

A STUDY ON THE ATTITUDES OF IRANIAN CANDIDATES TOWARDS THE GENERAL IELTS TEST

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ABSTRACT

IELTS, International English Language Testing System, is nowadays widely used as a certificating device and is claimed to be a reliable and strongly accountable measure of language proficiency by the organizations and educational centers that utilize it. Irrespective of the importance IELTS has gained in the present world, the attitudes of those who take the test have rarely been explored. Therefore, the present study aimed at investigating the attitudes of Iranian candidates towards the IELTS test. Accordingly, a standardized attitudes questionnaire was administered to 40 homogeneous Iranian IELTS candidates after taking the test. The collected data were then analyzed through Pearson correlation coefficient to find out whether there were any significant relationships between the candidates' test scores and their attitudes towards IELTS. The findings indicated that the participants of the study mostly had a positive attitude towards IELTS. Implications can also be drawn for all the stakeholders including candidates intending to sit the test, institutes running IELTS preparation programs, teachers wishing to teach such programs, and finally, IELTS test administrators.

Key Words: IELTS, Attitude, Belief, Motivation, Affective Factors.

INTRODUCTION

To get an insight into the minds of language learners there is no more certain way than to study their beliefs. As in the area of language teaching, there has recently been an increasing emphasis on the styles and variables of learners. Additionally, learners' attitudes and beliefs are to join the growing body of research in the field. When learners step in a language classroom, they bring all their personality features including their beliefs, attitudes, and language styles to the learning environment. Almost all of the scholars admit that how successful people are in learning a language is exactly and directly influenced by what they think and how they evaluate the target language, the target language speakers, culture, and of course, the learning setting. Though merely investigating the attitudes and beliefs of learners may not guarantee any success, they, in turn, can be the guidelines for the next steps taken, as learners play the main role in any learning environment.

The concept of learners' attitudes has been the focus of attention in explanation and investigation of human behavior offered by social psychologists. Attitude is usually defined as a disposition or tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain thing such as an idea, object, person, or situation. Students have positive or negative attitudes towards the language they want to learn or the people who speak it. Having

positive attitude towards tests is also claimed to be one of the reasons which make students perform better on the tests (Malallaha, 2000). A large number of studies have also investigated the relationships between attitude and proficiency in the language (Bachman, 1990; Malallaha, 2000; Coleman, Strafield, & Hagan, 2003). Additionally, Gardner (1985) believes that attitude and other affective variables are as important as aptitude for language achievement.

IELTS

IELTS, which is now jointly administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), the British Council, and the IDP Education Australia, is required for anyone who wishes to pursue their education in an English speaking country or anyone who desires to migrate to or work in such countries.

IELTS is taken by more than 25,000 candidates each year. The test is accepted for undergraduate or postgraduate entry by Australian and British universities, colleges, and professional and technical institutions. IELTS has been developed on the basis of new approaches to language teaching and testing. It may be claimed that IELTS is more content based, task oriented and authentic than TOEFL. The tasks in IELTS are closer to real life situations. IELTS continues to help change people's lives as they look for opportunities around the world whether that is in education, for migration, or employment. This is the reason why IELTS is a high stakes test and also why it is so critical that the test continues to be a robust and rigorous measure of English language proficiency.

IELTS, initially called ELTS (English Language Testing Service), is used to judge potential higher education (HE) students' language proficiency, the job which was previously carried out by EPTB (English Proficiency Test Battery) since the mid 1960s. It was in the late 1980s that some practical administrative issues, especially around the scope of the test, were questioned. Following a validation study (Criper & Davies, 1988; Hughes, Porter & Weir, 1988; Cited in Hyatt & Brooks, 2007), the ELTS Revision Project was set up to design a new test. Hyatt and Brooks document that to highlight the international aspect of the test the International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges (IDP), now known as IELTS Australia, joined British Council and UCLES to form an international partnership. The new test was simplified and shortened and also changed its name to reflect the new internationalization, becoming known as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and went into operation in the 1989. During the period between 1989–1994, the system was monitored through a host of research evaluations, and further modifications were introduced in the 1995, including the replacement of three subject-specific subtests with one Academic Reading and one Academic Writing modules, the removal of the thematic link between the Reading and Writing modules, the convergence of scoring on all modules to nine bands, the introduction of checks on marking consistency, an appeal procedure, new validation procedures, security procedures, and computerized administration procedures.

The change from three subject-specific subtests was based on feedback from IELTS administrators and examiners (Charge & Taylor, 1997) and from a significant body of research into ESP and second language conducted by Clapham (1993, 1995, 1996). Clapham concluded that a single test did not discriminate for or against candidates regardless of their disciplinary areas and that a single test would not hinder accessibility. More specific details of these innovations and the rationale behind them can be found in Charge and Taylor (1997). More recently, continued evaluation of the system led to the introduction of a new Speaking test in the years 2001 and 2005, the introduction of new assessment criteria for the Writing test and the introduction of computer-based testing. A recent and comprehensive overview of the history of the assessment of academic English can be found in Davies (2008). Along with such global popularity, a large number of studies have been conducted worldwide to investigate issues related to IELTS. Merrylees (2003) conducted a study to investigate two IELTS user groups: candidates who sit the test for immigration purposes and candidates who sit the test for secondary education purposes. He believed that with the increase in candidature of both user groups, there is an increasing need to investigate and analyze how each group is performing on the test in terms of nationality, age, gender and other factors.

Compared with such studies, however, it seems that fewer studies have been carried out to examine and identify the IELTS candidates' attitudes and views towards this test. The attitudes of IELTS stakeholders were once investigated in a study conducted by Coleman et al. (2003). In their study, respondents perceived the IELTS test to have high validity in this study. Another study carried out by McDowell and Merrylees (1998) investigated the receiving institutions' attitudes to IELTS with positive results reported.

While there is a significant and growing literature on English language testing (Cheng, Watanabe, & Curtis, 2004) and on the credibility, reliability, and validity of IELTS in particular (Green, 2007), other more social and qualitative impacts also deserve consideration (Brown & Taylor, 2006; Barkhuizen & Cooper, 2004; Read & Hayes, 2003; Coleman et al., 2003). In light of this, a body of recent research has focused on impact studies on IELTS, including the consideration of stakeholder attitudes. A key overview of methodological and theoretical issues of such research is presented in Hawkey (2006) which focuses on one of its two case studies on IELTS impact testing. The stakeholders considered in this research include test-takers, teachers, textbook writers, testers and institutions. However, unlike the present study, there was no specific emphasis on admissions gatekeepers, a niche the present research aims to fill, while acknowledging that Hawkey (2006), provides an invaluable guide at both theoretical and practical levels to those engaging in impact studies.

Smith and Haslett (2007) investigated the attitudes of HE decision-makers in New Zealand towards the English language tests used for admission purposes. They argued that the changing context and growing diversity were leading to the consideration of more flexible pathways to entry. Coleman et al. (2003) contrasted stakeholder attitudes to IELTS in Australia, the people of the Republic of China and the United Kingdom. The researchers argued that students were, on the whole, more knowledgeable than staff on a wide range of themes related to the IELTS test. Students tended to have a positive view of IELTS as a predictive indicator of the future investigating stakeholders' perceptions of IELTS as an entry requirement for higher education in the UK success whereas staff were less satisfied with the predictive value of the test and wished to see minimum standards for entry set at a higher level.

The current project therefore sought to investigate if such perspectives were still reflected by institutional gatekeepers some four years after the publication of this key piece of research, though the nature of student perceptions was beyond the remit of this study. Read and Hayes (2003) also investigated the impact of IELTS on the preparation of international students for tertiary study in New Zealand. They found that even students who gained the minimum band score for tertiary admission were likely to struggle to meet the demands of English-medium study in a New Zealand university or polytechnic, though teachers generally recognized that IELTS was the most suitable test available for the purpose of admission to HE programs. The current study sought to ascertain whether the views of gatekeepers at HE institutions in the UK converged or diverged from those positions. Additionally, Kerstjens and Nery's (2000) research sought to determine the relationship between the IELTS test and students' subsequent academic performance. They reported that for students at the vocational level, IELTS was not found to be a significant predictor of academic performance, although staff and students were generally positive about students' capability to cope with the language demands of their first semester of study.

The correlation between English language proficiency and academic performance is an issue that has been researched frequently and an overview of this research theme can be found in Davies (2008). The present study therefore, examined this relationship and sought the perspectives of HE respondents as to the difficulties students encounter and whether or not IELTS fully meets their needs in terms of addressing language difficulties. Mok, Parr, Lee and Wylie (1998) compared IELTS with another examination used for purposes similar to the general IELTS paper. McDowell and Merrylees (1998) investigated the range of tests available in Australian tertiary education to establish to what extent IELTS was serving the needs of the receiving institutions. Similarly, Hill, Storch and Lynch (2000) explored the usefulness of IELTS and TOEFL as predictors of readiness for the Australian academic context. The current research project was intended to uncover whether IELTS was the dominant language testing system in UK and if stakeholders view it as meeting their needs, as well as those of their students.

Feast (2002) investigated the relationship between IELTS scores as a measure of language proficiency and performance at university. Her research revealed a significant and positive, but weak, relationship between English language proficiency and academic performance. Edwards, Ran, and Li (2007) also highlighted the concerns of university teachers and administrators around the limitations of tests of English used in relation to university admissions, and expressed concerns around the degree to which acceptance of students with levels well below native-speaker competence represented a lowering of academic standards, or a pragmatic response to an increasingly globalised HE market. In the light of this changing context, the present study sought to elicit participants' attitudes regarding their performance on IELTS.

Attitude and Language Learning

One core aim of education is to convey factual knowledge about subjects, but another is to encourage students' interest in these subjects. To encourage mastery of factual knowledge and skills, education systems rely on examinations. However, research has raised the possibility that exams could have the unintended side-effect of undermining the other core aim of education, that of encouraging student interest. Research has shown that people's goals can significantly influence how they react to a task (Lamb, 2004). Therefore, fulfilling a task such as international examinations of English proficiency can be inextricably related to the goal of the participants who take them. Barron and Harackiewicz (2000), for example, have summarized the research on college students which suggests that individuals with mastery goals are more likely to enjoy a task, while individuals with a performance goal are more likely to do well on it. However, these differences are not absolute. Under some circumstances, performance goals can actually lead to greater interest than mastery goals (see for example, Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001).

The reaction and attitude toward a task can also be determined by the degree of the participants' motivation (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). According to Holmes (1992), in learning a foreign language, students can be motivated by the people who speak the language or the context in which the language is spoken. The amount of the anxiety of the learners in foreign language learning contexts may account for the changes in motivation of language learners (Johnson & Johnson, 1998) and ultimately changes the students' positive attitudes. According to Brown (2000), second language learners benefit from positive attitudes, and negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation. Nevertheless, he believes negative attitudes can be changed, often by exposure to reality – for example, by encounters with actual persons from other cultures. Positive attitudes on the part of language learners can cause the development of an integrative motivation and this can consequently facilitate second language progress.

Berwick and Ross (1989) assessed the motivation of university students at the beginning and end of their freshmen year. Their analysis indicated a limited development of an orientation towards personal growth through widening of their horizons and a desire to study abroad. While they supported the idea that it was difficult to bring students back from the pressure of exam they also maintained that the curriculum was at fault, by not being relevant to learners' needs and motives for language study.

The type of the task is also a determining factor with respect to the formation of attitudes and reactions towards the tasks. The students who sit for school or university exams would display lower motivation in comparison to students who learn the material without any assessment and test at the end of the curriculum. Test anxiety is a crucial factor in testing circumstances which results in lower motivation in pre-test conditions. Anxiety theorists have suggested that test anxiety is caused by individuals' perception of the test as a form of pressure to do well. These theorists further suggest that test anxiety is determined by individuals' personal interpretation or cognitive appraisal of the situation (Sarason & Sarason, 1990). The anticipation of a forthcoming exam is likely to be demotivating for most students because it directs their attention towards the consequences of being graded rather than the inherent interest of the subject (Harackiewicz, Manderlink, & Sansone, 1984). According to Vallerand and Reid (1984) motivation can be boosted after the exam if the student receives positive feedback on their performance. They suggest when individuals learn in order to achieve grades; the information they process is likely to be seen as useful only for that specific task. Thus, after the test is completed, the materials will no longer warrant retention.

Truitt (1995) found in a study regarding attitude of language learners that students' beliefs and attitudes about language learning may vary based on cultural background and previous experiences as well. Thus, it can be argued that positive or negative attitudes do not develop accidentally but have some reasons for their emergence. Malallaha (2000) investigated the attitudes of Arab learners towards English and discovered that they have positive attitudes towards the English language and their proficiency in tests was positively related to their attitude to English. Hence, it can be argued that having positive or negative attitudes towards a certain language can exert considerable effect on the learners' performance on a language test. By the same token, learners' attitudes towards a certain language proficiency test may affect their performance on that test. IELTS candidates' attitudes and perceptions towards IELTS might, therefore, affect their overall band score they get in this standardized test.

Bernat and Lioyd (2007) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between beliefs about language learning and gender through The Belief About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). Their study revealed that females and males hold generally similar beliefs about language learning; the results, as they claim, deviate from those reported in a previous study conducted in the U.S. Mansareh (2003) cited in a study conducted by Cleary (1996) on university students in Malaysia. The findings of the study revealed that all of the students did not have a positive attitude toward English and believed that Arabic should be raised to equal status with English or should completely take the role of English in Malaysia. Mansareh, in the same study, mentions another study by Shaaban and Ghaith (2003) who embarked upon investigating the linguistic attitudes of Lebanese college students towards Arabic, French, and English. They found that students considered foreign languages, e.g., French and English, to be more useful in domains of science, technology, and business. They didn't believe in such status for their native language, i.e., Arabic. Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2009) conducted a survey to identify Petroleum Engineering students' motivation and attitudes towards learning the English language. To do this, their study focused on three motivational frameworks: instrumental motivation, integrative motivation and, personal motivation. They also studied learners' attitudes in 4 areas: 1) the use of English in the Yemeni social context, 2) the use of English in the Yemeni educational context, 3) the English language and, 4) the culture of the English speaking world. The results showed that instrumental motivation including utilitarian and academic reasons, was more highlighted than the other motivational subdivisions among students. Personal reasons came next, however, students showed the least support for integrative motivation.

In terms of learners' attitudes toward learning English, the data showed that most of the students had positive attitudes towards the social value and educational status of English. Besides, the results uncover the students' positive orientation toward the English language. Surprisingly, a high number of participants showed their interest in the culture of the English speaking world as represented by English-language films. Rasti (2009) studied Iranian candidates' attitudes towards IELTS. In his research he explored the attitudes of 60 Iranian IELTS candidates who had taken the actual test in Iran. The findings suggest that almost 80% of the participants in this study showed a positive attitude towards IELTS. No meaningful relationship was found between Iranian candidates' sex, age, educational background, and IELTS scores with their attitudes towards IELTS.

With regard to the aforementioned studies and the significance of affective factors such as perception, attitude etc., influencing language learners' performance, IELTS Joint-funded research program (2006, 2007) states that one of the areas of interest for IELTS external research purposes is the investigation of attitudes of IELTS test takers. Therefore, the present study seeks to determine whether there is any positive correlation between the candidates' performance on IELTS and their attitudes after the test through the following research question:

RQ. Is there any significant relationship between the IELTS candidates' performance and their attitudes after taking the test?

METHOD

Participants

The participants of the study were forty IELTS candidates (both male and female) taking part in the IELTS preparation courses in the TEFL research center, Tehran, Iran. They were selected based on the results of the homogeneity test and their performance on IELTS test. Sixty participants who were EFL learners received the test and according to the results, forty learners whose scores fell 1 SD below and above the mean score met the requirements and were randomly selected for the purpose of the study. These participants were of various disciplines and they enjoyed different educational backgrounds.

Instruments

The present study enjoyed three instruments in the process of data collection as follows:

1. A language proficiency test of PET (2007), developed by Cambridge University Press, to homogenize the prospective candidates for the study.
2. A standard IELTS (general module, 2003) as the main test on which the candidates perform.
3. A questionnaire of attitude developed and validated by Rasti (2009) based on the framework developed by Bachman (1990) to check the candidates' attitudes after taking the test (see Appendix I).

Data Analysis

With regard to the analysis of the collected data, three levels of analysis were carried out including:

1. Descriptive statistics of the homogeneity test of PET
2. Normality tests for IELTS
3. A Pearson correlation coefficient to investigate any significant relationship between the IELTS candidates' performance and their attitudes towards the test.

Procedures

A group of sixty IELTS candidates taking part in the IELTS preparation courses in the TEFL research center, Tehran, Iran after completing their due course, were given a version of standardized IELTS which consisted of 25 listening comprehension items, 35 reading comprehension items, and 2 types of writing. The pilot study was also conducted before the experiment for the purpose of standardization and making sure of their homogeneity.

The participants received standard IELTS general module test and according to the results, 40 learners whose scores fell 1 SD below and above the mean were selected randomly for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire investigating the candidates' attitudes which had been already developed and validated by Rasti (2009) was also administered after taking the test. The learners' responses to the items in the questionnaire were then collectively correlated with their performance on the IELTS test to investigate whether there was any significant relationship between the candidates' performance and their attitudes towards the test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

In order to select a group of homogenous participants in terms of their general language proficiency, the PET test was administered to 60 students. 40 cases whose scores were 1 SD above and below the mean were selected to participate in the main study. That is to say, those whose scores fall within the ranges of 35.74 (mean - 1SD) and 46.42 (mean + 1SD) were randomly selected to participate in this study. The following table represents the results of descriptive statistics of the homogeneity test of PET.

Table1: Descriptive statistics of PET

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-----|----|---------|----------------|
| PET | 60 | 41.0833 | 5.34026 |

Normality Tests

In order to analyze any sets of data through parametric tests, four assumptions of interval data, independence of subjects, normality, and homogeneity of variances should be met. The present data were measured on an interval scale and the subjects were independent, i.e., none of them participated in more than one group.

The assumption of normality was empirically tested through the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their respective standard errors. As displayed in Table 2, these ratios were all within the ranges of +/- 1.96, thus the present data did not show any marked deviations from normal distribution.

Table2: Normality tests

| | N | Skewness | | | Kurtosis | | |
|----------|----|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| | | Statistic | Std. Error | Normality | Statistic | Std. Error | Normality |
| PET | 40 | 0.04 | 0.37 | 0.10 | -0.78 | 0.73 | -1.06 |
| IELTS | 40 | -0.16 | 0.37 | -0.43 | -1.02 | 0.73 | -1.38 |
| Attitude | 40 | -0.35 | 0.37 | -0.93 | 0.12 | 0.73 | 0.17 |

Pearson Correlation Coefficient

In order to answer the following question, a Pearson correlation coefficient was run to probe any significant relationship between the IELTS candidates' attitudes towards the test and their performance on the test.

RQ. Is there any significant relationship between the IELTS candidates' performance and their attitudes after taking the test?

Table 3: Pearson correlation of IELTS with attitude

| | | Attitude |
|-------|---------------------|----------|
| IELTS | Pearson Correlation | .662** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 40 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results ($R = .662$, $P = .000 < .01$; it does represent a large effect size) indicated that there was a positively significant and meaningful relationship between the IELTS candidates' performance on the test and their attitudes towards the test.

Discussion

With respect to the reported results, this study revealed that there was a significant and meaningful relationship between the IELTS candidates' performance on the test and their attitudes towards the test. The findings represent that the examinees with high positive attitude towards learning English could perform better in the IELTS exam. The reported results are also in line with those of Rasti (2009) who conducted a similar

research in Liverpool University and came up with the notion that “almost 80% of the participants in this study had a positive attitude towards IELTS” (p.110). Statistics clearly indicate that IELTS is constantly growing more popular worldwide. Just as IELTS candidature is growing significantly, so is the number of organizations, universities, professional bodies, and governments that recognize IELTS results.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, among many other countries, was among the top 25 countries in terms of the number of candidates who took the IELTS test in 2003 (IELTS Annual Review, 2003). According to Keyvanfar (2005), in the last five years a great number of young Iranians have traveled to other countries and they have been required to take the IELTS or other proficiency exams for the assessment of their communicative abilities in English. Many of these people have represented positive attitudes towards the IELTS exam and learning English (Keyvanfar, 2005). The reported findings of the present study are also supported by the previous research conducted in the ELT domain concerning the relationship between IELTS candidates’ performance on the test and their attitudes towards the test (Amiri, 2012; Ayres, 2003; Brown, 2003; Keyvanfar, 2005; Mickan & Slater, 2003; O’Loughlin & Wigglesworth, 2003; Rasti, 2009). Mickan and Slater (2003) investigated candidates’ interpretation of prompts and compared the written responses of English background speakers with those of IELTS intending candidates, who were not English background speakers. Their findings suggest implications for item writers and for teachers preparing candidates for IELTS examinations.

O’Loughlin and Wigglesworth (2003) also conducted a study on task difficulty in the IELTS Academic Writing Task 1. The study examined firstly, the extent to which the difficulty of the task is affected by the amount of information provided to the candidate and secondly, the extent to which the difficulty of the task is affected by the presentation of the information to the candidate. The findings indicated that there were no substantial differences in difficulty between the tasks, either in terms of the amount of information presented or in terms of the differences in presentation of the tasks. Brown (2003) intended to find out whether handwriting and neatness have any impact on the overall judgment of the IELTS writing quality of the candidates or not. The findings of her study clearly indicated that in general the quality of handwriting in IELTS does have an impact on the scores awarded to essays, and that increased legibility results in higher ratings. Ayres (2003) designed and delivered an online academic writing course (www.ielts.ac.nz). His course is specifically targeted at prospective candidates of IELTS examinations with the aim to develop both writing proficiency and awareness of the IELTS examination format and requirement.

The findings of the present study revealed that Iranians have a positive attitude towards IELTS. Increasingly significant growth in candidature in Iran shows how much popularity IELTS has gained among Iranians which is exactly in line with the findings of the present study. Coleman et al. (2003) also find IELTS a very popular test and according to their study, IELTS stakeholders in various countries have high positive attitudes towards IELTS. Such findings could be employed by IELTS administrators to do the modifications required.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at investigating the relationship between the IELTS candidates’ performance and their attitudes towards the test. To conduct the study, out of 60 participants who received a standard PET test, 40 IELTS candidates were selected based on the results of the pilot study. After taking the IELTS test, they were provided with a questionnaire evaluating their attitudes towards the test. After collecting the required data, Pearson correlation coefficient was run to probe any significant relationship between the IELTS candidates’ attitudes towards the test and their performance on the test. The results of the analysis revealed a highly significant and meaningful relationship between the IELTS candidates’ attitudes towards the test and their performance.

The present study can help all the IELTS stakeholders including candidates intending to sit the test, institutes running IELTS preparation programs, teachers wishing to teach such programs and the IELTS test administrators. Further studies are suggested to be carried out to investigate issues related to IELTS in Iran and internationally including:

1. Studies involving the IELTS Listening and Reading tests.
2. Further studies on the use of IELTS for professional purposes or for migration.
3. Studies intended to establish appropriate IELTS score levels for specific uses of the test (for access to a university department, for professional registration, for access to a vocational training course).
4. Studies of test preparation practices and investigation of the cognitive processes of IELTS test takers.
5. Finally, further studies must be carried out to investigate the process of writing IELTS test items.

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Appendix I

Language learning attitudes questionnaire

| Fill out the following questionnaire, checking the box which best describes whether you agree or disagree with each statement. This is for yourself not for anyone else, so answer as honestly as you can. | | | | | | |
|--|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, N= Neither agree nor disagree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree | | | | | | |
| No | Item | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 1 | I think I'm a pretty good language learner. | | | | | |
| 2 | Learning a language may be important to my goals, but I don't expect it to be much fun. | | | | | |
| 3 | My language learning aptitude is probably pretty high. | | | | | |
| 4 | I don't have any idea about how to go about learning a language. | | | | | |
| 5 | I think that I could learn pretty much any language I really put my mind to, given the right circumstances. | | | | | |
| 6 | I worry a lot about making mistakes. | | | | | |
| 7 | I'm afraid people will laugh at me if I don't say things right. | | | | | |
| 8 | I end up trembling and practically in a cold sweat when I have to talk in front of people. | | | | | |
| 9 | I find it hard to make conversation even with people who speak my own language. | | | | | |
| 10 | I feel a resistance from within when I try to speak in a foreign language, even if I've practiced. | | | | | |
| 11 | It is a mark of respect to people to learn their language if you're living in their country. | | | | | |
| 12 | I like getting to know people from other countries, in general. | | | | | |
| 13 | Speaking the language of the community where I'll be living will let me help people more than I could otherwise. | | | | | |
| 14 | I don't like the idea of relying on speaking English (or my mother tongue) in another country. | | | | | |
| 15 | I think the people of the country where I'll be living would like for me to learn their language. | | | | | |
| 16 | I won't really be able to get to know people well if I don't speak their language. | | | | | |
| 17 | There is a right and a wrong way to do almost everything, and I think it's my duty to figure out which is which and do it right. | | | | | |
| 18 | It annoys me when people don't give me a clear-cut answer, but just beat around the bush. | | | | | |
| 19 | You should say "yes" if you mean yes and "no" if you mean no. Not to do so is dishonest. | | | | | |
| 20 | You have to understand people's culture and value system before you can be sure whether some things are right or wrong. | | | | | |
| 21 | I like to mimic other accents, and people say I do it well. | | | | | |
| 22 | I can do impersonations of famous people. | | | | | |
| 23 | I find it easy to "put myself in other people's shoes" and imagine how they feel. | | | | | |
| 24 | In school, if I didn't know an answer for sure, I'd sometimes answer out loud in class anyway. | | | | | |
| 25 | I often think out loud, trying out my ideas on other people. | | | | | |
| 26 | I want to have everything worked out in my own head before I answer. | | | | | |
| 27 | I'd call myself a risk-taker | | | | | |