

## **The Correlation between Interpersonal Intelligence and Speaking Performance of Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Students**

Asst.Inst. Ali Mohi Hadi Salman,

Directorate General of Education in Karbala Province

[ali.mohi1207@ircoedu.uobaghdad.edu.iq](mailto:ali.mohi1207@ircoedu.uobaghdad.edu.iq)

### **Abstract**

One of the most major influences on learning a foreign language is intelligence, and interpersonal intelligence is considered one of the eight intelligences that is thought to be vital in learning a foreign language. It is crucial to know the types of intelligences, their differences, and their connection to students' learning in order to adopt and develop educational strategies that are compatible with this disparity. The current study investigates the correlation between interpersonal intelligence and speaking Performance of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students. Data is collected from 200 sixth grade EFL preparatory school students. They include 100 males and 100 females. Two tools, a questionnaire and an interview, have been employed in the current study to fulfill its objectives. A questionnaire by Thomas Armstrong (1995) which is adopted to find out students' interpersonal intelligence, and constructed speaking performance test to assess students' speaking skill. The findings indicate that Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' interpersonal intelligence and speaking performance are low, and there is a substantial correlation between students' interpersonal intelligence and their speaking performance.

## الارتباط بين الذكاء الاجتماعي واداء التحدث لدى طلبة الاعدادية العراقيين دارسي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية

م.م علي محي هادي سلمان

**المستخلص:** يعتبر الذكاء من أهم العوامل التي لها تأثير على تعلم اللغة الأجنبية حيث من المهم ملاحظة انواع الذكاء وتفاوتها كذلك في ارتباطها بتعلم الطلبة لتبني وتطوير استراتيجيات تعليمية توائم هذا التفاوت . ويعتبر الذكاء الاجتماعي احد انواع الذكاء الثمانية التي لها اهمية في دراسات تعلم اللغة الأجنبية. تهدف الدراسة الحالية لإيجاد الارتباط بين الذكاء الاجتماعي واداء التحدث بين طلبة المدارس الاعدادية العراقيين دارسي اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية. كانت عينة البحث مكونة من 200 من طلاب السادس الاعدادي. توزعوا بين 100 طالب و 100 طالبة. لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة الحالية ، تم استخدام أداتين ، وهما استبيان توماس أرمسترونج (1995) الذي تم اعتماده لاكتشاف الذكاء الاجتماعي للطلبة ، واختبار اداء التحدث الذي تم بناؤه من قبل الباحث لمعرفة قدرة الطلبة في اداء التحدث. أظهرت النتائج أن مستوى الذكاء الاجتماعي واداء التحدث لدى طلاب الاعدادية العراقيين دارسي اللغة الإنكليزية لغة أجنبية كان منخفضاً، كما أظهرت النتائج ان هناك ارتباط وثيق بين الذكاء الاجتماعي واداء التحدث لدى الطلبة.

**keywords:** Interpersonal Intelligence; Speaking Performance; Preparatory School Students.

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

In humans , it is well known that there are many types of performing and capacities of acquiring knowledge that correlate with intelligence (Strungaru,2003,p.25). Accordingly, Recognizing those abilities and performances that go beyond the scope of a single intelligence or sub intelligences can help educators choose the type of instruction that will have the greatest impact on achievement among students (Gardner,1999,p.214).

Speaking ability is also very important to be recognized, measured, and improved. In many studies, low speaking ability among Iraqi EFL preparatory schools students is invasively recognized .This is because there aren't many instructional strategies used, in which numerous cognitive variables, interpersonal relationships, and language learning process are disregarded (Yaseen, 2016,p.27).

The current study therefore intends to determine the relationship between interpersonal intelligence and speaking ability of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students ,with the former being characterized as having significant contribution and positive correlational impact on the latter.

Accordingly, addressing the following two research questions will best illustrate the main problem of the study:

1. Is there a correlation between interpersonal intelligence and speaking performance?
2. Does interpersonal intelligence contribute to student's mastery of speaking performance?

## **1.2 Aims of the Study**

1. Finding out Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' interpersonal intelligence.
2. Finding out Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' speaking performance.
3. Finding out the statistical significant of the correlation between interpersonal intelligence and speaking performance of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students.

## **1.3 Values**

This study is thought to be valuable in terms of providing educational experts with pertinent insights that lead to a reevaluation of the relationship between interpersonal intelligence and speaking performance of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students, particularly those who are interested in EFL learning and teaching.. It is hoped to provide them with more information on learners' interpersonal intelligence and their speaking performance. knowing the correlation between these two variables may eventually inspire educators to use more adaptable techniques in order to increase their prospects for enhancing the speaking abilities of EFL school students.

## **1.4 Limits**

This study is limited to:

1. Iraqi EFL six grade preparatory school students .
- 2.The academic year 2022-2023 .

## **2 . Theoretical background**

Human intelligence, Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, interpersonal intelligence, and speaking performance are highlighted in the theoretical background.

### **2.1.1 Human Intelligence**

Human intelligence remains one of the largest and most widely researched notions in cognitive science history, and the argument over general ability VS multiple abilities has raged for over a century. The capacity to acquire and use information and skills is referred to as "intelligence", this comprises reasoning, comprehension, learning, planning, creativity, and problem solving abilities. As the mental abilities that necessary for different language competencies may differ depending on the nature of that competency, intelligence however is unlikely to be considered as a single comprehensive capacity (Andrew, et al.,2015,p.1).

Human intelligence is often understood to be the capacity for mental processes such as perception, remembering, knowing, and reasoning. Children and teenagers, whose cognitive and learning capacities are usually still growing, are the target populations for studies on the development of intelligence. ( Ooi and Mohamad ,2016,p.104).

### **2.1.2 Gardner's Theory of " Multiple Intelligences"( MI)**

The concept of intelligence has been addressed by several models, including Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. Since the earliest days of time, when it was believed that the mind resided somewhere in the heart, liver, or kidneys, there have been hypotheses about intelligence. More recently, theories of intelligence have appeared, claiming that there are between the one of Spearman's (G) kind of intelligence and Guilford's Structure of the Intellect, in which 150 different forms of intelligence

(Armstrong,2008,p.17) .The concept of multiple intelligences, which was created by psychologist Howard Gardner in the late 1970s and early 1980s, asserts that people have eight or more relatively independent intelligences. To produce products and resolve issues that are pertinent to the communities in which they live, people rely on these intelligences, individually as well as collectively (Gardner, 1983, 1993,1999).The theory of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, which takes a cognitive approach to intelligence, has significant ramifications for education broadly. To be more precise, it has resulted in the application of eight of these frameworks to language teaching and learning (Morgan and Fonseca, 2004,p. 119).

According to (Gardner, 1999,pp.40, 84),the eight identified intelligences include:

1. Musical intelligence: The capacity to recognize sounds and rhythms.
2. Visual Intelligence: The capacity for visualization and environmental awareness.
3. Linguistic Intelligence: The effectiveness in using language.
4. Mathematical/Logical reasoning: Thinking conceptually and abstractly.
5. Interpersonal Intelligence: The ability of a person to properly comprehend and engage with others.
6. Kinesthetic Intelligence: Effectiveness in using one's body.
7. Naturalistic Intelligence: Special knowledge in plant life and the natural world .
8. Intrapersonal Intelligence: The capacity to comprehend one's deepest emotions .

Three fundamental ideas are backed up by Gardner: first, no two people are alike; second, no two people have the same types of minds and third, it is best for education if these differences are acknowledged rather than downplayed or ignored. However, it is evident that the MI approach is fundamentally based on treating human diversity seriously. Theoretically, this indicates that it is not possible to productively align all people along a single intellectual axis (Gardner, 1999,p.91).

### **2.1.3 Interpersonal Intelligence**

One of the eight different intelligences recognized by Gardner's MI theory is interpersonal intelligence. It indicates a person's aptitude to comprehend the goals, motives, and objectives of others and, as a result, their ability to collaborate well with others. Interpersonal intelligence is necessary for all professions, including salespeople, educators, physicians, religious and political leaders, and performers (Gardner, 1999,p. 43).

Furthermore, It is the type of intelligence that controls how well you can manage connections and interact to other people. It might also be defined as having the capacity to engage, comprehend, and communicate well with people. We all possess it to some extent. If you work as a teacher, legislator, pastor, physician, therapist, or agent, you have more. Both at work and at educational institutions, it is helpful. Highly interpersonal Intelligence individuals are frequently perceptive, reflective, sympathetic, and empathic. Sensitivity to other people's emotions, personality types, motives, and sentiments is a trait of persons with strong interpersonal intelligence. It might be defined as having the capacity to distinguish between different individuals, respond to their needs correctly, comprehend their actions and feelings, and respect such viewpoints with empathy. It is an important consideration for those whose jobs need them to lead or communicate with others. Extroverts individuals are those who possess interpersonal intelligence strongly (Sadiku,et al .,2020,p.1).

It is the capacity to recognize and distinguish between other people's intents, attitudes, and feelings. This can include being perceptive to gestures, voice inflections, and facial emotions. It is the ability to distinguish between a variety of interpersonal cues; and being able to successfully react to those cues in a practical way (Armstrong, 2008,p. 7). Moreover, interpersonal intelligence is known as the ability to distinguish between others' sentiments and intentions (Hyland,2011,p.7).

## **2.2 Speaking Performance**

Speaking is commonly defined as uttering words orally, conversing, communicating through talking, making a request, and delivering a

message (Nunan:1995,p.593). A good speaking ability is described as "a framework that enables individuals to effectively express themselves throughout oral communication with their interlocutors in an intended language" (Cheng, 2007,p.16). Even Languages that have never been written down, satisfy the basic humanity urge for communication. Natural languages exist largely as spoken in which speaking is a child's primary method of language acquisition, and it accounts for the majority of people's daily linguistic activity (Hughes, 2006,p.144). So much of daily life involves speaking that we often take it for granted. However, trying to talk requires acquiring delicate and in-depth understanding of the reasons for, how, and when one needs to communicate, whether in one's own language or another. Despite we might not always be conscious of it, we adjust our language and the meanings we want to share to our unique objectives for speaking in that setting when we engage in and the variety of social activities. (Schmitt,2010,p.197). Students sometimes just know the dictionary definitions of words while they are learning or speaking, yet speaking requires much more than simply words; there are messages that extend behind merely spoken or written word, such as subtleties, sentiments ,etc. (Bartels,2005,p.54).

Speaking with fluency, word pronunciation, vocabulary, grammatical structure, task, and understanding are categories of speaking ability (Brown, 2001,pp. 406-407). Fluency is a quality of oral performance that is seen as a reliable measure of how well the speaker of a language can utilize and integrate the fundamental processes of planning and composing an utterance in order to produce a piece of speech which is appropriate from a communicative standpoint .It is the capacity to accurately express and report acts or circumstances (Segalowitz, 2010,p.47) .

It's crucial to know that mastering new pronunciation habits to pronounce another language requires developing new pronunciation skills and getting over the bias of the original language. Poor pronunciation will frustrate and make the discourse uncomfortable over those who are speaking and also for the listeners (Trouvain & Gut, 2007,p. 53). Grammar is a set of rules that control how language is organized and structured (Parsons, 2004,p.8). All languages evolve throughout time for

a number of causes, and people apply these grammatical rules to their spoken words, phrases, and sentences. (Barry, 2002,p. 84).

The building block of speaking is vocabulary, thereby making it one of the most crucial goals for mastering a foreign language (Cooper et al., 2011,p. 228).Task is the procedure for choosing the communication's material and formulating the message in accordance with the speaker's aim and cultural upbringing (Kaplan, 2010,p. 64). To grasp something uttered by another person, absolute and complete comprehension is required. It may be argued that understanding is knowing the meaning of something that someone says, and comprehending the meaning of anything requires a talent in order to achieve the capacity to thoroughly grasp what the speakers have said. (Schmitt,2010,p.110).

### **3.Methodology**

In this study, the researcher used a correlational research in terms of explanatory design to find out the correlation among the two variables. The researcher identified the students' interpersonal intelligence by using a questionnaire, and speaking performance test to identify students' speaking ability. analysis was also used in order to find out the correlation between the variables based on the result of the questionnaire and speaking performance test.

#### **3.1 Sample**

The sample of the current study is limited to sixth grade EFL preparatory school students. the all number of the sample is(200 ) ,they include 100 males and 100 females.

#### **3.2 Instruments of the Study**

By reviewing the related literature and the previous studies and a set of scales that measure interpersonal intelligence, a questionnaire by Thomas Armstrong (1995) is adopted to find out students' intrapersonal intelligence ,and constructed speaking performance test to find out students' ability in speaking skill.

### **3.2.1 Measurement of Interpersonal Intelligence**

To assess students' interpersonal intelligence, the MI questionnaire developed by Thomas Armstrong (1995) is used. MI questionnaire contains 80 items, with 10 items for each category of intelligence. Based to the study's limitations, 10 of the items are used. Each item includes a (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree question. Answers are graded from 1 to 4. The greatest possible score is (40), while the lowest possible score is (10). See appendix (A).

### **3.2.2 Measurement of Speaking Performance**

In order to assess students' speaking abilities, the researcher devised a speaking interview in which six questions were presented together with images of various characters about which the students appeared to be knowledgeable and conversant. See appendix (B).

#### **3.2.2.1 Scoring Scheme - Speaking Performance Test**

Brown's (2010) scoring method was used to evaluate students' replies to each question of the speaking test. The scoring method consists of six scored components and a rating scale (1-5). As a result, the greatest possible score on the exam is (30), while the lowest possible score is (6). See (Brown, H.D., 2001, pp.406-407).

### **3.3.1 Face Validity**

Interpersonal intelligence scale and speaking performance interview are presented to a jury of ten educational psychology specialists. The jury members all agree that the scale items are appropriate and legitimate. The speaking scoring rubric is also subjected to a jury of eight EFL teaching specialists, all of whom agree on the applicability of this rubric to the current study's objectives and sample.

### **3.3.2 Construct Validity**

The psychometrics of the scale and the items of the test are analyzed to achieve construct validity of the interpersonal intelligence scale and the speaking performance test by conducting an item analysis in which discrimination power and item-total correlation are assessed.

### 3.3.3 Item-Analysis

The two tests, in this study have been corrected and an overall score is determined for each student. After arranging their answers according to the degree totality on the scale in a descending manner, the two extreme groups in the total score were identified (the upper group and the lower group) with a rate of 27% of the total number, and accordingly the number of students has become in each group (54) students.

### 3.3.4 Discrimination Power

The students' scores in the sample used for statistical analysis are listed in decreasing order of highest to lowest. The scores are separated into two groups, an upper group and a lower group, in accordance with this sequential sequence. The difference between the mean scores of each question in the upper and lower groups is examined using the T-test for two independent samples. The findings indicate that the interpersonal intelligence scale and speaking performance test items are appropriate in this regard .See Tables ( 1,2).

**Table (1) The Outcome of the T-test Conducted on two Independent Samples to Determine the Discrimination Power of Interpersonal intelligence**

NO	Upper group		Lower group		T-Value		Level of significance	Significance
	mean	Standard deviation	mean	Standard deviation	calculated	tabulated		
1	2,981	1,054	1,902	0,830	5,803	1,980	0,05	Significant
2	2,814	1,010	1,176	0,433	10,681			Significant
3	3,000	1,063	2,000	0,871	5,250			Significant
4	2,925	1,078	1,176	0,433	10,783			Significant
5	2,888	1,003	1,941	0,881	5,131			Significant
6	2,944	1,088	1,294	0,641	9,392			Significant
7	2,914	0,979	1,921	0,844	5,716			Significant
8	2,907	1,086	1,196	0,400	10,588			Significant
9	2,942	0,968	1,862	0,775	6,252			Significant
10	2,926	1,187	1,137	0,347	11,295			Significant

**Table ( 2) Difficulty Level and Discrimination Power of Speaking Performance Test.**

No	Total answer marks		difficulty coefficients	discrimination coefficients
	Upper group	Lower group		
1	27	10	0,342	0,314
2	25	7	0,296	0,333
3	25	6	0,287	0,351
4	26	8	0,314	0,333
5	24	6	0,277	0,333
6	28	9	0,342	0,351

### 3.3.5 Item- Total Correlation

The Pearson correlation coefficient is used to determine the correlation between the results of each component and the overall results of the interpersonal intelligence scale and speaking performance test in order to determine the relationship between the scores of each item and the overall results. The findings demonstrate that all correlation coefficients are statistically significant when compared to their critical values, where the critical value for the correlation coefficient is (0,139) at the degree of freedom and 0.05 for both the scale and the test .See tables (3), (4).

**Table (3): The Result of Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Item score-Total Score of Interpersonal Intelligence scale**

NO.	Correlation coefficient	Critical value	Level of significance	Judgment
1	0,685	0,139	0,05	Significant
2	0,726			Significant
3	0,496			Significant
4	0,566			Significant
5	0,645			Significant
6	0,545			Significant
7	0,594			Significant
8	0,570			Significant
9	0,478			Significant
10	0,384			Significant

**Table (4): The result of Pearson correlation coefficient between item score-total score of speaking performance test**

NO.	correlation coefficient	Critical value	Level of significance	Judgment
1	0,753	0,139	0,05	Significant
2	0,519			Significant
3	0,571			Significant
4	0,790			Significant
5	0,705			Significant
6	0,580			Significant

### 3.3.5 Reliability

Two techniques are used to assess the validity of the interpersonal intelligence scale. The first is the test-retest technique, in which the pilot sample is given the scale again two weeks following the initial administration. The scores from both administrations' Pearson correlation coefficients were computed, and the result was determined to be (0.854), which is a respectable dependability coefficient. Second, the Alpha-Cronbach equation is used in the method of analysis of variance, producing a trustworthy coefficient (0.877) that is also widely acknowledged. On the other hand. The split-half approach, in which the test was divided into two parts with the first half including items with odd sequences and the second half including even sequences, was used by the researcher to confirm the dependability of the speaking performance test. The degrees of the two halves have a pearson correlation coefficient of (0.749). Using the equation Spearman Brown, the correlation coefficient's value was adjusted to determine the stability coefficient's value, which came out at (-0.856), which is regarded as an excellent stability coefficient. Cronbach's alpha equation also is used, which is stability coefficient was (0.867).

## 4.Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The following are data analysis and presentation of results according to the statistical processing of data obtained through tools management.

#### 4.1 Results Related to the First Aim

Finding out the interpersonal intelligence of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students is the study's first goal. In order to know the significance of the statistical discrepancies between the sample's arithmetic mean of scores and the scale's hypothetical mean, the researcher utilized the t-test on one sample to accomplish this goal. It is evident from the results that students in preparatory schools have low interpersonal IQ levels. According to the calculated t-value, the difference between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean was (35,479), which is statistically significant when compared to the tabulated T-value (1,960) at a significance level (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (198). The results are shown in table (5).

**Table (5): Results of T-Test for One Sample to Identify the Level of students' interpersonal intelligence.**

Sample	mean	Standard deviation	hypothetical mean	T-value		Level of significant	Judgment
				Calculated	Tableted		
200	14,215	4,298	25	35,479	1,690	0,05	For the hypothetical mean

#### 4.2 Results Related to the Second Aim

To fulfill the goal of "finding the level of speaking performance of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students. "The results show that the students perform poorly on the speaking performance test, as the calculated t-value indicates the difference between the sample mean and the hypothetical mean (29,759) which is statistically significant when computed. The researcher used the t-test for one sample to determine the significance of the statistical differences between the arithmetic mean of the sample's scores and the hypothetical mean. This discrepancy is therefore determined to favor the fictitious mean. the results are shown in Table (6 ).

**Table(6): Results of T-Test for One Sample to Identify the Level of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' Speaking Performance**

Sample	mean	standard deviation	Arithmetic Mean	T-value		Level of significance	Judgment
				Calculated	Tabulated		
200	9,790	3,901	18	29,759	1,960	0,05	For the mean

### 4.3 Results Related to the Third Aim

Finding the correlation between students' speaking performance and their interpersonal intelligence is the third goal of the current study. Pearson correlation coefficient is used to determine the correlation between the two variables in order to achieve this goal. The t-test is used to determine the statistical significance of the value of the estimated correlation coefficient. Calculated t-value is compared to the tabulated t-value which is found (1,960) at level of significance (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (198), this is the evident that the calculated t-value is statistically significant. The findings demonstrate that there is a large statistically significant correlation between students' speaking performance and interpersonal intelligence. The results are shown in the table (7).

**Table :(7) T-Value for the Significance of Calculated Correlation Coefficients Between Interpersonal Intelligence and Speaking Performance of Preparatory School Students**

No.	Calculated correlation coefficient	T-Value		Level of Judgment Significance	Judgment
		calculated	tabulated		
200	0,578	10,140	1,960	0,05	Significant

## **Conclusions**

In the light of the study findings, the following conclusions are drawn

1. Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' interpersonal intelligence is low.
2. Iraqi EFL preparatory school students' speaking performance is low.
3. There is a strong correlation between students' interpersonal Intelligence and their speaking performance.

## **Recommendations**

The following educational suggestions are offered in light of the findings and conclusions.

1. The Ministry of Education is encouraged to establish curricula that gives greater thought to interpersonal intelligence, which has been found to be directly associated to learning and strong speaking abilities of EFL students.
2. Iraqi EFL teachers need professional development in their knowledge of multiple intelligences theory to expand their understanding of the value of interpersonal intelligence and its correlation with speaking performance.
3. Iraqi EFL teachers should create such an environment, which is favorable for the development of all the intelligences, keeping in view individual differences and interpersonal skill of the students.

## Appendix( A)

### Interpersonal Intelligence Questionnaire

Please check the box next to each of the statements below to indicate how serious your condition is. SD, D, A, or A.

SD : Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree , A : Agree SA : Strongly Agree

NO	Question list	SD 1	D 2	A 3	SA 4
1	At work or in my community, I'm the kind of person who others turn to for advice and guidance.				
2	I prefer group sports like badminton, volleyball, or softball to solo sports such as swimming and jogging.				
3	When I have a problem, I'm more likely to seek out another person for help than attempt to work it out on my own.				
4	I have at least three close friends				
5	I favor social pastimes such as Monopoly or bridge over individual recreations such as video games and solitaire.				
6	I enjoy the challenge of teaching another person, or groups of people, what I know how to do.				
7	I consider myself a leader (or others have called me that).				
8	I feel comfortable in the midst of a crowd.				
9	I like to get involved in social activities connected with my work, church, or community.				
10	I would rather spend my evenings at a lively party than stay at home alone.				

## Appendix B

### Speaking Interview

This phase tests the student's ability to use social greeting, to provide information about him/her. The examiner's main aim is to help the students to relax.

Items
1- Good morning/ afternoon/ hello, please have a seat.
2- What is your name?
3- Where do you live?
4- How do you feel today?

Choose one of the following pictures then answer these questions.



1	What kind of films do you like to watch and why ?
2	What do you remember when you see these pictures ?can you tell me about your favorite characters in these pictures?
3	Could you describe what is happening in this scene ?
4	Imagine yourself within this film, what will you do and why?
5	Could you tell me about a film you have watched recently?
6	Which do you prefer: watching a film on TV/on video or watching a film in the cinema and why?

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