

To What Extend Could Multiple Intelligence and Creative Thinking Predict EFL Learners' Academic Performance in Virtual Classes?

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Abstract

Various research was devoted to the influential role of students' intelligence in their academic performance in different ecologies. Creative thinking as a dynamic moderator of learning can also foster the learning process. Therefore, students with different levels of creative thinking can't experience the language learning process like others. However, further studies are needed about the meditative role of creative thinking levels among different students with different types of intelligence in virtual classes among EFL students. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the relation between these two independent variables and their effects on academic performance in Iran. In this mixed-method study, 120 EFL university students participated in the data collection process for six months. Two questionnaires were used for the quantitative phase; McKenzie's Multiple Intelligences Inventory (1999) and the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking. Then, the obtained statistical data were analyzed and categorized through multiple regression in SPSS software (ver. 22). Simultaneously, the qualitative phase was completed with ten students in interview sessions. The audio-recorded interviews were codified through grounded theory for a deeper level of analysis by categorizing themes and sub-themes. Based on the obtained results, students with higher levels of creative thinking could manage their learning process better with higher academic performance; although, the type of intelligence was less effective in predicting students' academic progress. When the students improve their level of creative thinking through tasks and activities, they could also manage their learning process more successfully. Teachers and educational administrators can also take advantage of the results for fostering a higher level of creative thinking with better educational performance regarding the type of intelligence.

Keywords: *multiple intelligence, creative thinking, EFL learners*