

Examining emotions in English language learning classes: A case of EFL emotions

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Emotions play a significant role in learning in general, and foreign language learning in particular. Although with the rise of humanistic approaches, enough attention has been given to the affective domain in language learning, the emotions English as a foreign language (EFL) learners experience regarding English language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing have not gained adequate attention. Accordingly, this study investigates whether language skills play any role in engendering emotions in EFL learners, or in other words, how language skills affect EFL learners' emotions. To this end, 20 students were interviewed to elicit their views about the emotions they experienced in EFL classes, as a basis for constructing the EFL Skills Emotions Questionnaire containing 20 items. Then, 308 students were asked to take the newly-designed scale. Afterwards, confirmatory factor analysis was utilised to validate the scale, and then EFL learners' emotions generated by language skills were measured and compared using ANOVA. Findings indicated that EFL learners experience anger mostly over listening skills, enjoyment and pride over speaking, shame over listening and speaking, hope, boredom, and hopelessness over writing and listening, and finally, anxiety over all of language skills. Finally the results were discussed and some suggestions were made for future research.

Introduction

Scientifically, there is no single agreed-upon definition of emotion. However, Freud (1911, as cited in Pishghadam, Adamson & Shayesteh, 2013) takes the stance that emotion is like a wayward horse which is taken over by the rational ego. In other words, emotion is the representation of internal states and is tied to physical and sensory feelings (Lazarus, 1999). Obviously, emotions can significantly affect learning in general (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz & Perry, 2002), and foreign language learning in particular (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Mendez Lopez & Pea Aguilar, 2013). Moods and emotions can affect cognitive processes like memory and perception (Parkinson, Totterdell, Briner & Reynolds, 1996). Assuming this, a number of studies in different fields have been done to show the significance of emotions experienced in educational settings, such as research on students' test anxiety, which has continuously been under investigation since the 1930s (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007), and achievement motivation (Heckhausen, 1991, as cited in Pekrun, Frenzel, Goetz & Perry, 2007). Considering the fact that "the classroom is an emotional place" (Pekrun, 2014, p. 6), and bearing in mind that one's emotions affect his/her learning process, motivation, performance, identity development, and even health (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007), it is worthwhile to give more detailed and meticulous attention to academic emotions. According to Pekrun et al. (2002a), academic emotions, which include enjoyment, pride, boredom, and hopelessness, to name a few, are the emotions experienced in an academic setting and are related to students' learning, classroom instruction, and achievement. Moreover, a number of other studies have been done

focusing on the role of affective aspects and emotions in different domains of education (e.g., Goleman, 1995; Linnenbrink, 2006; Schutz & Lanehart, 2002).

Having been defined as "the emotional side of human behavior" (Brown, 1994, p. 135), the affective domain plays a significant role in foreign language learning too. Although there is no doubt about the significance of affective factors in language learning process, no attention has been given to them until the rise of humanistic approach and its particular attention to the affective domain and emotional states (Mendez Lopez & Pea Aguilar, 2013). When it comes to language learning, it should be noted that investigating the role of emotion is not a novel phenomenon in the domain of second/foreign language teaching and learning (Pishghadam, Adamson & Shayesteh, 2013); however, there is only scanty research done on emotions experienced by English language learners (Imai, 2010; Pishghadam, 2009). Despite this, previous literature has indicated that language learners experience a variety of both negative and positive emotions such as enjoyment and pride (Goetz, Frenzel, Hall & Pekrun, 2008), fear (Ellis, 1994), and anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). Assuming this, existing literature has focused more on the destructive impacts of negative emotions like anxiety and has not paid adequate attention to the beneficial impacts of positive emotions (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz & Perry, 2002b). Keeping this in mind, although several studies have been done on emotions in the English as a foreign language (EFL) domain, there has been no comprehensive study focusing on how language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) can evoke emotions such as boredom, hopelessness, shame, and enjoyment, to name a few.

Consequently, this body of research can be distinguished from prior literature in terms of its focus on examining the role of language skills in engendering a variety of positive and negative emotions, which surely function differently, but should be studied simultaneously. To this end, the present study aims to, at first, develop and validate a scale called *EFL Skills Emotions Scale*, which assesses EFL learners' emotional states engendered by language skills. The second aim of this study is to measure the emotions EFL learners experience with regard to language skills. Thus, our research questions are:

- Q1. What factors underlie the EFL Skills Emotions Scale?
- Q2. Do language skills play any significant role in engendering emotions?

Theoretical framework

Unlike other concepts in science, there is no single agreed definition of emotion. Nevertheless, there is a considerable consensus that emotion is an affective reaction that changes the way of thinking, behaving and expressing (Scherer, Schorr & Johnstone, 2001). These reactions can be ascribed to an incident (Otto, Euler & Mandl, 2000) or situations in which a person's goals and concerns are significantly affected (Parrott, 2001) such as educational settings that have the potentiality of manipulating one's emotions. Similarly, Al-Nafjan, Al-Wabil and Al-Ohaili (2015, p. 595) stated that "emotion is an affective state induced by a specific stimulus".

Emotion in academic settings

Emotional states can have significant impacts on education and learning, and when it comes to education, investigating the entire diverse range of emotions experienced in academic settings seems to be of high importance because learning and achievement are "major sources of human emotions today" (Pekrun et al., 2002a, p. 92). Assuming this, Pekrun et al.'s (2002a) study on academic emotions is a shining example of educational research aimed at investigating the emotions experienced in educational settings. These emotions, which are related to achievement activities or outcomes, are also defined as achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2006), and are critically crucial for learners' motivation, learning strategies, identity development, and health (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). Pekrun, Frenzel, Goetz and Perry's (2007) study on academic emotions provides a multi-dimensional taxonomy of achievement emotions (see Table 1) which includes three dimensions, namely object focus (activity or outcome), valence (positive or negative), and activation (activating or deactivating). For instance, enjoyment is considered to be a positive emotion which can activate students while they are doing tasks, and thus, enhance academic motivation. In contrast, hopelessness is a negative deactivating emotion which can be detrimental (Pekrun et al., 2002a) and is related to outcomes.

Table 1: A three-dimensional taxonomy of achievement emotions
(Pekrun et al., 2007, p. 16)

Focus	Positive		Negative	
	Activating	Deactivating	Activating	Deactivating
Activity focus	Enjoyment	Relaxation	Anger Frustration	Boredom
Outcome focus	Joy Hope Pride Gratitude	Contentment Relief	Anxiety Shame Anger	Sadness Disappointment Hopelessness

Keeping this in mind, although several questionnaires and instruments have been developed for assessing emotions, there had not been a comprehensive instrument before 2005, which could specifically investigate academic emotions and their impacts on achievement. The *Academic Emotions Questionnaire* (AEQ) developed by Pekrun, Goetz and Perry (2005) is a self-report instrument which has been designed to assess the relationship between achievement emotions and students' learning and academic performance. Feelings of anger, enjoyment, hope, boredom, and hopelessness are among such series of emotions, which can be regarded as the most prevalent emotions in academic settings, particularly in the language learning domain.

Emotions and language learning

Emotions are so important that they can influence a person in deciding whether to study a foreign language and whether to continue doing a task in a language classroom or not (Mendez Lopez & Pea Aguilar, 2013). In this regard, having utilised Pekrun et al.'s (2005)

AEQ, Ismail (2015) found that both negative and positive emotions students experience in English classes have an impact on their English achievement. In addition, he takes the stance that if English language teachers want to reduce negative emotions and provide peace in their classrooms, they need to take into account their students' academic emotions and consider them as part of education. In addition, Mendez Lopez and Pea Aguilar (2013) pointed out that both positive and negative emotions can have significant impacts on foreign language learners' motivation. They found that negative emotions like fear and sadness can enhance learning and can also be regarded as positive and motivational in foreign language learning process.

Generally, negative emotions affect students' motivation, attention, and use of learning strategies (Zeidner, 1998). Similarly, Goleman (1995) took the stance that "students who are anxious, angry, or depressed do not learn; people who are caught in these states do not take in information efficiently or deal with it well" (p. 78). For instance, anxiety, which is the most frequently studied emotion in academic domains (Pekrun et al., 2002a), is also associated with foreign language learning and affects EFL learners' achievement (Horwitz et al., 1986) and performance in tasks related to language skills. Many scholars believe that foreign language anxiety has negative impacts on the learners' productive language skills (e.g., Cheng, 2002; Daly & Wilson, 1983; Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001). However, there are some assertions made by other scholars who take the stance that anxiety has negative effects on reading and listening comprehension as perceptive skills (Bacon, 1989; Lund, 1991; Sellers, 2000). Prior research has indicated that students who have higher levels of writing anxiety write shorter compositions even when they are writing in their native language (Horwitz et al., 1986). Similarly, Peyman and Sedighi (2011) found that the more EFL learners have stress, the worse they perform in reading comprehension tests. In the same vein, Mahmoudzade (2012) indicated that, in comparison with less proficient EFL learners, those who have higher levels of speaking proficiency experience less speaking anxiety.

On the contrary, emotions like anger, relief, enjoyment, hope, shame, pride, boredom, and hopelessness, which have profound effects on achievement and learning (Pekrun, 2006) and are critically crucial for learners' motivation, learning strategies, identity development, and health (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007), have been extensively neglected. Regarding enjoyment, Yükselir (2014) found that language learners have high levels of enjoyment before learning as compared to enjoyment during learning and enjoyment after learning. This is somehow in harmony with the assertion Horwitz et al. (1986) made arguing that anxiety is inherent in foreign language learning processes. In brief, a positive activating emotion like enjoyment can increase interest and motivation (Pekrun et al., 2007). Prior studies investigating the relation between emotional states and cognitive performance have also found out that pleasant emotions like enjoyment and hope bring about flexible thought, the ability of elaborating ideas, and engagement in self-regulative and metacognitive strategies. It has also been revealed that positive moods and emotional states have impacts on students' performances in processing information (Febrilia, Warokka & Abdullah, 2011), and that they have a facilitating role in memory processes and retrieval of long-term memory (Isen & Patrick, 1983), and executive tasks (Phillips, Bull, Adams & Fraser, 2002).

On the other hand, for instance, concerning boredom, Pekrun et al. (2007) took the stance that boredom is induced when students do not find any negative or positive value in the activity they are doing. According to Brookes (2010), boredom is mostly more associated with writing than might be expected. This may be due to the fact that students find little mutual engagement in writing, while the intensity of mutual engagement in speaking and conversations is more, which leads to a more enjoyable atmosphere in speaking classes. In this regard, Brookes (2010) stated that if students understand that there is mutual engagement in writing skills too, they become more enthusiastic and will be less likely to experience boredom. In addition, it has also been found that unpleasant emotions like boredom and hopelessness are associated with external guidance and regulation (Pekrun et al., 2002a). These findings imply that language teachers should adjust their teaching methodology and approach to one that can decrease the detrimental impacts of negative emotions like boredom, and increase the beneficial effects of positive emotions because as Fried (2011) stated, positive emotions lead to the production of more ideas and strategies by both teachers and students. Considering the fact that teachers play the most influential role in promoting students' achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1997), and bearing in mind that emotionally intelligent teachers are more able to interact with their students and to make positive teacher-student relationships (Rust, 2014), it can be concluded that teachers can also play an active role in understanding and regulating their students' emotions. Thus, due to its significance, the issue needs to be included in teacher education programs.

However, one of the key points which is worth knowing about assessing academic emotions is that such emotions are domain specific, meaning that not all subjects and fields are favoured by students in school and university contexts (Goetz et al., 2008). Having examined the interrelations of students' academic enjoyment, achievement, and self-concepts in two domains of mathematics and German language, Goetz et al. (2008) found that a student's level of enjoyment in a mathematics class is not necessarily similar and equal to that of a language class like German. Similarly, Goetz, Frenzel, Pekrun, Hall and Ludtke (2007) investigated the between-domain relations of emotions like enjoyment, pride, anxiety, anger, and boredom in four different domains, namely, mathematics, physics, German, and English classrooms. Based on their findings, the between-domain relations observed for these academic emotions were generally weak. They also found out that, in comparison with more different domains (e.g., mathematics and English), the relations between emotions experienced in similar subject domains (e.g., mathematics and physics) are stronger.

As stated earlier, not enough attention was given to emotions and affective factors in language learning until the rise of humanistic approach and teaching methodologies, such as *Community Language Learning*, *Silent Way*, and *Suggestopedia* (Mendez Lopez & Pea Aguilar, 2013). Pishghadam, Tabatabaeyan, and Navari (2013) held the view that emotion is one of the main factors in language teaching and learning. As Pishghadam and Zabihi (2012) stated, emotional ability is one of the indicators of improving the quality of life; thus, teaching should not focus merely on a specific subject or domain but should also include emotions. In this regard, Pishghadam (2011) claimed that English language classrooms

can be a place for improving human abilities along with teaching and learning English. Keeping this in mind, Pishghadam, Adamson et al. (2013), who were inspired by Greenspan's (1992) *Developmental Individual-Difference Relationship-Based model* (DIR), came up with a novel approach to second language acquisition named *Emotion-Based Language Instruction* (EBLI), which is based on the fact that having stronger emotions toward second/foreign language vocabularies leads to a better understanding of them and facilitates learning. In other words, each individual may experience a different emotion when he/she is encountered with a word or concept in a language (Pishghadam & Shayesteh, in press). Hence, some words may be learned faster and easier because they have a higher level of *emotioncy* for learners (Pishghadam, Jajarmi & Shayesteh, in press; Pishghadam, Shayesteh & Rahmani, 2016). In this regard, *emotioncy* refers to the degree of emotions one has toward language entities (Pishghadam, Adamson et al., 2013). According to Pishghadam (2015), "emotioncy ranges on a hierarchical order of null, auditory, visual, kinaesthetic, inner, and arch emotioncies" (p. 1). Based on this classification, higher levels of *emotioncy* (inner and arch) bring about higher levels of comprehension, learning, and retention because of involvement, i.e., they engage learners from inside, while lower levels of *emotioncy* (auditory, visual, kinaesthetic) lead to exvovement because they engage learners from outside (Pishghadam, 2015). Recent studies have also found that even students' open and closed postures can bring about both positive and negative moods and emotions (Zabetipour, Pishghadam & Ghonsooly, 2015) leading to possible changes in EFL learners' perceptions of class activity (Zabetipour & Pishghadam, 2016), which may indicate that even students' postures need to be taken into account by language teachers.

Given that students' emotional states and learning are inextricably and deeply related to each other (Goleman, 1995), and bearing in mind that students' learning and motivation as well as teachers' performance can be affected by emotions (Meyer & Turner, 2007; Pekrun et al., 2002a), and also being mindful of the fact that affective states are regarded to have significant impact on language learning process (Gardner, 1985), it is worth looking for a way to assess and examine emotional states in English language classrooms. Thus, employing Pekrun et al.'s (2005) AEQ, this study aims to develop and validate a scale called *EFL Skills Emotions Scale*, and to measure the emotions EFL learners experience with regard to language skills.

Method

Participants and setting

Three hundred and eight (150 female, 48.7%, and 158 male, 51.3%) intermediate English language learners from eight private language institutes in Mashhad, Iran, where they were learning English for conversation purposes participated in the present study voluntarily. The participants' ages ranged between 12 and 37 (mean = 17.7, SD = 4.76). In addition, their previous term's overall score ranged between 57 and 100 (mean = 87.7, SD = 8.25). They all spoke Persian as their mother language.

Instrument

The authors designed a scale in English (see Appendix), which includes 20 items, each having 9 alternatives, based on Pekrun et al.'s (2005) AEQ and interviews with EFL learners. AEQ is a self-report instrument which manifests the relationships between achievement emotions, students' learning, and academic performance. In order to assure the content validity of the scale, the items were written after passing through two steps. Firstly, a number of English language classes were attended and interviews were held with about 20 male and female EFL learners who described their perspectives on the main emotions experienced in the EFL classes. Then, their answers were collected, revised, and presented as the items examining the participants' emotions regarding English language skills. Secondly, after doing a comprehensive review of the literature, nine emotions including anger, anxiety, shame, relief, enjoyment, hope, pride, boredom, and hopelessness were used as the alternatives of the scale, which were adapted from Pekrun et al.'s (2005) AEQ. Afterwards, values of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were assigned to these alternatives, respectively, to run statistical analysis. One of the questions, for instance, read, "What emotion/s do you have when your English language teacher is teaching listening skill?". The participants were asked to specify what emotion(s) they have regarding this situation by selecting none, one, two or any number of nine choices presented below each item. Finally, it is important to note that since none of the participants chose relief, this emotion was removed from the statistical analysis process.

Procedure

The printed scale was copied and administered to the participants of eight language institutes of Mashhad, Iran, after securing their verbal and voluntary approval in coordination with the language institutes and their instructors. As the scale was in English, the researchers were present during the data collection and provided the participants with some explanations whenever they had questions. The participants completed the scale in about 15 minutes. First, in order to confirm the number of factors found in EFA, having used AMOS (version 8), the researchers conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Generally, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is used to indicate what the sub-components of the major trait are, while CFA is used to confirm the findings of EFA. Finally, in order to investigate the relationship between emotions and test the equality of means, nine repeated measures of ANOVA were utilised.

Results

Validation

In order to examine the construct validity of the scale, EFA was run, and as expected, four five-item factors were extracted. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient (RC) of all the items of the scale is .91. Moreover, the reliability estimates of all four factors range from .81 to .92. And finally, after examining the outcome of the factor rotation, no item was removed. Needless to say that the factors, which underlie the scale, were named as, reading (items: 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5), speaking (items: 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10), writing (items: 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15), and listening (items: 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20).

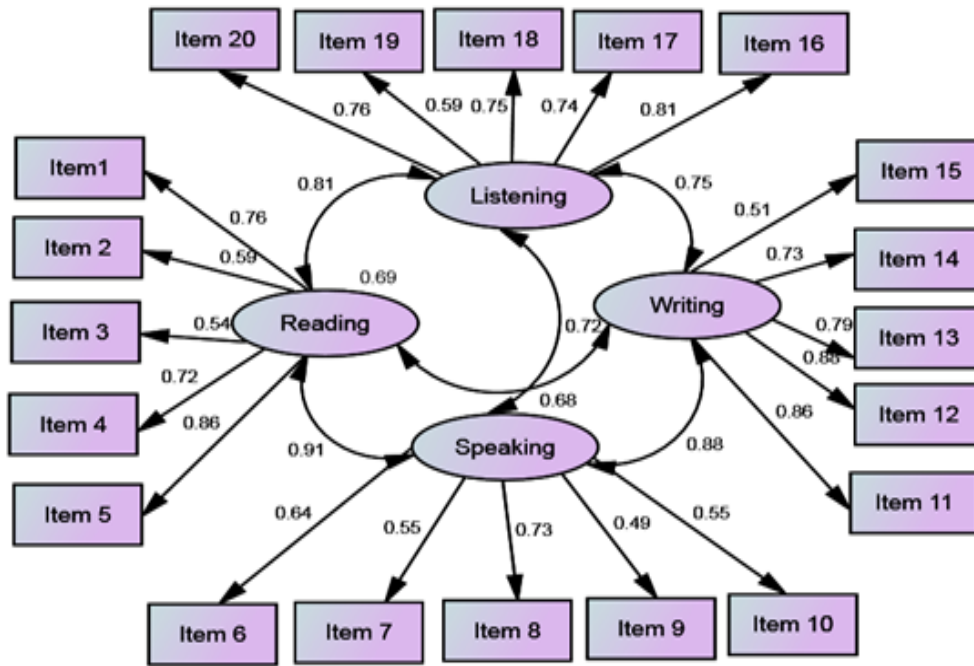


Figure 1: The results of the CFA

In order to confirm the factor structure of the EFL Skills Emotions Scale found in EFA, CFA was used. As can be seen in Figure 1, a four-factor model of EFL Skills Emotions Scale with 20 items was specified. To examine the viability of the hypothesised model for the EFL Skills Emotions Scale, the goodness of fit measures in AMOS were checked.

Table 2: Goodness of fit indices

	χ^2 / df	Fit index				
		AGFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Acceptable range	< 3	> 90				< 0.08
Observed	2.11	0.91	0.92	0.91	0.91	0.05

The goodness of fit indices used in this study were goodness of fit index (GFI), chi-square/degree of freedom (χ^2/df), and root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA). As MacCallum, Browne and Sugawara (1996) stated, there are some criteria by which a fit model is considered to be acceptable. In this regard, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI), and adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), should be above .90, RMSEA should be less than .08, and χ^2/df should be less than 3. Hence, based on the results presented in Table 2, all the goodness of fit indices were above the cut-off points indicating that the factor structure of the scale has been confirmed by the CFA.

Repeated measures of ANOVA

Descriptive statistics for each emotion are presented in Table 3. As mentioned earlier, the second aim of this study was to measure the emotions engendered by language skills. As shown in Table 3, regarding anger, in comparison with other skills, the mean of listening was higher ($M = .4968$) with a standard deviation of .81715. Writing ($M = .3604$, $SD = .81715$), reading ($M = .2532$, $SD = .59926$), and speaking ($M = .1883$, $SD = .52020$) skills are in the second, third, and fourth place, respectively.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error		Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error
Anger. L	.4968	.81715	.047	Anxiety. L	.9416	.94980	.054
Anger. R	.2532	.59926	.034	Anxiety. R	.9675	1.08540	.062
Anger. S	.1883	.52020	.030	Anxiety. S	.8864	1.06012	.060
Anger. W	.3604	.81715	.054	Anxiety. W	.8279	1.07060	.061
Shame. L	.3994	.92006	.052	Enjoyment. L	1.7045	2.28585	1.705
Shame. R	.2338	.58529	.033	Enjoyment. R	2.3312	1.80681	2.331
Shame. S	.3442	.78155	.045	Enjoyment. S	3.1071	1.58932	3.107
Shame. W	.1883	.55062	.031	Enjoyment. W	1.6883	1.69890	1.688
Hope. L	.8344	1.16484	.834	Pride. L	.4026	.79509	.045
Hope. R	.1851	.47904	.185	Pride. R	.5487	1.03721	.059
Hope. S	.1266	.49117	.127	Pride. S	1.1591	1.33019	.076
Hope. W	.9870	1.26330	.987	Pride. W	.6494	1.04325	.059
Boredom. L	1.3312	1.56532	.089	Hopeless. L	.4091	.86264	.049
Boredom. R	.8279	1.28113	.073	Hopeless. R	.1851	.47904	.027
Boredom. S	.3279	.76970	.044	Hopeless. S	.1266	.49117	.028
Boredom. W	1.5455	1.69917	.097	Hopeless. W	.4935	1.01292	.058

* L: listening; R: reading; S: speaking; W: writing

Anxiety was the only emotion that had been experienced extensively on all occasions. Table 3 shows that students' degree of anxiety does not vary across language skills. The results obtained regarding listening ($M = .9416$, $SD = .94980$), reading ($M = .9675$, $SD = 1.08540$), speaking ($M = .8864$, $SD = 1.06012$), and writing ($M = .8279$, $SD = 1.07060$) skills indicate how stress-provoking English language skills are for EFL learners. In addition, listening ($M = .3994$, $SD = .92006$) and speaking skills ($M = .3442$, $SD = .78155$) are better associated with shame, and as it was expected, the feeling of enjoyment was experienced more while students were working on the speaking skill ($M = 3.1071$, $SD = 1.58932$), though it was also high in relation to other skills. Lying at the other end of the continuum, reading ($M = 2.3312$, $SD = 1.80681$), writing ($M = 1.6883$, $SD = 1.6883$) and listening ($M = 1.7045$, $SD = 2.28585$) were less enjoyable for EFL learners in comparison with speaking.

Table 4: Tests of within-subjects effects

		Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	Sig.
Anger	Sphericity assumed	16.812	3	5.604	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	16.812	2.647	6.352	.000
F: 15.375	Huynh-Feldt	16.812	2.672	6.292	.000
	Lower-bound	16.812	1.000	16.812	.000
Anxiety	Sphericity assumed	3.552	3	1.184	.245
	Greenhouse-Geisser	3.552	2.914	1.219	.246
F: 1.387	Huynh-Feldt	3.552	2.945	1.206	.246
	Lower-bound	3.552	1.000	3.552	.240
Shame	Sphericity assumed	8.743	3	2.914	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	8.743	2.618	3.340	.000
F: 7.373	Huynh-Feldt	8.743	2.642	3.309	.000
	Lower-bound	8.743	1.000	8.743	.007
Enjoyment	Sphericity assumed	414.929	3	138.310	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	414.929	2.698	153.820	.000
F: 50.708	Huynh-Feldt	414.929	2.724	152.340	.000
	Lower-bound	414.929	1.000	414.929	.000
Hope	Sphericity assumed	179.619	3	59.873	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	179.619	2.269	79.176	.000
F: 77.325	Huynh-Feldt	179.619	2.286	78.561	.000
	Lower-bound	179.619	1.000	179.619	.000
Pride	Sphericity assumed	99.873	3	33.291	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	99.873	2.830	35.285	.000
F: 38.855	Huynh-Feldt	99.873	2.860	34.926	.000
	Lower-bound	99.873	1.000	99.873	.000
Boredom	Sphericity assumed	273.575	3	91.192	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	273.575	2.757	99.236	.000
F: 60.296	Huynh-Feldt	273.575	2.784	98.257	.000
	Lower-bound	273.575	1.000	273.575	.000
Hopelessness	Sphericity assumed	28.510	3	9.503	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	28.510	2.383	11.963	.000
F: 22.187	Huynh-Feldt	28.510	2.403	11.864	.000
	Lower-bound	28.510	1.000	28.510	.000

As Table 4 presents, for instance, while there is a significant difference between the means of language skills regarding anxiety, no significant difference has been found between means of language skills with regard to enjoyment ($F = 50.708$, $p < .05$). Table 4 shows us that there is a significant difference somewhere between the means, except for anxiety ($p = .246 > .05$), but we do not know which means differ from the others; therefore, post-hoc tests needed to be carried out to determine which pairs of means differ from each other. The following sets of pairwise comparisons (see Table 5) indicate what the exact difference is between the means.

The pairwise comparisons for emotions in terms of language skills are presented in Table 5. This table indicates that in almost all cases, or in other words, in all pairs, except for anxiety, there is a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the effects each language skill

Table 5: Pairwise comparisons of language skills

	Skill	Mean diff.	Std. error	Sig.(b)		Skill	Mean diff.	Std. error	Sig.(b)
Anger	L vs. R	.244*	.049	.000	Anxiety	L vs. S	.055	.072	.445
	L vs. S	.308*	.043	.000		L vs. W	.114	.074	.128
	L vs. W	.136*	.057	.018		R vs. L	.026	.074	.727
	R vs. S	.065	.038	.089		R vs. S	.081	.068	.232
	W vs. R	.107*	.050	.034		R vs. W	.140	.080	.083
	W vs. S	.172*	.052	.001	S vs. W	.058	.077	.449	
Shame	L vs. R	.166*	.045	.000	Enjoy- ment	L vs. W	.016	.155	.917
	L vs. S	.055	.059	.347		R vs. L	.627*	.142	.000
	L vs. W	.211*	.056	.000		R vs. W	.643*	.115	.000
	R vs. W	.045	.038	.234		S vs. L	1.403*	.141	.000
	S vs. R	.110*	.051	.032		S vs. R	.776*	.111	.000
	S vs. W	.156*	.053	.003	S vs. W	1.419*	.130	.000	
Hope	L vs. R	.649*	.069	.000	Pride	R vs. L	.146*	.064	.023
	L vs. S	.708*	.071	.000		S vs. L	.756*	.079	.000
	R vs. S	.058	.034	.086		S vs. R	.610*	.075	.000
	W vs. L	.153	.087	.080		S vs. W	.510*	.084	.000
	W vs. R	.802*	.078	.000		W vs. L	.247*	.070	.000
	W vs. S	.860*	.076	.000	W vs. R	.101	.074	.176	
Boredom	L vs. R	.503*	.103	.000	Hopeless- ness	L vs. R	.224*	.052	.000
	L vs. S	1.003*	.096	.000		L vs. S	.282*	.045	.000
	R vs. S	.500*	.076	.000		R vs. S	.058	.034	.086
	W vs. L	.214	.110	.053		W vs. L	.084	.065	.197
	W vs. R	.718*	.103	.000		W vs. R	.308*	.057	.000
	W vs. S	1.218*	.103	.000	W vs. S	.367*	.057	.000	

Based on estimated marginal means

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least significant difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

has on emotions. For instance, in case of anger, there is a significant difference ($p < .05$) between all language skills except for reading and speaking ($p = .89 > 0.05$) indicating that these two language skills have the same impact on feeling of anger.

Concerning anxiety, the results indicate that there is no significant difference between language skills, meaning that anxiety is the only emotion which was equally experienced in all occasions and situations. With regard to shame, although there is a significant difference between listening and reading ($p = .000 < .05$), listening and writing ($p = .000 < .05$), speaking and reading ($p = .032 < .05$), and speaking and writing ($p = 0.03 < .05$), no significant difference was found between either listening and speaking ($p = .347 > .05$) or reading and writing ($p = .234 > .05$). This result indicates that the pair of listening and speaking and the pair of reading and writing have the same impacts on the feeling of shame.

Regarding enjoyment, except for listening and reading ($p = .917 > .05$), in all other pairs, there is a significant difference between language skills. Similarly, concerning pride, a significant difference was found between language skills in almost all comparisons made,

except for only one case, writing and reading ($p = .176 > .05$). This table also indicates that concerning hope, there is no significant difference between reading and speaking ($p = .086 > .05$) and also writing and listening ($p = .080 > .05$). However, in all other cases, a significant difference was found.

With regard to boredom, as it was mentioned before, both writing and listening skills bring about boredom in EFL classrooms. Accordingly, as this table shows, there is no significant difference between writing and listening ($p = .053 > .05$) in the extent of boredom they cause. On the other hand, in all other cases, there is a significant difference between language skills. Finally, concerning hopefulness, except for only two pairs, namely, reading and speaking ($p = .086 > .05$), and also writing and reading ($p = .197 > .05$), there is a significant difference between all other pairs of skills.

Discussion

The present study showed that the EFL Skills Emotions Scale is a reliable measure of English language learners' emotions regarding language skills. As mentioned earlier, this paper reported on the construction and validation of a scale called EFL Skills Emotions Scale, which assesses EFL learners' emotional states generated by language skills. The second aim of this study was to measure the emotions EFL learners experience with regard to language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing). Based on the findings of the study, EFL Skills Emotions Scale manifests the academic emotions which were adapted from Pekrun et al.'s (2005) AEQ. The results also revealed that each one of language skills is associated with specific emotions.

Based on the findings, anxiety was the only emotion which was intensely engendered by all four English language skills. This finding is in harmony with the assertion made by Horwitz et al. (1986), who held the view that foreign language learning activates anxiety in EFL learners. In addition, this finding is in accord with previous studies that indicated anxiety might have negative impacts on both productive (e.g., Cheng, 2002; Daly & Wilson, 1983) and perceptive language skills (Bacon, 1989; Lund, 1991). Difficulty in speaking in front of the teacher and other classmates, listening to native or native-like accents in audio clips, and writing using accurate grammar and spelling, as well as reading texts and comprehending them accurately without making any mistakes may lead to fear of negative evaluation and thus bring about language anxiety. These facts highlight the significant role of language teachers as facilitators and counsellors, who should pay considerate attention to actual emotional needs of learners and offer solutions and suggestions for attaining confidence and calmness. In brief, the findings of the present study and also the previous ones (e.g., Cheng, 2002; Mahmoudzade, 2012) indicate that more attention should be given to language anxiety.

Based on the findings of this study, listening is the only English language skill which is associated with all of the negative emotions (e.g., anger, shame, boredom and hopelessness). Generally, frustration is one of the main causes of anger (Averill, 1983). Moreover, since listening is a complex process, which involves discriminating between

unfamiliar sounds, understanding the meaning of words, and interpreting stress and intonation as well as the meaning in the immediate and sociocultural environment (Vandergrift, 1999), language learners may feel frustrated for this endless effort, which may lead to the feeling of anger. In addition, when they fail to utter what they had heard in the classroom, feelings of shame and hopelessness might be triggered. In fact, shame is triggered when one fails to meet important internalised goals, rules, or standards (Lewis, 1993). According to Turner and Waugh (2007), shame is "one of the most distressing and disruptive unpleasant emotions" (p. 131). Moreover, an interesting point observed in the findings of the study is that both opposite feelings of hope and hopelessness are engendered by the listening skill. Listening is the only skill which puts a heavy pressure on the learners' cognition to simultaneously entangle with decoding sounds, retaining information, considering grammatical features, and the speed of sounds (Walker, 2014). Generally, when the focus is on finding the right answers to the follow-up questions in the listening tasks, students will feel hopeless if they fail to answer correctly. Generally, hopelessness is posited to occur whenever success or a positive satisfying achievement outcome is not attainable (Pekrun et al., 2007). Moreover, hope is considered to be a positive outcome-focused emotion while hopelessness is a negative outcome-focused emotion (Elliot & Pekrun, 2007). Assuming this, language teachers need not focus merely on the product, meaning that adequate attention should also be given to the process of learning. When the focus is on the product/outcome rather than the process, students' final performance is only judged, which may bring about a feeling of hope or hopelessness.

Moreover, the findings showed that listening is also associated with boredom. Pekrun et al. (2007) pointed out that boredom is induced when students do not find any negative or positive value in the activity they are doing. Moreover, due to the fact that listening is regarded as the most difficult skill to learn (Vandergrift, 2004), and that language learners find it difficult to grasp and utter what they have heard, they may not find any positive value in listening activities and then feel bored. Moreover, language learners are not able to see the speaker and the environment when they are listening to audio files. Hence, video clips can be regarded as "a very valuable tool for language learning" (Woottipong, 2014, p. 203) because they provide contextual information and an environment helping language learners improve their listening comprehension and confidence in speech (Shrosbree, 2008).

Unlike other language skills, feelings of enjoyment and pride are mostly triggered by the speaking skill. The findings also indicate that, in comparison with other language skills, speaking brings about the least amount of boredom and hopelessness in language classrooms. Generally, emotional states can influence thinking, meaning that students can perform and learn better when they feel happy, interested, and excited about the task they are to do (Oatley & Nundy, 1996). Thus, the fact that speaking is the most enjoyable skill for language learners can be related to their probable interest in speaking. In the same vein, positive activating emotions like enjoyment can broaden thought-action repertoires leading to creative and novel thoughts and ideas (Fredrickson, 1998), which are particularly useful in speaking.

In contrast to speaking, writing is associated with a higher extent of negative unpleasant emotions like boredom, hopelessness, and anger in language learners. This finding accords with the assertion Brookes (2010) made arguing that boredom is mostly associated with writing. As mentioned earlier, according to Pekrun et al. (2007), boredom is induced when students do not find any negative or positive value in the activity they are doing. In other words, when students are faced with either a low or a high-demand activity, they experience boredom (Pekrun et al., 2007). In addition, Pekrun et al. (2007) took the stance that hopelessness arises from negative achievement outcomes or when "a positive achievement outcome cannot be attained" (p. 19). Keeping these in mind, with regard to writing, for one thing, feeling negative emotions may be due to the fact that there is little mutual engagement in writing, and that in most of the cases, EFL learners need to do the writing tasks on their own, while the intensity of mutual engagement in speaking and conversations is greater, which leads to a more enjoyable atmosphere. In this regard, Brookes (2010) advanced the view that if students understand that there is mutual engagement in the writing skill, they become more enthusiastic and will be less likely to experience boredom. Secondly, although students' emotional states and feelings as well as their state of mind can be discovered through writing (Brookes, 2010), encoding thoughts and feelings seem to be an overwhelming task for language learners.

Concerning reading skill, the findings of the study indicate that reading can be considered as a neutral skill in engendering negative or positive emotions. In contrast, Moore (1993) pointed out that for science students reading is both boring and overly time-consuming. However, as mentioned earlier, academic settings are highly domain-specific. That is to say, for instance, a student's level of boredom in a science class is not necessarily similar and equal to that of an English language class. Moreover, this study showed that reading does not bring about boredom as much as listening and writing skills do. This can be, firstly, due to the fact that reading sections of language learning books taught in Iran, in most of the cases, include stories about real life events, outstanding celebrities, and famous tourist attractions, which make learners become more interested. Secondly, language learners are often provided with visual elements (i.e., photos) in reading comprehension sections, and thus, can understand the texts more easily.

In summary, considering the significant impact of affective factors on language learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), and based on the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that it is essential to help students manage, regulate, and control their emotions and feelings in language classrooms. Based on the principles of *Suggestopedia*, which is defined as "the application of suggestion to pedagogy" (Bancroft, 1999, p. 16), most learning happens in a both relaxed and focused state (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). *Suggestopedia* was originally developed in the 1970s by Lozanov, whose aim was to provide a positive state of mind and environment, where language learners would overcome psychological obstacles through positive suggestion (Guclu & Ayhan, 2015). Thus, language teachers need to take into account the possible impacts of language skills on learners' emotions, and consider every aspect or factor which can affect and manipulate learners' emotions in order to create a positive state of mind and secure environment for the development of optimal learning of their students.

This can be done by encouraging students to express their feelings and talk about their learning worries while they are doing tasks related to each language skill. Moreover, making use of visual elements (e.g. video clips) that include contextual information for listening tasks, and promoting mutual engagement while learners are doing writing tasks may have positive impacts on their performance and reduce negative emotions like boredom. Future research however, can be conducted to measure the emotions engendered by language sub-skills, i.e., grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In addition, further studies can be done to draw a comparison between male and female language learners and investigate the type of emotions they experience regarding language skills. Furthermore, the relationship between EFL learners' emotional intelligence and the emotions they experience in English language classrooms can be explored in future studies.

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Appendix: Sample items in the EFL skills emotions scale

Reading

1. What emotion/s do you have when your English language teacher is teaching **reading skill**?
Anger Anxiety Shame Relief Enjoyment Hope Pride Boredom Hopelessness
2. What emotion/s do you have when you are doing **reading skill tasks**?
Anger Anxiety Shame Relief Enjoyment Hope Pride Boredom Hopelessness
3. What emotion/s do you have when you are taking a **reading skill test**?
Anger Anxiety Shame Relief Enjoyment Hope Pride Boredom Hopelessness
4. What emotion/s do you have to the **teaching method of reading skill**?
Anger Anxiety Shame Relief Enjoyment Hope Pride Boredom Hopelessness
5. What emotion/s do you have to the **reading skill section of the English language book**?
Anger Anxiety Shame Relief Enjoyment Hope Pride Boredom Hopelessness

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