Abstract: This study aimed at investigating the influence of learners’ previously acquired capitals on their response to the teacher’s attempts to trigger their attention. For this purpose, 403 EFL learners completed three different questionnaires. The results of Structural Equation Modeling showed that emotional capital was a positive predictor of interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual, musical, and kinesthetic joint attention styles. Similarly, social capital was a positive predictor of interpersonal, verbal, visual, and musical styles, and cultural capital was a positive predictor of logical and verbal styles. Moreover, the proposed model of L2 achievement based on the capitals and joint attention styles showed good fit to the data. It appears that learners’ socio-cultural and emotional backgrounds influence their response to the teacher’s initiation of joint attention. And their L2 achievement is enhanced when the teacher uses different joint attention modalities. In the end, pedagogical implications and areas for further research were provided.

Keywords: emotional capital, social capital, cultural capital, joint attention styles, initiation of joint attention, L2 achievement

1 Introduction

The human brain’s capacity is limited in getting and processing information; accordingly, our attentional system needs to select among an overwhelming number of stimuli. In all classroom learning, teachers usually try to apply various strategies to draw learners’ focal attention to a shared learning
experience. Their attempts to establish mutual interest in focusing on a shared point of reference referred to as the initiation of joint attention may or may not be recognized by learners. This is because many factors affect learners’ attention in the class. According to Staves (2013), some of these factors are the external dynamics of the task (such as nature, intensity, size, etc.) while some others relate to the internal factors (such as interest, motives, needs, etc.). Some of them are manageable by the teacher, while others are uncontrollable.

In the realm of language learning, most studies have focused on dealing with external factors which affect learners’ noticing by applying strategies such as input enhancement (e.g., Han et al. 2008; White 1998), repetition (e.g., Birjandi and Ahangari 2008; Hawkes 2012), manipulation of the characteristics of tasks (e.g., Qi and Lapkin 2001), and feedback (e.g., Loewen 2005; Sheen 2006). With regard to internal factors, to our best knowledge, no systematic study has investigated the role of EFL students’ previously acquired dispositions in their attentional behavior in class.

Based on Bourdieu’s idea of habitus (Bourdieu 1977), previous experiences, backgrounds, and dispositions which learners bring to the class can affect their response to the teacher’s attempts to gain their attention. The reason of this influence is because individuals’ earlier socialization affects their mental sets, biases, and causal schemas, as well as motives, interests, mannerism, beliefs, and attitudes (Bourdieu 1984). According to his contention, learners’ acquired dispositions make them a rather consistent tendency to behave in and react to the environment in a particular way. Accordingly, learners’ motivation to focus on the learning goals may be affected by their relational and interpersonal habits (referred to as social capital), their cultural dispositions (known as cultural capital), and their emotional dispositions (called emotional capital).

In particular, special characteristics of foreign language learning classes make it difficult for the teachers to effectively grab and sustain students’ focused attention any time they want to. Group membership, interpersonal interactions, vast reliance on social media and digital devices, and simultaneous engagement with multiple tasks scatter learners’ attention in language classes. Furthermore, teachers usually apply some fixed strategies to gain learners’ attention while ignoring their individual differences in engaging in the joint experience of learning (Robinson et al. 2012).

One part of learners’ individual differences concerns previous experiences and backgrounds they bring to the class. For instance, their previously learned dispositions can affect aspects of learning such as motivation, attention, learning strategies, self-regulation, and interpersonal relationships (Raymond 2009; Oliveira et al. 2013). However, it seems the current practices in Iranian EFL
contexts do not reflect the ideal condition for learning a foreign language in which teachers consider learners’ social, cultural, and emotional backgrounds and their preferred ways of attentionally engaging in the joint experience of learning. Analyzing EFL learners’ previously acquired capitals and their conceptions of joint attention can help teachers reflect deeply on their teaching practice, and thereby amend their strategies so that to accommodate learners’ individual differences in getting attentionally involved in the course of instruction. Studying these individual differences can add to our understanding of difficulties some students experience in learning a new language item as compared to other learners.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Attention, joint attention, and initiation of joint attention

Selection is a significant mechanism in human learning since the human attentional system screens out irrelevant and unpleasant data in favor of interesting and relevant information (Tomasello 2008). The selectivity of the human mind can resolve not only the limitation in brain capacity but also interference and confusion with previously learned knowledge. Furthermore, since the detection of unattended stimulus is very poor, non-attentional learning is methodologically and theoretically impossible (Schmidt 1995; Truscott 1998).

As the process of learning involves coordinating the attention of two or more persons, joint attention can be a useful technical term which can describe many issues related to students’ attentional behaviors in class instruction. Based on Baldwin’s (1995) definition, “joint attention simply means the simultaneous engagement of two or more individuals in mental focus on one and the same external thing” (p. 132). Kaplan and Hafner (2006) indicate that gaze following and simultaneous looking are not the only indicators of joint attention. There are other factors such as identifying the intention behind the other agent’s behavior as well.

The cognitive approach seeks to explain how knowledge is received, processed and organized within the mind. It focuses on the role of thoughts, mind, reflection, and attention in the learning process. Attention is one of the main topics in cognitive psychology since it deals with selecting the information from the environment and processing it. According to the cognitive theorists, attention is the first step of knowledge acquisition and it facilitates the perception of stimuli. However, based on Vygotsky’s concept of social constructivism, joint attention can be defined as being both a social and cognitive process. It is the
influence of social context in the level of knowing. In other words, effective learning can happen through interactive attentional process between the teacher and learners.

Numerous studies have underlined that joint attention plays an important role in infants’ L1 development (e.g., Carpenter et al. 1998; Striano et al. 2006; Striano and Stahl 2005). They generally refer to two distinct abilities involved in the joint attention experience, namely responding to joint attention and initiating joint attention. According to Mundy et al. (2007), responding to joint attention is the ability to recognize the intention of other people and respond to their attempt to trigger joint attention by following their gaze direction, gestures, and verbal commands. Initiating joint attention (IJA), however, refers to directing others’ attention to a shared point of reference. It requires, firstly, an ability to establish connections to other people, and then direct their attention to the intended object or idea by using different strategies like looking at or pointing to something, using gesture, establishing eye contact, making vocalization, and so on.

To channel joint attention to the intended object or idea, one needs not only to recognize its certain perceptual features, but also to establish social coordination, understand the speaker’s intention, and manipulate his/her own attention (Mundy et al. 2007). Mahmud (2004) explicated that two broad categories of factors can influence learners’ attention: external or objective factors which are issues related to the stimulus such as intensity, size, repetition, meaningfulness, and change. Internal or subjective factors, however, are related to the individual himself/herself such as interest, needs, purposes, attitudes, and backgrounds. In the realm of foreign language learning, most of the studies focused on the manipulation of external factors at the level of the noticing (e.g., Hawkes 2012; Sheen 2006; White 1998); however, few studies (e.g., Wang 2015) tried to study the level of awareness and arousal in EFL learners’ attentional behavior. Wang (2015) found that the teacher’s method for presenting new items, learners’ role in the learning process, their previous language knowledge, and face-saving and peer-pressure concerns are factors which are influential in stirring learners’ attention. In the same vein, regarding the awareness and arousal phase of attention, to our best knowledge, no systematic study has investigated the role of learners’ previously acquired dispositions in their attentional behavior.

Based on the Bourdieu’s (1977) idea of habitus, backgrounds, and previous experiences learners bring with them to the class can affect their responses to the teacher’s attempts to gain their attention. According to his theoretical framework, the learner’s motivation to focus on the learning goals is affected by his/her interpersonal habits (referred to as social capital), cultural dispositions (known as cultural capital) and emotional dispositions (called emotional capital).
2.2 Social, cultural, and emotional capitals

In Bourdieu’s (1977) general theoretical framework, three major components of capital, habitus, and field interact with each other to generate a course of social action. Fields are settings of different power and class relations in which agents compete to get the profits and capitals related to that field. Habitus, however, refers to socialized dispositions generated through the effect of one’s social positions. These enduring patterns of behavior (i.e., habitus) are unconsciously developed during childhood and through the effect of events and experiences (Bourdieu 1984). They influence individuals’ current practices and determine their aspirations, determinations, actions, struggles, and interactions in the society (Navarro, 2006). Bourdieu (1984) believes that what causes inequality in the society is not merely material asset; several other forms of asset/capital are equally important sources of inequality. He extended the notion of capital to any rare item which is worthy of pursuit (Bronfenbrenner 1979). Economic, symbolic, cultural, and social capitals are Bourdieu’s classification of four major forms of capital. For him, economic capital refers financial assets and symbolic capital refers to value one owns on the basis of recognition such as resources available for a war hero (Waquant 2008). Examining economic and symbolic capitals are not within the focus of this study and we focus only on social, cultural capitals, and emotional capital as an extension to Bourdieu’s classification.

Bourdieu (1986) was the first who proposed a new conception of culture that is very much different from the traditional concept of culture as a source of shared norms and values. In his view, cultural dispositions can produce profits and they can be transmitted from one generation to the next (Lareau and Weininger 2003). He classified cultural capital into three types: first, embodied cultural capital consists of long–lasting dispositions of body and mind being developed over time in the form of one’s habitus (for instance, a disposition to appreciate cultural goods). Second, objectified cultural capital consists of cultural goods whose appreciation involves special cultural abilities (e.g., paintings, works of art, dictionaries, writings, monuments, pictures, books, television, radio, & the Internet). Finally, institutionalized cultural capital consists of educational credentials, qualifications, experiences, and competencies. People with high cultural capital have more access to cultural assets which promotes social status such as education and cultural goods.

Moreover, as a relatively new concept, social capital is being increasingly used to refer to the role of relations and networks in society, ranging from relations in families and communities to networks in civil societies. Numerous
studies (e.g., Crosnoe 2004; Israel and Beaulieu 2004; Jager and Holm 2007) attempted to show the influence of social capital in education through exploring family relations and parents’ expectations of education, connection between family and school, academic environment in educational institutes, and the social values of the society which encourage or discourage educational efforts.

Furthermore, as emotional skills can promote better health, well-being, and relationships through managing and fostering appropriate behaviors, they can be viewed as a kind of capital (Nowotny 1981). In fact, the term emotional capital was first introduced by Nowotny (1981) to refer to “knowledge, contacts and relations as well as access to emotionally valued skills and assets, which hold within any social network characterized at least partly by affective ties” (p. 148). Additionally, Gendron (2004) saw emotional capital as a component of emotional intelligence. Such a definition of emotional capital is contrary to what Bourdieu outlined in his work. According to Reay (2004), Bourdieu introduced the concept of capital to refute the prevalent assumptions regarding the attribution of success or failure to any kind of intelligence. Reay (2004) clearly explained that the prominent property of emotional capital is the management of desirable and undesirable emotions through acquiring proper emotional competencies. Likewise, drawing on Gendron (2004)’s framework, emotional capital can be conceptualized in relation to emotional competencies. Based on her definition, emotional capital is “the set of resources (emotional competencies) that inhere to the person useful for their cognitive, personal, social and economical development” (Gendron 2004, p. 9). The emotional competencies include skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social-awareness, and social skills (Salovey and Mayer 1990).

2.3 Capitals, joint attention, and foreign language learning

Referring to the intentionality of joint attention experience, Tomasello (2003) emphasized the interconnection between joint attention and language learning by explaining that the learner assumes relevance in any unknown expressions the speaker utters because he/she maintains that each utterance has communicative intention. Moreover, he believes that if learners of a language understand the usefulness of the utterances addressed to them, they will be motivated to engage in the shared attentional context. It means that learners of a language should assume helpfulness of individuals involved in a linguistic interaction to cooperate in getting the message across. This cooperative interaction which is referred to as “an interactive work-in-progress” by Lowi (2013, p. 89) is an
essential step in the establishment of joint attention. It means that language learners should involve in a jointly shared attentional experience to be able to communicate messages.

However, Abdullah (2004) mentioned social, emotional, and demographic backgrounds in his classifications of factors which affect attention. In the categories of psychological and social factors, he emphasized the role of families, motivation, concerns, needs, interests, and previous experience in stirring individuals’ attention. Similarly, drawing on Bourdieu’s concept of social capital, Menard-Warwick (2004) explained that L2 learning is not so much mediated by gender, but the gendered expectations learners developed though their earlier socialization affect EFL learners’ motivation and attention in language classes. In the same way, Bernstein (1996), Grant and Wong (2008), and Kumaravadivelu (2006) made reference to Bourdieu’s work in illustrating that middle-class children have more access to social capital and this makes them more successful in education.

Likewise, Bourdieu (1984) maintained that academic achievement is not merely the effect of talents, but the capital learners bring to the class can influence their academic success. According to him, children from lower-class families lack the necessary cultural capital to communicate efficiently with teachers and other students, work easily with educational materials and media, behave comfortably under the formal educational circumstances and consequently, do well in school. Similarly, Clemente (2007) showed the effect of cultural capital on EFL learners’ enthusiasm and interest in learning a new language. Seo (2010) also concluded that cultural capital has a significant effect on the performance of learners from high-income families.

One of the most influential recent studies regarding EFL learners’ social capital and their language achievement was conducted by Pishghadam et al. (2011a, 2011b). Through validating a questionnaire of social and cultural capitals, they came up with five sociocultural variables, namely social competence, social solidarity, extraversion, literacy, and cultural competence. The first three factors pertain to social capital and the last two refer to cultural capital. The first factor, social competence, refers to the level of parental involvement, learners’ participation in learning, and their ability to ask help from others. The second factor, social solidarity, assesses social relations and ties (e.g., by measuring the amount of talk between learners and their parents and peers). The third factor, extraversion, refers to learners’ tendency to enjoy interactions and communications. The fourth factor, literacy, examines learners’ reading ability and their knowledge of literature. Finally, the fifth factor, cultural competence, refers to cultural activities such as listening to classical music, visiting museums, and attending concerts.
They applied their newly designed questionnaire (i.e. Social and Cultural Capital Questionnaire) to EFL students and could confirm the importance of social and cultural capital in foreign language achievement.

In the same way, some sociologists drew on the work of Bourdieu and adopted the notion of emotional capital to refer to the role of emotional involvement in academic achievement. For instance, Gendron (2004) viewed emotional capital as a range of emotional competencies which are crucial for individual’s cognitive, personal, and social development. For her, effective management of this set of emotional resources is a significant part of the emotional capital. This way, emotional capital is considered to be a part of emotional intelligence and can be improved by strengthening emotional competencies through formal rather than informal learning program (Gendron and Haenjohn 2010). However, as no study has been conducted to date to our best knowledge to operationalize the concept of emotional capital in the realm of language learning, this study attempts to examine its role in EFL learners’ achievement.

2.4 Purpose of the study

The general purpose of this study is examining the role of four major variables in the process of EFL learning. It seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Do EFL learners’ social, cultural, and emotional capitals influence their joint attention styles?
2. Do EFL learners’ joint attention styles play any roles in their success in foreign language learning?
3. Are there any interrelationships among Iranian EFL learners’ social, cultural, and emotional capitals, their joint attention styles, and foreign language achievement?

3 Methodology

3.1 Participants

A total of 403 language learners in the intermediate level recruited from a large language institute in Iran. Convenience sampling was used to include 177 (43.9 %) male and 226 (56.07 %) female learners. They were aged between 16 and 32 (Mean = 21.35, SD = 2.72) and they were 31% high-school students, 40% university students in a BA or MA program, and 29% were graduated. They
were all selected from the same institute and they were all intermediate-level learners according to the placement test the institute was administered in the beginning of the term. Also, their scores in their final and midterm exams (achievement tests) for three successive terms were averaged. Those whose scores lie within one and a half standard deviations of the mean ($M = 77.44$, $SD = 14.00$) were included in the study. It means, to insure a rather same proficiency level, learners with the average scores below 55 or above 98 were exempted from the study.

### 3.2 Instruments

In the current study, three questionnaires were used to collect data. The participants’ emotional capital was measured using Emotional Capital Questionnaire (ECQ) which were designed and validated by the Author 1 (2016). She elicited the most relevant indicators of emotional capital by reviewing the related literature (e.g., Salovey and Mayer 1990; Goleman 1998; Reay 2004; Gendron 2004). Then, four specialists in the field of psychology of education approved the five-factor model of emotional capital which includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social awareness, and social skills. For each indicator, 8 to 10 items were constructed, revised, and then piloted. The final version of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1 for some sample items) comprises 40 items which measure learners’ level of emotional capital through a five-point Likert scale.

Moreover, the participants’ engagement in joint attention experience was measured through applying Joint Attention Styles Inventory (JASI) designed and validated in Author 1 (2016) mixed-method research. In the qualitative phase of her study, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were conducted to elicit EFL learners’ different conceptions of getting involved in joint attention experience via the teacher’s different attention-grabbing strategies. She believes that using multiple media can accommodate students’ different learning styles and accordingly their attentional engagement is boosted.

She used the multiple intelligences theory (Gardner, 1983) as a guideline to classify the emerging themes in the form of seven major constructs, namely musical, visual, verbal, logical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal styles. **Auditory style** refers to EFL learners’ attentional response to changes in sounds, tones, intonation, stress, volume, etc. Teachers’ strategies such as, repeating and slower pronouncing are some of the examples of this style. **Visual style** refers to EFL learners’ attentional response to visual stimuli like pictures, moves, illustrations, notes on the board, etc. Teachers’ strategies such as using different colors and bigger fonts in writing on the board, presenting
materials through pictures, movies, and illustrations, are some of the examples of this style. *Verbal style* refers to EFL learners’ attentional response to words and language. The teacher’s use of synonyms, antonyms, examples, verbal explanations, and Internet search are some examples of this style. *Logical style* refers to EFL learners’ attentional response to abstraction and reasoning; for example, making comparisons, and presenting rules instead of numerous examples. *Kinesthetic style* refers to EFL learners’ attentional response when involved in bodily motions like taking notes, doing role play, and playing games. *Intrapersonal style* refers to EFL learners’ response to the joint attention experience as a consequence of their self-reflection; for example, having learners think about needs of future education and job, and encouraging them to self-correct their mistakes. Finally, *Interpersonal style* refers to EFL learners’ attentional response to others’ moods and feelings or when engaged in group work, communication, cooperation and discussion.

For each construct, 6 to 9 items were constructed, revised, and then piloted. The final version of the questionnaire (see Appendix 2 for some sample items) comprises 45 items which assess learners’ opinions through a five-point Likert scale.

Finally, the participants’ social and cultural capitals were measured using Social and Cultural Capital Questionnaire (SCCQ) designed and validated by Author 2 & co-authors (2011a). They proposed a five-factor model of social and cultural capitals which includes social competence, social solidarity, and extraversion as the sub-scales of social capital and literacy and cultural competence as the sub-scales of cultural capital. The questionnaire (see Appendix 3 for some sample items) comprises 42 items which measure learners’ level of social and cultural capitals through a five-point Likert-type scale. 13 items measure learners’ level of cultural capital and 29 items measure their social capital. All the mentioned scales and their subscales enjoy acceptable reliability rates ranging from 0.64 to 0.93 (see Table 1).

### 3.3 Procedure

The purpose of the study was explained to the learners and those who were willing answered JASI in 15, ECQ in 10, and SCCQ in 10 minutes. The three questionnaires were simultaneously administered to the participants in the same session during their classes holding from June to July. The scores of these intermediate learners in final and midterm exams for three successive terms were provided by the institute through their exact system of recording learners’ performances. After collecting the questionnaires, learners’ total scores on each
Table 1: Composites of variables with cronbach alpha coefficients, means, standard deviations, minimum, and maximum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Musical style</td>
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<td>25.8437</td>
<td>2.39670</td>
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<td>Visual style</td>
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<td>4.30616</td>
<td>12.00</td>
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<td>3.83474</td>
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<td>2.85167</td>
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<td>14.00850</td>
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</table>
survey, their scores on each sub-scale, and their average achievement scores were carefully recorded for analysis.

4 Results

4.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics as well as Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients of all the scales and subscales used in the study. As can be seen, Joint Attention Styles Inventory and Verbal Style subscale are the most and least reliable with $\alpha = 0.95$ and 0.60, respectively. Note that the former consists of only 45 items whereas the latter comprises 7 items.

4.2 Structural equation modeling (SEM)

Based on the previous research and review of the literature (Tomasello 2003; Gendron 2004; Clemente 2007; Grant and Wong 2008; Kumaravadivelu 2006; Author 2 & co-authors 2011a, 2011b), two very related but separate models with five variables, namely joint attention styles (JAS), emotional capital (EC), social capital (SC), cultural capital (CC) and L2 achievement (L2A) were constructed. The first model hypothesized that different JAS predicted L2A and EC, SC, and CC predicted certain JAS (see Figure 1). This model is based on the assumption that joint attention styles can affect foreign language learning (Tomasello 2003) and the process of attention is influenced by learners’ previously learned capital (Menard-Warwick 2004; Abdullah 2004).

The proposed model was analyzed using AMOS 16 software, and the suggested model showed a good fit to the data (see Table 2). According to Byrne (2001), $\chi^2/df$ with a value below 3, RMSEA lower than 0.08, NFI, GFI, IFI, and CFI a value greater than 0.90 show a good fit to the data.

Furthermore, Cohen’s $f^2$ was used to estimate the magnitude of effect size (ES). According to the Murphy and Myors (2004), ES is small when $f^2 = 0.02$, medium when $f^2 = 0.15$, and large when $f^2 = 0.35$. Note that the equation for computing $f^2$ is $f^2 = R^2/1 - R^2$. This model accounted for 40% of the variance in L2 achievement and $f^2 = 0.66$ shows a large ES. L2 achievement was predicted by interpersonal style ($\beta = 0.53$, $R^2 = 0.28$, $f^2 = 0.38$, large ES, $p < 0.05$), logical style ($\beta = 0.40$, $R^2 = 0.16$, $f^2 = 0.19$, medium ES, $p < 0.05$), verbal style ($\beta = 0.39$, $R^2 = 0.15$, $f^2 = 0.17$, medium ES, $p < 0.05$), intrapersonal style ($\beta = 0.26$, $R^2 = 0.06$, large ES, $p < 0.05$).
small ES, p < 0.05), visual style (β = 0.31, R^2 = 0.09, f^2 = 0.09, small ES, p < 0.05), musical style (β = 0.30, R^2 = 0.09, f^2 = 0.09, small ES, p < 0.05), and kinesthetic style (β = 0.20, R^2 = 0.04, f^2 = 0.04, small ES, p < 0.05), respectively. This shows that this model significantly explains the variance of L2 achievement based on different JAS.

Furthermore, EC predicted interpersonal style (β = 0.45, R^2 = 0.20, f^2 = 0.25, medium ES, p < 0.05), intrapersonal style (β = 0.42, R^2 = 0.17, f^2 = 0.20, medium ES, p < 0.05), visual style (β = 0.37, R^2 = 0.13, f^2 = 0.15, medium ES, p < 0.05), musical style (β = 0.31, R^2 = 0.09, f^2 = 0.09, small ES, p < 0.05), and kinesthetic style (β = 0.26, R^2 = 0.06, f^2 = 0.06, small ES, p < 0.05), respectively. Furthermore, SC predicted interpersonal style (β = 0.32, R^2 = 0.10, f^2 = 0.11, small ES, p < 0.05),

![Figure 1](image1.png)

**Table 2:** Goodness-of-fit indices for the first model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>χ²/df</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>IFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f^2 = 0.06, small ES, p < 0.05), visual style (β = 0.31, R^2 = 0.09, f^2 = 0.09, small ES, p < 0.05), musical style (β = 0.30, R^2 = 0.09, f^2 = 0.09, small ES, p < 0.05), and kinesthetic style (β = 0.20, R^2 = 0.04, f^2 = 0.04, small ES, p < 0.05), respectively. This shows that this model significantly explains the variance of L2 achievement based on different JAS.
verbal style ($\beta = 0.28$, $R^2 = 0.07$, $f^2 = 0.07$, small ES, $p < 0.05$), visual style ($\beta = 0.23$, $R^2 = 0.05$, $f^2 = 0.05$, small ES, $p < 0.05$), and musical style ($\beta = 0.20$, $R^2 = 0.04$, $f^2 = 0.04$, small ES, $p < 0.05$), respectively. Likewise, CC predicts logical style ($\beta = 0.23$, $R^2 = 0.05$, $f^2 = 0.05$, small ES, $p < 0.05$) and verbal style ($\beta = 0.20$, $R^2 = 0.04$, $f^2 = 0.04$, small ES, $p < 0.05$), respectively.

An alternative model of L2 achievement based on the capitals and joint attention styles (JAS) was proposed (see Figure 2). In this model, EC, SC, and CC were aggregated as the composite variable of capitals and then, its influence on L2A and JAS was simultaneously investigated. The composite variables (i.e., capitals and joint attention styles) were used to make the model easier for interpretation. The model hypothesized that capitals and JAS affect L2A. Moreover, capitals were hypothesized to predict JAS. Furthermore, the model illustrated the contribution of EC, SC, and CC to the composite variable of capitals. The proposed model showed good fit to the data (see Table 3).

![Figure 2](image.png)

**Figure 2:** The second proposed structural model of L2 achievement based on different joint attention styles and capitals.

**Table 3:** Goodness-of-fit indices for the second model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\chi^2$/DF</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>IFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 summarizes ES estimates for the latent endogenous variables. As can be seen in the table, this model accounted for 48% of the variance in L2 achievement ($f^2 = 0.92$, large ES), 32% of the composite variance in JAS ($f^2 = 0.47$, large ES), and 31% of the variance in verbal style ($f^2 = 0.31$, medium ES).
Table 4: Standardized parameter estimates for capitals and JAS as predictors of L2 achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent variable</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$f^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 achievement</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Attention Styles (JASs)</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitals</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

large ES) and 42% of the variance in the composite variable of capitals ($f^2 = 0.72$, large ES). Furthermore, EC ($\beta = 0.53$, $R^2 = 0.28$, $f^2 = 0.38$, large ES, $p < 0.05$), SC ($\beta = 0.38$, $R^2 = 0.14$, $f^2 = 0.16$, medium ES, $p < 0.05$), and CC ($\beta = 0.24$, $R^2 = 0.05$, $f^2 = 0.05$, small ES, $p < 0.05$) predicted the composite variable of capitals respectively. All these show that this model significantly explains the variance of L2 achievement based on capitals and JAS.

Furthermore, the predictability of the variable of JAS in L2 achievement can be examined using the factor loading $\beta$ (i.e. the correlation coefficient for the variable and factor) for JAS (see Figure 2) which is 0.51 when $p < 0.05$. The values of $R^2 = 0.26$ and $f^2 = 0.47$ show a large ES. In addition, the predictability of the composite variable of capitals in learners’ joint attention styles can be examined using the factor loading $\beta$ for capitals which is 0.57 when $p < 0.05$. The values of $R^2 = 0.32$ and $f^2 = 0.47$ show a large ES. Finally, the predictability of the composite variable of capitals in learners’ L2 achievement can be examined using the factor loading $\beta$ for capitals which is 0.36 when $p < 0.05$. The values of $R^2 = 0.13$ and $f^2 = 0.15$ show a medium ES.

5 Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of learners’ psychological assets and backgrounds like social, cultural, and emotional capitals in their attentional reaction and language achievement. Reviewing the related literature and the application of some newly designed instruments allowed to model L2 learning on the bases of four main variables and their sub-components. The models showed a good fit to the data and their construct validity was confirmed.

The results of SEM in the first model indicated that learners with higher emotional capital respond better to interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual, musical, and kinesthetic joint attention strategies, respectively. This result is justifiable considering that learners with a higher level of emotional capital have higher empathy, more social skills, and better self-regulation abilities (Gendron 2004;
Salovey and Mayer 1990). These skills can improve learners’ motivation and selective attention while engaging in communicative activities (Robinson 1995; Whitehead 2008). Likewise, self-awareness and self-regulation as the subskills of emotional capital help learners manage their negative emotions and respond better to intrapersonal joint attention strategies. Furthermore, according to Ferrer et al. (2016), controlling negative emotions increases attentional sensitivity to visual stimuli.

The results also indicated that learners with higher social capital respond better to interpersonal, verbal, visual, and musical joint attention styles rather than the others. This is partly because better social competence of learners with high social capital can stimulate them to focus their attention to the learning activities (Hansen and Liu 2005; Whitehead 2008). Moreover, our findings regarding the predictability of verbal joint attention style by social capital are in line with Ratto et al.’s (2010) findings concerning the relevance of verbal intelligence to social functioning. They indicated that people with good social resources are skilled in attending to and dealing with words and language.

The results also showed that learners with higher cultural capital respond better to logical and verbal joint attention styles rather than the others. This result is especially conceivable by thinking of literacy as a sub-skill of cultural capital and it is consistent with the result that Sternberg et al. (1981) found in regard to the importance of culture in people’s attention to the verbal aspect of communication. Furthermore, the effect of cultural capital on logical joint attention style is consistent with the results of Goode’s (2000) study who emphasized the role of culture in people’s reaction to logical stimuli.

Moreover, the results of the study showed interpersonal style had a large predictive power, logical and verbal styles had medium predictive power, and intrapersonal, visual, musical, and kinesthetic styles had small predictive power for L2 achievement. The predictability of L2 achievement by interpersonal joint attention styles is in line with what Aguilar (2001), Chen (2013), and Gass (2002) found in regard to the role of empathy and interpersonal skills in L2 achievement. Moreover, attentional response to logical stimuli was confirmed to be an important skill in learning grammar (Steinberg et al. 2013), reading comprehension (Tamri et al. 2013), and communication strategies (Sadripour and Motallebzadeh 2015). Learners’ attentional sensitivity to verbal stimuli was also confirmed to be important in learning writing (Naoe 2010) and grammar (Nolen 2003).

However, the results of SEM in the second model indicated that emotional capital had a large predictive power, social capital had a medium, and cultural capital had a small predictive power in developing the whole capital learners
bring with them to the class. The more contribution of emotional capital is explicable considering that its comprising sub-skills are all very influential in the process of second/foreign language learning. The vital roles of motivation Gardner (1983), social interactions (Gass 2002), empathy (Aguilar 2001), self-regulation, and self-awareness (Brown 1994; Zárate and Monserrat 2014) are well-appreciated in the realm of second/foreign language learning.

Furthermore, the composite variable of capitals had a large predictive power for learners’ joint attention styles and medium predictive power for their L2 achievement. The predictability of learners’ joint attention styles by their capitals implies that different dispositions and tendencies they have acquired through the socialization process in certain habitus affect their attentional behavior in class. The reason of this predictability is because living in different habitus and environmental systems influences their mental set, biases, causal schemas, motives, interests, mannerism, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior (Bourdieu 1984; Bronfenbrenner 1979). According to Bourdieu, based on their acquired dispositions, people show a rather consistent tendency to behave in and react to the environment in a particular way. Consequently, the teacher’s strategies to initiate joint attention have different influences on learners with different backgrounds. This result is consistent with the findings of other researchers who confirmed the significant role of learners’ backgrounds in their behavior (e.g. Abdullah 2004; author 1, 2017, 2018; etc.). Heft (1979) found that children’s family background influences their attentional response to noise and aural stimuli. Similarly, Hinshaw (2002) confirmed the role of demographic and background characteristics in the attentional behavior of girls with attention hyperactivity disorder. Likewise, Abdullah (2004) included social and emotional backgrounds in his classification of factors which affect attention.

Additionally, the possession of more social, cultural, and emotional capitals entails having more metacognitive and self-regulation skills, communicative skills, motivation, empathy, social resources, and cultural goods. All of these skills were approved to be influential in the process of second/foreign language learning by numerous previous studies (e.g., Aguilar 2001; Gardner and Lambert 1972; Gass 2002; Long 1996; Zárate and Monserrat 2014). Likewise, learners’ L2 achievement is enhanced by the teacher’s more joint attention strategies. This is consistent with the findings of several studies (e.g., Beeland 2002; Bryant and Hunton 2000) which emphasized that learners’ interest, motivation, moods, engagement, and achievement are enhanced when the teacher presents teaching points via different modalities. Particularly, Allport et al. (1972) confirmed that the teacher’s presentation via different modalities expands learners’ attentional capacity (Allport et al. 1972).
Moreover, the teacher’s better understanding of the background characteristics that are associated with EFL learners’ attentional behavior can inform his/her efforts to apply efficient strategies to improve the representation of teaching content. By applying varied joint attention strategies, the teacher gives different learners equal opportunities to receive the instruction he/she wishes to give them. In addition, teachers should reinforce the skills associated with the possessions of capitals in learners, and in doing so, they should consider the influence of environmental factors in shaping learners’ dispositions. For instance, teachers are expected to be aware of the motivational level of students and consider the motivational effect of their family, friends, school, university, society, and other contexts in order to get able to fortify their interest in learning.

However, in examining learners’ backgrounds, the present study only focused on investigating social, cultural, and emotional capitals. Further studies can shed light on the role of various types of background skills learners possess. Finally, the study was not conducted with a large sample to draw definite conclusions. Future studies can extend to a larger sample and different levels of EFL learners.

Appendix 1: Sample items from emotional capital questionnaire (ECQ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very often 100%</th>
<th>Most of the time 80%</th>
<th>Sometimes 60%</th>
<th>Not very often 40%</th>
<th>Rarely 20%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My family members help each other identify their strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My friends help me in controlling my behavior and emotions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The educational system has been successful in creating my motivation to study.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Religious regulations have made me help my fellows as much as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My relationship with friends helps me communicate with others more easily and effectively.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Sample items from joint attention styles inventory (JASI). The teacher can draw my attention when s/he

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Not very often</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Makes eye-contact with me while teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Explains something slowly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Asks us to take notes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Asks us to search something in the Internet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tries to connect the learning material to my personal life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Asks us to do an activity in group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Compares the new learning material with the previous ones.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 3: Sample items from social and cultural capital questionnaire (SCCQ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My parents used to have a regular connection with my school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel I have strong ties with my peers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I see my friends weekly.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I enjoy reading literature.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I know all famous music composers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; U = Undecided; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree
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