الذكاء العاطفي للطلاب. أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة بين فهم طلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية للاستلزام الحواري ومستوى ذكائهم العاطفي مع قيمة 0.458 عند مستوى الدلالة $p=0,05$. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أظهرت اختبارات الارتباط الخاصة ببيرسون أن الأبعاد الثلاثة للذكاء العاطفي: إدراك العواطف، وإدارة العواطف الخاصة، وإدارة عواطف الآخرين كانت ذات ارتباط معنوي مع فهم المشاركين للتلميح الحواري. وبالتالي يلعب امتلاك مستويات عالية من الذكاء العاطفي دورًا مساعدًا في فهم الاستلزام الحواري في مجال اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. ومن ثم يُنصح بأن يكون كل من تمرين الذكاء العاطفي وتعليم التلميح الحواري جزءًا أساسيًا لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاستلزام الحواري، الذكاء العاطفي، الترابط، سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.