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Finding out Iraqi EFL Preparatory School Students' Intrapersonal Intelligence and Speaking Performance: A Correlational Study

A B S T R A C T

The present paper investigates the correlation between intrapersonal intelligence and speaking performance at the preparatory school level in Iraq. Although speaking is a fundamental skill for communication, many students struggle to master it within a foreign language (FL) context. This challenge is often attributed to various underlying factors, including low self-esteem, heightened anxiety, and a deficit in the awareness of productive learning strategies. Intrapersonal intelligence is defined as being self-aware and possessing the ability to understand one's own emotions, motives, and goals is hypothesized to play a crucial role in helping students handle these challenges and improve their speaking proficiency. The study aims to determine the level of intrapersonal intelligence among students, evaluate their speaking performance, and identify the correlation between these two variables. By understanding this relationship, the paper seeks to assist educators in developing focused pedagogical approaches to enhance students' oral proficiency. The sample consists of 130 randomly selected Iraqi EFL fifth preparatory students from Karbala Governorate during the 2024–2025 academic year. The methodology employs two main instruments: a Speaking Performance Test to evaluate oral communication proficiency and an Intrapersonal Intelligence Questionnaire to assess students' self-awareness and their capacity to understand their own emotions and motives.

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التعرف على الذكاء الشخصي والأداء الكلامي لطلاب المدارس الإعدادية العراقيين دارسي اللغة
الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية: دراسة ارتباطية

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الخلاصة:

يتناول البحث العلاقة بين الذكاء الشخصي وأداء التحدث على مستوى المدارس المتوسطة في العراق. على الرغم من أن التحدث يعد مهارة أساسية للتواصل، إلا أن العديد من الطلاب يجدون صعوبة في إتقانها في سياق اللغة الأجنبية (FL). غالبًا ما يُعزى هذا التحدي إلى عوامل أساسية مختلفة، بما في

ذلك تدني احترام الذات، وزيادة القلق، والعجز في الوعي باستراتيجيات التعلم المنتجة. يتم تعريف الذكاء الشخصي على أنه الوعي الذاتي وامتلاك القدرة على فهم مشاعر الفرد ودوافعه وأهدافه، ويُفترض أنه يلعب دورًا حاسمًا في مساعدة الطلاب على التعامل مع هذه التحديات وتحسين كفاءتهم في التحدث. تهدف الدراسة إلى تحديد مستوى الذكاء الشخصي لدى الطلبة، وتقييم أدائهم في التحدث، والتعرف على العلاقة بين هذين المتغيرين. ومن خلال فهم هذه العلاقة، يسعى البحث إلى مساعدة المعلمين في تطوير مناهج تربوية مركزة لتعزيز الكفاءة الشفهية للطلاب. تتكون العينة من ١٣٠ طالباً عراقياً تم اختيارهم عشوائياً من طلاب المرحلة الإعدادية الخامسة للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من محافظة كربلاء خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٤-٢٠٢٥. استخدمت المنهجية أداتين رئيسيتين: اختبار أداء التحدث لتقييم كفاءة التواصل الشفهي واستبيان الذكاء الشخصي لتقييم الوعي الذاتي للطلاب وقدرتهم على فهم عواطفهم ودوافعهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء الشخصي، أداء التحدث، ارتباطية.

1. Introduction

Effective speaking performance in a foreign language (FL) is a prime goal for many language learners, even though it often raises significant challenges. Dissimilar to native language communication, FL speaking stresses on the mastery of various linguistic components, including vocabulary, pronunciation, besides grammar, combined with the capacity to manage psychological factors. Students commonly experience “stage fright, low self-esteem, and anxiety” when they are asked to perform speaking drills in front of peers or teachers. These emotional impediments can create significant barriers to learning, leading students to avoid participation and shy away from opportunities to practice, ultimately hindering their progress (Normawati & Muna, 2015; Brown, 2007). This phenomenon is a widespread problem in language education nowadays.

Overcoming these speaking challenges is not exclusively dependent on linguistic knowledge it's also rooted in a student's internal resources and beliefs

regarding their capabilities. Students' self-perception as well as their intrapersonal intelligence 'their capacity for self-awareness and understanding of their personal innermost potentials' are crucial in defining their perceived self-efficacy in language learning. Gardner (2006) suggested that individuals who have higher intrapersonal intelligence confide in their ability to be more competent, interested, and inspired in their learning endeavors. This implies that students who are mindful of their dominant intelligences and learning approaches have a tendency to be more successful (Brunton et al., 2006).

Putting in mind these considerations, it is appropriate to explore how intrapersonal intelligence correlates with speaking performance among preparatory school students. Understanding this relationship can have a spotlight on the inside influences that contribute to or obstruct speaking proficiency, offering valuable perceptions for educationalists to develop more effective pedagogical strategies.

2. Concept of Intrapersonal Intelligence

The intelligence refers to the ability to think by oneself in the absence of social procedures. It helps individuals gain a realistic and honest understanding of their identity and goals. This form of intelligence is used by those seeking to understand themselves better. Intrapersonal intelligence (II) supports productivity, creativity, and learning (Sadiku & Musa, 2021). Intrapersonal intelligence (II), as theorized by Howard Gardner in his theory of Multiple Intelligences, discusses an individual's ability for self-understanding. This intelligence encompasses the ability to raise awareness of one's own emotions, motivations, goals, and principles. Individuals with strong intrapersonal intelligence are able to comprehend the world, other people, and themselves. In this situation, the circle of self-awareness and self-understanding is where intrapersonal intelligence first enters. Being in harmony with one's ideas and

feelings leads to being in harmony with other people's thoughts and feelings. Accordingly, intrapersonal intelligence may be described as a link between understanding oneself and understanding others (Parvez, 2021). Individuals that possess intrapersonal intelligence are able to succeed in interpersonal communication processes because they have acquired empathy abilities. Intrapersonal communication is linked to intrapersonal intelligence.

Intrapersonal communication includes self-talk, imagination, and memory. Intrapersonal communication allows us to plan, solve problems, resolve conflicts, and evaluate ourselves and others. According to McLean (2005), mental engagement occurs without externalization and is based on past experiences with the outside world.

Intrapersonal intelligence refers to understanding a person's personality, preferences, and behaviour in different settings, allowing them to make informed judgements. (Saban, 2002). These three combinations are crucial for effective learning and growth. Intrapersonal intelligence is the capacity to comprehend one's own personality and identity. This involves recognizing one's strengths, limitations, moods, desires, and objectives. Intrapersonal intelligence helps individuals remember more about themselves than just their talents and abilities. According to Christison (2005) intrapersonal intelligence helps individuals manage with emotions and develop self-awareness.

Those who are possess strong intrapersonal intelligence have the ability to develop a deep understanding of their inner self, as well as their strengths, weaknesses, needs, and fears (Gardner, 2006). This self-knowledge allows them to adjust their own emotions, performances, and cognitions effectually.

Key characteristics of intrapersonal intelligence can include:

1. Self-awareness is the capacity to recognize and comprehend one's own motivations, feelings, and attitudes as well as how they affect other people.
2. Self-regulation is the ability to restrain or refocus erratic moods and urges, as well as the propensity to put judgement aside and consider actions before taking them.
3. Motivation: The desire to labour for motives other than money or prestige, the propensity to pursue objectives with vigour and perseverance.
4. The capacity to understand the emotional composition of others is known as empathy.
5. Social skills: The ability to connect and discover common ground; proficiency in network organization and relationship management.

Gardner (2006) highlights that intrapersonal intelligence is not about being withdrawn or shy; rather, it is about having a vibrant and correct picture of oneself. This self-understanding can be a commanding tool for personal growth and accomplishment, as individuals can make informed decisions regarding their learning paths and adapt their environment to be most prolific.

2.1 Intrapersonal Intelligence in the L2 Classroom

The role of intrapersonal intelligence (II) in the second language (L2) classroom is noteworthy, especially regarding a student's ability to engross himself in the learning process and handle the emotional needs of learning a new language. Students with high levels of intrapersonal intelligence are better prepared to navigate the challenges characteristic in L2 acquisition. (Parvez, 2021). According to Sadiku and Musa (2021) L2 classroom, intrapersonal intelligence can be apparent in quite a few ways:

- a) **Motivation and Perseverance:** A profound understanding of one's own motivations can fuel determination in the face of difficulties. L2 learning often encompasses frustration and hindrances, and students with strong II can tap into their inherent motivation to continue practicing and enlightening, even when advancement feels slow.
- b) **Goal Setting and Self-Direction:** Students with high II are frequently able to set accurate and personal learning goals. They recognize their own learning styles and preferences, empowering them to plan effective strategies to attain their L2 proficiency objectives. They take possession of their learning journey, instead of relying exclusively on the teacher for direction.
- c) **Self-Correction and Reflection:** Intrapersonal intelligent learners are skillful at self-reflection. They can judgmentally assess their own performance, detect areas for improvement in their speaking, and fine-tune their learning approaches consequently. This reflective capacity is central for continuous language development.
- d) **Utilizing Personal Strengths:** Students with high II can fully utilize their personal strengths to improve their L2 learning. For instance, if they understand they pick up learning best through autonomous study, they might seek out additional materials or practice prospects outside of class.
- e) **Managing Anxiety and Inhibition:** The self-awareness characteristic in II can help students recognize and manage their anxieties related to speaking in the L2. By means of understanding their emotional responses, they can utilize coping mechanisms and slowly drive themselves out of their comfort zones, leading to better self-confidence and contribution.

Romero (2006) emphasized that inner factors, for example, low self-esteem, can be substantial impediments to speaking proficiency. On the other hand, Gardner (2006) proposed that students with strong intrapersonal

intelligence would feel more experienced and motivated to contribute to their learning, therefore potentially justifying these issues. By distinguishing their own learning preferences in addition to strengths, students can implement strategies that line up with their intrapersonal intelligence, leading to more effective and pleasurable L2 learning experiences.

3. Concept of Speaking Skill

Speaking skill is often considered the most vital of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) for the reason that it is the principal means of communication. It involves much more than simply producing sounds; it is a complex, interactive process of constructing meaning through both verbal and non-verbal cues. (Brownell, 2015).

3.1 Significance of Speaking Skill

The significance of speaking skill in language learning and real-world communication cannot be overstated. It is the active production of language, allowing individuals to express their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and intentions to others. Key aspects highlighting its significance include:

1. **Primary Mode of Communication:** In most daily interactions, speaking is the most frequently used skill. From casual conversations with family and friends to formal presentations in academic or professional settings, speaking facilitates the exchange of information and fosters human connection (Perez & Ruz, 2014).
2. **Foundation for Other Skills:** Speaking is often intertwined with listening. Effective oral communication requires not only producing coherent utterances but also understanding and responding appropriately to an interlocutor. It also supports the development of other skills; for instance,

practicing speaking can reinforce grammatical structures and vocabulary learned through reading or listening. (Foralová, 2007).

3. Immediate Feedback: Unlike writing, speaking provides immediate feedback from the listener, allowing for real-time negotiation of meaning, clarification, and correction. This dynamic interaction is crucial for refining language use. (Burns 2019).
4. Demonstration of Proficiency: A student's ability to speak fluently and accurately is often seen as a direct indicator of their overall language proficiency. It establishes the foundation for their command of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and communicative strategies. (Perez & Ruz, 2014).
5. Social Integration and Confidence: The ability to use a foreign language confidently permits individuals to take part more fully in social situations, create relationships, besides expressing their personality. Contrariwise, an absence of this skill may likely contribute to the feelings of isolation, frustration, and a unwillingness to participate. (Luoma,2004).
6. Real-World Application: The eventual goal of learning a foreign language for countless individuals is to use it in everyday frameworks, whether for travel, academic success, or professional opportunities. Speaking is requisite for achieving these practical aims. (Brownell, 2015).

3.2 Fundamentals of Speaking Skill

The productiveness of speaking skill is constructed according several fundamental constituents that learners ought to control to communicate evidently and meaningfully.

3.2.1 Interconnected Speech

In order to speak the FL successfully, students need to be able to link their speech in addition to forming split phonemes. The FL speakers must be able to

develop their fluent linked speech and produce single phonemes for the FL. Consequently, educators must focus on improving their linked speech (Crystal, 2011).

3.2.2 Expressive Devise

Beyond speaking in a specific dialogue with others, the essential goal is to express sentiments and ideas in such a way that the hearer of the discussion understands. A communication device is a modification of voice, emphasis, and word loudness used to portray emotions. Using such a technology allows learners to alter meaning. Speakers must be able to govern at least some of these supra-segmental qualities and techniques in the same way if they want to become entirely effective communicators (Sebeok 2001).

3.2.3 Grammar and Lexis

Using a variety of the most well-known lexical phrases is a sign of natural speech, particularly when carrying out certain language activities. Therefore, teachers should encourage or provide a variety of words for a range of purposes, such as agreement, disagreement, or the expression of astonishment, shock, or acceptance. Teachers may create them in the best possible way using certain helpful words that they can develop at various phases of connection in various speaking circumstances, such a job interview (Römer, 2017).

3.2.4 Language Negotiation

The negotiation language that students employ to ask questions and clarify the structure of their sentences is advantageous to proficient speakers. Students frequently need to "seek for clarification" when they hear someone else speaking. The function of teachers is crucial, and they may teach pupils expressions like these: I apologise; I didn't fully understand that. (I apologise.) I

don't get it. What is meant by X exactly? Would you mind repeating that? (Page 112, Lzard, 1977)

3.3 Speaking Characteristics

Speaking skills must be carefully evaluated, which is the main reason why some students have trouble with oral performance. In order to assist students engage productively in real-world circumstances and to identify some of the values for understanding this ability, this aids in the organization of educational activities (Burns 2019). Below, certain speech traits are introduced and then addressed in further detail.

1. **Face-to-face communication:** Since immediate feedback is possible, most talks take place when the speakers and listeners are present at the same time and place. In conversations between speakers and listeners, body language, facial expressions, and gestures are all employed (Ann, 2014).
2. **Speaking is interactive:** Since the conversation begins at a desirable moment, speaking in person or over the phone takes a long time. Playing roles in conversations with a large number of individuals or with at least one participant is not the same as this (Brownell, 2015). This means that whether speaking to one or more people in person or over the phone, the speaker has to be involved at the right moment to strengthen argument techniques (Cornbleet & Carter, 2001).
3. **Real-Time Speaking:** When a speaker begins a conversation, he thinks passionately and speaks for a while before changing his mind in the middle. According to Foster et al. (2000), this is known as a false beginning. Miller (2001) suggests that speakers communicate themselves in short, straightforward sentences rather than long, intricate terms that individuals employ in writing. Additionally, the speakers frequently recite

their speech because they forget what they were going to say or even what they have said. Using techniques like generic expressions, hesitancy devices, self-correction, rephrasing, and repetition, speakers can overcome these difficulties and become more fluent and cautious with speaking production time. This is related to the idea that producing speech through communication stresses out producers, but it also gives them the ability to overcome these difficulties. Hughes (2002)

3.4 Purpose of Speech

Speaking is fundamentally a component of everyday communication and interpersonal interaction; when someone talks, they need to be able to identify what they are talking about and understand the idea behind it. To identify the many purposes of speaking, a number of linguists have tried to ascertain the function of speech in interpersonal communication (Luoma,2004). Richards (2008, p. 21) states: "In workshops with teachers and when developing my materials, I employ a three-part version of Brown and Yule's framework—speak as interaction, talk as a transaction, and talk as a performance." Every one of those speaking activities has a distinct function and necessitates a particular teaching approach. The following is an explanation of these positions:

1. **Speaking as interaction:** To establish a good exchange, students need to be able to communicate right immediately. Students avoid situations that need them to speak in the language because they lack confidence in their ability to do so, and they always start and stop abruptly because they are uncomfortable and tend to forget words (Willis, 2021). It is very difficult to handle the art of speech as interaction, and not all language learners can handle speaking as a priority, according to Rivers (2018). However, pupils lose the correct words in instances where they need to communicate successfully because they are afraid and unwilling to speak when they realize they lack the required communication skills.

2. **Speaking as a transaction:** this type of speech function focuses on the words that are said, particularly the shared message, which may be the most important aspect of its meaning. In order to create the letter in a meaningful way, this style of discourse requires a particular degree of linguistic precision, which is often retained when students establish such exchanges (King & Ng, 2018). Students absorb the idea that "talk is associated with other activities" through a range of interactive exercises. For instance, in a science class, students can be involved in practical exercises to investigate ideas related to floating and sinking. Students and teachers typically concentrate on meaning or talking their way to comprehension in this kind of spoken language (Jones, 2000). The average linguistic accuracy that students achieve after completing various types of interactional activities is a critical problem related to the use of speech as a daily-life transaction.
3. **Speaking as performance:** According to Richards (2007), SP is defined as the public speaker who may utilize this style of speaking to recount facts in formal reports, speeches in front of an audience, and classroom presentations. Speech as a performance is likely to follow a familiar structure, such as a welcome speech, and be in the form of a monologue rather than an interlocutor.

3.5 Speaking: Knowledge vs. Skill

Being able to communicate smoothly in a foreign language is the primary objective of speaking instruction for pupils. It's possible that teaching and learning SP are both challenging procedures. The mechanism has several "wheels" that must cooperate in order for "the whole" to function properly. Students must be able to comprehend what others are trying to say while also being able to carry out their messages with ease if the primary objective is communication skills (Foralová, 2007).

However, when students begin practicing SP of a FL, there is another phase in the learning process that must be taken into account. Securing the transfer of skills from a controlled classroom setting to a real-life scenario is the term for this phase. Wilkins (1974) emphasized the importance of this particular step. He [the student] will only learn what he has experienced, just like with everything else. It will be difficult for him to manage his own language creation if it is entirely managed from outside. He won't be able to apply what he has learned in a language-learning context to a language-using one.

The ability to control one's own SP and make judgments in communication is another name for interaction skill. Choosing what to say, how to say it, and whether to develop it in line with one's aims while preserving the desired relationships with others are examples of communication decisions (Bygate, 2003).

3.6 Students' Problems in Speaking

The issues that students could encounter during SP are addressed in this section. The barriers are gathered and their primary reasons are identified. Therefore, it is important for EFL students to feel at ease and secure when practicing SP. In SP, EFL should attempt to take chances. It is suggested that SP is the only way for pupils to learn to speak (Scrivener, 2005).

3.7 Reasons for Students' Reluctance to Speak

Studies on speaking abilities have shown that the majority of EFL are either unprepared or not yet ready to talk. There may be differences in the primary causes of EFL students' reluctance to talk. The most frequent reasons why pupils become reluctant can be identified. For the majority of learners, their prior learning experiences are the factor limiting their SP. They might not have the assistance they need to communicate in class. Traditional FL teaching

and learning approaches do not consider SP to be the most important skill. Accuracy of language structures is emphasized heavily in their courses. Therefore, reading and writing exercises that focus on grammatical elements must be a part of their typical language lesson plan (Kerr, 2014).

It is also typical for EFL classrooms to have a big number of students, which results in a relatively limited opportunity for pupils to speak. Personal characteristics might be another factor contributing to pupils' reluctance. Many students with introverted personalities may find it difficult to express themselves in front of their peers. Being the center of attention bothers them. As a result, SP can cause them problems. Students' hesitation to communicate might be attributed to a variety of factors. It seems more sensible to group them together. They identify three categories of sources that might elicit students' hesitancy. These elements include emotive, linguistic, and cultural aspects (Burns & Joyce, 2007).

Students' past educational experiences are the source of cultural variables. Issues with FL's phonetics and phonology are a few examples of linguistic variables that limit SP. Furthermore, inadequate grasp of cultural background and social norms, as well as rudimentary knowledge of grammar structures, are essential for comprehending meaning in a foreign language. Affective aspects include things like low motivation, classroom anxiety, bad social experiences, and cultural norms (Gonzalez, 2004).

3.8 Students' Problems with Speaking Activities

Several prevalent difficulties encountered by learners are examined as follows:

1. Native language: This issue mostly affects schools with a large student population that speaks the same language. EFL students sometimes "switch" to their home tongue during SP activities since, according to their

reports, they are not exposed to a FL enough. When a student believes that he lacks a suitable term or structure, he can convey his ideas more easily in his home tongue. Additionally, speaking with his peers in a FL feels "unnatural" to him (Kecskes & Papp, 2000, p. 2).

2. Inhibition: Students are frequently encouraged to express themselves in front of their instructor or peers through SP exercises. Some students could find such a setting challenging. They get sensitive when they make errors or fail to express themselves correctly. As a result, they fear being made fun of and humiliated (Pawlak et al., 2011).
3. Lack of thoughts to share: Students assert that they are never able to recall or consider the precise meaning of a given subject. They say they don't know enough about the subject, they're bored, or they don't have anything to say (Helman, 2009).
- 4- Participation issues: Only one student may speak at a time during SP exercises, and many pupils in the classroom are not eager to participate or speak. There is extremely little time for speaking with students. Additionally, certain students have a tendency to dominate the conversation whereas the majority of students either talk very little or not at all (Keith & Lundberg, 2016).

As stated by Tsui (1994), there are five complications influence students' SP in teaching space.

- 1- Students' anxiety about making mistakes in front of their peers,
- 2- Students' inaccurate assessment of their average proficiency: Some EFL students generally have a tendency to underestimate their abilities. These elements can be linked to low self-esteem and an underestimation of their linguistic skills, which makes them hesitant to take chances—a crucial need for SP.

- 3- Teachers' intolerance of silence: The majority of FL teachers give their students little to no time to consider their responses.
- 4- Unequal participation: When collecting answers to their inquiries, teachers frequently speak to "smarter" students. This issue is related to the point, which is that teachers find stillness intolerable.
- 5- Incomprehensible input: In many circumstances, a teacher's speech is seen too challenging, and their questions to students are not sufficiently clear.

3.9 Elements that Affect Students' Ability to Speak

The majority of language learners worldwide study FL in order to improve their SP of FL. It is really challenging to comprehend the talk's content and use FL effectively (Martínez-Flor et al., 2008). More than simply internalising grammatical or semantic components is required to acquire a FL; one must also understand how native speakers use their language while generating interpersonal interchangeable speech, where a number of elements interact (Scrivener, 2005). According to Shumin (2002), the following are the primary elements that might influence students' SP:

- 1- Age or Maturation Constraints: According to certain linguists and educators, pupils who begin their learning process early—that is, by being exposed to naturalistic information throughout childhood—may achieve a better degree of competence than those who start later in life. This suggests that the maturation age has an effect on the learning process as it may reduce the learner's capacity to assimilate and speak the language (Andersen & Krashen, 1990).
- 2- Aural Medium: improving speaking abilities can be greatly aided by listening skills. In the framework of learning, speaking serves as the primary source of listening, which comes before it. As a result, speaking

is associated with hearing, which is the fundamental producer used to acquire language skills (Tuan & Mai, 2015).

- 3- Socio-Cultural Factors: Since language exchange occurs within a created interpersonal interaction in which meaning is socially built, language tends to be a sociable behaviour. This illustrates how important it is to educate us how to speak the FL in a social setting (Lou & Noels, 2016).
- 4- Affective Factors: anxiety, empathy, motivation, attitude, emotions, and self-esteem are the primary affective factors that are centrally correlated with FL. These factors are among the most important ones for language learning because they can directly affect whether a language learning attempt is successful or not. It is evident that the emotional aspects of learners play a critical role in explaining individual variations in learning results. Although students' attitudes towards language acquisition are probably pretty constant, their emotional states are frequently erratic, impacting not just their overall development but also how they react to specific learning tasks on a daily and even moment-by-moment basis.
(Leong & Ahmadi, 2017)

3.10 Forms of Speaking Performance in the Classroom

There are six appropriate oral production techniques that students are expected to practise in the classroom setting (Nunan, 2003).

- 1- Imitative: in a classroom setting, students are given a very specified amount of speaking time to produce conversation. For instance, they may practise a tone or attempt to recognise a certain vowel sound. The purpose of this exercise is to identify certain particular language form elements. The "Drills" provide pupils with the opportunity to hear and repeat verbally specific language forms that can lead to a variety of grammatical and phonological issues.

- 2- intense: intense speech goes beyond the extreme to incorporate any SP that is used to carry out certain grammatical constructs or synchronic linguistics. Another way to describe intensive speaking is as a self-initiated activity, or as a component of a pair work activity.
- 3- Responsive: most student conversations in the classroom are brief answers to questions, discussions, or remarks made by the teacher or by the students themselves. These responses frequently suffice and don't go beyond discourse. It is genuine and significant.
- 4- Transactional (Dialogue): An enlarged version of the responsive language, transaction language is used to conduct out or exchange particular information.
- 5- Interpersonal (Dialogue): this type of conversation is used to foster social relationships as opposed to recounting facts and information. Since these conversations may have any or all of the following elements, they are more difficult for students to comprehend: emotional language, slang, informal, mocking, heated language, and a "agenda."
- 6- Extensive (Monologue): students in preparatory phases need to be able to provide more monologues in the form of brief speeches, abstracts, or oral reports. These speeches might be scheduled or spontaneous.

3. Methodology: Population, Sampling and the Study Instruments

The study population is constituted of Iraqi EFL fifth preparatory school students in Karbala governorate for the academic year (2024–2025). The present study sample consists of ١٣٠ students who have been randomly selected from Iraqi EFL preparatory schools in Karbala region.

To achieve the aims of the current study, two instruments have been used by the researcher:

- Speaking Performance Test: The researcher utilized a speaking test specifically to evaluate the students' performance and proficiency in oral communication.
- Intrapersonal Intelligence Questionnaire: A questionnaire was administered to assess the students' levels of intrapersonal intelligence, which involves their self-awareness and understanding of their own emotions and motives.

4. Results

The analysis of the data collected from the speaking performance tests and intrapersonal intelligence questionnaires yielded the following primary results:

- a. High Levels of Intrapersonal Intelligence: The data reveals that Iraqi EFL preparatory school students generally exhibit a high degree of intrapersonal intelligence, which is indicative of a strong level of self-awareness and internal knowledge.
- b. Mid-Level Speaking Performance: Despite demonstrating strong intrapersonal intelligence, the test results indicate that these students possess only a mid-level speaking performance in English.
- c. Positive Correlation: The correlational analysis demonstrates a significant positive correlation between the students' speaking performance and their intrapersonal intelligence.
- d. Predictive Value of Intrapersonal Intelligence: The findings establish that the variance in students' speaking abilities can be largely explained by their intrapersonal intelligence, underscoring its function as a reliable predictor of success in oral communication.

5. Discussion of Results

The findings of this study offer important insights into the relationship between internal psychological resources and external language production among preparatory EFL learners. The disconnect between internal awareness and oral application. One of the most notable findings is that while students exhibit high intrapersonal intelligence, their actual speaking performance remains at a mid-level. This indicates a distinct disconnect between their internal resources and the practical application of oral communication. While intrapersonal intelligence equips students with the ability to understand their own emotions, motives, and goals, speaking a foreign language remains a highly complex, interactive process that goes beyond simply producing sounds. The mid-level performance may be attributed to the affective barriers commonly experienced in EFL classrooms, where students frequently face "stage fright, low self-esteem, and anxiety" during speaking drills. Additionally, students often struggle with securing the transfer of skills from a controlled classroom setting to real-life scenarios, which may prevent their high internal intelligence from fully translating into fluent spoken output. The Impact of Intrapersonal Intelligence on Speaking Proficiency.

The significant positive correlation found between speaking performance and intrapersonal intelligence aligns with the theoretical framework that more self-awareness is linked to improved speaking skills. As suggested by Gardner (2006), students with strong intrapersonal intelligence feel more experienced and motivated to contribute to their learning, which can potentially justify and mitigate emotional impediments like low self-esteem. Because intrapersonal intelligent learners are skillful at self-reflection, they can critically assess their own performance, detect areas for improvement, and fine-tune their learning

approaches. This reflective capacity serves as a foundational tool for continuous language development. Intrapersonal Intelligence as a Predictor of Success

The results underscore that intrapersonal intelligence largely explains the variance in students' speaking abilities. This reinforces the concept that overcoming speaking challenges is not exclusively dependent on linguistic knowledge, but is deeply rooted in a student's internal resources and beliefs regarding their capabilities. Ultimately, these findings highlight how crucial it is for educators to take into account students' psychological and self-management skills as primary determinants of their growth as foreign language speakers. Developing pedagogical strategies that nurture this intrapersonal intelligence could provide a focused approach to enhancing students' overall speaking proficiency.

6. Conclusions

The following conclusions on intrapersonal intelligence and speaking proficiency among Iraqi EFL preparatory school students are derived from the results of this correlational study:

- 1) Intrapersonal intelligence, which indicates a high degree of self-awareness and internal knowledge, is often high among Iraqi EFL preparation school students.
- 2) These children have a mid-level speaking performance in English despite having strong intrapersonal intelligence, indicating a disconnect between their internal resources and their oral communication application.
- 3) Students' speaking performance and intrapersonal intelligence significantly positively correlate, suggesting that more self-awareness is linked to improved speaking skills.

- 4) The variance in students' speaking abilities may be largely explained by intrapersonal intelligence, underscoring its function as a predictor of oral communication success.

These findings highlight how crucial it is to take into account students' psychological and self-management skills, particularly intrapersonal intelligence, as determinants of their growth as foreign language speakers.

7. Recommendations and Suggestions

The following points outline the proposed pedagogical and research directions derived from the study's findings:

- 1) To further understand how intrapersonal intelligence affects students' speaking ability, future study should think about utilising qualitative techniques such case studies, reflective diaries, and interviews.
- 2) To investigate whether the relationship between intrapersonal intelligence and speaking performance changes with age or academic level, comparable research with students from various educational stages (such as fifthary or university level) is recommended.

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