

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE INFLUENCE ON COLLEGE STUDENTS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE INTERACTIONS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of emotional intelligence (EI) and cultural intelligence (CI) on English language development, interaction, and academic performance among Nigerian college students. Recognizing that linguistic proficiency extends beyond cognition to encompass socio-emotional and intercultural competencies, a structured questionnaire was administered to 100 students randomly selected from three Colleges of Education. The analysis of data employed descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, ANOVA, and multiple regression to evaluate five hypotheses. The findings indicated substantial positive correlations between cognitive intelligence (CI) and English language development, CI and interaction, as well as emotional intelligence (EI) and language development ($p < 0.05$). The combined influence of EI and CI was also significant, indicating that students with greater emotional stability, empathy, adaptability, and cross-cultural awareness demonstrate stronger communicative competence. Additionally, cultural exposure was found to enhance language fluency, confidence, and engagement. The study concludes that embedding emotional and cultural intelligence frameworks into English language pedagogy can advance holistic learning. It recommends developing affective instructional models that integrate emotional regulation and intercultural understanding for sustainable linguistic growth.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, English language development, English language interaction

Introduction

Language serves as the primary vehicle for communication and social interaction within every society. The collective agreement among

people on the use of symbols and codes for conveying information gives rise to different languages. In Nigeria, English is the official language and the medium of communication

across the six geo-political zones, which faces significant challenges due to the nation's multilingual landscape, where numerous indigenous languages coexist (Bamgbose, 2014; Adegbite, 2019). Over the past four centuries, the English language has undergone remarkable global expansion, evolving into one of the most influential mediums of communication across diverse linguistic and cultural boundaries (Graddol, 2006).

Emotional and cultural intelligence along with the absence or presence of these competencies plays a pivotal role in shaping the effectiveness of pedagogical practices in English language education. As English continues to gain global prominence, proficiency in the language has become indispensable for academic achievement, social integration, and professional advancement across nations. According to Okpala (2023), English language proficiency constitutes a vital element of sustainable development in the 21st century, underscoring the necessity of effective English teaching and learning. Similarly, Putra (2020) affirmed that the significance of learning English in today's interconnected world cannot be overstated, as it remains the most widely spoken language globally and serves as a vital bridge for international communication and collaboration. Mastery of the English language is widely regarded as essential for college students, serving as both a prerequisite for effective societal integration and a foundation for performing professional roles particularly in teaching with competence and confidence. According to Souriyavongsa et al. (2013), English holds a global status as a major medium of communication among its users, whether as a first, second, or third language, especially within academic and educational contexts. In English language classrooms, instruction typically emphasizes key linguistic components aimed at

cultivating communicative competence and practical language performance. College students are therefore expected to attain proficiency in core language skills and specific abilities required to accomplish linguistic and communicative tasks effectively. Language development encompasses the acquisition of grammatical rules and structural conventions (competence), while language interaction involves the practical application of these rules in real-life contexts (performance). However, despite sustained pedagogical efforts to strengthen both linguistic development and communicative application, existing literature reveals that genuine mastery of English remains elusive for many students. Empirical studies on collegiate English performance continue to highlight persistent weaknesses and learning gaps that hinder full proficiency.

In this context, emotional intelligence pertains to the role of a student's affective states in shaping the process of language acquisition. It encompasses an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions in order to respond effectively to environmental and learning demands. Conversely, cultural intelligence refers to the capacity to interpret, adapt to, and interact appropriately within diverse cultural and social contexts, thereby facilitating effective communication and performance (Earley & Ang, 2003). This study seeks to investigate the extent to which students' emotional and cultural competencies influence their English language learning outcomes whether these factors exert a positive or negative effect. Accordingly, the research explores the impact of emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence on College of Education students' English language development and communicative interactions.

Statement of the Problem

Existing studies consistently reveal that students in Colleges of Education exhibit notable deficiencies in both English language development (competence) and English language interaction (performance). Despite persistent pedagogical interventions aimed at enhancing mastery, many learners continue to struggle with core aspects of grammar, pronunciation, and appropriate language use in communicative settings. This persistent challenge is particularly concerning, as these students are prospective teachers who will ultimately transfer linguistic knowledge and skills to learners at the pre-primary and post-primary levels (Adewale & Odebode, 2021). Consequently, their limited proficiency in English risks perpetuating language errors and undermining the overall quality of English instruction in Nigeria.

Previous research exploring the causes of poor English performance among college students has largely concentrated on cognitive and instructional factors such as teaching methodologies, learner motivation, availability of instructional materials, and linguistic aptitude (Olagbaju, 2019; Okonkwo & Nwosu, 2020). However, these studies have paid insufficient attention to the affective and intercultural dimensions of language learning particularly *Emotional Intelligence (EI)* and *Cultural Intelligence (CI)* are two crucial constructs that shape learners' abilities to understand emotions, manage interpersonal relationships, adapt to diverse cultural contexts, and communicate effectively across linguistic boundaries.

Emotional intelligence has been shown to influence motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and resilience—key affective attributes that support successful language acquisition and communication (Salovey, 2009). Similarly, cultural intelligence fosters openness,

adaptability, and pragmatic competence, all of which are fundamental determinants of effective language interaction (Earley & Ang, 2003). This study aims to investigate the influence of emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence on English language acquisition and interaction among College of Education students in Oyo State, Nigeria, thereby addressing a significant gap in the comprehension of how affective and intercultural elements affect language learning results.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate the influence of Emotional Intelligence and Cultural Intelligence on English Language Development and Interaction among College of Education students in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study aims to:

1. Investigate the correlation between the development of English language skills and Cultural Intelligence among college students in Oyo State.
2. Investigate the connection between Oyo State college students' English language interaction and cultural intelligence.
3. Examine the correlation between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Development among college students in Oyo State.
4. Evaluate the correlation between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Interaction among college students in Oyo State.
5. Assess the combined impact of Cultural Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence on English Language Development and Interaction among college students in Oyo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guides this study.

1. What is the correlation between Cultural Intelligence and English Language Development among college students in Oyo State?
2. What is the correlation between Cultural Intelligence and English Language Interaction among college students in Oyo State?
3. What is the correlation between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Development among college students in Oyo State?
4. What is the correlation between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Interaction among college students in Oyo State?
5. What is the composite relationship between Cultural Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence regarding English Language Development and Interaction among college students in Oyo State?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance,

- H₀₁: Cultural intelligence and English language proficiency among Oyo State college students do not significantly correlate.
- H₀₂: Cultural intelligence and English language interaction among Oyo State college students do not significantly correlate.
- H₀₃: Among Oyo State college students, there is no discernible correlation between English language development and emotional intelligence.
- H₀₄: Emotional intelligence and English language interaction among Oyo State

college students do not significantly correlate.

- H₀₅: Oyo State college students' English language development and interaction do not exhibit a composite relationship between cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence.

Methodology

The research employed a descriptive quantitative methodology to assess 'the impact of Cultural Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence on English Language Development and Interaction among College of Education students in Oyo State, Nigeria'. One hundred students were chosen from three Colleges of Education using a basic random sampling method. The institutions involved were 'the Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo; Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate; and Mufutau Lanahun College of Education, Ibadan'. Data were gathered by a four-point Likert-scale questionnaire, aimed at eliciting respondents' perceptions and experiences concerning the primary dimensions under investigation. The instrument was verified by a team of specialists in educational psychology and language instruction to guarantee content and construct validity. A pilot test was administered at a College of Education excluded from the main sample to determine dependability. 'The gathered data were examined utilising the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis were utilised to evaluate the hypotheses and ascertain the type and strength of correlations among the study variables'.

Results

The results demonstrated empirical evidence about the substantial impact of Cultural Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence on

English Language Development and Interaction among college students in Oyo State. The findings enhance the comprehension of how affective and intercultural abilities facilitate

efficient language acquisition, hence expanding the scope of knowledge in English language teaching in Nigeria.

Table 1: Demography Information

Respondents' Class Level	Rate	Percent
100 Level	38	38.0
200 Level	57	57.0
300 Level	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0
Gender		
Male	24	24.0
Female	76	76.0
Total	100	100.0
Age		
15-18 years	20	20.0
19-25 years	76	76.0
26-30 years	2	2.0
31 and above years	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0

With respect to Table 1 on class level of respondents, the distribution of respondents across class levels indicates that the majority were in the 200 level, representing 57% of the total sample. This was followed by 100 level students, who constituted 38%, while only 5% were in the 300 level. The cumulative percentage of 100% reflects full participation across all levels. This distribution suggests that most participants were in the middle stage of their academic programme, where active engagement in language learning is typically high.

Also, the gender distribution reveals that 76% of the respondents were female, while 24% were male. This shows a notable gender imbalance, with female students forming the majority of the study sample. The finding reflects a broader trend in Nigerian Colleges of Education, where female enrolment, particularly in language-related disciplines, often surpasses that of males. In terms of age, most respondents (76%) were within the 19–25 years age range, followed by 20% who were between 15–18 years. Only 2% each fell within the 26–30 years and 31 years and above categories. This distribution implies that the majority of participants were young adults, typically within the conventional age bracket for undergraduate students in Colleges of Education. The predominance of this age group suggests that the respondents are at an optimal stage for cognitive and emotional development, factors relevant to language learning and interaction.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: Cultural intelligence and English language proficiency among Oyo State college students do not significantly correlate.

Table 2: Correlational Analysis on Cultural Intelligence and English Language Development

Items	Instrument	Variables	
		Cultural Intelligent	English Language Development
Cultural Intelligent	Pearson Correlation	1	.596**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
English Language Development	Pearson Correlation	.596**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

Table 2 shows the Pearson Correlation analysis reveals a positive, statistically significant relationship between Cultural Intelligence and English Language Development ($r = 0.596$, $p < .01$, two-tailed; $N = 100$). The coefficient of 0.596 indicates a moderate-to-strong positive association: as students’ cultural intelligence increases, their English language development tends to improve. The result is highly significant (Sig. = .000), and approximately 35.5% of the variation in English language development can be accounted for by variation in cultural intelligence ($r^2 \approx 0.355$), suggesting a meaningful, practically relevant relationship in this sample. This therefore shows that there is significant relationship between Cultural Intelligence and English Language Development among college students in Oyo State.

H₀₂: Cultural intelligence and English language interaction among Oyo State college students do not significantly correlate.

Table 3: Correlational Analysis on Cultural Intelligence and English Language Interaction

Items	Instrument	Variables	
		Cultural Intelligent	English Language Development
Cultural Intelligent	Pearson Correlation	1	.805
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
English Language Interaction	Pearson Correlation	.805	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

The correlation analysis presented in Table 3 reveals a robust positive and statistically significant association between Cultural Intelligence and English Language Interaction ($r = 0.805$, $p < .01$, two-

tailed; N = 100). The elevated correlation value indicates that students possessing greater cultural intelligence are likely to display enhanced English language interaction abilities. The significance value (Sig. = .000) indicates that the link is not attributable to chance. This conclusion indicates that cultural intelligence, which includes an individual's capacity to comprehend, adapt, and respond suitably in many cultural contexts, is essential for improving students' communicative competence and interactional effectiveness in English. The findings suggest that cultivating cultural awareness and sensitivity in learners may significantly enhance their capacity to utilise English confidently and responsibly in many social and academic contexts. This indicates a substantial association between Cultural Intelligence and English Language Interaction among college students in Oyo State.

H03: Among Oyo State college students, there is no discernible correlation between English language development and emotional intelligence.

Table 3: Correlational Analysis on Cultural Intelligence and English Language Interaction

Items	Variables		
	Instrument	Cultural Intelligent	English Language Development
Emotional Intelligent	Pearson Correlation	1	.688**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
English Language Development	Pearson Correlation	.688**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

Table 3 illustrates a robust positive and statistically significant association between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Development ($r = 0.688$, $p < .01$, two-tailed; N = 100). This coefficient indicates that elevated emotional intelligence correlates with improved English language proficiency in college students. The significance value (Sig. = .000) indicates that the observed association is extremely reliable and not attributable to random variation. This research indicates that pupils who can comprehend, manage, and articulate their emotions typically achieve greater success in learning and mastering the English language. Emotional intelligence thus seems to enhance cognitive engagement, drive, and resilience—elements crucial for continuous advancement in language acquisition and total linguistic proficiency. This indicates a significant link between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Development among college students in Oyo State.

H04: Emotional intelligence and English language interaction among Oyo State college students do not significantly correlate.

Table 4: Correlational Analysis on Cultural Intelligence and English Language Interaction

Items	Variables		
	Instrument	Cultural Intelligent	English Language Interaction
Emotional Intelligent	Pearson Correlation	1	.559**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
English Language Interaction	Pearson Correlation	.559**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

Table 4 indicates a moderate positive and statistically significant correlation between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Interaction ($r = 0.559$, $p < .01$, two-tailed; $N = 100$). This suggests that students possessing elevated emotional intelligence typically have enhanced English language interaction abilities. The significance level (Sig. = .001) indicates that the link is statistically significant and improbable to have arisen by chance. This research indicates that emotional intelligence—comprising self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and social adaptability—significantly contributes to improving students' communication efficacy. Learners who can manage their emotions and interpret those of others are more likely to engage confidently in discussions, express ideas clearly, and navigate interpersonal exchanges in English with greater competence and fluency. This therefore shows that there is significant relationship Emotional Intelligence and English Language Interaction among college students in Oyo State.

H05: Oyo State college students' English language development and interaction do not exhibit a composite relationship between cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Summary for the Influence of Cultural and Emotional Intelligence on English Language Development and Interaction

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	90.540	2	45.270	44.603	.000 ^b
Residual	98.450	97	1.015		
Total	188.990	99			

a. Dependent Variable: English language development, English language Interaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), cultural intelligence, Emotional intelligence

The ANOVA results in Table 8 reveal that the combined influence of Cultural Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence on English Language Development and Interaction is statistically

significant ($F(2,97) = 44.603$, $p < .001$). The regression sum of squares (90.540) compared to the residual (98.450) indicates that a substantial proportion of the variance in English language

outcomes is explained by the two predictors. This finding demonstrates that both cultural and emotional intelligence jointly exert a significant and meaningful effect on students' language competence and interaction, underscoring the importance of integrating affective and intercultural dimensions into English language pedagogy.

4.0 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study, as presented in the preceding section, are discussed below in relation to existing literature and theoretical implications. The analysis revealed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between Cultural Intelligence (CI) and English Language Development ($r = .805, p < .001$). This large effect indicates that students with higher levels of cultural intelligence exhibit considerably greater proficiency in English language development. A plausible explanation for this finding is that cultural intelligence encompasses not only cognitive awareness of cultural differences but also behavioural adaptability and motivation to engage in intercultural contexts. Such readiness enables students to access meaningful linguistic input and authentic communication experiences through cross-cultural conversations, media engagement, and peer interaction which collectively accelerate language acquisition.

This result corroborates the findings of Crowne (2008), who posited that exposure to diverse cultures and the development of intercultural competence significantly enhance language learning. The present study extends this position by empirically demonstrating a strong, practically meaningful association between cultural intelligence and language development among College of Education students in Oyo State.

Similarly, the findings indicated a strong positive association between Cultural Intelligence and English Language Interaction ($r = .805, p < .001$). This relationship is likely attributable to the behavioural and motivational dimensions of cultural intelligence, which facilitate adaptive communication and pragmatic flexibility. Students with heightened cultural intelligence are more adept at interpreting contextual cues, adjusting tone and register, and employing culturally appropriate communicative strategies, thereby fostering smoother and more effective English interactions.

This outcome aligns with the observations of Meniado (2020) and Saud (2019), who emphasized that cultural intelligence enhances learners' pragmatic competence and interactional effectiveness. From a pedagogical standpoint, this finding suggests that incorporating intercultural learning experiences such as simulations, role-plays, study-abroad programmes, and culturally rich instructional materials—can significantly enhance students' communicative competence and confidence in English language use. The study also found a significant positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and English Language Development ($p < .001$). Unlike cultural intelligence, emotional intelligence exerts its influence through affective regulation and interpersonal adaptability. Students with higher emotional intelligence are typically better at managing anxiety, coping with stress, maintaining motivation, and engaging collaboratively—all of which indirectly contribute to language learning outcomes.

These findings are consistent with the works of Abisamra (2000) and Stottlemeyer (2002), who reported that emotional intelligence supports language learning by fostering emotional balance and persistence. While its effect on language competence may be

somewhat indirect, EI plays a crucial supportive role in sustaining learners' engagement and resilience, both of which are essential for continuous improvement in English language proficiency.

The results further revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and English Language Interaction ($p < .001$). This suggests that emotionally intelligent students are more capable of engaging confidently, empathetically, and effectively in English communication. Such students often display superior listening skills, emotional awareness, and social sensitivity—qualities that enhance the quality of interpersonal exchanges in academic and social contexts. This finding aligns with Parker et al. (2005), who asserted that emotional and social competences foster academic success and smooth adaptation to new learning environments. However, compared with the stronger cultural intelligence effect, the role of emotional intelligence appears to be more qualitative—enhancing the depth, empathy, and coherence of communication rather than merely increasing the frequency of interaction. This distinction underscores that while both EI and CI contribute to effective English use, they operate through different yet complementary pathways.

Conclusion

This study established that both **Cultural Intelligence** and **Emotional Intelligence** significantly influence English Language Development and English Language Interaction among College of Education students in Oyo State. The findings demonstrate that students with higher levels of cultural intelligence exhibit stronger communicative competence and greater adaptability in using English, while those with higher emotional intelligence display enhanced confidence, motivation, and emotional

regulation that facilitate effective learning and interaction. Generally, the study concludes that language mastery extends beyond cognitive ability—it is deeply shaped by learners' affective and intercultural competencies. Integrating emotional and cultural intelligence into English language pedagogy can therefore strengthen students' linguistic proficiency, communicative effectiveness, and readiness to function in diverse educational and social contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

5. Since cultural intelligence significantly influences English language development, Colleges of Education should integrate intercultural communication modules, cultural immersion activities, and multilingual awareness programmes into English language courses to broaden students' cross-cultural understanding and language adaptability.
6. Given the strong link between cultural intelligence and language interaction, institutions should create structured platforms, such as cultural exchange workshops, drama, debates, and collaborative projects that encourage authentic language use and intercultural engagement among students.
7. As emotional intelligence was found to impact English language development, teacher education curricula should include emotional literacy, self-regulation, and empathy training to help future teachers manage classroom dynamics and support learners' emotional well-being during language learning.

8. To enhance English language interaction through emotional intelligence, lecturers should adopt supportive, student-centred pedagogies that reduce anxiety and build confidence—such as peer feedback, cooperative learning, and motivational counselling.
9. Since both emotional and cultural intelligence jointly predict language development and interaction, English language programmes should adopt an integrated pedagogical framework that simultaneously nurtures intercultural competence and emotional awareness, thereby producing more competent, adaptable, and empathetic language users.

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