

A Path-Analytic Study into Foreign Language Enjoyment, Willingness to Communicate in English, Self-Efficacy, and Academic Achievement

Yusuf Demir and Hatice Okyar

Abstract

This paper reports on a study that intended to (a) reveal the extent of English Foreign Language (EFL) learners' foreign language enjoyment (FLE), their self-efficacy, and willingness to communicate (WTC) in English, and (b) try out a hypothesized model to find out whether FLE, self-efficacy and academic achievement predict learners WTC in English. A total of 257 tertiary-level Turkish EFL students participated in the study. The data were collected through three quantitative scales to elicit the constructs in question as well as the participants' English achievement test scores. Analysis of the data included the use of descriptive statistics to present the students' WTC, FLE, and self-efficacy levels while a path analysis was performed to verify the hypothesized model. The results showed that the participants had a moderate level of WTC and self-efficacy, and a favorable amount of FLE. More prominently, path analysis results revealed that FLE and English achievement predicted self-efficacy, and self-efficacy predicted WTC to a significant extent. In addition, FLE and English achievement indirectly affected WTC through the mediation of self-efficacy. FLE was also found to be a significant predictor of English achievement.

Keywords: English as a Second Language; Willingness to communicate, Foreign language enjoyment, Self-efficacy, Path analysis, Academic achievement

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Encouraging students to be effective and communicatively competent users of a foreign language is considered to be at the very heart of contemporary principles of language teaching (MacIntyre, Baker, Clement & Conrod, 2001). Therefore, an instructional setting in which language learners are apparently willing to communicate in L2 is a real necessity beyond any doubt (MacIntyre, Clement, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998). To put it another way, willingness to communicate (WTC), defined briefly as, “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using a L2” (p. 547) needs to be one of the main motives for students as the outcome of language instruction. WTC was initially presented by McCroskey and Baer (1985) to the literature regarding first language (L1) use, and later its relation to L2 started to become a considerable area of interest for researchers (e.g. Alemi, Daftarifard & Pashmforoosh, 2011; MacIntyre et al., 1998; Peng, 2012; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Watanabe, 2013). For instance, adapting the WTC construct of McCroskey and Baer (1985), MacIntyre et al. (1998) suggested a model of variables (i.e. linguistic, communicative, and social psychological) that influence L2 WTC. These variables are composed of personality, intergroup climate, communicative competence, social situation, intergroup attitudes, L2 self-confidence, intergroup motivation, interpersonal motivation, state communicative self-confidence, and desire to communicate with a specific person (MacIntyre et al., 1998). In this model, WTC refers to, “the most immediate determinant of L2 use” (Clement, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003, p.190) because it appears as the last phase prior to L2 use, which points out that it is time to act (MacIntyre, 2007). As the authors of the present study, we call this turning point ‘the time for breaking chains to speak in L2’. By identifying the aforementioned variables, MacIntyre et al. (1998) showed that L2 WTC and L2 use of the learners can be influenced by a variety of inside and outside factors.

One of the factors that has often been investigated in relation to WTC is learners' language anxiety (e.g. Alemi et al., 2011; Baran-Lucarz, 2014). However, the number of studies on its relationship with positive emotions (e.g. joy, interest) is apparently very limited (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Fredrickson, 2004). Viewing positive emotions as a neglected area of research in this respect, Fredrickson (1998, 2004) developed her broaden-and-build theory, which emphasizes that, "positive emotions serve to broaden an individual's momentary thought-action repertoire, which in turn has the effect of building that individual's physical, intellectual, and social resources" (Fredrickson, 1998, p. 1). Put differently, positive emotions contribute to the development of a person's "personal resources, whether they be physical resources (e.g., the ability to outmaneuver a predator), intellectual resources (e.g., a detailed cognitive map for way finding), or social resources (e.g., someone to turn to for help or compassion)" (p. 14). In the most general sense, positive emotions like 'joy, interest, contentment, love' are the feelings distinguished from negative emotions such as 'anxiety, sadness, anger' (Fredrickson, 2004). As a result of the need for a change of research focus from L2 anxiety to positive emotions (Jin & Zhang, 2018), positive psychology in SLA has become the major reference point for language researchers (e.g. MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014) as the ones in this recent study. Most recently, enjoyment as being one of the positive emotions, and referring to, "the sense of satisfaction and reward generated from the activity and/or the outcome of the activity" (Ainley & Hidi, 2014, p. 206) has attracted applied linguists' attention within the framework of foreign language enjoyment (FLE). Little work exists on enjoyment in relation to foreign language learning, and the studies in the literature are mostly designed with a main focus on the relationship between anxiety and enjoyment as located at the opposite ends of the continuum (e.g. Boudreau, MacIntyre, & Dewaele, 2018;

Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Dewaele, Witney, Saito, & Dewaele, 2018; Uzun, 2017). To date, to the best of our knowledge, only one study was conducted on FLE in the Turkish context. In his study, Uzun (2017) investigated university level students' FLE and foreign language anxiety (FLA) levels. He found that the level of FLE was significantly higher when compared to the level of FLA, and there was a negative correlation between the two constructs. Scarcity of studies on FLE calls for an in-depth research. With this gap in mind, the present study is determined to contribute to the field with its additional focus on FLE, by revealing learners' FLE level and its interactions with a number of significant constructs under a path analysis model.

In addition to FLE, another concept that deserves to be investigated in relation to WTC is L2 learners' perceived self-efficacy, which is defined by Bandura (1995) as, "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (p. 2). More specifically, as Brown (2007b) states, it refers to, "a person's belief in his or her ability to accomplish a task" (p.73). When this belief is available enough in the individual, she can strive more toward her goals (Bandura, 1977). Approaching this belief from the perspective of L2 learners, when they believe in themselves and their language-related capabilities, they can take action to use the target language (Brown, 2007b). Based on this inference, some researchers (e.g. Brown, 2007a; Matsuoka, 2006) put forward that self-efficacy and WTC are related concepts, and this connection has lately been an area of research interest for researchers in the field. For instance, Tasdemir (2018), focusing on high-school EFL learners in Turkey, explored the relationship between these two constructs and found a significant positive correlation between them. On this basis, it was assumed that the higher the level of self-efficacy is, so is the level of their WTC. Similarly, Matsuoka (2006) found that self-efficacy strongly and

positively predicted WTC in L2. In this respect, Matsuoka's study underlines that learners' self-efficacy, that is to say, their positive beliefs about their level of ability in learning and using English eventually leads to WTC.

Along with the nonlinguistic variables (FLE and self-efficacy) mentioned above, the relationship between L2 learners' achievement and WTC also emerges as a factor under scrutiny. Some studies (e.g. Mahmoodi & Moazam, 2014; Rastegar & Karami, 2015) indicated that WTC and L2 success are positively correlated. As for Kim (2004), WTC predicts learners' success in L2, in other words, strong WTC has the potential to indicate advanced language proficiency. In a similar vein, Valadi, Rezaee and Baharvand (2015) found in their study that EFL learners with more WTC had higher proficiency in speaking. Contrary to these positive findings, there is one specific study disaffirming this link. Joe, Hiver and Al-Hoorie (2017) found WTC not to be a predictor of L2 achievement. They underlined that high level of WTC did not positively affect L2 success.

The potential ties of the abovementioned constructs (i.e. FLE, self-efficacy, academic achievement) to WTC requires a comprehensive investigation. Having identified this significant gap in the literature, the current study first intends to examine the learners' level of WTC, FLE, self-efficacy, and academic achievement in addition to possible sources of FLE. Another key contribution of this study to the field is its additional concern to reveal the factor structure of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale. More prominently, this study has constructed and tested a hypothesized model which integrates WTC in English, FLE, self-efficacy and academic achievement. Using a path analysis model, this study is a seminal one in terms of documenting whether the above constructs predict WTC. With these perspectives, this study aims to shed light upon the following research questions:

1. How much WTC, self-efficacy and FLE is reported by Turkish EFL learners?
2. Do FLE, self-efficacy and academic achievement predict WTC?

Methodology

Participants

The data for this study were collected from 257 tertiary-level EFL learners (143 males, 114 females) enrolled in the English preparatory program of a state university in Turkey. They were sampled randomly, amounting to half of the whole population. The students in the program receive one, year-long English course before they start mainstream education in their faculties where English is the medium of instruction in certain subjects. The time the data collection tools were administered, the student participants had already spent more than a semester in the program, which was considered adequate for them to effectively attend to the content of the instruments.

Instruments

English Classroom Enjoyment Scale (ECES)

The first data collection instrument used in this study was the *Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale* (FLES) developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014). The 5-point Likert-type scale consisted of 21 items, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), within the following limit values: ‘strongly disagree’ (1.00 – 1.79), ‘disagree’ (1.80 – 2.59), ‘undecided’ (2.60 – 3.39), ‘agree’ (3.40 – 4.19) and ‘strongly agree’ (4.20 – 5.00). In order for the Turkish participants to get a sound grasp of the items, the FLES was translated into Turkish. In translation process, the following procedure was followed: The FLES was first translated into Turkish by both of the researchers separately. Then, these translations were agreed upon through negotiation by handling minor controversies. In what follows, the translated scale was back

translated to English by two ELT colleagues. The Turkish and English versions were then compared in company with a Turkish and an English language instructor. They approved the one-to-one correspondence between the items of the Turkish version and that of the original one. In addition, *English class* was put to use in the translated FLES to accord with the present research context as in Jin and Zhang (2018) who did the same for a Chinese adaptation. Therefore, the FLES was renamed as the *English Classroom Enjoyment Scale (ECES)*. Following the translation procedure, in order to reveal the factor structure underlying the scale items in the Turkish context, exploratory factor analysis was employed on the 21-item enjoyment scale through SPSS 23.0. First, in terms of construct validity, sample appropriateness was analyzed. Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient for the sample was found as .82, which means the sample size was adequate for this study. The results of the Bartlett's test showed that the values regarding the distribution ($\chi^2=2559,64$, $df=210$, $p=0.000$) were appropriate for exploratory factor analysis. A quartimax rotation was applied, and a minimum of factor loading of .32 was considered as acceptable for the analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) while at the same time cross-loadings were avoided. The items 2, 5 and 11 were removed from the scale due to low factor loads, and item 13 was removed due to cross-loading.

When the commonalities were examined, the shared values were seen above .31, and Eigen values revealed five dimensions above 1. However, it was noticed that the component values after the first two dimensions were clustered proximally. Therefore, when taken together with the Scree Plot (Appendix 1), the three-factor structure was acknowledged. Factor loads ranged from .46 to .84 (Appendix 2). It was seen that the items 1,3,4,6,7,8,9,12 belonged to the first dimension (Enjoyment of English learning), 15,16 and 17 to the second (Enjoyment of teacher support), and 10,14,18,19,20,21 to the third dimension (Enjoyment of student support).

These dimensions were labelled based on the relevance of the items to teachers, students, and English learning itself (Jin & Zhang, 2018). When the variance was considered, the total variance explained by the 3-factored structure was found to be 59.07%. Alpha reliability coefficients for the overall scale, Enjoyment of teacher support, Enjoyment of English learning, and Enjoyment of student support dimensions were found as .902, .90, .822, and .885, respectively. The correlations between the dimensions of the scale were also analyzed. As seen in Table 1, there are positive and significant correlations between the dimensions.

Table 1

Correlations between the Dimensions of the ECES

Dimensions	English learning	Teacher support	Student support
English learning	1.00	.303*	.281*
Teacher support		1.00	.490*
Student support			1.00

* $p < 0.0$

As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, a 17-item three-factor ECES emerged. After the ECES was administered, the students were also asked to respond to the following open-ended prompt: Describe one specific event or episode in your FL class that you really enjoyed, and describe your feeling in as much detail as possible (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 246). This way, exemplary reflections were collected to be of support and complementary to the quantitative results.

Willingness to Communicate Scale (WTC)

The second instrument was the *Willingness to Communicate scale* developed by McCroskey (1992). The scale that specified 12 items for different communication contexts

(group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations and public speaking) and for different receivers (strangers, acquaintances and friends) measured the participants' degree of WTC in English. For each of the 12 situations given, the scale elicits participants' level of willingness ranging from 0 (never) to 100 (always). The Turkish translated version of the WTC scale used in this study was borrowed from Cetinkaya (2005) in which she pursued some procedures for accuracy of the translation. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.94 for her adaptation, and .961 for the present study.

Self-efficacy Scale

The self-efficacy scale used in this study was originally developed in the Turkish language by Hancı-Yanar and Bümen (2012) in order to measure high school EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs in English. They conducted exploratory factor analysis to explore dimensions and item loads, and confirmatory factor analysis to test the model and verify the dimensions. They came up with a valid and reliable (Alpha coefficient = .97) self-efficacy scale. The scale consisted of 34 Likert-type items under the dimensions of reading (8 items), writing (10 items), listening (10 items), and speaking (6 items), ranging from very untrue of me (1) to very true of me (5). The reliability coefficients for the dimensions of the scale were .92, .88, .93, and .92, respectively. In this study, reliability coefficients for the overall scale was .946, and for reading, writing, listening, and speaking dimensions were .849, .832, .881, and .863, respectively.

English Achievement Tests

The students took two mid-term examinations throughout the semester as the indicator of their English achievement for this study. The mid-terms were an amalgamation of essay writing, cloze tests, multiple choice questions, true/false options and speaking sessions which measured macro skills (i.e. speaking, listening, writing, reading) as well as micro skills (vocabulary and grammar). The scores from these two mid-terms were aggregated to compose one particular

score. In other words, the two mid-term results were averaged to serve as another variable for the study

Data analysis

The participants' English scores and item scores obtained from all the three scales were input into SPSS 23.0 software without reversely coding the items (except for one item in self-efficacy scale). In the reporting of the results of the first research question, i.e. how much WTC, self-efficacy, and ECE was reported by the students, descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage and standard deviation were utilized.

Path Analysis

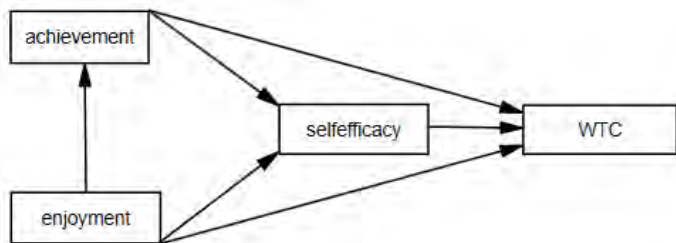
To verify the theoretical model of the study offered in the second research question, path analysis was run using AMOS 23. Having been first introduced by Sewall Wright in the 1930s, path analysis is a subset of the multivariate Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) aimed to discover the magnitude and significance of paths (relationships) among sets of variables in a prespecified and hypothesized model. Path analysis allows to make predictions concerning hypothetical causalities (Deliktas, Usta, Bozkurt & Helvacı, 2008). Similar to multiple-regression analysis, in path analysis, interactions and relationships among a number of variables are examined in a holistic manner (Meydan & Sesen, 2011) in order to analyze impacts on dependent variables within the model (Stage, Carter & Nora, 2004). However, "in the multiple regression analysis, dependent variable is regressed in a single analysis on all independent variables [while] in path analysis, more than one regression analysis may be called for" (Jeon, 2015, p. 1638). Path analysis is structured around a specific set of causal connections among traits to determine fitness whereas a multiple regression presumes a simpler causal linkage in which all traits impact directly on fitness (Scheiner, Mitchell & Callahan; 2000). In addition,

path analysis can measure total, direct and indirect effects while trying out causal models (Asher, 1983).

In this study, path analysis was employed in order to explore the predictive value of certain constructs. To be more specific, it was hypothesized within the theoretical model of the study (Figure 1) that academic achievement and English classroom enjoyment exert direct influences on self-efficacy and willingness to communicate, and indirect influences on willingness to communicate through the mediation of self-efficacy. It was also assumed that self-efficacy has a direct effect on willingness to communicate, and English classroom enjoyment has a direct effect on achievement.

Figure 1

The model tested



Results

The Level of WTC, Self-efficacy and FLE Reported by Turkish EFL Learners

The first research question involved understanding the level of WTC, self-efficacy, and ECE perceived by the participants. Their engagement in these constructs is reported below.

Level of Willingness to Communicate**Table 2***The Participants' Item-based WTC*

Willingness to Communicate	\bar{X}	SD
1 Have a small-group conversation in English with acquaintances	65.54	28.11
2 Give a presentation in English to a group of strangers	35.70	29.03
3 Give a presentation in English to a group of friends	51.44	28.30
4 Talk in English in a large meeting among strangers	38.07	30.13
5 Have a small-group conversation in English with strangers	42.92	29.88
6 Talk in English in a large meeting among friends	51.93	30.76
7 Talk in English to friends	69.89	26.86
8 Talk in English in a large meeting with acquaintances	53.45	28.99
9 Talk in English to acquaintances	65.21	28.55
10 Give a presentation in English to a group of acquaintances	50.18	29.01
11 Talk in English to a stranger	51.35	31.94
12 Talk in English to a small group of friends	61.73	28.04
WTC Total	52.95	23.77

McCroskey and Richmond (2013) specified the following value ranges for WTC: Total WTC > 82 High Overall WTC < 52 Low Overall WTC. Considering these ranges, as shown in Table 2, the students reported a medium level of general WTC (\bar{X} =52.95). While the students were most willing to talk in English to friends (\bar{X} =69.89), to have a small-group conversation in English

with acquaintances (\bar{X} =65.54), to talk in English to acquaintances (\bar{X} =65.21), and to talk in English to a small group of friends (\bar{X} =61.73), the least rated willingness items were reported as giving a presentation in English to a group of strangers (\bar{X} =35.70), talking in English in a large meeting among strangers (\bar{X} =38.07), and having a small-group conversation in English with strangers (\bar{X} =42.92).

WTC scale also drew up specifications in order to determine individuals' WTC in different types of context for communication, and with different types of receivers. Types of communication contexts included public speaking, meetings, group discussions, and interpersonal conversations. Level of WTC for these communication contexts were measured in light of the following reference ranges (McCroskey & Richmond, 2013):

Group discussion >89 High WTC, <57 Low WTC (Items 1, 5, 12)

Meetings >80 High WTC, <39 Low WTC (Items 4, 6, 8)

Interpersonal conversations >94 High WTC, <64 Low WTC (Items 7, 9, 11)

Public Speaking >78 High WTC, <33 Low WTC (Items 2, 3,10)

Table 3

The Participants' WTC across Four Communication Contexts

Communication Contexts	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>
Public Speaking	45.77	25.69
Meetings	47.82	26.58
Group Discussions	56.06	24.82
Interpersonal Conversation	62.15	24.96
WTC Total	52.95	23.77

As shown in Table 3, public speaking ($\bar{X}=45.77$) and meetings ($\bar{X}=47.82$) were the contexts for which the students reported the least willingness to engage in communication. These mean scores amount to a medium level of WTC for these contexts. However, the students reported considerably higher levels of WTC when the contexts were in the form of interpersonal conversations ($\bar{X}=62.15$) and group discussions ($\bar{X}=56.06$), though these indicated low levels of WTC according to the set norms. These results overall show that when engaged in communication in daily informal contexts such as interpersonal and group conversations, the students tend to be more willing to communicate in comparison to relatively formal-seeming contexts such as public speaking and meetings.

When the students' WTC is analyzed in terms of different types of receivers which include strangers, acquaintances, and friends, the following norms can be considered (McCroskey & Richmond, 2013):

Stranger >63 High WTC, <18 Low WTC (Items 2, 4, 5, 11)

Acquaintance >92 High WTC, <57 Low WTC (Items 1, 8, 9, 10)

Friend >99 High WTC, <71 Low WTC (Items 3, 6, 7, 12)

Table 4

The Participants' WTC across Three Types of Receivers

Type of Receivers	\bar{X}	SD
Stranger	42.01	26.39
Acquaintance	58.09	24.86
Friend	58.75	25.30
WTC Total	52.95	23.77

As Table 4 revealed, the students seem to be the least willing to communicate when their interlocutors are strangers (\bar{X} =42.01, at medium level). However, when the receivers are their acquaintances (\bar{X} =58.09, at medium level) and friends (\bar{X} =58.75, at low level), they reported considerably higher levels of WTC.

Level of Self-efficacy in English

Table 5

The Participants' Level of Self-efficacy in English across Major Skills

Self-efficacy	\bar{X}	SD
Listening	2.86	.70
Speaking	3.00	.78
Writing	3.01	.74
Reading	3.36	.68
Total	3.06	.62

Table 5 shows the mean scores for students' self-efficacy in English in terms of four macro skills as well as the overall perceived self-efficacy. In the evaluation of the mean scores, the ranges specified by Kanadli and Bagceci (2015) were taken into account (1.00-2.99=low self-efficacy; 3.00-3.99 medium self-efficacy; 4.00-5.00 high self-efficacy in English). The findings showed that the students perceived themselves as the least efficacious in listening (\bar{X} =2.86, at low level). However, they reported a medium level of self-efficacy in speaking, writing and reading (\bar{X} =3.00, \bar{X} =3.01, \bar{X} =3.36, respectively). The general mean score (\bar{X} =3.06) also showed that the students have a moderate degree of self-efficacy perceptions in English overall.

Level of English Classroom Enjoyment

Table 6

The Participants' Level of English Classroom Enjoyment across Dimensions

ECE	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>
Enjoyment of English learning	3.69	.70
Enjoyment of student support	3.84	.88
Enjoyment of teacher support	4.55	.71
ECE Total	3.90	.58

*Ranging from 1 to 5, as the mean increases, so does the level of ECE.

Considering the dimensions of ECE, as evident in Table 6, the students received the highest mean score from *enjoyment of teacher support* dimension as the source of ECE (\bar{X} =4.55) which included items such as *my teacher is encouraging, my teacher is friendly, my teacher is supportive*. This was followed by *enjoyment of student support* (\bar{X} =3.84), and *enjoyment of English learning* dimension (\bar{X} =3.69). The students' overall enjoyment was reported with a mean score of 3.9 out of 5.00.

In addition, the open-ended prompt at the end of the ECES asked the students to write about enjoyable classroom events as well as their feelings. Table 7 provides the students' exemplary reflections on their sources of ECE in accordance with its dimensions.

Table 7

Quoted Examples for Dimensions of ECE

	<i>Enjoyment of English learning</i>	<i>Enjoyment of teacher support</i>	<i>Enjoyment of student support</i>
	I enjoy learning English. Sometimes I can make mistakes. Although this year is the grade repetition for me, I don't feel upset since I am learning better this year.	I was trying to speak in English in the early weeks of the school. It was staggeringly pleasing when my teachers gave me positive energy.	I feel so happy when we work together and interact in English. We are all learning this way.
	The first time I started to understand spoken English, I felt happy. It was a weird but nice thing.	My teachers are trying to teach by entertaining us. They made me believe I could learn English.	We had so much fun when we created an English TV show as a class.
Quoted examples	Classroom activities are enjoyable, and we are willing to participate.	My teacher's jokes are jazzing up our lessons. We felt so amused as he mocked us gently.	I have been here for the past four months. We are helping each other when we make errors.

	<p>I enjoy speaking activities most.</p> <p>I find it enjoyable to engage in English dialogues.</p> <p>I really enjoyed the English games we played in the class. They turned out to be a didactic adventure.</p> <p>Before I started prep class, I hadn't spoken English for more than a minute. Here I realized that a new common language developed for communicating. This made</p>	<p>My teacher's witty and warm-hearted nature encourages me to attend to the lesson.</p> <p>I appreciate my teachers' attitudes toward all of us. They are also genial. This builds a desire in us to learn English.</p> <p>Sometimes I correct my teachers and sometimes they correct my errors. I enjoy that because I learn more as they correct me.</p> <p>It is encouraging to have friendly teachers. This way, our classes are becoming more meaningful. This makes me so happy.</p>	<p>We are trying to find a solution together in the face of problems.</p> <p>I really enjoyed the short films prepared by my friends. Especially the back stories were hilarious.</p> <p>When I mispronounce a word, we laugh it off together.</p> <p>Jokes are constantly flying around the class. We are all close friends, and this makes lessons more enjoyable. We are</p>
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me happy and at the same time I felt I could learn new things. Each passing day I am getting better. For all these reasons, I enjoy the English classes although it is not a compulsory course for me.

learning and having fun at the same time.

We can witness very funny moments while speaking. Pronunciation errors, subject errors, pauses etc. We can laugh them off when we retain them in the future. I really enjoyed it once when I remember having laughed out together with the whole class when I used 'she' to refer to my father.

*The quotations were translated from the original Turkish version.

*To ensure anonymity, the teachers' and students' names were not mentioned.

Path Analysis Results

To verify the theoretical model of the study, path analysis was conducted. In the hypothesized model, enjoyment was the exogenous variable, while achievement, self-efficacy and WTC were the endogenous variables. Several indices were examined to determine the goodness of fit of the model. These include chi square (χ^2), normalized chi square (χ^2/df), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), goodness of fit index (GFI), adjustment

goodness of fit index (AGFI), and comparative fit index (CFI). Table 8 indicates the fit indices of the revised model alongside the cut-off points (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001), signaling that the data fit well to the model. During the modification process of the hypothesized model, insignificant paths were deleted after the initial analysis (Meydan & Sesen, 2011), since no significant path had existed between achievement and WTC ($p = .475$), and ECE and WTC ($p = .186$).

Table 8

Goodness-of-fit Indices

Fit indices	Good fit	Acceptable fit	Value
χ^2 / sd	≤ 3	$\leq 4-5$	$(2.186 / 2) = 1.093$
GFI	$\geq .90$.89 - .85	.996
AGFI	$\geq .90$.89 - .85	.979
RMSEA	$\leq .05$.06 - .08	.019
NFI	$\geq .95$.94 - .90	.989
CFI	$\geq .97$	$\geq .95$.999

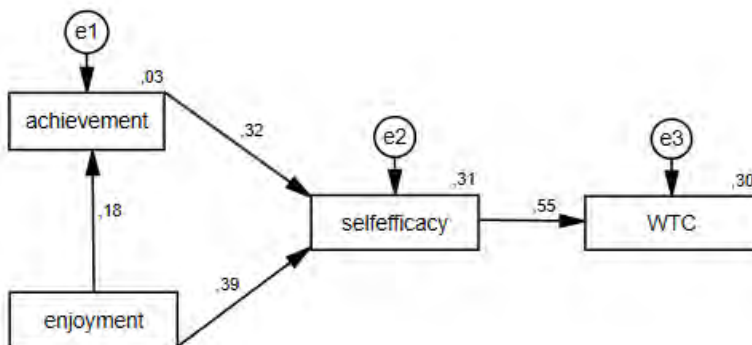


Figure 2

Path diagram of the study model

Figure 2 illustrates the output path diagram which revealed the significant paths between the variables tested. Standardized path coefficients are also provided in Table 9.

Table 9

Parameter Estimates for the Model

	Standardized effects		Critical ratio	p
	Direct	Indirect		
	Total			
ECE -----> achievement	.18	-	2.930	.003
	.18			
achievement -----> self-efficacy	.32	-	6.139	***
	.32			
ECE -----> self-efficacy	.39	.06	7.461	***
	.45			
self-efficacy -----> WTC	.55	-	10.585	***
	.55			
ECE -----> WTC	-	.25		
	.25			
achievement -----> WTC	-	.18		
	.18			

*** $p < .001$

While interpreting the path analysis results, the ranges specified by Suhr (2008) were followed. “Standardized path coefficients with absolute values less than 0.10 may indicate a small effect. Values around 0.30, a medium effect, and values greater than 0.50, a large effect” (p. 4). As shown in Table 9, ECE significantly and positively predicted achievement with a small effect ($\beta = .18, p = .000$). Also, positive direct paths of medium strength were obtained from ECE and achievement to self-efficacy ($\beta = .39$, and $\beta = .32$, respectively; $p = .000$ for both). These two predictor variables totally explained 31% of the variance in self-efficacy. Furthermore, self-efficacy was shown to be a significant, positive and strong predictor of WTC ($\beta = .55, p = .000$) and it accounted for 30% of the variance in WTC. Given the standardized indirect and total effect coefficients, the indirect effects of ECE and achievement on WTC through the mediation of self-efficacy were found as $\beta = .25$, and $\beta = .18$, respectively. The indirect effect of ECE on self-efficacy through achievement was found to be $\beta = .06$. Accordingly, the total effect of ECE on self-efficacy was calculated as $\beta = .45$.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was twofold: to find out 1) the EFL learners' level of WTC, ECE, and self-efficacy level in the research context, and 2) whether their level of ECE, self-efficacy, and academic achievement would predict their WTC. In addition to these, the sub-purpose of the study was to identify the factor structure of the FLES. With these concerns, the present study aimed to make a substantial contribution to the field by searching the impact of the aforementioned variables, i.e. ECE, self-efficacy, and academic achievement, on WTC through path analysis. To begin with, this study found a moderate level of WTC in English among the students, and it was also reported that the degree of the learners' WTC changes according to particular contexts. More specifically, the students reported more WTC when their interlocutors

were their friends in comparison to strangers. They reported to be unwilling to talk, give presentations, or have small-group conversations when their interlocutors are strangers. These findings support those of MacIntyre (2007) who points out that WTC level can differ depending on the situation. These results are also in line with Kang's findings (2005) which suggest that WTC is situation-dependent, and variables such as interlocutors, topic, and conversational context can affect one's WTC level. Moreover, consistent with the findings of the current study, Cao and Philp (2006) underlined that students are more eager to initiate communication with their friends rather than the classmates that they do not know well. Similarly, Riasati and Rahimi (2018) indicated that learners are more willing to talk in English when the interlocutors are the people they are familiar to. Additionally, the present study identified that the students are more eager to talk in English to a small group of friends. This is again in accordance with the finding of Cao and Philp (2006) who suggest that learners prefer the number of interlocutors in the conversation groups to be few. Considering all of these, it can be inferred that WTC in L2 tends to be open to oscillations according to different variables.

Another important finding of the study was that the learners' general self-efficacy perceptions in English was at a moderate level. While their listening self-efficacy perceptions were found to be low, those related to other skills (i.e. speaking, writing and reading) were at a moderate level. However, Tasdemir's (2018) study which was conducted in a similar context reported low level of self-efficacy perceptions in all the main language skills. Considering this, students' perceived self-efficacy level in English might vary across different settings. As for the ECE scores, a favourable amount of ECE (\bar{X} =3.9 out of 5) was identified among the participants. Enjoyment of teacher support received the highest mean score, and this was followed by enjoyment of student support, and enjoyment of English learning. This is in accordance with the

findings of Jiang and Dewaele (2019) who found teacher-related factors (i.e. positive attitude toward the teacher, teacher jokes) to be the best predictors of FLE when compared to the other factors (e.g. attitude toward English). Moreover, Uzun (2017) found in his study that learners' enjoyment level is positively influenced when the teacher makes them feel valuable as an individual by asking their opinions, talking to and praising them. He also reported that peer collaboration positively contributed to FLE and summarized that, "FLE has self-oriented, group-oriented, performance-oriented and teacher-oriented sources" (p. 15). Additionally, Uzun highlighted that, "learning new things, collaborating with their peers including making jokes, demonstrating successful performance, being praised by the teacher and listening to the teacher's jokes" (p. 15) were the most enjoyable moments of classroom instruction for the students. With regard to this, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) state that an enjoyable classroom environment created by teachers or classmates is likely to contribute positively to the learning process. Also, they underline that, "teachers who were positive, humorous, happy, well-organised, respectful of students, and praised them for good performance were appreciated by their students" (p. 264). The present study's qualitative findings also support the findings of these previous studies. For instance, in relation to enjoyment of teacher support, one of our participants reported that the teacher's positive attitudes toward them helped build a desire to learn English. Another student mentioned having been encouraged by the teacher's witty and warm-hearted nature to attend to the lesson. Some of them also reported enjoying the teacher appreciation upon their success. These accounts indicate clear evidences of the students' enjoyment of the teacher support. Additionally, student self-reports revealed that learning, understanding, speaking English and playing educational games in English greatly add to their enjoyment of the English classes. These are in line with Dewaele, Witney, Saito and Dewaele's (2018) contention that learners

with positive attitudes toward both the foreign language and the language teacher had higher levels of FLE. Furthermore, student reports revealed that they enjoyed working with their peers and helping each other, which is in keeping with the research findings mentioned earlier (e.g. Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Uzun, 2017). These results also remind us of the main tenets of positive psychology, emphasizing that positive emotions contribute significantly to individuals' development (Fredrickson, 1998, 2004). In relation to this, it can be deduced that enjoyment of learning English, of teacher as well as peer support can contribute to students' learning in turn. This study also revealed the possible effects of ECE, self-efficacy, and academic achievement on the learners' WTC through path analysis. The most notable finding of the path analysis was that ECE and achievement predicted learners' self-efficacy, and self-efficacy strongly and positively predicted WTC. While ECE and achievement had an indirect influence on WTC through the mediation of self-efficacy, self-efficacy had a direct influence on WTC. This finding seems to be in line with the previous studies (e.g. Fallah, 2014; Peng & Woodrow, 2010) which found that communication self-confidence in L2 is a significant predictor of WTC. One more directly related finding to the current study is Onoda's (2012), which also reported self-efficacy as a strong predictor of WTC. Likewise, in Zhong's (2013) study, self-efficacy was one of the factors that affected the learners' WTC. As mentioned earlier, Matsuoka's (2006) study also underlined that self-efficacy was a strong and positive predictor of WTC in L2. In another research, Pattapong (2010) concluded that Thai FL learners' WTC was affected by their self-efficacy level. Therefore, the finding related to the self-efficacy as a predictor of WTC is lent support by each of these studies.

Another significant finding was that ECE was found to be a significant predictor of achievement. This is in accordance with some previous studies. For instance, in their study, Jin

and Zhang (2018) found that enjoyment of English language learning directly and positively influenced learners' achievement. Likewise, in their study which investigated the role of FLE and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) on language learners' performance, Dewaele and Alfawzan (2018) found that the positive effect of FLE on learners' language performance was more rewarding when compared to the negative effects caused by FLCA. To summarize, as shown in previous research and the present study, as a kind of positive emotion, enjoyment has the strong potential to promote learners' achievement.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study investigated the EFL students' level of ECE, self-efficacy and WTC, as well as whether ECE, self-efficacy and achievement predicted WTC. The analyses revealed moderate levels of WTC and self efficacy, in addition to a favourable amount of ECE. Moreover, the path analysis indicated that self-efficacy had a direct influence on the students' WTC, while ECE and achievement had indirect influences on WTC through the mediation of self-efficacy. Given that self-efficacy emerges as a strong predictor of WTC, and WTC promotes L2 learning (MacIntyre, 2007) and eagerness to practise with the target language (Peng & Woodrow, 2010), then it seems to be a prerequisite to increase learners' self-efficacy to trigger their WTC. As Bandura (1995) states, "successes build a robust belief in one's personal efficacy" (p. 3), and therefore, it is important for teachers to build in their students a sense of achievement. Some of the ways to do this, to mention but a few, could be to give positive feedback to their performance (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), and to persuade them that they have the necessary skills to be successful (Bandura, 1995).

In this study, moreover, ECE was found to be the predictor of student achievement, which is in accordance with the suggestion that enjoyment can promote learning (Dewaele &

MacIntyre, 2014). As mentioned earlier, the participants in this study enjoyed the teacher support most. With this in mind, it is crucial to create an enjoyable classroom atmosphere where there is a full harmony among the teacher and students, and senses of rapport and trust are effectively established. Therefore, whether it be in success or failure, teachers need to trigger and address positive emotions rather than evoke the negative ones. As Dewaele et al. (2018) note, “effective teachers fuel learners’ enthusiasm and enjoyment and do not spend too much time worrying about their FLCA (foreign language classroom anxiety)” (p. 694). And finally, considering the merits of enjoyment of student support, collaborative tasks can be prioritized in classroom instruction in order for them to take part in and enjoy peer and group work, thereby promoting each other’s learning.

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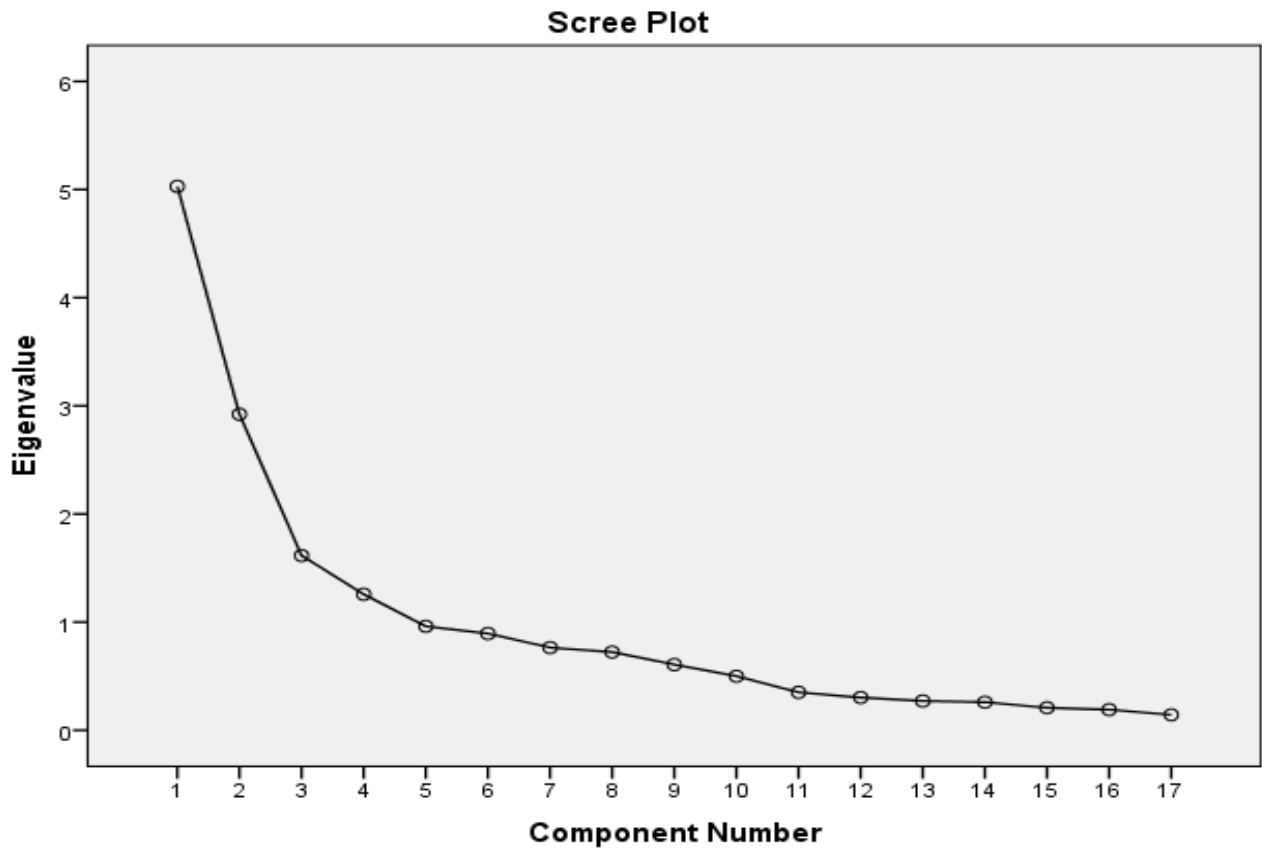
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Appendices

Appendix 1. Scree Plot



Appendix 2. Factor items and loadings

Items	Factor loads
Factor 1 (Enjoyment of English learning)	
1 Yaratıcı olabiliyorum. <i>I can be creative.</i>	.49
3 İngilizce öğrenmekten sıkılmıyorum. <i>I don't get bored.</i>	.79
4 İngilizce öğrenmekten keyif alıyorum. <i>I enjoy it.</i>	.84
6 Kendimi İngilizce'de daha iyi ifade etmeyi öğrendim. <i>I learnt to express myself better in the FL.</i>	.53
7 İngilizce sınıfının değerli bir üyesiyim. <i>I'm a worthy member of the FL class.</i>	.53
8 İlginç şeyler öğrendim. <i>I've learnt interesting things.</i>	.46
9 Sınıfta, başarılarımla gurur duyuyorum. <i>In class, I feel proud of my accomplishments.</i>	.58
12 İngilizce öğrenmek eğlencelidir. <i>It's fun.</i>	.75
Factor 2 Enjoyment of teacher support	
15 Öğretmenim teşvik edicidir. <i>The teacher is encouraging.</i>	.81
16 Öğretmenim cana yakındır. <i>The teacher is friendly.</i>	.79
17 Öğretmenim destekleyicidir. <i>The teacher is supportive.</i>	.83
Factor 3 Enjoyment of student support	
10 İngilizce sınıfımı olumlu bir ortam olarak nitelendirebilirim. <i>It's a positive environment.</i>	.61
14 Sınıftaki arkadaşlarım iyidir. <i>The peers are nice.</i>	.75
18 Sınıfta iyi bir atmosfer var. <i>There is a good atmosphere.</i>	.82

19 Sınıfta birbirine bağılı (samimi) bir grup oluřturuyoruz. <i>We form a tight group.</i>	.80
20 Sınıfta, ortak eęlencelerimiz var. (orneęin; dzenli yaptığımız espriler) <i>We have common “legends”, such as running jokes.</i>	.83
21 Çokça gülüyoruz. <i>We laugh a lot.</i>	.82