

## The Correlation Between Iraqi EFL University Students' Emotional Coping and Productive Skills Performance

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### Abstract

*Emotional approach coping refers to specific coping strategies elected in response to stressful experiences. They indicate what people generally do, feel, and think when they experience stressful situations to enable them achieve successful self-regulation (Hoyt et al, 2020).*

*Learning of speaking and writing enjoys a paramount status in any language education classroom. So long as communication in a foreign language is the ultimate goal for learning, the productive skills will continue to be an important component of syllabus content and learning outcomes (Goh& Burns, 2012).*

*The study aims at finding out at :firstly, Iraqi EFL university students' level of emotional coping and performance in productive skills. Secondly: The correlation between emotional coping with performance in productive skills. The current study is a descriptive correlational one. For the academic year 2021-2022, a sample consists 360 third-year college students who are selected randomly from the colleges of education in three universities (Tikrit University, Baghdad University, Wasit University). Two instruments are used to achieve the aims of this study: the emotional coping scale and productive skills test.*

*The findings reveal that Iraqi EFL college students have a satisfactory level of emotional coping. Furthermore, the findings also reveal that Iraqi EFL college students productive skills performance is at an average level.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Coping, Productive Skills, Performance.*

### Introduction

Emotional approach coping can be defined as a psychological construct that involves the use of emotional processing and emotional expression in response to a stressful situation. Emotional approach coping involves the conscious use of emotional expression and processing to better deal with a stressful situation. Emotional processing and expression are demonstrated to be beneficial (Stanton et al, 2002).

Stressful events might upset emotional balance and force the deployment of steady coping mechanisms aimed at controlling emotional reactions. The purpose of such efforts can be to up- or down-regulate positive or negative emotions, which can have an impact on one's physical and mental health (Segerstrom & Smith, 2019, p.653).

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Harmer (2007) thinks that the term productive skills refers to the language skills where the students produce the language themselves.

Speaking and writing are called productive skills because people use the language to produce a message through speech or written text. According to Hubackova & Golkova (2014) "productive skills - also called active skills and mean the transmission of information that a language user produces in either spoken or written form"(p.478).

To wrap up, productive skills performance in a foreign language is affected by many factors both affective and cognitive. Students' personal emotions such as self-confidence and their belief about learning are among the major factors. Further, fear of evaluation, interpersonal threat (fear of their mistakes being known by peers) and fear of teachers' negative feedback can cast their shadow on EFL productive skills performance. Furthermore, asking learners to write or speak about topics they do not know well under a rigid time constraint as well as teachers' preoccupation with forms and language can add up to the difficulty EFL learners face. In addition, students can feel worried about their performance because they have poor linguistic proficiency. Therefore, without good level of emotional coping their performance in productive skills will get affected drastically.

## **Literature Review**

According to Baker & Berenbaum (2007) emotional-approach coping is defined as actively identifying, processing, and expressing one's emotions, thus providing information about one's goal status. It facilitates potential decision making by providing different problem-solving perspectives. It is viewed as engaging a particular problem in an active, dynamic way rather than avoiding the problem in a passive static way.

Emotional approach coping refers to specific coping strategies elected in response to stressful experiences. They indicate what people generally do, feel, and think when they experience stressful situations to enable them achieve successful self-regulation (Hoyt et al, 2020).

Gross (2014) thinks that emotional-approach coping is coping that focuses primarily on reducing negative affect and managing specific stressful negative experiences and thereby it is distinguishable from broader aspects of emotion regulation .

Moreover, it is one specific form of coping characterized by attempts to actively process and express stressor-engendered emotions. Emotional approach coping involves the use of active attempts to acknowledge, explore, and understand emotions. Also, it includes active verbal and/or nonverbal efforts to communicate or symbolize emotional experience (Austenfled& Stanton, 2004).

There are two types of emotional approach coping styles:

- a) Emotional processing (EP), which is making an attempt to understand and validate one's emotions, and
- b) Emotional expression (EE) (i.e., feeling free to express emotions in both verbal and nonverbal manners).

As a result, "coping with bad circumstances through purposefully processing and expressing emotions" is what emotional approach coping entails (Stanton, 2012, p. 370).

On the one hand, processing emotions has a signaling purpose. Understanding and acknowledging one's emotions makes events more salient and draws attention to essential objectives. According to Carver and Scheier's (1981), in behavioral self-regulation theory, emotions indicate the degree to which one's progress toward a goal deviates from the predicted pace. Although emotions do not need to be fully processed in order to fulfill a

basic signaling role, more fully processed emotions may help to specify goal barriers and inspire action to overcome them.

Additionally, emotional processing could encourage reconsidering the stressor. Understanding emotions can lead to a satisfactory attribution of the stressor, a diminished perception of threat, or the discovery of value in one's experience, all of which can lead to positive adjustment (Morrow & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1990).

The following statements, such as "I acknowledge my emotions" and "I take time to find out what I'm actually experiencing," show that the emotional processing reflects intentional endeavors to investigate, understand, and acknowledge emotions (Seegerstrom et al., 2003, p. 918).

Emotional processing, however, can be distinguished to some extent from other types of repetitive thought since it involves focused attention on stress-related emotions. In fact, some research have demonstrated that emotional processing is positively connected with rumination (Hoyt et al., 2020).

Emotional expression (EE) refers to conscious verbal and/or nonverbal attempts to convey or portray emotional experience, such as when a person says, "I feel free to express my emotions" or "I take time to express my emotions." By encouraging people to share their emotions with others and by guiding them in making the best possible choices for and use of their social settings, the usage of EE helps to improve interpersonal relationships (Manne et al., 2004, p. 43).

Notably, emotional expression frequently includes a shared process; therefore, its adaptive utility may depend on factors of the social context, such as openness to emotional expression. A considerable interaction between emotional expression and social variables on adaptive outcomes would be the empirical result of such a process. Additionally, expressing emotions may encourage habituation to the stressor. Expression of one's emotions as a means of coping may help to control the social environment, tell others of one's worries, and elicit a response (Hoyt, 2009).

As components of an emotional coping approach, specific coping mechanisms that are chosen in reaction to stressful events include emotional processing (EP) and emotional expression (EE) (Smith & Lumley, 2002).

They have situational (i.e., a specific stressor) and dispositional (i.e., "indicate what you normally do, feel, and think when you experience stressful conditions") measurement.

A deep awareness of one's emotions during difficult situations may also help the person choose an emotional setting that will provide them the most satisfaction. (Stanton et al., 2000).

Emotional tension can be worsened when they are so much concerned about what others might say or think about their speaking or writing performance. Students may adopt an avoidance strategy instead of the fear of committing mistakes and tendencies of receiving negative feedback and assessment from others. Usually, students tend to escape, avoid, withdraw, and inhibit from interacting in such instances (Lindsay & Knight, 2006).

#### Language Productive Skills

The four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing in FL context (Blake, 2016). These skills are divided in two categories "(1) receptive skills: listening and reading, and (2) productive skills which consist of speaking and writing" (Zahroh, 2020, p. 12).

Whereas Harmer (2007) thinks that the term productive skills refers to the language skills where the students produce the language themselves.

Speaking and writing are called productive skills because people use the language to produce a message through speech or written text. According to Hubackova & Golkova

(2014) “productive skills - also called active skills and mean the transmission of information that a language user produces in either spoken or written form” (p.478).

Speaking and writing are inextricably linked, as most regular users of any foreign language are aware of. Grammatical structures, words and their right application, as well as a particular level of accuracy, must all be observed. These are used in both active and passive skills. Rather than using activities that focus solely on correctness, many language teachers use “communicative activities” to promote communicative competence in FL students (Riggenbach & Lazaraton, 1991).

Thus, productive language skills are important because they are the observable evidence of language acquisition. The more the speaker or the writer produces appropriate and coherent language the more proof of the progress in the learner’s language system is present (Roca, 2019).

### Speaking Skill

Speaking is the most significant tool in our communication system, speaking plays the most crucial part in our daily lives. Any attribute of life whether it’s societal or personal communication needs capability to talk since it’s really the only way out to keep our interaction process working. Celce-Murcia (2001) believes that the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication. And It seems to be naturally the most important skill. This importance due to the fact that students who has the will to speaks FL is referred to as speaker of the language, which provides the proof that speaking integrates every single other sort of knowledge.

Speaking is a basic skill in language learning. It is the crucial skill to dynamic communication. It is a main method of evaluating someone's ability to acquire FL. Let alone it is the best unique aspect of humans that discriminates them from other living beings. Nonetheless, most FL students’ conflict to develop speaking skill because it needs oral communication that involves both speaking and listening (Nunan, 2003).

Speaking with the target language in the foreign language classroom could be the most stressful experience that the foreign learners face (Amin & Ibrahim, 2021).

Speech as a daily-life transaction raises a crucial issue connected with the use of different kinds of interactional activities, which is the average of linguistic accuracy that learners obtain when finishing these activities. The main assumption is that the form will be taken care naturally via the learner and by the teacher (Krebt, 2017).

### Writing Skill

According to Brown (2001), writing is the practice of the abilities that allow pupils to create their own thoughts, beliefs, habits, etc. in order to successfully master and produce the subject matter.

Contrarily, writing performance relates to the practical application of words in authentic situations . Performance is often referred to as a unique talent or skill that is developed via practice or instruction (White, 1999).

Writing is the process of results of recording language in the form of conventionalized visible graphic signs or marks on a surface which is both a physical and a mental act (Al-Kubaisy, 2018, p.138). The most important learning and teaching skill as Mohammed and Jassim (2022:672) state is writing. It has been provided with an emphasis in second language learning.

Similarly, studies indicated that students with the highest levels of writing anxiety produced essays that were shorter and less competent than those of their peers who experienced the lowest levels of writing anxiety (Elaf, 2022).

One of the most important things you can do in the modern world is learning English because it makes it easier to obtain information and communicate internationally. For the majority of people, communicating is the main goal of learning a foreign language. With communication, people exchange and receive information effectively and negotiate meaning Celce-Murcia (2001).

#### Emotional Coping and Productive Skills Performance

Geake (2009, p.113) states, "We know that our students' emotions have a significant impact on the quality of their learning." because "all learning has an emotional basis".

Experts in education view learning as a complex interaction between cognitive, emotional, and physiological components. Emotions are potent and unavoidable components of life and education. Possessing the ability to control one's emotions is one of the many requirements of a good learner. Emotional regulation transcends the basic display of feeling; emotions direct (or disrupt) psychological processes, such as the capacity to focus attention, solve problems, and maintain relationships. Emotional competency or intelligence refers to a person's skill to self-regulate; that is, to control one's impulses and instincts. It also encompasses the capacity for compassion and the ability to collaborate (OECD, 2007, p. 64).

Stress is a mismatch between what the body and brain anticipate and the actual problems we encounter or feel. Psychological issues, such as striving for academic success or competing for a spot on the school team, or physical factors, such as an acute illness can create stress. However, stress systems have evolved into very sophisticated processes that assist us in dealing with unforeseen obstacles (Morris & Fillenz, 2003).

Levenson (2007) defines emotions as short-lived psychological, physiological phenomena that represent efficient modes of adaptation to produce a bodily milieu that is optimal for effective response.

Findings from the empirical literature on stress and coping harken back to the view of emotions primarily elaborated on by Lazarus and Folkman's (1984). They provide influential conceptualization of coping, as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (p. 141). In their framework, coping processes subsume both direct efforts to alter demands perceived as taxing one's resources ; i.e., problem-focused coping and attempts to regulate emotions surrounding the stressful encounter ; i.e., emotion-focused coping (Folkman et.al, 1986).

Problem-focused coping includes such strategies as defining the problem, generating and weighing alternative solutions, and following a plan of action. Emotion-focused coping includes processes such as avoidance, denial, seeking emotional support, and positive reappraisal. Lazarus and Folkman observed that people use both coping approaches in almost all difficult situations (Dillard, 2019).

According to Krashen's Affective filter theory (1988) FL learners with low levels of stress have the better success rate of acquisition than learners with high levels of stress. Krashen noted that worry and low self-image created a mental barrier that filtered or blocked out new learning (Willis, 2006).

In terms productive skills performance, high stress can :

- Impair concentration and attention .
- Impair cognition, imagination, and memory .
- Reduce social abilities and social judgment .
- Reduce motivation, resolve, and exertion .

Moreover, in a stress–appraisal–coping process, personality traits can influence any stage in the sequence: exposure to stressors, reactivity to or appraisal of stressors (e.g., viewing a stressor as a danger or a challenge), reaction or coping with stress. Similarly, emotion might appear at various points throughout the sequence (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Lazarus (1999, p. 35) claimed that "where there is stress, there are also feelings" and pushed the concept of emotion-focused coping, which entails efforts to alleviate stress-related emotions through techniques such as reappraisal, seeking social support, and distraction.

A person is unlikely to identify a problem or think it necessary to cope unless it elicits a strong emotional response. Moreover, emotions prepare individuals for action in reaction to inputs. Indeed, the literal definition of *emote* is to prepare for action. Besides, emotion seems to prepare the body for action (Tooby & Cosmides 2008).

Managing emotions may involve behaviors induced by emotions, regardless of whether the acts are meant to manage emotional experience or really do so. For instance, rage may inspire you to confront another individual. It is possible that confrontation could diminish your anger, but it could also maintain or even increase your anger (Seegerstrom, 2019, p.653).

According to Carver & Scheier (1981), Learning to cope by processing and expressing emotions might help learners to focus on important issues and reveal differences between one's actual and expected rate of development toward a learning goal.

Thus, emotions are part and parcel of learning, retention, and recall. Speaking and writing in English is a difficult, demanding exercise that involves emotional responses. Emotional stress is to be expected whenever EFL students are required to talk and express themselves in front of others. If they do not use the appropriate emotional coping mechanisms, they may find it difficult to talk and interact in an English classroom, especially if they sense that they could at any moment feel ashamed in front of their classmates and teachers. Errors in grammar, or erroneous articulation can make them feel too ashamed and humiliated (Jones, 2012).

Emotional tension can be worsened when they are so much concerned about what others might say or think about their speaking or writing performance (Crystal, 2006).

Students may adopt an avoidance strategy instead of the fear of committing mistakes and tendencies of receiving negative feedback and assessment from others. Usually, students tend to escape, avoid, withdraw, and inhibit from interacting in such instances (Lindsay & Knight, 2006).

Consequently, they may doubt their potentials knowing that they lack the knowledge or the fundamentals of the second language like grammar, correct pronunciation, and familiarity with the meaning. The matter that drives them to become more tense, conscious, and apprehensive. Those students usually hold back from participating in speaking writing activities due to their fear of receiving negative assessments or criticism from their peers and teachers. Inhibition can take place as students' last resort in protecting their self-image in the classroom (Crystal, 2006).

Without good level of emotional coping, Students can withdraw from using the English language and weaken their productive skills performance. Both adaptive and maladaptive behaviors can result from emotional reactions. When emotions are interpreted positively, they may improve performance; yet, when they are interpreted negatively, they may impede it (Amorous, 2012).

When stress is reduced and learning experiences are relevant to students' lives, interests, and experiences, students are able to acquire knowledge more effectively. Lessons must be engaging and difficult without being scary in order to meet the expanding curricular expectations. Stress, anxiety, boredom, and alienation can inhibit learning (Willis, 2006).

To wrap up, productive skills performance in a foreign language is affected by many factors both affective and cognitive. Students' personal emotions such as self-confidence and their belief about learning are among the major factors. Further, fear of evaluation, interpersonal threat (fear of their mistakes being known by peers) and fear of teachers' negative feedback can cast their shadow on EFL productive skills performance. Furthermore, asking learners to write or speak about topics they do not know well under a rigid time constraint as well as teachers' preoccupation with forms and language can add up to the difficulty EFL learners face. In addition, students can feel worried about their performance because they have poor linguistic proficiency. Therefore, without good level of emotional coping their performance in productive skills will get affected drastically.

## Methodology

The methodology involves in the current study is the descriptive methodology. The primary goal of descriptive research is to provide an accurate description of a phenomenon's characteristics. ( Mohammed & Al-Bakri ,2022).

### Population and Sample

The population in this study includes Iraqi EFL students at the colleges of Education/ departments of English (except for Kurdistan region) during the academic year 2021-2022. The total number is (2464).

While the study sample consists 360 third-year college students who are selected randomly from the colleges of education in three universities (Tikrit University, Baghdad University, Wasit University) as is it displayed in table below:

Table (1) The Study Sample

University	Sample	Percentage
1.Baghdad	145	40%
2.Wasit	100	28%
3. Tikrit	115	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Instruments of the study

The following instruments have been used in the current study in order to collect the required data:

#### 1. The Emotional Coping Scale (ECS)

An Emotional coping scale is a measure that tries to tap into what strategies and skills are used by individuals to cope with a stressful event.

It is a tool to capture the cognitive and behavioral efforts used in the course of emotional processing and emotional expression in response to a stressful situation. This is due to specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person (Stanton et al, 2002).

The emotional coping scale used in this study is developed by the researcher herself after thoroughly reviewing the literature on the subject. Then, the first draft of the scale is exposed to jury members specialized in psychological and educational sciences to get input in terms of the items relevance, accuracy. The initial draft scale is composed of (45) items. After the jury's revision, (5) items is deleted. Thus, the final form of the instrument contains (40) items.

## 2. The Productive Skills Test

The productive skills test comprises two parts: speaking and writing. In order to prepare the productive skills test, the researcher has referred to literature on the subject before exposing the draft test to the jury members.

To assess the level of speaking performance among students, a structured interview that the researcher herself prepared is developed. According to Fulcher (2010), the most common speaking exam format is the interview format, in which test-takers converse with an interviewer while having their performance evaluated.

In accordance with the jury members' advice, six interview topics have been chosen, and each topic has a list of suggested question. The interview topics with a list of proposed questions have been prepared. The topics are chosen based on their relevance to the sample's interest and level, their authenticity, and how current they are conceptualized.

### Validity of the study Instruments

Validity is a measure of how well a measuring instrument fulfills its purpose by examining whether it measures the behavior or quality that it is designed to assess (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020).

In order to assess face validity, the test should be presented to experts who have substantive knowledge about the research topic of interest to provide constructive insights and observations that help the development of the research project (Salkind & Rasmussen 2008, p.473).

### Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability is the consistency of data, scores, or observations gathered using measurement instruments, which may involve a range of tools from standardized tests to tasks completed by participants in a research study. In other words, reliability indicates the extent to which measurement methods and procedures yield consistent results in a given population in different circumstances (Tavakoli, 2012).

The concept of reliability in a test score means the extent to which it is free from errors that limit the measurement (Shatha & Shaima, 2009). In other words, it is a measure of the reproducibility of the test (Elaf, 2019).

### Reliability of the Emotional Coping Scale (ECS)

Reliability in psychometrics means "the accuracy of the instrument in measurement or observation, its non-contradiction with itself and its consistency in the information it provides us with about the behavior of the respondent". The tool is reliable if it gives the same results when it is repeated especially if the surrounding conditions are similar in both applications (Sürücü & Maslakçı, 2020).

The goal of calculating reliability is to identify measurement errors and to find ways to reduce these errors. Calculating reliability is important because it indicates accuracy or consistency in the scores of the scale. To achieve this end, the researcher has adopted two methods: test-retest method and Cronbach's alpha method (Brown , 2001).

### Reliability of the Productive skills Test

The researcher used Cronbach's alpha to determine the reliability of the productive skills test. There are (360) female and male students in the sample for the statistical analysis. According to the results, the computed reliability coefficient is (0.85) which suggests that the test possesses a high reliability coefficient. As a result, this test exhibits internal consistency and is considered to be reliable. This provides solid proof of the test items' homogeneity and consistency (Anastasi, 1976, p.126).



## Results

### Results Related To the First Aim

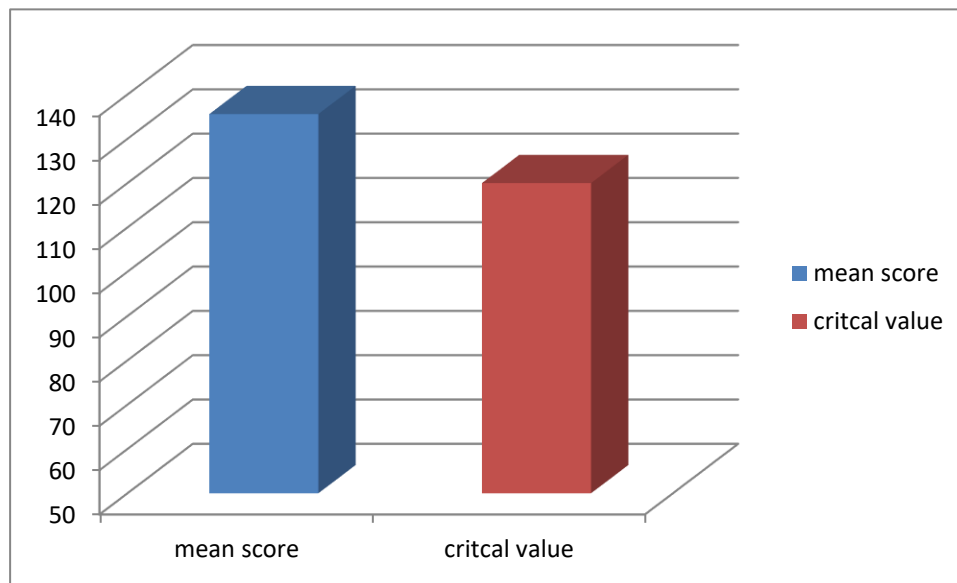
The first aim is to identify:

Iraqi EFL university students' level of emotional coping and performance in productive skills.

To achieve this aim, the researcher used emotional coping scale, the statistical manipulation of the sample results reveals that the mean score is (135.578), and the standard deviation is (29.025) whereas the hypothetical mean is (120). The T-test for one sample is also used which reveals a statistically significant difference at level of significance (0.05). The calculated t-value is (10.183) which is greater than the critical t-value of (1.96), at a degree of freedom of (359). This reflects that the research sample possesses a significant level of emotional coping as illustrated in the table and figure below:

Table (2) The mean, standard deviation and the t-test value for the emotional coping scale

Variable	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	t- values		Level of Significance 0.05
					Computed	Critical	
Emotional coping	360	135.578	29.025	120	10.183	1.96	Significant



With regard to the level of productive skills performance, the sample results from the test show that the mean score is (29,889) and the standard deviation is (6,059), with a hypothetical mean of (15). The calculated t-value is (0.348) which is smaller than the critical value of (1.96) at significance level (0, 05) and (359) degree of freedom. Thus, this indicates that the research sample has an average level of productive skills since the computed mean is close to the hypothetical mean, and there are no statistically significant differences between them. The results are illustrated in the table (3) and figure (2).

Table (3) The mean, the standard deviation and the t-test value for the productive skills test

Variable	sample	mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	t-test values		significance (0.05)
					computed	critical	
The productive skills	360	29.889	6.0569	30	0.348	1.96	insignificant

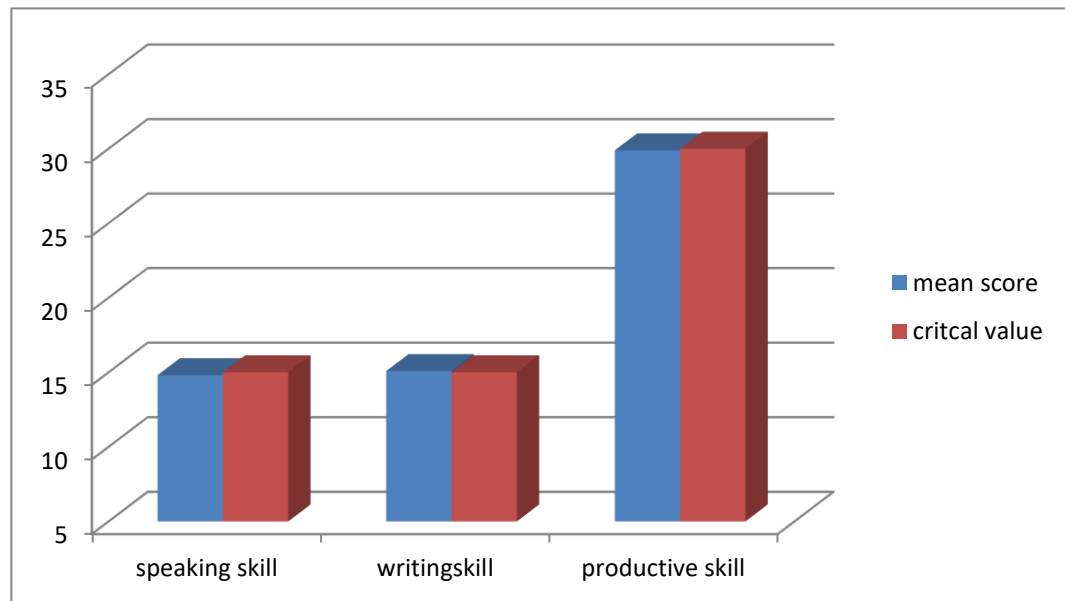


Figure (2) The arithmetic and hypothetical mean for the productive skills

#### Results Related to the Second Aim

The second aim is to identify:

The correlation between emotional coping and performance in productive skills.

The Correlational relationship between emotional coping and productive skills among Iraqi university students studying English as a foreign language.

To achieve this, the sample answers to the emotional coping scale and the productive skills test are collected, then Pearson correlation coefficient is used. The results are demonstrated in the table (3).

Table (3) The correlation between the emotional coping and productive skills

Sample size	Correlational value	t-test values		significance (0.05)
		computed	critical	
360	0.541	12.022	1.96	Significant

It is evident from the above table that the correlation coefficient between emotional coping and the productive skills is (0.541), and the calculated t-value is (12,022), which is greater than the critical value of (1.96) at the level of significance (0.05) and a degree of freedom (358). Therefore, the relationship between emotional coping and the productive skills performance is a direct statistically significant relationship. The higher the level of students' emotional coping is the higher their overall productive skills performance is.

## Discussion of Results

The first aim of the study is to find out Iraqi EFL university students' level of emotional coping and performance in productive skills. Results related to the first aim reveals that Iraqi EFL third grade college students have a satisfactory level of emotional coping.

When faced when a stressful situation, they employ adequate level of strategies and skills to cope with it. Moreover, they exert cognitive and behavioral efforts that relate mainly to adaptive emotional strategies.

These emotion-focused coping strategies include seeking social support for emotional reasons, positive interpretation and growth, acceptance, turning to religion, and humour.

Another result related to the first aim is to find out Iraqi EFL college students' level of the productive skills. It is evident from table (4) and figure (3) that :

A. Concerning speaking skill, Iraqi EFL college students have an average level of speaking performance. When speaking, it seems that Iraqi EFL university students can usually handle elementary construction quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar. Also, they have sufficient speaking vocabulary to express themselves simply with some circumlocutions and they can get the gist of most conversation of nontechnical subjects (i. e., topics that require no specialized Knowledge). Moreover, they can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information.

B. Regarding writing skill, Iraqi EFL college students have an average level of writing performance. This result can be accounted for owing to some indices. Their writing seems to be characterized by ordinary introduction or conclusion. Essay addresses the issues but misses some points; ideas could be more fully developed; some extraneous material is present. In addition, it can be detected advanced proficiency in English grammar; some grammar problems don't influence communication, although the reader is aware of them. Lastly, there are some problems with writing conventions or punctuation; occasional spelling errors; left margin correct; and paper is neat and legible. Accordingly, Iraqi EFL college students have an average level of productive skills .

Table (4) The mean, the standard deviation and the t-test value for the productive skills test

Variable	sample	mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	t-test values		significance (0.05)
					computed	Critical	
speaking	360	14.808	3.661	15	0.993	1.96	insignificant
writing	360	15.081	3.594	15	0.425	1.96	insignificant
the productive skills	360	29.889	6.059	30	0.348	1.96	insignificant

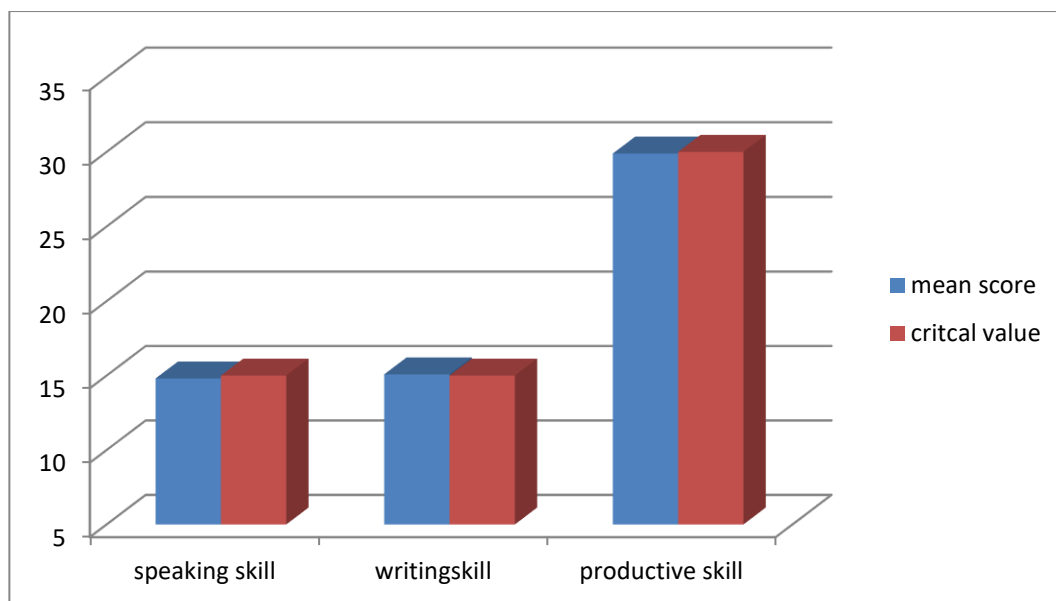


Figure (3) The arithmetic and hypothetical mean for the productive skills test

The second aim is to identify the correlation between emotional coping with performance in productive skills. Results reflect that There is a direct positive relationship between Iraqi EFL college students' emotional coping and their productive skills performance. Thus, when students have a high level of emotional coping, they are in a better position to excel in their productive skills performance. See table (5) below:

Table (5) The correlation between the emotional coping and productive skills

The variable	sample	Correlational value between emotional coping and productive skills	t-test values		significance (0.05)
			computed	Critical	
Speaking	360	0.405	8.437	1.96	significant
Writing	360	0.500	10.869	1.96	significant
Emotional coping	360	0.730	20.278	1.96	Significant

The above table exhibits that:

A. The value of the correlation coefficient between emotional coping and speaking skill has is (0.405). The researcher used the T-test formula to find out the significance of the relationship. The calculated T-value is (8.437), which is greater than the tabular value of (1.96) at (0.05) level of significance and a degree of freedom of (358). Consequently, the relationship between emotional coping and speaking skill is a direct statistically significant relationship. That is the higher the level of emotional coping is the better speaking skill performance is.

Speaking English is a complex and demanding task that involves emotional reactions. Whenever the EFL learners are asked to speak and express themselves in front of others, emotional tensions are expected to develop. If they do not employ the suitable emotional coping strategies, they can become hesitant to speak and communicate in an English classroom especially when they discern that at any time, they might get embarrassed in front of their peers and teachers. Errors in grammar, or erroneous articulation can make them feel too ashamed and humiliated. Emotional tension can be worsened when they are so much concerned about what others might say or think about their speaking performance.

tudents may adopt an avoidance strategy instead of the fear of committing mistakes and tendencies of receiving negative feedback and assessment from others. Usually, students tend to escape, avoid, withdraw, and inhibit from interacting in such instances.

Consequently, they may doubt their potentials knowing that they lack the knowledge or the fundamentals of the second language like grammar, correct pronunciation, and familiarity with the meaning. The matter that drives them to become more tense, conscious, and apprehensive.

Those students usually hold back from speaking due to their fear of receiving negative assessments or criticism from their peers and teachers. Inhibition took place as students' last resort in protecting their self-image in the classroom.

Without good level of emotional coping, they can withdraw from using the English language and weaken their speaking performance.

Both adaptive and maladaptive behaviors can result from emotional reactions. When emotions are interpreted positively, they may improve performance; yet, when they are interpreted negatively, they may impede it.

B. The value of the correlation coefficient between emotional coping and writing skill has is (0,500). The researcher used the T-test formula to find out the significance of the relationship. The calculated T-value is (10,869), which is greater than the tabular value of (1.96) at the level of significance of (0.05) and (358) a degree of freedom. This result confirms the existence of a relationship between the two variables. As a result, the relationship between emotional coping and writing skill is a direct statistically significant one. The more the level of emotional coping, the higher the performance in writing skill is.

Writing in a foreign language is affected by many factors both affective and cognitive. Students' personal emotions such as self-confidence and their belief about learning to write which includes preoccupation with performance and high expectation is one of the major factors. Further, fear of evaluation, interpersonal threat (fear of their mistakes being known by peers) and fear of teachers' negative feedback can cast their shadow on EFL writing performance. Furthermore, asking learners to write about topics they do not know well under a rigid time constraint as well as teachers' preoccupation with forms and language can add up to the difficulty EFL learners face in writing tasks. Moreover, students can feel worried about writing because they have poor linguistic proficiency. Therefore, without good level of emotional coping their writing performance will get affected drastically.

## Conclusions

1. Iraqi EFL college students have a satisfactory level of emotional coping.
2. Iraqi EFL college students productive skills performance is at an average level.
3. Emotions are part and parcel of learning, retention, and recall. Speaking or writing in English is a difficult, demanding exercise that involves emotional responses. Emotional stress is to be expected whenever EFL students are required to talk and express themselves in front of others.

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