

Teachers and Learners' Emotional Intelligence and their Corrective Feedback Practices and Preferences

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Abstract

The role of corrective feedback (CF) in language learning has recently gained prominence; however, ignoring the interwoven relationship between cognitive/affective factors, along with individual differences, may not lead to efficient results. This mixed methods research examined high/low emotional intelligence (EI) Iranian EFL learners' CF preferences. This study was grounded in the Chaos Complexity Theory of Larsen-Freeman (1997). Considering complexity theory, learners' modified outputs were examined to find the related EI components in teacher-learner matched/mismatched conditions. First, using Bar-on Emotional Quotient Inventory, 12 teachers and 223 learners were grouped as having high/low EI. Second, learners' CF preferences were determined through Students' Preferences Elicitation Questionnaire, including both closed and open-ended questions. Third, utilizing an observation checklist, teachers' CF practices and learners' modified outputs in summery telling activity were examined to find the associations among EI components and modified output in teacher-learner matched/mismatched conditions. The quantitative analysis using a number of Chi-square tests and the complementary qualitative data analyses revealed that the high/low EI learners preferred the different CF types. The most frequent successful modified output was associated with certain EI components in the mismatched conditions of EI and CF. The findings provide pertinent implications for practitioners regarding feedback implementation and successful modified output. Furthermore, the findings refer to the necessity of future studies in this area which are discussed in the article.

Keywords: Complexity Theory, Corrective Feedback, Emotional Intelligence, Modified Output

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1. Introduction

Corrective feedback (CF) is widely appraised as essential for triggering and consolidating second/foreign language (L2/FL) learning (Anderson, 1982; Vygotsky, 1978). When learners are provided with information on their performance, their academic performance and overall learning enhances (Ormrod, 2004). Feedback alludes to comments or information provided upon learners' enactment of a task, from either the teacher or other learners. It is intended to attract the learners' attention to specific facets of their performance endeavoring to bring a change in subsequent performances (Keh, 1990; Richards, John & Heidi, 2000) or reinforce the current performance. The majority of instructional practices attempting to remedy learners' language learning problems through the use of CF strategies aimed at the improvement of content (or meaning) and/or the language forms (cognitive scaffolding). However, it is well-established in the language teaching literature (e.g., Nunan, 1991) that learners' successful cognitive development is highly dependent upon their emotional needs, which necessitates considering individual differences, such as emotional intelligence (EI).

Emotional intelligence is a social skill related to the perception, understanding, management, and use of emotions in interpersonal relations such as language learning contexts (e.g., Caruso & Salovey, 2004; Fineman, 2004). Research has shown a link between EI and language learning achievement (Ferguson & Austin, 2010; Motallebzadeh & Azizi, 2012). The complexity of the L2 learners' language learning process in relation to their affective traits such as emotional intelligence is a significant issue that can best be explicated through the complexity theory. Based on complexity theory, second language acquisition is dynamic, complex, nonlinear, and self-organizing (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). Complexity refers to the existence of multiple elements, agents, entities, or components, which are in detailed interaction; this idea is shared by many studies (Dornyei, 2014; Kostoulas, Stelma, Mercer, Cameron, & Dawson, 2018; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). According to these studies, complexity is ascertained through possessing different main features, which have been agreed upon in different studies to complete the continuum with adding slight differences. Thus, individual differences lie at the heart of the complexity theory according to which disorder can be a triggering cause of language acquisition. In other words, interaction in the classroom, as an open system, is dynamic. It is governed by complex principles because of the interplay among individual differences between teacher and learner, both cognitively and affectively, especially in mismatched conditions (Larsen-Freeman, 1997).

The degree to which interactional practice in the classroom is effective particularly following the provision of corrective feedback is commonly measured through learners' modified output. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) defined modified output as "learners' revisions of their erroneous output following feedback" (p. 73). According to Swain (1998, 2000) learners' language or output is an indication of interlanguage as a process rather than a signal of acquisition as a product. Specially, output, in Swain's claim, has been considered as a trigger to lead the learners from semantic analysis to syntactic analysis. Moreover, the distinguishing features of modified output as noticing of the gap, negotiation of the form, and its relationship with different CF types in different interaction pairs in most studies (e.g., Adams, Nuevo & Egi, 2011; Egi, 2010) convinced scholars to adopt modified output in most of CF studies.

This study has delineated the extent to which the teachers and learners have matched and mismatched emotional intelligence with their CF preferences. That is, learners' CF preferences and teachers' CF practices while modified output is involved was explored.

Many studies have been conducted on the efficacy of CF (Han, 2002; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; R. Ellis, 2007; R. Ellis, Loewen & Erlam, 2006), CF preferences, particularly (Lee, 2013; Rassaei, 2013; Yousefi, 2016, Zhao, 2015), CF along with EI (Vaezi, Zand-Vakili, Mohammadkhani & Fardkashani, 2013). However, no study focused on both cognitive and affective factors regarding EI and CF preferences in the way they exist in the natural classroom setting. Limiting their studies to quantitative research, most of these studies, without providing explanations for learners' CF preferences, have paid far too little attention to modified output in teacher-learner matched/mismatched conditions of EI and CF practices and preferences, based on complexity theory. Therefore, this study aimed at finding the learners' CF preferences, and the reasons for their preferences considering their individual difference of EI (high/low). Furthermore, this study focused on modified output in different teacher-learner matched/mismatched conditions (high-high, low-low, and high-low) to determine which EI components associate more with successful modified output.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Complexity Theory

Complexity theory was selected as the underpinning theoretical framework for the present study for two reasons. Firstly, although a vast body of previous studies has attempted to explicate the processing of corrective feedback from the perspective of other theories such as the sociocultural

theory, there have been fewer, if any, attempts to understanding the complexities of the feedback processing based on complexity theory. Secondly, in spite of the fact that the sociocultural theory underscores the role of environment in language learning in general and corrective feedback in particular, it does not cover the complexity of different elements involved in language learning. Complexity refers to the existence of multiple elements, agents, entities, or components, which are in detailed interaction; this idea is shared by many studies (Dornyei, 2014; Kostoulas, Stelma, Mercer, Cameron, & Dawson, 2018; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). According to these studies, complexity is ascertained through possessing different main features, which have been agreed upon in different studies to complete the continuum with adding slight differences.

Larsen-Freeman (1997) mentioned the role of environment in the agents' interaction out of which a behavior arises. Besides, according to Dornyei's (2014) definition, the elements in complex dynamic system can "change independently over time" (p. 81). Similarly, Kostoulas, et al. (2018), regarding the class as a system, as well as relating it to a space and a specific time, posed historicity of the system, including the "sedimented" past experiences besides the present ones. Furthermore, in Kostoulas, et al. (2018), system has been defined as a conceptual framework to understand the observed issues, and sometimes the observed issues specify the distinguishing lines of the system, but mostly these lines are "fuzzy". Moreover, Kostoulas, et al. (2018) believe that besides the interactions among the entities of the system, the complex system interacts with other "proximate" systems existing in the context, too. Similarly, Larsen-Freeman (2012) posed the blurred borders of disciplines in reaction to "the principle of disjunction" (Morin, 2007, as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2012). While the disciplines were once considered as sealed tight and limited to encompass different principles, nowadays, transdisciplinary approach has been put forward to underscore the relation among the principles. Transdisciplinary approach has been proposed to modify the accumulative aspect of multidisciplinary approach, one-discipline-dominant feature of cross-disciplinary approach, and the lack of simultaneous reference to different perspectives in interdisciplinary approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2012).

Larsen-Freeman (2018), regarding the link between research and practice, mentioned two affordances: the first one is related to external environments to specify the components assisting the result and the second one is more internal which deals with the learners' views and their participation in learning conditions. Regarding the classroom in spite of being complex system, self-organization feature of such a system forms a predictability to make the self-organization research possible. Self-organization in class is indicated through restricted varieties of outcomes,

such as common learner performance and learner types (Dornyei, 2014). However, Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008) and Dornyei (2014) argued that complexity system requires retrospection rather than prediction, and they posed a “retrodiction” process. According to Dornyei (2014), retrodiction refers to the backward search to specify the main components underlying specific emerged outcomes.

Therefore, keeping in mind the blurred boundaries between different systems involving various components and their interactions in transdisciplinary and ecological approaches (Larsen-Freeman, 2012, 2018), this study included EI and CF as the reflections of cognitive and affective paradigms merging in the real classroom. Furthermore, considering Larsen-Freeman's (2018) second affordance regarding research-practice dichotomy and involving learners' views, learners' CF preferences were taken into account. Furthermore, the learners' types, one of Dornyei's (2014) self-organization features, was met in this study as high/low EI, regarding individual differences. Defining different matched/mismatched conditions of EI and CF was another point considered to establish the interaction between the components of the systems. Finally, this study observing the modified output as a particular outcome followed a retrodiction process to find the origin in EI components in different conditions.

2.2. Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Research performed in the measurement of EI has brought about two different models. One model, namely the ability model of EI, relies upon a solely cognitive measure. On the contrary, the trait model of EI is more occupied with behavioral dispositions and self-perceived skills (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Trait EI theory perceives EI as an integration of emotional self-perceptions and behaviors. Such a theoretical stance is in line not only with the common models of personality but also with a great number of research findings in different fields such as life satisfaction, reflection, and coping styles (Petrides & Furnham, 2003; Petrides, Pita & Kokkinaki, 2007). Applying the latter theoretical model into empirical research, Bar-On (2000) came up with a research instrument, the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). This instrument has been widely used in research and overwhelmingly found to be a very valid and reliable instrument (Bar-On, Brown & Thome, 2000; Dawda & Hart, 2000). Bar-On (1997, p. 36) specified five main scales and subscales (components):

- 1) Intrapersonal: managing oneself, becoming familiar with one's emotions (Emotional self-awareness, Assertiveness, Self-regard, Self-actualization, Independence).
- 2) Interpersonal: managing relationships with others (Empathy, Interpersonal-relationship, Social responsibility).
- 3) Adaptability (Problem solving, Reality testing,

Flexibility). 4) Stress management: (Stress tolerance, Impulse control). 5) General mood: being optimistic and positive to enjoy life (Happiness, Optimism).

Ashford (1986) posed a high probability that EI, a social construct, manifests a distinct pattern of self-awareness. Regarding the ongoing task of facing language learning challenges and dealing with emotions, both their own and those of others (such as the teacher, peers, and parental expectations), language learners are likely to have recurrent chances of noticing and solving their failures in this domain. He further mentioned that it is expected that those who are low in emotional intelligence may have restricted capability of gauging appropriate emotionally intelligent reactions. Obviously, it seems inevitable that low performing learners welcome negative feedback to learn from experience particularly early in their language learning experience in order to avoid permanent failure (Ashford, 1986). As a result, the majority of individuals, especially language learners with low EI, might realize the significance of CF provision in their development and thus demonstrate an interest to develop skills and address any deficit (Maurer, Weiss, & Barbeite, 2003). However, it is also plausible, as a large body of work suggests, that individuals including struggling learners react to feedback with limited receptivity, potentially rejecting the results or uncovering ways of protecting their self-views (Brett & Atwater, 2001; Korsgaard, 1996; Sitzmann & Johnson, 2012). It needs to be noted that Bar-On's (2000) model was used in the present study for two reasons. Firstly, since the model by Bar-On is presumed to be a more comprehensive and detailed explanation of EI. Secondly, since the majority of previous works in this realm have employed Bar-On's model, this model was used in the present study to make comparisons with previous studies possible.

2.3. Corrective Feedback (CF)

Since the introduction of form focused instruction in the early 1990s (Khezrlou, 2018; Khezrlou, Ellis & Sadeghi, 2017; Lightbown & Spada, 1990), CF has witnessed considerable attention from both theoretical and pedagogical viewpoints. Lyster and Ranta (1997), based on learner uptake, classified CF into six various categories: In "explicit correction", the teacher clearly points at what is erroneous with the learner's utterance and offers the correct form. In "recast", the teacher retains the meaning while revising the utterance. In "clarification request", the teacher poses some phrases like "Excuse me?" or "I don't understand" to show the learner that his/her utterance was wrong or not comprehended. In "metalinguistic feedback", the teacher gives technical information regarding the learner's error. In "Elicitation", the teacher prompts the learner to use the right form through asking questions, asking for reformulation, or completion of the teacher's

utterance. Finally, in “repetition”, the teacher restates the wrong utterance to make the learner pinpoint the erroneous part.

The CF classification proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) led to the conduction of a large number of studies exploring the effectiveness of different types of CF in both laboratory (Han, 2002; Mackey & Oliver, 2002) and classroom contexts (Ellis, 2007; Ellis, Loewen & Erlam, 2006; Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013). This interest in this area has led to a number of studies (Biber, Nekrasova & Horn, 2011; Kang & Han, 2015; Khezrlou, 2019; Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Russell & Spada, 2006). Overall, the results signify the positive role of CF in L2 development even though the meta-analyses have not irrefutably verified the superiority of implicit feedback (e.g., recast, clarification request) over explicit feedback (e.g., explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback). For instance, the results of a meta-analysis on 31 primary studies on CF by Russel and Spada (2006) were inconclusive for the implicit versus explicit feedback effectiveness. Li (2010), in his meta-analysis, concluded that explicit feedback is more effective compared to implicit feedback when the acquisition is measured in immediate and short delayed post-tests; the results of long-delayed post-tests have revealed the success of implicit feedback in this study. Lyster and Saito (2010) did not find a significant difference between explicit and implicit feedback (i.e., recast or prompt) in classroom setting, adding more to the controversy over implicit/explicit dichotomy.

In addition, a few studies delved into the CF from different perspectives. Lee (2013), using actual classroom observations, questionnaires, and in-depth follow-up interviews, aimed at finding the learners' preferences, the patterns of CF and learners' repair in the four-sequenced ESL Spoken English programs. Classroom observation of 60 graduate students and their four teachers revealed that recasts as the most frequently used CF type led to 92.09 % learner repair. Furthermore, while the students preferred to receive the explicit and immediate corrections in the middle of their conversations with each other or with the teacher, the teachers did not accept the correction of the learners' all errors in spite of its advantage. The learners' preference of explicit corrections to recasts and clarification requests was justified by the unclear nature of clarification requests, the students' feeling of embarrassment, and their fear related to the lack of proficiency threatening their face. In a mixed methods study, Zhao (2015) explored 147 Chinese second language learners' views of CF focusing on language proficiency level, degree of extraversion, and anxiety. The results of a questionnaire and in-depth interviews showed learners' positive attitudes to CF and their preferred CF types of explicit correction, recast, and prompt, which were found helpful on noticing and learning motivation.

In the Iranian EFL context, Rassaei (2013) investigated the way CF helps L2 progress. This study checked the relationship between recasts and explicit CF impacts on L2 progress and learners' perceptions of CF. Sixty-eight Persian EFL learners, carrying out meaning-focused tasks, were provided with recasts or explicit corrections. The participants who were exposed to explicit correction outperformed those who received recast, and the control group in terms of L2 achievement. Furthermore, learners' stimulated recall explanations, considering the perceptions of the recasts and explicit corrections, were categorized as "noticing", "corrective feedback", and "non-corrective". The findings indicated that explicit correction is mostly related to the learners' noticing of target forms and their L2 progress. Vaezi, Zand-Vakili, Mohammadkhani, and Fardkashani (2013) examining the impact of two feedback types of recast and elicitation with participants of different EI levels indicated that those with high EI benefitted from both recast and elicitation, whereas those with low EI advantaged more from recast. Moreover, Yousefi (2016), inspecting CF patterns and negotiated feedback in 16 senior ELT students' discussion sessions, found teachers' no 'Explicit correction', while 'Clarification request' got the first rank of 8 (32%) out of 25 feedback, 7 (28%) 'Metalinguistic feedback', 6 (24%) 'Recast', 2 (8%) 'Elicitation', and 2 (8%) 'Repetition'.

To the best of authors' knowledge, no attention, if any, has been paid to learners' preferences regarding CF, along with teachers' CF practices in natural classroom settings, while successful modified output in matched/mismatched conditions of EI and CF preferences and practices, based on complexity theory, is investigated. Hence, as an attempt to fill this gap, and present a pretty novel approach to CF studies, the present study was undertaken so as to determine the CF types that different learners with different EI levels (high/low) prefer and their reasons behind their preferences. Another important concern of the study is whether successful modified output differs depending on different EI components in teachers and learners' matched/mismatched conditions of EI and CF practices and preferences, which will specify the contribution of both learners' and teachers' individual differences to CF. The objectives of this research are articulated in the following research questions:

1. What oral CF types do learners with high EI prefer? Why?
2. What oral CF types do learners with low EI prefer? Why?
3. Which EI components associate more with successful modified output in teacher-learner matched/mismatched conditions of EI and CF practices and preferences?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Based on convenience sampling, 12 teachers (six High EI and six Low EI) and their 223 male learners (in 12 classes) at intermediate level (109 High EI and 114 Low EI), studying English at a language institute, participated in this study. In teacher-learner matched/mismatched EI conditions (the first word “High” or “Low” shows the teacher’s EI level and the second one shows the learners’), two matched conditions of High (6)-High (54), and Low (6)-Low (59), and two mismatched conditions of High (6)-Low (55), and Low (6)-High (55), based on the Bar-on EQ-i questionnaire, emerged. In each EI condition, two other conditions of matched CF and mismatched CF were defined based on the teachers’ CF practices and learners’ CF preferences. Learners’ age ranged 17-21 and teachers’ 30-45. All learners were at intermediate level based on the placement test of the language institute; however, in order to examine their homogeneity more accurately, they were all administered the Preliminary English Test (PET); Based on two standard deviations above and below the mean they were included in this study. All the learners were required to take the English course at Iran Language Institute (ILI) for two 105-minute sessions per week for three months.

3.2. Instruments

3.2.1. *Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i)*

Bar-On’s EQ-I (1997) is a self-report 90-item measure of emotionally intelligent behavior that provides an estimate of emotional intelligence. The questionnaire yields scores on five primary components: intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability, and general mood. Each of these five scales is composed of specific factors, with a total number of 15 sub-components. It is coded on a five-point Likert scale continuum ranging from 1 to 5: “1 = strongly disagree”, “2 = disagree”, “3 = somewhat agree”, “4 = agree”, and “5 = strongly agree”. Within a possible score-range from 90 to 450, a total score of more than 328 achieved by the participants of this study indicated a high EI and a total score of less than 328 revealed low EI. The reliability (using Cronbach’s alpha) of the inventory in this study was found to be as high as .91. In another study in the context of Iran, its translation was validated and reported satisfying level of reliability, .88, for Bar-On’s EQ-I (Saeidi & Yusefi, 2008).

3.2.2. *The Students’ Preference Elicitation Questionnaire (S’s PEQ)*

The Students’ Preferences Elicitation Questionnaire (S’s PEQ) was originally developed by Al-Faki and Siddiek (2013) as an instrument for measuring language learners’ preferences towards different categories of

error correction. The questionnaire includes 10 items about the 10 CF types, whose responses are recorded along a 5-point Likert scale, from “very helpful (4)” to “not helpful at all (0).” The scores were within the total possible score from 0 to 40. There were three categories of ‘feedback type’, ‘definition of the feedback’, and ‘teacher response’ (i.e., error correction). The feedback types in the questionnaire included recast, explicit correction, repetition of error, elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification request, denial, questioning (peer-correction and self-correction), and ignorance. In this study, the reliability of the scale as measured by Cronbach’s alpha was .87. In addition to the Likert-type questions, there was an open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire asking for respondents’ reasons for their CF preferences. The inter-rater reliability (using Cohen’s Kappa) for the participants’ ideas, descriptions, reasons and attitudes was evaluated by two raters and was found to be .89.

3.2.3. *Instructional Materials*

The ILI English Time Series: Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, and Intermediate 3, all in B level in common European framework, were published by Iran Language Institute in 2004. This study used to summary-tell task in line with Shehadeh’s task types (1999, as cited in Shehadeh, 2005) to create situations for learners to produce modified output.

The topic of the passages covered general issues like *Sleep, Lost in the Snow*, and in 10 sessions, every session one topic, and the structures included Active and Passive voice, Wish (Unreal Past), Conditional Sentences, Reported Speech: Statements, Past Modals, Used to/Would, Reporting Yes/No Questions, Reporting Information Questions, Causative Verbs: Have, Make, and Get, Subjunctive. However, since this study had no treatment and benefited from observation, not just the above-mentioned structures, but also any CF leading to the learners’ successful modified output in summary telling were taken into account.

3.2.4. *Observation Checklist, Teachers’ Corrective Feedback Practice (CFP), and Measurement of Modified Output*

In order to tap into the frequency of successful modified output after the exposure to a specific type of correction, a classroom observation checklist based on S’s PEQ (Al-Faki & Siddiek, 2013) was adapted and used by the researcher. In this checklist, in addition to categories of ‘feedback type’, ‘its definition’, and ‘teacher response’, there were the category of ‘the number of times used by the teacher’ and the category of ‘the frequency of modified output’. Thus, the teachers’ CFP was recorded by checking the number of times that a particular correction had been used and led to modified output. According to Dornyei’s (2007) classroom observation features, in this study, in order not to interfere with the teaching practice, we

used the 'nonparticipant observation' where the researcher attended the class and just observed the process. Furthermore, this study followed 'structured observation' with 10 definite observation categories of CF types leading to successful modified output. To this end, the observation checklist by Al-Faki and Siddiek (2013) was adapted to involve the frequency of the successful modified output. Therefore, in an 'event sampling', the frequency of the specific CF types and the learners' successful MO was recorded through tally marks every time that they occurred. In the checklist, the observer's decision to check the CF types provided by the teacher and the learners' successful modified output were in accordance with the researchers' consistent judgment as 'a high-inference category' (Dornyei, 2007).

3.3. Procedure

Twelve EFL teachers and their 223 students, selected based on PET scores out of 238 students, were assigned into four EI groups of H-H, L-L, H-L, and L-H. Based on the mean results of Bar-On questionnaire, the low EI participants scored lower than 328 and high EI participants were those who managed to score above 328. During 10 sessions, teachers provided feedback to the learners' errors with no pre-planned focus. We observed the sessions in which the reading and structure sections were covered, and students read the passage, told the summary of the passage, and answered reading comprehension questions. Every session two students told the summaries, which made 20 in 10 sessions. The teachers' feedback types in practice were observed and checked by the researcher in the checklist and classified into the following categories: 'recast', 'explicit correction', 'repetition', 'elicitation', 'metalinguistic', 'clarification', 'denial', 'peer correction', 'self-correction', and 'ignorance'.

In the 'explicit correction', the teacher clearly pointed out that the learners' utterance was incorrect and he provided the correct form. In 'recasts', however, the teacher implicitly reformulated the learners' erroneous sentence without directly demonstrating the inaccuracy of the learners' production. In 'clarification request', the teacher resorted to phrases such as "Excuse me?" or "I don't understand" to signal the incomprehensibility of the meaning or the appearance of ungrammaticality. The 'metalinguistic feedback', however, attracted learners' attention to their mistakes by the teacher's posing of questions or providing comments or information (e.g., "Do we say it like that?" "That's not how you say it in English" and "Is it plural?"). In 'elicitation', the teacher directly obtained the accurate form from the learner by putting forward questions (e.g., "How do we say that in English?"), by pausing to permit the learner to complete the teacher's utterance (e.g., "It's a...") or by asking learners to reformulate the utterance (e.g., "Say that again."). The learners in the present study also received 'repetition' CF where the teacher repeated the learners' error with a notable

intonation to attract the learners' attention to the error. In the 'self-correction' feedback type, learners were encouraged to correct their errors by themselves. It should be noted that the participants were helped to self-correct by the teacher's using a facial expression to indicate there was a problem. They were also given ample time to self-correct their productions. In 'peer-correction' on the other hand, the participants received correction from their peers.

Having defined the four conditions of EI (H-H, L-L, H-L, and L-H) through EQ-i, two other conditions of MCFP and MMCFP were specified by the S's PEQ and the observation checklist in each of the EI conditions. Students were also allowed to elaborate on their thoughts and perspectives in the open-ended question section at the end of this questionnaire. After ascertaining the learners' CF preferences, the observation of the teachers' CF practice was carried out; the process in which matched CF practices/preferences (MCFP) and mismatched CF practices/preferences (MMCFP) were identified. The observation checklist was used to calculate the frequency of the learners' successful modified output after receiving particular CF type, too.

3.4. Design of the Study

This study adopted a mixed methods design and, based on complexity theory, attempted to involve the interaction of different classroom variables in merged forms as they naturally exist and involve the classroom practice. Firstly, through the EQ-i, four teacher-learner matched/mismatched EI conditions (H-H, L-L, H-L, and L-H) were defined and within each EI condition, two other conditions of Matched CFP (MCFP) and Mismatched CFP (MMCFP) were specified through S' PEQ and teachers' observation checklist. Moreover, the observation checklist was used to find the frequency of modified output (see Figure 1).

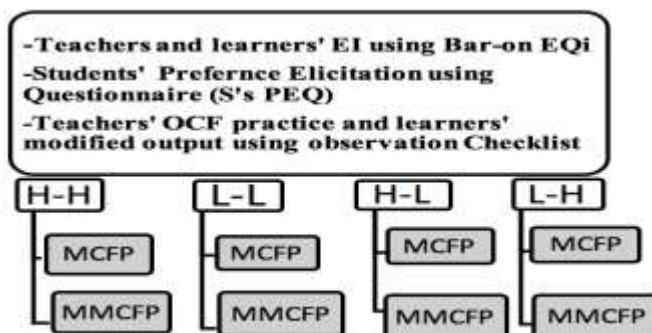


Figure 1. Design of the Study regarding Conditions of Teacher-Learner EI and Matched/Mismatched CFP

Figure 2 indicates how complexity was manifested in this study through different variables and methodological facets within complexity theory.

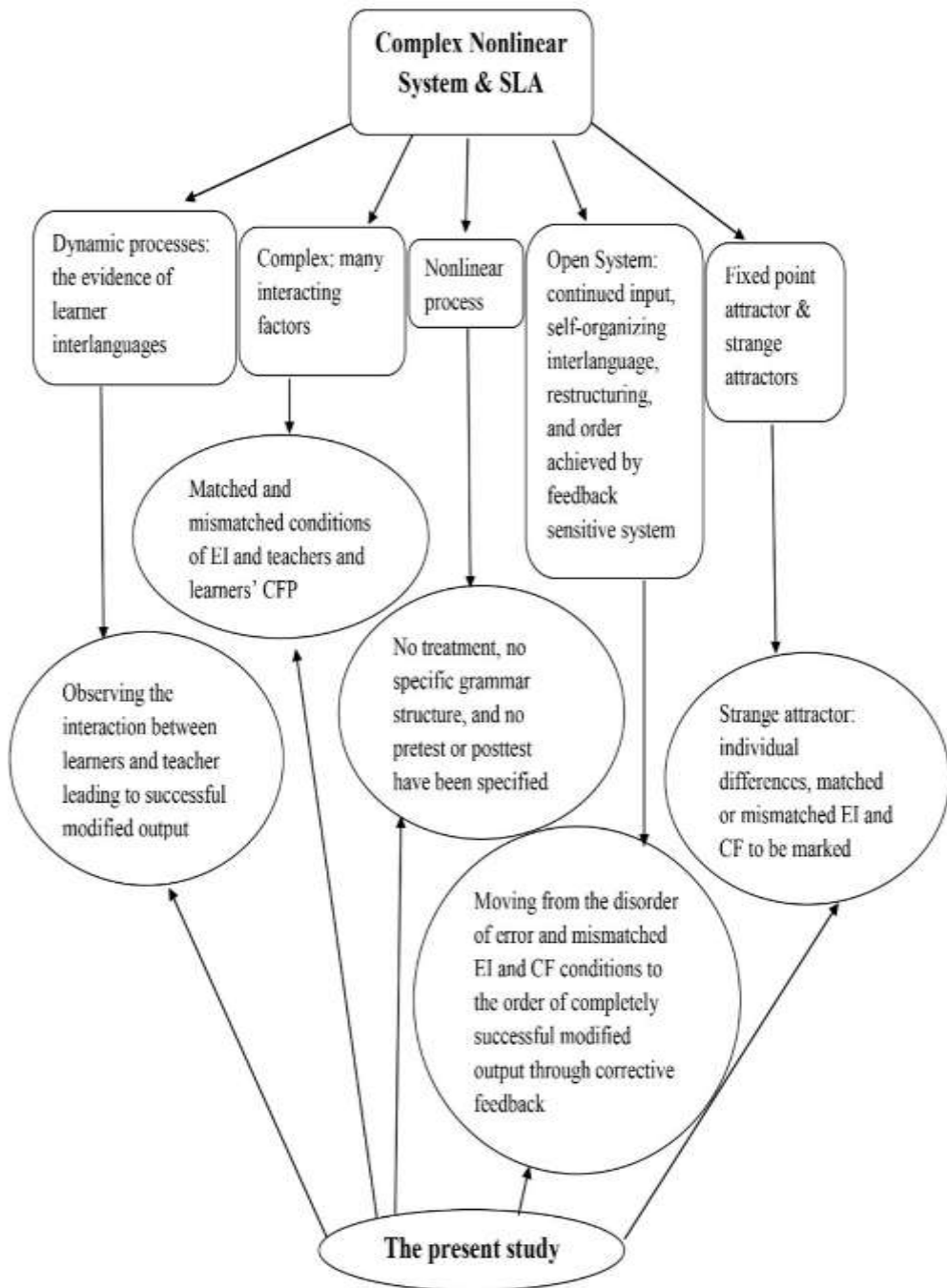


Figure 2. Methodology of the Study regarding the Principles of Complexity Theory

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Research Questions 1 and 2: Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

For the first and second research questions, which look into high EI and low EI learners' preferences of oral CF types, respectively, a Chi-square was performed. The results of the descriptive statistics are reported in Table

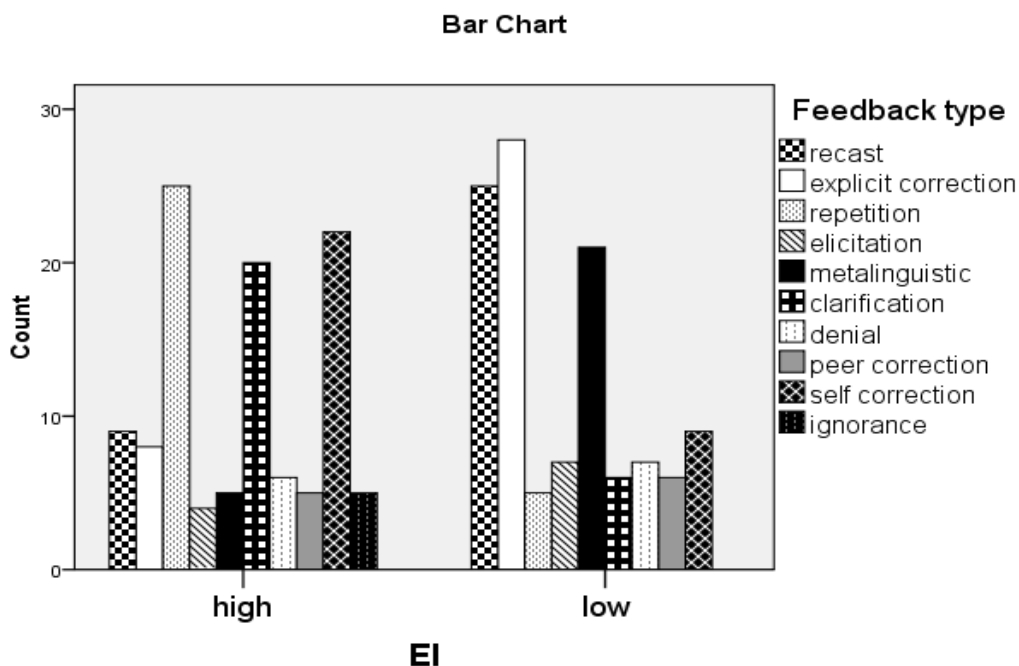


Figure 3. Feedback Types Selected by High/Low EI Learners

As illustrated in Table 1, most of the high EI participants opted for the provision of 'repetition' (22.9%), 'self-correction' (20.2%) and 'clarification' (18.3%) feedback types by their teachers. The majority of low EI participants preferred the provision of 'explicit correction' (24.6%), 'recast' (21.9%), and 'metalinguistic' (18.4%) CF by their teachers and none opted for 'ignorance'. The results of Chi-square indicated that there were statistically significant differences, $\chi^2 = 60.71$, $p = .000$, among the oral CF preferences by both high/low EI participants. Furthermore, there was evidence exhibiting the moderate and significant strength of association ($phi = .52$, $p = .000$) between CF preferences and EI.

Figure 3 provides a schematic representation of percentages for CF types selected by high/low EI learners.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for CF Types Preferred by High/Low EI Learners

		Feedback type										Total
		recast	explicit correction	repetition	Elicitation	metalinguistic	clarification	denial	peer correction	self-correction	ignorance	
EI	Count	9	8	25	4	5	20	6	5	22	5	109
	% within EI	8.3%	7.3%	22.9%	3.7%	4.6%	18.3%	5.5%	4.6%	20.2%	4.6%	100.0%
	% within Feedback type	26.5%	22.2%	83.3%	36.4%	19.2%	76.9%	46.2%	45.5%	71.0%	100.0%	48.9%
	high % of Total	4.0%	3.6%	11.2%	1.8%	2.2%	9.0%	2.7%	2.2%	9.9%	2.2%	48.9%
	Count	25	28	5	7	21	6	7	6	9	0	114
	% within EI	21.9%	24.6%	4.4%	6.1%	18.4%	5.3%	6.1%	5.3%	7.9%	.0%	100.0%
	% within Feedback type	73.5%	77.8%	16.7%	63.6%	80.8%	23.1%	53.8%	54.5%	29.0%	.0%	51.1%
	low % of Total	11.2%	12.6%	2.2%	3.1%	9.4%	2.7%	3.1%	2.7%	4.0%	.0%	51.1%
	Count	34	36	30	11	26	26	13	11	31	5	223
	% within EI	15.2%	16.1%	13.5%	4.9%	11.7%	11.7%	5.8%	4.9%	13.9%	2.2%	100.0%
% within Feedback type	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Total	% of Total	15.2%	16.1%	13.5%	4.9%	11.7%	11.7%	5.8%	4.9%	13.9%	2.2%	100.0%

The results of the qualitative analysis for the first research question indicated a correspondence between the quantitative analysis and the learners' personal inclinations such that the majority of learners high in EI tended to prefer 'self-correction', 'clarification request', 'repetition of error' with a comparatively lower number being fond of 'recasts'. They presented some reasons; the three most common themes out of the analysis were autonomy, usefulness, and face keeping. Regarding autonomy, for example, a learner stated that, "*I like to find my problems myself and try to remove them autonomously*". Regarding usefulness, another learner expressed that, "*I think self-correction is very useful compared to others because I don't forget the corrected errors that I work on them*". Regarding face keeping, for example, a learner said, "*I like to ask the teacher about my problem when I face it rather than him try to correct every mistake I make. I don't want to feel lazy in front of my friends*". This inclination towards self-correction is attributed in some ways to learners' lack of interest in being corrected by teachers or peers, especially explicitly, because they may not feel good to be corrected in front of others, which makes them feel anxious. As a result, most of the high EI learners preferred indirect CF of 'self-correction', 'clarification request', and 'repetition of error' to have more chances of self-correction. In addition, as a last resort, a small number of high EI learners preferred recast to save their face. Therefore, the aforementioned learner's statements and the similar ones exhibit the learners' positive attitudes towards more indirect methods of correction instead of direct and explicit methods. Moreover, as it is palpable in one of the learners' statement, "*I think I can correct my own errors and there is no need for the extra help of others*" (i.e., self-correction), high EI learners' independence and courage backs their ability to notice and detect their errors by indirect correction and attention catching techniques. It needs to be noted that, the results of the qualitative analysis highlighted some of the learners' tendency towards 'recast', as mentioned before. Although this technique was not found to be statistically significant in the quantitative analysis, its face keeping function from learners' point of view lends further credence to high EI learners' keenness on indirect methods of error correction.

The same procedure of qualitative analysis was pursued for the second research question with low EI learners. The low EI learners felt more dependent upon external sources of correction and welcomed explicit and very clear methods of error correction. The most prominent reason behind the higher popularity of explicit approaches is due to a number of factors as also depicted in Figure 4. One of the reasons for the low EI learners' preference for explicit correction was "dependence upon teacher" as expressed by one of the learners: "*I like my teacher to correct my problem. In this way, I better understand my problems and know the answer*". Secondly, it was found that

low EI learners were weak in terms of tolerating the ambiguous learning situations, as it is clear in this statement by a learner: *“If I know the solution to my problem and my mistake, then I can better learn. I don't want to spend more time to search for the solution...most of the times I can't find the answer myself”*. As another factor leading to low EI learners' explicit CF preferences was “learners' anxiety” since they were less anxious when the teacher provided explicit correction of their errors in comparison to indirect feedback which might have confused the students: *“I don't want my teacher to help me indirectly because sometimes I don't understand and make me embarrassed in front of other students”*. In line with these reasons, the other cause put forward by the learners for the explicit correction preference was “understanding everything faster and better”. This last reason in fact corroborated learners' reliance on teachers and their lack of ambiguity tolerance since they were more inclined towards a quick and efficient understanding of the challenging points in the class, as noted by one of the learners: *“sometimes my teacher asks me to find the answer, but I really like to learn him answer because I understand better”*.

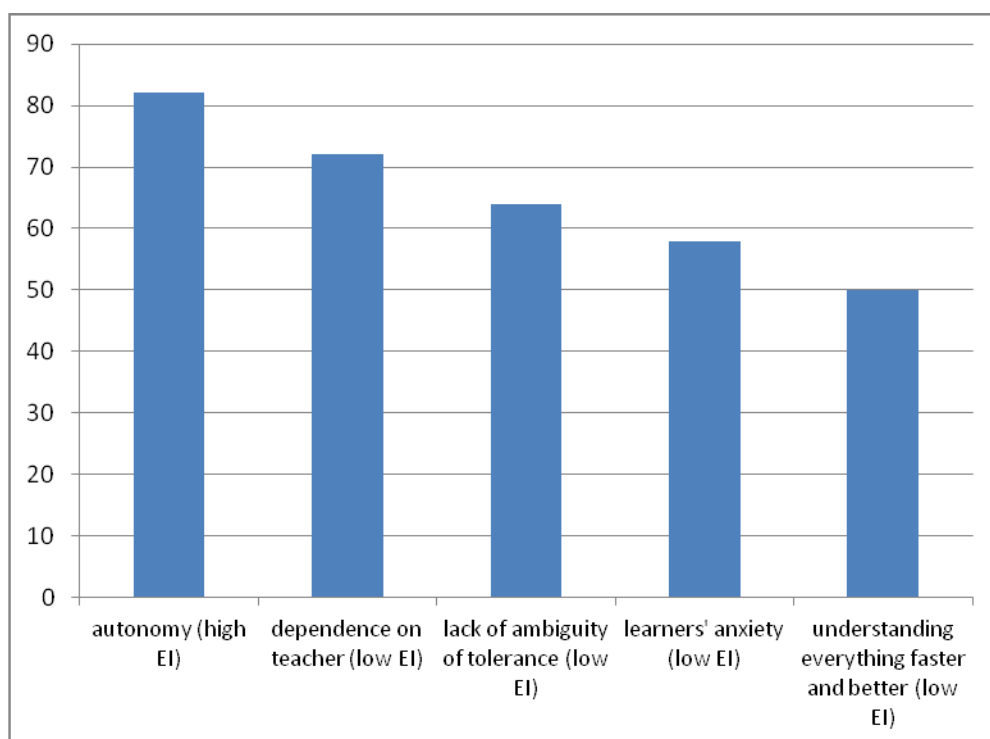


Figure 4. High/Low EI Learners' Reported Reasons for CF Preferences

		Output								
	% of Total	1.0%	.6%	.7%	.7%	.7%	.7%	.6%	.6%	9.2%
Self Actualization	Count	9	9	8	8	10	6	8	7	65
	% within EI	13.8%	13.8%	12.3%	12.3%	15.4%	9.2%	12.3%	10.8%	100.0%
	% within Output	5.4%	5.3%	5.5%	5.3%	6.8%	3.9%	6.5%	4.0%	5.3%
	% of Total	.7%	.7%	.6%	.6%	.8%	.5%	.6%	.6%	5.3%
Self Awareness	Count	13	11	11	11	10	15	15	9	95
	% within EI	13.7%	11.6%	11.6%	11.6%	10.5%	15.8%	15.8%	9.5%	100.0%
	% within Output	7.8%	6.4%	7.6%	7.3%	6.8%	9.7%	12.1%	5.1%	7.7%
	% of Total	1.1%	.9%	.9%	.9%	.8%	1.2%	1.2%	.7%	7.7%
Reality Testing	Count	13	11	12	11	14	10	11	8	90
	% within EI	14.4%	12.2%	13.3%	12.2%	15.6%	11.1%	12.2%	8.9%	100.0%
	% within Output	7.8%	6.4%	8.3%	7.3%	9.5%	6.5%	8.9%	4.6%	7.3%
	% of Total	1.1%	.9%	1.0%	.9%	1.1%	.8%	.9%	.6%	7.3%
Interpersonal Relation	Count	13	9	7	11	6	8	8	8	108
	% within EI	12.0%	8.3%	6.5%	10.2%	5.6%	7.4%	7.4%	11.4%	100.0%
	% within Output	7.8%	5.3%	4.8%	7.3%	4.1%	5.2%	6.5%	4.6%	8.8%
	% of Total	1.1%	.7%	.6%	.9%	.5%	.6%	.6%	.6%	8.8%
Optimism	Count	12	8	7	13	12	10	8	9	79
	% within EI	15.2%	10.1%	8.9%	16.5%	15.2%	12.7%	10.1%	11.4%	100.0%
	% within Output	7.2%	4.7%	4.8%	8.7%	8.1%	6.5%	6.5%	5.1%	6.4%
	% of Total	1.0%	.6%	.6%	1.1%	1.0%	.8%	.6%	.7%	6.4%
Self-Regard	Count	14	7	9	6	7	10	9	4	66
	% within EI	21.2%	10.6%	13.6%	9.1%	10.6%	15.2%	13.6%	6.1%	100.0%
	% within Output	8.4%	4.1%	6.2%	4.0%	4.7%	6.5%	7.3%	2.3%	5.4%
	% of Total	1.1%	.6%	.7%	.5%	.6%	.8%	.7%	.3%	5.4%
Impulse Control	Count	8	6	8	8	7	8	3	4	52
	% within EI	15.4%	11.5%	15.4%	15.4%	13.5%	15.4%	5.8%	7.7%	100.0%
	% within Output	4.8%	3.5%	5.5%	5.3%	4.7%	5.2%	2.4%	2.3%	4.2%
	% of Total	.6%	.5%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.6%	.2%	.3%	4.2%
Flexibility	Count	10	30	8	10	10	8	5	6	87
	% within EI	11.5%	34.5%	9.2%	11.5%	11.5%	9.2%	5.7%	6.9%	100.0%
	% within Output	6.0%	17.5%	5.5%	6.7%	6.8%	5.2%	4.0%	3.4%	7.1%

	% of Total	.8%	2.4%	.6%	.8%	.8%	.6%	.4%	.5%	7.1%
Social Responsibility	Count	9	9	11	11	10	12	6	2	70
	% within EI	12.9%	12.9%	15.7%	15.7%	14.3%	17.1%	8.6%	2.9%	100.0%
	% within Output	5.4%	5.3%	7.6%	7.3%	6.8%	7.8%	4.8%	1.1%	5.7%
Empathy	% of Total	.7%	.7%	.9%	.9%	.8%	1.0%	.5%	.2%	5.7%
	Count	7	5	10	9	10	11	6	3	61
	% within EI	11.5%	8.2%	16.4%	14.8%	16.4%	18.0%	9.8%	4.9%	100.0%
	% within Output	4.2%	2.9%	6.9%	6.0%	6.8%	7.1%	4.8%	1.7%	4.9%
Assertiveness	% of Total	.6%	.4%	.8%	.7%	.8%	.9%	.5%	.2%	4.9%
	Count	12	6	10	6	10	16	9	46	77
	% within EI	15.6%	7.8%	13.0%	7.8%	13.0%	20.8%	11.7%	42.6%	100.0%
	% within Output	7.2%	3.5%	6.9%	4.0%	6.8%	10.4%	7.3%	26.3%	6.2%
Total	% of Total	1.0%	.5%	.8%	.5%	.8%	1.3%	.7%	3.7%	6.2%
	Count	166	171	145	150	148	154	124	175	1233
	% within EI	13.5%	13.9%	11.8%	12.2%	12.0%	12.5%	10.1%	14.2%	100.0%
	% within Output	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	13.5%	13.9%	11.8%	12.2%	12.0%	12.5%	10.1%	14.2%	100.0%

The results regarding EIC in matched/mismatched CF types yielded the similar scores. However, a close examination of the results reveals that in MMCFP under H-H condition, problem solving (31.5 %) and flexibility (34.5%) are different from their counterparts in determining successful MO. Moreover, results in Table 3 shows that in MMCFP under teacher-learner L-H condition, assertiveness (42.6%) and independence (40.5%) are associated with the most completely successful MO. The results of the Chi-square test illustrated a statistically significant association, $\chi(1) = 0.2.61$, $p = .000$, between EIC and MO in two conditions of matched/mismatched CF practice and preferences; that is, the EIC as explained in descriptive statistics showed variation in matched/mismatched conditions regarding MO. Moreover, there was evidence exhibiting the moderate and significant strength of association ($phi = .46$, $p = .000$) between EIC and MO.

4.2. Discussion

The results related to research questions one and two demonstrated that learners with different EI levels (H/L) prefer different oral CF types. The first research question yielded that high EI learners mostly preferred repetition, self-correction, and clarification request types of CF. Underlying these choices, high EI learners, in response to the open ended question of

why, justified their preferences through being independent or being autonomous, and not choosing the peer-correction due to their anxiety and face threatening factors. This study, explaining the anxiety, as the negative emotional aspect, revealed that high EI learners' CF preferences were a successful endeavor to ameliorate the effect of anxiety, which is corroborated by Ciarrochi and Mayer's (2007) argument that emotional intelligence can amend the individual's negative emotions. Furthermore, consistent with the results of the present study in which high EI learners preferred challenging types of oral CF such as repetition, self-correction, and clarification, Vaezi, et al. (2013) showed that high EI learners were corrected by elicitation, as challenging CF type. Since elicitation is not ready-made regarding the challenging aspect of CF types, this requires a kind of learners' manipulation or self-correction, which is welcomed by high EI learners. Yousefi (2016) also revealed that learners preferred 'clarification request' over other types of CF.

While the high EI learners welcome challenges, take risks and face unknown situations because of their adaptability trait, the second research question revealed that the low EI learners may incline toward more 'ready-made' (e.g., recast) and explicit CF types (e.g., explicit correction and metalinguistic feedback) to avoid failure. Zhao (2015) also reported that learners were more inclined towards explicit correction due to the ambiguities of the indirect CF types. This finding can be attributed to the specificities of each CF type matched with emotional intelligence, which is evident in participants' explanations of the reasons for their preferences. As the qualitative analysis of the open-ended question revealed, learners related their preference of explicit type to some factors such as 'lack of tolerance of ambiguity' 'dependence on teachers', 'learners' anxiety', and 'quick understanding'. However, their preference of recast was unanticipated because it is one of the implicit CF types; the qualitative analysis revealed that the reason is due to the smooth provision of correct form of the utterance, which does not interrupt the flow of speech; as a result, it does not engender anxiety in the low EI learners.

Regarding the matched/mismatched conditions of EI between teachers and learners and in each of them MCFP and MMCFP, the third research question displayed that, in MMCFP under H-H (high EI teacher-high EI learners) condition, problem solving and flexibility, as the subcategories of adaptability, associated more with successful modified output. Moreover, in MMCFP under L-H (low EI teacher-high EI learners) condition, assertiveness and independence, as the subcategories of intrapersonal, associated more with the successful modified output. Likewise, Arnold and Brown (1999), Schumann (1994), and Stevick (1995) posed some

beneficial conditions based on positive emotions such as self-awareness, empathy, motivation, and self-confidence to trigger language learning process. In line with the positive emotions of these studies, regarding affective paradigm and individual differences, the present study found EI component of problem solving, flexibility, assertiveness, and independence beneficial to successful modified output.

Pishghadam (2009), paving the ground for language process, attributed the learners' EI level to their adaptability in emotional aspects and the present study, with a similar focus on the learners' EI level, revealed that flexibility and problem solving led to more successful modified output. A possible explanation for this might be that high EI learners' flexibility might have helped them control their anxiety, take risk and prefer CF types, which were more indirect, while low EI learners' lack of flexibility made them prefer direct CF types of explicit correction and metalinguistic clue, and surprisingly, recast as indirect one. In addition, the reason for low EI learners' recast preference might be that the learners were not directly involved in the correction by recast, because it was just repetition of what teachers said and the low EI learners did not face with the anxious condition of being expected to correct.

Besides, regarding recast and anxiety, Sheen (2008) and Rassaei (2015) yielded different results to one another. While Sheen (2008) showed that the low-anxiety recast group outperformed the high-anxiety recast group in modified output production, Rassaei (2015), in a pretest-posttest design, indicated that recasts were more beneficial for high-anxiety learners than metalinguistic feedback, and low-anxiety learners benefited from recasts and metalinguistic feedback. These controversial results imply the existence of another variable from which such a difference in result might have originated. High or low EI learners with low or high anxiety might benefit from recasts differently. In Zhao (2015), learners favored the match between the teacher's CF provision and their own preferences; this study, in practice, showed that successful modified outputs were produced more in MMCFP under H-H and L-H EI conditions. In addition to the learners' reasons for their CF preferences related to individual differences in Zhao's study, the present study posed some other factors of problem solving, flexibility, assertiveness, and independence regarding the learners' EI level and successful modified outputs. Therefore, it seems possible to justify that these results can be related to other individual differences, which have ameliorated the mismatch between the teacher's and learners' CF preferences and led to successful modified outputs. This study, supporting Lee (2013), attributed the learners' explicit correction preference to their low EI. While Lee (2013) mentioned that the students' feeling of embarrassment and their fear related to the lack of proficiency, which might threaten their face, had made the

learners prefer explicit correction, the present study put forward that the low EI learners might have preferred the explicit correction and metalinguistic clues because of not being high in specific EI components. The high EI learners in this study, by means of possessing specific EI components of flexibility, problem-solving, assertiveness, and independence to a higher degree, could compensate the features related to clarification request (as being vague in comparison with direct types of feedback) in Lee's (2013) study and led to the learners' successful modified outputs. Moreover, regarding mismatch between teacher's CF practices and learners' CF preferences, this study, in accordance with Lee (2013), who found teacher's recast causing learner repair, in spite of the learners' explicit correction preference, showed the learners' successful modified output more in MMCFP.

While the match between teacher and learners might have seemed desirable in language learning conditions, surprisingly, underlying subcategories of EI, in MMCFP and EI of H-H (high teacher-low learners) and L-H (low teacher-high learners) led to more successful modified outputs. A possible explanation for this might be that in MMCFP under H-H EI conditions, learners' problem-solving in facing challenging CF types of repetition, self-correction, and clarification request must have had a key role. Moreover, flexibility, as one of the EI components, which associated with more successful modified outputs, can be justified in two respects. First, since the participants came from the school background in which their teachers provide explicit correction and even explanation in Persian, in the context of the institute, they faced with the implicit CF types in English, a kind of methodology which was beyond their expectation because of their school background. Therefore, high EI learners' flexibility might have helped them adapt themselves to the new CF types of repetition, self-correction, and clarification request. Second, low EI learners, having high level of anxiety and low level of independence, as highlighted in the open-ended part of the questionnaire, might have hindered the learners' preference of implicit CF types. The case in which high EI learners' flexibility and independence might have led them to amend their anxiety and prefer repetition, self-correction, and clarification request. In addition, high EI learners' stress tolerance was expected to associate with more successful modified output; however, it seems that anxiety preponderated over preference of peer-correction and the learners inclined toward less anxiety-provoking CF types. Moreover, the existence of high EI learners' independence got them to prefer self-correction to peer-correction. On the other hand, learners' more successful modified outputs, in MMCFP under L-H (low teacher-high learners) condition, were related to the high EI learners' components of 'assertiveness' and 'independence'. High EI learners' independence component can help the

learners to use other resources to compensate the teacher-learner mismatch of CF preferences and EI. Besides, being assertive in reaction to the teachers' CF practice, which are not in match with the learners' CF preferences, makes the learners endeavor more and benefit from any other resources at their disposal.

The basic tenet of complexity theory, moving from disorder to order and its parallel aspect restructuring in SLA, was confirmed by the advantageous feature of MMCFP, in which learners face CF types different from their expectations and habits of learning. Considering the dynamic aspect of language learning in grammaring process, this study, considering teachers and learners' EI, included the interaction of the teacher's feedback provision and the learners' modified output production in both MCFP and MMCFP conditions to give a thorough picture regarding the role of affective/cognitive factors, along with individual differences, in implementing CF leading to successful modified output.

5. Conclusion and Implications

In a nutshell, this study offers some support for the conceptual premise that learners repeating their habits of learning may not sound logical to be the harbinger of change in their language processing. However, learners being challenged by the mismatched conditions may boost their repertoires of CF strategies through some novel techniques. Furthermore, this study has important implications to enhance learners and teachers' emotional intelligence learnability aspect in some sessions or teacher training courses to be reflective and autonomous in learning and teaching. The findings of this study are significant in at least two major respects. First, it raises teachers' awareness toward learner-centered CF strategies according to different individual variables. Then, it paves the ground to move from random CF provision to systematic one with which teachers can take into account different cognitive and affective factors of individual differences and decide what types of CF can be effective. The inclusion of emotional intelligence in CF may prevent the teachers' stigmatizing the learners as lazy and it may lead to the change of the methodologies which present one-size-fit-all approach. Besides, this study can raise the teachers and authorities' awareness toward the existence of psychological and social aspect of intelligence through EI in CF, which have not previously met both cognitively and affectively regarding both teachers' CF practices and learners' CF preferences.

Based on EI and CF, since learners are not scored in CF provision, their awareness of successful modified output can increase their self-confidence to take risks, the claim which can be checked in further research. In addition, regarding rapport, CF, and EI components, further studies with

more focus on solidarity, as a sociolinguistic aspect, can be undertaken to keep a close look at peer-correction versus teacher's correction. Moreover, further studies should be conducted to explore teachers' attitude toward different types of CF and determine the extent to which they apply their CF preferences in practice. Lastly, since this study was limited in terms of using a small sample of participants and limited types of CF. Thus, further studies are encouraged to replicate the results of this study with a larger sample size and a wider array of CF types.

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