



HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ

Department of Foreign Language Education

English Language Teaching Program

THE INTERRELATIONS AMONG ENGLISH LANGUAGE SELF-EFFICACY, ENJOYMENT,
ANXIETY, AND ACHIEVEMENT OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Hilal GÜNEŞ

Ph.D. Dissertation

Ankara, 2025

With leadership, research, innovation, high quality education and change,

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ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN İNGİLİZCEYE YÖNELİK ÖZ-YETERLİK, KEYİF, KAYGI
VE İNGİLİZCE BAŞARILARI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

Hilal GÜNEŞ

Ph.D. Dissertation

Ankara, 2025

Acceptance and Approval

To the Graduate School of Educational Sciences,

This dissertation, prepared by **HİLAL GÜNEŞ** and entitled “The Interrelations Among English Language Self-Efficacy, Enjoyment, Anxiety, and Achievement of University Students” has been approved as a thesis for the Degree of **Ph.D.** in the **Program of English Language Education** in the **Department of Foreign Language Education** by the members of the Examining Committee.

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Prof. Dr. İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ

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Abstract

This study aimed to (a) explore the perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety among EFL learners and (b) test a hypothesized model investigating their interrelations and potential predictive effects on English Language Achievement (ELA). Using a quantitative, non-experimental correlational design, data were collected through a 26-item composite survey. Participants were 471 EFL learners enrolled in the English Preparatory Program at a state university in Türkiye. Descriptive findings indicated high English self-efficacy and enjoyment levels, alongside moderate anxiety among EFL learners. Correlation analysis demonstrated a medium positive correlation between self-efficacy and ELA, a small positive correlation between enjoyment and ELA, and a small negative correlation between anxiety and ELA. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis further indicated that (1) Self-efficacy directly and positively predicted ELA, while enjoyment and anxiety exhibited no significant direct effects; (2) Enjoyment significantly enhanced self-efficacy, whereas anxiety diminished it; (3) Both enjoyment and anxiety indirectly influenced ELA through the mediating role of self-efficacy. These findings underscore self-efficacy's dual role as a direct predictor and mediator of ELA. Pedagogically, the findings suggest that ELA can be enhanced not only by directly fostering learners' self-efficacy but also indirectly by promoting enjoyment and mitigating anxiety. The study highlights the centrality of self-efficacy in EFL learning and provides actionable insights for educators in tertiary Turkish contexts, where the interplay of these affective factors remains underexplored.

Keywords: self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, achievement, English language, positive psychology

Öz

Bu çalışma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen (EFL) öğrencilerin İngilizceye yönelik özyeterlik, keyif ve kaygı düzeylerini araştırmayı; ve bu değişkenlerin birbirleriyle olan ilişkilerini ve İngilizce Dil Başarısı (İDB) üzerindeki olası etkilerini inceleyen bir modeli test etmeyi amaçlamıştır. Veriler, nicel, deneysel olmayan ilişkisel bir desen kullanılarak, 26 maddelik bir anket aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Katılımcılar, Türkiye'deki bir devlet üniversitesinin İngilizce Hazırlık Programı'na kayıtlı 471 EFL öğrencisinden oluşmaktadır. Betimsel bulgular, öğrencilerde yüksek İngilizce özyeterliği ve keyif düzeyleri ile orta düzeyde kaygı olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Korelasyon analizi, özyeterlik ile İDB arasında orta düzeyde pozitif bir ilişki, keyif ile İDB arasında küçük düzeyde pozitif bir ilişki ve kaygı ile İDB arasında küçük düzeyde negatif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi (SEM) analizi ise şu sonuçları göstermiştir (1) Özyeterlik, İDB'yi doğrudan ve pozitif olarak yordarken; keyif ve kaygının doğrudan anlamlı bir etkisi bulunmamıştır; (2) Keyif, özyeterliği anlamlı derecede artırırken; kaygı özyeterliği azaltmıştır; (3) Hem keyif hem de kaygı, özyeterlik aracılığıyla İDB üzerinde dolaylı etkiler göstermiştir. Bu bulgular, özyeterliğin İDB üzerinde hem doğrudan bir belirleyici hem de aracı olarak ikili rolünü vurgulamaktadır. Pedagojik açıdan, sonuçlar İDB'nin yalnızca özyeterliği doğrudan geliştirerek değil, aynı zamanda keyfi artırarak ve kaygıyı azaltarak dolaylı yoldan da iyileştirilebileceğini önermektedir. Çalışma, bu duyuşsal faktörlerin etkileşiminin henüz yeterince araştırılmadığı Türkiye'deki üniversite bağlamlarında, İngilizce öğreniminde özyeterliğin merkezi rolünü ortaya koyarak eğitimciler için uygulanabilir stratejiler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: öz-yeterlik, keyif, kaygı, başarı, İngilizce, pozitif psikoloji

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Symbols and Abbreviations

ELA: English Language Achievement

EFL: English as as Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

EPP: English Preparatory Program

FL: Foreign Language

FLA: Foreign Language Anxiety

FLE: Foreign Language Enjoyment

FLSES: Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale

GPA: Grade Point Average

L2: Second/Foreign Language

PP: Positive Psychology

SCT: Social Cognitive Theory

S-FLES: Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale

S-FLCAS: Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

SEM: Structural Equation Modeling

SLA : Second Language Acquisition

SoFL: School of Foreign Languages

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study aims to (1) find out the perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners and (2) test the hypothesized model to explore interrelations among these variables and their potential predictive effects on English language achievement (ELA). In this chapter, a statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study, research questions, assumptions and limitations of the study, and definitions of key terms will be identified.

Statement of the Problem

Learning a second or foreign language (L2) is, without a doubt, an arduous and challenging process requiring a combination of cognitive, social, and psychological factors. Although all these factors are crucial in the language learning process, research on language learning has given the most attention to the cognitive aspects for a long time (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Many language theorists and researchers have sought to find out psycholinguistic aspects of language learning, for example, how people acquire their first and second language, developmental orders of acquisition, and how the language is processed in the mind (Brown, 1973; Dulay & Burt, 1974; Krashen, 1981; Pienemann, 1998). Then, psychological factors and individual differences have attracted considerable attention, and their importance in the L2 learning process has been acknowledged by a great number of researchers (Dewaele, 2012; Dörnyei, 2005; MacIntyre, 2002). However, psychology has long been excessively focused on “the shortcomings and deficiencies in human cognition and behavior” (Fathi et al., 2024, p. 3). Positive psychology, on the other hand, has transformed this viewpoint, redirecting attention towards the strengths and positive sides of individuals’ experiences (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014).

Positive psychology, which was introduced into the field of psychology by Seligman (1998), primarily investigates how individuals thrive and flourish (MacIntyre & Mercer,

2014). It promotes the well-being of individuals (Oxford, 2016a) and emphasizes their strengths and virtues, which are believed to contribute to a better quality of life (Lopez & Snyder, 2009; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology focuses on three key aspects: positive experiences (such as positive emotions), positive personal characteristics (such as self-efficacy), and positive institutions that promote well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Since its emergence, PP has directed its focus toward the positive aspects of human psychology and experience, rather than dwelling on problematic or distressing elements (Oxford, 2016a). Serving as an umbrella term for various isolated theories and studies related to the concept of well-being (Peterson, 2006), positive psychology has garnered significant attention since its inception and has evolved into an interdisciplinary field (Dewaele et al., 2019).

In 2011, Seligman developed the PERMA model of psychological well-being, which encapsulated various dimensions of a thriving life. This model is comprised of five key components: (P) fostering positive emotions, (E) engaging in activities that utilize one's character strengths, (R) cultivating meaningful relationships, (M) discovering purpose beyond oneself, and (A) recognizing areas of achievement. Seligman's well-being theory, centered around the PERMA model, aimed to enhance flourishing by enhancing "positive emotions, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment" (Seligman, 2011, p.12). According to this model, finding meaning and connection in life requires a harmonious interplay of positivity across these elements, which leads to the realization of human well-being (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020).

With the rapid growth of positive psychology in the field of education, its relevance has also begun to be recognized in the domain of language education. Over the past few decades, in particular, the importance of PP in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) has been acknowledged by numerous L2 researchers (Gregersen, 2016; Komorowska, 2016; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014; MacIntyre et al., 2016; Oxford, 2016a,

2016b). Positive psychology constructs have gained increasing popularity in SLA research, and studies exploring the relationships between these constructs and L2 learning success have proliferated, especially in recent years (Dewaele, 2012; MacIntyre, 2002).

As a result of the widespread acceptance of positive psychology within SLA, a positive renaissance has emerged in L2 studies (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Lake, 2013; Wang et al., 2021). Research on positive psychology in SLA has prioritized a strengths-based approach to empirical investigation, moving away from a deficit-based perspective (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Consequently, there is now a growing body of research focused on identifying the positive psychology factors that contribute to language learners' success (Bai et al., 2021; Fathi et al., 2024; Teng et al., 2023). On the other hand, some researchers have argued that expecting universal positivity is unrealistic and have advocated for a more balanced perspective that acknowledges both positive and negative experiences in L2 learning (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre, 2021; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Oxford, 2016). This approach has encouraged SLA researchers to shift their focus from exclusively studying negative factors to examining both positive and negative factors in the process of language teaching and learning (Fallah et al., 2023; Pawlak et al., 2022).

In the field of SLA, Oxford (2016a) expanded upon Seligman's (2011) *"PERMA model of psychological well-being"* and developed the *"EMPATHICS model of psychological well-being for language learners."* EMPATHICS is an acronym that offers a practical framework for enhancing the well-being of language learners within PP. The EMPATHICS model comprises nine components : "(1) Emotions and empathy, (2) Meaning and motivation, (3) Perseverance, (4) Agency and autonomy, (5) Time, (6) Habits of mind, (7) Intelligences, (8) Character strengths, and (9) Self factors (e.g., self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-concept)" (Oxford, 2016a). This theoretical model has opened up new empirical and pedagogical opportunities for SLA researchers (Wang et al., 2021).

As Oxford (2016a) argues, many of the constructs within the EMPATHICS model have not yet been explored in SLA research. Therefore, by theoretically drawing on positive

psychology, L2 research can benefit from incorporating these significant constructs (Wang et al., 2021a). Oxford (2016a) recommends that both quantitative and qualitative studies be conducted to enhance language learners' well-being and further develop the EMPATHICS model. Accordingly, she suggests that empirical research could explore the complex relationships among the components of the EMPATHICS model across different cultures and contexts. To address the aforementioned considerations, this study aims to adopt the PP perspective and explore the interrelations among the three core components of the EMPATHICS model—enjoyment, anxiety, and self-efficacy—and their potential predictive effects on English language achievement (ELA).

Aim and Significance of the Study

Given the importance of positive psychology in SLA and the scarcity of empirical research on this area both in Türkiye and globally, this study primarily aims to examine the interrelations among the three core elements of PP and the EMPATHICS model, as well as their potential predictive effects on English language achievement (ELA). To achieve this, first, students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety will be assessed. Then, the structural relationships among these variables, along with their possible direct and indirect effects on ELA, will be explored.

The current research is significant for several reasons. First, while the relevance and importance of positive psychology in the field of SLA have been acknowledged by several researchers (Gregersen, 2016; Komorowska, 2016; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014; MacIntyre et al., 2016; Oxford, 2016a, 2016b), relatively little research has explored its application in language learning and teaching (Gabrys-Barker & Gałajda, 2016; Li & Jiang, 2017; Oxford, 2016a, 2016b). As MacIntyre and Mercer (2014) have pointed out, many positive psychology (PP) topics related to language learning and teaching remain underexplored. This study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on positive psychology in SLA.

One of the major contributions of positive psychology in the SLA field is its focus on studying both positive and negative emotions together. Many PP researchers have indicated that language learners experience both positive and negative emotions simultaneously, and therefore, these emotions must be studied together (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Oxford, 2016a). Moreover, to achieve a deeper understanding of emotions, studying both positive and negative emotions together is recommended (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016). This study responds to this call by examining both positive and negative emotions (i.e., enjoyment and anxiety) in the L2 learning process.

A significant contribution of positive psychology to the field of SLA lies in its emphasis on examining both positive and negative emotions in tandem. Numerous researchers in positive psychology have highlighted that language learners often experience positive and negative emotions simultaneously, underscoring the necessity of studying these emotions together (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Oxford, 2016a). Furthermore, scholars have advocated for an integrated approach to studying emotions, arguing that a comprehensive understanding of emotional dynamics in language learning can only be achieved by considering both positive and negative dimensions (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016). In response to this call, the present study investigates the interplay of positive and negative emotions—specifically, enjoyment and anxiety—within the L2 learning process.

Recent line of research has investigated various constructs of PP and the EMPATHICS model, such as L2 learners' positive and negative emotions (Li & Dewaele, 2021; Pawlak & Kruk, 2022), motivation (Kim & Shin, 2021; Teng et al., 2023), resilience (Yun et al., 2018), autonomy (Csizer et al., 2021), growth and fixed mindsets (Bai et al., 2020; Lou et al., 2022), grit (Alamer, 2022; Khajavy et al., 2021; Lam & Zhou, 2022), self-regulation (Güneş, 2023; Huang, 2022), and self-efficacy (Alhadabi & Karpinski, 2020; Teng et al., 2023; Young Kyo, 2022). Among them, some studies have scrutinized the complex

interaction between these elements and how they jointly impact L2 achievement (Alamer, 2022; Sudina & Plonsky, 2021; Karbakhsh & Ahmadi Safa, 2020; Kim & Shin, 2021; Shih, 2019; Wei et al., 2019; Zorlu & Ünver, 2022). However, there is a notable gap in the literature examining the interaction among L2 self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety and their joint effect on English language achievement. This study focuses on these three pivotal variables, which are integral to both positive psychology and the EMPATHICS model.

This study adopts a comprehensive approach by integrating English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement into a single model. Additionally, it gives particular importance to exploring the possible mediating role of English self-efficacy, an aspect that has been underexplored in previous SLA research. Hence, this study aims to fill the current gap by examining both the individual effects of English self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety on students' L2 achievement while also considering the possible mediating effect of self-efficacy through SEM analysis. In doing so, it intends to offer a comprehensive understanding of how these variables interact, revealing the complex dynamics that affect L2 achievement. Finally, this study aims to contribute to the existing SLA and positive psychology research literature with a more comprehensive perspective.

Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety among tertiary-level Turkish EFL students. Additionally, it seeks to explore the interrelationships among these variables and their potential predictive effects on the students' English language achievement. To achieve this overarching aim, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the tertiary-level Turkish EFL students' perceived levels of:
 - a. English language self-efficacy
 - b. English language enjoyment
 - c. English language anxiety

2. Are there significant correlations between the students' perceived levels of:
 - a. English language self-efficacy and achievement?
 - b. English language enjoyment and achievement?
 - c. English language anxiety and achievement?
 - d. English language self-efficacy and enjoyment?
 - e. English language self-efficacy and anxiety?
3. To what extent is the hypothesized model appropriate for explaining the interrelations among the EFL students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement? Specifically:
 - a. Does English language self-efficacy have a direct influence on English language achievement?
 - b. Does English language enjoyment have a direct influence on English language achievement?
 - c. Does English language anxiety have a direct influence on English language achievement?
 - d. Does English language enjoyment have a direct influence on English language self-efficacy?
 - e. Does English language anxiety have a direct influence on English language self-efficacy?
 - f. Does English language enjoyment have an indirect influence on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy?
 - g. Does English language anxiety have an indirect influence on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy?

Assumptions

In this study, the following assumptions are made:

1. The students' English GPA from the first semester of their English Preparatory Program serves as an appropriate indicator of their English language achievement.
2. The exams and assessments contributing to the students' English GPA are valid and reliable measures of English language proficiency.
3. The constructs of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety can be reliably and validly measured using the following scales:
 - "The Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES)"
 - "The Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES)"
 - "The Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS)"

Limitations

1. This study is limited to tertiary-level Turkish EFL students enrolled in an English Preparatory Program at a Turkish state university, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or populations.
2. The study relies on self-reported data collected through a composite survey instrument, which may be subject to response bias, such as social desirability bias or inaccuracies in participants' self-assessments.

Definitions

Positive psychology: It is “the scientific study of what goes right in life, from birth to death and at all stops in between” (Peterson, 2006, p. 4).

Enjoyment: It refers to “a complex emotion, capturing interacting dimensions of challenge and perceived ability that reflect human drive for success in the face of difficult tasks” (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016, p. 216).

L2 enjoyment: It is “the emotion that fuels the second language learning process and that boosts performance in the second language” (Dewaele, 2022, p.190).

Anxiety: It is “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p.125).

L2 anxiety: It refers to “feelings of worry and negative, fear-related emotions associated with learning or using a language that is not an individual’s mother tongue” (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 103).

Self-efficacy: It refers to “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3).

L2 self-efficacy: It refers to “language learners’ beliefs in their ability to successfully perform language-related tasks and achieve proficiency in a foreign language” (Piniel & Csizér, 2013, p. 526).

English language achievement: It refers to students’ Grade Point Average (GPA) at the end of the semester in the English Preparatory Program at the School of Foreign Languages. The GPA is calculated as a weighted average of students’ performance across various assessments, including midterm exams, process evaluations, and the English proficiency exam.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Basis of Research and Literature Review

Humanistic Psychology

While contemporary positive psychology emerged in 1998, its premises extend far back (Peterson, 2006). Eminent humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers laid the foundations for many enduring concepts in positive psychology. Indeed, the term “Positive Psychology” was first articulated by Abraham Maslow in 1954 (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016; Peterson, 2006). Therefore, positive psychology represents a resurgence of humanistic psychology (Funder, 2010). Both Maslow (1970) and Rogers (1951) underscored the significance of well-being and individuals’ contentment with their lives (as cited in Peterson, 2006). Specifically, Maslow concentrated on positive attributes contributing to creativity, contentment, achievement, and self-actualization (MacIntyre, 2016; Peterson, 2006).

With its different views about human nature, humanistic psychology differs from behaviorism or psychoanalysis, which were popular in psychology during the 20th century. Humanistic psychology chiefly advocates that the needs and values of people are more important than materials. Accordingly, people should not be just regarded as part of a material that behaves similarly; they need to be seen as unique organisms (Peterson, 2006). Moreover, it places importance on the choice of individuals, which makes them enjoy a well-developed personality and eventually contribute to a well-constructed and value-oriented community (Rahman, 2013). Although it previously emphasized the development of the individual, the significance of change and development of relationships, families, societies, and communities were also recognized later (Association of Humanistic Psychology (AHP), 1991).

The foundational principles of the humanistic approach to psychology emphasize self-actualization, creativity, individuality, intrinsic nature, the self, the process of becoming,

the search for meaning, and overall health (goodtherapy.org). According to the humanistic approach, concepts of wellness, empathic communication, attachment, self-direction, and maximization of potential are essential in developing good health and adjustment throughout life (AHP, 1991). It advocates that the driving forces of behavior are morality, good intentions, and ethical values. Accordingly, adverse psychological or social experiences were regarded as deviations from natural tendencies (goodtherapy.org).

During the 21st century, humanistic psychology in education came to the fore. It was termed differently, such as spiritualistic education, self-actualizing education, and group dynamics education. The aim was to build a society in which individuals have spiritual and mental freedom, where their souls and minds are in harmony with their bodies, providing a stress-free situation for better learning. Central to this approach was recognizing the significant interplay between individuals' minds and their learning environment. Emphasis was placed on individual choices over societal norms, aiming to cultivate a society that prioritizes choice, personal growth, and creativity (AHP, 1991).

Humanistic approaches in education are based on the principles of humanism. The fundamental principle of humanistic education is human well-being, focusing on the growth of human potential, and recognizing human dignity. Especially Maslow (1908–1970) and Rogers (1902–1987) used humanistic approaches to learning in their studies. Maslow and Rogers emphasized the importance of seeing the learner as a unique individual. They advocated that education should address not just intellectual development but also the holistic growth and nurturing of the entire person. Therefore, their needs, interests, goals, and passions need to be taken into consideration while teaching them to help them achieve their full potential (Sharp, 2012).

Contrary to behaviorism, which “sees learning as the result of conditioned responses, reinforced by extrinsic rewards or imposed sanctions,” and cognitivism, which “sees the brain as being similar to a computer with neural networks performing processes to solve problems and make decisions,” humanistic education stresses the importance of

personal learning experiences, learner needs, and a holistic approach to learning (Sharp, 2012, p.1470). Rogers (1969) emphasized the significance of affective factors in learning and stated that a learner needs to be seen as a whole person with cognition and emotion (Rahman, 2013). Likewise, Maslow stressed the significance of making students “feel respected and valued” in the class so that they can develop at an optimum rate. Therefore, creating a supportive classroom environment by the teacher is quite significant in humanistic education (simplypsychology.org). Accordingly, good teachers behave like a therapist who shows empathy, and unconditional positive regard towards students who are seen as clients with individual needs (Burden & Williams, 1997). Such an approach to learning was unique and made a significant contribution to pedagogical applications and research (Brown, 1994).

Humanistic approaches to education promote student-centered learning, where learners are encouraged to take charge of their own learning (Sharp, 2012). Rogers (1969) promoted “client-centered” and “experiential learning,” where the focus is on fostering “a strong self-concept” in the learners so that they can make their own choices and become self-directed learners (as cited in Sharp, 2012, p. 1470). According to humanistic education, teachers need to act as facilitators and assist students in experiencing a meaningful educational life (Szymczak, 2016). Humanistic teaching methods give importance to emotion, empathy, encouragement, and involvement of the learner. Proponents of humanism advocate that these elements are quite important in language learning (Rahman, 2013). Moreover, humanistic education emphasizes promoting positive emotions in students (e.g., empathy, self-esteem) and eliminating negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, depression) (Sharp, 2012).

Both Maslow (1970) and Rogers (1951) emphasized that human beings aim to realize their own potential throughout their life, which is called self-actualization (Peterson, 2006). Maslow (1954) stressed that people strive to achieve certain needs, some of which take precedence over others. According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory, the most

basic needs are the physical ones, followed by safety, love and belongingness, and esteem, and at the top, there is self-actualization, which refers to a state where a person realizes his/her full potential. This theory has made a significant contribution to educational practices. For example, it has been realized that before not fulfilling the basic physical needs of a learner, his/her cognitive needs cannot be met. To illustrate, a tired or hungry student will have difficulty in focusing on or understanding the subject. Likewise, learners should be both physically and emotionally safe and accepted within the classroom so that they can make progress and realize their full potential (simplypsychology.org).

One of the oldest and most famous schools that adopts a humanistic approach to education is *A.S. Neill's Summerhill School*, which was founded in 1921 (Vaughan, 2006). It aims to give a progressive and democratic education. The school denominates itself as a "free school," where children are encouraged to make their own decisions, take responsibility for themselves and others, and become self-confident, tolerant, considerate, fair, understanding, sensitive, creative, and self-motivated. The school's decision-making process is also democratic, where each adult and child have an equal vote. Children have a right not to attend the lessons, but the teacher should remain neutral towards them. Creating a relaxed and friendly classroom environment is important (summerhillschool.co.uk).

Humanistic approaches to learning are closely related to the learner-centered views of constructivism. Humanist theory influences various approaches, including "person-centered counseling, group-work approaches, student-centered learning, cooperative learning, and discovery learning (Sharp, 2012, p. 1470). In discovery learning, learners are seen as discoverers of knowledge. According to it, if learners discover knowledge, learning is more permanent, and learners achieve more. In this respect, teachers are expected to act as "facilitators" and "coaches." Learner autonomy and self-motivation are important. Furthermore, they gave importance to building a collaborative learning environment (Sharp, 2012). In social constructivism, teachers are expected to scaffold learners to help them

achieve their own potential, which they cannot otherwise do without that help (Szymczak, 2016).

Humanistic approaches to language teaching give importance to positive experiences and treat each learner as “a whole person” where not only cognitive but also affective factors are important in the learning process (Piasecka, 2016). Many humanistic psychologists, in particular, “Abraham Maslow,” “Jeremy Bruner,” and “Gertrude Moskowitz” made significant contributions to SLA (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016, p. vii).

In 1978, Moskowitz published his book *“Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class,”* which was one of the pioneering works in foreign language education that demonstrated how language instructors could effectively utilize positive psychology based on humanistic principles not only to improve learners’ L2 development but also to promote their personal (especially emotional) development and well-being (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016). In his book, Moskowitz demonstrated how humanistic ideas and methods, in particular, Silent Way and Counseling Learning, can be used in language classrooms. Although such humanistic approaches became popular and were adopted by many language teachers, they were also treated with suspicion by some applied linguistics who regarded humanistic methodology as having no scientific basis (Johnston & Stevick, 1993).

Foreign Language teaching methodologies like Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Counseling Learning, Total Physical Response, and Community Language Learning are also grounded in humanistic theory. Across all these approaches, the central emphasis lies on the learner rather than solely on linguistic content (Sharp, 2012). Additionally, they highlight the unique features of each learner, prioritize learners’ autonomy, and uphold the dignity of learners (Stevick, 1990).

A Brief History of Positive Psychology

Before World War II, there were three fundamental missions of psychology: treating mental illness, making people live a more satisfying and prolific life, and discovering and

developing high talent (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Earlier studies that focused on positive psychology included giftedness (Terman, 1939), marital happiness (Terman et al., 1938), effective parenting (Watson, 1928), and searching for meaning in life (Jung, 1933) (as cited in Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). However, following the war, two economic occurrences altered the trajectory of psychology. The initial event was the establishment of Veteran Affairs in 1946, prompting psychologists to recognize the potential for earning a livelihood by treating mental illness. The second event occurred with the establishment of the “National Institute of Mental Health” in 1947, which embraced “the disease model,” leading academics to realize that grants were available for research focused on “pathology.” As a result, the focus of empirical research shifted to understanding and treatment of psychological suffering. A large number of studies have been conducted on mental disorders, traumatic childhood experiences, and the negative impacts of environmental stressors, including physical and sexual harassment, marital separation, and death. These studies were conducted under the framework of “repairing damage” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.6).

While the focus on pathology within psychology has yielded certain benefits in terms of comprehending and addressing various mental disorders, it has unfortunately led to the neglect of psychology’s other fundamental objectives: enhancing people’s well-being and fostering talent. Traits like hope, creativity, perseverance, and responsibility often go unnoticed or are perceived merely as deviations from inherently negative impulses (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

During World War II, Csikszentmihalyi recognized the necessity of positive psychology after observing how previously successful and self-confident adults became desperate when they lost their jobs, money, and social status. On the other hand, he also encountered people who preserved their integrity, purpose, and hope despite the chaotic environment that surrounded them, even if they were not necessarily more respected, educated, or skilled people. Csikszentmihalyi wondered what made those people keep their

strength and decency despite all those difficulties. He then did extensive research on philosophy, history, and religion yet could not find any satisfying answer. Afterwards, he read about psychology and thought that he could find possible answers to his question with this discipline, although it was not a recognized discipline at that time (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

A decade later, in the 1960s, humanistic psychologists, including Maslow and Rogers, appeared to “add a new perspective to the entrenched clinical and behaviorist approaches” in psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.7). However, humanistic psychology lacked a cumulative empirical basis, leading to a sheer number of “therapeutic self-help movements.” What is more, it placed much emphasis on the “self” and “a self-centeredness” which trivialized the “concerns for collective well-being” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.7). In the end, there was a conviction that there should be a movement toward positive psychology.

The term “positive psychology” was introduced by Martin Seligman in psychology in 1998, a few months after his election as a president of the American Psychological Association (APA) (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In 2000, a millennial issue of *American Psychologist* was published, which focused on positive psychology and factors that lead to happiness, the impacts of self-regulation and autonomy, the effect of optimism and hope, as well as creativity and talent. In this special issue, the foundations of positive psychology were laid, a framework of positive psychology as a scientific field was outlined, and knowledge gaps in positive psychology were underlined. Furthermore, it was predicted that in the next era, factors that lead individuals, communities, and societies to flourish would be recognized and encouraged by science and the profession (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Although positive psychology has been reflected in humanistic theory (Linley et al., 2011), only in the past ten years has it become a scientific field with its extensive scientific

research, institutional and personal networks, as well as its major coursebooks and handbooks (Oxford, 2016a; Peterson, 2006; Seligman, 2011).

In light of this background, it becomes evident that positive and humanistic psychology are closely interrelated with each other. So, what makes positive psychology different from humanistic psychology? First and foremost, positive psychology relies strongly on scientific methods and empirical study to build knowledge, while humanistic psychology is mostly skeptical of science and lacks empirical evidence to support its claims (Funder, 2010; Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016; MacIntyre, 2016; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Additionally, positive psychologists acknowledge that both good and bad can exist together in people, whereas humanists often suppose that people are good by their nature (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Furthermore, positive psychology serves as an umbrella term for somewhat isolated theories and studies related to the concept of well-being. It has also been suggested that researching what makes life worth living deserves its own dedicated branch within general psychology (Peterson, 2006).

The Core Tenets of Positive Psychology

Positive psychology basically studies the thriving and flourishing of human beings (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014). It promotes the well-being of the people (Oxford, 2016a) and emphasizes the strengths and virtues of people that supposedly lead a better life (Lopez & Snyder, 2009; Peterson, 2006; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Since its emergence, PP has addressed three main areas: positive experiences, including emotions, positive personal characteristics, and positive institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive psychology deals with the positive elements of human psychology and experience rather than problematic and distressing aspects. When faced with a challenging situation, it suggests focusing on strengths instead of weaknesses (Oxford, 2016a).

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) emphasize the importance of positive personal experiences, positive individual characteristics as well as positive institutions as

they not only improve the quality of life but also avert sickness when life is desperate and meaningless. At this point, social and behavioral sciences can play a crucial role in articulating a vision of a flourishing life, which is not only understandable and attractive but also empirically sound. They can demonstrate which factors or practices cause the well-being, thriving, and flourishing of individuals, communities, and institutions. For example, psychology needs to “be able to document what kinds of families result in children who flourish, what work setting support the greatest satisfaction among workers, what policies result in the strongest civic engagement, and how people’s lives can be most worth living” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.5) Nonetheless, psychologists do not have much knowledge about what makes people’s life worthwhile as they have focused mostly on “how people survive and endure under conditions of adversity” (p.5). At this juncture, positive psychology aims to change the direction of psychology from focusing merely on healing or repairing to focusing on positive features of life as well (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

“Prevention” is one of the main issues which foregrounds positive psychology. The presidential theme of the APA convention in 1998 was “prevention.” The positive psychologists acknowledge that when it comes to the prevention of serious problems such as substance abuse, depression, violence, or schizophrenia in individuals who are vulnerable to them because of genetic or environmental factors, “the disease model” does not carry psychology a step forward. Instead, major developments in prevention stem largely from a perspective that places emphasis on “building competency” systematically rather than on “correcting weakness” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.7).

Prevention researchers have revealed that human strengths such as “courage, future-mindedness, optimism, interpersonal skill, faith, work ethic, hope, honesty, perseverance, and the capacity for flow and insight” can serve as “buffers against mental illness” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.7). Therefore, a new science of human strengths and virtues needs to be created whose mission is to study intensively and discover how to promote these human strengths and virtues in individuals to prevent emotional

disorders. The psychology that relies on this view will also “make normal people stronger and more productive” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.8).

The articles in the “*Journal of American Psychologist (2000)*” present a diverse and complex picture of the direction of psychology that can be positioned under the division of positive psychology. The topics focus on three main issues: positive experiences, positive personal traits, and positive societies and institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In this journal, Buss (2000) discusses positive states of mind and argues that they are elusive because of evolutionary reasons. He then identifies some obstacles to well-being and offers concrete solutions to overcome them. Diener (2000) focuses on subjective well-being, which is about how people interpret the events they experience. Peterson (2000) examines optimism and emphasizes that it has emotional, cognitive, and motivational components. Myers (2000) examines empirical research on happiness and argues that religious faith, economic growth, and income, as well as interpersonal relationships, are closely associated with happiness. Ryan & Deci (2000) investigates the issue of self-determination. Salovey et al. (2000) review emotions and indicate that studies mostly focus on negative emotions and illness relationships rather than positive emotions and healthy relationships (as cited in Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

In 2011, Martin Seligman, introduced the “*PERMA model of psychological wellbeing*”, which reflects the multifaceted aspects of a flourishing life. It is an acronym that consists of five core elements: (P) positive emotions, (E) engagement in activities using one’s character strengths, (R) developing good interpersonal relations, (M) finding meaning by serving a purpose beyond oneself, (A) being aware of accomplishment and achievement areas. The aim of his theory of well-being centered on the PERMA model, was to “increase flourishing by increasing positive emotion, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment” (Seligman, 2011, p.12). According to this model, achieving meaning and connection in life necessitates a balanced integration of positivity across these elements, ultimately leading to human well-being (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020).

Among positive emotions, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) put enjoyment in a special place. The researchers explicitly make a distinction between “*pleasure*” and “*enjoyment*”, noting that while pleasure stems from fulfilling basic needs like hunger, bodily comfort, and sex, enjoyment arises from surpassing personal limits in activities such as sports, art, or intellectual engagement. Distinct from pleasure, enjoyment fosters “personal growth and long-term happiness” (p. 12).

In the SLA field, Oxford (2016a) remodeled Seligman’s (2011) “*PERMA model*” and developed the “*EMPATHICS model*” concerning the “*psychological well-being of language learners*”, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Positive Psychology in SLA

Positive psychology highlights the significance of three core elements crucial for human flourishing: positive emotions, positive personality traits, and positive institutions. Likewise, these elements are central to the realm of language learning and teaching as well (MacIntyre, 2016). In the context of SLA, positive psychology delves into themes such as positivity, affectivity, attitudes, motivation, student and teacher strengths that facilitate the teaching-learning process, and educational environments fostering the well-being, growth, and success of both educators and learners (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016).

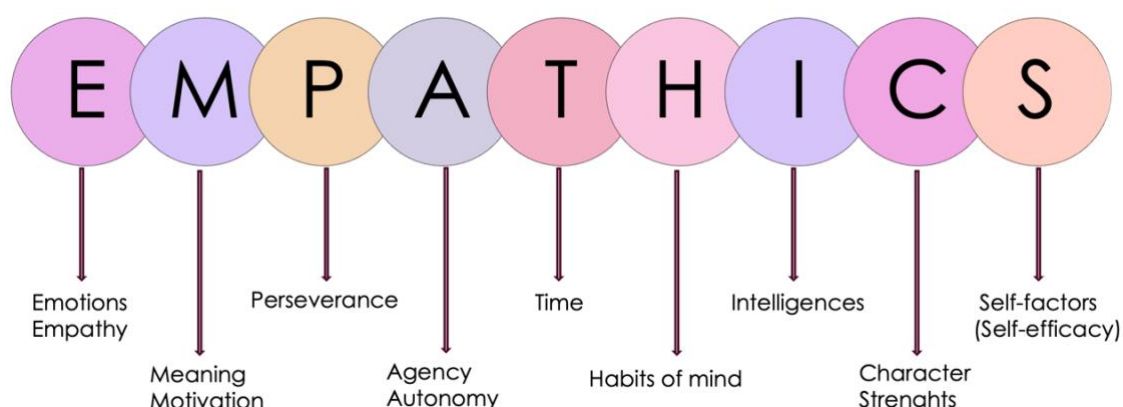
Myriad research has indicated that incorporating positive psychology in language education is advantageous as it enhances the learning experience (Dewaele et al., 2019; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Furthermore, the positive psychology movement offers researchers new perspectives on improving the effectiveness of language education (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Primarily, positive psychology allows for the recognition of the roles played by both positive and negative emotions in the learning process. Fredrickson (2001) argues that positive and negative emotions serve different functions in human life. He suggests that positive emotions broaden one’s awareness, while negative emotions

constrain one's thoughts. These distinct functions of emotions are explained by the "Broaden-and-Build Theory" (Fredrickson, 2001; 2004).

Within the realm of SLA, Seligman's (2011) positive psychology model, PERMA, was remodeled by Rebecca Oxford in 2016. Drawing from her extensive educational background as a former language teacher, language teacher educator, and educational psychologist, Oxford developed the EMPATHICS model (see Figure 1) based on existing research findings. Her objective was to develop a practical framework for enhancing the well-being of language learners. The EMPATHICS model underscores the importance of contextualization, recognizing that both language learning and teaching are situated within specific socio-cultural environments (Oxford, 2016a).

Figure 1

Graphical Representation of the EMPATHICS Model



The term EMPATHICS is an acronym involving psychological aspects, which in turn positively influence the achievement and proficiency of language learners. As Oxford (2016a) contends, these aspects within the model are characterized as "complex, interrelated, interacting, and evolving" (p. 26). Below, the constructs of the model are explained:

E for emotions and empathy: According to Oxford (2016a), emotions and empathy are two interwoven constructs. MacIntyre (2002) describes emotion as "the primary human motive," which provides "the intensity, urgency, and energy to propel our behavior" (p. 61).

Since cognition and emotion are inseparable constructs, emotion is an integral part of learning (Oxford, 2015). Oxford (2016a) argues that positive emotions such as pride and satisfaction play an important role in learners' self-regulation behaviors (Schunk & Ertmer, 2000), their autonomy (Benson, 2011), and their motivation.

Oxford (2016a) addresses Emotional Intelligence (EQ) as an important concept, which is "the ability to understand feelings in the self and others and to use these feelings as informational guides for thinking and action" (Salovey et al., 2011, p. 238). Oxford argues that language teachers need to help students develop EQ and use it when interacting with other people. She underlines that EQ is particularly essential in intercultural contexts.

One of Oxford's (2016a) criticisms of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model is its mere focus on positive emotions, ignoring negative emotions. However, as Oxford (2016a) highlights, positive and negative emotions both exist in learning and even the most successful language learners can "experience anxiety and other negative emotions" during their language learning process (p. 24). Moreover, sometimes, negative emotions can facilitate learning (e.g., facilitating anxiety). Because of these reasons, the current study will examine not only positive (enjoyment), but also negative emotion (anxiety) that learners experience in their language learning journey.

According to Oxford (2016a), empathy is both emotional and cognitive, and it "includes such elements as compassion, sympathy, and caring, and it focuses not on oneself but on someone else." It is neither disposition nor trait, but it "is situated in given contexts and events." (p.27). For example, during a specific language activity, a learner may show empathy towards another learner who feels anxious, confused, or worried.

M for meaning and motivation: Positive psychology emphasizes that all individuals are active and goal-oriented, and that shows they are continually constructing meaning for themselves (Linley et al., 2011). Meaning refers to having a purpose, aim, goal, or mission in life, believing that life is significant and greater than the current moment, making sense of experience, understanding self-worth and worth of other things in life, and canalizing the

energy appropriately (Steger, 2011). According to Oxford (2016a), learners engage in activities that they consider meaningful and avoid activities that they find meaningless. Meaningful engagement subsumes “intrinsic motivation, flow, self-determination, and investment” (p. 25).

Dörnyei (2009) describes motivation as “cumulative arousal, or want, that people we aware of” (p. 209). According to Dörnyei and Ryan (2015), motivation is of vital importance in SLA as it “provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later driving force to sustain the long, often tedious learning process” (p. 72). They have emphasized that neither a good curriculum nor efficient teaching methods are sufficient for ensuring student achievement. Without motivation, even the most talented people would not be successful in attaining long-term goals. Therefore, motivation is a prerequisite for SLA.

P for perseverance: Perseverance means “an ongoing effort to accomplish something valuable despite problems, opposition, difficulties, or failure” (Oxford, 2016a, p. 28). It includes elements such as resilience and hope.

Resilience refers to “the process of adapting well” in the face of traumatic, problematic, or stressful situations, such as family, workplace, relationship, financial, or health problems. It means gathering oneself up after troublesome experiences. Resilience is not a trait that people possess or do not possess. Rather, it embodies “behaviors, thoughts, and actions which can be learned and developed in anyone” (American Psychological Association, 2018). According to Oxford (2016a), personal protective factors such as goal orientation, sense of meaning, self-efficacy, and positivity, as well as social/environmental factors such as positive institutions and compassionate relationships promote resilience (p.29).

Hope is not related to cognition or thought. Rather, it is affective and volitional. It influences emotion and will. Hope does not indicate an “unrealistic fantasy or wish.” Instead, it is “grounded in reality,” where desire is accompanied by a reasonable expectation. It is about believing in something to happen, which may be not certain yet possible (Clarke,

2003, p. 164). On the other hand, hopelessness is associated with “negative distortions of reality” and “poor outcomes” (Clarke, 2003, p.165). Studies have shown that people with high hopes were more energized, engaged, confident, goal-oriented, inspired, and less depressed in comparison to those with low hopes (Feldman & Snyder, 2000; Wroblewski & Snyder, 2005). Other studies alike had outlined that long-term hope (trait hope) was positively correlated with academic success even when factors such as self-esteem, intelligence, and previous academic performance were controlled (Oxford, 2016b).

A for agency and autonomy: Agency refers to the “capacity to act volitionally to affect outcomes” (Ryan & Irie, 2014, p. 113). According to Oxford (2016a), “the agentic person is the origin of his or her actions, has high aspirations and good problem-solving skills, enjoys well-being, and learns from failures” (p.30).

Autonomy is a concept referring to people taking more responsibility for their lives. Likewise, autonomous learning implies being more responsible for learning, both inside and outside of the class (Benson, 2011). These responsibilities include making decisions about learning, setting objectives, identifying the learning content and organizing the learning process, determining methods and techniques to be employed, monitoring the learning process, and evaluating learning outcomes (Holec, 1981). According to Little (2007), taking responsibility does not necessarily mean doing things by oneself but for oneself. Deci (1996) underlines the importance of autonomy, stating that it is one of three basic needs that people must meet to achieve a sense of self-actualization, while two others are competence and relatedness (as cited in Little, 2007).

T for time: According to Oxford (2016a), the time concept in the EMPATHICS model does not follow a path of “past-present-future”. Rather, it is “nonlinear and recursive” (p.30). Accordingly, future and past time can affect present behavior. Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2011) have indicated that people evaluate time differently: while positive people enjoy their previous positive experiences, negative people complain about their past negative

experiences. Oxford (2016a) states that these two different kinds of people can be associated with optimists and pessimists in various ways.

According to Zimbardo and Boyd's (1999) five-factor model, there are two types of past time perspectives named "past positive" perspectives, where people "focus nostalgically on good times" (p.41) and "past negative" perspectives characterized by "a generally negative, aversive view of the past" (p.25). There are also two types of present-time perspectives called as "present-hedonistic," which is "characterized by an orientation toward present enjoyment, pleasure, and excitement, without sacrifices today for rewards tomorrow" (p.33), and "present-fatalistic," which reflects "a fatalistic, helpless, and hopeless attitude toward the future and life" (p. 27). Lastly, there is a future-time perspective, which "is characterized by planning for and achievement of future goals" (p.33). Zimbardo (2002) indicates the value of a balanced time perspective where "past, present and future components blend and flexibly engage, depending on a situation's demands and our needs and values" (p.62). Many researchers cite the importance of the future time perspective, while a few value the past-positive time perspective as being the most important for the well-being and success of the people (Boniwell, 2011). Both of the present-time perspectives have been referred to as negative by the researchers. Thus, Oxford (2016a) addresses the question of whether there are any individuals or language learners who possess a present-positive perspective.

H for habits of mind: A habit of mind is a "composite of many skills, attitudes, cues, past experiences, and proclivities" (Costa & Kallick, 2008, p.17). A study has been conducted on the habits of mind of successful people in various fields. Sixteen habits of mind were listed, including finding humor, striving for accuracy, persisting, thinking flexibly, thinking about thinking, communicating with accuracy and precision, listening with understanding and empathy, and learning through multiple senses (Costa & Kallick, 2008). According to Oxford (2016a) "language learners who experience well-being" also utilize these habits of mind.

I for intelligences: This dimension refers to Multiple Intelligences. Sternberg's triarchic theory of intelligence sets forth that "successful intelligence is what helps the individual succeed within his or her own sociocultural context". The theory involves "three types of intelligence: practical, creative, and analytical," and people "can possess more than one of these intelligences" (as cited in Oxford, 2016a, p.32). Practical intelligence is a capability that is based on context and situation. Creative intelligence is related to using creativity and intuition to overcome difficult situations. Analytical intelligence is about cognitive skills such as information-processing and critical thinking. There is also Gardner's (2011) theory of multiple intelligences, which highlights various types of intelligences: "(a) musical, (b) logical-mathematical, (c) verbal-linguistic, (d) visual-spatial, (e) bodily-kinesthetic, (f) interpersonal (social), (g) intrapersonal (introspective), (h) existential (largely spiritual), and (i) naturalistic (ecological, environmental)" (as cited in Oxford, 2016b, p.54).

C for character strengths: This dimension refers to "six virtues and 24 character strengths related to those virtues" (Oxford, 2016a, p.33). Accordingly, the virtue of wisdom involves creativity, curiosity, love of learning, open-mindedness, and perspective; the virtue of courage includes authenticity, bravery, persistence, and zest; The virtue of humanity encompasses kindness, love, and social intelligence; the virtue of justice contains fairness, leadership, and teamwork; the virtue of temperance embraces forgiveness/mercy, modesty/humility, prudence, and self-regulation; and the virtue of transcendence consists of appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, and religiousness/spirituality (Oxford, 2016a, Seligman, 2011). Oxford (2016b) emphasizes that these virtues and character strengths can be applied in language learning.

S for self-factors, especially self-efficacy: Self-efficacy refers to "people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives." Self-efficacy beliefs are important as they "determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave" (Bandura, 1994, p. 71). In the context of language learning, L2 self-efficacy refers to language learners' beliefs in their

capability to (a) effectively learn a foreign language and achieve a desired level of proficiency, and (b) successfully execute specific tasks related to foreign language use. These beliefs encompass confidence in one's general ability to acquire linguistic skills and knowledge, as well as the capacity to apply those skills in practical, task-oriented situations, such as speaking, listening, reading, or writing in the target language. L2 self-efficacy is thus a multifaceted construct that influences motivation, persistence, and performance in the language learning process (Pinel & Csizér, 2013).

While positive psychology has found applications in diverse fields, its utilization in the context of teaching and learning second or foreign languages has been limited (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016). Numerous researchers have emphasized the potential of positive psychology as a promising area of research within SLA (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016; MacIntyre, 2016; Oxford, 2016a). As MacIntyre (2016) indicates, topics of positive psychology and SLA “fit like a glove” as the current pedagogy for language learning attaches importance not only to the development of effective communication skills but also to the personal development of the language learner.

Studies on positive psychology in the field of SLA have made it their primary agenda to focus on a strengths-based approach to empirical research, as opposed to a deficit-based approach (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Accordingly, there is currently a growing body of research interested in identifying the positive psychology factors that contribute to the success of language learners (Bai et al., 2020; Fathi et al., 2024; Teng et al., 2023). On the other hand, MacIntyre (2021) cautions against falling into what he terms the “tyranny of positive thinking” (p. 7), a concept that proponents of positive psychology should approach with caution. He argues that expecting universal positivity is unrealistic and advocates for a more balanced perspective that acknowledges both positive and negative experiences in research on SLA.

Among the positive psychology constructs, this study is going to focus on the interplay among positive and negative emotions (i.e., enjoyment and anxiety) and self-

efficacy and investigate if these constructs have any influence on the English language achievement of tertiary-level EFL learners. With this aim, this study employs two theoretical frameworks and brings them together to explain the relationships among these variables and their possible influence on ELA. These two frameworks pertinent to laying the groundwork for this study are the “*Broaden-and-Build Theory*” (Fredrickson, 2001; 2004) and the “*Social Cognitive Theory*” (Bandura, 1986; 1994; 1997).

Broaden and Build Theory

Positive psychology is grounded in Fredrickson’s (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions. This theory posits that certain positive emotions – involving joy, hope, contentment, love, and pride – have the ability to “broaden people’s momentary thought-action repertoires” and help them “build their enduring personal resources.” These personal resources include “physical, psychological, intellectual, and social resources” (p. 219). According to this theory, unlike negative emotions, which tend to narrow an individual’s focus, positive emotions encourage broadened thinking and the exploration of innovative and novel ideas. These widened mindsets offer indirect, lasting adaptive advantages, as they help build enduring personal resources that can be utilized later to handle future challenges (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2001; Fredrickson, 2004).

Conceptual studies have demonstrated that, positive emotions have *broadening and building power* (Fredrickson, 2001). To illustrate, a significant positive emotion, *joy*, expands thought patterns by inspiring the desire to play, test limits, and be creative (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988). Another distinct positive emotion, *interest*, fosters exploration, the pursuit of new experiences, and personal growth (Ryan & Deci, 2000). *Pride*, which arises from personal achievements, stimulates the desire to share these accomplishments and to aspire to greater ones in the future (Lewis, 1993). *Love* encourages ongoing cycles of play, exploration, and the enjoyment of shared experiences. Each of these thought-action tendencies - playing, exploring, savoring, or envisioning future achievements - broaden typical thinking or behavior patterns (Fredrickson, 2001).

Fredrickson (2001) contrasts the Broaden-and-Build Theory with earlier traditional theories based on specific action tendencies that are helpful for describing the function of negative emotions. Accordingly, a specific action tendency is the result of a psychological process that narrows people's momentary thought-action repertoire by suggesting an impulse to act in a particular way, such as escaping, attacking or expelling. Thus, "in a life-threatening situation, a narrowed thought-action repertoire promotes rapid and decisive action to achieve direct and immediate benefit" (p. 220).

Fredrickson and Branigan (2005) tested the broadening hypothesis by showing participants short, emotion-inducing film clips to elicit feelings of joy, contentment, fear, and anger, as well as a neutral clip for control. After each clip, participants were asked to imagine a situation evoking similar emotions and list what actions they would like to take. Results showed that those experiencing positive emotions (joy and contentment) identified broader possible actions compared to those experiencing negative emotions (fear and anger) and neutral control. Conversely, participants in the negative emotion conditions listed fewer actions than the neutral group. These findings support the Broaden-and-Build theory, demonstrating that positive emotions expand the range of thoughts and actions while negative emotions narrow them.

In addition to widening the thought-action repertoire, positive emotions also have an "undoing" effect on lingering negative emotions (Fredrickson, 2001). This is called the "*undoing hypothesis*" (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998; Fredrickson, Mancuso, et al., 2000). According to this hypothesis, by expanding people's immediate thought-action repertoire, positive emotions might function as antidotes for negative emotions' effects on the mind and body. Positive emotions do this by effectively reversing or undoing the readiness for specific actions associated with the negative emotion. One example of such specific actions is "increased cardiovascular activity" during negative emotions. In such conditions, positive emotions either undo or accelerate recovery from cardiovascular reactivity, bringing the body back to more moderate activation levels. In this way, positive emotions create a

physical state that supports the exploration of a wider range of thoughts and actions (Fredrickson, 2001).

Fredrickson et al. (2000) tested the “undoing hypothesis” in their research. Participants were given a time-pressured task to prepare a speech in just one minute, knowing it would be recorded and evaluated by their peers. This task caused anxiety, leading to increased heart rate, vasoconstriction, and elevated blood pressure. Afterward, participants were randomly assigned to watch one of these films: two that induced positive emotions (joy and contentment), a neutral control film, and a film inducing sadness. The positive-emotion and neutral films, when viewed at rest, caused no significant cardiovascular changes, while sadness was chosen as a comparison due to its lack of association with high-energy responses. According to the “undoing hypothesis,” those experiencing positive emotions after the anxiety would recover cardiovascular balance fastest. The study found that participants who viewed the positive-emotion films recovered quicker than those in the neutral condition, while those in the sadness condition had the slowest recovery. The data suggest that positive emotions, specifically joy and contentment, are effective in undoing the lingering cardiovascular effects of negative emotions.

Another contribution of positive emotions to human functioning is supporting the psychological resiliency of human beings. This hypothesis asserts that, by fostering positive emotional experiences at more opportune times to manage negative emotions, individuals may enhance their psychological well-being and potentially their physical health (Fredrickson, 2001). There is also empirical evidence that shows that positive emotions and experiences help people cope during stressful situations (Aspinwall, 2001; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000). Individuals who are more resilient may intuitively recognize and use the advantages of positive emotions. They typically bounce back from stressful situations faster and more efficiently, showing quicker cardiovascular recovery. The Broaden-and-Build theory asserts that this ability to bounce back might stem from their experiences of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001).

In an experimental study by Tugade and Fredrickson (2004), the relationship between psychological resilience and positive emotions was examined using a stressful speech preparation task designed to induce negative emotions. While resilience did not predict the levels of anxiety or the intensity of participants' cardiovascular responses, it was associated with higher reports of positive emotions. Even before the task, more resilient participants reported greater positive affect. During the task, although they had high levels of anxiety, they also reported higher levels of happiness and interest. Moreover, as suggested by Broaden-and-Build theory, resilient participants showed faster cardiovascular recovery after the task, and this quicker recovery was mediated by their positive emotions. The findings suggest that positive emotions play a key role in psychological resilience, helping individuals recover from stress more effectively. In this sense, resilient people may efficiently use the undoing effect of positive emotions to cope with negative experiences, either consciously or unconsciously.

To sum up, the traditional view of positive psychology proposes that positive emotional experiences guide momentary behavior. The Broaden-and-Build theory assigns a much more significant role to positive emotions: although momentary, they have more long-lasting effects. Positive emotions serve as catalysts for personal development and social bonding. By enhancing both individual and collective resources, they facilitate positive transformation in individuals, paving the way for a brighter future (Fredrickson, 2001).

In the context of SLA, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) built on Fredrickson's theory and proposed that emotions should be viewed along two distinct dimensions: positive-broadening and negative-narrowing. Accordingly, they assert that positive emotions help build resources by broadening language learners' perspectives, which allows them to acquire the language more effectively. Conversely, negative emotions tend to narrow the focus of the language learner and limit the amount of possible language input. They argued that language learners experience both positive and negative emotions simultaneously. By

drawing on the positive tenets of the broaden and build theory, they offered guidelines for balancing “positive-broadening” and “negative-narrowing” emotions in and outside of the language classroom. MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) stated that the literature has thoroughly documented the potentially detrimental impacts of negative emotions, particularly language anxiety. In contrast, the potentially beneficial impacts of positive emotions in the language learning process have not been extensively researched. They proposed that both positive and negative emotions be analyzed together, as they exist simultaneously and have distinct functions.

Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) underlined the fact that the studies on positive emotions so far have often been embedded within a broader study of language learner motivation. They argued that a more detailed exploration of positive emotions would offer new insights into language learning processes. According to Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), developments in positive psychology have created an impetus for further investigation of the role of positive emotions in language learning. They stated that the pioneer in theoretical development regarding positive emotions was Barbara Fredrickson, whose prominent study on Broaden-and-Build theory argued that there is a clear distinction between positive and negative emotions.

The construct of “*Foreign Language Enjoyment*” (FLE) was formulated by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) to encapsulate Fredrickson’s (2001) broadening-and-building theory of positive emotions. Dewaele and MacIntyre described enjoyment as “a complex emotion, capturing interacting dimensions of challenge and perceived ability that reflect human drive for success in the face of difficult tasks” (2016, p. 216). In search of a positive emotion to parallel the well-studied negative emotion of the “*Foreign Language Anxiety*” (FLA), they decided to use FLE. Conceptually, *enjoyment* has been a central element of Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) flow concept, which describes a positive state where challenges align with an individual’s skills, indicating that psychological needs are being fulfilled. Emotion theorists recognize joy as a fundamental emotion that arises from personal

success and social connections. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) points out that enjoyment involves completing tasks, maintaining concentration, having clear goals, and receiving immediate feedback. Language learners frequently express their levels of enjoyment regarding specific activities, classes, or courses. The language learning process typically involves two primary sources of enjoyment: building interpersonal relationships and progressing toward goals.

Csikszentmihalyi's earlier study (1975) highlights that when a task's difficulty greatly surpasses a person's skills, it can lead to anxiety. However, as skills align with the challenge, enjoyment, and flow can occur. Conversely, if skills far exceed the challenge, apathy and boredom may result. Therefore, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) indicated that understanding students' enjoyment and emotional states during courses is essential. Additionally, they recommended to examine both positive and negative emotions in the same study. Starting from this point of view, they examined both enjoyment and anxiety in their studies.

In their initial study, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) investigated whether Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) and Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) are "opposite ends of the same spectrum" or independent emotions. To assess FLE, they adapted the Interest/Enjoyment sub-scale from Ryan et al. (1990) to the foreign language context. For measuring FLA, they selected eight items from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) that reflect "physical symptoms of anxiety, nervousness, and lack of confidence" (Horwitz et al., 1986, as cited in Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p.243). Their findings provided statistical evidence supporting the idea that FLE and FLA are separate dimensions rather than two sides of the same coin.

The role of *self-efficacy* was not explicitly addressed by the Broaden-and-Build theory. However, some experimental studies have explored the role of general self-efficacy in the broadening and building process. In her major study, Schutte (2014) argued that self-efficacy, though under-researched in this context, could be an important factor within the theory, as it may help broaden an individual's perspective and build further resources.

Schutte (2014) hypothesized a model to examine the mediating role of general self-efficacy within the broaden and build spiral. First, the model proposed that an abbreviated version of Fredrickson et al.'s (2008) loving-kindness meditation protocol would increase positive affect, as well as the ratio of positive to negative affect, as described by Fredrickson and Losada (2005). Since the broaden and build model does not emphasize the importance of negative affect independently of positive affect, the models did not examine the impact of negative affect on its own. Second, it was hypothesized that a higher positive affect and a greater positive-to-negative affect ratio would lead to higher self-efficacy. It was further hypothesized that increased self-efficacy would result in improved life satisfaction and mental health.

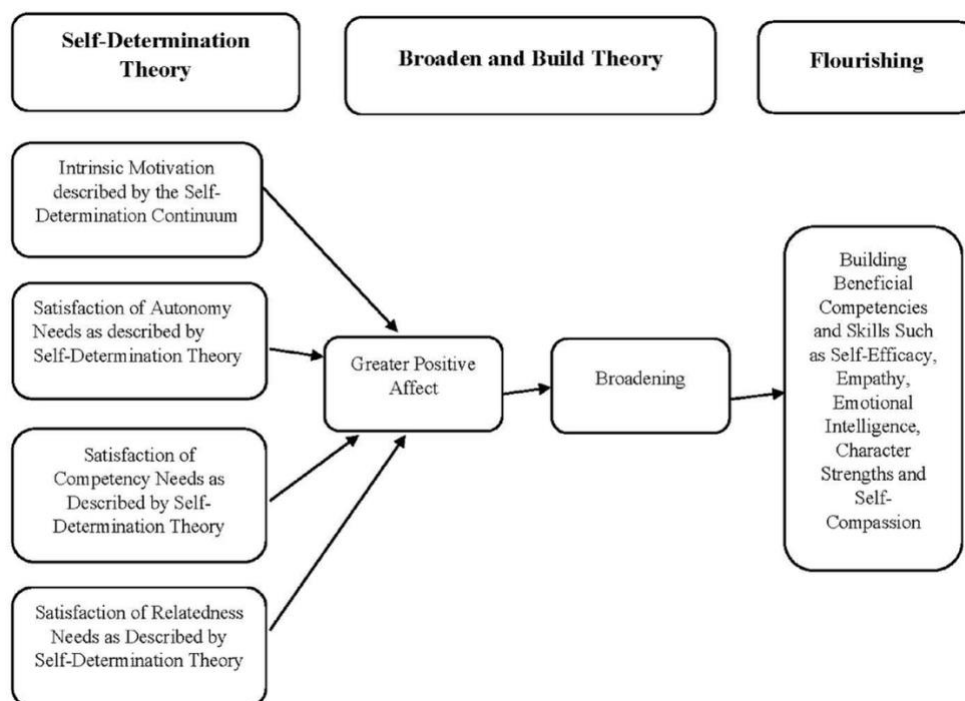
Schutte's study (2014) found that the loving-kindness meditation intervention led to significantly greater increases in positive affect and related positive-to-negative affect ratios, which in turn contributed to higher self-efficacy. This increased self-efficacy resulted in higher work satisfaction and better mental health. Schutte (2014) concluded that self-efficacy has a broadening effect and that boosting self-efficacy in specific areas can lead to building positive outcomes in those areas. Because the study's results partially replicated those of Fredrickson et al. (2008), it provided additional support for the Broaden-and-Build Theory.

In another seminal study, Stanley and Schutte (2023) introduced "the Macro Theory of Positive Functioning," which combines core principles from "the Self-Determination Theory" (SDT) and "the Broaden-and-Build Theory" (see Figure 2). This theory suggests that when the level of intrinsic motivation and satisfaction of basic needs (as outlined in SDT) are high, individuals experience a high level of positive affect, such as joy and contentment. According to the Broaden-and-Build Theory, increased positive affect broadens individuals' perspectives, encouraging them to engage more with opportunities and relationships, thus fostering cognitive and behavioral resources. These resources, in turn, support the development of positive traits central to positive psychology, such as self-

compassion, self-efficacy, empathy, emotional intelligence, and character strengths. Together, these traits contribute to what is considered *optimal functioning* or *flourishing*.

Figure 2

Model of the Macro Theory (Stanley & Schutte, 2023)



While such studies focus on the role of positive affect in general, its basic tenets can be applied to SLA contexts. The current study hypothesizes a model suggesting that English language enjoyment will have a broadening effect on learners' language learning self-efficacy, which, in turn, results in higher L2 achievement. Conversely, it also hypothesizes that English language anxiety will have a narrowing effect on learners' language learning self-efficacy, which will have a negative effect on L2 achievement.

Social Cognitive Theory

Integrating aspects from earlier theories and empirical studies in the social, cognitive, behavioral, and motivational domains, Bandura (1997) proposed "Social Cognitive Theory" (SCT) for understanding human functioning. Self-efficacy is the pre-eminent construct of Social Cognitive Theory. According to this theory, the self-efficacy belief of an individual is "a major basis of action" (1997, p.3). Bandura's (1997) central claim

regarding the role of self-efficacy beliefs is that “people’s level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true” (p. 2). Therefore, how people behave is often better predicted by the beliefs they have about their abilities than by what they can actually accomplish. It is because these perceptions of self-efficacy help determine what individuals do with their knowledge and skills and influence their motivation, effort, and ultimately their accomplishments (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 2002).

People play an active role in shaping their own psychosocial functioning through personal agency mechanisms. Among the various agency mechanisms, beliefs in self-efficacy are the most fundamental and widespread. Without the belief that they can achieve desired outcomes through their actions, people lack incentive to act. Consequently, belief in one’s self-efficacy is a key driver of action as individuals navigate their lives based on their self-efficacy beliefs. Perceived self-efficacy refers to an individual’s belief in her/his ability to plan and carry out the actions needed to achieve specific goals (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy beliefs have a wide range of impacts on individuals. To illustrate, these beliefs affect the choices people make, the amount of effort they invest in various tasks, how long they will endure when faced with challenges or failures, and their ability to bounce back from adversity, namely their “resilience.” Such beliefs also shape whether their thought patterns are self-constructive or self-defeating, how much stress or depression they experience when dealing with difficult situations, and ultimately, the level of achievements they realize. A strong belief in one’s ability to cope enhances resilience to adversity and reduces susceptibility to stress and depression during challenging situations (Bandura, 1997)

Self-efficacy beliefs significantly influence the paths individuals take in life by affecting their choices of activities and environments. Factors that impact choice behavior can have a lasting effect on personal development, as the social influences in chosen settings continue to foster specific skills, values, and interests long after the initial decision.

Therefore, by selecting and shaping their environments, individuals can influence their own development and future selves (Bandura, 2001).

In SCT, individuals are seen as active agents in shaping their life paths rather than passive recipients of experiences dictated by environmental factors. They actively engage with their experiences, using their sensory, motor, and cognitive systems as tools to achieve meaningful goals (Harré & Gillet, 1994). This agentic action not only influences brain development and functioning over time (Kolb & Whishaw, 1998) but emphasizes the importance of exploring and manipulating the environment rather than merely being exposed to stimuli. By regulating their motivations and the activities they engage in, individuals create the experiences that contribute to their neurobiological foundation for various skills, including social, symbolic, and psychomotor abilities (Bandura, 1999).

Bandura (1997, 1999) asserts that self-efficacy beliefs are shaped by four main sources of information. The first one is “mastery experiences”, which is the most influential and authentic source of self-efficacy. These experiences can be gained by addressing challenges in sequential and manageable steps. Accomplishments through effort and perseverance build a firm belief in one’s self-efficacy, reinforcing their belief in one’s capacity to succeed in future challenges. Conversely, failures can weaken this belief, particularly if these failures occur during the early stages of self-development. Furthermore, individuals who only experience easy accomplishments may become easily disheartened when faced with failures or setbacks. To cultivate a resilient sense of self-efficacy, it is essential to engage in experiences that involve overcoming challenges through persistent effort (Bandura, 1999).

The second factor for developing and reinforcing self-efficacy beliefs is through “vicarious experiences.” When individuals witness others achieving success through persistent effort, they begin to believe they can succeed as well (Bandura, 1999). Vicarious experiences are especially powerful when the observed person (a role model or peer) shares similar characteristics with the observer, such as age, skill level, or background.

These observations can positively influence their self-efficacy, particularly when direct mastery experiences are limited (Bandura, 1997). Competent role models can also enhance self-efficacy by conveying the knowledge and skills needed to manage/navigate environmental requirements. On the other hand, witnessing other's failure can lead to doubts about one's own ability to handle similar tasks, affecting self-efficacy negatively (Bandura, 1999).

"Social persuasion" is the third method for reinforcing the self-efficacy of individuals. It refers to the verbal and non-verbal encouragement, feedback, or communication that individuals receive from others regarding their abilities to succeed in specific tasks or challenges. Social persuasion can come from various sources, such as teachers, peers, or mentors (Bandura, 1997). Effective social persuaders do more than simply express faith in other's abilities. They also organize activities in a way that facilitates success. Additionally, they avoid placing individuals in situations where they are likely to encounter failure. When people are convinced that they possess the ability to succeed, they tend to put in more effort and demonstrate greater perseverance compared to when they have self-doubts and focus on their shortcomings in challenging situations (Bandura, 1999).

Lastly, physical and emotional states may have an impact on self-efficacy and performance. These internal states act as indicators that people use to assess their capability to perform a task. When individuals feel calm, focused, and physically fit, they are more likely to believe in their ability to succeed at a task. Conversely, high levels of stress, anxiety, fatigue, or emotional distress can undermine self-efficacy. For example, a person feeling anxious before public speaking may interpret this nervousness as a sign of inadequacy, which lowers their confidence in their speaking ability. These physical and emotional states are important because they influence how individuals perceive and interpret their own abilities (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, the fourth way to influence self-efficacy beliefs is to improve physical well-being, reduce negative emotions, and correct misinterpretations of bodily signals (Bandura, 1999).

While SCT does not focus extensively on specific positive emotions like *joy* or *enjoyment* in relation to self-efficacy, these emotions are implicit in the broader discussion of how positive emotional states can enhance self-efficacy beliefs. SCT emphasizes that positive emotional experiences, in general, contribute to stronger self-efficacy. When people experience positive emotions, they are more likely to feel confident in their abilities. Positive emotional states can increase motivation and resilience, making individuals more likely to persist in the face of difficulties. For example, someone who feels calm and confident before giving a presentation is more likely to believe they will perform well, boosting their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

SCT specifically addresses the reciprocal relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) describes anxiety as a feeling of anticipatory worry about potential negative events, often leading to apprehension and avoidance that can hinder performance in both daily and academic settings. Within SCT, an individual's perceived self-efficacy significantly influences anxiety levels. Those with higher self-efficacy are more likely to approach academic tasks with positive expectations, often turning them into favorable experiences. Conversely, those with weaker self-efficacy are more likely to become more anxious in specific situations. Thus, a lower self-efficacy triggers anxiety and reduces achievement (Bandura, 1986,1997).

On the other hand, anxiety can significantly undermine self-efficacy by influencing how individuals interpret their ability to perform tasks and handle challenges. People often perceive feelings of anxiety as indicators of personal inadequacy or a lack of competence. For instance, anxiety or tension before a challenging task may be seen as an indication of incompetence, reducing confidence in their ability to succeed. Additionally, anxiety manifests in physical symptoms like a racing heart or sweating, which individuals may misinterpret as evidence of their inability to cope with a task. In situations requiring mental or physical performance, these symptoms can further diminish self-efficacy. Anxiety can create a self-reinforcing cycle: low self-efficacy leads to greater anxiety when facing tasks,

and the anxiety, in turn, further decreases self-efficacy, particularly if it results in failure or avoidance behaviors (Bandura, 1997, 1999).

Positive psychologists (Maddux, 2011; Peterson, 2006) have adopted Bandura's social cognitive concept of self-efficacy. According to Maddux (2011), self-efficacy is "best understood in the context of social cognitive theory - an approach to understanding human cognition, action, motivation, and emotion," assuming that people are active shapers of their environments rather than simply passive reactors to them (p.3).

Maddux (2011) highlights five key areas in which self-efficacy plays a crucial role. First, self-efficacy is essential for psychological well-being. A sense of control over one's behavior, environment, and thoughts is central to happiness and psychological well-being. Those who seek therapy often report feeling a lack of control, and low self-efficacy is strongly linked to psychological challenges such as depression, anxiety, avoidance behaviors, substance abuse, and eating disorders. Individuals with low self-efficacy frequently feel incapable of managing important life domains or tackling difficult situations. Enhancing self-efficacy in therapy is vital for addressing these issues, as it equips individuals with strategies to overcome specific challenges.

Second, self-efficacy is critical for physical health. It plays a significant role in adopting and maintaining healthy behaviors, quitting harmful habits, and supporting changes that improve health. Self-efficacy also affects physiological processes such as the stress response and immune function, which, in turn, influence susceptibility to illness and disease progression (Maddux, 2011).

Third, self-efficacy beliefs significantly impact self-regulation by shaping goal-setting and influencing persistence and effort toward goal achievement. High self-efficacy encourages the setting of ambitious goals, fosters resilience when facing obstacles, and enables a problem-solving orientation rather than self-doubt. This confidence leads to better outcomes and a stronger sense of efficacy, while low self-efficacy can result in self-criticism and impede effective problem-solving (Maddux, 2011).

Fourth, Maddux (2011) notes that psychotherapy can effectively increase self-efficacy for essential behavioral and cognitive skills. Many therapeutic interventions use strategies based on five sources of self-efficacy: (1) *Performance experiences* provide concrete success experiences that build confidence, such as exposure therapy for phobias. (2) *Vicarious experiences* involve modeling, where observing others' successes can strengthen belief in one's abilities. (3) *Imagined experiences* involve mentally rehearsing success in difficult situations. (4) *Verbal persuasion* uses encouragement and cognitive restructuring to instill positive beliefs. (5) *Physiological and emotional states* aim to reduce emotional arousal (especially anxiety) through techniques, such as meditation, relaxation training, and biofeedback to improve self-efficacy and performance.

Finally, Maddux (2011) emphasizes the importance of *collective efficacy*. Positive psychology and social cognitive theory underscore the social dimension of self-efficacy, recognizing that individuals often rely on the strengths of others to achieve shared goals. Self-efficacy theory acknowledges that individuals cannot accomplish everything alone, which is reflected in the concept of collective efficacy—defined as “a group’s shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required for producing given levels of attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 477). Collective efficacy has wide-reaching significance: it improves academic outcomes, boosts team performance, and supports social change.

A strong sense of self-efficacy boosts personal well-being and promotes success in academic learning, as outlined by Bandura (1997). Individuals with high perceived efficacy exhibit greater cognitive resourcefulness and strategic flexibility, enabling them to set challenges and visualize success. In contrast, those with low efficacy often imagine failure, which undermines their performance. This cognitive framework affects their motivation; for instance, individuals who view themselves as capable attribute failures to insufficient effort rather than a lack of ability, thus fostering resilience and enhancing their achievement (Relich et al., 1986; Weiner, 1986). Moreover, high self-efficacy encourages individuals to

pursue challenging goals, invest effort, and persist despite obstacles, allowing them to view challenges as opportunities for growth. As a result, they are more likely to recover their confidence after setbacks, sustaining motivation and reducing vulnerability to stress and depression (Locke & Latham, 1990).

Since Bandura's introduction of the self-efficacy construct, research has demonstrated that self-efficacy beliefs significantly impact performance and success across various domains (Bond et al., 2001; Lane & Lane, 2001; Pajares & Miller, 1994; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Self-efficacy has shown particular significance in educational research, influencing academic achievement, explanations of success and failure, goal setting, memory, problem-solving, career development, teaching, and teacher education (Pajares, 2002). A substantial body of research highlights the positive relationships between self-efficacy beliefs and academic motivation, persistence, effort, and the use of learning strategies (Chase, 2001; Multon et al., 1991; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). In the literature, a large number of studies have found a strong positive correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement in various disciplines (Diseth, 2011; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005). Especially in psychology and education, self-efficacy has been shown to be a strong predictor of academic achievement (Chemers et al., 2001; Grigg et al., 2018; Hackett, 1985; Meier et al., 1984; Wilson & Narayan, 2016). Moreover, self-efficacy has consistently emerged as the strongest predictor of academic performance among other psychological constructs (Graham & Weiner, 1996; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Komarraju & Nadler, 2013; Mills et al., 2007; Pajares & Graham, 1999; Schunk, 1991).

Kata Csizér and Ildikó Piniel have made significant contributions to understanding self-efficacy in the SLA context, frequently integrating concepts from Social Cognitive Theory. Piniel and Csizér (2013) emphasize that self-efficacy is essential in language learning, as it directly and indirectly affects success and motivation. They reference research indicating that self-efficacy predicts learning success (Mills et al., 2007), influences

motivation, effort, and persistence (Zimmerman, 2000), and is negatively impacted by language anxiety (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Piniel and Csizér (2013) also highlight that the interconnectedness of motivation, cognition, and affect has regained attention as a focus of social cognitive research (Carver, 2006; Dai & Sternberg, 2004). Advocates of this approach argue that cognitive functioning occurs in context, making it more meaningful to study alongside motivation and emotion. In this light, Dörnyei (2010) suggests that research on language learners' mental processes and traits should consider motivation, cognition, and affect as parts of an interconnected framework.

Using Dörnyei's (2009) tripartite model of motivation-cognition-affect, Piniel and Csizér (2013) examined the relationship among language learning motivation, self-efficacy, and classroom anxiety. The self-efficacy scale used in their study was based on Bandura's conceptualizations and guidelines for constructing such measures (Bandura, 2006). Through structural equation modeling, they found that motivation, self-efficacy, and anxiety form a cyclical relationship. Motivated learning behavior positively impacts the language learning experience, which, in turn, affects self-efficacy. Self-efficacy influences facilitating anxiety positively, while it influences debilitating anxiety negatively. Then, this facilitating/debilitating anxiety influences motivated learning behavior. This cyclical model suggested that enhancing self-efficacy or reducing anxiety can create positive feedback loops, thereby boosting overall motivation and the learning experience. These insights highlighted the complex interplay between cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors in shaping language learning outcomes.

By adopting the basic principles of SCT, this study hypothesizes that English language self-efficacy of the learners will have a positive influence on their English language achievement. Moreover, English language enjoyment, a positive emotion, will have a positive influence on English language self-efficacy of the learners. Conversely, English language anxiety, a negative emotion, will have a negative influence on English language self-efficacy of the learners.

Empirical Studies on L2 Self-efficacy, Enjoyment, Anxiety, and Achievement

Studies on L2 Self-efficacy and L2 Achievement

L2 self-efficacy has been widely recognized as a critical factor influencing language learning success. Numerous studies across diverse EFL and ESL contexts have explored the relationship between L2 self-efficacy and language achievement, consistently demonstrating that higher self-efficacy is associated with improved L2 performance. The following section reviews empirical findings from various educational settings, emphasizing the predictive role of L2 self-efficacy in language learning outcomes.

In an Australian ESL university context, Phakiti et al. (2013) investigated the interrelations among L2 motivation, self-efficacy, personal values, self-regulation, and students' English language proficiency and academic achievement. The participants were ESL international students studying in the Foundation Studies programme. Correlation results suggested a strong interrelationship between motivation, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and achievement. Moreover, motivation, self-regulation, and self-efficacy significantly explained both English language proficiency and academic achievement.

In an Iranian EFL context, Goudarzi et al. (2014) examined the structural relationships among learners' English self-efficacy, metacognitive awareness, and English language test performance through SEM analysis. A total of 200 intermediate EFL learners from two foreign language institutes participated in the study. The results indicated that participants had high levels of English self-efficacy beliefs. Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between English self-efficacy, metacognitive awareness, and test performance. SEM analysis further indicated that English self-efficacy was the strongest direct predictor of learners' test performance. The findings also showed that metacognitive awareness was a significant positive predictor of Iranian EFL learners' English self-efficacy beliefs. However, metacognitive awareness did not directly predict L2 performance; instead, its effect on performance was mediated by self-efficacy.

In a Chinese secondary school EFL context, Chao et al. (2019) investigated the relationship between students' self-efficacy and self-concept in language learning and their academic achievement in English and Chinese. A total of 1,092 students participated in the study. The results indicated that students had a moderate level of self-efficacy in both English and Chinese learning. Additionally, self-efficacy in Chinese had a moderate correlation with Chinese achievement, while self-efficacy in English had a strong correlation with English achievement. Multiple regression analyses revealed that Chinese language self-efficacy and self-concept were significant predictors of Chinese language learning achievement. Likewise, English language self-efficacy and self-concept predicted both students' English and Chinese learning achievements. This finding provided preliminary evidence for the domain specificity of self-efficacy.

Karbakhsh and Ahmadi Safa (2020) explored the interrelations among Iranian EFL learners' basic psychological needs satisfaction, goal orientation, willingness to communicate (WTC), learning strategy use, self-efficacy, and ELA using a path analytic research design. A total of 506 Iranian undergraduate English students completed the relevant questionnaires. The correlation between self-efficacy and participants' L2 achievement was found to be significant, though small. Path analysis further demonstrated that L2 achievement was directly predicted by goal orientation, self-efficacy, and learning strategy use. Additionally, self-efficacy mediated the relationship between goal orientations and L2 achievement.

To estimate the average effect size of the relationship between self-efficacy and language proficiency, Wang and Sun (2020) conducted a meta-analysis. The effect sizes used in this study were all coefficients of determination. A meta-analysis of 493 effect sizes from 74 published journal articles, book chapters, and dissertations (1995–2019) examining the relationship between language learners' self-efficacy beliefs and their language proficiency revealed an average effect size ranging from small to medium. In the language domain, self-efficacy accounted for 15% of variance in general language proficiency, 13%

in receptive language proficiency (listening and reading), and 12% in productive language proficiency (speaking and writing). The study concluded that “the relationship between self-efficacy and language proficiency was stronger in East Asian and Middle Eastern cultures than in Western culture,” which “was also supported by social cognitive theories and previous empirical studies (e.g., Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 1996; Usher & Pajares, 2008; Wang & Bai, 2017),” (as cited in Wang & Sun, 2020, p.23).

In a Korean secondary school EFL context, Kim and Shin (2021) investigated whether English self-efficacy directly and indirectly influences ELA through the mediation of integrative motivation. The study involved 102 eighth-grade EFL learners in Korea. Correlation analysis indicated that English self-efficacy was positively and significantly associated with ELA at a moderate level. Regression analysis further revealed that both self-efficacy and integrative motivation positively predicted ELA. Moreover, path analysis demonstrated that learners’ self-efficacy influenced ELA both directly and indirectly through its effect on integrative motivation. Students with higher self-efficacy reported greater integrative motivation, which, in turn, was associated with higher English achievement. These findings highlight the crucial role of integrative motivation in mediating the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and English achievement in an EFL context.

In a Chinese university context, Ou and Yang (2022) examined the relationship between English self-efficacy beliefs and ELA among English major juniors. Results indicated that students exhibited a moderate level of English self-efficacy. Correlation analyses revealed a significant positive relationship between students’ English self-efficacy and their ELA. Furthermore, regression analysis demonstrated that students’ English self-efficacy beliefs significantly and directly predicted their ELA.

To enhance our understanding of self-efficacy and to advance theory and practice within the positive psychology framework in SLA, Goetze and Driver (2022) conducted a thorough meta-analysis examining the overall impact of self-efficacy on L2 achievement. They selected studies published in 1997 or later to encompass research that followed

Bandura's (1997) and Pajares's (1997) influential contributions regarding self-efficacy, as well as the rise of positive psychology. The study comprised 37 studies published between 1999 and 2019 across 15 different countries. The meta-analysis showed that the average correlation between L2 self-efficacy and achievement was $r = .47$, with self-efficacy explaining about 22% of the variance in learners' achievement, indicating a medium effect in SLA (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014).

From a longitudinal perspective, Young Kyo (2022) examined the development of English self-efficacy beliefs among South Korean EFL students. This large-scale study involved 4,501 secondary school students from 63 middle schools. The study explored (1) the malleability of L2 self-efficacy and (2) the extent to which self-efficacy growth factors influence L2 learning outcomes over three years of secondary education. Using a curve-of-factor model approach, Young Kyo (2022) found that students' English self-efficacy gradually increased over three years. These findings suggest that, like other cognitive-motivational constructs, self-efficacy is not a fixed trait but can be cultivated over time. Moreover, the study revealed that students' self-efficacy beliefs significantly predicted their classroom comprehension, engagement, and L2 achievement, even after controlling for prior academic attainment and socioeconomic status.

In an online English learning environment, Teng et al. (2023) examined the relationships among self-efficacy beliefs, metacognitive strategies, motivation, and their potential effects on achievement. The study included 590 Chinese university students enrolled in a remote English course. Data were collected through three surveys and English tests assessing grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening, and writing skills. The results indicated that students reported high levels of self-efficacy beliefs. Correlation analyses revealed a strong, significant association between self-efficacy beliefs and English learning achievement ($r = .567$). SEM analyses demonstrated that self-efficacy beliefs both directly and indirectly predicted online English learning achievement. Additionally, the findings

indicated that language learning motivation and metacognitive strategies mediated the impact of self-efficacy beliefs on achievement.

In an Iranian EFL context, Fathi et al. (2024) examined the predictive effects of growth mindset and English self-efficacy on L2 achievement. They also assessed the mediating role of L2 grit in the hypothesized model. The sample consisted of 379 intermediate learners enrolled in IELTS preparation courses at a large language center in Iran. SEM analysis revealed that students had a moderate level of English self-efficacy beliefs. In addition, English self-efficacy demonstrated a significant moderate positive correlation with ELA ($r = 0.478$). Moreover, English self-efficacy directly predicted ELA ($\beta = .295$). Furthermore, findings indicated that English self-efficacy indirectly predicted achievement through the mediation of L2 grit. Additionally, results showed that growth mindset indirectly predicted ELA through the mediation of English self-efficacy.

In the Turkish EFL context, a growing body of research examined L2 self-efficacy and its relationship with L2 achievement. For instance, Açikel (2011) investigated how language learning strategies and English self-efficacy beliefs predicted English language proficiency among 459 EFL students in a preparatory school at a private university in Ankara. Regression results indicated that both self-efficacy beliefs and language learning strategies significantly predicted L2 performance, with self-efficacy for receptive skills emerging as the strongest predictor.

Kırmızı (2015) explored the interrelations among academic self-concept, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and academic success among students enrolled in an English Language and Literature department. Results showed that students had a moderate level of English self-efficacy, which was moderately and positively correlated with academic performance. Regression analysis revealed that English self-efficacy was the only significant predictor of academic success.

In another study, Alymidin Kyzy (2016) examined the relationships among English self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, attributions (i.e., external factors, ability/interest, and

effort), and ELA among Turkish university-level EFL learners. Findings indicated that students exhibited high levels of English self-efficacy, which was moderately and positively correlated with ELA ($r = .36$). Regression analyses further showed that English self-efficacy was the strongest predictor of ELA, explaining 17% of the total variance, whereas academic self-efficacy did not significantly predict language learning achievement.

In an experimental study, Balci (2017) investigated the impact of learning-style-based activities on EFL students' reading comprehension skills and self-efficacy perceptions at a Turkish university. The study concluded that learning-style-based activities improved both reading comprehension skills and English self-efficacy perceptions. Additionally, a significant positive correlation was found between reading comprehension and English self-efficacy beliefs.

More recently, Zorlu and Ünver (2022) explored the relationships among English self-efficacy beliefs, self-regulatory learning strategies, and ELA among ninth-grade students. The study included a sample of 542 students from 10 different high schools. A correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive relationship between English self-efficacy beliefs and ELA ($r = .49$), whereas self-regulatory learning strategies showed a weaker positive correlation ($r = .20$). Both English self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulatory strategies significantly predicted English achievement, with English self-efficacy beliefs ($r^2 = .24$) emerging as a stronger predictor than self-regulatory strategies ($r^2 = .04$).

In a mixed-method study, Özdemir and Karafil (2023) examined the English self-efficacy beliefs of EFL students. Findings indicated that students had a moderate level of English self-efficacy and identified multiple factors influencing their self-efficacy beliefs. These included individual motivation, classroom environment, teacher support, peer encouragement, feedback, and technological resources. Students reported that being eager to learn a foreign language, receiving positive feedback from peers and instructors, interacting with successful classmates, enjoying the learning process, and using technology

enhanced their self-efficacy. Furthermore, speaking English with friends online and having supportive families were also cited as positive influences.

As evidenced by the literature, studies conducted both in Türkiye and globally reveal consistent patterns of medium to high L2 self-efficacy beliefs, their positive correlation with L2 achievement, and their significant predictive power in language learning outcomes.

Studies on L2 Enjoyment and L2 Achievement

With the integration of positive psychology into the SLA field, there has been increasing research on L2 enjoyment and its relationship with L2 achievement. Studies conducted in both global and Turkish contexts have consistently demonstrated that higher levels of enjoyment are associated with greater language achievement. The following section reviews empirical studies exploring the relationship between L2 enjoyment and language learning, highlighting its role in fostering a positive learning environment.

In their pioneering study, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) developed the 21-item Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (FLES) to measure Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE). The FLES captures various aspects of enjoyment in the foreign language classroom, including creativity, interest, fun, and a positive learning environment. It consists of positively phrased items such as “I enjoy my FL class,” “There is a positive environment in my FL class,” “The teacher is encouraging,” and “The peers are nice.” The study aimed to investigate whether L2 anxiety and L2 enjoyment are independent constructs and to examine their relationship. Data were collected from over 1,700 L2 learners across different countries and educational levels. T-test analysis revealed that participants experienced higher levels of enjoyment than anxiety in their L2 classes. Additionally, a moderate negative correlation between enjoyment and anxiety was found ($r = -.36$). Given the small shared variance and distinct score distributions, the authors concluded that enjoyment and anxiety are related but separate constructs rather than opposite ends of a single dimension. Thus, a lack of L2 enjoyment does not necessarily indicate high L2 anxiety, nor does the

absence of L2 anxiety guarantee the presence of enjoyment (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). This conclusion was further supported by qualitative analysis, which revealed that some L2 students experience both anxiety and enjoyment simultaneously.

In a follow-up study using the same dataset, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2016) conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on the 21-item FLES, identifying two distinct dimensions: "Private-FLE" and "Social-FLE." Private-FLE was associated with internal, personal reactions to language learning, including interest and intellectual engagement, as reflected in items such as "I don't get bored" and "I've learnt interesting things." In contrast, Social-FLE pertained to the role of social interactions in fostering enjoyment, encompassing elements such as peer support and a positive classroom atmosphere, as seen in items like "We form a tight group" and "We laugh a lot." Their findings reinforced the notion that FLE and FLCA are distinct but coexisting constructs, emphasizing the importance of balancing these emotional dimensions to optimize language learning experiences.

Expanding on the relationship between FLE and L2 achievement, Jin and Zhang (2018) examined the impact of English language enjoyment on Chinese high school students' English language achievement (ELA). Their path analysis revealed that L2 enjoyment had a direct and positive effect on achievement, suggesting that students who experience greater enjoyment in learning English are more likely to perform better academically. Similarly, Li (2020) investigated English enjoyment levels among Chinese high school students and found that learners generally experienced a moderate degree of enjoyment. Correlation analysis demonstrated positive relationships between students' enjoyment, perceived ELA, and actual ELA, while regression analyses indicated that enjoyment significantly influenced both perceived ($\beta = .338$) and actual achievement ($\beta = .147$).

Wei et al. (2019) extended this line of research to a middle school context, examining the mediating role of L2 enjoyment and the moderating role of the classroom environment in the relationship between L2 grit and L2 performance. Among 832 Chinese EFL students,

findings indicated that L2 grit significantly predicted both L2 enjoyment and performance, underscoring the interplay between persistence and positive emotions in language learning. Furthermore, even after controlling for the interaction between classroom environment and grit, L2 enjoyment remained a strong predictor of performance.

Beyond the Chinese context, Qi and Haladin (2022) investigated Chinese international students in Malaysia, exploring the interconnections among English language enjoyment, psychological well-being, and ELA. Their findings revealed a moderate positive correlation between English enjoyment and achievement ($r = .39$), as well as between psychological well-being and enjoyment ($r = .38$). Regression analyses further demonstrated that both English enjoyment and achievement directly influenced psychological well-being, with enjoyment serving as a mediator. This meant that the positive effect of high language competence on well-being was enhanced by English language enjoyment.

A broader perspective on the role of FLE in language learning was provided by Botes et al. (2022), who conducted a meta-analysis of 56 studies published between 2014 and 2022. Their analysis revealed a moderate negative correlation between L2 enjoyment and L2 anxiety ($r = -.31$), a strong positive correlation with WTC ($r = .48$), and moderate positive correlations with both L2 achievement ($r = .30$) and self-perceived L2 achievement ($r = .27$).

Most recently, Fathi and Hejazi (2024) examined L2 enjoyment among Iranian EFL learners, reporting high levels of enjoyment among participants. SEM analysis indicated that L2 enjoyment had a direct and positive effect on L2 achievement ($\beta = .394$). Moreover, enjoyment partially mediated the relationship between the ideal L2 self and L2 achievement, suggesting that learners who envision themselves as proficient language users are more likely to experience enjoyment, which in turn contributes to their academic success.

Studies on FLE in Türkiye have increased, particularly in recent years. The first study in this context was conducted by Uzun (2017), who examined both English language enjoyment and anxiety among Turkish EFL undergraduate students. The findings indicated

that participants had moderate levels of both enjoyment and anxiety. Moreover, a strong negative correlation between the two constructs was observed ($r_s = -.55$).

In a similar study, Özer (2020) detected that fifth-grade Turkish EFL students experience a high level of enjoyment and a moderate level of anxiety in English. In addition, a high and negative correlation was detected between these variables ($r = -.60$). What is more, regression analyses indicated that English language enjoyment predicted students' ELA ($\beta = .234$), yet sharing only 3% of the unique variance. On the other hand, English anxiety did not predict students' ELA.

Durmuş (2022) explored pre-service English language teachers' enjoyment of online speaking skills courses with 722 participants from 33 universities in Türkiye. The study found that the participants have a high level of L2 enjoyment and a moderate level of speaking anxiety. Also, a high and negative relationship between these constructs ($r = -.50$) was found. Similarly, Kaplan (2022) investigated Turkish university students' English language enjoyment. The participants were 150 tertiary EFL learners enrolled in a preparatory program in Türkiye. He found that the participants experienced a high level of enjoyment while they were learning English.

In a different study, Proietti Ergün and Ersöz Demirdağ (2022) examined the relationship between perceived levels of well-being, stress, and their effects on enjoyment when learning an additional language (i.e., Italian and French). Their findings suggested that multilingualism positively influences FLE. Additionally, well-being and stress coexists independently among learners, indicating that they are distinct constructs. Moreover, higher levels of well-being and lower levels of stress were associated with higher levels of FLE among Turkish university students.

Recently, Yeşilçınar and Erdemir (2023) investigated the sources of L2 enjoyment and anxiety among 305 Turkish EFL learners studying at preparatory schools in various state universities. Quantitative analysis indicated that students had high levels of L2 enjoyment and moderate levels of L2 anxiety. However, correlation analysis did not reveal

a significant relationship between these variables, leading the researchers to conclude that enjoyment and anxiety are distinct constructs for Turkish EFL learners. Furthermore, advanced students reported higher enjoyment levels than intermediate learners.

Lastly, Aydın and Denkci Akkaş (2023) examined L2 enjoyment among 609 Turkish EFL learners across different educational levels. The results indicated that more proficient learners experienced higher levels of enjoyment than their less proficient counterparts. These learners also reported more positive experiences, including quality study time, excitement, fun, and a sense of worth in class. They found foreign language learning more meaningful, experienced less boredom, and reported greater enjoyment in communication and supportive classroom environments.

Overall, findings from both global and Turkish studies converge on the notion that L2 learners experience moderate to high levels of L2 enjoyment. Moreover, L2 enjoyment has been generally negatively associated with L2 anxiety and positively associated with L2 achievement.

Studies on L2 Anxiety and L2 Achievement

Foreign language anxiety is one of the most widely studied affective factors in SLA research. Researchers have extensively examined its causes and consequences, particularly its impact on language learning outcomes. In recent years, L2 anxiety has also been reconsidered within the framework of positive psychology and investigated alongside positive emotions, such as enjoyment. Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated a negative relationship between L2 anxiety and L2 achievement. The following section reviews empirical findings from diverse educational settings, highlighting the role of L2 anxiety as a predictor of language learning performance.

In their seminal qualitative research, Yan and Horwitz (2008) investigated how L2 anxiety interacted with instructional and personal factors to affect students' L2 achievement. Participants were recruited from Chinese undergraduate EFL learners with high, medium,

and low levels of L2 anxiety. The study revealed that students' L2 anxiety is influenced by various interconnected factors. Regardless of their anxiety levels, students reported feeling anxious mostly during listening and speaking activities. Many students felt pressured and anxious due to perceived differences in English abilities compared to their peers, often feeling "uncomfortable" and "envious." This peer pressure sometimes motivated students to work harder. Students with a strong interest and motivation in learning English reported little or no anxiety, enabling them to study for extended periods without feeling pressured. Conversely, a lack of interest and motivation increased some students' anxiety levels, and in some cases, anxiety caused students to lose interest in learning English altogether. Some students' L2 anxiety hindered their classroom performance, leading to feelings of incapability, frustration, and anger. Teacher characteristics also played a significant role in shaping anxiety, with dynamic, humorous teachers fostering a supportive and relaxed classroom environment. Additionally, many participants expressed concerns about not having effective language learning strategies and felt that early guidance could have improved their success. Overall, the findings showed the complex relationships among anxiety, motivation, teacher characteristics, instructional practices, external influences, and L2 performance in the language learning process.

The study by Hewitt and Stephenson (2012) investigated how English anxiety levels impact Spanish students' English-speaking performance in a controlled exam setting. Findings confirmed a moderate negative correlation between higher anxiety levels and oral exam scores ($r = -.49$), reinforcing the notion that anxiety hinders learners' speaking ability. Qualitative findings emphasized that individual differences, such as students' confidence and perceptions of their abilities, played a significant role in how anxiety influenced performance. For example, a notable difference emerged in the strategies employed by the two groups: low-ability students relied heavily on memorization and translation techniques, while high-ability students did not mention such strategies. Additionally, attitudes towards anxiety differed significantly; low-ability students felt powerless to change their nervousness

and its negative impact on their performance, whereas high-ability students were more optimistic, with one even suggesting that the experience could help her become more comfortable speaking in public. Findings highlighted the importance of creating a supportive and less intimidating environment for oral assessments to mitigate the impact of anxiety and allow students to perform to the best of their abilities.

The study conducted by Salehi and Marefat (2014) examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety and test anxiety and whether they have an influence on L2 test performance. Participants were 200 EFL learners from a language institute in Iran. The findings revealed that there is a significant and negative relationship between EFL learners' test performance and foreign language anxiety ($r = -.22$); and test anxiety ($r = .18$, both with a small degree. The results also revealed a strong positive correlation between these two types of L2 anxiety ($r = .69$), indicating that students with higher anxiety in language classrooms also experience greater anxiety in language exams.

Lian and Budin (2014) investigated the relationship between students' English language anxiety and their oral English test achievement. 200 EFL students from a secondary school in Malaysia. The results indicated that the students have a moderate level of English language anxiety. Interestingly, the correlation analysis indicated that there was a moderate and positive relationship between students' English language anxiety and oral test scores.

In the Iranian EFL context, Amiri and Ghonsooly (2015) found that there is a negative relationship between learners' L2 anxiety and achievement at a moderate level ($r = -.348$). From the findings, students reported the highest levels of anxiety in situations requiring unprepared speaking, such as when asked to speak spontaneously in a language class or respond to unanticipated teacher questions. Additionally, they expressed significant concern about the potential consequences of failing their foreign language class. These results suggest that lack of preparation and fear of failure are key contributors to students' foreign language anxiety. To reduce foreign language anxiety, the study suggested creating

a supportive, relaxed classroom environment where students feel secure to express themselves.

In their mixed method study, Zheng and Cheng (2018) examined the relationships among students' L2 anxiety, cognitive test anxiety, and their L2 performance. The participants were 921 Chinese EFL university students. They found that the participants have a moderate level of L2 anxiety and cognitive test anxiety. Multiple regression analysis showed that students' test anxiety had a negative impact on students L2 performance, while their classroom anxiety was not a significant predictor. As a result of the qualitative analysis, students with higher self-confidence in their English abilities generally reported lower anxiety levels. Some participants reported experiencing some degree of anxiety in English classrooms, especially when called upon to answer questions they could not answer. A clear relationship emerged between students' language anxiety levels and their perceived competence in English. Students with lower perceived proficiency felt more anxious in classroom interactions, particularly during unexpected or challenging situations. Anxiety levels varied across language skills, with listening and speaking generally being more anxiety-inducing than writing or reading. Individual differences, such as proficiency levels, pronunciation challenges, and academic stakes, significantly influenced the degree of anxiety experienced.

Zhang (2019) conducted a meta-analysis to investigate the relationship between L2 anxiety and L2 performance. The analysis included 46 studies that were conducted after 1986, a year when Horwitz and her associates published their influential theory of FL anxiety. Based on the reported correlation coefficients, L2 anxiety was found to have a negative and moderate relationship with L2 performance ($r = -.34$). L2 listening anxiety had the strongest correlation with L2 listening performance. Both L2 reading anxiety and test anxiety had a weaker correlation with L2 performance. The anxiety and performance correlation remained stable across groups with different L2 proficiency levels, suggesting

that the role of FL anxiety should not be ignored regardless of the L2 learners' proficiency level.

Another significant meta-analysis was conducted by Teimouri et al. (2019) to examine the relationship between L2 anxiety and achievement. Their study included 97 studies published after Horwitz et al.'s (1986) seminal work on L2 anxiety. The results revealed a moderate negative correlation between L2 anxiety and L2 achievement ($r = -.36$), with L2 anxiety accounting for 13% of the variance in L2 achievement. Furthermore, the study found that the negative effects of anxiety on language achievement were more pronounced in younger learners, who may lack the necessary strategies and experience to manage anxiety effectively. As learners progress in their education, they develop metacognitive and affective strategies, along with increased language learning experience, which helps them better regulate anxiety. Additionally, anxiety had a stronger negative impact on listening than on speaking, likely due to the time constraints involved in processing spoken messages. In contrast, reading was the least affected, as learners could process text at their own pace. The study also highlighted that situation-specific anxieties had a greater impact on L2 performance than trait anxiety, reinforcing the growing focus on the contextual nature of anxiety in L2 research.

Similarly, Botes et al. (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of 66 studies to examine the relationship between FL classroom anxiety and achievement. Their analysis included only studies that employed the FLCAS developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). The results indicated a moderate negative correlation between L2 anxiety and achievement ($r = -.39$). Furthermore, L2 anxiety was found to be significantly and negatively correlated with achievement across all four language skills: "reading, writing, listening, and speaking."

Jugo (2020) examined the levels, sources, and causes of L2 anxiety among EFL students enrolled in teacher education programs, as well as its impact on their English proficiency. The study involved 242 students from a language learning institution in the Philippines. The findings indicated that the overall level of L2 anxiety among participants

was moderate. Speaking activities emerged as the primary source of high language anxiety, while writing activities, negative self-perception, and lack of comprehension were identified as moderate sources of anxiety. Correlation analysis revealed a strong negative relationship between overall L2 anxiety and English proficiency ($r = -.613$). However, regression analysis indicated that among all sources of anxiety, only speaking anxiety significantly predicted English proficiency.

Most recently, Dauba (2024) found that Filipino EFL learners exhibited moderate levels of English language classroom anxiety. Additionally, a weak negative correlation was identified between their English anxiety and achievement ($r = -.285$).

In the Turkish EFL context, Demirdaş and Bozdoğan (2013) investigated prep school students' English anxiety levels and their relationship with English achievement. The results indicated that students reported low levels of anxiety in their English lessons. Additionally, a moderate negative correlation was found between L2 anxiety and achievement. A similar study was conducted by Doğan and Tuncer (2016) with 683 EFL students enrolled in a preparatory class at a state university in Türkiye. They found that students experienced a medium level of L2 anxiety. Furthermore, they detected a small yet negative relationship between students' L2 anxiety levels and their L2 achievement. Likewise, Kızıltepe (2023) conducted a study with EFL learners at a prep school and observed that they experienced a moderate level of English classroom anxiety, with no significant differences across proficiency levels.

Ertem (2023) reviewed doctoral theses on L2 anxiety in Türkiye through document analysis, evaluating 14 theses that primarily involved university, high school, and secondary school students. The FLCAS was the most commonly used data collection tool, and the studies largely employed descriptive statistics, t-tests, ANOVA, and correlation analyses. More than half of the theses focused on the relationship between L2 anxiety and achievement, with six reporting a negative correlation and one indicating a positive correlation. Overall, higher levels of L2 anxiety corresponded to lower student success. The

studies also identified multiple factors contributing to L2 anxiety, including negative self-evaluation, fear of negative evaluation, peer comparisons, exam anxiety, fear of communication, and limited vocabulary knowledge. Teacher-related factors such as authority, error correction, and attitudes toward students were likewise noted as significant sources of anxiety. Additionally, the flipped classroom model appeared to reduce anxiety, whereas oral exams increased anxiety, especially among students with moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety.

Overall, the relevant research has consistently demonstrated a negative relationship between L2 anxiety and L2 achievement, with higher levels of L2 anxiety generally associated with lower language performance. However, the strength of this relationship varies across different studies and contexts.

Studies on Interrelations among L2 Self-efficacy, Enjoyment, Anxiety, and Achievement

One of the earliest studies to integrate language attitudes (including enjoyment, anxiety, interest, and motivation subscales), self-efficacy, motivational behavior, and L2 achievement among French language learners was Tremblay and Gardner's (1995) study. Their findings revealed that language attitudes directly influenced self-efficacy, which, in turn, affected motivational behavior and ultimately impacted language achievement. The study also highlighted that self-efficacy and expectancy of success were critical predictors of effort and persistence in language learning. Moreover, their results suggested that motivational processes were not independent of emotional states but deeply intertwined, shaping how L2 learners approached and persisted in their language-learning journey. Thus, their work provided a foundational framework for analyzing the complex relationships between emotions, cognitive appraisals, and motivational constructs in L2 learning.

Mills et al. (2006) examined the relationships among French language self-efficacy, anxiety, and proficiency among 95 university students enrolled in French courses in the US.

The findings indicated that students with higher self-efficacy in reading achieved higher reading proficiency scores. When controlling for reading self-efficacy, reading anxiety was not significantly related to reading proficiency. However, a negative association was observed between reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy, suggesting that greater confidence in reading abilities was linked to lower anxiety levels. These results highlighted the critical role of self-efficacy in language learning and its strong association with L2 proficiency.

Focusing on English writing, Chen and Lin (2009) investigated the relationship among writing anxiety, self-efficacy, and proficiency in a sample of 120 Taiwanese EFL university students. A statistically significant correlation between the writing test and writing self-efficacy was found ($r = .85$), and the writing test was negatively correlated with writing anxiety ($r = -.76$). Likewise, writing self-efficacy was negatively correlated with writing anxiety ($r = -.92$), all at a high level. Cluster analysis has shown that high achievers have high self-efficacy and low anxiety in English writing.

A similar study was conducted by Ghonsooly and Elahi (2010), who investigated English reading anxiety, self-efficacy, and proficiency among EFL students. The participants were 150 university students majoring in English literature in Iran. Correlation analysis revealed a significant and strong negative correlation between the students' reading self-efficacy and reading anxiety in English ($r = -.82$). Moreover, a significant and strong positive relationship was observed between self-efficacy and achievement in English reading ($r = .76$). T-test results indicated that learners with high English reading self-efficacy experienced lower levels of anxiety than those with low self-efficacy. Moreover, learners with high self-efficacy achieved higher scores in reading exams.

Using SEM analysis, Woodrow (2011) tested whether writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety in English had an influence on the English writing performance of EFL university students in China. The analysis showed that English writing self-efficacy had a direct and positive effect on English writing performance ($\beta = .43$). English writing anxiety,

on the other hand, did not have a direct influence on writing performance. Rather, it affected performance indirectly, with its strong, negative, and direct influence on self-efficacy ($\beta = .71$). Qualitative data revealed that students with high self-efficacy studied English for more hours per week, perceived themselves as hardworking, and were motivated by intrinsic factors such as interest and self-development. In contrast, highly anxious students reported fewer study hours, felt less diligent, and were primarily driven by external factors like university exams and, to some extent, communication with other cultures. Students with high self-efficacy demonstrated more positive learning attributes, including greater effort, intrinsic motivation, and lower susceptibility to external pressures.

Piniel and Csizér (2013) investigated the interrelations among L2 self-efficacy, anxiety, and motivation in the Hungarian secondary school EFL context. The research focused on how these variables interacted with and contributed to students' language learning outcomes. The findings demonstrated a cyclical relationship among these variables. The SEM analysis confirmed that motivated learner behavior enhanced language learning experiences, which, in turn, influenced self-efficacy. Then, self-efficacy had a direct and positive impact on facilitating anxiety and a negative impact on debilitating anxiety. This facilitating/debilitating anxiety, in turn, influenced motivation. Apart from its indirect effect mediated through anxiety, self-efficacy also directly influenced motivation. The study supported the dynamic and reciprocal nature of Dörnyei's (2009) "tripartite model of motivation, cognition, and affect" in SLA.

In a Spanish as a foreign language context, Torres and Turner (2016) investigated differences in students' Spanish self-efficacy and anxiety regarding skill-specific Spanish language tasks across beginner, intermediate, and advanced courses. Participants consisted of 206 students from Spanish classrooms in 12 universities. Students' levels of Spanish skill-specific anxiety and skill-specific self-efficacy resulted in statistically significant, moderate-to-large, negative correlations. Further analyses showed that students' ratings of Spanish language anxieties were not significantly different across

different levels. Conversely, students' Spanish self-efficacies varied significantly across course levels, with substantial growth observed as students progressed to intermediate and advanced courses. The study emphasized that foreign language educators should recognize that students at all levels experience anxiety across all language skills and prioritize creating a comfortable learning environment to reduce anxiety, boost self-efficacy, and promote their success.

The study by Medrano et al. (2016) examined how positive and negative emotional states influenced academic self-efficacy beliefs in college students. Using an experimental design, the researchers induced emotional states through a combination of movie clips and music, with emotional regulation difficulties considered as a moderating factor. The findings revealed that positive emotions increased academic self-efficacy, while negative emotions decreased it, particularly in students experiencing intense emotions or responding to atypical self-efficacy-related items. Moreover, the ability to manage emotions played a crucial role in this process, emphasizing the importance of emotional well-being in academic settings.

In a Chinese EFL context, Zhen et al. (2017) examined how the satisfaction of basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) in the English classroom influenced learning engagement, with self-efficacy and positive (i.e., enjoyment and pride) and negative emotions (i.e., anxiety, anger, and boredom) as mediators. The study included 605 EFL students from a junior middle school in China. Correlation analyses showed a moderate, positive relationship between positive emotions and self-efficacy ($r = .58$) and a low, negative relationship between negative emotions and self-efficacy ($r = -.26$). The SEM analysis revealed that satisfying basic psychological needs directly enhanced learning engagement and indirectly influenced it through two pathways. First, needs satisfaction boosted L2 self-efficacy, which strengthened L2 engagement. Second, it fostered positive emotions while reducing negative ones, further promoting engagement. Together, self-efficacy and emotions acted as key mechanisms linking psychological needs satisfaction to

active and persistent learning. L2 self-efficacy had a positive predictive impact on positive emotions and a negative predictive impact on negative emotions.

In different language learning contexts, Dewaele and Alfawzan (2018) investigated the relationship between L2 enjoyment and L2 anxiety with L2 achievement. Participants included 189 British pupils learning various foreign languages (Study 1) and 152 Saudi EFL learners (Study 2). In Study 1, correlation analysis revealed a moderate, positive relationship between L2 enjoyment and test scores and a moderate, negative relationship between L2 anxiety and test scores. In Study 2, correlation analysis showed that only the relationship between L2 enjoyment and test scores was significant, with a small effect size. The negative relationship between L2 anxiety and test scores did not reach significance. The study indicated that the positive relationship between L2 enjoyment and achievement was stronger than the negative relationship between L2 anxiety and achievement.

In a Korean as a foreign language context, Jee (2019) examined self-efficacy and anxiety in relation to the four language skills of intermediate-level Korean learners. Descriptive results indicated that the learners experienced a moderate level of Korean language anxiety across all skills. Similarly, they demonstrated a moderate level of Korean language self-efficacy. Additionally, L2 anxiety negatively correlated with L2 self-efficacy across the four skills. Regression analysis showed that speaking self-efficacy was the only significant negative predictor of L2 anxiety. The study concluded that language learners could experience both self-efficacy and anxiety simultaneously during their language-learning process.

Shih (2019) investigated the interplay among English language self-efficacy, anxiety, self-regulatory strategies, goal-setting, intended effort, and their predictive effects on ELA. A total of 356 EFL high school students in Taiwan participated in the study. The results indicated that L2 anxiety had a direct, negative, and strong impact on self-efficacy, self-regulatory strategies, goal-setting, and ELA. L2 self-efficacy exerted a direct and positive influence on intended effort and goal-setting among L2 learners. Additionally, as a

mediator of goal-setting, self-efficacy indirectly influenced learners' ELA and self-regulatory strategies.

Most relevant to the current study, Hung (2020) analyzed the effect of teacher emotional support on intrinsic motivation, mediated by L2 enjoyment, anxiety, and self-efficacy beliefs. The hypothesized model suggested that emotional support from English teachers would directly enhance students' L2 enjoyment and reduce their L2 anxiety. Subsequently, higher L2 enjoyment and lower L2 anxiety were expected to foster greater L2 self-efficacy, which, in turn, would increase intrinsic motivation to learn the language. The study included 1,464 EFL students from six public universities in China. Pearson correlation analysis revealed that intrinsic motivation was significantly and positively correlated with enjoyment, self-efficacy, and teacher emotional support but was negatively correlated with anxiety. Moreover, the correlation between self-efficacy and enjoyment was stronger than the correlation between self-efficacy and anxiety. A significant negative correlation was also found between enjoyment and anxiety. SEM analysis demonstrated that teacher emotional support positively predicted L2 enjoyment and negatively predicted L2 anxiety. Additionally, L2 enjoyment had a direct and positive impact on L2 self-efficacy, whereas L2 anxiety had a direct and negative impact on it. The results further showed that teacher emotional support, enjoyment, and self-efficacy were positive and direct predictors of intrinsic motivation, while anxiety was a negative and direct predictor. These findings highlighted the critical role of teacher emotional support in fostering positive emotions, reducing anxiety, and enhancing self-efficacy to promote intrinsic motivation in students.

Csizér et al. (2021) explored the interrelations among L2 self-efficacy, emotions (including enjoyment and anxiety), autonomy, and motivation among Hungarian secondary school EFL students. Using survey data, they found that participants demonstrated a high level of English self-efficacy across different language skills, a moderate level of English language enjoyment, and a moderate level of English language anxiety. Furthermore, they

identified a moderate, positive correlation between students' self-efficacy and enjoyment ($r = .332$) and a moderate, negative correlation between self-efficacy and anxiety ($r = -.454$).

In a Chinese middle school EFL context, Wang et al. (2023) examined the chain-mediating roles of L2 anxiety and self-efficacy between learning adaptability and academic engagement. The study identified two key mediating pathways. First, learning adaptability reduced L2 anxiety, which subsequently enhanced academic engagement. Second, learning adaptability increased L2 self-efficacy, which further fostered greater academic engagement. Additionally, a chain mediation effect was observed, where higher learner adaptability reduced L2 anxiety, which then boosted self-efficacy, ultimately leading to improved academic engagement. These findings suggested that enhancing learning adaptability and addressing psychological factors such as anxiety and self-efficacy could significantly improve students' academic engagement in English.

In a Korean EFL context, Gordon (2022) examined the interplay among Korean university students' English language enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement. Correlation analyses revealed that students' English grades were positively correlated with enjoyment ($Rho = .27$) and negatively correlated with anxiety ($Rho = -.30$). Moreover, a moderate, negative relationship was found between English enjoyment and anxiety ($Rho = -.36$). Regression analyses confirmed that English enjoyment had a positive and strong influence on EFL learners' achievement ($\beta = .81$), while English anxiety had a negative and strong influence on learners' English language achievement ($\beta = -.72$).

To examine the overall relationship between L2 anxiety and L2 self-efficacy, Zhou et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis incorporating 43 effect sizes from 37 studies. The results revealed a significant and strong negative association between L2 anxiety and self-efficacy ($r = -0.704$). Moderator analyses indicated that this relationship did not vary across school levels, L2 anxiety types, measures of L2 self-efficacy, language distance, gender, national income, publication year, or publication type, suggesting a robust and consistent negative relationship across diverse EFL and ESL contexts.

Derakhshan and Fathi (2024) investigated the interrelations among L2 enjoyment, L2 grit, online learning self-efficacy, and online learning engagement among Iranian EFL learners. SEM analysis indicated that L2 enjoyment had a direct and positive impact on both online learning self-efficacy and engagement. Additionally, online learning self-efficacy directly and positively influenced online learning engagement, suggesting that self-efficacy served as a mediator between enjoyment and engagement in online learning. Furthermore, the results showed that L2 grit had a direct and positive effect on online learning self-efficacy.

Csizér and Albert (2024) examined the relationships among emotions, motivation, and autonomy in the Hungarian EFL context. Descriptive analysis revealed that Hungarian secondary school EFL learners demonstrated fairly high levels of L2 enjoyment and self-efficacy, along with moderate levels of L2 anxiety. Correlation analyses showed that L2 anxiety had a small negative relationship with autonomy, motivation, and enjoyment, but a strong negative relationship with self-efficacy. Additionally, L2 enjoyment was positively and strongly correlated with autonomy, motivation, hope, and pride, and moderately correlated with self-efficacy. Moreover, L2 self-efficacy was highly and positively correlated with autonomy, motivation, hope, and pride, while negatively correlated with confusion and anxiety.

In the Turkish EFL context, Öztürk and Saydam (2014) explored the relationship between English writing self-efficacy and anxiety. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from 240 EFL students across eight universities in Turkey. The results revealed that students had a moderate level of L2 writing self-efficacy and anxiety, with a moderate negative correlation between the two constructs. The primary sources of L2 writing anxiety included limited vocabulary knowledge, difficulties in generating and organizing ideas, fear of negative evaluation, and unfamiliarity with the topic. As for L2 writing self-efficacy, key factors influencing it were linguistic knowledge, writing competence, and teacher-related aspects. While linguistic proficiency and writing skills

contributed to higher self-efficacy, teacher feedback and behavior played a crucial role, with supportive practices enhancing self-efficacy and negative experiences undermining it.

In a different study, Tuncer and Doğan (2015) examined the relationship between L2 anxiety and academic self-efficacy. The participants included 271 EFL learners from a preparatory school at a state university in Türkiye. They detected a positive but low correlation between academic self-efficacy and L2 classroom anxiety ($r = .215$). The researchers concluded that the students within the scope of the research did not experience anxiety at a level that would hinder their learning.

In another study, Doğan (2016) observed a significant negative correlation between L2 self-efficacy and L2 anxiety, although the correlation was small ($r = -.19$). Similarly, Mede and Karairmak (2017) found a strong negative correlation between these variables ($r = -.62$). Kutuk et al. (2022) also reported a significant negative relationship between English self-efficacy and anxiety ($r = -.57$).

Demir (2018) conducted a correlational study to examine the relationship between English language classroom anxiety, self-efficacy, and ELA. The participants consisted of 163 EFL students from a preparatory school at a Turkish university. Descriptive statistics revealed that the students had high levels of English self-efficacy beliefs in both productive and receptive skills, while their level of English anxiety was low. Correlational analysis indicated a significant, positive, and moderate relationship between self-efficacy in both receptive and productive skills and ELA. Additionally, a significant but weak negative correlation was found between anxiety and ELA. Furthermore, a significant, moderate, negative relationship was observed between self-efficacy beliefs and anxiety.

Yelgeç and Dağyar (2020) investigated the potential predictive effects of metacognitive awareness and L2 self-efficacy beliefs on L2 anxiety among middle school students. A total of 285 EFL students from a middle school in Türkiye participated in the study. Descriptive statistics revealed that the students had moderate levels of metacognitive awareness, L2 self-efficacy beliefs, and anxiety. Additionally, a significant negative

relationship was found between L2 self-efficacy and anxiety, with a moderate effect size ($r = -.45$). The researchers hypothesized that in a FL environment where students' self-efficacy beliefs are supported by metacognitive awareness, their L2 anxiety would decrease. This hypothesis was tested using SEM analysis, which showed that L2 self-efficacy had a direct and positive effect on metacognitive awareness. Furthermore, L2 self-efficacy strongly and negatively influenced L2 anxiety, although metacognitive awareness did not mediate this relationship.

Demir and Okyar (2021) conducted a path analytic study to investigate the interplay among English self-efficacy, enjoyment, WTC, and achievement. A total of 257 Turkish EFL university students participated in the study. Descriptive statistics revealed that the students had high level of L2 enjoyment and moderate level of L2 self-efficacy and WTC. Path analysis showed that L2 enjoyment and achievement had a direct and positive impact on L2 self-efficacy beliefs, which, in turn, had a direct and positive influence on students' WTC. Additionally, L2 enjoyment was found to be a significant predictor of ELA.

Özer and İspınar Akçayoğlu (2021) investigated the interrelations among English self-efficacy, anxiety, self-regulation, class attendance, and achievement. The participants consisted of 344 EFL learners enrolled in a preparatory school at a state university in Türkiye. The results revealed that the students had moderate levels of English self-efficacy and anxiety. The analysis showed a medium negative correlation between English self-efficacy and achievement, as well as a small positive correlation between self-efficacy and self-regulated learning. Linear regression analysis indicated that both L2 self-efficacy and anxiety were significant predictors of achievement. Notably, L2 self-efficacy emerged as the most significant positive predictor of EFL learners' achievement.

This body of research has synthesized key findings from both global and Turkish studies, highlighting the relationships among L2 self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement. While numerous studies have explored the relationships among L2 self-efficacy, anxiety, and achievement, relatively few have examined the connections between

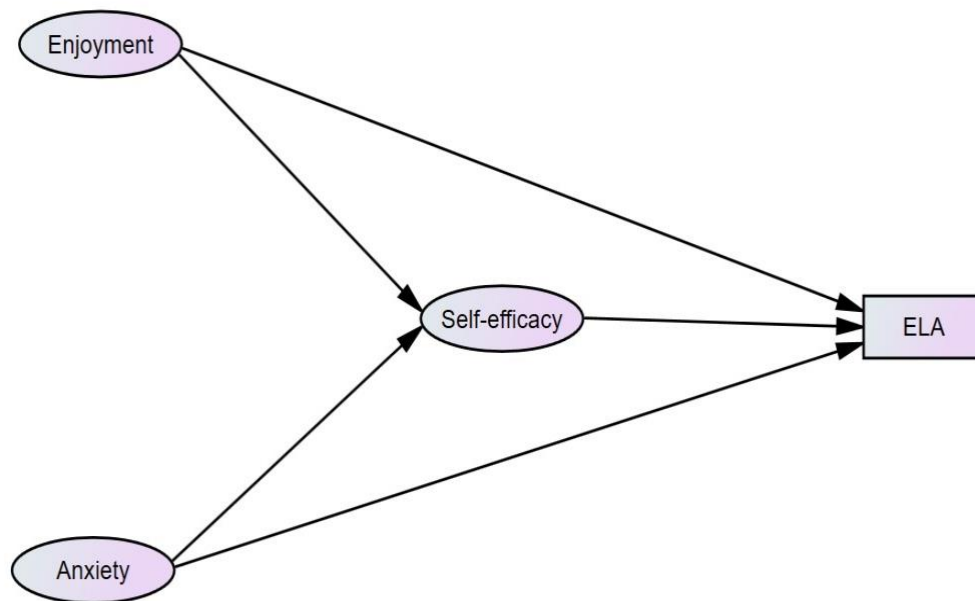
L2 self-efficacy, enjoyment, and achievement. Furthermore, studies investigating the interactions among L2 self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety, as well as their combined effect on L2 achievement, have remained limited. In the Turkish context, no study has yet examined these crucial variables together. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by investigating the interrelations among English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement.

The Hypothesized Model

Based on the theoretical considerations and the literature review, a model was hypothesized to examine the interrelations among English language self-efficacy, anxiety, enjoyment, and English language achievement (ELA) (see Figure 3).

The hypotheses are as follows:

1. English language self-efficacy has a positive direct effect on ELA.
2. English language enjoyment has a positive direct effect on ELA.
3. English language anxiety has a negative direct effect on ELA.
4. English language enjoyment has a positive direct effect on English language self-efficacy.
5. English language anxiety has a negative direct effect on English language self-efficacy.
6. English language enjoyment has a positive indirect effect on ELA, mediated by English language self-efficacy.
7. English language anxiety has a negative indirect effect on ELA, mediated by English language self-efficacy.

Figure 3*The Hypothesized Model*

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter begins with an explanation of the research design used in the study. Subsequently, a comprehensive account of the piloting process is provided. Following this, the methodological details of the main study are described in five separate chapters: research setting, participants, data collection procedure, data collection instruments, and data analysis techniques.

Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative methodology and a non-experimental correlational research design. Rooted in positivism, quantitative methodology employs objective measurements to collect numerical data, which are then utilized to address inquiries or examine predetermined hypotheses (Ary et al., 2009). Quantitative research includes “data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data, which is then analyzed primarily by statistical methods” (Dörnyei, 2007, p.24). In nonexperimental quantitative research, variables are identified, and relationships among them are explored without manipulating the variables. Nonexperimental research includes relationship studies such as “ex post facto and correlational research” (Ary et al., 2009, p. 26).

Correlational design enables researchers to analyze relationships among numerous variables within a single group, offering insights into the strength of relationships through correlational statistics (Fraenkel et al., 2011; Gall et al., 2007). Correlational research is mainly utilized for exploring relationships, evaluating consistency, making predictions, and testing hypotheses regarding expected relationships (Ary et al., 2009). Hence, employing a correlational design was deemed suitable for this study to investigate the relationship among English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety and achievement of EFL learners. The relationship among these variables was investigated using both Pearson

product-moment correlation analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. These procedures were explained in more detail in the data analysis section.

In correlational research, the selection or development of instruments must align closely with the constructs under scrutiny. Crucially, these instruments must exhibit satisfactory reliability and validity to ensure accurate measurement of the targeted constructs. Studies employing instruments with low validity and reliability are not likely to yield meaningful findings (Ary et al., 2009). Therefore, the validity and reliability of the Turkish versions of the scales were assessed through a pilot study, which was explained in detail in the following section.

Pilot Study

Prior to the main study, a pilot study was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the scales and to identify potential issues related to face validity, clarity, design, layout, and administration of the measurement tool. The following section details the pilot study procedure, describing the setting, participants, and the process of adapting the data collection tools into Turkish. Finally, it discusses the results of the validity and reliability assessment of the scales.

Setting and Participants of the Pilot Study

Data for the pilot study were collected from 390 students learning English as a Foreign language (EFL) at the preparatory school in a state university in Ankara, Türkiye. The participants of the pilot study were selected through a convenience sampling technique based on ease of access and volunteering. Demographic information about the participants is demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Pilot Study Participants

Variable		N	%
Nationality	TC	379	97.2

	Other	11	2.8
Gender	Female	212	54.4
	Male	168	43.1
	Prefer not to say	10	2.6
Age	18	55	14.1
	19	131	33.6
	20	135	34.6
	21	39	10.0
	22	16	4.1
	23-27	14	3.6
Prep Class Level	Beginner	14	3.6
	Elementary	28	7.2
	Intermediate	314	80.5
	Upper-intermediate	6	1.5
	Advanced	28	7.2
Total		390	100

As can be seen in Table 1, the majority of the pilot study participants (97.2%) were Turkish citizens. Among the participants, 212 of them were female (54.4%), 168 of them were male (43.1%), and 10 of them did not indicate their gender (2.6%). The mean age of the participants was 19.85 ($SD = 2.11$, minimum = 18; maximum = 27). The participants consisted of 14 (3.6%) beginner, 28 (7.2%) elementary, 314 (80.5%) intermediate, 6 (1.5%) upper-intermediate, and 28 (7.2%) advanced-level students.

Instruments

Data for the pilot study were collected through an online composite survey instrument. It consisted of a demographic information section and three scales, which were (1) "Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES)," (2) "Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES)," and (3) "Short Form of the Foreign Language

Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS).” Detailed information for each scale and its piloting process is provided below.

The Foreign Language Self-efficacy Scale (FLSES)

In order to determine the English self-efficacy beliefs of the participants, the FLSES was used. The FLSES was originally compiled by Pinieel and Csizér (2013), based on Bandura’s (2006) conceptualizations of the self-efficacy construct and adhering to his guidelines for constructing the instrument. It was designed to assess the self-efficacy beliefs of foreign language learners regarding the four language skills, both in and outside the classroom. Essentially, it aims to measure the extent to which learners perceive their ability to effectively perform language-related tasks. The scale consists of one dimension and nine items, and is scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the self-efficacy scale was reported to be very high ($\alpha = .92$) by Pinieel and Csizér (2013). All items on the scale are phrased positively. A higher score on the scale indicates a higher level of English self-efficacy. To ensure that all participants could understand the statements, the FLSES was translated and adapted into Turkish.

Adaptation of the FLSES into Turkish

To ensure accuracy between the English and Turkish versions of the scale, both translation and back-translation methods were employed (Brislin, 1980). Initially, the FLSES was translated into Turkish by the researcher and the advisor independently. The translators then collaborated to consolidate their versions into a single draft. This draft was subsequently back-translated into English by two bilingual ELT experts, fluent in Turkish and English, without consulting the original English scale, as suggested by Geisinger (1994). Following this, two additional ELT professionals compared the translations and merged them into one final version. Experts from the Turkish Education and Psychological Counseling and Guidance Departments then reviewed the original items and their Turkish translations. They were selected for their specialized knowledge, as they could provide

insights into the educational context and the psychological implications of the scale items. Based on their evaluations of grammatical accuracy, semantic fidelity, and content coherence, minor adjustments were made to the Turkish items. As a result of this process, the Turkish version retained fidelity to the original in terms of the number and sequence of the items, as well as the rating scale. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Turkish adaptation of the FLSES accurately reflects the original version.

Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES)

To determine participants' perceived levels of English language enjoyment, the Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES) was used. The long version of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (FLES), developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), consists of 21 items and was adapted from Ryan et al.'s (1990) interest-enjoyment sub-scale for the foreign language context. Later, the short form of FLES (S-FLES) was developed and validated by Botes et al. (2021). The S-FLES consists of 9 items divided into three sub-dimensions: teacher appreciation (3 items), personal enjoyment (3 items), and social enjoyment (3 items). These sub-dimensions are related to foreign language learning enjoyment, classroom atmosphere, peers, and the teacher (Botes et al., 2021, p. 859). The S-FLES uses a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All items are phrased positively. Higher scores on any sub-dimension indicate higher levels of that specific dimension, while higher overall scores reflect a greater level of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE). Botes et al. (2021) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of ($\alpha = .71$) for the S-FLES, indicating acceptable reliability. To ensure participants could fully understand the scale, the S-FLES was translated and adapted into Turkish.

Adaptation of the S-FLES into Turkish

To ensure no semantic loss between the English and Turkish versions of the scale, both translation and back-translation techniques were employed (Brislin, 1980). First, the term "foreign language" was replaced with "English," as suggested by the scale developers

(Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Next, two independent translations of the S-FLES into Turkish were conducted by the researcher and the advisor. In the second phase, the translators collaborated to reconcile the two translations into a single draft. This draft was then back-translated into English by two different ELT experts, both of whom were bilingual in Turkish and English. The back-translation was conducted without reference to the original English scale (Geisinger, 1994). Subsequently, two English Language Teaching professionals compared the back-translations and merged them into a single draft. The original scale items and their Turkish translations were then reviewed by two experts from the Turkish Education and Psychological Counseling and Guidance departments. These experts were asked to evaluate the extent to which the Turkish version aligned with the original version in terms of grammar, meaning, and content. Based on their feedback, necessary corrections were made to the Turkish items. These corrections involved minor changes, such as replacing words and phrases with more culturally appropriate synonyms in Turkish. The Turkish version preserved the original scale's structure, including the number of items, the order of the items, and the rating scale. As a result, it was concluded that the Turkish version of the S-FLES adequately reflected the original content. This adaptation process was also published as an article. For a more detailed account of the translation and adaptation procedures, refer to (Güneş & Uysal, 2025).

Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS)

The Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS) was used in the study to determine participants' perceived levels of English language anxiety. The original 33-item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), measures learners' anxiety during the foreign language learning process. Later, MacIntyre (1992) created a short version of the scale by reducing the number of items based on corrected item-total correlations. Recently, Botes et al. (2022) conducted a comprehensive psychometric evaluation of the S-FLCAS, including validity and reliability analyses. The S-FLCAS consists of 8 items and one dimension, scored on a 5-

point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Two of the items are reverse-coded. Botes et al. (2022) reported an internal consistency coefficient of $\alpha = .89$ for the scale. The adaptation of the S-FLCAS into Turkish and its psychometric evaluation were conducted by Karabulut (2023). The construct validity of the Turkish version was assessed through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses using two student samples in a higher education setting. Additionally, the scale was examined for internal consistency and reliability. Karabulut (2023) concluded that the Turkish version of the S-FLCAS is reliable and valid for use with tertiary Turkish EFL learners, reporting a Cronbach's alpha value of $\alpha = .89$.

Before administering the composite survey instrument to participants, feedback was sought from 10 English language learners, 5 English language instructors at the Prep School, and 5 faculty members from the English Language Education Department at a state university. The feedback focused on the content, clarity, design, and layout of the instrument. No issues were reported regarding the design and layout, and the participants confirmed that the statements in the scales were clear and understandable.

Data Collection Procedure of the Pilot Study

After the research design and the survey instrument obtained approval from the Ethics Committee of Hacettepe University, the Administration of the School of Foreign Languages (SoFL) in a state university in Ankara was contacted to obtain approval for data collection of the pilot study. The researcher provided details regarding the aim, research design, and data collection tool. Later, the researcher applied to the SoFL with approval from the ethics committee and the survey instrument, requesting permission to collect data from preparatory students. Upon completion of the necessary correspondences, the SoFL approved the administration of the survey. Then, the SoFL administration shared the online survey link with students via Google Docs. At the beginning of the survey, the purpose of the research was explained, and the voluntary and confidential nature of the study was

emphasized. Prior to starting the survey, individual consent was obtained from each participant.

Findings of the Pilot Study

In order to assess the construct validity and reliability of the Turkish versions of the scales, first, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted, followed by the calculation of Cronbach's alpha value. The results are presented in detail below.

Preliminary Analysis of the FLSES

Before conducting CFA and reliability analysis of the Turkish form of the FLSES, data were primarily evaluated in terms of missing values and normality assumptions. Accordingly, while no missing values were detected, it was observed that the kurtosis and skewness coefficients met the assumptions of normal distribution (Skewness= -.328, Kurtosis= .422). As George and Mallery (2010) indicate, kurtosis and skewness value between ± 1.0 can be considered excellent for most psychometric purposes. Apart from this, the mean score, 5% trimmed mean score, and median score are nearly the same, which is also an indicator of normal distribution (*See Appendix-D for the test of normality results of the FLSES*).

To further validate the results of normal data distribution, Histograms and Normal Q-Q Plots were checked. According to the Histogram, scores seem to be reasonably normally distributed as it has the shape of a normal curve. This is also substantiated by the Normal Q-Q Plot, where the observed value for each score is plotted against the expected value from the normal distribution. As Pallant (2011) indicates, a reasonably straight line shows a normal distribution (*See Appendix-D for Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plots of FLSES*).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the FLSES

In order to test the construct validity of the 1-factor and 9-item FLSES on tertiary Turkish EFL students, CFA was performed by using the AMOS 23.0 package program. Estimation was made using the maximum likelihood (ML) method.

As a result of the analysis, a value of $\chi^2 = 106.52$ ($df = 25$, $p < .001$) was obtained regarding the structure of the one-factor scale consisting of 9 items. In general, the chi-square value is expected to be insignificant, but this value is very sensitive to the sample size and can often become significant in large sample groups (Awang, 2014; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Gerbing & Anderson, 1985). Alternatively, it is suggested that statistics be calculated by dividing the chi-square value by the degrees of freedom (Hoe, 2008; Kline, 1994). In this study, this value was found to be ($\chi^2/df = 3.88$). A value of 5 or less indicates that the model has an acceptable goodness of fit (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Şimşek, 2007). In this respect, the value obtained was important evidence that the model was acceptable. In addition, GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), RMR (Root Mean Square Residual), and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) fit indexes were calculated. In general, GFI, AGFI, and CFI values of .90 and above, RMSEA value below .08, and RMR value below .08 indicate a good fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2013; Dimitrov, 2012; Kline, 1998; Şimşek, 2007). Some researchers suggest that GFI and AGFI values above .85 are also acceptable (Awang, 2014; Schermelleh-Engel & Moosbrugger, 2003). In this study, the calculated values were as follows: GFI = .95, AGFI = .90, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMR = .029, and RMSEA = .062. These results demonstrate that the 1-factor FLSES, consisting of 9 items, fits well with the sample to which it was applied. The factor loadings of the 1-factor model of the FLSES ranged between .66 and .85. As the factor loadings are above the cut-off point (.32), they are considered statistically significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) (*See Appendix-D for the path diagram of FLSES*).

Reliability Analysis of the FLSES

In order to evaluate internal consistency, which is “the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute” (Pallant, 2011, p. 6), Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was calculated. This statistic indicates the average correlation among all the items comprising the scale (Pallant, 2011). While a Cronbach’s

coefficient alpha above .70 is generally considered acceptable (Büyüköztürk, 2009; Özdamar, 2004), higher values indicate greater reliability (Pallant, 2011). The Cronbach's alpha value of the Turkish version of the FLSES is found to be $\alpha = .89$, indicating a very high level of reliability. In sum, the psychometric properties of FLSES can be considered acceptable, indicating that the scale is reliable and valid for use with Turkish EFL students studying at the university.

Preliminary Analysis of the S-FLES

Before conducting CFA and reliability analysis of the Turkish form of S-FLES, data were primarily assessed in terms of missing values and normality assumptions. Accordingly, no missing values were detected, and it was observed that the kurtosis and skewness coefficients met the assumptions of normal distribution (Skewness= -.440, Kurtosis= .104). Apart from this, the mean score, 5% trimmed mean score, and median score are nearly the same, which is also an indicator of normal distribution (*See Appendix-E for the test of normality results of the S-FLES*).

To further validate the results of normal data distribution, Histograms and Normal Q-Q Plots were checked. According to the Histogram, scores seem to be reasonably normally distributed as it has the shape of a normal curve. This is also substantiated by the Normal Q-Q Plot as there is a reasonably straight line (*See Appendix-E for Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plots of S-FLES*).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the S-FLES

In order to determine whether the 3-factor and 9-item S-FLES fit well with the sample data, CFA was performed. Accordingly, the fit indices were found to be $\chi^2/df = 2.58$, GFI= .97, AGFI= .94, CFI= .98, TLI= .97, RMR= .032, RMSEA= .064. Since the calculated values are compatible with the values recommended by the researchers (Byrne, 2013; Dimitrov, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Thompson, 2000), it can be concluded that the 3-factor S-FLES with 9 items fits very well with the sample it was tested on. The factor loadings of

the 3-factor model of the S-FLES varied from .59 to .94 (See *Appendix-E for the path diagram of FLSES*).

Reliability Analysis of the S-FLES

In order to check the internal consistency of S-FLES, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. Accordingly, Cronbach's alpha value for the whole scale was found to be $\alpha = .89$, which shows that the scale has a high reliability. Likewise, Teacher Appreciation, Personal Enjoyment, and Social Enjoyment sub-dimensions indicate high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of .91, .75, and .84 respectively. Overall, the psychometric properties of the S-FLES affirm that it is valid and reliable for use with Turkish EFL students at the tertiary level.

Preliminary Analysis of the S-FLCAS

Although Karabulut (2023) conducted the validity and reliability calculations for the Turkish form of S-FLCAS, it is deemed appropriate to replicate these analyses using a different sample, as also suggested in Karabulut's study. To accomplish this, CFA and reliability analysis were carried out, respectively. Before the analyses, the data were primarily evaluated in terms of missing values and normality assumptions.

Accordingly, while no missing values were detected, it was observed that the kurtosis and skewness coefficients met the assumptions of normal distribution (Skewness = .055, Kurtosis = -.505). Apart from this, the mean score, 5% trimmed mean score, and median score are nearly the same, indicating a normal distribution (See *Appendix-F for test of normality results of the S-FLCAS*).

Additionally, Histograms and Normal Q-Q Plots were examined. According to the Histogram, scores seem to be reasonably normally distributed as it has the shape of a normal curve. Likewise, in the Normal Q-Q Plot, the observed value for each score is plotted against the expected value from the normal distribution, showing a normal distribution (See *Appendix-F for Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plots of S-FLCAS*).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the S-FLCAS

So as to find out whether the 1-factor and 8-item S-FLCAS fit well with the sample data, CFA was conducted. Accordingly, the fit indices were calculated as $\chi^2/df = 3.81$, GFI = .95, AGFI = .92, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMR = .056, RMSEA = .068. Thus, it can be concluded that the 1-factor S-FLCAS consisting of 8 items fits perfectly well with the sample considering the recommended values (Byrne, 2013; Dimitrov, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Thompson, 2000). The factor loadings of the 1-factor model of the S-FLCAS varied from .49 to .87 (See Appendix-F for the path diagram of FLCAS).

Reliability Analysis of the S-FLCAS

In order to evaluate the internal consistency of S-FLCAS, Cronbach's alpha value was calculated, which was found to be fairly high ($\alpha = .86$). To conclude, the psychometric properties of the S-FLCAS support its reliability and validity for use with Turkish EFL students at the university level.

Main Study

Aim of the Study

The current study aims to (1) examine the perceived level of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety among the tertiary-level Turkish EFL students and (2) explore interrelations among these variables and their potential predictive effects on the students' English language achievement. Within this purpose, this study seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the tertiary-level Turkish EFL students' perceived levels of:
 - a. English language self-efficacy
 - b. English language enjoyment
 - c. English language anxiety
2. Are there significant correlations between the students' perceived levels of:

- a. English language self-efficacy and achievement?
 - b. English language enjoyment and achievement?
 - c. English language anxiety and achievement?
 - d. English language self-efficacy and enjoyment?
 - e. English language self-efficacy and anxiety?
3. To what extent is the hypothesized model appropriate for explaining the interrelations among the EFL students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement? Specifically:
- a. Does English language self-efficacy have a direct effect on English language achievement?
 - b. Does English language enjoyment have a direct effect on English language achievement?
 - c. Does English language anxiety have a direct effect on English language achievement?
 - d. Does English language enjoyment have a direct effect on English language self-efficacy?
 - e. Does English language anxiety have a direct effect on English language self-efficacy?
 - f. Does English language enjoyment have an indirect effect on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy?
 - g. Does English language anxiety have an indirect effect on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy?

Research Setting

The main study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages (SoFL) at a state university located in Ankara, Türkiye. The SoFL has a Preparatory Education Program which provides English language education for its students who could not succeed in the Foreign Language Proficiency Exam before their education in their departments.

The English Preparatory Program (EPP) offers both optional and compulsory English courses to students. Students who are obliged to attend EPP and who could not get sufficient scores from the English Exemption Exam held at the beginning of the academic year, as well as those who enrolled in the optional EPP, are placed into the appropriate proficiency levels (e.g., beginner, elementary, intermediate) based on their proficiency test scores from the English Placement Test.

The goals of the EPP are as follows:

- to create suitable conditions for students to acquire the language knowledge and skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) they will need in academic studies,
- to provide students with the necessary basic knowledge and skills to continue their language learning after completing the English preparatory program,
- to equip students with the skills needed to express themselves and engage in information exchange in various contexts where English is used as a means of communication (e.g., work, social settings),
- to impart competence in using English as a tool for accessing and disseminating information,
- to guide students in acquiring the necessary study skills to organize their language learning efforts.

Within the EPP, students receive various educational programs and assessment practices aligned with the academic goals of their university programs. To achieve its

objectives, the program offers 25 hours of language instruction per week over two fourteen-week semesters each academic year, focusing on developing students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

Throughout each level, students undergo two midterms per semester, assessing reading, writing, listening, speaking skills, and grammar. Additionally, ongoing assessments, including unannounced quizzes, speaking assessments, writing assignments, presentations, and portfolio evaluations, are conducted to monitor students' progress. Towards the end of each semester, a comprehensive English proficiency exam is administered. To advance to the next level, students must meet attendance requirements and earn a minimum of 65 out of 100 points in all course assessments. Those who do not meet these criteria must take the placement exam again and repeat the course.

In the current study, students' English language achievement (ELA) is one of the key variables, measured by the grade point average of the English grades they received in the first semester. To calculate students' end-of-semester English Grade Point Average (GPA), the School of Foreign Languages (SoFL) applies the percentage rates outlined in Table 2.

Table 2

Percentage Rates for Assessing the Students' English GPA

Exams	Points	Content	Percentage rates
I. Mid-term exam	100 points	grammar, reading, writing, listening, speaking	15%
II. Mid-term exam	100 points	grammar, reading, writing, listening, speaking	15%
Process evaluation	100 points	quizzes, presentations, assignments, portfolio studies	30%
English proficiency exam	100 points	grammar, reading, writing, listening, speaking	40%
Total			100%

Participants

For the main study, data were gathered from 471 EFL students enrolled in the English Preparatory Program (EPP) at a state university in Ankara, Türkiye. Participants were selected using convenience sampling, a non-probability method. This approach was based on practical criteria such as geographical proximity, accessibility, availability at specific times, and willingness to volunteer (Dörnyei, 2007).

The majority of participants have recently graduated from high school and were admitted to university based on their exam scores from the “*Higher Education Institutions Exam*” (abbreviated as YKS), which is a nationwide university entrance exam in Türkiye. Therefore, most students studying in the EPP are in their first year of university. Detailed demographic information of the participants is provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Demographic Information of the Main Study Participants

Variables		N	%
Nationality	TC	451	95.8
	Other	20	4.2
Gender	Female	255	54.1
	Male	205	43.5
	Not indicated	11	2.3
Age	17	5	1.1
	18	134	28.5
	19	145	30.8
	20	106	22.5
	21	29	6.1
	22	20	4.2
	23	10	2.1
	24	8	1.7
	25-39	14	3

Prep Class Level	Beginner	65	13.8
	Elementary	85	18
	Pre-intermediate	109	23.2
	Intermediate	143	30.4
	Upper-intermediate	45	10
	Advanced	24	5.1
GPA	81-100	161	34.2
	61-80	239	50.7
	41-60	57	12.1
	21-40	6	1.3
	0-20	2	0.4
	Not indicated	6	1.3
Total		471	100

As depicted in Table 3, the majority of participants were Turkish citizens (95.8%), with only a small percentage (4.2%) from other nationalities. Gender distribution was relatively balanced, with females comprising 54.1% of participants, males 43.5%, and a small portion (2.3%) choosing not to disclose their gender. The mean age of participants was 19.76 ($SD= 3.01$), indicating a predominantly young group. Participants exhibited varying levels of English proficiency, with the majority falling within the pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. The inclusion of students across different proficiency levels is crucial for providing a comprehensive understanding of the situation. Analysis of students' first-semester English GPA revealed that a significant majority achieved high grades, with a mean GPA of 75.66 ($SD= 13.57$, minimum=14, maximum=100). Only a small portion of (1.3%) of the students did not indicate their GPA.

Data Collection Procedure

In the data collection process, the researcher first contacted the School of Foreign Languages (SoFL) administration at a state university in Ankara. The researcher provided

information about the study's objectives, research design, and data collection tools. A formal request, along with the survey instrument and the ethics committee approval document, was then submitted to the SoFL to seek authorization for data collection from preparatory students.

After completing the necessary correspondence, the SoFL granted permission for the survey administration. The SoFL administration subsequently shared the online survey link with students via Google Docs. At the beginning of the survey, the research purpose was explained, and the voluntary and confidential nature of participation was emphasized. Additionally, individual consent was obtained from each student, confirming their agreement to participate in the survey. The study adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring that participants' rights and confidentiality were protected throughout the research process.

Data Collection Tools

Since the three scales applied to the students in the pilot study were found to be valid and reliable as a result of the analyses, these scales were utilized in the main study. Accordingly, the 26-item composite survey instrument for the main study consisted of two main parts. The first part asked for demographic information about the participants' nationality, gender, age, prep class level, and their first-semester English GPA. The second part involved Turkish versions of the scales, which were (1) 9-item "*Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES)*" (2) 9-item "*Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES)*" and (3) 8-item "*Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS)*." Detailed information about the scales is presented below.

The Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES)

The Turkish adaptation of the Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES) was used to measure participants' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy. Originally developed by Piniel and Csizér (2013) based on Bandura's (2006) conceptualizations of

self-efficacy, the FLSES aims to assess the self-efficacy beliefs of foreign language learners across the four language skills, both inside and outside the classroom.

The FLSES consists of 1 dimension and 9 items. Participants respond to statements on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). All items are phrased positively; therefore, higher scores on the scale indicate higher levels of English self-efficacy beliefs.

Piniel and Csizér (2013) reported the following fit indices for the FLSES: $\chi^2/df= 1.45$, RMSEA= .044, SRMR= .023, GFI= .97, CFI= .99, and NFI= .97, indicating an excellent model fit. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale was also reported to be fairly high ($\alpha = .92$).

For this study, the FLSES was translated and adapted into Turkish (refer to the pilot study section for further details). The fit indices obtained from the CFA of the Turkish version were as follows: $\chi^2/df= 3.88$, RMSEA= .062, GFI= .95, AGFI= .90, CFI= .96, TLI= .95, and RMR= .029. These results indicate that the Turkish version of the FLSES fits the sample well, with factor loadings ranging between .66 and .85. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Turkish FLSES was calculated as $\alpha= .89$, indicating a very high level of internal consistency (see Appendix-A for the English and Turkish versions of the FLSES).

Short form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES)

The Turkish adaptation of the Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES) was employed to measure participants' perceived levels of English language enjoyment. Originally, the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (FLES) was developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) through an adaptation of Ryan et al.'s (1990) interest-enjoyment sub-scale to the foreign language domain. The FLES comprised 21 items. Subsequently, Botes et al. (2021) developed and validated a shortened version known as the Short Form of FLES (S-FLES).

The S-FLES consists of 9 items divided into three sub-dimensions: teacher appreciation (3 items), personal enjoyment (3 items), and social enjoyment (3 items). These sub-dimensions are related to personal language learning enjoyment, classroom environment, peer interactions, and teacher rapport (Botes et al., 2021, p. 859). Respondents rate their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), with all items positively phrased. Higher scores on any sub-dimension indicate greater enjoyment in that dimension, while a higher overall scale score reflects higher levels of English language enjoyment.

Botes et al. (2021) assessed the fitness of the S-FLES model and reported the following indices: $\chi^2/df = 3.72$, RMSEA = .059, CFI = .97, and TLI = .96, indicating a good model fit. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the entire scale was $\alpha = .81$, while the coefficients for its sub-dimensions—teacher appreciation, personal enjoyment, and social enjoyment—were .91, .71, and .79, respectively (Botes et al., 2021).

In this study, the S-FLES was translated and adapted into Turkish (refer to the pilot study section for further details). CFA of the Turkish version yielded the following fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.58$, RMSEA = .064, GFI = .97, AGFI = .94, CFI = .98, TLI = .97, and RMR = .032, indicating a robust fit of the 9-item, 3-factor S-FLES to the sample. Factor loadings ranged between .74 and .94. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the overall scale was calculated as .89, while the coefficients for its sub-dimensions—teacher appreciation, personal enjoyment, and social enjoyment—were .91, .75, and .84, respectively, demonstrating strong internal consistency (see Appendix-B for the English and Turkish versions of the S-FLES).

Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS)

To determine participants' perceived levels of English language anxiety, the Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS) was employed in this study. The original 33-item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), assesses learners' anxiety during the foreign language learning

process. Later, MacIntyre (1992) created a shortened version of the scale by reducing the number of items based on corrected item-total correlations. Recently, Botes et al. (2022) conducted a comprehensive psychometric evaluation of the S-FLCAS, including validity and reliability analyses. They found that a one-factor, 8-item structure demonstrated a good fit to the data (CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .078, SRMR = .040). Botes et al. (2022) also reported a high level of internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$).

The adaptation of the S-FLCAS into Turkish and its psychometric evaluation, based on validity and reliability analyses, were conducted by Karabulut (2023). The findings indicated that the Turkish version of the S-FLCAS is reliable and valid, showing acceptable model fit indices (CFI= .95, TLI= .93, RMSEA= .047, SRMR= .041), with a Cronbach's alpha value of $\alpha = .89$. Like the original version, the Turkish form of the S-FLCAS consists of a single dimension and 8 items, with two items reverse-coded. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher total scores indicate higher levels of English language anxiety among students.

In the pilot study, CFA of the S-FLCAS yielded good fit results ($\chi^2/df = 3.81$, GFI = .95, AGFI = .92, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMR = .056, RMSEA = .068), with a high Cronbach's alpha value of $\alpha = .86$. Thus, it can be concluded that the Turkish version of the S-FLCAS demonstrates strong validity and reliability for use with tertiary Turkish EFL learners (see Appendix-C for the English and Turkish versions of the S-FLCAS).

Table 4

The Scales Utilized in the Current Study

The scales	Number of items
1. "Foreign Language Self-efficacy Scale (FLSES)"	9
2. "Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES)"	9
3. "Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S- FLCAS)"	8

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis techniques were utilized for the study. For the first research question, “What are the tertiary-level Turkish EFL students’ perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety?” descriptive statistics were calculated with the help of IBM SPSS (“Statistical Package for the Social Sciences”) 23.0 software.

For the second research question, “Are there significant correlations between the students’ perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement?”, “Pearson product-moment correlation analysis” was conducted using IBM SPSS 23.0 software.

For the third research question, “To what extent is the hypothesized model appropriate for explaining the interrelations among the EFL students’ perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement?” “Structural Equation Modeling” (SEM) analysis was conducted by using AMOS 23.0 statistical program.

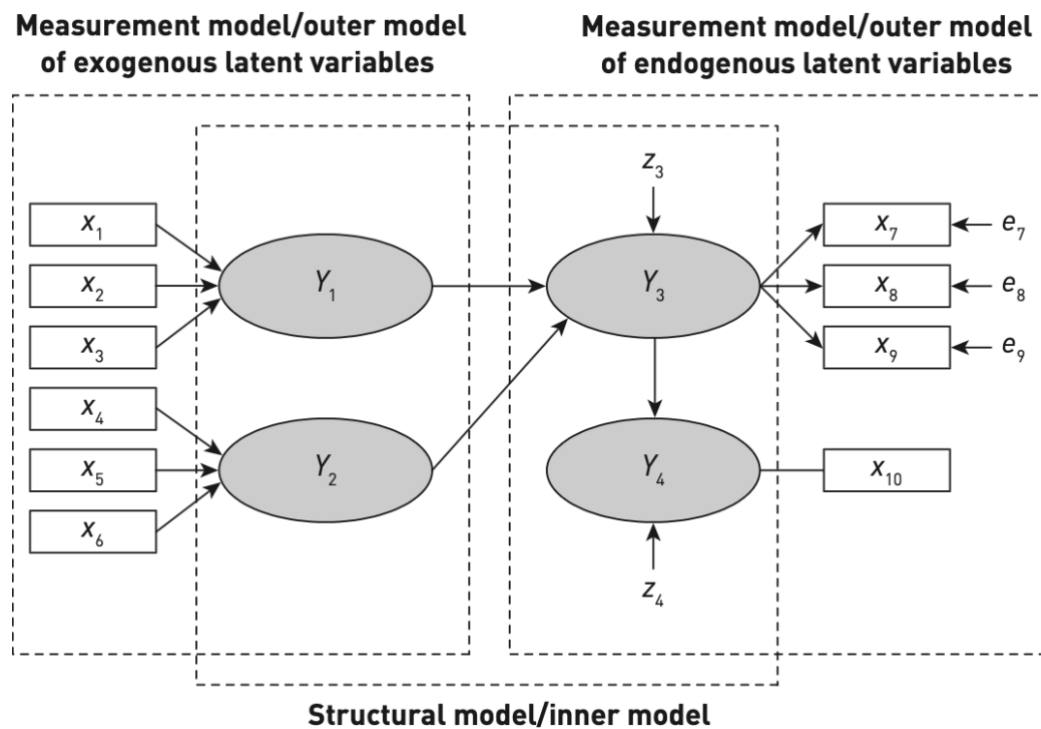
SEM is an advanced quantitative method. Brown (2015) outlines that employing advanced quantitative methods in L2 research is beneficial for (1) achieving more accurate measurements, (2) thinking beyond conventional null hypothesis significance testing, (3) abstaining from multiple comparisons problem, (4) increasing the statistical robustness of the study, (5) enlarging the research perspective, (6) making research analyses more closely aligned with the way people think, (7) decreasing the redundancy (8) increasing types of variables (9) achieving more flexibility in the analyses, and (10) addressing multiple levels of analyses concurrently.

Unlike univariate or bivariate analysis, SEM is a multivariate analysis method that employs statistical techniques to analyze multiple variables simultaneously (Hair et al., 2022). SEM is a complex data analysis technique that explores and possibly confirm causation among more than two variables (Fraenkel et al., 2011). It “combines confirmatory

factor analysis and path analysis to test both a measurement model and a structural model” (Ary et al., 2009, p. 364). A visual diagram illustrating the measurement and structural models in SEM is provided in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Measurement and Structural Model in SEM (Hair et al., 2022)



In SEM, there can be many dependent variables (DVs) and many independent variables (IVs). These variables can be directly observed or latent variables. SEM is used to identify the relationships among a variety of variables. SEM technique “evaluates whether the model provides a reasonable fit to the data and the contribution of each of the IVs to the DVs” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p.26). SEM is a confirmatory technique rather than an exploratory one. Thus, SEM cannot be conducted “without prior knowledge of, hypotheses about, potential relationships among variables. This is perhaps the largest difference between SEM and other techniques... and one of its greatest strengths. Planning, driven by theory, is essential to any SEM analysis” (Ullman, 2007, p. 682).

While traditional multivariate methods lack the capability to evaluate or account for measurement errors, SEM offers explicit estimations of these error variances. Unlike

methods such as regression or the general linear model, which assume no errors in the independent variables, SEM acknowledges and addresses errors in both explanatory and dependent variables. Ignoring such errors with traditional methods can result in significant inaccuracies, particularly when errors are substantial. SEM analyses prevent these errors and ensure more accurate results (Byrne, 2010, p.3). When the phenomena under investigation are intricate and multifaceted, SEM stands out as the sole analysis method that enables comprehensive and simultaneous testing of all the relationships involved (Ullman, 2013, p.684). Given these highly favorable attributes, SEM was utilized in this study to address the third research question.

Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter focuses on presenting the findings of the data analysis. The findings for each research question are presented below.

Findings of the Research Question 1

RQ-1: What are the tertiary-level Turkish EFL students' perceived levels of

- a. English language self-efficacy
- b. English language enjoyment
- c. English language anxiety

To explore the participants' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety, descriptive statistics of mean scores (*M*) and standard deviations (*SD*) were calculated. For interpreting the results, the mean scores were categorized into three groups using the following formula:

$$formula = \frac{maximum\ mean\ score\ (5.00) - minimum\ mean\ score\ (1.00)}{number\ of\ categories\ (3)}$$

Accordingly, mean scores ranging from 1.00 to 2.33 were evaluated as low, those from 2.34 to 3.67 as moderate, and those from 3.68 to 5.00 as high.

RQ-1a. In order to determine the students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, the mean scores of each item in the FLSES, along with the total FLSES score, were calculated. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive Results of the FLSES

FLSES items	Mean	SD
1- "I am confident that I can do the speaking tasks in the EFL class"	3.90	1.054
2- "I am confident that I can do the reading tasks in the EFL class"	4.25	.970

3- "I am confident that I can do the writing tasks in the EFL class"	3.98	1.054
4- "I am confident that I can do the listening tasks in the EFL class"	3.94	1.045
5- "I am confident that I can understand what is said in English in the EFL class"	4.24	.926
6- "I am confident that I can answer questions in English in the EFL class"	4.03	.971
7- "I am confident that I can understand what is said in English outside the classroom"	4.02	.989
8- "I am confident that I can understand what I read in English outside the classroom"	4.04	.948
9- "I am confident that I can express myself in writing in English outside the classroom"	3.96	1.046
Total FLSES	4.04	.798

Note: 1.00 – 2.33= low; 2.34 – 3.67= moderate; 3.68 – 5.00= high

As depicted in Table 5, the students exhibit a high level of English self-efficacy beliefs. When the statements are examined separately, it becomes evident that students hold the highest level of self-efficacy towards English reading activities in the class ($M= 4.25$, $SD= .970$). Similarly, they express confidence in their ability to comprehend English reading material outside the class ($M= 4.04$, $SD= .948$). Likewise, students are highly confident that they can understand what is said in English in the class ($M= 4.24$, $SD= .926$) and outside the class ($M= 4.02$, $SD= .989$). What is more, the students have a high level of self-efficacy toward answering questions in English ($M= 4.03$, $SD= .971$). The students are confident that they can do the writing tasks in EFL class ($M= 3.98$, $SD= 1.054$) and express themselves in writing in English outside the classroom ($M= 3.96$, $SD= 1.046$). The students also indicate their confidence in their ability to do listening tasks in the EFL classroom ($M= 3.94$, $SD= 1.045$). Lastly, the students feel themselves less competent in performing speaking activities in class ($M= 3.90$, $SD= 1.054$). Overall, the students demonstrate a high level of self-efficacy across all statements in the English self-efficacy scale.

RQ-1b. To ascertain participants' perceived levels of English language enjoyment, the means of the factors in the S-FLES and their items, along with the total S-FLES score, were calculated. The results are depicted in Table 6.

Table 6

Descriptive Results of the S-FLES

S-FLES factors and items	Mean	SD
<i>In the English language class,</i>		
1- "The teacher is encouraging"	4.21	1.059
2- "The teacher is friendly"	4.42	.977
3- "The teacher is supportive"	4.45	.941
<i>Teacher appreciation factor</i>	4.36	.901
4- "I enjoy it"	4.00	1.112
5- "I've learned interesting things"	4.09	1.018
6- "I am proud of my accomplishments"	4.00	1.088
<i>Personal enjoyment factor</i>	4.03	.903
7- "We form a tight group"	3.89	1.173
8- "We laugh a lot"	3.95	1.100
9- "We have common 'legends,' such as running jokes"	3.74	1.238
<i>Social enjoyment factor</i>	3.86	.996
Total S-FLES	4.09	.811

Note: 1.00 – 2.33= low; 2.34 – 3.67= moderate; 3.68 – 5.00= high

As shown in Table 6, the students possess a high level of English language enjoyment ($M= 4.09$, $SD= .811$). When the means of the statements are examined, it can be seen that the students are strongly agree that their English teacher is supportive ($M= 4.45$, $SD= .941$), friendly ($M= 4.42$, $SD= .977$), and encouraging ($M= 4.21$, $SD= 1.059$). Therefore, the "teacher appreciation factor" holds the highest mean value among others ($M= 4.36$, $SD= .901$). Additionally, the students indicate a pretty high level of personal enjoyment ($M= 4.03$, $SD= .903$). The students enjoy the English lesson ($M= 4.00$, $SD= 1.112$), find it informative ($M= 4.09$, $SD= 1.018$), and feel proud of their accomplishments in

the English classroom ($M= 4.00$, $SD= 1.088$). Lastly, the students report a high level of social enjoyment ($M= 3.86$, $SD= .996$). They laugh a lot ($M= 3.95$, $SD= 1.100$), form a tight-knit group ($M= 3.89$, $SD= 1.173$), and share common and enjoyable experiences in the English class ($M= 3.74$, $SD= 1.238$).

RQ-1c. In order to explore participants' perceived English language anxiety levels, the means of each item in the S-FLCAS along with the total S-FLCAS score were calculated. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Descriptive Results of the S-FLCAS

S-FLCAS items	Mean	SD
1- "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class"	3.54	1.318
2- "I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do"	2.92	1.301
3- "I don't worry about making mistakes in English class" (<i>Reversed item</i>)	3.25	1.310
4- "Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it"	3.37	1.362
5- "I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class"	3.30	1.386
6- "I feel confident when I speak in English class" (<i>Reversed item</i>)	3.60	1.150
7- "It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class"	2.77	1.362
8- "I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class"	2.92	1.321
Total S-FLCAS	3.00	.976

Note: 1.00 – 2.33= low; 2.34 – 3.67= moderate; 3.68 – 5.00= high

According to Table 7, the students express a moderate level of English language anxiety ($M= 3.00$, $SD= .976$). Upon analyzing individual statements, it becomes evident that the students moderately agree that they feel confident when speaking in the English language classroom ($M= 3.60$, $SD= 1.150$). They also moderately agree that they experience panic when required to speak without prior preparation in English class ($M= 3.54$, $SD= 1.318$). Furthermore, even if they are well-prepared for English class, they feel anxious ($M= 3.37$, $SD= 1.362$). Moreover, they moderately agree that their heart rate

increases when it's their turn to speak in English class ($M= 3.30$, $SD= 1.386$). Additionally, they partly agree that they do not worry about making mistakes in English class ($M= 3.25$, $SD= 1.310$). They also moderately agree that they become nervous and confused while speaking in the English class ($M= 2.92$, $SD= 1.321$), as well as with the notion that other students speak English better ($M= 2.92$, $SD= 1.301$). Lastly, they express a moderate level of agreement that they are embarrassed to volunteer answers in English class ($M= 2.77$, $SD= 1.362$).

Findings of the Research Question 2

RQ-2: Are there significant correlations between the students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and English language achievement?

"A *Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient*" was calculated to assess the "bivariate" relationships between the variables. Before conducting correlation analysis, first, six participants were removed from the dataset, as they did not indicate their English language GPA. Then, preliminary analyses were performed to ensure that the assumptions of linearity and normality were satisfied. To check linearity, the distribution of the scores on the scatterplots was examined. It was confirmed that the bivariate relations between the variables are fairly linear. Also, it was detected that the data is normally distributed (refer to the Preliminary Analyses section below for more detail). The results of the correlation analyses are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Correlations Between the Variables

	1	2	3	4
1. Self-efficacy	1			
2. Enjoyment	.430**	1		
3. Anxiety	-.409**	-.038	1	
4. GPA	.370**	.122**	-.250**	1

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

Note: Small= .10 - .29; Medium= .30 - .49; Large= .50 - .100 (Cohen, 1988)

As shown in Table 8, the correlation between self-efficacy and enjoyment was statistically significant and positive at a moderate level ($r = .430, p < .001$), with 18% shared variance. Additionally, a statistically significant and moderately negative correlation was found between self-efficacy and anxiety ($r = -.409, p < .001$), with 16% shared variance. However, the correlation between enjoyment and anxiety was not statistically significant ($r = -.038, p = .416$).

When examining the relationship between self-efficacy and GPA, a statistically significant and positive correlation at a moderate level was observed ($r = .370, p < .001$), with 13% shared variance. Furthermore, a statistically significant but small negative correlation was found between anxiety and GPA ($r = -.250, p < .001$), with 6% shared variance. Finally, a statistically significant and positive, yet very small, correlation was detected between enjoyment and GPA ($r = .122, p = .008$), with only 1% shared variance.

Findings of the Research Question 3

RQ-3: To what extent is the hypothesized model appropriate for explaining the interrelations among the EFL students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement?

In order to answer the third research question, SEM analysis was conducted. Before conducting SEM, it is crucial to ensure that specific assumptions are met. These assumptions include checking for missing values, normality, linearity, absence of collinearity and singularity, univariate and multivariate outliers, and sample size (Kline, 2011; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Therefore, prior to proceeding with the SEM analysis, a data screening procedure was implemented. First, it was determined that there was not any missing value in the dataset. Then, the assumption of normal distribution of data was inspected. The normality test results of each scale are presented below.

Test of Normality of the FLSES

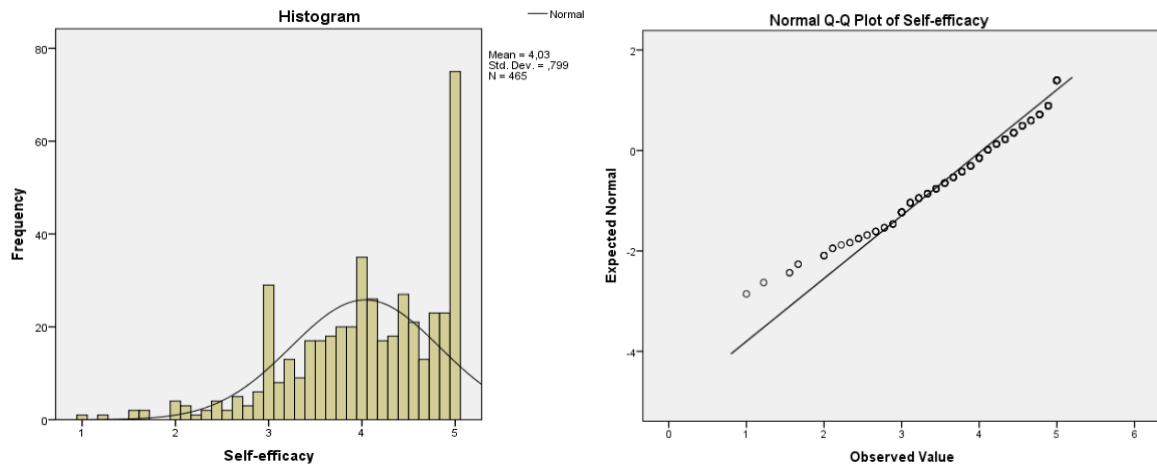
The assumption of normality was examined based on the skewness and kurtosis of the data distribution, as suggested by the SEM researchers (Kline, 2011; Ullman, 2013). It was observed that the kurtosis and skewness coefficients met the assumptions of normal distribution (Skewness= -.781, Kurtosis= .378). As George & Mallery (2010) indicate, kurtosis and skewness value between ± 1.0 can be considered excellent for most psychometric purposes. Apart from this, as can be seen from Table 9, the mean score, 5% trimmed mean score, and median score were nearly the same, indicating a normal distribution.

Table 9

Test of Normality of the FLSES

	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
Mean	4.03	.037
5% Trimmed Mean	4.09	
Median	4.11	
Minimum	1	
Maximum	5	
Std. Deviation	.799	
Skewness	-.781	.113
Kurtosis	.378	.226

To further validate the results of normal data distribution, Histograms and Normal Q-Q Plots were inspected. According to the Histogram, scores appeared to be reasonably normally distributed, as indicated by the shape of a normal curve. This was also substantiated by the Normal Q-Q Plot. In this plot, the observed value for each score was plotted against the expected value from the normal distribution. As Pallant (2011) indicates, a reasonably straight line shows a normal distribution.

Figure 5*Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plot of the FLSES****Test of Normality of the S-FLES***

According to the test of normality results, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients adhered to the assumptions of normal distribution (Skewness= -1.108, Kurtosis= 1.078). As indicated by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), values between +1.5 and -1.5 are acceptable for normal distribution. Additionally, as demonstrated in Table 10, the mean score, 5% trimmed mean score, and median scores are very similar, further indicating normal distribution.

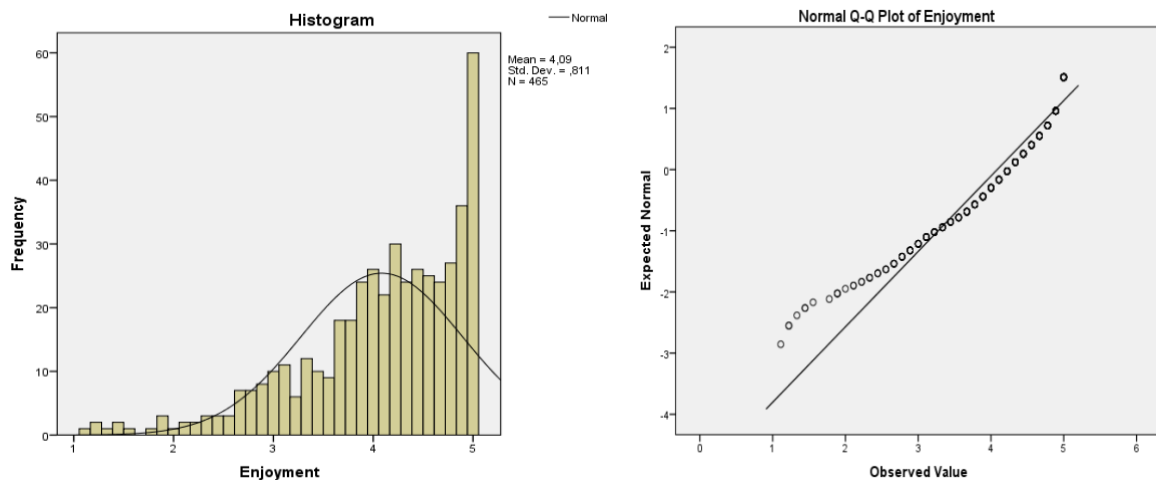
Table 10*Test of Normality of the S-FLES*

	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
Mean	4.09	.038
5% Trimmed Mean	4.15	
Median	4.22	
Minimum	1	
Maximum	5	
Std. Deviation	.811	
Skewness	-1.108	.113
Kurtosis	1.078	.226

Moreover, the Histogram suggested that the scores are fairly normally distributed, with a typical bell curve. This finding was further supported by the Normal Q-Q Plot, where the observed scores closely matched the expected values from a normal distribution. A fairly straight line with minor deviations in this plot indicates a normal distribution (Pallant, 2011).

Figure 6

Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plot of the S-FLES



Test of Normality of the S-FLCAS

According to the test of normality results, the kurtosis and skewness coefficients meet the assumptions of a normal distribution (Skewness= -.014, Kurtosis= -.710). Additionally, as depicted in Table 11, the mean score, 5% trimmed mean score, and median score are the same, indicating a normal distribution.

Table 11

Test of Normality of the S-FLCAS

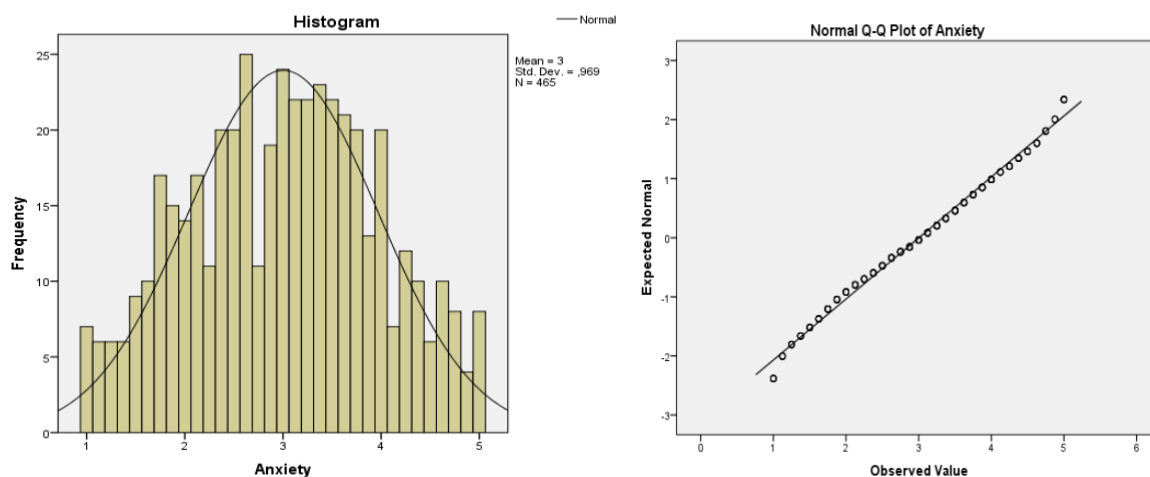
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
Mean	3.00	.045
5% Trimmed Mean	3.00	
Median	3.00	
Minimum	1	
Maximum	5	

Std. Deviation	.969	
Skewness	-.014	.113
Kurtosis	-.710	.226

The Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plot were also examined. The Histogram indicated that the scores followed a normal distribution, displaying a perfect normal curve shape. Similarly, a close examination of the Normal Q-Q plot revealed perfect straight lines, further suggesting normal distribution.

Figure 7

Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plot of the S-FLCAS



Linearity, Multicollinearity and Singularity

SEM analyzes only linear relationships between the constructs. Linearity among pairs of variables can be evaluated through the examination of bivariate scatterplots (Ullman, 2013). Therefore, the linearity assumption was assessed through the examination of the scatterplots. Consequently, no violation of the linearity assumption was observed.

In order to inspect singularity, the determinant of the covariance matrix was examined, following Ullman's (2013) suggestion. For checking multicollinearity, correlation matrices were scrutinized to identify any instances where variables were highly correlated (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Additionally, variance inflation factor (VIF) values were

examined as recommended by Hair et al. (2022). All of these inspections revealed no singularity or multicollinearity issues.

Univariate and multivariate outliers

Univariate outliers refer to data points that exhibit exceptionally low or high scores compared to the majority of scores within a variable's distribution (Barnett, 1978). Univariate outliers were assessed by calculating z-scores for each of the dependent variables separately. Using a threshold of ± 3.29 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), seven cases were removed from the dataset.

In order to identify multivariate outliers, Mahalanobis distance scores were calculated. Consequently, only one case was identified as exceeding the chi-square critical value of 16.27. This case was excluded from the dataset. As a result of removing univariate and multivariate outliers, 457 participants were retained for CFA and the SEM analysis.

Sample size

Regarding the sample size, SEM researchers have attested varying numbers for achieving adequate power. For instance, Kline (2011) recommended a minimum of 200 cases for SEM analyses, whereas Hu and Bentler (1999) proposed targeting a total of 250 participants. Bentler and Chou (1987) recommended a 5:1 ratio of participants to each variable in SEM studies. In general, achieving a participant-to-variable ratio of 10:1 is considered adequate (Bentler & Chou, 1987; Mueller, 1996). In the current study, the sample size expectations suggested by the SEM researchers were met, with a total of 457 participants.

As a result of inspecting SEM assumptions, it was determined that the assumptions were met, allowing the SEM analysis to commence. SEM analysis proceeded in two stages: testing the measurement model and testing the structural model, both of which were detailed in the following section.

First Stage: Test of the Measurement Model

Testing the relationships that have been postulated among the variables can be conducted only if the measures for the variables are valid and reliable. These concerns are addressed within the framework of the measurement model (Kline, 2011; Schoonen, 2015). Accordingly, CFA was conducted to assess the fit of the model, which involved modeling the relationship between measured variables and hypothesized factors (latent variables), thereby evaluating its compatibility with empirical data (Schoonen, 2015). Then, the internal consistency reliability of each measure in the hypothesized model was assessed, as suggested by researchers (Byrne, 2010; Kline, 2011; Schoonen, 2015).

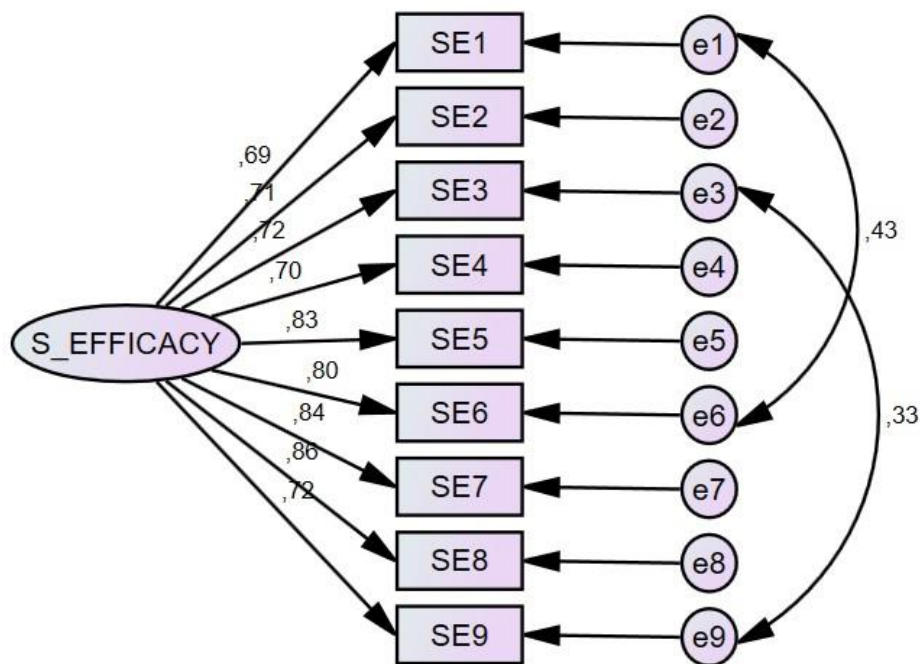
Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the FLSES

In order to test the construct validity of the 1-factor and 9-item FLSES, CFA was performed by using the AMOS 23.0 program. As the estimation, the maximum likelihood (ML) method was utilized. As a result of the CFA analysis, a value of $\chi^2 = 75.06$ (df= 22, $p < .001$) was obtained regarding the structure of the one-factor scale consisting of 9 items. In general, the chi-square value is expected to be insignificant, but this value is very sensitive to the sample size and can often become significant in large sample groups (Awang, 2014; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Gerbing & Anderson, 1985). Alternatively, it is suggested that statistics be calculated by dividing the chi-square value by the degrees of freedom (df) (Hoe, 2008; Kline, 2011). In this study, this value was found to be ($\chi^2/\text{df} = 3.41$). A value of 5 or less indicates that the model has an acceptable goodness of fit (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Kline, 2011; Şimşek, 2007). In this respect, the value obtained was important evidence that the model was acceptable. In addition, GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), RMR (Root Mean Square Residual), and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) fit indexes were calculated. In general, GFI, AGFI, and CFI values of .90 and above, RMSEA value below .08, and RMR value below .08 indicate a good fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 2013; Dimitrov, 2012; Kline, 2011; Şimşek, 2007). Some researchers suggest that GFI and AGFI

values above .85 are also acceptable (Awang, 2014; Schermelleh-Engel & Moosbrugger, 2003). In this study, the calculated values were as follows: GFI= .97, AGFI= .94, CFI= .98, TLI= .97, RMR= .023, and RMSEA= .072. These results demonstrate that the 1-factor FLSES, consisting of 9 items, fits well with the sample to which it was applied. The relevant path diagram is presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Path Diagram and Factor Loadings of the FLSES



As can be seen in Figure 8, the factor loadings of the 1-factor model of the FLSES ranged between .69 and .86. As they are above the cut-off point (.32), they can be considered statistically significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Reliability Analysis of the FLSES

In order to inspect the internal consistency, which is “the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute” (Pallant, 2011, p. 6), Cronbach’s Alpha value was calculated. This statistic indicates the average correlation among all the items comprising the scale (Pallant, 2011). While a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha above .70 is generally considered acceptable (Büyüköztürk, 2009; Özdamar, 2004),

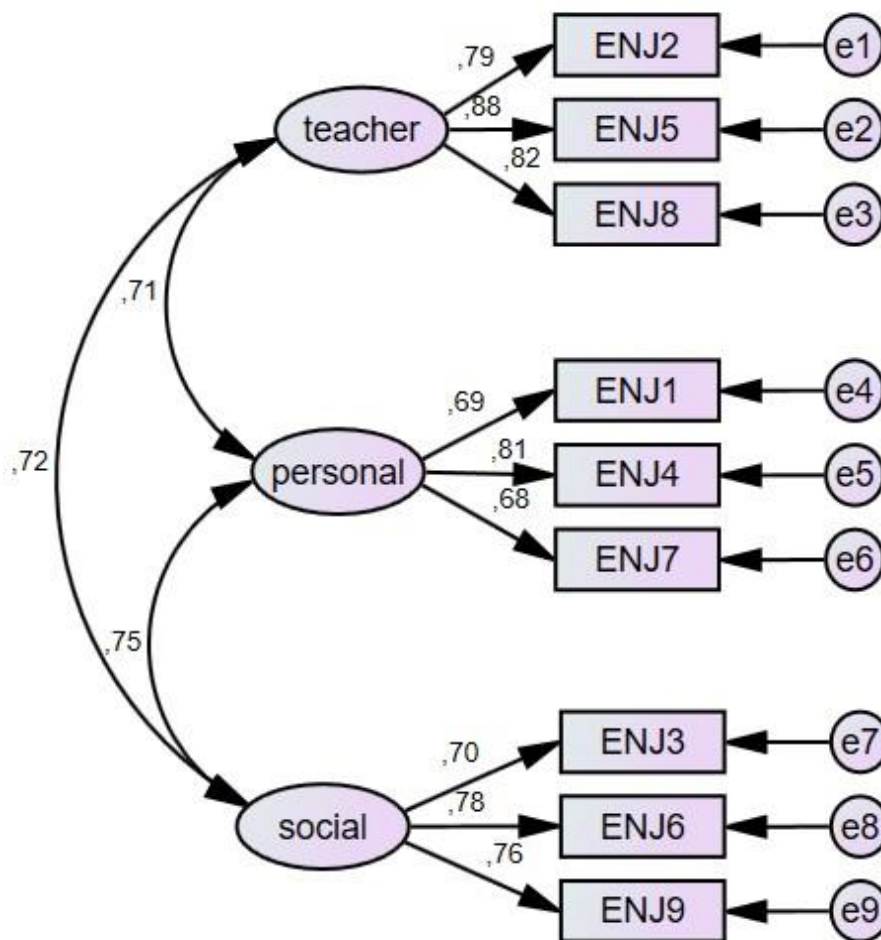
higher values indicate greater reliability (Pallant, 2011). The Cronbach's alpha value of the FLSES in the current study is found to be $\alpha = .92$, indicating a very high level of reliability.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the S-FLES

In order to determine whether the 3-factor and 9-item S-FLES fit well with the sample data, CFA was performed using the ML estimation method. Accordingly, the fit indices were found to be $\chi^2/df = 3.86$, GFI = .96, AGFI = .92, CFI = .97, TLI = .95, RMR = .037, RMSEA = .078. Since the calculated values are compatible with the values recommended by the researchers (Byrne, 2013; Dimitrov, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Thompson, 2000), it can be concluded that the 3-factor S-FLES with 9 items fits very well with the sample it was tested on. The relevant path diagram is given in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Path Diagram and Factor Loadings of the S-FLES



As depicted in Figure 9, the factor loadings of the 3-factor model of the S-FLES varied from .68 to .88. Since these factor loadings surpass the cut-off point (.32), they are deemed as statistically significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Reliability Analysis of the S-FLES

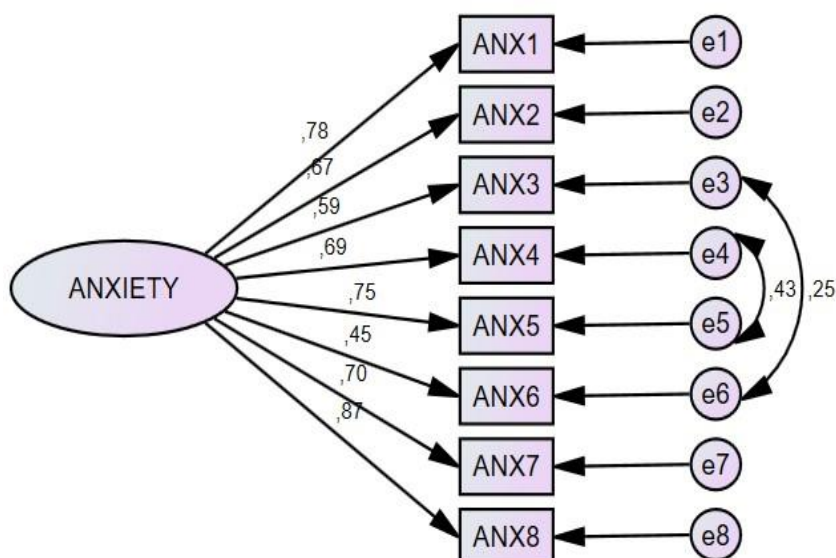
In order to check the internal consistency of the S-FLES, Cronbach's alpha value was calculated. Accordingly, the Cronbach's alpha value for the whole scale was found to be $\alpha = .88$, which shows that the scale has high reliability. Likewise, "Teacher Appreciation," "Personal Enjoyment," and "Social Enjoyment" factors indicate high reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of .86, .77, and .79, respectively.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the S-FLCAS

So as to find out whether the 1-factor and 8-item S-FLCAS fit well with the sample data, CFA was conducted using the ML estimation method. The fit indices were calculated as $\chi^2/df = 3.74$, GFI = .96, AGFI = .93, CFI = .97, TLI = .96, RMR = .052, RMSEA = .076. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the 1-factor S-FLCAS consisting of 8 items fits perfectly well with the sample considering the recommended values (Byrne, 2013; Dimitrov, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Thompson, 2000).

Figure 10

Path Diagram and Factor Loadings of the FLCAS



As seen in Figure 10, the factor loadings of the one-factor model of the S-FLCAS vary between .45 and .87. Since the factor loadings are higher than the cut-off point (.32), they are evaluated as statistically significant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

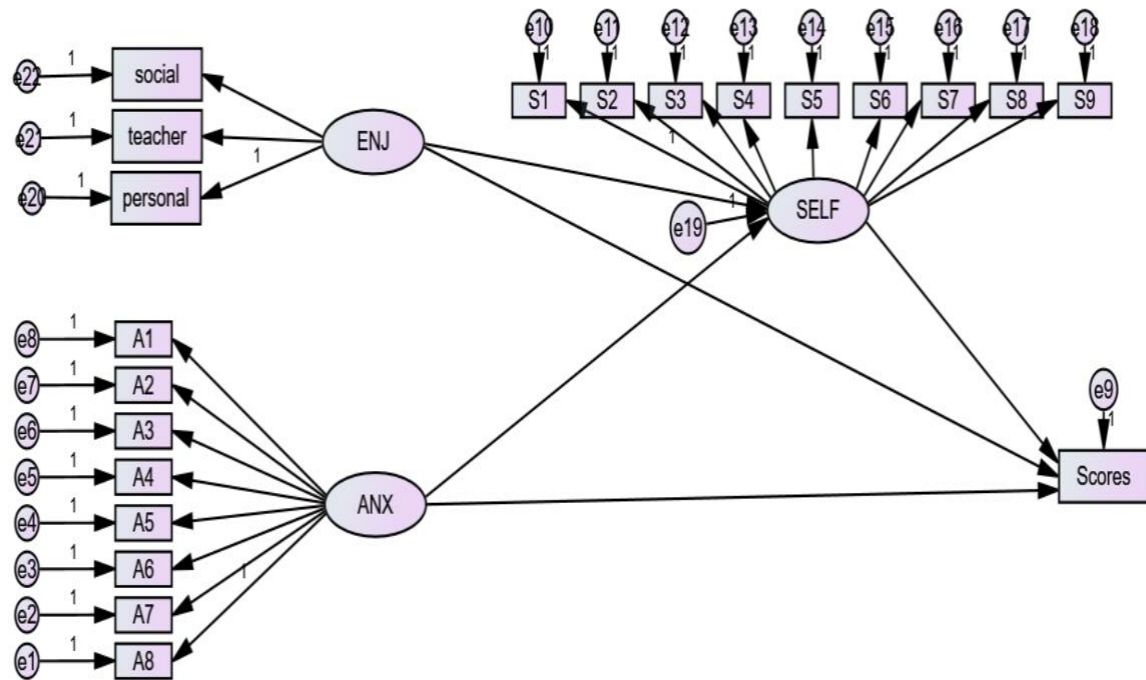
Reliability Analysis of the S-FLCAS

In order to evaluate the internal consistency of S-FLCAS, Cronbach's alpha value was calculated, which was found to be fairly high ($\alpha = .88$).

To sum up, all of the Confirmatory Factor Analyses indicated a satisfactory fit of the measurement models, confirming that the models align well and all observed measures are accounted for by their respective underlying variables. Moreover, following the reliability analyses, it was evident that all measures exhibited internal consistency reliability. Therefore, the researcher proceeded to the next stage: Testing the structural model.

Second Stage: Test of the Structural Model

Testing of the structural model involves testing the hypothesized relationships among the variables (Schoonen, 2015). In order to investigate the structural relationships among the learners' English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement, SEM analysis was performed. As shown in Figure 11, English language enjoyment (ENJ), anxiety (ANX), and self-efficacy (SELF) were considered unobserved (latent) variables, and English language achievement (Scores) was considered as an observed variable.

Figure 11*The Hypothesized Structural Model*

Note: ENJ= Enjoyment; ANX= Anxiety; SELF= Self-efficacy; Scores= English GPA

AMOS 23.00 program with the ML estimation method was utilized to test the hypothesized relationships. The model fit indices, including degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df), the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), the Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), RMR (Root Mean Square Residual), SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual), TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were administered.

When the goodness-of-fit indices in the structural model were examined, the χ^2/df ratio was 4.506, GFI was .85, AGFI was .81, CFI was .88, TLI was .86, and RMSEA was .088. Since the model fit was poor according to recommended values, modification indices were examined. Accordingly, covariance structures between the error terms of e4 and e5, e3 and e6, e10 and e15, and e12 and e18 were proposed. After these covariances were drawn, the model was re-analyzed.

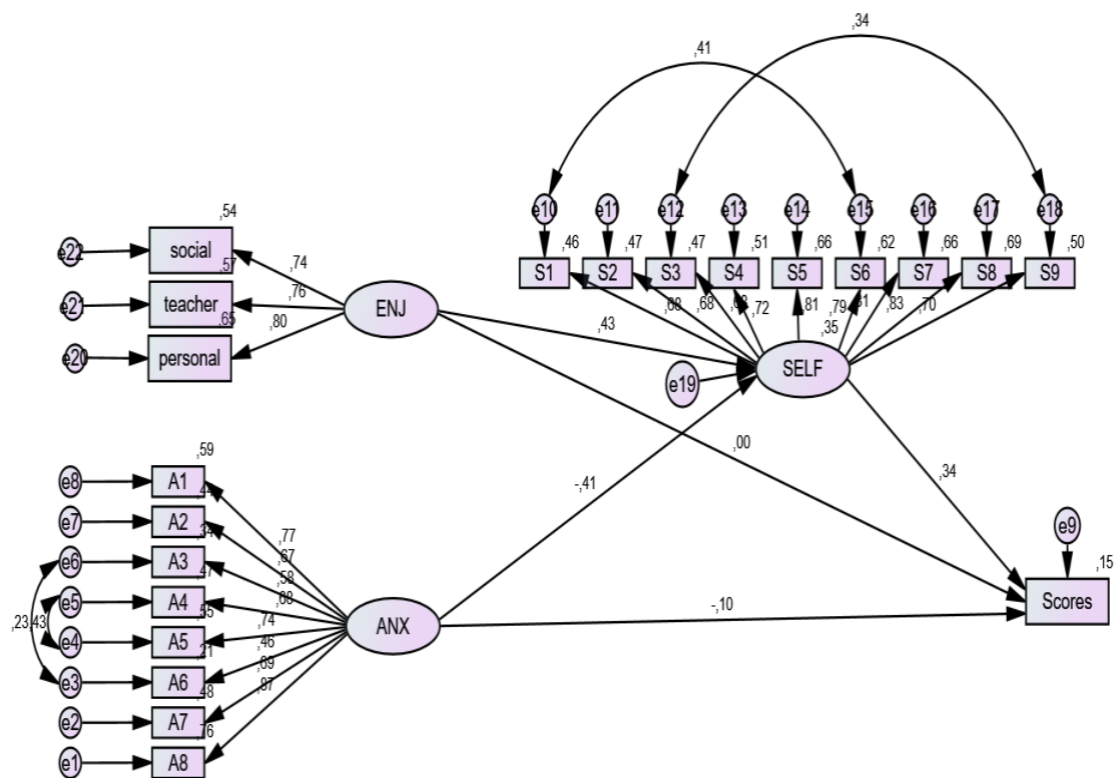
According to the final results, the hypothesized model provided acceptable goodness-of-fit values. The χ^2/df ratio was 3.396, GFI was .89, AGFI was .86, CFI was .92, TLI was .90, and RMSEA was .072, all suggesting an overall fit to the data (see Table 12).

Table 12

The Goodness of Fit Statistics of the Hypothesized Model

	χ^2/df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Hypothesized Model	3.396	.89	.86	.92	.90	.072

After ensuring that the model suggested an acceptable fit to the data, the standardized path coefficients were inspected. The significance levels of both direct and indirect paths were checked via two-tailed tests. Both p-values ($\leq .05$) and t-values ($\geq \pm 1.96$, Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993) were the criteria for the significance of direct and indirect paths. The hypothesized structural model with standardized coefficients is provided in Figure 12.

Figure 12*The Structural Equation Model with Standardized Estimates*

Note: ENJ= Enjoyment; ANX= Anxiety; SELF= Self-efficacy; Scores= English GPA

As can be seen in Figure 12, standardized path coefficients indicate that enjoyment has a significant positive direct effect on self-efficacy ($\beta = .43, p < .001$), while anxiety has a significant negative direct effect on self-efficacy ($\beta = -.41, p < .001$). When the predictive effects of these variables on English language achievement (ELA) are inspected, it can be seen that self-efficacy ($\beta = .34, p < .001$) has a significant positive direct effect on ELA. In contrast, neither enjoyment ($\beta = .00, p = .976$) nor anxiety ($\beta = -.10, p = .062$) has a significant direct effect on ELA. The results of the proposed hypotheses regarding the direct effects are presented in Table 13.

Table 13*Direct Effects*

Relationships	β_1	β_2	S.E.	t-values	R^2	p-values	Hyp. Results
1. ENJ→SELF	0.428	.145	0.018	7.903	0.348	$p < .001$	Supported
2. ANX →SELF	-0.406	-.243	0.030	-8.143		$p < .001$	Supported
3. SELF → ELA	0.344	6.782	1.225	5.536	0.155	$p < .001$	Supported
4. ANX → ELA	-0.099	-1.164	0.625	-1.863		0.063	Not supported
5. ENJ → ELA	-0.001	-.007	0.378	-0.018		0.986	Not supported

Note: β_1 = Standardized Regression Weights; β_2 = Unstandardized Regression Weights; S.E.= Standard Error; R^2 = Coefficient of Determination

In addition to direct effects, indirect effects were examined using the bootstrapping method, as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2004). Bootstrapping is a process of creating replications from the data to compute the significance of the indirect effects (set at 5000) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

First, it was assessed if enjoyment has an indirect effect on ELA through self-efficacy. The results revealed a positive indirect effect of enjoyment on ELA mediated through self-efficacy. Inspection of p -values, t -values, along with confidence intervals (upper-lower bounds) has shown that this indirect effect is significant. Since the direct effect of enjoyment on ELA was not significant ($\beta = .00$, $p = .976$), it can be concluded that self-efficacy fully mediates the relationship between enjoyment and ELA (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In other words, there is an “indirect only” effect (Zhao et al., 2010).

Second, it was assessed if anxiety has an indirect effect on ELA through self-efficacy. The results revealed a negative indirect effect of anxiety on ELA mediated through self-efficacy. Inspection of p -values, t -values, along with confidence intervals (upper-lower bounds) has shown that this indirect effect is significant. Since the direct effect of anxiety on ELA was not significant ($\beta = -.10$, $p = .062$), it can be concluded that self-efficacy fully mediates the relationship between anxiety and ELA (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Finally, the total effects were calculated by summing up the direct and indirect effects. The results are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Relationships	Direct Effects	Indirect Effects	Total Effects	Confidence Intervals		p-values	Conclusion
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1. ENJ→SELF→ELA	-.007	.983	.976	.609	1.456	.000	Full mediation
2. ANX→SELF→ELA	-1.164	-1.647	-2.811	-2.503	-.982	.000	Full mediation

The results in Table 14 demonstrate a full mediation model for both enjoyment and anxiety on English language achievement through self-efficacy. For the path 1 (ENJ→SELF→ELA), enjoyment exhibits no significant direct effect on ELA ($\beta = -.007$, $p = .976$), but a significant positive indirect effect ($\beta = .983$, 95% CI [.609, 1.456], $p < .001$) is observed, resulting in a total positive effect ($\beta = .976$). This indicates that enjoyment enhances ELA exclusively by boosting learners' self-efficacy, with no independent direct contribution to achievement. For the path 2 (ANX→SELF→ELA), anxiety shows no significant direct effect on ELA ($\beta = -1.164$, $p = .063$), but a significant negative indirect effect ($\beta = -1.647$, 95% CI [-2.503, -.982], $p < .001$) is present, leading to a total negative effect ($\beta = -2.811$). This suggests that anxiety reduces ELA solely by undermining self-efficacy, without directly impacting achievement.

The confidence intervals for both indirect effects (Enjoyment: [.609, 1.456]; Anxiety: [-2.503, -.982]) do not include zero, confirming the robustness of the mediation effects. These findings align with Baron and Kenny's (1986) criteria for full mediation, as the direct effects of enjoyment and anxiety on ELA are non-significant, while their indirect effects via self-efficacy are significant. This "indirect-only" pattern (Zhao et al., 2010) underscores self-efficacy as the pivotal mechanism through which emotional factors (enjoyment and anxiety) influence L2 achievement.

Chapter 5

Discussion of the Findings

Discussion of the Research Question 1

The first research question explored tertiary-level Turkish EFL students' perceived levels of (a) English language self-efficacy, (b) English language enjoyment, and (c) English language anxiety. Below, the findings were discussed regarding this research question.

RQ-1a. Discussion on L2 Self-efficacy Level among EFL Learners

The current study revealed that tertiary-level Turkish EFL students have high levels of self-efficacy beliefs in English. Overall, the students demonstrated a high degree of self-efficacy across all statements on the English self-efficacy scale, encompassing both receptive and productive skills. This finding aligns with previous research, which has generally shown that L2 students report high (Alymidin Kyzy, 2016; Csizér & Albert, 2024; Csizér et al., 2021; Demir, 2018; Goudarzi et al., 2014; Teng et al., 2023) or moderate (Chao et al., 2019; Demir & Okyar, 2021; Fathi et al., 2024; Jee, 2019; Kırmızı, 2015; Ou & Yang, 2022; Özdemir & Karafil, 2023; Özer & İşpınar Akçayoğlu, 2021; Yelgeç & Dağyar, 2020) levels of L2 self-efficacy. In contrast, a few studies have reported low levels of self-efficacy among language learners (Taşdemir, 2018).

Given the positive impact of self-efficacy on well-being and achievement, the high level of self-efficacy among Turkish EFL students is a promising outcome. Self-efficacy beliefs are foundational drivers of actions, as Bandura (1997) suggests, with the potential to enhance positive affect and mental health (Schutte, 2014). According to Maddux (2011), self-efficacy is essential for both physical and psychological well-being. A strong sense of efficacy enhances personal well-being and academic achievement (Bandura, 1997). Both social cognitive theory and positive psychology assert that self-efficacy beliefs positively influence students' motivation, self-regulation, learning strategies, effort, and resilience in academic settings (Bandura, 1997; Maddux, 2011).

The high levels of English self-efficacy among participants in this study may stem from several factors. First, students' self-efficacy could largely be shaped by their mastery experiences, which Bandura describes as the most influential source of self-efficacy. Success achieved through effort and perseverance can strengthen self-belief, enhancing confidence in overcoming future challenges. For these students, succeeding in the demanding university entrance exam and enrolling in one of Türkiye's most prestigious universities may have bolstered their general self-confidence and their eagerness to improve their English for career prospects. In the literature, students' scores on standardized tests are often seen as reliable indicators of their future academic success. High-achieving students tend to develop stronger self-efficacy beliefs regarding their ability to learn independently and assume greater responsibility for their academic achievements (Zimmerman et al., 1992; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005).

Furthermore, attending such a prestigious university may imply that they attended high schools that provided a strong academic foundation. Numerous empirical studies have confirmed that prior achievement predicts both self-efficacy and subsequent academic success (Elias & MacDonald, 2007; Diseth, 2011; Wilson & Narayan, 2016). Substantiating these findings, Tuncer and Doğan (2015) found that the academic self-efficacy perceptions of Turkish EFL students graduating from Science, Anatolian, and Super High Schools are more positive than those of students graduating from regular high schools. Açikel (2011) also found that the type of high school significantly affects students' language learning performance at university. Apart from high school, their high level of self-efficacy can also stem from their success in English at the university. For example, Demir and Okyar (2021) found that English language achievement strongly predicts the students' English self-efficacy at the university level.

Another factor contributing to these students' self-efficacy could be their vicarious experiences. Bandura (1997) emphasizes that observing competent role models who share similar characteristics, such as age or skill level, can strengthen self-efficacy beliefs. In

alignment with this, students in the preparatory school environment may benefit from observing high-achieving peers, which positively influences their own self-efficacy. Supporting this view, Özdemir and Karafil (2023) found that EFL students identified the presence of successful classmates as a motivator in enhancing their self-efficacy.

Social persuasion may have also played a role in building self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). The participants may have teachers and peers who provide positive encouragement and constructive feedback, which fosters their self-efficacy. Since self-efficacy beliefs arise from language learning experiences (Mills, 2014), such positive experiences could explain the high level of self-efficacy. Özdemir and Karafil (2023) found that friendly and supportive instructors and peers, along with constructive feedback, positively affected students' English self-efficacy. As Bandura (1997) suggests, effective social persuasion involves more than verbal encouragement; it includes organizing activities that facilitate success. Substantiating this, Öztürk and Saydam (2014) determined that teacher feedback and behavior, as well as supportive practices, play a critical role in increasing L2 writing self-efficacy among Turkish EFL learners. Thus, the participants' self-efficacy may benefit from language teachers who actively support their growth and create an environment conducive to positive learning experiences. Considering these factors, it can be assumed that the participants in this study experience a positive foreign language class atmosphere and positive language learning experiences, which contribute to their self-efficacy.

RQ-1b. Discussion on L2 Enjoyment Level among EFL Learners

The current study showed that tertiary-level Turkish EFL students have a high level of enjoyment in English. First of all, the students have the highest level of positive perception towards their English teacher. The students are highly contented that their English teacher is supportive, encouraging, and friendly. This result implies that the teacher fosters a positive classroom environment, which is crucial for student engagement and learning. This strong appreciation for the teacher contributes to a more effective and enjoyable learning

experience in the classroom. Some studies (Demir & Okyar, 2021; Jiang & Dewaele, 2019) also found that students have the highest level of enjoyment related to their FL teacher.

In addition, students experience a significant level of personal enjoyment in their English lessons. Specifically, students enjoy the English lessons, suggesting that the classes are engaging and enjoyable for them. They also find the lessons informative, which implies that the content is valuable and enhances their understanding of the subject matter. Additionally, students feel proud of their accomplishments in the English classroom, reflecting a sense of achievement and confidence in their skills. These results suggest that students are not only enjoying the lessons but also recognizing their educational value and feeling a sense of pride in their progress.

Lastly, the students are highly pleased with the FL classroom atmosphere and their peers, indicating strong positive feelings about their social interactions. They frequently laugh, which contributes to a joyful atmosphere, and they perceive their group as tight-knit, suggesting a sense of intimacy and support among classmates. Additionally, they share common enjoyable experiences, which enhance their social bonds. Overall, these results are very promising because this combination of personal, social, and teacher enjoyment can contribute to a positive learning environment that likely fosters further engagement and motivation among students.

The findings of the current study align well with the recent research, which has consistently reported high levels of L2 enjoyment in various SLA contexts, such as Hungarian (Csizér & Albert, 2024), Chinese (Pan & Yuan, 2023), Iranian (Fathi & Hejazi, 2023), Spanish (Elvira & Irene, 2022) and Turkish (Aydın & Denkci Akkaş, 2023; Demir & Okyar, 2021; Özer, 2020; Yeşilçınar & Erdemir, 2023). Apart from these studies, some studies found a moderate level of L2 enjoyment among Chinese EFL learners (Hu et al., 2022; Li, 2020); Iranian EFL learners (Nemati et al., 2020); Turkish EFL learners (Kaplan, 2022; Uzun, 2017).

The current study revealed that EFL learners can simultaneously experience high levels of enjoyment and moderate levels of anxiety. This finding aligns with the pioneering work of Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014, 2016), who demonstrated that enjoyment and anxiety often coexist in language learners. Since enjoyment and anxiety are not opposite ends of the same spectrum but distinct emotions (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014), this result is consistent with theoretical expectations. In this regard, MacIntyre (2021) argues that expecting universal positivity is unrealistic and advocates for a more balanced perspective that acknowledges both positive and negative emotions in language learners. Supporting this view, Oxford (2016a) emphasizes that positive and negative emotions coexist in learning, noting that even the most successful language learners can "experience anxiety and other negative emotions" during their language learning process (p. 24). Similarly, Boudreau et al. (2018) highlight that learners' emotions fluctuate over time based on specific activities and tasks, meaning individuals can experience both anxiety and enjoyment simultaneously.

This finding is also consistent with the principles of positive psychology and the Broaden-and-Build theory. These frameworks recognize the roles of both positive and negative emotions in the learning process. For instance, enjoyment, which arises from successfully completing a task, can coexist with anxiety, particularly during challenging tasks, as success often brings satisfaction despite initial stress (Fredrickson, 2013). Positive psychology researchers argue that, rather than expecting the absence of negative emotions, "the higher ratio of positive to negative affect" is more critical for well-being and success (Fredrickson, 2001; Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Schutte, 2014). Supporting this perspective, the present study found that Turkish EFL learners experience higher levels of L2 enjoyment than L2 anxiety, a promising outcome also reported in previous research (Csizér & Albert, 2024; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). As noted by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2016), understanding and managing these emotional dimensions is key to fostering a more effective and supportive language learning environment.

RQ-1c. Discussion on L2 Anxiety Level among EFL Learners

The current study revealed that tertiary-level Turkish EFL students experience moderate levels of anxiety in English. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted in various contexts. For instance, Zheng and Cheng (2018), in their mixed-method study, found that Chinese EFL university students experience moderate levels of English anxiety and cognitive test anxiety. Along the same lines, Jugo (2020) and Dauba (2024) reported that Filipino EFL learners exhibit moderate levels of English language classroom anxiety. Similarly, Jee (2019) found that learners of Korean as a foreign language experience moderate anxiety across all language skills. In the Malaysian EFL context, Lian and Budin (2014) also indicated that learners demonstrate moderate levels of English language anxiety. Furthermore, in the Iranian EFL context, Amiri and Ghonsooly (2015) identified a moderate negative relationship between learners' L2 anxiety and achievement.

This result is also consistent with research in the Turkish SLA context, where nearly all studies have found that Turkish L2 learners experience moderate levels of L2 anxiety (Doğan, 2016; Doğan & Tuncer, 2016; Kızıltepe, 2023; Özer, 2020; Özer & Işpınar Akçayoğlu, 2021; Öztürk & Saydam, 2014; Tuncer & Doğan, 2015; Uzun, 2017; Yelgeç & Dağyar, 2020; Yeşilçınar & Erdemir, 2023). These findings collectively highlight that moderate levels of L2 anxiety are a common phenomenon across diverse educational and cultural settings, underscoring its relevance as a key affective factor in language learning.

As evidenced by the literature, most studies assessing FLA among students worldwide, including in the Turkish context, have found that language learners generally experience moderate levels of L2 anxiety. This suggests that, regardless of educational context or proficiency level, language learners are likely to experience some degree of anxiety. This finding aligns with the principles of positive psychology, which recognize that even the most successful language learners can experience anxiety during their language-learning process (MacIntyre, 2021; Oxford, 2016a). In this regard, anxiety is a natural and

inevitable part of language learning, and moderate levels of anxiety among learners are to be expected.

The students in the current study exhibited the highest levels of anxiety when required to speak without preparation in an English classroom. This finding aligns with previous research. Amiri and Ghonsooly (2015) also reported that students experience the most anxiety in situations requiring spontaneous speaking, such as responding to unanticipated teacher questions. Similarly, Zheng and Cheng (2018) found that some participants experienced anxiety in English classrooms, particularly when called upon to answer questions they could not answer.

In their qualitative study, Yan and Horwitz (2008) observed that, regardless of overall anxiety levels, EFL students felt most anxious during listening and speaking activities. Likewise, Jugo (2020) identified speaking activities as the primary source of anxiety among Filipino EFL students, followed by error correction during speaking and communication in English. Hewitt and Stephenson (2012) further demonstrated that higher L2 anxiety correlates negatively with English-speaking performance, reinforcing the idea that anxiety hinders learners' ability to demonstrate their skills effectively. These findings suggest that speaking anxiety is a major contributor to L2 anxiety and is closely linked to lower speaking performance.

The results also indicated that although students have a high level of English self-efficacy, they also experience a moderate level of English anxiety. Supporting this finding, Jee (2019) reported that Korean language learners exhibited both self-efficacy and anxiety simultaneously during their language-learning process. Similarly, Yelgeç and Dağyar (2020) found that moderate levels of self-efficacy and anxiety coexist among Turkish EFL learners. These findings suggest that L2 self-efficacy and anxiety can coexist, indicating that strong self-efficacy in language ability do not necessarily eliminate L2 anxiety.

Discussion of the Research Question 2

The second research question examined the bivariate correlations between tertiary-level Turkish EFL students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, anxiety, enjoyment, and English language achievement. Below, the findings were discussed regarding this research question.

RQ-2a. Discussion on the Correlation between English Language Self-efficacy and Achievement

This study identified a significant, positive, and moderate correlation between Turkish EFL students' English language self-efficacy and achievement, with self-efficacy accounting for 13% of the variance in ELA. This suggests that higher L2 self-efficacy is associated with greater L2 success.

This finding aligns with a substantial body of research across diverse SLA contexts, which has consistently demonstrated moderate to strong positive correlations between L2 self-efficacy and L2 achievement (Alymidin Kyzy, 2016; Chao et al., 2019; Fathi et al., 2024; Golparvar & Khafi, 2021; Goudarzi et al., 2014; Karbakhsh & Safa, 2020; Kirmızı, 2015; Kim et al., 2015; Kim & Shin, 2021; Ou & Yang, 2022; Teng et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2012; Zorlu & Ünver, 2022). Furthermore, numerous studies have identified significant positive correlations between skill-specific self-efficacy and L2 achievement in various domains, including writing (Chen & Lin, 2009; Golparvar & Khafi, 2021; Hetthong & Teo, 2013; Phakiti et al., 2013; Raoofi & Maroofi, 2017; Sun et al., 2021), reading (Al Khamisi et al., 2016; Balci, 2017; Ghonsooly & Elahi, 2010; Phakiti et al., 2013), speaking (Asakereh & Dehghannezhad, 2015), and listening (Phakiti et al., 2013).

This result corroborates the findings of two recent meta-analyses. For instance, Wang and Sun (2020) reported a small-to-medium average effect size for the relationship between self-efficacy and language proficiency, with self-efficacy accounting for 15% of general language proficiency, 13% of receptive skills, and 12% of productive skills. The

current finding aligns with their study, which suggests that the relationship between self-efficacy and language proficiency is stronger in East Asian and Middle Eastern cultures compared to Western cultures. Similarly, Goetze and Driver's (2022) meta-analysis revealed a medium correlation between L2 self-efficacy and achievement, with self-efficacy accounting for approximately 22% of the variance in L2 achievement. They argued that, while positive psychology in SLA has predominantly emphasized emotional factors, these findings underscore the importance of cognitive variables and their interactions in understanding student success and growth.

This finding is consistent with both theoretical frameworks and empirical research on the topic. Theoretically, it aligns with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which highlights the positive relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance (Bandura, 1997). According to SCT, a strong sense of self-efficacy enhances well-being and academic success by fostering resourcefulness, strategic flexibility, and resilience. These qualities enable individuals to set challenging goals, persist through obstacles, and regain confidence after setbacks (Locke & Latham, 1990; Relich et al., 1986; Weiner, 1986), ultimately contributing to academic achievement (Bond et al., 2001; Lane & Lane, 2001;; Pajares & Miller, 1994; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

A possible explanation for why learners with higher L2 self-efficacy beliefs tend to achieve greater success in L2 learning may lie in its association with higher levels of L2 (Csizér & Albert, 2024; Hung, 2020; Phakiti et al., 2013; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), strategy use (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Raoofi & Maroofi, 2017; Wu et al., 2012; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990), self-regulation (Özer & İspınar Akçayoğlu, 2021; Phakiti et al., 2013; Shih, 2019), metacognitive awareness (Goudarzi et al., 2014; Yelgeç & Dağyar, 2020), persistence (Chase, 2001; Multon et al., 1991; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), autonomy (Csizér & Albert, 2024), effort (Chase, 2001; Shih, 2019; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), task performance (Wu et al., 2012), and positive emotions (Csizér & Albert, 2024).

RQ-2b. Discussion on the Correlation between English Language Enjoyment and Achievement

This study revealed a significant, positive, yet small correlation between English language enjoyment and achievement among Turkish EFL students. This suggests that higher levels of L2 enjoyment are associated with higher levels of ELA. However, caution is warranted, as this relationship has a very low effect size, accounting for only 1% of the variance.

Studies in the literature have reported mixed findings regarding the relationship between L2 enjoyment and achievement. For instance, Hu et al. (2022) identified a strong positive correlation between L2 enjoyment and performance among Chinese university EFL learners. Similarly, Qi and Haladin (2022) found a moderate positive relationship between language competence and enjoyment among Chinese international students. Dewaele and Alfawzan (2018) observed a moderate positive correlation between L2 enjoyment and L2 achievement among British students learning foreign languages, but only a small correlation among Saudi EFL learners. Li (2020) reported a moderate positive correlation between enjoyment and perceived achievement among Chinese high school EFL learners, though the correlation between enjoyment and actual achievement was small. Xu and Liu (2023) detected small to moderate positive correlations between enjoyment and self-rated competence among Chinese-English interpreting students. In the Korean EFL context, Gordon (2022) found a positive but small correlation between L2 enjoyment and achievement. Furthermore, Botes et al. (2022), in a meta-analysis of 56 studies, determined that L2 enjoyment had a moderate positive relationship with both L2 achievement ($r = .30$) and self-perceived L2 achievement ($r = .27$).

Collectively, these findings, including those of the present study, indicate that while the relationship between L2 enjoyment and L2 achievement is consistently positive, the strength of this relationship varies across different SLA contexts. This variability may be attributed to several factors, such as cultural differences, instructional settings, learner

characteristics, and the specific measures of enjoyment and achievement used in each study. For instance, cultural contexts that emphasize collaborative learning and positive reinforcement may foster stronger associations between enjoyment and achievement. Conversely, in contexts where anxiety or external pressures dominate the learning environment, the relationship between enjoyment and achievement may be weaker.

RQ-2c. Discussion on the Correlation between English Language Anxiety and Achievement

This study identified a significant, negative but small correlation between English language anxiety and achievement among Turkish EFL students. This implies that higher levels of L2 anxiety are associated with lower levels of ELA, though the relationship accounts for only 6% of the variance.

For decades, SLA research has consistently linked L2 anxiety to negative outcomes in language achievement (Aida, 1994; Ganschow et al., 1994; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Young, 1986). Anxious learners often exhibit apprehension and avoidant behaviors that hinder academic performance (Mills et al., 2006). Additionally, L2 anxiety has been associated with lower autonomy and motivation (Csizér & Albert, 2024; Hung, 2020), further aligning with the theoretical expectation of a negative relationship between anxiety and achievement.

This negative relationship has also been consistently supported by empirical research. Most of the recent studies have reported moderate negative correlations between L2 anxiety and achievement (Amiri & Ghonsooly, 2015; Chen & Lin, 2009; Demirdaş & Bozdoğan, 2013; Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018; Gordon, 2022), which have also been corroborated by three influential meta-analyses (Botes et al., 2020; Teimouri et al., 2019; Zhang, 2019). However, strong negative correlations remain relatively rare in the literature (Jugo, 2020).

Our findings align with earlier research that identified a negative but small relationship between L2 anxiety and achievement (Dauba, 2024; Demir, 2018; Doğan & Tuncer, 2016; Salehi & Marefat, 2014). This weak relationship is not surprising, as moderate levels of L2 anxiety do not necessarily have a strong inhibiting effect on achievement (Bailey, 1983; Scovel, 1978). In fact, some studies have reported positive correlations between L2 anxiety and achievement (Kitano, 2001; Lian & Budin, 2014; Jee, 2014). For instance, Lian and Budin (2014) found that Malaysian EFL learners have a medium level of L2 anxiety, which correlated positively and moderately with their oral test scores. Likewise, Jee (2014) reported a positive relationship between L2 anxiety and achievement among Korean learners. Such results imply that moderate level of L2 anxiety can also be facilitative in some language learning contexts (Bailey, 1983; Jee, 2019; Kleinmann, 1977; Scovel, 1978,1991; Tobias, 1986). Substantiating this, qualitative findings from Yan and Horwitz's (2008) study have also revealed that L2 anxiety, stemming from different reasons, pushed and motivated students to study harder.

RQ-2d. Discussion on the Correlation between English Language Self-efficacy and Enjoyment

The present study revealed a significant, positive, and moderate correlation between English language self-efficacy and enjoyment among Turkish EFL students, suggesting that learners with higher self-efficacy tend to experience greater enjoyment. This relationship accounted for 18% of the variance.

These findings are in alignment with prior research demonstrating a positive association between L2 enjoyment and self-efficacy. For instance, Csizér et al. (2021) identified a moderate positive correlation between self-efficacy and enjoyment among Hungarian EFL students. Similarly, Zhen et al. (2017) reported a strong positive relationship between positive emotions (e.g., enjoyment, pride) and English self-efficacy in Chinese EFL learners. In the same vein, Hung (2020) observed a robust positive correlation between self-efficacy and enjoyment among Chinese EFL learners, which exceeded the strength of

the link between self-efficacy and anxiety. Xu and Liu (2023) further corroborated this pattern, identifying a strong positive relationship between enjoyment and self-efficacy in Chinese-English interpreting students, particularly across sub-dimensions such as teacher-related, personal, and social self-efficacy. Likewise, Csizér and Albert (2024) found a moderate positive correlation between L2 enjoyment and self-efficacy among Hungarian secondary school EFL learners. Complementing these findings, Wang et al. (2021b) employed latent profile analysis to demonstrate that students with high L2 self-efficacy experienced the most frequent pleasant emotions (e.g., enjoyment, pride) and the least frequent unpleasant emotions (e.g., anger, anxiety, shame) in language learning contexts.

Taken together, the current finding reinforces the notion that higher L2 enjoyment is positively linked to L2 self-efficacy. The bidirectional nature of this relationship aligns with Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory, which posits that positive emotions like enjoyment expand learners' cognitive and behavioral repertoires, enabling them to approach challenges with resilience and creativity.

RQ-2e. Discussion on the Correlation between English language Self-efficacy and Anxiety

The current study found a significant, negative, and moderate correlation between the perceived level of English language self-efficacy and anxiety among Turkish EFL students. This implies that higher levels of English self-efficacy are associated with lower levels of English anxiety, accounting for 16% of the variance.

Theoretically, this finding confirms Bandura's SCT, which highlights the negative relationship between learners' self-efficacy beliefs and anxiety. Learners with lower self-efficacy tend to doubt their ability to complete specific tasks, which can lead to heightened anxiety. In the context of language learning, students with low self-efficacy may undervalue their abilities to learn the language, resulting in increased anxiety levels (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 1997). By contrast, students with higher self-efficacy are more confident in their ability to achieve positive outcomes, which gives them a stronger sense of control, resulting

in less anxiety (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Mills et al., 2006). Supporting this framework, the current findings suggest that Turkish EFL students experiencing higher anxiety likely have lower self-efficacy, while those with lower anxiety possess stronger self-efficacy.

This finding is in agreement with a substantial body of research across diverse SLA contexts, which has consistently identified a significant negative correlation between L2 self-efficacy and L2 anxiety. For example, Chen and Lin (2009) found a strong negative correlation between English writing self-efficacy and anxiety among Taiwanese learners, with cluster analysis revealing that high achievers exhibit high self-efficacy and low anxiety in English writing. Similarly, Ghonsooly and Elahi (2010) reported a strong negative relationship between English reading self-efficacy and anxiety, with t-test analysis showing that learners with high self-efficacy experience significantly lower anxiety levels than those with low self-efficacy. Csizér et al. (2021) identified a moderate negative relationship between these constructs, while Li (2021) found a negative link between foreign language reading anxiety and reading self-efficacy. Zhen et al. (2017) also observed a weak but negative correlation between negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, anger, boredom) and self-efficacy in English. In the Hungarian context, Csizér and Albert (2024) found a strong negative correlation between secondary school EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety. This pattern extends beyond English as a foreign language. For instance, Jee (2019) found that Korean language learners' anxiety negatively correlated with self-efficacy across all four language skills. Similarly, Torres and Turner (2016) reported moderate-to-large negative correlations between Spanish skill-specific anxiety and self-efficacy.

The significant negative relationship between L2 self-efficacy and L2 anxiety has also been confirmed by studies conducted in the Turkish EFL context. These studies, however, vary in the strength of the correlation. For instance, some identified a strong negative correlation (Kutuk et al., 2022; Mede & Karairmak, 2017), while others reported a moderate negative correlation (Demir, 2018; Özer & İşpınar Akçayoğlu, 2021; Öztürk & Saydam, 2014; Yelgeç & Dağyar, 2020). A few studies found only a weak negative

correlation (Doğan, 2016), suggesting that the strength of this relationship may depend on contextual or individual factors.

These findings are further supported by a recent meta-analysis by Zhou et al. (2023), which examined the relationship between FL anxiety and FL self-efficacy across 43 effect sizes from 37 studies. Their analysis revealed a strong negative correlation between the two constructs. Importantly, this relationship remained robust across various moderators, including school level, anxiety type, national income, measurement type, and publication year. These results underscore the universal nature of the inverse relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy.

Discussion of the Research Question 3

The third research question explored the extent to which the hypothesized model is appropriate for explaining the interrelations among EFL students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement. Below, the results for each hypothesis were discussed.

RQ-3a. Does English language self-efficacy have a direct effect on English language achievement?

Hypothesis 1 posited that English language self-efficacy has a positive direct effect on English language achievement. Confirming this hypothesis, the current study found that Turkish EFL learners' English self-efficacy is a significant, positive, and direct predictor of ELA.

This finding aligns with a large and growing body of empirical research conducted in diverse language learning contexts, which has consistently demonstrated that L2 self-efficacy positively and directly predicts L2 achievement (Chao et al., 2019; Fathi et al., 2024; Goudarzi et al., 2014; Karbakhsh & Ahmadi Safa, 2020; Kim, 2012; Kim & Shin, 2021; Mills et al., 2007; Ou & Yang, 2022; Teng et al., 2023; Woodrow, 2011; Young Kyo, 2022). This trend is also evident in the Turkish EFL context (Açıkel, 2011; Alymidin Kyzy, 2016; Kırmızı,

2015; Özer & İspınar Akçayoğlu, 2021; Zorlu & Ünver, 2022). Collectively, these studies underscore the consistent finding that L2 self-efficacy is a direct and positive determinant of L2 performance in academic settings.

This finding is theoretically grounded in Bandura's (1989) Social Cognitive Theory. According to SCT, self-efficacy—defined as an individual's belief in their ability to plan and execute actions to achieve specific goals—plays a pivotal role in determining how individuals utilize their knowledge and skills. Self-efficacy beliefs significantly influence choices, motivation, effort, perseverance, thought patterns, stress levels, and achievements. Specifically, strong self-efficacy enhances resilience and reduces susceptibility to stress and depression (Bandura, 1989, 1997).

SCT emphasizes the concept of human agency, portraying individuals as proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflecting agents who actively shape their life trajectories rather than passively reacting to environmental factors (Bandura, 1999). This agentic perspective highlights the active engagement of sensory, motor, and cognitive systems to pursue meaningful goals (Harré & Gillet, 1994). Furthermore, exploration and interaction with the environment are critical for brain development and learning (Kolb & Whishaw, 1998). By regulating their motivations and activities, individuals create experiences that foster the development of social, symbolic, and psychomotor skills, underscoring the central role of agency in personal and cognitive growth. As a whole, these processes contribute positively to academic achievement (Bandura, 1999).

Students' L2 self-efficacy levels may have influenced their L2 achievement through multiple pathways. Empirical research in SLA has demonstrated that high L2 self-efficacy positively and directly impacts various affective, cognitive, and metacognitive factors, including L2 motivation (Hung, 2020; Kim & Shin, 2021; Teng et al., 2023; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), language learning strategies (Golparvar & Khafi, 2021; Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Wong, 2005), self-regulation (Kim et al., 2015; Mills et al, 2007; Shih, 2019), L2 class comprehension (Ryu & Seo, 2015; Young Kyo, 2022), L2 class engagement (Derakhshan

& Fathi, 2024; Lee, 2011; Oh & Cha, 2017; Young Kyo, 2022), L2 WTC (Demir & Okyar, 2021; Matsuoka, 2006), intended effort (Shih, 2019; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), L2 grit (Fathi et al., 2024), persistence (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), metacognitive awareness (Yelgeç & Dağyar, 2020, and metacognitive strategies (Teng & Huang, 2019; Teng et al., 2023). All of these affective, cognitive, and metacognitive factors contribute to English language achievement positively.

Another explanation of why L2 self-efficacy is a positive direct predictor of L2 success may be because of its ability to mitigate negative emotions, such as worry and anxiety (Bandura, 1997; Tahmassian & Moghadam, 2011). As Bandura (1997) argues, individuals with higher self-efficacy are more likely to approach stressful situations with positive expectations, often transforming challenges into favorable experiences. Furthermore, self-efficacy beliefs enhance learners' coping mechanisms, enabling them to manage negative emotions and maintain competence in English (Teng et al., 2023). Supporting this view, Wang et al. (2021b), in their latent profile analysis of EFL learners' self-efficacy, found that students with high self-efficacy experienced the most frequent pleasant emotions (e.g., enjoyment, pride), the least frequent unpleasant emotions (e.g., anger, anxiety, shame), and achieved the highest scores on language proficiency tests. Similarly, Zhen et al. (2017) demonstrated that academic self-efficacy positively predicted pleasant emotions (e.g., enjoyment, pride) and negatively predicted unpleasant emotions (e.g., anxiety, anger, boredom).

Another significant finding of this study is that, among the independent variables examined, only L2 self-efficacy has a significant and direct influence on ELA. This result is substantiated by a substantial body of research demonstrating that L2 self-efficacy exerts the strongest impact on L2 achievement compared to other variables (Asakereh & Dehghannezhad, 2015; Chen, 2007; Goudarzi et al., 2014; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Kirmızı, 2015; Lew, 2011; Zorlu & Ünver, 2022). For instance, Goudarzi et al. (2014) examined the relationships among English self-efficacy, metacognitive awareness, and ELA among

Iranian EFL learners and found that self-efficacy was the only direct predictor of ELA. Similarly, Kırmızı (2015) identified self-efficacy as the sole significant predictor of academic success among English Language and Literature students at a Turkish university. Furthermore, Özer and İşpınar Akçayoğlu (2021) investigated the interrelations among L2 self-efficacy, self-regulation, anxiety, class attendance, and ELA, revealing that self-efficacy played the most significant and positive role in predicting achievement. In the same vein, Zorlu and Ünver (2022) found that English self-efficacy beliefs were a stronger predictor of ELA than self-regulatory strategies. Additionally, Asakereh and Dehghannezhad (2015) demonstrated that speaking self-efficacy beliefs were a significantly stronger predictor of Iranian EFL students' speaking achievement than their satisfaction with speaking classes.

Cumulatively, these findings highlight the dominant predictive power of L2 self-efficacy in shaping language learning outcomes, underscoring its critical role in academic achievement.

RQ-3b. Does English language enjoyment have a direct effect on English language achievement?

Hypothesis 2 asserted that English language enjoyment has a positive direct effect on English language achievement. However, this hypothesis was not supported, as the English language enjoyment among Turkish EFL learners did not exert any statistically significant direct effect on their ELA.

This result was contrary to expectations, considering both theoretical assumptions and previous research. In the literature, higher levels of L2 enjoyment have been positively associated with greater L2 autonomy (Csizér & Albert, 2024; Resnik & Dewaele, 2023), L2 motivation (Hung, 2020; Wang et al., 2023), positive emotions such as hope and pride (Csizér & Albert, 2024), willingness to communicate (Botes et al., 2022; Khajavy et al., 2018), peer support (Pan & Yuan, 2023), L2 engagement (Dewaele & Li, 2021), L2 self-efficacy (Csizér & Albert, 2024; Hung, 2020), and psychological well-being (Qi & Haladin, 2022). Because of such positive associations, enjoyment has strong potential to enhance

language learning performance. In line with this, a large and growing body of empirical research has demonstrated that L2 enjoyment has a direct and positive influence on L2 achievement (Demir & Okyar, 2021; Fathi & Hejazi, 2023; Gordon, 2022; Hu et al., 2022; Jin & Zhang, 2018; Li, 2020; Özer, 2020; Wei et al., 2019), with varying effect sizes. However, our study did not support this conclusion.

The current findings also diverge from theoretical assumptions regarding the facilitative role of foreign language enjoyment in L2 achievement. According to the Broaden-and-Build theory, positive emotions encourage broadened thinking and the exploration of innovative and novel ideas. These widened mindsets offer lasting adaptive advantages, as they help build enduring personal resources that can later be used to handle future challenges (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2001; Fredrickson, 2004). In the context of SLA, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) built on Fredrickson's theory and proposed that emotions should be viewed along two distinct dimensions: positive-broadening and negative-narrowing. Accordingly, they assert that positive emotions help build resources by broadening language learners' perspectives, allowing them to acquire the language more effectively. Overall, this result did not align with theoretical assumptions or previous findings. Therefore, the impact of L2 enjoyment may vary significantly across cultural contexts.

RQ-3c. Does English language anxiety have a direct effect on English language achievement?

Hypothesis 3 proposed that English language anxiety has a negative direct effect on English language achievement. However, this hypothesis was not confirmed, since the English language anxiety of Turkish EFL learners did not have any statistically significant direct effect on their ELA.

This result is somewhat surprising, as SLA literature has consistently documented the debilitating impact of L2 anxiety on the language learning process. Krashen (1981) asserted that students who feel anxious in FL classrooms struggle to process meaningful language input, ultimately leading to lower L2 acquisition. Additionally, Arnold and Brown

(1999) demonstrated that L2 anxiety can disrupt the optimal functioning of the prefrontal lobe, impairing memory and reducing L2 learning capacity. Moreover, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) indicated that L2 anxiety disrupts language acquisition and production at the input, processing, and output stages of the learning process.

Horwitz et al. (1986) noted that students who experience L2 anxiety may react in ways that hinder their success in foreign language classes. Anxious students often experience fear, worry, and unease, which may lead to difficulty focusing, forgetfulness, sweating, and heart palpitations. They also tend to engage in avoidance behaviors that negatively affect both their academic performance (Mills et al., 2006). L2 anxiety can further hinder their ability to comprehend learning material and may even cause them to avoid studying or attending class to reduce discomfort (Horwitz et al., 1986). Moreover, anxious students may withdraw from classroom interactions (Han, 2006). Physical symptoms such as a racing heart or sweating may also be misinterpreted as signs of incompetence (Bandura, 1997). As a result, L2 anxiety can lead to feelings of inadequacy, frustration, and anger, ultimately hindering classroom performance (Yan & Horwitz, 2008).

For these reasons, previous SLA research has consistently documented the negative impact of L2 anxiety on language performance (Gordon, 2022; Horwitz et al., 1986; Jugo, 2020; MacIntyre, 1999, 2017; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Özer & İşpınar Akçayoğlu, 2021; Zheng & Cheng, 2018). However, the findings of the current study did not support the theoretical assumptions or empirical evidence regarding the debilitating role of L2 anxiety on L2 achievement.

The current results imply that experiencing a moderate level of anxiety does not necessarily lead to a lower level of L2 achievement. In other words, the Turkish EFL students in this study did not experience anxiety at a level that would hinder their L2 achievement. Moreover, since the students have high enjoyment and moderate anxiety, these emotions might have balanced each other, resulting in neither a positive nor a negative impact on L2 performance.

Supporting this finding, Özer (2020) observed that fifth-grade Turkish EFL students experienced a moderate level of anxiety, which did not influence their L2 achievement. Similarly, Zheng and Cheng (2018) found that Chinese EFL undergraduate students experienced moderate L2 anxiety that did not affect their L2 performance. Woodrow (2011) also discovered that L2 writing anxiety did not directly impact the L2 writing performance of Chinese EFL learners. Instead, L2 writing anxiety indirectly influenced performance by exerting a strong, negative, and direct effect on self-efficacy—similar to the findings of the current study. These findings suggest that learners may have effectively managed their L2 anxiety, preventing it from negatively impacting their performance.

Building on this perspective, language specialist *Alice Omaggio Hadley* suggests that a certain level of anxiety is natural in real-life language use and plays a crucial role in motivating learning and driving improvement. Such tension serves as an incentive, helping individuals identify areas for improvement without becoming overwhelming or detrimental (as cited in Young, 1992). Supporting this, Abdullah et al. (2010) argue that students with very low anxiety may become overly relaxed, hindering their ability to acquire new knowledge effectively and potentially leading to an unsuccessful language-learning experience. Conversely, highly anxious students may perceive L2 learning as threatening, which can impair their performance.

This aligns with Csikszentmihalyi's (1997) concept of flow, which suggests that learners achieve an optimal state of engagement when a task is well-balanced—not too easy or too difficult—and their level of arousal is ideal. Arousal should be high enough to sustain engagement but not so intense that it hinders performance or so low that it induces boredom (Egbert, 2003). This optimal arousal level mirrors facilitating anxiety, which fosters a proactive, problem-solving approach (Piniel & Csizér, 2013).

Overall, these findings highlight the complex and context-dependent nature of L2 anxiety, suggesting that while excessive anxiety can be detrimental, a moderate level may

not necessarily hinder achievement and could even contribute to an optimal learning experience when balanced with higher level of enjoyment.

RQ-3d. Does English language enjoyment have a direct effect on English language self-efficacy?

Hypothesis 4 posited that English language enjoyment has a positive direct effect on English language self-efficacy. Confirming this hypothesis, the current study determined that Turkish EFL learners' English language enjoyment has a significant, positive and direct effect on their English self-efficacy beliefs.

This result aligns with the assumptions of Stanley and Schutte (2023), whose “*Macro Theory of Positive Functioning*” suggests that a high level of positive affect—such as joy and contentment—broadens individuals' perspectives, encouraging greater engagement with opportunities and relationships. This, in turn, fosters cognitive and behavioral resources that support the development of positive traits in PP, such as self-compassion and self-efficacy. Additionally, this finding substantiates Schutte's (2014) study, which found that higher *positive affect* and a *positive-to-negative affect ratio* contribute to enhanced self-efficacy.

The research examining the role of L2 enjoyment on L2 self-efficacy has captured scant scholarly attention. A few empirical studies have found that L2 enjoyment has a significant and positive direct effect on L2 self-efficacy. One of the earliest studies was conducted by Tremblay and Gardner (1995), who confirmed that language attitudes—including enjoyment, anxiety, interest, and motivation—directly and positively influenced the L2 self-efficacy beliefs of French language learners. More recently, Hung (2020) delivered that L2 enjoyment among Chinese university-level EFL learners had a direct and positive impact on their L2 self-efficacy. In an online EFL context, Derakhshan and Fathi (2024) observed that Iranian EFL learners' L2 enjoyment directly and positively influenced their online learning self-efficacy, which, in turn, enhanced their online classroom engagement. Similarly, in the Turkish EFL context, Demir and Okyar (2021) found that L2 enjoyment

among Turkish EFL learners was a significant and positive predictor of L2 self-efficacy, ultimately leading to higher WTC among learners. These studies highlighted the significant role of enjoyment in fostering self-efficacy within the SLA context—a finding that aligns with the results of the current study.

Other than EFL context, Medrano et al. (2016) examined how positive and negative emotional states influence academic self-efficacy beliefs in college students by using experimental design. The results indicated that positive emotions increase academic self-efficacy, while negative emotions decrease them. Also, Xu and Liu (2023) determined that Chinese interpreting major students' social enjoyment in interpreting classes has a direct and positive impact on their self-rated Chinese-English interpreting competence.

There are also very few studies that have examined the effect of L2 self-efficacy on L2 enjoyment. For example, Zhen et al. (2017) found that the L2 self-efficacy of Chinese EFL learners had a positive and direct impact on positive emotions, such as enjoyment and pride. Although very limited, such findings may suggest a reciprocal relationship between enjoyment and self-efficacy. Further research in the field of SLA could help uncover this potential cyclical relationship between these constructs.

RQ-3e. Does English language anxiety have a direct influence on English language self-efficacy?

Hypothesis 5 asserted that English language anxiety has a negative direct effect on English language self-efficacy. Confirming this hypothesis, the current study found that Turkish EFL learners' English language anxiety is a significant, negative, and direct predictor of their English language self-efficacy.

This result converges with the main tenets of Bandura's SCT, which suggests a cyclical relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety. According to the theory, physical and emotional states influence how individuals perceive and interpret their abilities. Emotional states, particularly anxiety, are identified as one of the four key sources of self-efficacy.

Accordingly, anxiety can significantly undermine self-efficacy, as individuals may interpret feelings of anxiety as indicators of personal inadequacy or a lack of competence (Bandura, 1997; Schunk, 2007). In a cyclical manner, individuals with lower self-efficacy are more likely to experience heightened anxiety in specific situations (Bandura, 1997). Consequently, anxiety functions as both a source and an outcome of self-efficacy beliefs (Mills et al., 2006).

The cyclical relationship between these variables has led to two strands of research in the SLA context. The first line of research focused on the role of L2 self-efficacy beliefs in influencing L2 anxiety. For instance, Piniel and Csizér (2013) found that the L2 self-efficacy of Hungarian EFL students had a direct and positive impact on facilitating anxiety while negatively affecting debilitating anxiety. Similarly, Jee (2019) revealed that speaking self-efficacy was a strong negative predictor of overall L2 anxiety. In the Turkish context, Mede and Karairmak (2017) demonstrated that English self-efficacy was a strong and negative predictor of English anxiety among EFL learners. Likewise, Yelgeç and Dağyar (2020) found that higher levels of English self-efficacy negatively predicted English anxiety among middle school EFL learners. Additionally, Zhen et al. (2017) showed that the English self-efficacy of Chinese EFL middle school learners had a negative predictive impact on their negative emotions (i.e., anxiety, anger, and boredom) in English.

The second line of research, including the current study, examined the influence of L2 anxiety on L2 self-efficacy. For example, Woodrow (2011) found that the English writing anxiety of Chinese EFL students exerted a strong, negative, and direct influence on their English writing self-efficacy beliefs. Similarly, Shih (2019) revealed that L2 anxiety among EFL high school students in Taiwan had a direct and negative influence on their L2 self-efficacy beliefs. In their study on the influence of learning adaptability on English academic engagement, Wang et al. (2021b) observed a chain mediation effect: higher learning adaptability reduced English anxiety, which then enhanced English self-efficacy, ultimately leading to improved engagement among Chinese EFL middle school learners. Likewise,

Hung (2020) found that L2 anxiety among Chinese EFL university learners had a direct and negative influence on their L2 self-efficacy.

Beyond the SLA context, Medrano et al. (2016) investigated how positive and negative emotional states influence academic self-efficacy beliefs in college students using an experimental design. The results demonstrated that positive emotions enhance academic self-efficacy, while negative emotions diminish it. Additionally, Pekrun (2016) identified a reciprocal relationship among anxiety, self-efficacy, and motivation: anxiety reduces self-efficacy, which in turn lowers motivation, and decreased motivation further heightens anxiety.

To sum up, the current finding is parallel with the theoretical perspectives that position anxiety as a key factor influencing self-efficacy beliefs. Additionally, consistent with empirical research, this study revealed that the students' English anxiety negatively affected their perceptions of self-efficacy regarding their English abilities.

RQ-3f. Does English language enjoyment have an indirect influence on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy?

Hypothesis 6 proposed that English language enjoyment has a positive indirect effect on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy. Confirming this hypothesis, the current study found that while L2 enjoyment of the learners does not directly influence ELA, it has an indirect effect on it, fully mediated by L2 self-efficacy. This indicates that Turkish EFL learners' enjoyment of English enhances their L2 self-efficacy, which in turn leads to higher English language achievement.

Among the earliest empirical studies, Tremblay and Gardner's (1995) findings align with this result, demonstrating that L2 enjoyment positively influences self-efficacy, which in turn enhances motivational behavior and ultimately leads to higher L2 achievement.

This finding also aligns with the Broaden-and-Build Theory, which posits that positive emotions expand cognitive resources, leading to favorable outcomes. For instance, it

supports Schutte's (2014) claim that increases in *positive affect* and *the ratio of positive-to-negative affect* lead to higher self-efficacy. Since self-efficacy has a broadening effect, enhancing self-efficacy in specific domains can foster positive outcomes in those areas. Similarly, this result reinforces the assumptions of Stanley and Schutte's (2023) "*Macro Theory of Positive Functioning*," which suggests that high levels of positive affect, such as joy and contentment, broaden individuals' perspectives, motivating them to engage more actively with opportunities and relationships. This engagement, in turn, cultivates cognitive and behavioral resources that support the development of key positive psychological traits, such as self-compassion and self-efficacy. Together, these traits contribute to what is described as optimal functioning or flourishing.

RQ-3g. Does English language anxiety have an indirect influence on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy?

Hypothesis 7 posited that English language anxiety has a negative indirect effect on English language achievement, mediated by English language self-efficacy. Affirming this hypothesis, the present study detected that while L2 anxiety of the learners does not directly influence ELA, it has an indirect effect on it, fully mediated by L2 self-efficacy. This shows that Turkish EFL learners' anxiety of English diminishes their L2 self-efficacy, which in turn leads to lower English language achievement.

This result implies that while L2 anxiety alone may not directly hinder performance, its detrimental influence on learners' L2 self-efficacy significantly reduces their ability to succeed. This result resonates with Tremblay and Gardner's (1995) findings that L2 anxiety negatively impacts self-efficacy, thereby diminishing motivational behavior and resulting in lower L2 achievement. Similarly, Woodrow (2011) highlighted the mediating role of self-efficacy in the domain of L2 writing. Her analysis revealed that while English writing anxiety did not directly influence writing performance, it had a negative influence on writing self-efficacy, which, in turn, affected writing performance negatively.

This finding also aligns with Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory, which argues that negative emotions narrow people's cognitive resources, leading to unfavorable outcomes. Similarly, it supports Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which posits that affective perceptions shape self-efficacy beliefs. For example, high-level anxiety or emotional distress can erode self-efficacy, further diminishing their performance (Bandura, 1997).

The mediating role of L2 self-efficacy in the language learning context has been widely established in the literature, demonstrating its pivotal role in bridging various psychological and academic variables. For example, Goudarzi et al. (2014) identified that English self-efficacy mediated the relationship between metacognitive awareness and ELA among Iranian EFL learners. In another study, Karbakhsh and Ahmadi Safa (2020) showed that L2 self-efficacy mediated the link between intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientations and L2 achievement. Additionally, Fathi et al. (2024) demonstrated that a growth mindset indirectly predicted L2 anxiety through the mediation of self-efficacy.

Furthermore, other studies emphasize the central role of self-efficacy in different contexts. Derakhshan and Fathi (2024) found that online learning self-efficacy (OLSE) partially mediated the relationship between FLE and engagement and fully mediated the relationship between L2 grit and online learning engagement. Similarly, in a study with Turkish EFL students, Demir and Okyar (2021) revealed that L2 self-efficacy fully mediated the relationship between L2 enjoyment and WTC as well as between L2 achievement and WTC. Moreover, Wang et al. (2023) reported that L2 self-efficacy mediated the relationship between learning adaptability and greater English academic engagement among Chinese middle school EFL learners. They also found a chain mediation effect, where higher learning adaptability reduced L2 anxiety, thereby enhancing self-efficacy and subsequently leading to improved L2 engagement. These findings collectively underscore the critical function of self-efficacy as a mediator in various dimensions of SLA, suggesting that fostering self-efficacy can create pathways for enhanced learning outcomes.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study aimed to investigate the perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, anxiety, and enjoyment among Turkish EFL learners, as well as the interrelations among these variables and their potential predictive effects on English language achievement. Utilizing a quantitative methodology and a non-experimental correlational research design, data were collected with a 26-item composite survey instrument including (1) The Foreign Language Self-Efficacy Scale (FLSES), (2) The Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES), and (3) The Short Form of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (S-FLCAS). The study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages (SoFL) at a state university, in Ankara, Türkiye. Participants were 471 EFL students enrolled in the English Preparatory Program at the SoFL.

The descriptive findings revealed that tertiary-level Turkish EFL students demonstrate a high level of self-efficacy in English, which aligns with extant research showing that L2 learners often report high or moderate level of self-efficacy. Additionally, the students experience a high level of enjoyment in learning English, driven by their appreciation for language teachers, personal enjoyment, and socially enjoyable classroom environment. These findings resonate with recent studies highlighting the prevalence of high or moderate L2 enjoyment across diverse learning contexts. The students also report moderate levels of English language anxiety, which is consistent with previous research.

The current study revealed that Turkish EFL students can simultaneously experience high levels of enjoyment and moderate levels of anxiety, a finding consistent with the work of Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014, 2016), who established that these emotions coexist as distinct dimensions rather than opposites. In this regard, MacIntyre (2021) argues that expecting universal positivity is unrealistic and advocates for a more balanced perspective that acknowledges both positive and negative emotions in language learners. Therefore, this moderate anxiety reflects a natural aspect of language learning, as

supported by positive psychology, emphasizing that even successful learners experience some degree of anxiety as part of the process. This aligns with the principles of positive psychology and the Broaden-and-Build theory, which emphasize the importance of a higher ratio of positive to negative emotions, rather than absence of negative emotions for well-being and success (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005; Schutte, 2014). Supporting this perspective, the present study found that Turkish EFL learners experience higher levels of L2 enjoyment than L2 anxiety, which is a promising outcome. Along the same lines, the present study uncovered that while students exhibit high self-efficacy in English, they can still experience moderate level of anxiety. This supports the idea that self-efficacy and anxiety can also coexist in language learners, and strong self-efficacy in language ability do not necessarily eliminate L2 anxiety.

As a result of the correlation analyses, a significant, positive, and moderate correlation was found between English language self-efficacy and achievement, aligning with substantial body of prior research. In addition, a positive but very small correlation was identified between English language enjoyment and achievement, reflecting the mixed findings in the literature regarding the strength of this relationship. Third, a negative but small correlation emerged between English language anxiety and achievement, consistent with empirical research. Additionally, a positive and moderate correlation was found between self-efficacy and enjoyment, which was in line with the previous research. Finally, a negative and moderate correlation was observed between self-efficacy and anxiety, substantiating a large body of research.

In order to test the extent to which the hypothesized model is appropriate for explaining the interrelations among EFL students' perceived levels of English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, anxiety, and achievement, a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was conducted. Accordingly, each hypothesis was tested. The SEM analysis confirmed that the students' L2 self-efficacy is a significant and positive predictor of their English language achievement, supporting the study's first hypothesis. This finding aligns

with extensive empirical research across diverse language learning contexts, which consistently demonstrates that L2 self-efficacy directly and positively influences L2 achievement. Theoretically grounded in Bandura's SCT, this result underscores the pivotal role of self-efficacy in shaping learning outcomes (Bandura, 1997).

The second hypothesis posited that English language enjoyment has a positive direct effect on English language achievement, which was not supported, as no statistically significant direct effect was detected. This result was unexpected, because it contrasts with the recent research, which has consistently demonstrated a positive influence of L2 enjoyment on L2 achievement. The lack of alignment between the current findings and prior research highlights the potential variability in the impact of L2 enjoyment across different cultural and educational contexts.

The third hypothesis proposed that English language anxiety has a negative direct effect on English language achievement, which was not supported, as no statistically significant direct effect was found. This result is surprising, given the extensive body of SLA literature that consistently highlights the detrimental impact of L2 anxiety on language learning (Krashen, 1981; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Despite this robust theoretical and empirical foundation, the current study did not align with these results. These findings underscore the nuanced role of anxiety in language learning, indicating that moderate anxiety, when balanced with positive emotions like enjoyment, and self-efficacy, may not hinder achievement. This highlights the importance of understanding the interplay among cognition, emotion and their context-dependent effects on L2 performance.

The fourth hypothesis that posited English language enjoyment has a positive direct effect on English language self-efficacy, was confirmed. This result aligns with Stanley and Schutte's (2023) assumptions, which argue that positive emotions like joy broaden individuals' perspectives and foster cognitive and behavioral resources, thereby enhancing traits such as self-efficacy. It also supports Schutte's (2014) findings that higher positive affect and a positive-to-negative affect ratio contribute to increased self-efficacy. Although

research remains limited, the few existing studies corroborate the current finding, emphasizing the significant role of enjoyment in fostering self-efficacy within the SLA context.

The hypothesis five, assuming that English language anxiety has a negative direct effect on English language self-efficacy, was also confirmed. This finding aligns with the tenets of SCT, which highlights that emotional states are a key source of self-efficacy. As individuals may interpret anxiety as a sign of incompetence, it can undermine their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997, 1999). This result is also parallel with a substantial body of empirical research that has consistently demonstrated the negative impact of L2 anxiety on L2 self-efficacy. This fact reinforces the importance of addressing anxiety to foster stronger self-efficacy in language learning contexts.

Hypothesis six, which proposed that English language enjoyment has a positive indirect effect on English language achievement mediated by self-efficacy, was confirmed. This suggests that Turkish EFL learners' enjoyment of English strengthens their confidence in their language abilities, which in turn leads to higher L2 achievement. This finding aligns with the Broaden-and-Build Theory, which posits that positive emotions like enjoyment broaden cognitive and behavioral resources, fostering favorable outcomes (Fredrickson, 2001). It also supports Schutte's (2014) assertion that increased positive affect enhance self-efficacy.

Lastly, hypothesis seven was also confirmed, which proposed that English language anxiety has a negative indirect effect on English language achievement mediated by self-efficacy. This indicates that Turkish EFL learners' anxiety undermines their confidence in their language abilities, which in turn leads to lower L2 achievement. This result highlights that although L2 anxiety alone may not directly hinder performance, its negative impact on self-efficacy significantly impairs learners' ability to succeed. The finding aligns with Broaden-and-Build Theory, which suggests that negative emotions narrow cognitive resources, leading to unfavorable outcomes (Fredrickson, 2001). It also supports SCT,

which emphasizes that affective states, such as high anxiety, decrease self-efficacy beliefs, further diminishing performance (Bandura, 1997).

In conclusion, this study contributes to a nuanced understanding of the emotional and cognitive dimensions of language learning, offering valuable insights for both theory and practice. It addresses a significant gap in SLA research by employing SEM analysis to explore the complex interplay among self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety and their impact on L2 achievement. From the findings, L2 self-efficacy has emerged as both a direct predictor and a mediator of achievement, underscoring its dual and pivotal role in the language learning process. These findings highlight the critical importance of fostering self-efficacy to enhance academic achievement in language learning contexts.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings of the current study provide valuable insights into the interactions among English language self-efficacy, enjoyment, and anxiety, shedding light on their implications for the L2 learning process. The distinctive results of the present study clearly show that learners' L2 self-efficacy perceptions play a more direct and leading role in predicting their success than their enjoyment or anxiety levels in the language learning process. From a pedagogical perspective, this may imply that strengthening L2 self-efficacy of language learners may be a higher priority than increasing their enjoyment or reducing their anxiety. As the findings suggest, students' L2 achievement can be enhanced not only by directly fostering learners' self-efficacy but also indirectly by promoting enjoyment and mitigating anxiety.

Both theoretical assumptions and extant literature suggest that L2 self-efficacy is not fixed but can be shaped by various antecedents (Bandura, 1997; Schunk et al., 2008; Young Kyo, 2022). Therefore, students' self-efficacy beliefs can be developed with the help of foreign language teachers. As Bandura (1997) states, self-efficacy beliefs can be reinforced through four main sources. Therefore, the effective use of these resources can

significantly contribute to the increase of language learners' self-efficacy beliefs. The first one is *mastery experiences*, which is claimed to be the most authentic and effective source. According to Bandura (1997), mastery experiences can be gained by overcoming difficulties through sequential and manageable steps.

In the context of L2 learning, such experiences can be developed in several ways. First, language teachers can assign learners achievable tasks that gradually increase in difficulty as learners become more proficient. This does not mean assigning students very easy tasks. On the contrary, students who experience easy successes may be more easily discouraged by failures (Bandura, 1997). Difficult but achievable tasks prepare students to persevere in the face of challenges, which in the long run increases their self-efficacy. Therefore, adjusting the difficulty of tasks is vital to maintain balance.

This approach is in line with Csíkszentmihályi's (1997) concept of flow, according to which learners experience flow when a task is appropriately balanced - neither too easy nor too difficult - and when their arousal level is optimal. This level should be high enough to keep students interested, but not so high as to impair their performance or so low as to lead to boredom (Egbert, 2003). Successful completion of progressively challenging tasks would reinforce students' beliefs that they can handle more complex tasks.

The second way to increase students' L2 self-efficacy could be to encourage their *vicarious experiences*. As Bandura (1997) suggests, these experiences can be gained by observing competent role models with whom they share similar characteristics such as age, skill level or background. In language classrooms, this can be practiced through group activities that can provide opportunities for students to learn from each other. Observing peers successfully using strategies to complete tasks such as giving a presentation or reading a complex text can encourage and motivate other students to adopt similar strategies. In this process, it is important that students focus not only on the outcome but also on the efforts and methods that lead to success, reinforcing the belief that with persistent effort they can achieve similar results.

As Bandura (1997) highlights, competent role models can also enhance self-efficacy by conveying knowledge and skills needed to navigate environmental requirements. At this point, peer mentorship programs, where more proficient learners help less experienced peers, can also foster vicarious experiences in a non-threatening environment. As a result of such experiences, these students would also gradually begin to perceive themselves as more self-efficacious by making efforts and developing their own language learning strategies.

The third way of reinforcing L2 self-efficacy beliefs of the language learners can be through *social persuasion*, which refers to the verbal and non-verbal encouragement, feedback, or communication that individuals receive from others regarding their abilities. In language classrooms, this can be achieved through providing constructive feedback and encouragement. For example, when giving feedback, teachers can point out the positive aspects, rather than focusing only on the negative aspects. Such balanced feedback can reinforce students' belief in their capacity to improve their learning. Teachers can also create a positive environment where failures are emphasized as natural part of the learning process. When students struggle with a language task, teachers can highlight and praise their perseverance and progress as a valuable part of the learning process. Teachers can consistently communicate their belief in students' potential to succeed. As a result, when the learners are convinced that they possess the ability to succeed, they tend to put in more effort and demonstrate greater perseverance.

As Bandura (1997) indicates, such encouragement can also be provided by the peers or mentors. Therefore, teachers can create a supportive environment, where students are giving constructive feedback to each other. Tasks such as role-plays, debates, and group projects can provide opportunities for peers to encourage each other through verbal praise and problem-solving support. Students can be encouraged to give peer feedback to each others' performance, by writing both positive aspects and the aspects that can be improved, in a non-threatening way. By implementing such strategies, teachers can

empower students to become sources of encouragement for one another. Peer social persuasion not only boosts self-efficacy but also builds a collaborative and positive classroom culture where learners feel supported and motivated.

Lastly, *physical and emotional states* may have an impact on self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). This assertion resonates with the current study's finding that both enjoyment and anxiety of the language learners have a significant and direct influence on students' L2 self-efficacy. Henceforth, the importance of addressing and regulating the students' anxiety and enjoyment, and promoting their well-being becomes apparent.

The current findings suggest that English language learners simultaneously experience high level of self-efficacy and moderate level of anxiety in the classroom. This highlights the complexity of emotional experiences in language learning, where positive beliefs in one's abilities do not necessarily eliminate feelings of apprehension. Teachers should acknowledge this duality by designing classroom practices that both build on students' self-efficacy and address their anxiety.

This study substantiated the existing literature and the claims of positive psychologists, affirming that, regardless of the educational context or proficiency levels, language learners experience L2 anxiety to some extent (MacIntyre, 2021; Oxford, 2016a). Therefore, it is essential for both teachers and students to recognize this reality. As MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) emphasized, "well-managed stress opens the door to positive-broadening emotion" (p. 206). Thus, applying effective strategies to reduce L2 learners' anxiety can foster a broadened mindset, ultimately leading to positive language learning outcomes. To address students' L2 anxiety, language teachers can encourage learners to view their anxiety as a natural part of the language learning process rather than a sign of inadequacy. Emphasizing that mistakes are opportunities for growth can help students reframe anxiety as a temporary challenge instead of a permanent flaw.

Recognizing that students may experience anxiety at different levels, teachers can offer varied task options tailored to individual comfort zones. For example, students who

feel anxious about speaking can start with written assignments or partner activities before progressing to group presentations. In general, providing ample opportunities for practice, assigning structured tasks, offering clear guidelines can help students feel more competent and less anxious in language classrooms.

The relevant research shows that teacher characteristics play a significant role in shaping L2 learners' anxiety. In her review study, Ertem (2023) found that teacher-related factors, such as authority, correction of mistakes, reactions to errors, and attitudes toward students, are significant sources of anxiety among Turkish EFL learners. Yan and Horwitz (2008) found that dynamic, humorous teachers who foster a supportive and relaxed classroom environment can decrease L2 students' anxiety levels. Therefore, cultivating a safe, enjoyable, relaxed, supportive, and non-judgmental atmosphere can alleviate students' anxiety. Providing specific and sincere feedback that highlights students' strengths can counterbalance feelings of inadequacy. For instance, praising a student for their creativity in constructing a sentence—even if minor errors are present—can shift the focus to their strengths.

Caring for students' psychological and emotional well-being is also crucial for reducing their anxiety. To manage anxiety symptoms, teachers can introduce strategies such as deep breathing, relaxation techniques, and mindfulness meditation. Furthermore, as Maddux (2011) suggests, techniques including meditation, relaxation training, and biofeedback could be offered to reduce anxiety and improve L2 learners' self-efficacy.

Both the existing literature and the current study have found that L2 students sometimes experience peer pressure, which increases their anxiety levels (Ertem, 2023; Yan & Horwitz, 2008). Creating a classroom culture where mistakes are not harshly criticized, either by the teacher or by peers, can help students perform to the best of their abilities. Teachers should encourage respect among peers, avoid ridicule, and emphasize that mistakes are a natural and essential part of language learning. Group work and pair activities can help anxious students feel less isolated and more supported by their peers.

Cooperative learning can distribute responsibility and provide opportunities for students to learn from and encourage each other.

The current study, which is also supported by the literature, shows that L2 students experience the most anxiety during speaking activities, especially when they are called upon to speak without preparation (Amiri & Ghonsooly, 2015; Zheng & Cheng, 2018). To address this, teachers can incorporate warm-up activities that allow students to brainstorm vocabulary or ideas related to potential speaking topics. This preparation can give students a sense of readiness, even when asked to speak spontaneously. Teachers can also allow students a few seconds to gather their thoughts before responding to spontaneous questions. Moreover, gradual exposure to speaking tasks can help desensitize students to anxiety-inducing situations. Teachers can start with low-stakes activities, such as simple question-and-answer exchanges or speaking in pairs or small groups, before progressing to more complex spontaneous speaking tasks. Last but not least, focusing on communication rather than perfection can celebrate students' efforts to express themselves, even if their responses are imperfect or incomplete.

This study showed that English language enjoyment, shaped by personal accomplishments, teacher-student relationships, and social interaction, plays a central role in creating positive language learning experiences. The results highlight that teacher supportiveness, friendliness, and encouragement are pivotal in fostering L2 enjoyment, as these qualities help create an enjoyable classroom environment.

Language teachers play a vital role in fostering positive emotions, such as joy, interest, and contentment, which encourage behaviors like exploring, integrating, and building relationships—key drivers of language learning (Dörnyei, 2008; Gardner, 2010). To nurture these emotions, teachers should create engaging activities that combine language practice with opportunities for collaboration and creative exploration. Additionally, building learners' resilience through strategies like humor, relaxation, and optimistic thinking can

help them cope with challenges and recover more effectively. These strengths can be modeled by the teacher and embedded in language tasks (Fredrickson, 2004).

Positive psychology underscores the importance of balancing positive and negative emotions rather than striving for the absence of negative emotions. As MacIntyre (2021) warns against the "tyranny of positive thinking," researchers and educators are encouraged to adopt a balanced perspective that acknowledges both positive and negative experiences in language learning. This study's finding that Turkish EFL learners experience higher levels of enjoyment than anxiety reflects this balanced view and aligns with previous studies (Csizér & Albert, 2024; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). While a moderate level of anxiety is natural and can even be beneficial, higher levels of enjoyment indicate a more supportive and effective language learning environment.

All in all, managing emotional dimensions—particularly through positive teacher-student interactions and a balanced approach to classroom dynamics—is key to optimizing language learning outcomes. Teachers should strive to create environments that allow for a harmonious interplay of enjoyment and anxiety. This balanced emotional landscape can not only promote students' emotional well-being but also enhance their motivation, perseverance, and overall language achievement. As such, an understanding of these emotional complexities is essential for fostering an effective, enjoyable, and supportive language learning experience.

By implementing these approaches and strategies, language teachers can promote L2 students' self-efficacy, mitigate anxiety, and foster enjoyment, leading to improved language learning experiences and, ultimately, L2 achievement.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

While this study offered valuable insights, it is essential to recognize several limitations that highlight the need for further research. First of all, in this study, self-report measures were utilized to assess L2 self-efficacy, anxiety, and enjoyment. Considering the

social desirability effect and response bias issues, future research could improve reliability and validity by incorporating different assessments such as classroom observations and teacher evaluations.

Because of the cross-sectional design, causal relationships cannot be established fully. While the findings suggest connections among L2 self-efficacy, anxiety, enjoyment, and achievement, there might be reverse causality or confounding factors. For stronger evidence for understanding the possible relations, future research could benefit from combining qualitative and quantitative methods to triangulate the results. Furthermore, longitudinal studies can be used to track changes in L2 self-efficacy, anxiety, enjoyment, and achievement. Additionally, to capture dynamic nature of these constructs, future research can measure these variables multiple times.

Moreover, this study investigated only the interactions among L2 self-efficacy, anxiety, enjoyment, and achievement without accounting for other factors that could influence language learning. Other psychological factors such as motivation, effort, self-regulation, and learning strategies may provide additional insights. Also, including other emotions—both positive and negative—such as hope, shame, and interest could enrich future research. Furthermore, since affective variables may vary with proficiency levels, further studies could investigate these relationships across different proficiency levels.

What is more, while this study tested the mediating role of L2 self-efficacy between L2 enjoyment-anxiety and L2 achievement, future research can test the mediating roles of L2 enjoyment and anxiety between L2 self-efficacy and achievement since existing literature suggests potential reciprocal relationships among these variables.

Lastly, this research was conducted with Turkish EFL students studying at a university. Therefore, results cannot be generalized to other populations or contexts. Replicating this study with different samples in diverse settings might provide more generalizable results.

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APPENDIX-A: English and Turkish Versions of the FLSES

English Version of the Foreign Language Self-efficacy Scale

Instruction: Please read the following statements carefully and select the option that best applies to you.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. "I am confident that I can do the speaking tasks in the EFL class"					
2. "I am confident that I can do the reading tasks in the EFL class"					
3. "I am confident that I can do the writing tasks in the EFL class"					
4. "I am confident that I can do the listening tasks in the EFL class"					
5. "I am confident that I can understand what is said in English in the EFL class"					
6. "I am confident that I can answer questions in English in the EFL class"					
7. "I am confident that I can understand what is said in English outside the classroom"					
8. "I am confident that I can understand what I read in English outside the classroom"					
9. "I am confident that I can express myself in writing in English outside the classroom"					

Turkish Version of the Foreign Language Self-efficacy Scale

“Yabancı Dil Özyeterlik Ölçeği”

Yönerge: Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri dikkatlice okuyunuz ve size en uygun olan seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
1. “İngilizce dersinde konuşma aktivitelerini yapabileceğime inanıyorum”					
2. “İngilizce dersinde okuma aktivitelerini yapabileceğime inanıyorum”					
3. “İngilizce dersinde yazma aktivitelerini yapabileceğime inanıyorum”					
4. “İngilizce dersinde dinleme aktivitelerini yapabileceğime inanıyorum”					
5. “Derste İngilizce söylenenleri anlayabileceğime inanıyorum”					
6. “Derste İngilizce soruları yanıtlayabileceğime inanıyorum”					
7. “Ders dışında İngilizce konuşulanları anlayabileceğime inanıyorum”					
8. “Ders dışında İngilizce okuduklarımı anlayabileceğime inanıyorum”					
9. “Ders dışında kendimi İngilizce yazılı olarak ifade edebileceğime inanıyorum”					

APPENDIX-B: English and Turkish Versions of the S-FLES

English Version of the Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale

Instruction: Please read the following statements carefully and select the option that best applies to you.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. "The teacher is encouraging"					
2. "The teacher is friendly"					
3. "The teacher is supportive"					
4. "I enjoy it"					
5. "I've learned interesting things"					
6. "I am proud of my accomplishments"					
7. "We form a tight group"					
8. "We laugh a lot"					
9. "We have common 'legends,' such as running jokes"					

Turkish Version of the the Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale

“Yabancı Dil Keyfi Ölçeği Kısa Formu”

Yönerge: Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri dikkatlice okuyunuz ve size en uygun olan seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
1. “İngilizce öğretmeni cesaretlendiricidir”					
2. “İngilizce öğretmeni sıcakkanlıdır”					
3. “İngilizce öğretmeni destekleyicidir”					
4. “İngilizce dersinden keyif alıyorum”					
5. “İngilizce dersinde ilgi çekici bilgiler öğreniyorum”					
6. “İngilizce dersindeki başarılarımla gurur duyuyorum”					
7. “İngilizce dersinde iyi bir grubuz”					
8. “İngilizce dersinde çok güleriz”					
9. “İngilizce dersinde herkesin anladığı espriler gibi ortak paylaşımlarımız var”					

APPENDIX-C: English and Turkish Versions of the S-FLCAS

English Version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Instruction: Please read the following statements carefully and select the option that best applies to you.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. "Even if I am well prepared for FL class, I feel anxious about it"					
2. "I always feel that the other students speak the FL better than I do"					
3. "I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in FL class"					
4. "I don't worry about making mistakes in FL class"					
5. "I feel confident when I speak in FL class"					
6. "I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my FL class"					
7. "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in FL class"					
8. "It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my FL class"					

Turkish Version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

“Yabancı Dil Sınıf Kaygısı Ölçeği Kısa Formu”

Yönerge: Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri dikkatlice okuyunuz ve size en uygun olan seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

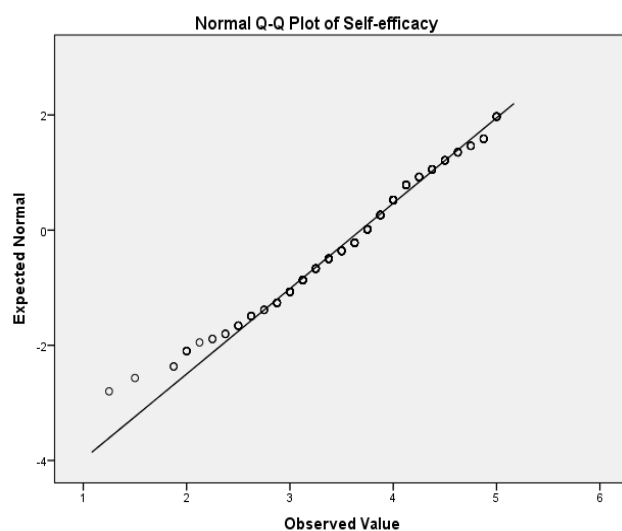
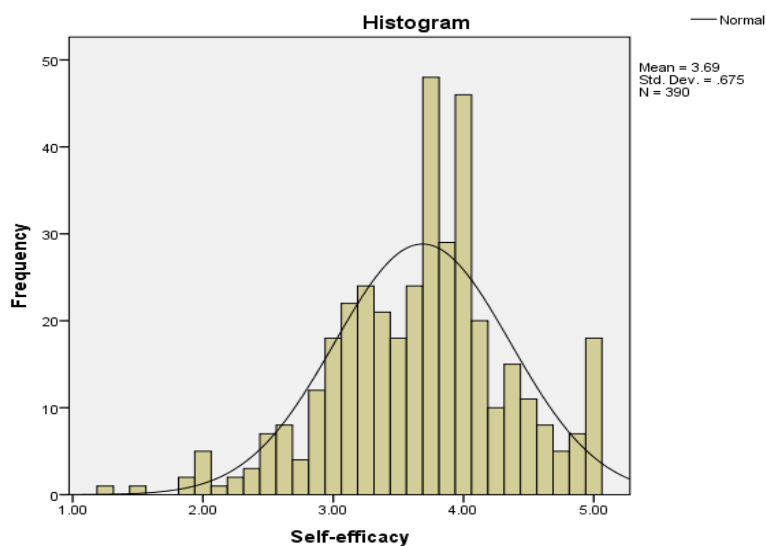
	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
1. “Önceden iyi hazırlanmış olsam bile derste heyecanlanıyorum”					
2. “Diğer öğrencilerin her zaman benden daha iyi İngilizce konuştuğunu düşünüyorum”					
3. “İngilizce dersinde sıra bana geldiği zaman kalbimin hızlı hızlı attığını hissediyorum”					
4. “İngilizce dersinde hata yapmak beni endişelendirmez”					
5. “İngilizce dersinde konuştuğum zaman kendime güvenirim”					
6. “İngilizce dersinde konuştuğum zaman hem tedirgin oluyorum hem de kafam karışıyor”					
7. “İngilizce dersinde hazırlıksız konuşmak zorunda kaldığımda paniğe kapılıyorum”					
8. “İngilizce dersinde sorulan sorulara gönüllü olarak cevap vermeye çekiniyorum”					

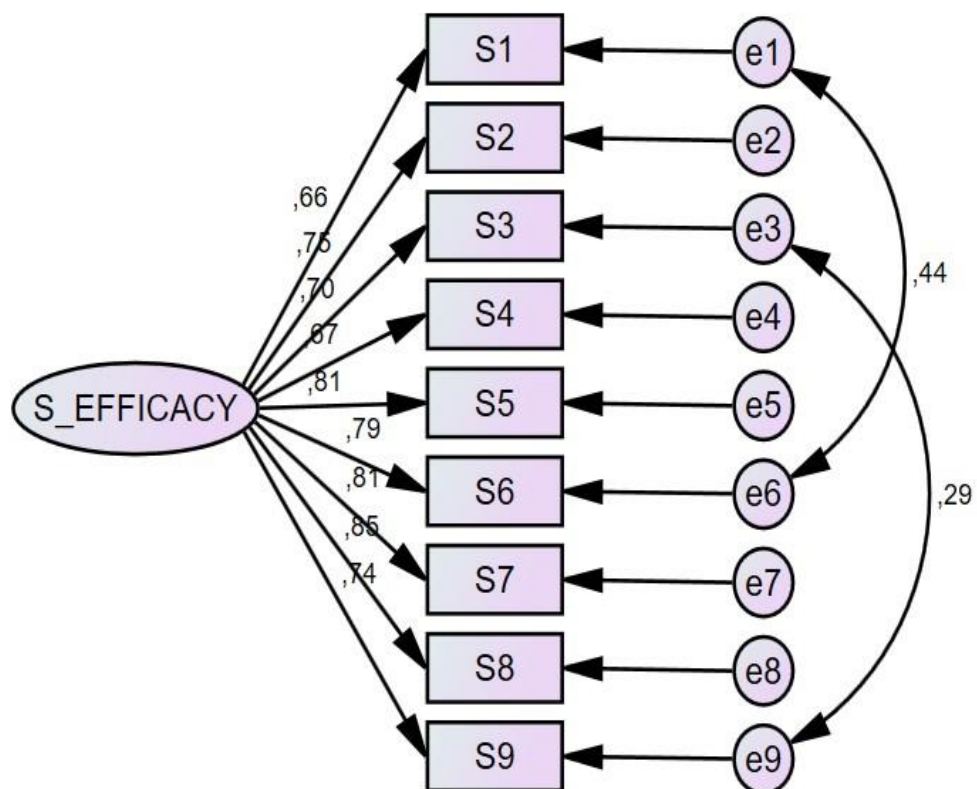
APPENDIX-D: Pilot Study Results of the FLSES

Test of Normality of the FLSES

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean	3.69	.273
5% Trimmed Mean	3.69	
Median	3.75	
Minimum	1.25	
Maximum	5	
Std. Deviation	.675	
Skewness	-.328	.124
Kurtosis	.422	.247

Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plots of the FLSES



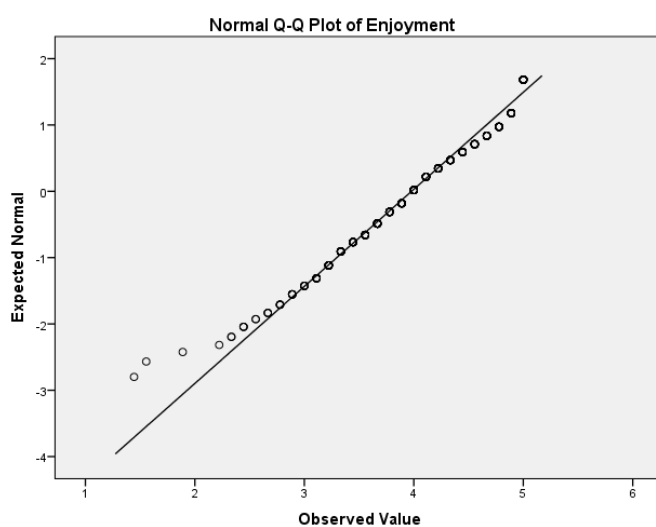
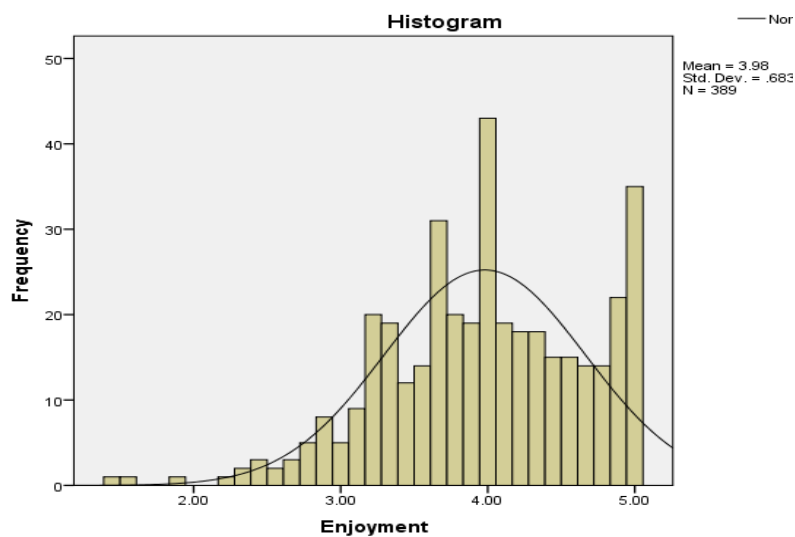
Path Diagram and Factor Loadings of the FLSES

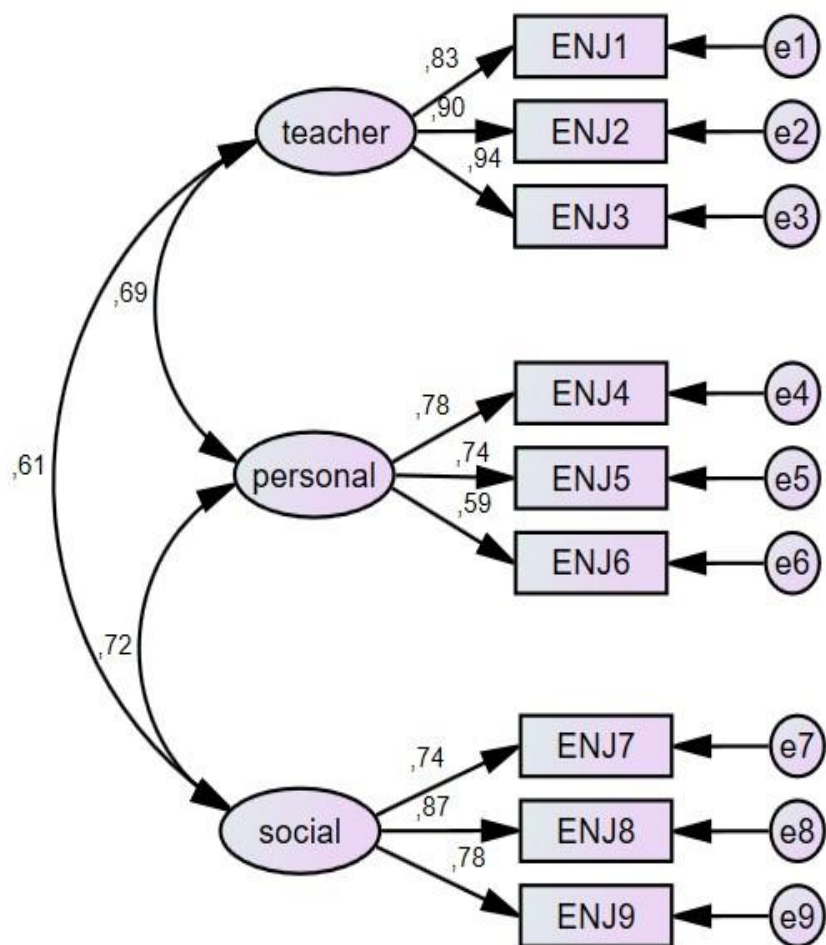
APPENDIX-E: Pilot Study Results of the S-FLES

Test of Normality of the S-FLES

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean	3.98	.034
5% Trimmed Mean	4.00	
Median	4.00	
Minimum	1.44	
Maximum	5	
Std. Deviation	.683	
Skewness	-.440	.124
Kurtosis	.104	.247

Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plots of the S-FLES



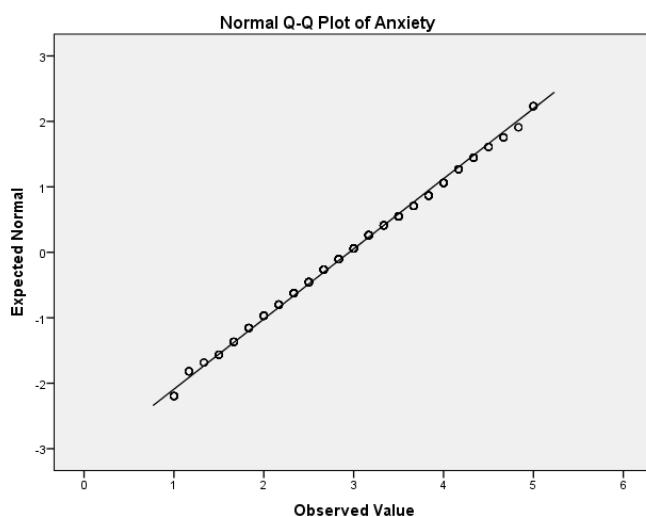
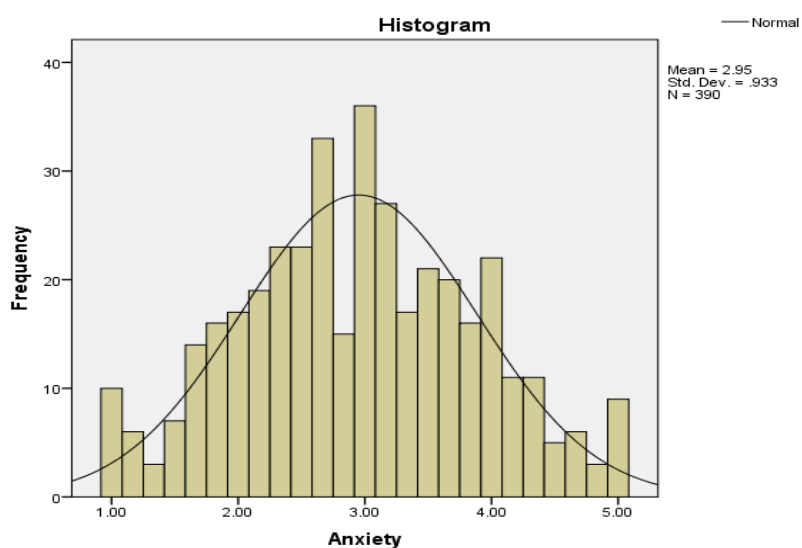
Path Diagram and Factor Loadings of the S-FLES

APPENDIX-F: Pilot Study Results of the S-FLCAS

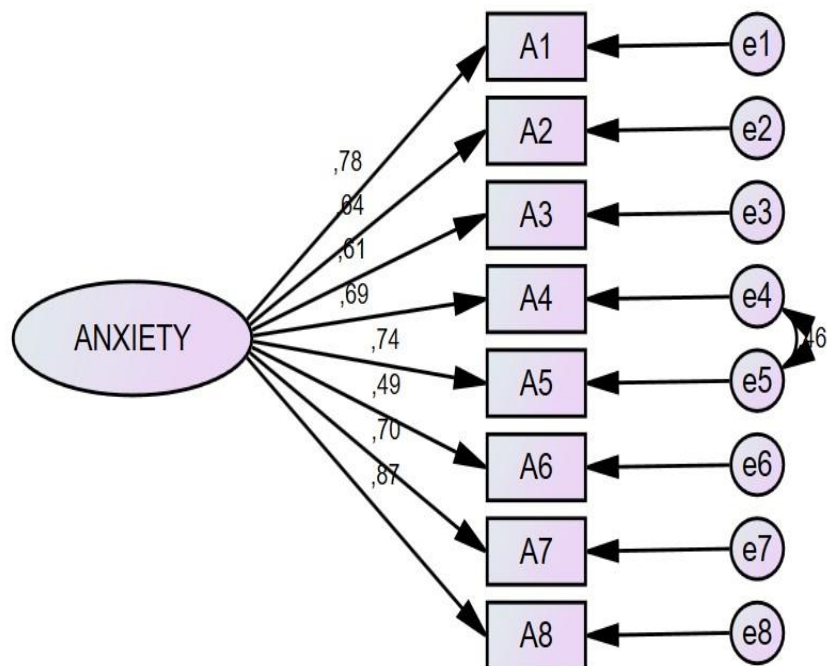
Test of Normality of the S-FLCAS

	Statistic	Std. Error
Mean	2.95	.047
5% Trimmed Mean	2.94	
Median	3.00	
Minimum	1	
Maximum	5	
Std. Deviation	.933	
Skewness	.055	.124
Kurtosis	-.505	.247

Histogram and Normal Q-Q Plots of the S-FLCAS



Path Diagram and Factor Loadings of the S-FLCAS



APPENDIX-G: Ethics Committee Approval

Tarih: 20/03/2020
Sayı: E-35853172-101.02.02-00001052422
00001052422



T.C.
HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Rektörlük

Sayı : 35853172-101.02.02
Konu : Hilal GÜNEŞ (Etik Komisyon İzni)

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

İlgi : 06.03.2020 tarihli ve 51944218-101.02.02/00001039600 sayılı yazı.

Enstitünüz Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı Doktora programı öğrencilerinden **Hilal GÜNEŞ**'in **Doç. Dr. Hacer Hande UYSAL GÜRDAL** danışmanlığında yürüttüğü "**Üniversite Düzeyinde Pozitif Psikolojinin Öğeleri ile İngilizce Öğrenme Başarısı Arasındaki İlişki**" başlıklı tez çalışması Üniversitemiz Senatosu Etik Komisyonunun **10 Mart 2020** tarihinde yapmış olduğu toplantıda incelenmiş olup, etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini saygılarımla rica ederim.

e-imzalıdır
Prof. Dr. Rahime Meral NOHUTCU
Rektör Yardımcısı

APPENDIX-H: Declaration of Ethical Conduct

I hereby declare that...

- I have prepared this thesis in accordance with the thesis writing guidelines of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences of Hacettepe University;
- all information and documents in the thesis/dissertation have been obtained in accordance with academic regulations;
- all audio visual and written information and results have been presented in compliance with scientific and ethical standards;
- in case of using other people's work, related studies have been cited in accordance with scientific and ethical standards;
- all cited studies have been fully and decently referenced and included in the list of References;
- I did not do any distortion and/or manipulation on the data set,
- and **NO** part of this work was presented as a part of any other thesis study at this or any other university.

(17) /(02)/(25)

(Signature)

Hilal GÜNEŞ

APPENDIX-I: Dissertation Originality Report

17/02/2025

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Educational Sciences
To The Department of Foreign Language Education

Thesis Title: The Interrelations among English Language Self-Efficacy, Enjoyment, Anxiety, and Achievement of University Students

The whole thesis that includes the *title page, introduction, main chapters, conclusions and bibliography section* is checked by using **Turnitin** plagiarism detection software take into the consideration requested filtering options. According to the originality report obtained data are as below.

Time Submitted	Page Count	Character Count	Date of Thesis Defense	Similarity Index	Submission ID
17/02/2025	213	329,984	17/12/2024	12	2598217106

Filtering options applied:

1. Bibliography excluded
2. Quotes excluded
3. Match size up to 5 words excluded

I declare that I have carefully read Hacettepe University Graduate School of Educational Sciences Guidelines for Obtaining and Using Thesis Originality Reports; that according to the maximum similarity index values specified in the Guidelines, my thesis does not include any form of plagiarism; that in any future detection of possible infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility; and that all the information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

Name Lastname: Hilal Güneş

Student No.: 16145163

Department: Foreign Language Education

Program: English Language Teaching

Status: ☐ Masters ☒ Ph.D. ☐ Integrated Ph.D.

Signature

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED
(Prof. Dr. Hacer Hande UYSAL GÜRDAL)

APPENDIX-J: Yayımlama ve Fikrî Mülkiyet Hakları Beyanı

Enstitü tarafından onaylanan lisansüstü tezimin/raporumun tamamını veya herhangi bir kısmını, basılı (kâğıt) ve elektronik formatta arşivleme ve aşağıda verilen koşullarla kullanıma açma iznini Hacettepe Üniversitesine verdiğimi bildiririm. Bu izinle Üniversiteye verilen kullanım hakları dışındaki tüm fikri mülkiyet haklarım bende kalacak, tezimin tamamının ya da bir bölümünün gelecekteki çalışmalarda (makale, kitap, lisans ve patent vb.) kullanım hakları bana ait olacaktır.

Tezin kendi orijinal çalışmam olduğunu, başkalarının haklarını ihlal etmediğimi ve tezimin tek yetkili sahibi olduğumu beyan ve taahhüt ederim. Tezimde yer alan telif hakkı bulunan ve sahiplerinden yazılı izin alınarak kullanılması zorunlu metinlerin yazılı izin alınarak kullandığımı ve istenildiğinde suretlerini Üniversiteye teslim etmeyi taahhüt ederim.

Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından yayınlanan “**Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge**” kapsamında tezim aşağıda belirtilen koşullar haricince YÖK Ulusal Tez Merkezi / H.Ü. Kütüphaneleri Açık Erişim Sisteminde erişime açılır.

- Enstitü/Fakülte yönetim kurulu kararı ile tezimin erişime açılması mezuniyet tarihinden itibaren 2 yıl ertelenmiştir.⁽¹⁾
- Enstitü/Fakülte yönetim kurulunun gerekçeli kararı ile tezimin erişime açılması mezuniyet tarihinden itibaren ... ay ertelenmiştir.⁽²⁾
- Tezimle ilgili gizlilik kararı verilmiştir.⁽³⁾

..... / /

(imza)

Hilal GÜNEŞ

“Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge”

- (1) Madde 6. 1. Lisansüstü teze ilgili patent başvurusu yapılması veya patent alma sürecinin devam etmesi durumunda, tez danışmanının önerisi ve enstitü anabilim dalının uygun görüşü üzerine enstitü veya fakülte yönetim kurulu iki yıl süre ile tez erişime açılmasının ertelenmesine karar verebilir.
- (2) Madde 6. 2. Yeni teknik, materyal ve metotların kullanıldığı, henüz makaleye dönüşmemiş veya patent gibi yöntemlerle korunmamış ve internette paylaşılmamış durumda 3. şahıslara veya kurumlara haksız kazanç; imkânı oluşturabilecek bilgi ve bulguları içeren tezler hakkında tez danışmanının önerisi ve enstitü anabilim dalının uygun görüşü üzerine enstitü veya fakülte yönetim kurulunun gerekçeli kararı ile altı ayı aşmamak üzere tezin erişime açılması engellenebilir.
- (3) Madde 7. 1. Ulusal çıkarları veya güvenliği ilgilendiren, emniyet, istihbarat, savunma ve güvenlik, sağlık vb. konulara ilişkin lisansüstü tezlerle ilgili gizlilik kararı, tezin yapıldığı kurum tarafından verilir*. Kurum ve kuruluşlarla yapılan işbirliği protokolü çerçevesinde hazırlanan lisansüstü tezlere ilişkin gizlilik kararı ise, ilgili kurum ve kuruluşun önerisi ile enstitü veya fakültenin uygun görüşü üzerine üniversite yönetim kurulu tarafından verilir. Gizlilik kararı verilen tezler Yükseköğretim Kuruluna bildirilir.

Madde 7. 2. Gizlilik kararı verilen tezler gizlilik süresince enstitü veya fakülte tarafından gizlilik kuralları çerçevesinde muhafaza edilir, gizlilik kararının kaldırılması halinde Tez Otomasyon Sistemine yüklenir

*Tez danışmanının önerisi ve enstitü anabilim dalının uygun görüşü üzerine enstitü veya fakülte yönetim kurulu tarafından karar verilir.

