

YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

**PREP LEARNERS' PROACTIVE PERSONALITY, PATIENCE,
RESILIENCE, AND INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS: A
STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING APPROACH**

Merve Oflaz

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INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING
APPROACH**

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALTY

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that all information in this thesis has been obtained and presented following academic rules and ethical conduct. I have fully cited and referenced all material and results as required by these rules and conduct, and this thesis study does not contain any plagiarism. The necessary permissions have been obtained if any material used in the thesis requires copyright. No material from this thesis has been used to award another degree.

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Merve Oflaz

ABSTRACT

PREP LEARNERS' PROACTIVE PERSONALITY, PATIENCE, RESILIENCE, AND INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING APPROACH

This study explores the relationships among proactive personality, patience, resilience, and intercultural awareness by examining the extent to which proactive personality predicts intercultural awareness through the mediating roles of patience and resilience in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners enrolled in preparatory programs at Turkish universities. While intercultural awareness has traditionally been emphasized in English as a Second Language (ESL) settings, this study highlights its growing importance in EFL contexts influenced by globalized education. A descriptive research design was adopted, incorporating relational analysis to examine the associations among the key psychological and intercultural variables. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the study addressed two primary aims: first, to examine the predictive pathways from proactive personality to intercultural awareness, mediated by patience and resilience; and second, to validate the factor structure and psychometric properties of the adapted Intercultural Awareness Scale (Saka & Asma, 2020) and Proactive Personality Scale (Bateman & Crant, 1993) in Türkiye. Additionally, the Resilience Scale (Basım & Çetin, 2011) and Patience Tendency Scale (Çeliköz & Gül, 2018) were employed to measure the corresponding constructs. All instruments utilized a five-point Likert-type format and were culturally adapted for Turkish EFL learners. A series of analyses were conducted to evaluate the extent to which proactive personality predicts intercultural awareness through the mediating roles of patience and psychological resilience. Among the tested hypotheses, the first one proposed that proactive personality predicts both patience and psychological resilience, which in turn predict intercultural awareness. The findings revealed that proactive personality is a strong predictor of intercultural awareness, both directly and indirectly. Furthermore, the scales demonstrated valid psychometric properties within the Turkish context. These results underscore the importance of affective psychological traits as internal learner resources that contribute to the development of intercultural competence in EFL education.

Key words: intercultural awareness, proactive personality, patience, resilience, structural equation modelling



ÖZET

HAZIRLIK ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN PROAAKTİF KİŞİLİKLERİ, SABIRLARI, PSİKOLOJİK DAYANIKLILIKLARI VE KÜLTÜRLERARASI FARKINDALIKLARI: BİR YAPISAL EŞİTLİK MODELİ YAKLAŞIMI

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin hazırlık programlarına kayıtlı İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil (EFL) olarak öğrenen öğrenciler bağlamında, girişimci kişilik, sabır, psikolojik dayanıklılık ve kültürlerarası farkındalık arasındaki ilişkileri; özellikle girişimci kişiliğin, sabır ve psikolojik dayanıklılık aracılığıyla kültürlerarası farkındalığı ne ölçüde yordadığını incelemektedir. Kültürlerarası farkındalık geleneksel olarak İngilizcenin ikinci dil (ESL) olarak öğretildiği ortamlarda vurgulanmış olsa da, bu çalışma, küreselleşen eğitim ortamlarının etkisiyle EFL bağlamlarında da artan önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Araştırmada betimsel bir araştırma deseni benimsenmiş ve temel psikolojik ve kültürlerarası değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri incelemek amacıyla ilişkisel analiz kullanılmıştır. Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi (SEM) yoluyla, araştırmanın iki temel amacı ele alınmıştır: Birincisi, girişimci kişilikten kültürlerarası farkındalığa uzanan yordayıcı yolları sabır ve psikolojik dayanıklılık aracılığıyla incelemek; ikincisi ise, Türkiye bağlamında uyarlanan Kültürlerarası Farkındalık Ölçeği (Saka & Asma, 2020) ile Girişimci Kişilik Ölçeği'nin (Bateman & Crant, 1993) faktör yapısını ve psikometrik özelliklerini doğrulamaktır. Ayrıca, ilgili değişkenleri ölçmek amacıyla Psikolojik Dayanıklılık Ölçeği (Basım & Çetin, 2011) ve Sabır Eğilimi Ölçeği (Çeliköz & Gül, 2018) kullanılmıştır. Tüm ölçme araçları beşli Likert tipi ölçek formatında hazırlanmış ve Türk EFL öğrencilerine kültürel olarak uyarlanmıştır. Araştırmada, girişimci kişiliğin sabır ve psikolojik dayanıklılık aracılığıyla kültürlerarası farkındalığı ne ölçüde yordadığını değerlendirmek üzere bir

dizi analiz gerçekleştirilmiştir. Test edilen hipotezler arasında, birincisi; girişimci kişiliğin hem sabır hem de psikolojik dayanıklılığı yordadığı ve bu değişkenlerin de kültürlerarası farkındalığı yordayacağı varsayılmıştır. Bulgular, girişimci kişiliğin kültürlerarası farkındalığın hem doğrudan hem de dolaylı olarak güçlü bir yordayıcısı olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, kullanılan ölçeklerin Türk bağlamında geçerli ve güvenilir psikometrik özellikler sergilediği görülmüştür. Bu sonuçlar, duyuşsal psikolojik özelliklerin, EFL eğitiminde kültürlerarası yeterliğin geliştirilmesine katkı sağlayan içsel öğrenen kaynakları olarak önemini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kültürlerarası farkındalık, proaktif kişilik, sabır, psikolojik dayanıklılık, yapısal eşitlik modellemesi

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my dear beloved mum, Selma Baytok, who has given me great strength—spiritually and emotionally—every step of the way. She encouraged me to persevere and finish this thesis whenever I thought of giving up. Even when others doubted me or wanted to see me fail, she never wavered in her belief in my potential. I owe who I am today to her, as she raised me alone and did everything possible to help me become the person I am now.

Her unwavering support, boundless love, heartfelt prayers, and endless encouragement have been the foundation of my journey. She has taught me the value of perseverance and the importance of pursuing my dreams. This thesis is a testament to her sacrifices and the countless battles she has faced.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index; a model fit index in SEM
EIL	English as an International Language
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
H	Hypothesis
HESA	Higher Education Student Statistics
ICA	Intercultural Awareness
ICAS	Intercultural Awareness Scale
L2	Second Language
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
N	Number of participants or observations
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SBCD	School-Based Curriculum
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index; a model fit index used in SEM
TLT	Transformative Learning Theory
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WEF World Economic Forum



LIST OF SYMBOLS

$\%$	Per cent
$<$	Less than
$>$	Greater than
β	Beta; standardized regression coefficient
χ^2	Model chi-square; tests overall model fit
ω	Omega
ΔCFI	Change in Comparative Fit Index
ΔRMSEA	Change in RMSEA
p	Significance level
r^2	R squared; proportion of variance explained

1. INTRODUCTION

Intercultural awareness (ICA) is becoming more and more important in today's world, especially in educational settings where students are expected to collaborate across borders, navigate a variety of cultural viewpoints, and form meaningful relationships. As Sharifian (2009) highlights, cultural conceptualizations have a significant influence on language and communication. Without ICA, people run the risk of misinterpreting or misrepresenting these ingrained meanings. In this way, cultivating ICA calls for the deliberate development of social-emotional qualities like forbearance, resilience, and proactive engagement in addition to exposure. According to this viewpoint, proactive involvement, patience, and resilience are not fixed personality traits that people either possess or lack. Rather, they are seen as individual assets that can be fostered and improved with time. These traits make it easier for learners to interact with people from other cultures, especially when they are unsure, confused, or in a new situation. These traits are important for building intercultural competence because they help students become more emotionally and mentally strong. This way of looking at ICA gives a fuller picture. It includes both knowledge about cultures and the personal skills needed to communicate and connect well across cultural boundaries (Donahue-Keegan et al., 2019; Zhou & Hassan, 2024; SEE Learning Consortium, 2023).

Besides these theoretical points of view, it's important to think about the bigger sociocultural forces that are affecting education in Türkiye, especially when it comes to changes in population and migration patterns. While Türkiye was the 19th most populated country in the world in 2018, it rose to 17th by 2022 (Worldometer, 2022), and by 2025, it ranked 18th globally with an estimated population of approximately

87.7 million. This change in demographics has led to a quick growth in the country's higher education sector, both in terms of the number of students and the number of institutions. The number of college students is at an all-time high right now, and both public and private universities are still adding new courses to their catalogues. A lot of undergraduate and graduate programs that deal with cultural and international issues have also grown in response to this changing situation (British Council, 2018). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says that teaching a second language and creating a curriculum that is sensitive to different cultures are becoming more and more important in communities that host refugees and are multicultural (UNHCR, 2019). The educational system has had to adapt quickly to make sure that all students, whether they are citizens or newcomers, have equal and welcoming places to learn. Because of this, intercultural communication, diversity awareness, and emotional resilience are now at the heart of good teaching.

Moreover, alongside refugee populations, there has been a steady increase in the number of international students enrolling in Turkish universities—particularly in metropolitan areas and foundation universities with English-medium instruction. Türkiye has become a regional hub for higher education, attracting thousands of students from Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Balkans. A recent report by Hürriyet Daily News (2025) highlights that over 336,000 international students from 204 countries are currently studying in Türkiye, with the majority concentrated in large metropolitan universities. Studies also highlight the multicultural makeup of Turkish campuses—specifically noting large cohorts from the Middle East, Balkans, Central Asia–Caucasus, and North Africa in both public and foundation institutions (Meriç et al., 2021; Türkoğlu, 2005). This growing international presence contributes significantly to the multicultural nature of university classrooms and campus life.

In this evolving educational environment, Turkish students are no longer learning in culturally homogeneous spaces. Even though the participants of the present study are Turkish by nationality and mostly monocultural in background, they are immersed in classrooms where they study, collaborate, and interact with peers from diverse linguistic, national, and cultural origins. These intercultural encounters happen not only during formal instruction but also in group work, extracurricular activities, and digital platforms where globally sourced materials and communication patterns prevail.

Given these dynamics, the decision to conduct the present study with Turkish university students—rather than international or refugee students—was deliberate and theoretically grounded. Turkish learners in English preparatory programs are situated at the intersection of local and global influences: they are learning a global language (English), engaging with internationalized curricula, and navigating intercultural interactions on a regular basis. Their lived experiences within these multicultural academic ecosystems make them a relevant and valid population for exploring how psychological resources such as proactive personality, patience, and resilience relate to the development of ICA.

As such, even though the current study does not focus directly on refugee or international student populations, it is deeply embedded within the multicultural realities of Türkiye's higher education sector, where intercultural communication is not just a theoretical concern but a practical, day-to-day necessity.

As Yule (2014) emphasize, the term culture is used to refer to all the ideas and assumptions about the nature of things and people that we learn when we become members of social groups. It can be defined as 'socially acquired knowledge.' This is the kind of knowledge that, like our first language, we initially acquire without conscious awareness. We develop awareness of our knowledge, and hence of our

culture, only after having developed language. The particular language we learn through the process of cultural transmission provides us, at least initially, with a ready-made system of categorizing the world around us and our experience of it (Yule, 2014).

Culture became a buzzword in the field of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in the 1990s. In a language classroom, culture learning and language learning are inextricably linked. Some people go as far as saying that language learning and culture learning are the same. Even if we do not fully agree with this extreme position, it is obvious that language and culture learning go hand in hand, in whatever context learning takes place (Agnes, 2000). As language learners engage with different cultures, they often encounter unfamiliar values, behaviors, and perspectives, which may lead to confusion or emotional discomfort. Successfully navigating such experiences requires not only cultural and linguistic knowledge but also psychological and emotional readiness. In this context, resilience is an important trait that helps people get through what Agnes (2000) calls "linguistic culture shock," which is a time in language learning when people feel frustrated and lost. Learners may need help dealing with the emotional demands of adjusting to a new language and culture, rather than just seeing these problems as linguistic. This shows how important it is to guide learners beyond this important stage in their development (Agnes, 2000).

In today's world, where globalization and interconnectedness are happening quickly, resilience is a very important quality in both school and work. More and more recent studies have made this trend clearer. Fletcher and Thornton (2023), for example, say that there has been a big increase in job postings for both technical skills like software development and soft skills like resilience and stress tolerance. A large-scale survey of human resources professionals by Mainga et al. (2022) found that resilience is now the most important soft skill for companies to look for. Sixty-six percent of

hiring managers said it was the most important skill, up from only 34% in 2019. Also, almost 90% of those who answered said that the skills companies look for today are very different from the ones they looked for two years ago. Lyu and Liu (2021) agree with these results and stress the need for workers who can handle stress and adapt to new situations in fast-paced workplaces. From a human-centered leadership perspective, Lepeley et al. (2021) also underline the importance of psychological strength and emotional intelligence, including resilience, for sustainable workplace performance. Additionally, Succi and Canovi (2020) highlight how higher education institutions must adapt to foster such soft skills in students, preparing them for increasingly uncertain job markets.

The significance of having a proactive personality in today's world cannot be emphasized enough. With the world constantly changing and work regulations evolving, it is essential for individuals to adjust accordingly (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Embracing change allows for personal growth and innovative problem-solving. Those with a proactive mindset exhibit traits like self-motivation, adaptability, and effective problem-solving skills. Adopting a proactive approach leads to greater satisfaction in both personal and professional aspects of life. Proactive individuals are valued in academic and professional environments, and organizations benefit from their efficiency. Proactive problem-solving also improves relationships and leads to positive outcomes in various settings (Alstra & Susanti, 2024; Bakay, 2022; Liang, 2021; Wenli & Jantan, 2023).

While proactivity equips individuals to take initiative and navigate challenges, it is often complemented by other essential personal attributes that enhance success in both education and intercultural contexts. One such attribute is patience, which plays a critical role in fostering meaningful interactions and sustained personal development.

Persistence is an essential trait in academia. It serves to benefit both teachers and students by fostering an atmosphere of open communication and cultivating a nurturing learning environment. Patient instructors demonstrate empathy and acceptance of learner errors, leading to heightened student participation. A number of theories and methods support the idea that patience should be taught in schools. You can't teach someone patience directly; instead, you have to show them how to be patient and then let them practice it (Bullock et al., 2024; Gradellini et al., 2021).

Moreover, when combined with a proactive attitude, patience helps people start positive change and deal with problems with strength and calmness (McAllister et al., 2019; Schnitker et al., 2017). Building on these qualities, ICA becomes vital in today's increasingly globalized societies. Patience supports individuals in navigating the emotional dynamics of cross-cultural interactions, fostering deeper intercultural consciousness (Lieberman et al., 2012).

In countries like Australia, Canada, and the UK, large inflows of migrants and international students have transformed international education into a dynamic, multifaceted global enterprise. For example, Australia had approximately 794,000 international student enrolments by April 2025—a rise from 2024—and hosted around 784,400 students in 2023 (Department of Education, Skills and Employment, 2025). Canada saw over one million international students in 2023, marking a 29% increase from the previous year (Statistics Canada, 2024; The PIE News, 2025). The UK enrolled about 732,000 overseas students in the 2023/24 academic year (HESA, 2025). Foreign educators are increasingly drawn to Australia's multicultural education system—a country where multiple immigrant generations study and teach (Appel, 2023). Consequently, promoting ICA in teacher training programs and educational

institutions serving diverse student populations has become a recognized priority in these nations (OECD, 2019; Appel, 2023).

The importance of ICA, patience, resilience, and a proactive attitude in successful communication across cultures cannot be denied. These attributes contribute to personal and professional growth, enrich intercultural dialogues, and strengthen relationships. Developing these qualities is crucial in an evolving world with increasing demographic shifts. Educational initiatives and workplace focus can help preserve valuable intellectual capital. It is important to reflect on one's intercultural competencies and identify areas for further development. These personal qualities serve as the foundation for positive habits and attitudes in consulting practice. A person's frame of reference influences their actions and establishes cognitive and behavioral patterns (Caligiuri, 2021; Latilo et al., 2024; Martinez et al., 2023; Ramos-Roure et al., 2021).

As global interactions continue to expand, the interplay between individual traits and intercultural competence becomes increasingly significant, particularly in educational contexts where learners are constantly exposed to diverse cultural environments (Deardorff, 2006; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). Understanding how proactive personality, patience, and resilience collectively contribute to ICA can offer valuable insights for both educators and learners (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Hammer, 2012; Yu & D., 2021). Despite the growing body of literature on intercultural competence, limited research has systematically examined the combined effects of these psychological factors within a unified model. Addressing this gap, the present study aims to explore the structural relationships among proactive personality, patience, resilience, and ICA, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of how personal characteristics support successful intercultural engagement in today's globalized world.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to explore the relationships between ICA and several key psychological constructs—proactive personality, resilience, and patience—in the context of learners enrolled in preparatory programs at Turkish universities. These learners are positioned as both language learners and cultural informants because they are exposed to both a new language and a new culture through the language they are learning.

Adapting to new cultural norms and linguistic contexts may lead to some challenges such as language and culture shock (Kızıldaş, 2022). In order to lessen these difficulties, ICA is essential for promoting easier adjustment and better learning results. While increasing cultural awareness has historically been prioritized in ESL classes where students from various backgrounds come together to acquire a second language, it is also crucial in EFL settings where students may have similar linguistic and national identities but still encounter global influences (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). This study examined the ways in which personal traits like proactive personality, resilience, and patience aid in the development of ICA so as to improve educational practices and assist learners in successfully adjusting to different cultures,

1.2. Research Question

Understanding psychological concepts like ICA and proactive personality has become crucial in light of globalization and the rise in cross-cultural interactions. In addition to influencing how people behave in various contexts, these constructs are essential for promoting cross-cultural cooperation and effective communication. The purpose of this study is to investigate the underlying factor structures of these scales and how they relate to characteristics like proactive personality, patience, and resilience. The examination of these dimensions allows for insights into how

individuals navigate complex social landscapes. The following research question was answered:

RQ: To what extent does proactive personality predict intercultural awareness with the mediating role of patience and resilience?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis to be tested relates to the pattern of causal structure linking several predictors that bear on the construct of the other latent variable or variables. Causal relations among all variables on the hypothesized model must be grounded in theory or empirical research or both. Typically, the hypothesis to be tested argues for the validity of postulated causal linkages among the variables of interest. Figure 1 shows this graphically.

- **H1:** Proactive personality predicts patience and resilience, and patience and resilience in turn predict ICA.
- **H2:** Proactive personality predicts intercultural awareness, and intercultural awareness in turn predicts patience and resilience.
- **H3:** Proactive personality indirectly predicts ICA through the indirect effect of patience and resilience.

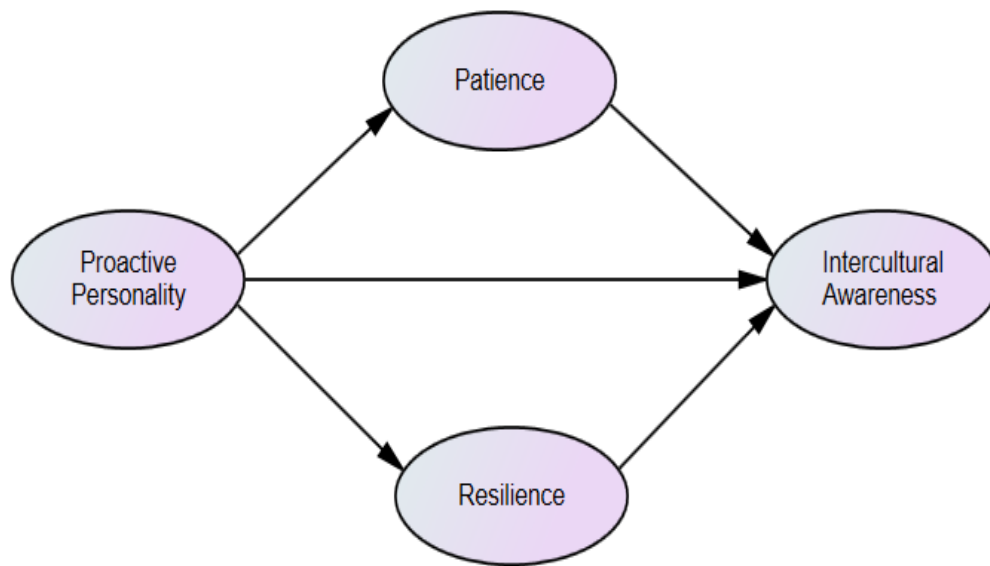


Figure 1. Hypothesis of the Model of the Study

Addressing these research questions will contribute to a deeper understanding of how psychological traits interact within the context of in-person L2 learning. Furthermore, the findings have practical implications for educational and organizational settings, where fostering intercultural competence and proactive behaviors can play a valuable role. By identifying potential variations in structural interpretations across demographic groups, this research can inform tailored interventions that enhance intercultural effectiveness and personal development in an increasingly interconnected world.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study is significant both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it expands current research on ICA by examining how patience as an emotional orientation and resilience as a personality trait can impact the association. Despite the growing interest in these individual traits, no prior research has combined them within a single model. This study addresses that gap by examining their collective role in shaping intercultural competence.

Practically, the findings offer insights for educators, program developers, and universities working with international students who are adapting to new cultural and linguistic settings. Finding the psychological elements that lead to ICA can help guide instructional strategies that promote students' academic achievement, development, and cultural adaptation.

In terms of methodology, the study uses sophisticated statistical analyses, like structural equation modeling (SEM), with valid and dependable tools to quantify the complex interactions between the variables. This methodological rigor enhances the value of intercultural education research.

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report (WEF, 2025) states that resilience, patience, and ICA—some of the skills this study looks at—are becoming more and more important for the workforce of the future. Because it helps people deal with change and uncertainty, resilience is ranked as one of the most important core skills that will be more important by 2030. Despite not being specifically mentioned as a stand-alone skill, patience is strongly linked to important self-management abilities like flexibility, stress tolerance, and active learning. The wider range of intercultural competencies, such as empathy and cross-cultural communication, which are stressed as globally relevant in a variety of work contexts, also emphasizes ICA. In alignment with this, the OECD's Global Competence Framework (2018) underscores the importance of fostering learners' ability to understand different perspectives, engage in respectful intercultural interactions, and act for collective well-being. These interpersonal and socioemotional skills, which are based on qualities like patience and resilience, are regarded as necessary for both personal growth and meaningful engagement in multicultural, globalized environments.

Despite not being specifically addressed in the report, proactive personality closely relates to a number of highlighted competencies. For example, curiosity and lifelong learning are often driven by proactive individuals. As noted by Fu et al. (2024), students with proactive personalities are significantly more likely to seek learning resources and actively participate in discussions, thereby enhancing their engagement, particularly in online learning environments. In addition, leadership and social influence—also emphasized by the WEF—are closely tied to proactive behavior. Drawing on social learning theory, Wu and Wang (2011) argue that proactive leaders influence their environment by modeling initiative and problem-solving, encouraging similar traits among their followers. Finally, the report's call for proactive workforce strategies to facilitate continuous skill development resonates conceptually with the characteristics of a proactive personality.

In sum, the present study contributes both to the literature and to practical educational strategies that foster intercultural understanding and learner well-being.

1.4. Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, the study is not without limitations. First, the cross-sectional nature of the research limits the ability to infer causality between the variables. Longitudinal or experimental designs would be more suitable for tracking how these traits evolve over time and impact ICA development. Second, the use of self-report measures introduces the possibility of social desirability bias, particularly in assessing traits such as patience and resilience. Future studies may benefit from triangulating data sources, such as teacher reports, peer assessments, or behavioral observations. Lastly, the study was carried out in a particular cultural and educational context, which might have limited how broadly the results can be applied.

It is known that there are many international learners at the preparatory schools of foundation universities in Türkiye (British Council, 2018). Due to the globalization, the world has become more accessible and cultural awareness and cultural competence are becoming important (Hadziabdic et al., 2016). Educational research, including comparative and international education, must acknowledge globalization as a crucial factor and adapt accordingly (Bakioğlu & Durmaz, 2017). As it is inevitable that the globalised world has a great impact on language education and its implementations should be taken seriously.

The data collected in this study reflect the structural relationships among key psychological and intercultural constructs, namely proactive personality, resilience, patience, and ICA. Rather than assessing general psychological or intercultural readiness, the study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine how these interrelated traits contribute to learners' ICA within English preparatory programs. As the research was conducted in foundation universities, the findings provide context-specific insights into this institutional setting. Future studies could be conducted in state (public) universities to allow for comparative analysis and to assess the generalizability of the results across different higher education contexts.

Although curriculum evaluation was not within the scope of this study, the findings can inform pedagogical practices and material development aimed at fostering intercultural competence. For example, insights gained from learners' and teachers' experiences may guide the creation of a booklet or guideline that supports the integration of ICA into classroom tasks and interactions.

Rather than evaluating full curricula, educators may focus on measuring culturally related behaviors, attitudes, and communicative practices that emerge in classroom settings (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009). In this regard, learners can

be seen as cultural informants, bringing their lived experiences, perspectives, and value systems into the classroom—an approach that aligns with Kumaravadivelu's (2003) view of learners as active contributors to cultural meaning-making.

Teachers, therefore, should take thoughtful steps when designing and facilitating culturally sensitive activities—such as cross-cultural role plays—to ensure that learners develop nuanced perspectives. Involving learners meaningfully in this process is crucial to building ICA and promoting emotional engagement (Frank, 2013). A majority of the schools today, especially private schools in Türkiye, prefer to use School-Based Curriculum Development (SBCD) which presents schools many opportunities such as including individuals and institutions within the community into the process. Some of these private schools receive support from the experts working for international publishers in the preparation process. According to research, teachers stated that School-Based Curriculum Development would be a more efficient curriculum as the stakeholders would be included in the process of curriculum development (Kahramanoğlu et al., 2016).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Intercultural awareness (ICA) has increasingly become essential for fostering meaningful interactions in today's globally connected world. It provides a foundation for understanding and accepting individuals from diverse backgrounds who may differ in terms of norms, values, and behaviors (Fuentes et al., 2021). On a personal level, ICA enhances appreciation of cultural diversity and helps individuals navigate complex social environments shaped by blended family values and multicultural influences (Abacıoğlu et al., 2020). In professional contexts, particularly in international business, it is crucial for ensuring successful interaction and cooperation between managers and employees of various cultural origins (Afsar et al., 2021a). particularly in international business, it is crucial for ensuring successful interaction and cooperation between managers and employees of various cultural origins (Arday et al., 2021; Romijn et al., 2021).

Intercultural means having respect, being aware of yourself, and being able to see things from other people's points of view. All of these things require patience. These things are necessary for encouraging good interactions between people from different cultures (Deardorff, 2018). Patience, as an emotional skill, helps people become more empathetic and open to other cultures, which makes it easier for people to connect with people from different cultures. People with a proactive personality are more likely to start positive changes and adjust better to new situations, which makes them more resilient in cross-cultural situations (Hua et al., 2020). When people learn about cultural differences, they become more resilient because they can adapt and navigate different sociocultural settings (Thalji, 2023). Additionally, proactive personality has been

shown to positively influence cross-cultural adjustment, particularly when mediated by adjustment self-efficacy (Hua et al., 2020).

It takes both cognitive and emotional processes to become aware of other cultures. For example, recognizing and appreciating cultural differences takes time, which lets people have reflective conversations, ask thoughtful questions, and hold off on making judgments too quickly. Studies have shown that being patient is very important for communicating between cultures. For instance, Gül (2021) looked at how patient university students from different cultural backgrounds are and found that there are big differences in how patience is seen across cultures. Turkish students often linked patience to religious values, while Kyrgyz students stressed cultural traditions. These results highlight the culturally embedded nature of patience and its relevance in shaping ICA.

The increasing diversity in Turkish higher education makes it even more important for students to learn about other cultures. In the last few years, a lot of students from Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Balkans have come to universities, especially those in big cities where classes are taught in English (Türkoğlu, 2005; Meriç, Emhan, & Çocuk, 2013; Hürriyet Daily News, 2025). Because of this, the way things work in the classroom has changed a lot. Students now have to learn how to work with classmates who have different points of view, ways of communicating, and cultural norms (Abacıoğlu et al., 2020). These changes make it easier for people from different cultures to learn from each other, but they also come with challenges that require emotional strength and a proactive attitude (Romijn et al., 2021; Thalji, 2023). In such contexts, ICA doesn't just happen because people are exposed to different cultures; it depends on how learners react to differences. People who are patient and resilient can deal with uncertainty, work through misunderstandings, and stay open to

cultural differences instead of becoming defensive or relying on stereotypes (Deardorff, 2018). Proactive learners are more likely to look for opportunities to interact with people from other cultures and think about what they learned from those experiences, which helps them become more aware (Hua et al., 2020; Afsar et al., 2021b). This study is important as it shows that these psychological traits are important personal resources that can either help or hurt students' readiness to interact with people from other cultures.

Taking these theories and contextual factors into account, this study aims to model the structural relationships between proactive personality, resilience, patience, and ICA, with a focus on how personal resources affect multicultural academic settings.

2.2 Intercultural Awareness

Today, the world is considerably more interconnected than it was 20 or 30 years ago. Globalization made people's access to different cultural worlds larger, and the importance of intercultural understanding for successful interaction and social cohesion has grown. In turn, educators have redoubled attempts to foster intercultural understanding by assisting students in exploring cultural differences and common human experience (Ashraf, 2022; Hammer, 2012).

In the past, the terms ICA and intercultural competence were respectively undefined and un-researched. In the last decades, researchers have actually been more concerned in searching for the basic ingredients of intercultural sensitivity and of building reliable instruments to assess them (Fantini, 2007). Despite these advances, the theater of cultural sensitivity at the local level has been virtually ignored -- the salient level of it in practice, not at the national. This has created a certain vagueness in the concept that makes it subject to different interpretations.

ICA, intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence are closely related terms, yet they are not synonymous. Intercultural communicative competence has typically been described as the effective use of linguistic and sociolinguistic resources in conjunction with the ability to take cultural knowledge and expectations of the context of interaction into consideration (Nugent & Catalano, 2015). In this wider definition communication is the central focus, while ICA refers to internal processes such as cultural knowledge, cognitive flexibility, emotional sensitivity, and self-awareness.

The major driver in accelerating globalization has been technological innovations in communication, transportation, and trade, which have further connected human societies, governments, and economies. This interconnectedness has facilitated the growth of cultural exchange and redefined global awareness. As students continue to operate in multicultural settings, they need to be equipped with knowledge on how global views differ and ways of coexisting. Educators can promote these goals by including global issues in their current events and encouraging students to critically evaluate alternative views; cultural accommodation, a critical tenet of ICA, can be fostered by international exposure, including study abroad and foreign internship trips and projects. Türkiye has always been influenced by migration in one way or another, from population exchanges to asylum movements and political evictions. It currently hosts the largest number of refugees in the world, with an estimated five million immigrants, primarily from Syria (Adalı & Türkyılmaz, 2020; Altıok & Tosun, 2020; Abdelaaty, 2021; Demirci & Kırdar, 2023; Gibárti, 2021; Ertorer, 2021; İçduygu & Nimer, 2019; Kırdar et al., 2022). People moving to Türkiye is affected by both short-term needs and long-term factors like demographics, the economy, and politics.

These big changes have changed the makeup of schools and made it necessary to make educational policies more open to everyone. Now, schools have to find ways to help both immigrants and refugees fit in, especially in culturally diverse classrooms. Schools play a huge role in this process since they help students learn about other cultures and develop communication and cultural skills that bring people together (Ahsan & Sadak, 2021; Aydemir, 2022; Çağlıyan & Dağlı, 2022; Dora, 2020; Düvell, 2020; Göçer et al., 2021; Léonard & Kaunert, 2022; Memişoğlu & Yavçan, 2020).

ICA is the ability to know, understand, and communicate with people from different cultures in a way that works. In schools, IA is very important for making sure that everyone feels welcome and for helping students from different backgrounds learn. Empathy, behavioral sensitivity, and communicative competence are all important parts of IA (Agu et al. 2021; Alam & Mohanty, 2023; Alenezi, 2023; Cantu-Ortiz et al., 2020; Fitria, 2023; Kornprobst & Paul, 2021; Meltzer & Petras, 2023; Mujahid et al., 2021; Tight, 2022; Wang et al., 2022). As Türkiye becomes more culturally heterogeneous, promoting intercultural awareness is essential for fostering tolerance, inclusion, and mutual respect.

A culturally diverse Michigan school served as the site of a longitudinal investigation whereby the Student Multicultural Relations Survey and statistical procedures (t-tests, regression) were employed to measure the effectiveness of the Cultural Awareness Curriculum. Findings indicated a significant improvement in students' attitude toward cultural diversity and cross-cultural biases. Notably, changes were not moderated by demographic characteristics such as gender and race, underscoring the transferability of the curriculum. (Baltes et al., 2015).

More and more people think that ICA (ICA), which is a more flexible and responsive framework, is a good fit for modern educational needs. In language teaching

contexts, ICA supports the integration of linguistic and cultural learning while encouraging self-reflection and openness in intercultural interactions (Baker, 2011).

2.3. Resilience

Several studies have shown that students from different cultural backgrounds who work on building their resilience are more likely to do well in school (Ang et al., 2021; Skinner et al., 2020; van Wyk et al., 2022). Despite this, resilience has not received sufficient emphasis in higher education discourse. Understanding how college students build resilience through lived experience is essential for promoting well-being and academic achievement. Resilience supports students in maintaining emotional balance and mental health while facing academic and personal challenges, with implications that extend beyond individual success to broader educational outcomes (Alam, 2022; Brooms, 2023).

Educational institutions that foster resilience are more likely to offer high-quality learning environments, retain students, and graduate individuals who contribute meaningfully to society. As academic demands grow more complex and culturally diverse, cultivating resilience becomes increasingly crucial for helping students adapt and maintain long-term engagement (Baker & Robnett, 2012; Hartley, 2011).

Resilience, in this context, goes beyond doing well in school and is a basic life skill that helps people deal with stress, handle unexpected problems, and make changes (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Southwick et al., 2014). It gives you the mental strength to keep going through hard times and is a big part of your emotional health.

Over the past few decades, resilience has become a central concept in higher education research. Scholars have investigated how resilience operates across various university systems, often focusing on the skills students need to overcome challenges in tertiary education (Cheng et al., 2022; Denckla et al., 2020; Lasota et al., 2020). More

and more people are realizing that resilience includes more than what has been studied before and needs to be looked at through the many different experiences that students have in real life.

Every academic year students embark on their university careers with the aim to develop foundational and intellectual competencies for future professional roles. But here, many also have to manage stressors, or external factors, beyond their control. Whilst academic achievement is one aspect of success, a student's ability to cope with adversity, acquire adaptive skills and bounce back from failure contribute to achievements in academia and in life. Environments that are supportive—those in which academic advising is personalized to the student, faculty mentorship, and community involvement—can contribute to student resilience as an embedded aspect of the academic experience.

Institutions that invest in building resilience see higher graduation and retention rates, which shows that it has a real effect on student outcomes (Trigueros et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022). Universities are increasingly recognizing their role in developing this important trait, especially since students are going through a lot of changes as they get ready for competitive and quickly changing job markets (Etherton et al., 2022; Russell et al., 2020). People are starting to see resilience as an important trait for graduates to have, and it has been linked to getting a job.

Moreover, fostering a resilient mindset has been shown to enhance motivation, focus, and cognitive performance (Ang et al., 2021; Neufeld et al., 2020). Adding lessons about resilience to the curriculum—through targeted workshops, integrated learning outcomes, or reflection activities—can help students feel like they belong and keep them going in school (Frisby et al., 2020; Raza et al., 2021).

Resilience is also crucial in contexts of migration and displacement. Capstick (2018) looked into how teaching English can help migrants and refugees become more resilient. The study stressed how teaching language makes it easier to get an education, find a job, and become a part of the community. Bilingual programs, storytelling, and psychosocial interventions all helped improve emotional health and strengthen cultural identity. Teachers were very important in making schools that were safe for everyone, sensitive to trauma, and helped students make their own choices and do well in school.

2.4. Proactive Personality

Since more and more people are realizing that being proactive can affect future success, it's important to look into how a proactive personality might affect school performance. Understanding the traits of proactive people is an important first step in this exploration. People like this are usually creative when it comes to solving problems, good at learning from their surroundings, and have high levels of job satisfaction, self-worth, and optimism (Feng & Liu, 2024; Nerissa & Rachmawati, 2024; Shoss et al., 2020). From an educational point of view, classrooms that promote creativity, innovation, and mental health are more likely to get students interested and help them do better, no matter what method is used.

Proactive personality can have a big effect on how students learn and what they learn, in addition to shaping their interest in certain subjects. Students who actively look for ways to learn—especially those that let them make their own decisions, solve problems in different ways, and meet their own developmental needs—often have learning patterns that are not linear and hard to predict. Teachers are very important for encouraging this kind of engagement because they can spot proactive behaviors in students and change how they teach to fit those behaviors. This reciprocal dynamic

encourages deep learning, curiosity, and meaning-making within the classroom context (Chai et al., 2023; Gao et al., 2020; He et al., 2021; Li et al., 2020; Su & Zhang, 2020).

Educational institutions also benefit significantly from proactive students, educators, and administrators. A steady stream of student-led projects can improve the academic culture and show how good the school is. Many colleges and universities actively try to encourage proactive behavior in order to improve their reputation, make students happier, and get more students to enroll and stay enrolled. Proactive learning environments, which include support, freedom, and involvement, draw in motivated students and create stories of academic success that improve the school's reputation even more (Bong & Chen, 2024; Gaebel & Morrisroe, 2023; Muhimmah et al., 2022).

Chen et al. (2021) looked into how a proactive personality affects how engaged elementary school students are in school and found that teacher-student relationships and academic self-efficacy are two important factors that affect this. Their results suggest that encouraging students to be proactive not only helps them get involved, but also shows how important relationships with others and self-beliefs are for shaping educational success.

Recent graduate research on Turkish EFL teachers has given us more proof of the psychological and educational value of affective traits. Ekinici (2023) found that proactive personality was a strong predictor of teachers' job crafting behaviors, which allowed them to change their work and social interactions in ways that helped them stay engaged and emotionally healthy. The quantitative results did not show a direct statistical link between proactivity and work engagement, but the qualitative data showed that proactive teachers became more engaged through strategies they came up with on their own that made them feel more in control and adaptable. Erduran Tekin and Çayak (2024) found more evidence that teachers who were more patient were more

resilient. This means that teachers who exercised patience were better able to cope with classroom stress, maintain positive interactions with students, and sustain adaptive behaviors under pressure.

These studies show that both being proactive and being patient are important for emotional self-regulation and creating inclusive, learner-centered classrooms. These are skills that are very important for building intercultural competence and resilience in today's schools.

2.5. Patience

Patience is widely recognized as a prominent value in education. People often see teachers who are patient as helpful and caring, which makes them act and interact better in the classroom. When students and teachers are patient with each other, it makes the learning process go more smoothly and effectively for everyone (Kilag & Sasan, 2023; Ai-Worafi, 2023). Importantly, patience is not only critical in teaching but also plays a vital role in student learning. Learners are patient are more likely to fully understand what they learn, think about what it means, and improve their memory and understanding over time. This slow pace gives students a chance to review, reinforce, and connect new information with what they already know.

Furthermore, patience supports learners in managing anxiety, remaining engaged with content, and personalizing their learning experiences—all of which contribute to deeper, more meaningful educational outcomes.

Patience also reflects qualities of calmness, self-control, and the ability to pause and consider appropriate responses. When students are given the time and space to process learning at their own pace, outcomes are often delayed but improved. Research suggests that slower, more deliberate learning leads to more detailed cognitive representations and enhances the ability to manage distractions or competing tasks in

multitask environments (Hanushek et al., 2022; Setiawan, 2021). Although slow learning may incur higher perceived costs—such as longer recall time—it reflects focused attention, increases internal relevance, and improves long-term memory. Patience helps learners focus on both intrinsic motivations (e.g., curiosity and interest) and instrumental goals (e.g., practical application), which enhance short-term satisfaction and lay the groundwork for deeper cognitive engagement. It also reduces anxiety, encourages people to keep going, and helps them think critically and use their imagination.

When it comes to helping students grow, patience is very similar to resilience and perseverance. It's normal for students to have academic problems, and they can learn to deal with and get through them by developing emotional tools. Learning to be patient can help you become more resilient. Studies show that students who take the time to think about things are more likely to improve their ability to handle different types of academic tests (Aramudin & Susanti, 2024; Hashimy et al., 2023). This growth mindset is important for changing how students think about problems and encouraging them to be positive. In educational contexts, being patient means changing how you think on purpose. This means trusting the learning process, accepting that things aren't always clear, and knowing your own role in your own growth. Ravich (2024) says that patience means having "a deep trust or respect for the process of learning and development." It also means being open to feedback, not giving up when things go wrong, and being open to constructive criticism. The Patient Initiative in higher education and other programs that focus on patience have had good results in real life. This program made students more resilient by giving them a lot of hands-on activities and connecting them with patient role models. Because of this, students said they were more comfortable with uncertainty, more determined to keep trying, and more willing

to take academic risks. These results show that learning to be patient is not just a passive trait; it's an active, teachable skill that helps students grow both academically and emotionally. (Ravich, 2024).

Recent studies in Turkish schools show that teacher patience is a dynamic resource that can improve both the quality of teaching and the emotional health of students. For example, Erdal (2023) looked into the patience of 355 public school teachers in Ordu and found that teachers who were more patient with their lessons and with their students were much better at managing their classrooms. His results show that patience accounts for a large part of the differences in proactive, organized, and learner-centered teaching methods. This proof shows that patience is not just a passive quality, but an active one that goes along with teaching that is self-regulated and emotionally intelligent.

Ulukan and Ulukan (2021) also looked at the links between patience, resilience, and well-being in 336 Turkish physical education teachers. They found that teachers' patience, mental toughness, and happiness were all linked in a moderate way. These traits together were good predictors of overall psychological well-being. This suggests that patience helps teachers deal with emotional stress and stay happy in their jobs, which makes them even better at their jobs in the classroom.

These results are also backed up by qualitative research. Üstündağ Kocakuşak and Akar Vural (2022) looked at how a program to empower teachers affected the resilience of primary school teachers. They found that patience was an important protective factor. Their program-based study found that teachers who felt empowered were often more tolerant, adaptable, and reflective—traits that are important for handling stress in the classroom, keeping relationships positive, and supporting emotionally responsive learning relationships.

When looked at as a whole, these studies show that patience is a multidimensional strength that includes emotional regulation, stable relationships, and staying engaged over time. In lessons shaped by cultural and linguistic diversity, patience helps teachers deal with student behavior and misunderstandings between cultures in a thoughtful way. Educators with patience demonstrate the capacity to tolerate uncertainty, model respectful interaction, and encourage a supportive learning space—attributes that align closely with intercultural competence and professional resilience. Therefore, teachers in the 21st century who work in complicated classrooms should not just see patience as a "buffer" trait, but as a core affective skill. Literature on the 21st century teaching talks about affective and social-emotional skills as more than just buffers; they are also important for effective teaching. For example, UNESCO, OECD, and meta-analyses all show that skills like empathy, emotional intelligence, patience, and social awareness are important for teachers to have when they are in charge of complicated, diverse classrooms (Scheirlinckx, 2023).

3. THE METHODOLOGY

The main goal of this study was to examine the relationships among four psychological constructs: resilience, patience, proactive personality, and intercultural awareness (ICA). To investigate the relationships between variables, this study used a descriptive research design and relational analysis. These four constructs were chosen because they are important for academic achievement and have the capacity to affect students' capacity to participate actively in multicultural learning environments. Resilience helps students deal with stress of studies and adapt to evolving circumstances, fostering perseverance and emotional balance (Hartley, 2011). Patience supports sustained cognitive engagement and tolerance for ambiguity—traits that are particularly crucial in culturally diverse classrooms and interactions (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018). By proactive personalities, Self-initiated learning, goal-setting, and openness to new cross-cultural experiences are all encouraged (Bateman & Crant, 1993). ICA, as the cornerstone of intercultural competency, is essential for facilitating polite and successful cross-cultural communication (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006).

To facilitate this exploration, four different scales, each designed to measure one of the constructs being studied, were used. In addition to improving the data's robustness, this methodological approach enables a comprehensive examination of the interrelationships between the variables.

After data collection was finished, Mplus version 8.4 and SPSS version 26 were used to perform a SEM analysis on the collected data. By employing the SEM, this study aimed to clarify how resilience, patience, and proactive personality all worked together to affect learners' ICA.

3.1. Participants

EFL students from five foundation universities in İstanbul participated in this study, representing a variety of departments such as the faculties of economics, design, health sciences, administration, and social sciences. A total of 482 students participated in the study, which was carried out during the 2023–2024 school year. Of these individuals, 135 identified as male and 347 as female. In conclusion, this research not only advances knowledge of higher education student demographics in higher education but also highlights the significance of creating a welcoming and encouraging learning environment that celebrates and values diversity.

3.2. Data Collection and Tools

In order to ensure a first-hand approach to gathering insights, the researcher collected the data for the study directly. A deliberate convenience sampling technique was used to streamline the process, and participants were volunteers.

The variables of ICA, patience, resilience, and proactive personality were measured in the second phase of the study using four standardized instruments. A five-point Likert-type response format, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 5 denoting "strongly agree," was used for all scales. Below are the specifics of each scale.

3.2.1. Intercultural Awareness Scale (ICAS)

The Intercultural Awareness Scale (ICAS), initially created by Saka and Asma (2020), is a unidimensional instrument which is used to capture various dimensions of ICA, providing a comprehensive measure of learners' abilities to navigate and understand diverse cultural contexts. The scale uses a five-point Likert scale to rate 24 items. It evaluates learners' sensitivity, awareness, and adaptability toward different cultural contexts (Saka & Asma, 2020). Among the sample items are "I am aware of the differences between my culture and other cultures" and "I respect the cultural

diversity of a society." In the initial study, the scale's reliability coefficient was calculated to be ($\alpha=.90$).

3.2.1.1. Analyses of Intercultural Awareness (ICA) Scale and Proactive Personality Scale Adaptation

In the initial phase of the study, two measures—the Proactive Personality Scale and the ICAS were modified for use in L2 instruction in Turkey. In order to do this, a cohort of EFL students (N=202) enrolled in an English preparatory school were given the Turkish versions of the scales. The adapted scales, as explained earlier, are the ICAS, originally developed by Saka and Asma (2020), and the Proactive Personality Scale, developed by Bateman and Crant (1993).

Given the increasing emphasis on cross-cultural competence and proactive dispositions in both educational and organizational domains, the localization of these scales is essential to ensure their psychometric integrity and contextual relevance. The goal of the adaptation process was to create Turkish versions of the instruments that are suitable for Turkish-speaking populations both linguistically and culturally, while preserving the conceptual equivalency of the original constructs. In Türkiye, where intercultural competency and personality qualities like proactivity are becoming more and more acknowledged as crucial components of teacher preparation and professional development, this endeavor is especially important for psychological and educational research.

The adaptation process adhered to generally recognized standards for cultural adaptation and scale translation, guaranteeing that the translated instruments maintained the original theoretical frameworks while becoming understandable and pertinent to the target audience (Beaton et al., 2000; Hambleton, 2001). Forward translation, back translation, expert panel evaluation, and cognitive interviews with

members of the target user group were among the steps in the process. Maintaining content validity within the Turkish sociocultural context was just as important as achieving linguistic accuracy.

As aforementioned, the adaptation study was conducted with a total of 202 undergraduate students enrolled in an English Language Teaching (ELT) program of a university in Istanbul, Türkiye. This specific participant group was selected based on its relevance to the constructs under investigation. As pre-service language teachers, these students are situated at the intersection of language instruction and intercultural communication, making them particularly suitable for the examination of ICA and proactive personality traits.

The adaptation process involved the rigorous translation and cultural tailoring of two instruments: The ICAS, as explained earlier, composed of 24 items measured on a five-point Likert scale, and the Proactive Personality Scale, consisting of 17 Likert-type items. The translation was carried out collaboratively by five academicians, all of whom brought subject-matter expertise and linguistic proficiency to the task. The translation team included two Associate Professors of TEFL (one of whom is multilingual), two Assistant Professors of ELT, a senior lecturer, and a medical doctor specialized in psychiatry with a doctoral degree. This interdisciplinary composition was intentional, ensuring the inclusion of both educational and psychological perspectives in the adaptation process.

The initial translation into Turkish was performed by the Associate Professors of TEFL, followed by a back-translation conducted independently by the two Assistant Professors, the senior lecturer, and the psychiatrist. Importantly, the individuals responsible for the back-translation had no prior exposure to the original English versions of the scales, a strategy employed to reduce translator bias and enhance the

objectivity of the process. To ensure consistency between the source and translated versions, one of the Assistant Professors undertook a comparative review of the original and back-translated scales, providing a final linguistic and conceptual verification.

Following this phase, five senior-level university students from ELT programs were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. These interviews were designed to assess the clarity, interpretability, and cultural appropriateness of the adapted scale items. They exerted their willingness to participate. The participants' feedback contributed to refinements that improved both the readability and contextual relevance of the items. The finalized Turkish versions of the scales were then piloted with the full sample of 202 ELT students, thus providing the dataset for subsequent psychometric analyses. This multistep, collaborative approach to translation and validation strengthens the credibility and applicability of the adapted instruments within the Turkish educational research context.

To verify the factor structure and psychometric properties of the ICAS within the context of the present study, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted.

3.2.1.1.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) Results for Intercultural Awareness (ICA) Scale

An EFA was executed to ascertain the factor structure of the ICA scale. The results indicated that the EFA method aligns well with Bartlett's test of sphericity, χ^2 (df) = 584.213 (229), $p < 0.001$. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure for sampling adequacy yielded a value of 0.86 (ranging from 0.72 to 0.89). The goodness of fit indices for the EFA model were satisfactory (χ^2 (df) = 584.213 (229), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.951, TLI = 0.934, RMSEA = 0.058, SRMR = 0.031). The descriptive statistics and factor loadings are presented in Table 1. The findings from the EFA

revealed that 24 items of the ICA scale were loaded onto two factors, where Factor 1 possessed an eigenvalue of 11.064 and Factor 2 had an eigenvalue of 1.806.

Table 1.

Factor Loadings, Item Uniqueness and Descriptive Statistics for ICA Scale

Item	Factor loading		Uniqueness	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Factor 1	Factor 2					
1	0.818***	-0.030	0.046	4.325	0.593	-1.377	1.703
3	0.849***	-0.008	0.040	4.236	0.652	-1.102	1.501
4	0.656***	0.217*	0.040	4.252	0.608	-0.774	-0.134
5	0.687***	0.077	0.038	4.041	0.761	-0.379	-0.497
6	0.645***	0.070	0.048	4.106	0.638	-0.720	-0.228
7	0.675***	0.132*	0.045	4.211	0.505	-0.972	1.196
9	0.584***	0.197	0.047	4.350	0.638	-1.305	1.082
14	0.580***	0.292*	0.038	4.211	0.554	-1.067	1.537
22	0.622***	0.210*	0.043	4.268	0.640	-1.424	1.110
24	-0.584***	0.122	0.042	2.659	0.529	0.378	-0.924
2	0.230*	0.580***	0.044	4.382	0.505	-0.982	0.441
8	0.166*	0.579***	0.048	4.179	0.508	-0.681	0.558
10	0.148	0.611***	0.048	4.366	0.526	-0.934	0.508
11	0.098	0.685***	0.046	4.187	0.553	-0.556	-0.097
12	0.191*	0.854***	0.061	4.000	0.445	-0.119	-0.872
13	0.232*	0.555***	0.046	4.244	0.548	-0.324	-0.797
15	0.127	0.677***	0.045	4.146	0.023	-0.481	-0.308
16	0.183	0.537***	0.051	3.967	0.615	-0.972	0.642
17	0.123	0.621***	0.051	4.228	0.718	-1.030	1.512
18	-0.068	0.736***	0.054	4.073	0.617	-0.781	0.519
19	0.015	0.732***	0.050	4.203	0.526	-1.380	1.336
20	-0.212	0.652***	0.058	4.016	0.650	-0.402	-0.508
21	0.032	0.629***	0.054	3.748	0.518	-0.763	0.388
23	-0.008	0.523***	0.042	3.862	0.753	-0.625	0.561

Following the EFA, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the validity of the two-factor model identified and to assess the model's overall fit within the sample.

3.2.1.1.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results for Intercultural Awareness (ICA) Scale

Further, a CFA was executed in order to validate the dimensionality, reliability, and validity of the ICA scale. The findings from the CFA demonstrated that the model possessed adequate fit indices (χ^2 (df) = 731.141 (251), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.943, TLI = 0.927, RMSEA = 0.051, SRMR = 0.033). The factor loadings resulting from the CFA solution are depicted in Figure 2. Subsequent to the established criteria of “ ± 2 ” (Gravetter et al., 2021), assessments of normality for each item were carried out. The skewness and kurtosis values for all 24 items in the scale fell within the recommended range, signifying a normal distribution of scores for each individual item.



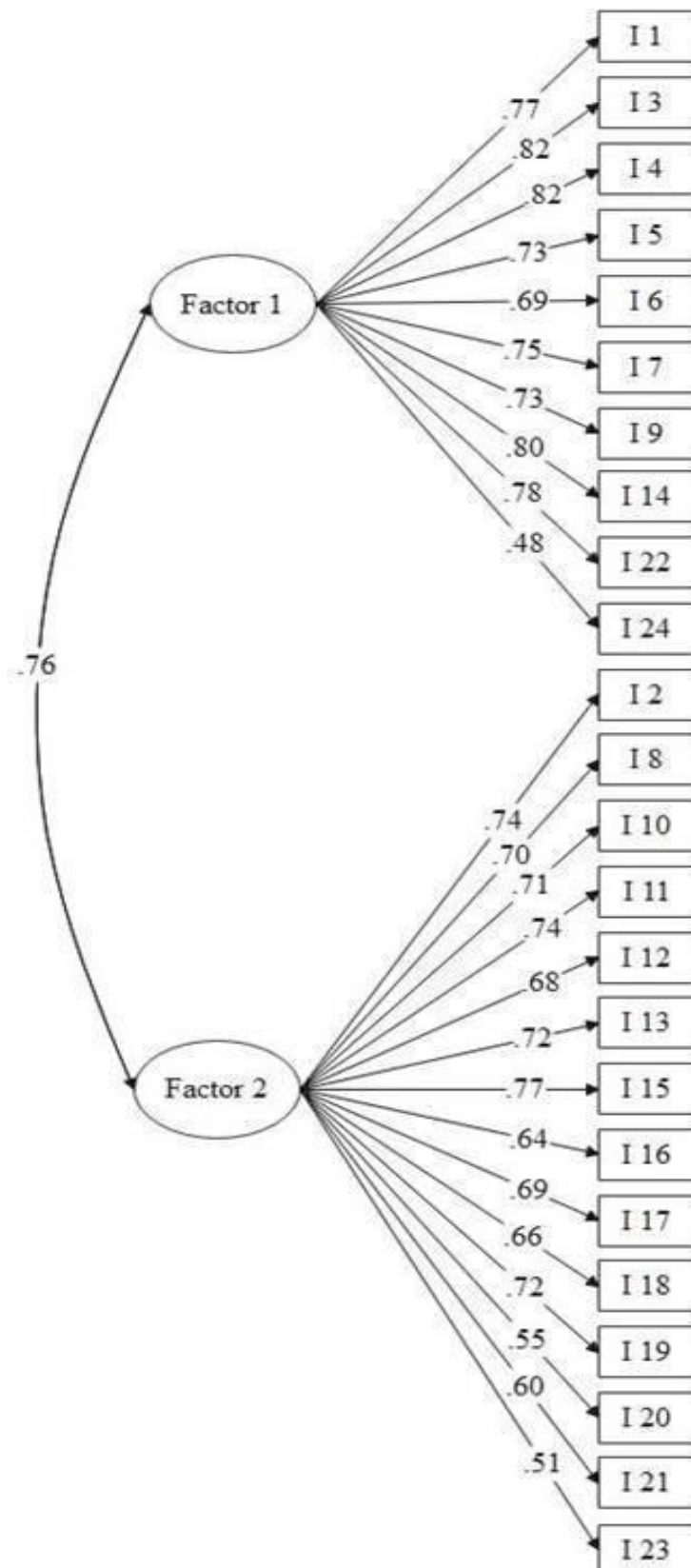


Figure 2.CFA solution for ICA Scale

In addition to validating the construct validity of the ICA Scale, an assessment was conducted to ascertain the convergent and discriminant validity of individual subscales through a comparison of the AVE and r^2 (coefficient of determination) of each subscale. The results presented in Table 2 demonstrate that the AVE values for both factors surpassed their respective r^2 values, suggesting a high level of convergent and discriminant validity for each subscale. Furthermore, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the overall ICA, Factor 1, and Factor 2 were 0.95, 0.94, and 0.93, respectively. Similarly, the McDonald's omega values for the overall ICA, Factor 1, and Factor 2 were 0.94, 0.92, and 0.91, respectively. Hence, the reliability of the construct was also affirmed (with α and $\omega > 0.70$, as per (Hair et al., 1998).

Table 2.

Reliability and validity for ICA Scale

Factor	r^2		AVE	α	ω
	Factor 1	Factor 2			
Factor 1	-		.768	.94	.92
Factor 2	0.761***	-	.789	.93	.91

The validity and reliability of the ICAS were reevaluated using data gathered from Turkish EFL students in order to determine whether it was appropriate for the current research setting. The ICAS was first created by Saka and Asma (2020) with the intention of assessing students' awareness, sensitivity, and adaptability in a variety of cultural contexts. The modified version used in this study is shown alongside the original version's psychometric qualities. This comparison illustrates the construct validity and consistency of the scale in various linguistic and educational contexts. A

summary of the reliability and validity evidence from both the original and present study is provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3.

Summary of Reliability and Validity of the original and present study

Psychometric Property	Original Study (Saka & Asma, 2020)	Present Study
Cronbach's Alpha	.90	.95
Factor Structure	Unidimensional	Two-Factor
Construct Validity	EFA/CFA	EFA/CFA
Content Validity	Expert Panel	Expert Review, Interviews
Model Fit (CFA)	Not Reported	

EFA Analysis: CFI = 0.951, TLI = 0.934, RMSEA = 0.058, SRMR = 0.031)

CFA Analysis: CFI = 0.943, TLI = 0.927, RMSEA = 0.051, SRMR = 0.033)

3.2.1.1.3. Identified Factors and Thematic Interpretations

Deviating from its initial unidimensional structure as developed by Saka and Asma (2020), the ICAS revealed a first factor thematically interpreted as Cultural Curiosity and Appreciation. This factor consists of items such as "I like discovering beliefs of other societies" and "I am interested in learning the taboos of different cultures," representing a blend of cognitive interest and affective appreciation. Sample items that loaded onto this factor included items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, and 22.

The second factor was labelled *Cross-Cultural Competence* and encompassed items indicative of behavioral adaptability, confidence in intercultural interactions, and active participation in culturally diverse experiences. Respondents with high scores on this factor indicated that they were more willing to communicate across cultural

boundaries and that they found it easier to modify their behavior when interacting with people from different cultures. Representative items included 2, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 23.

Both the item content and theoretical models of intercultural competence (e.g., Deardorff, 2006) as well as conceptual differences between affective orientations (e.g., curiosity, appreciation) and behavioral components (e.g., adaptability, communication skills) of ICA that are frequently found in the literature served as the basis for these thematic interpretations. The resulting two-factor structure is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4.

Factor Labels and Thematic Descriptions for ICAS

Factor	Proposed Title	Thematic Focus	Sample Items
Factor 1	Cultural Curiosity and Appreciation	Interest in exploring, respecting, and understanding different cultures; openness to cultural diversity	Items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14, 22
Factor 2	Cross-Cultural Competence	Intercultural adaptability, communication skills, behavioral flexibility in multicultural settings	Items 2, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15–21, 23

3.2.2. Proactive Personality Scale

The Proactive Personality Scale, originally developed by (Bateman & Crant, 1993), was utilized to assess participants' proactive tendencies. The scale consists of 17 items (e.g., "I am always looking for better ways to do things." and "I feel driven to make a difference in my community, and maybe the world." rated on a five-point Likert scale. It evaluates the degree to which individuals take initiative and bring about change

in their environments. The reliability coefficient of the entire scale was calculated as ($\alpha = 0.86$).

At the outset, 202 (52 male and 150 female) EFL learners participated in the scale adaptation phase of the study. They ranged in age from 18 to 35 years old with the average age of 20. In doing so, the scales of proactive personality were administered to a group of English-major EFL learners studying at a university in Istanbul, Türkiye.

3.2.2.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) Results for Proactive Personality Scale

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine the underlying factor structure of the proactive personality measure. The results of the assumption checks indicated that EFA is suitable for Bartlett's test of sphericity (χ^2 (df) = 341.87 (119), $p < 0.001$.) The KMO measure of sample adequacy was 0.84, with a range of 0.75 to 0.88. The fit indices of the EFA model were deemed satisfactory, (χ^2 (df) = 348.895 (119), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.935, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.062, SRMR = 0.041). Table 5 displays the descriptive statistics and factor loadings obtained from the EFA. The results of the EFA indicated that all 17 items of the proactive personality scale were grouped together under a single component, which had an eigenvalue of 3.74.

Table 5.

Factor Loadings, Item Uniqueness and Descriptive Statistics for Proactive Personality Scale

Item	Factor loading	Uniqueness	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	0.581***	0.669	4.081	0.644	-1.186	1.519
2	0.642***	0.506	3.691	0.848	-0.664	0.671
3	0.544***	0.782	3.585	0.714	-0.067	-0.601
4	0.661***	0.564	3.610	0.677	-0.047	-0.551
5	0.541***	0.763	3.846	0.700	-0.954	1.354

6	0.571***	0.784	4.447	0.410	-0.918	0.610
7	0.626***	0.718	3.911	0.781	-0.886	0.596
8	0.678***	0.771	3.894	0.745	-0.326	-0.657
9	0.732***	0.601	3.976	0.690	-0.635	0.416
10	0.653***	0.694	3.707	0.581	-0.554	0.686
11	0.636***	0.712	4.236	0.440	-0.304	-0.784
12	0.687***	0.529	3.870	0.829	-0.646	0.297
13	0.744***	0.446	3.569	0.749	-0.176	-0.279
14	0.658***	0.567	3.846	0.667	-0.873	1.402
15	0.641***	0.590	3.577	0.781	-0.341	0.018
16	0.649***	0.579	3.569	0.733	-0.371	0.193
17	0.673***	0.672	4.130	0.568	-1.016	1.051

3.2.2.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results for Proactive Personality Scale

Next, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to verify the dimensional structure, reliability, and validity of the proactive personality scale. The results of the CFA indicated that the CFA model had a satisfactory fit to the data, as evidenced by the following statistics: χ^2 (df) = 348.895 (119), $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.935, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.062, SRMR = 0.041. Figure 2 displays the factor loading obtained from the CFA. Normality tests were performed on each item, adhering to the recommended limits of ± 2 (Gravetter et al., 2021). All 17 items on the scale had skewness and kurtosis values that fell within the recommended range, suggesting that the scores for each item followed a normal distribution. In addition, the Cronbach's

coefficient α ($\alpha = 0.87$) and the McDonald's ω ($\omega = 0.86$) provided evidence of the reliability of the measurement (α and $\omega > 0.70$, (Hair et al., 1998).

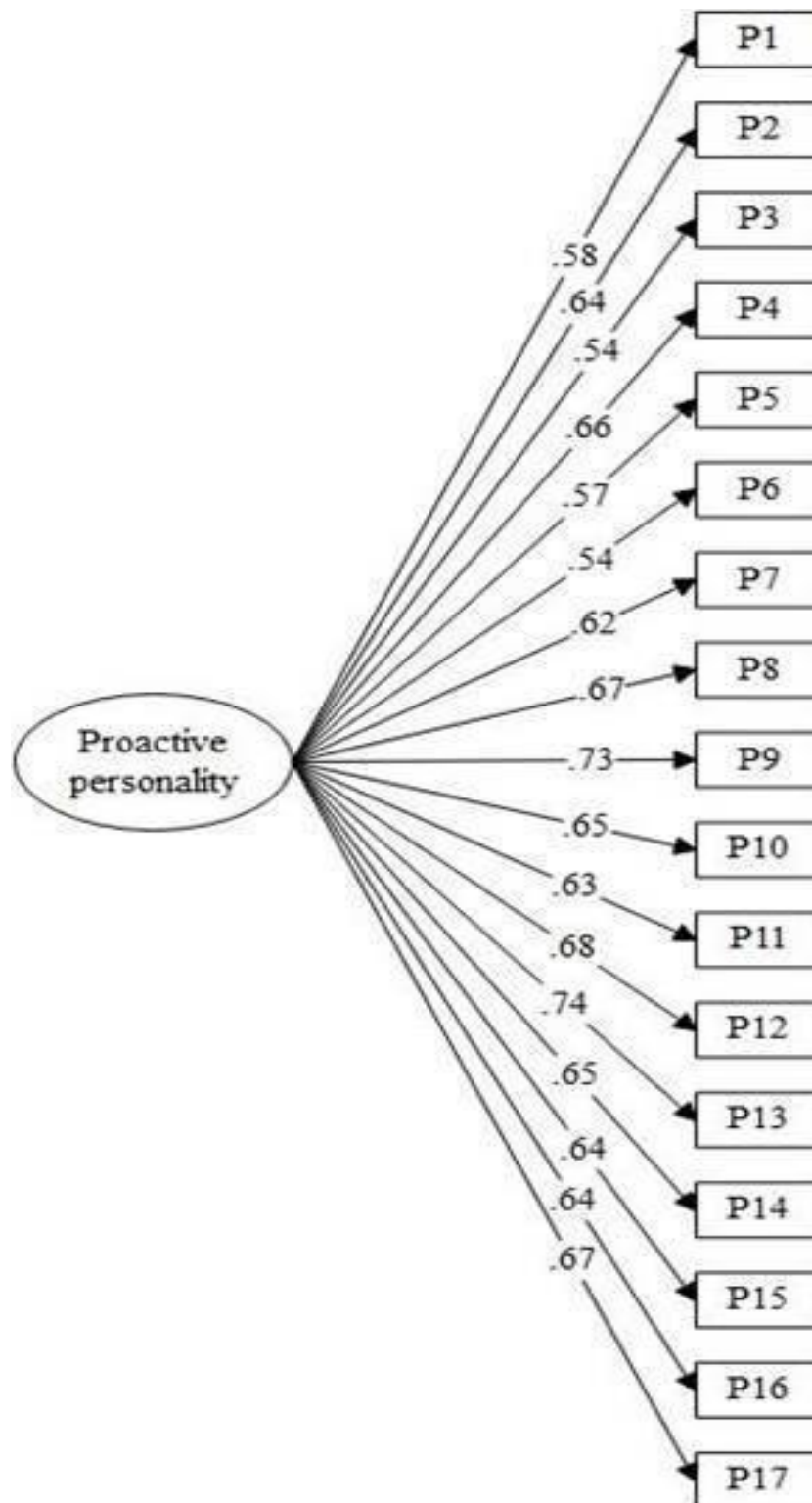


Figure 2. CFA solution for proactive personality scale

The validity and reliability of the Proactive Personality Scale were reexamined using a sample of Turkish EFL learners in order to guarantee that it was suitable for the current research setting. The original psychometric properties of the scale, developed by Bateman and Crant (1993), are presented alongside the results obtained from the adapted version used in this study. The internal consistency and construct validity of the scale in various linguistic and cultural contexts are demonstrated by this comparison. Table 6 below provides an overview of the validity and reliability indicators for the current study as well as the original study.

Table 6.

Summary of Reliability and Validity of the original and present study

Psychometric Property	Original Study (Bateman & Crant, 1993)	Present Study
Cronbach's Alpha	.89	.87
Factor Structure	Unidimensional	Unidimensional (confirmed via EFA and CFA)
Construct Validity	Supported through correlational and regression analyses	Supported via EFA and CFA; loadings > .40
Content Validity	Items developed based on theoretical and empirical basis	Culturally adapted and examined by experts
Model Fit (CFA)	Not Reported	Goodness of fit (EFA): CFI = 0.935, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.062, SRMR = 0.041 Goodness of fit (CFA): CFI = 0.935, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.062, SRMR = 0.041

3.2.3. Patience Scale

The Patience Tendency Scale was developed by Çeliköz and Gül (2018) and consists of 21 items with three subcomponents namely Patience for Intolerance (10 items; e.g., “I think that one needs to study patiently in order to be successful in classes.”), Patience for Pushiness (6 items; e.g., “I wait calmly until the exam grades are announced.”), and Patience for Anger (5 items; e.g., “A student who is more successful than me does not make me angry.”). It specifically assesses individuals’ ability to remain calm, composed, and tolerant in the face of challenges or delays. The scale was employed to measure the participants’ levels of patience in the context of L2 learning. The scale is rated on a five-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficient of the entire scale was calculated as ($\alpha = .79$).

3.2.4. Resilience Scale

The Resilience for Adults Scale was developed by (Basım & Çetin, 2011). The scale includes 33 items each rated on a five-point Likert scale. The scale consists of six components, namely perception of self (6 items; e.g., “I can't solve my personal problems / I know how to solve them.”), perception of future (4 items; e.g., “The plans I make for the future are difficult to achieve / possible to achieve.”), structured style (4 items; e.g., “I am good at: Planning my time / Spending my time.”), social competence (6 items; e.g., “I enjoy being... : with other people / on my own.”), family cohesion (6 items; e.g., “My close friends / family members appreciate my abilities / do not appreciate my abilities.”), and social resources (7 items; e.g., “I receive support: From my friends – family members / From no one.”). The study was used to evaluate participants’ psychological resilience. It measures individuals’ capacity to cope with stress, overcome difficulties, and adapt to changing circumstances. The scale is rated on a five-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficient of the entire scale was calculated as ($\alpha = 0.86$).

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

Data for the study were collected through in-person visits to five foundation universities. In the data collection process involved voluntary participants, and the tool was administered only to individuals who provided informed consent to participate. For participants who were directly accessible, the questionnaires were administered face-to-face. A convenience sampling method was employed, allowing for the inclusion of participants who were readily available and willing to contribute to the research.

A variety of instruments were used in the field in the data collecting process, translated and culturally adapted scales among them, to secure the gathering of rich and quality data. These measures were chosen for their theoretical alignment with constructs relevant to this study and were carefully modified to be appropriate for the participant's cultural and linguistic context. At the beginning of the survey, all participants were explained that the participation was completely voluntary and that responses would be used exclusively for the study and, in that, their anonymity would be ensured and the responses kept confidential.

3.4. Data Analysis

The subsequent analysis phase involved both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, measurement invariance testing, and structural model evaluations to examine the proposed relationships. To achieve this, at the outset, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) were conducted so as to measure the nuanced interplay between the main variables of the study.

3.4.1. Measurement models.

Mplus 8.4 with the robust maximum likelihood (MLR) estimator was utilized for all analyses. Analysis started by addressing the issue of outliers. Because the scale

was administered online and all items required forced choices, no missing values were identified. Prior to examining the interdependence associations between variables in structural models, the measurement model of a set of constructs in a structural model was validated using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Hair et al., 1998). The following model-fit metrics were applied to assess the model fit: RMSEA < 0.08, CFI > 0.90, TLI > 0.90, and SRMA < 0.08 (Kline, 2015). To verify the reliability, and validity of the constructs of measurement models, the following assumptions were investigated: (a) The factor loadings (λ) of all items should be higher than .50 on their target factors; (b) Cronbach's α coefficient and compositive reliability (CR) in the measurement models should be higher than .70 in order to ensure internal consistency (Hair et al., 1998); (c) The average variance extracted AVEs should be higher than .50 to ensure convergent validity (Hair et al., 1998). To investigate the associations between components, Pearson correlations were computed. We also calculated descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations), normality tests, and correlation analyses for the constructs used in this study.

Following these preliminary analyses, the correlations between the different variables were assessed using SEM. The SEM model specifically examined how proactive personality can predict the ICA of L2 learners. The estimation method utilized in this investigation was maximum likelihood (ML) due to its ability to produce unbiased estimates even when the constructs have a little or moderately non-normal distribution in large sample sizes (Hau & Marsh, 2004). The mediation analysis was employed to investigate the indirect impacts of patience and resilience on the connections between proactive personality and ICA. A bootstrap analysis with 5,000 resamples was employed, using 95% confidence intervals (CI), to assess the statistical significance of both direct and mediational impacts.

4. RESULTS

This part includes a summary of the significant descriptive statistics to examine the connections among ICA and the three main psychological constructs—proactive personality, resilience, and patience—in the context of university students enrolled in English preparatory programs. The direction and strength of these relationships were investigated using a series of analyses. The study's primary focus is on the connections between proactive personality, patience, resilience, and ICA. This is followed by examining the factor structure and psychometric properties of the ICAS and the Proactive Personality Scale within the context of Türkiye. Following this, the analysis focuses on the central research question: To what extent does proactive personality predict ICA through the mediating roles of patience and resilience? The question is addressed through a series of statistical analyses, accompanied by relevant tables, model fit indices, and interpretative commentary to support the findings.

4.1. Descriptive statistics

The results of the structural equation modeling (SEM) that was done to investigate the proposed connections between the four main variables—proactive personality, patience, resilience, and ICA—are shown in this section. As stated in Hypotheses 1 through 3, a number of analyses were conducted in accordance with the suggested research model to test the direct and indirect effects. Descriptive statistics and correlation values are the first steps in the analysis. Next, the measurement model and structural paths are assessed. The findings offer empirical backing for the suggested correlations as well as the model's mediation functions for patience and resilience.

Table 7 illustrates the means, standard deviations, and correlations among all variables examined in the study. A measurement model was assessed, incorporating factors that tap into latent variables. The adequacy of this measurement model was demonstrated by the fit indices obtained ($\chi^2(301) = 884.251$, CFI = 0.952, TLI = 0.941,

RMSEA = 0.039). Significant loadings on the intended factors were observed for all parcels ($\lambda = 0.58 - 0.92$; $p < 0.001$).

Table 7.

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables

	Mean	SD	ICA	Proactive	Patience	Resilience
Proactive	4.88	.84	-			
Patience	5.33	.89	.66***	-		
Resilience	6.71	1.12	.48***	.61***	-	
ICA	5.57	.93	.45***	.55***	.42***	-

4.2. Results of the Fit Statistics for Hypothesized Path Model

Three hypotheses were developed and put to the test using structural equation modeling (SEM) in order to assess the structural relationships among the constructs of proactive personality, patience, resilience, and ICA. The purpose of these hypotheses was to evaluate the mediating functions of patience and resilience in predicting ICA, as well as to investigate both direct and indirect pathways.

Hypothesis 1: *Proactive personality predicts patience and resilience, and patience and resilience in turn predict ICA.* H1 proposed that proactive personality would predict both patience and resilience, and that patience and resilience, in turn, would predict ICA. This hypothesis was grounded in the assumption that proactive individuals tend to possess higher levels of psychological resources such as patience and resilience, which subsequently enhance their intercultural sensitivity and engagement.

Hypothesis 2: *Proactive personality predicts ICA, and ICA in turn predicts patience and resilience.* H2 examined a reverse directional pathway, suggesting that proactive personality predicts ICA directly, and that ICA then acts as a predictor of patience and resilience. This alternative model was tested to investigate whether ICA

might itself serve as a foundation for building personal capacities such as emotional endurance and adaptability in diverse contexts.

Hypothesis 3 *Proactive personality indirectly predicts ICA through the indirect effect of patience and resilience.* H3 addressed the possibility of an indirect effect, hypothesizing that proactive personality predicts ICA indirectly through the mediating roles of patience and resilience. This model sought to determine whether the influence of proactive personality on ICA operates primarily through the development of these affective and behavioral traits.

Each hypothesis was evaluated using a distinct SEM pathway model to determine the direction, strength, and significance of the structural relationships among the variables. The results provided comparative insights into the predictive mechanisms linking proactive personality with ICA, both directly and indirectly through psychological mediators.

The results of the Model 1 SEM analyses indicated that the Model 1 fit well with the data ($\chi^2(303) = 874.278$, CFI = 0.958, TLI = 0.946, RMSEA = 0.041, see Figure 3). Results indicated a positive relationship between proactive personality and patience ($\beta = .627$, $p < .001$) as well as between proactive personality and resilience ($\beta = .440$, $p < .001$). Moreover, patience and resilience were significant predictors of ICA (Patience = .516, $p < .001$; Resilience = .391, $p < .001$). Additionally, there was a direct effect of proactive personality on ICA ($\beta = .415$, $p < .001$).

An alternative model (Model 2) was tested where ICA precedes patience and resilience. This new model showed a reasonable fit to the data ($\chi^2(303) = 802.577$, CFI = 0.915, TLI = 0.903, RMSEA = 0.033). A comparison of Akaike's information criterion (AIC) index (Bozdoğan, 1987) was conducted for Model 1 and Model 2. The AIC is a modified version of the conventional χ^2 statistic for evaluating goodness-of-

fit, which incorporates an adjustment for complexity. Generally, a lower AIC value indicates a better fit. Model 2 had a higher AIC value (754.216) compared to Model 1 (675.147), suggesting that Model 1 better represents the relationships between proactive personality, patience, resilience, and ICA in the structural model.

Table 8

. Goodness of fit indices of the alternative models

	χ^2	df	p	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δ CFI	Δ RMSEA
M1	574.278	203	.001	0.958	0.946	0.041	-	-	-
M2	602.577	203	.001	0.915	0.903	0.033	28.292	.043	.008
M3	561.744	204	.001	0.975	0.959	0.052	12.534	.017	.011

Note. Δ : differences; χ^2 : chi-square; df: degrees of freedom; TLI: Tucker–Lewis index; CFI: comparative fit index; RMSEA: root mean square error; SRMR: standardized root mean square residual.

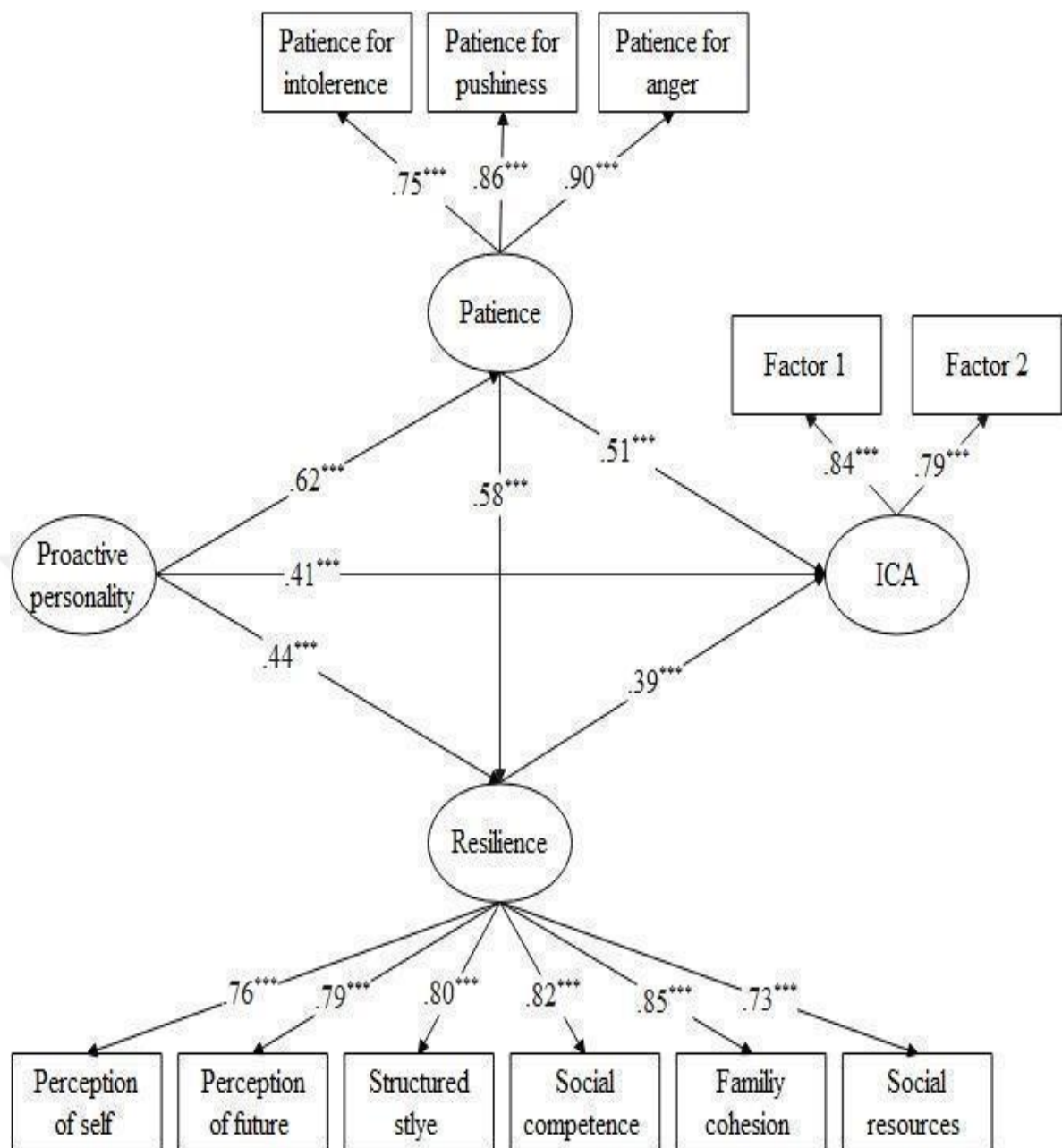


Figure 3. SEM Solution Reflecting the Hypothesized Relationships Among Study Variables

SEM solution on the associations among the study variables

In addition to examining direct impacts, the mediational model (Model 3) was assessed. The indirect effects were scrutinized through the utilization of bootstrap analysis. In accordance with Model 3, proactive personality was found to influence ICA by way of the indirect pathways of patience and resilience. The outcome indicated that

the fit of Model 3 to the data was satisfactory ($\chi^2(304) = 861.744$, CFI = 0.962, TLI = 0.957, RMSEA = 0.052). Model 3 demonstrated a significantly superior fit with the data in comparison to Model 1 and Model 2. A total of three indirect effects were specifically investigated.

Firstly, the indirect impact of proactive personality on ICA through patience was examined. The results from the bootstrap analysis revealed the significance of this indirect effect (estimate = .251, $p < .001$). Secondly, the indirect impact of proactive personality on ICA through resilience was evaluated. This indirect effect was also deemed significant (estimate = .211, $p < .001$). The outcomes from the third and final bootstrap analysis indicated the significance of the sequential mediation effect as well (estimate = .089, $p < .001$). In summary, these results provide evidence in support of a sequential mediation effect from proactive personality to ICA through resilience and patience.

The standardized path coefficient of $\beta = 0.39$ between Resilience and [variable] indicates a moderate positive relationship. According to Cohen (1988), coefficients in this range are considered moderate-to-large effects. Additionally, Kline (2015) highlights that such coefficients are commonly observed in SEM studies in psychology and social sciences, where relationships are typically not as strong as in natural sciences. For a coefficient β , conventional benchmarks identify 0.10–0.29 as small, 0.30–0.49 as medium, and 0.50 or greater as large, in line with Cohen's guidelines (1988), as cited by Nieminen (2022).

Based on the detailed EFA and CFA results of ICA, along with the scale items and their loadings, the following titles are proposed.

5. DISCUSSION

This section interprets and contextualizes the key findings of the study, highlighting how the relationships among proactive personality, patience, resilience, and intercultural awareness (ICA) contribute to our understanding of intercultural development in educational settings. The discussion is supported by theories that are relevant and appropriate to provide a complete explanation for the findings.

5.1. Summary of Key Findings

The present study aimed to investigate the relationships between proactive personality, patience, resilience, and ICA among university EFL learners. The results indicated a well-fitting model, with proactive personality exerting both direct and indirect effects on ICA, mediated through patience and resilience. The importance of the mediation via patience (emotion) and resilience (personality trait) provides an innovative approach to understanding the emotional and dispositional basis of intercultural development in the school-based intercultural development. The findings support the necessity of addressing affective and cognitive resources as essential components in intercultural competence, especially in an educational context increasingly interconnected due to globalization. These results of the study need to be situated in the broader theory of how these internal resources have been theorized and encouraged within the current intercultural frameworks. In an age of increased globalising of education, the ability to intercultural competence cannot simply be associated with knowledge or to communicative strategies. In recent years, there has been a rising awareness that researchers emphasize that affective and psychological resources (e.g. openness, empathy, emotional regulation, patience, resilience) are central to meaningful adaptation within intercultural environments (Deardorff, 2006; UNESCO MGIEP, 2020). These affective dimensions enable students not just to

understand cultural differences but to struggle with the ambiguities, tensions and affective difficulties that may be associated with intercultural encounters (Leung et al., 2014).

As the SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009) suggest, interculturality is processed in a triadic model that comprises cognitive, behavioral and affective dimensions, and the affective one is the most common and powerful force behind deeper learning. Both empathy, perspective-taking, tolerance of ambiguity and self-reflection can be regarded as internal psychosocial resources which build on learners' capacities and facilitate their establishing richer intercultural relationships and reducing misunderstandings (Barrett 2013; Ilie 2019). Related essential theoretical components are in accordance with the results of the present study, in which psychological attributes including patience, resiliency and proactive personality affecting learners' intercultural sensitivity. Specifically, patience and resilience can be understood as affective capacities, enabling the suffering of uncertainty, the regulation of response, and intentional response in intercultural settings. Similarly, a proactive attitude demonstrates a readiness not just in behavior, but a motivational stance that emanates from the affective sphere that propels learners to invest in sojourns, learn how to manage tensions and build cross-cultural relations meaningfully. Therefore, in the sense that triadic model provides a reasonable view of how these resources operate within intercultural competence, as one can see by observing structural relationships in the model presented in the study.

Additionally, educational environments that support the internal psychological faculties required for intercultural development are developed through culturally responsive pedagogy in educational systems. Emotional intelligence, sensitivity to the opinions of others, and active curiosity are examples of qualities that can be

purposefully developed through mindful teaching and guided cross-cultural experiences, as the UNESCO MGIEP (2020) report notes. These results also support Fredrickson's (2004) broaden-and-build theory, which holds that positive emotions (such as interest, joy, and gratitude) broaden people's perspectives and behaviors, leading to the long-term development of psychological resources that are essential for navigating the complexities of cross-cultural interactions.

In light of these viewpoints, the present research highlights affective resources in their dynamic influence on ICA in learning by referencing psychological traits (i.e., proactive personality, patience, and resilience). The control of emotions, the ability to tolerate ambiguity, and the willingness to initiate active cross-cultural communication efforts become even more crucial in the process of personal and communicative development, particularly in competitive, multicultural academic settings like Turkish preparatory programs.

5.2. Interpretation of Findings

The next subsection provides a detailed interpretation of the aforementioned highlights. By showing how personal initiative, emotional orientation, and personal traits function as an intersection between intercultural development, it begins by outlining the predictive role of proactive personality on patience, resilience, and intercultural understanding. These are followed by studies of several alternative model specifications that were proposed to capture the data's statistically and theoretically strongest accounting. When comparing alternative models, it also addresses the applicability of information criteria and model fit measures. In order to give a more comprehensive picture of the psychological processes involved in the development of ICA, it finally looks at indirect and serial mediation routes.

Based on this theoretical framework, the literature goes on to contend that intercultural competence is a dynamic, multifaceted construct that develops via the blending of behavioral, affective, and cognitive elements. Students acquire IC by combining their internal results (e.g., empathy and perspective-taking), external behaviors (e.g., respectful communication and flexibility in cross-cultural contexts), attitudes (e.g., openness to experiences and curiosity), and knowledge (e.g., in relation to cultural norms and communication styles) (Deardorff, 2006; Jones et al., 2023). This is consistent with the current study's findings, which showed that patience and internal resilience were key factors in the development of ICA.

It is well documented in the literature that students develop intercultural competence most effectively when engaged in sustained, reflective, and experiential learning (e.g., cultural exchange opportunities, collaborative projects, and generally engaging in meaningful dialogue across difference)—especially when under the guidance of structured instruction and feedback (Rokos & van der Rijst, 2002). Indicated thus only, intercultural competence is framed not as a trait but rather as a lifelong dynamic developmental journey, which is endlessly influenced by education, social context, and self-reflection (Deardorff, 2006; Rokos & van der Rijst, 2022). It is consistent with what was also revealed by the present study, in that intercultural consciousness developed within circles of resilient and patient origin.

5.2.1. Proactive Personality as an Antecedent of Patience, Resilience, and ICA

The results of a hypothesized structural model supported proactive personality as a significant predictor of patience and resilience and patience and resilience as a positive predictor of ICA. This two-path mediation indicates that proactive learners are more likely to develop emotional disposition (in this case patience), as well as psychological adaptability (resilience), which are indispensable for successful

intercultural engagement. The findings support the proposition that proactive personality is not only a dispositional factor but also a fundamental psychological resource that helps clients develop other affective strengths. This perspective is consistent with the emerging power of positive psychology as a modern lens through which we analyze the behavior of students particularly in higher education. From this point of view, fundamental characteristics like proactivity are foundations for other sets of strengths, such as patience and persistence. These factors not only contribute to learners' personal well-being, but also their ability to participate successfully in complex learning activities and culturally diverse university contexts--key areas of success in higher education context.

The close relationship between the primary constructs of the current study is strongly supported by the existing literature. For example, de la Fuente et al. (2022) demonstrated that proactive personality fosters resilience, which in turn mediated the relationship between character strengths and psychological well-being, which is consistent with the results of the current study. Relevant to intercultural outcomes and in line with our findings, Chu and Zhu (2023) discovered that resilience is positively predicted by cultural intelligence, which in turn mediates its impact on acculturation among Chinese international students. Additionally, the current study's findings align with the recent research by Nasaj et al. (2025), which found that proactive personality strongly predicts cultural intelligence and a global mindset—two factors that are precursors to resilience behaviors. This is in line with findings from the Turkish context, where Tunca et al. (2018) found that proactive personality significantly predicts innovative behavior and job performance in Turkish employees, supporting the idea that proactivity is a fundamental psychological resource. Similarly, Doğan (2017) discovered a strong and positive correlation between psychological well-being and

patience in middle-aged Turkish people, confirming the mediating function of patience in emotional functioning. All things considered, these results support the sequential mediation model proposed in this study: proactive personality predicts more ICA by fostering patience and resilience.

The results of the current study are in line with earlier research that shows a strong correlation between proactive personality and ICA. Ren et al. (2018), for example, found that proactive people are better equipped to use intercultural adjustment techniques (such as those focused on relationship building and information seeking), which in turn enhances cultural competency. Additionally, as demonstrated by Köksal et al. (2013) and Hu et al. (2020), proactive personality is a significant factor, particularly for ICA, and it positively predicts cultural intelligence. Indeed, the findings of the present study, along with the previous research reinforce the notion that learners with proactive dispositions are more inclined to actively seek out intercultural learning opportunities and establish meaningful intercultural connections.

5.2.2. Psychological Predictors of Intercultural Awareness

The results supported the hypothesis on the direct and indirect impact of proactive personality on ICA. In the intercultural communicator, proactive learners are more likely to seek out alternative viewpoints and find solutions to issues. They frequently exhibit high levels of cultural empathy, openness, and curiosity, all of which are necessary for cultural competency. These results are consistent with earlier research that linked learner autonomy and motivation to successful intercultural adaptation experiences (Deardorff, 2006; Kim, 2001).

In addition to proactivity, patience and resilience also emerged as significant predictors of ICA. This is in line with an educational narrative on intercultural development that has increasingly recognized the role of emotional dimensions. For

example, the family resilience-based adaptation program improved multicultural family members' emotional adaptation, according to Lee et al. (2022). In fact, the research unequivocally shows that resilience plays a significant role in determining how well people develop their intercultural sensitivity as it is operationalized. In a similar vein, Raccanello et al. (2021) found that resilience was a significant predictor of the cognitive, metacognitive, and motivational dimensions of cultural intelligence in Italian Erasmus students and emphasized its critical role in multicultural adaptation. In a different study, consistent with the findings of the current research, Song Zhou et al. (2025) demonstrated that personal resilience predicts intercultural competence trajectories in adolescents. Patience has also been considered imperative in intercultural communication. For example, learners reported in one qualitative research investigation (Hudson & Luke, 2023) revealed that learners frequently cited “being patient and open-minded” as key to understanding others in diverse learning environments.

Support from Turkish research further backs up the close interplay between the main variables of the present study. For instance, Abaslı (2019) identified empathy, which is highly associated with both patience and resilience, as a strong predictor of intercultural sensitivity among Turkish and international students. In combination, these research results contribute to the idea that affective dispositions such as proactivity, patience, and resilience are not tangential but rather at the core of intercultural competence. In intercultural education, teaching these dispositions can help students to be academically and socially adapted and become empathetic, emotionally in balance, and globally competent individuals.

In the study conducted by Abaslı (2019), it has been observed that among Turkish and foreign students, empathy— which has substantial overlap with patience

and resilience—was a significant predictor for intercultural sensitivity. Combined, then, such findings suggest that affective traits such as proactivity, patience and resilience are more than peripheral but rather core to intercultural competence. Incorporation of such predispositions into intercultural education may aid in students' academic and psychosocial adjustment, and help develop empathic, emotionally healthy and globally competent citizens.

In response to such views, an increase in the amount of research has addressed the underlying psychological characteristics of intercultural sensitivity within various cultural and educational backgrounds. Recent research that has focused on psychological factors underlying people's ICA and competence has underlined the importance of these for human intercultural understanding and competence. Tessema and Zeleke claimed that “social intelligence and psychological adjustment is one of the core contributors of intercultural competence” and refer to the importance of an individual's skills in decoding social signals that occur and their emotional ability to adjust to diverse cultural environments (Tessema & Zeleke, 2024).

Similarly, Bosuwon (2017) found that communicatively self-confident individuals tend to be more interculturally sensitive, suggesting that communication self-confidence plays a motivational and affective role in attaining communicative competences. Favaretto et al. (2019) contributed to this that personality traits—openness to experience and agreeableness in particular—facilitate culture-adaptive behavior in group contexts, indicating that dispositional factors contribute to the formation of a truly intercultural response (Favaretto et al., 2019).

In the Turkish context, these psychosocial predictors have been supported by other studies. Şahin et al. (2013) standardized the Cultural Intelligence Scale and verified its applicability in Türkiye, and concluded that cultural intelligence is a

multidimensional, reliable structure and is associated with intercultural effectiveness (Şahin et al., 2013). Based on this, Şenel's research on foreign language learners found significant differences in cultural intelligence in terms of academic field, indicating the influence of educational background on students' intercultural preparedness (Şenel, 2020). Erçelik and coworkers investigated cultural intelligence and ICA among health professionals, demonstrating that prior experience, language proficiency, and personal traits comprise the factors that affect both confidence and efficiency in intercultural encounter of the healthcare professionals (Erçelik et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Alagözlü (2017) in his research on pre-service teachers and core dimensions of intercultural communicative competence including skills, attitudes, awareness, and knowledge demonstrated that these dimensions are driven by not only personal features but learning environments as well. All these, international or Turkish cases, provide solid evidence, in aggregate, that the awareness of interculturality is mediated by psychological resources, such as social intelligence, communication self-efficacy, emotional flexibility, and personality dimensions.

5.2.3. Mediation Effects in Model 3: Indirect and Sequential Pathways

In addition to examining direct effects, a third structural configuration (Model 3) was evaluated to explore the mediational dynamics between proactive personality and ICA. This model, which included both individual and sequential mediation effects through patience and resilience, demonstrated a superior fit when compared to both Model 1 and Model 2. These results lend strong empirical evidence for the mediating role of a multiple-step mechanism that proactive individuals develop both emotional strength and tolerance, which in combination foster ICA.

The results are consistent with recent work that highlights a proactive route to resilience and intercultural competence. For instance, it was found that proactive

personality has a direct impact on cultural intelligence and global mindset, which also has a direct effect on resilience-related behaviors (Nasaj, et al., 2025). This supports the first half of the current mediation chain, highlighting how proactive dispositions can activate psychological capacities that promote emotional regulation. Supporting the model, Chu and Zhu (2023) found that psychological resilience mediates the relationship between cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation among international students. Additionally, a study by de la Fuente et al. (2022) confirmed that resilience mediates the link between character strengths and psychological well-being in university learners, reinforcing the critical role of emotional traits in intercultural engagement. Taken together, these studies substantiate the sequential mediation structure proposed in the present study, demonstrating that proactive personality contributes to ICA through affective resources such as resilience and patience.

5.2.4. Indirect Effects: Emotional Pathways

Mediation effects of patience and resilience highlight emotional mechanisms underlying ICA. The path from proactive personality to patience indicates that emotionally regulated learners tolerate ambiguity and persist through intercultural challenges. Similarly, resilience serves as a buffer, helping learners manage intercultural stress. These align with studies on emotional resilience in L2 learning contexts (Dewaele & Li, 2013; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). These intermediary variables illuminate the importance of internal emotional capacities in facilitating sustained intercultural learning. Learners who feel capable of navigating challenges and who perceive intercultural engagement as meaningful are more likely to demonstrate patience and emotional resilience, which in turn contribute to deeper and more sustained intercultural development.

This interpretation is further strengthened by findings from both international and Turkish contexts. Üzar-Özçetin and Çelik (2020) found that psychological resilience was positively and significantly correlated with intercultural sensitivity and empathic engagement among teachers of Syrian refugee children in Türkiye. Their findings favor the assumption that resilience does not merely buffer emotional strains but also determines levels of possible meaningful and long-term intercultural relations. Likewise, emotional flexibility— a close concept to resilience—was noticed in the findings of Mercan (2018) in a study of Intercultural adaptation of university students with the Intercultural Adaptation inventory as the measuring tool to be a determinant for success in the process of adaptation. Taken together, these findings confirm that affective traits (patience and resilience) are significantly emotional mediators in learners' intercultural development.

5.2.5. Bridging Affective Gaps in ICA Literature

While traditional models focus on cognitive and behavioral dimensions (Byram, 1997; Fantini, 2009), this study has further highlighted the significance of affective and dispositional traits like patience and resilience have shown the available empirical evidence that would support the necessity to include these constructs in the form of SEM. By showcasing the affective scaffolding involved in intercultural growth, the present findings expand our knowledge of how intercultural understandings become internalized and applied by learners.

The literature at large strongly supports this new focus. Beyond the national context, Sunio and Limpot (2024) utilized SEM to demonstrate that academic resiliency and social-emotional learning directly and positively predict intercultural communication competence. Chang et al. (2022) also show how intercultural competence is linked with resilience and well-being and structural reviews (Deardorff,

2006; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000) emphasize the importance of emotion regulation and resilience in predicting intercultural effectiveness. These international results are crucially replicated in Turkey. For example, Sarıb and Özdil (2022) exhibited that Chao's Intercultural Competence Scale was translated into Turkish using confirmatory factor analysis, revealing the multidimensional nature of intercultural competence and its connection with emotional and cognitive control. Moreover, Acar and Meydan (2024) also demonstrated that Turkish learners with a growth mindset were more interculturally sensitive, which had resulted in dispositional characteristic underpinnings for affective engagement. Collectively, reinforce the argument that proactive personality supports the development of patience and resilience— emotional prototypes necessary for engaging cultural complexity and achieving real intercultural understanding.

5.3. Situating the SEM Findings within Relevant Theoretical Frameworks

The findings of the current study underscore the interrelated effects of proactive personality, patience, resilience, and intercultural sensitivity. More than its statistical corroboration, the model has the potential to represent significant psychological and developmental processes that drive the way in which people deal with cultural complexity. This section provides a basic theoretical foundation for the model by relating the central constructs of the model to more general theories that can account for the relationships observed.

5.3.1. Interpretation via the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

The results can be explained by JD-R Model (see Demerouti et al., 2001). In this regard, proactive personality constitutes a core personal resource that facilitates the development of secondary resources (e.g., patience, resilience), which in turn contribute to ICA. The model underlines the importance of psychological strengths in

educational resilience and multicultural engagement. From this perspective, L2 learners with more personal resources are more able to cope with the high demands posed in intercultural settings, and to turn them into an opportunity for growing.

Based on the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Demerouti et al., 2001), these personal resources not only act as buffers to potential burnout resulting from the "demands" of intercultural contexts—e.g., linguistic complexity, cultural misunderstandings, and identity conflicts—, they also promote learner engagement, flexibility, and emotional resilience. This aligns with the study's finding that proactive individuals are more likely to cultivate emotional strengths that facilitate ICA, even when external demands are high. Importantly, the JD-R framework allows us to conceptualize intercultural learning environments—such as prep school classrooms, global mobility programs, or multilingual peer settings—as spaces that carry both demands (e.g., ambiguity, difference, and adjustment pressure) and resources (e.g., supportive teaching, SEL-informed interventions, and peer diversity) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Thus, the integration of the JD-R model provides a psychologically grounded explanation for the sequential mediation observed in the study. That is - proactive personality triggers patience and tenacity, which in turn contributes to the development of ICA. It also highlights the need for a more generative pedagogy of resources in which, rather than introducing learners to the content of cultures, teachers work to develop the psychological resources of individuals so that they are better able to cope, reflect and learn in between cultural contexts. From such a point of view, the psychological resources examined in this study are not fixed characteristics, but

dynamic, teachable, and context-sensitive tools for both academic and intercultural success (Bakker et al., 2005; Demerouti et al., 2001).

This resource-based interpretation also aligns with global workforce insights. According to the World Economic Forum (2020, 2023), emotional resilience, cultural intelligence, and adaptability are among the most in-demand skills for the future of work, particularly as societies undergo rapid digitalization and increased intercultural mobility. The JD-R model helps conceptualize how such “soft” psychological resources—proactivity, patience, and resilience—function as foundational drivers that enhance learners’ readiness to meet evolving labor market demands. Within this framework, ICA is not only an academic or communicative asset, but also a future-oriented skill that enables individuals to navigate diverse work environments, collaborate across cultural boundaries, and persist through ambiguity and change. Thus, equipping learners with these internal resources is not just a pedagogical goal—it is a reskilling imperative, echoing the WEF’s call for education systems to cultivate transferable capacities that support both personal and professional resilience in a globalized world.

5.3.2. Theoretical Explanation through Positive Psychology

Recent research suggests that positive psychology does not serve simply as a wellspring of emotional well-being, but also a conduit for enhanced self-regulation, engagement, and academic achievement in higher education—indeed a useful perspective for interpreting the linkages between proactive personality and intercultural mindfulness. Because it is a strengths-based, well-being-oriented and human potential-focused approach, positive psychology attends to the cultivation of internal resources that foster flourishing in all realms of life, including education and intercultural interactions. The relationship between proactive personality, ICA, can be further

conceived by the tenets of the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (see Fredrickson, 2004) which suggests that proactive individuals tend to experience positive emotions like curiosity and enthusiasm, which broaden cognitive and social engagement and ultimately enhance intercultural development. In this frame of analysis, dispositional forms of curiosity, persistence, and optimism—associated with proactive individuals—are construed as psychological capital that fosters personal and relational development. In the process of learning L2 and adapting to a new culture, these characteristics can help L2 learners stay motivated, emotionally in control and open to difference (key elements of intercultural competence). Furthermore, the relationship between proactive personality and the acquisition of other strengths like encourage patience, perseverance or resilience speaks to positive psychology's generative nature, whereby one strength can further the development of others in a reinforcing loop. This lens of theory would lend support to the notion that positive affect is more than a side-effect of success in intercultural situations; it is also a cause of success in such situations.

5.3.3. A Transformative Learning Perspective on the Findings

The results of this study are consistent with Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) (see Mezirow, 1997) and the idea that learning is more than merely the addition of new information – it is a critical, reflective process that results in people revising their beliefs, assumptions and worldviews. In this study, ICA can be perceived as a transformative outcome that results from learners' interactions with culturally different perspectives, when learners have developed the requisite emotional and cognitive resources to consider and understand them with openness, empathy and critical reflection.

Indeed, patience and resilience as mediators illustrate that transformative intercultural learning is not only cognitive but also affects the individuals' emotional regulation and psychological strength to tolerate ambiguity, to tolerate ambiguity, overcome discomfort, and persist through intercultural tension. L2 learners with a proactive personality are more likely to initiate and sustain these transformative encounters, actively seeking opportunities for intercultural engagement and meaning-making. Through this lens, the developmental pathway modeled in this study—from proactive action to emotional resources to ICA—echoes the core tenets of TLT, which emphasize learner agency, disorienting dilemmas, reflective discourse, and perspective transformation.

Thus, this research supports the idea that ICA can be cultivated as a transformational competence, one that develops through the intentional activation of emotional and psychological resources within reflective educational contexts.

5.3.4. Interpreting Intercultural Awareness within a Social Cognitive Framework

The close association between proactive personality, patience, resilience and ICA can be discussed through the lens of several educational theories. Firstly, the findings align closely with principles of Social Cognitive Theory (see Bandura, 1986), which emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy and agentic behavior in learning and adaptation. Proactive learners, characterized by a belief in their ability to influence outcomes, are more likely to initiate contact in intercultural settings, persist in the face of ambiguity, and regulate their behavior to achieve desired social and communicative goals. Their capacity to shape their own learning environments through intentional actions reflects the agentic dimension of intercultural development, further supporting the role of proactive personality in fostering ICA.

Moreover, the role of patience and resilience in this relationship can also be meaningfully situated within the constructs of self-regulation and reciprocal determinism central to Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura (1991) emphasizes that individuals are not passive recipients of environmental influences, but rather active agents capable of self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction. Patience reflects a form of emotional self-regulation that allows individuals to delay impulsive reactions in unfamiliar intercultural situations, while resilience enables them to maintain effort and optimism despite setbacks or misunderstandings. These qualities reinforce learners' belief in their capacity to manage challenges (self-efficacy) and contribute to the proactive regulation of affect, cognition, and behavior in social contexts (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Thus, the observed interplay between proactivity, patience, resilience, and ICA reflects a broader system of agentic functioning, where learners shape their intercultural development through intentional, self-directed strategies grounded in core tenets of Social Cognitive Theory.

Table 9.

Summary Table: Theoretical Interpretations of the Model of the Present Study

Theory	Focus in the model in the present study	Key Contributions
Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model (Demerouti et al., 2001)	Personal resources (e.g., proactive personality, patience, resilience) buffer the psychological demands of intercultural contexts	Explains how personal traits act as protective resources that reduce burnout and enhance engagement in multicultural settings
Broaden-and-Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004)	Patience and resilience as positive emotional resources	Suggests that such traits help broaden learners' awareness and build lasting intercultural competence and empathy
Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1997)	ICA as a reflective and developmental outcome	Frames ICA not as fixed knowledge but as a transformational

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986)	Development of ICA and psychological traits through modeling, self-efficacy, and reciprocal interaction	process involving emotional regulation, meaning-making, and perspective shift
		Highlights how learners acquire intercultural competence and emotional skills by observing others, regulating their own behavior, and believing in their ability to succeed in complex social situations

Table 9 consolidates the theoretical foundations of the present study by aligning each core construct with complementary theoretical perspectives. Given the multi-layered nature of ICA, this comparative framework helps clarify how proactive personality, patience, and resilience contribute not only to psychological adaptability of EFL learners but also to deeper cultural understanding. Visualizing these links supports a more integrative interpretation of the findings and highlights the need for multi-theoretical grounding in intercultural research.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section presents the key findings of the present study and offers concrete recommendations for implementation by universities and academic professionals.

6.1 Conclusions of This Study

This research aimed to examine the structural positions of proactive personality, patience, and resilience in relation to intercultural awareness (ICA) in an English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) learners' group. By employing a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach, this study provides strong evidence that proactive personality is a strong antecedent of ICA directly and indirectly through the mediating mechanisms of patience and resilience. The current results not only confirm the postulated mediating links but also enrich our knowledge of the psychological mechanisms underlying intercultural competence.

The results support the multidimensional nature of intercultural competence, as they provide evidence against the mere acculturation or behavioral view that exposure to foreign culture content may form by itself intercultural competence, and in favor that itself are also influence intercultural competence dispositions and affective characteristics. Proactive-oriented learners were more likely to develop patience and resilience—core emotional competencies that enable them, with empathy and openness, to understand and tolerate cultural differences. Among those, the serial mediation model was the one that fitted the model best, supporting the theoretical assumption that personality does not directly relate to intercultural development but that it does so through internal emotional processes that guide learners through how to perceive and respond in intercultural contexts.

These implications hold significant pedagogical value. They advocate a move away from the narrowly cognitive/knowledge-based orientation of intercultural

education to more comprehensive models of intercultural education that attend to the emotional, personal and motivational sides of learners. Educators are encouraged to design learning environments that cultivate learner agency, emotional regulation, and resilience, thereby supporting the development of intercultural sensitivity as both a cognitive and affective capacity. Classroom practices like cooperative problem-solving, emotionalized tasks and tasks that develop tolerance for ambiguity can be particularly useful in this regard.

At the same time, curriculum writers and teacher trainers are called to consider the design of intercultural training programs based on social-emotional learning (SEL) frameworks. These models might incorporate activities that address emotional competencies through experiential exercises, reflective journaling, and exposure to real or staged intercultural challenges. This is a way of teaching that enables students to understand differences in culture and accept the emotional, or empathetic, strength to survive diverse environments.

The study also highlights the potential of educational technologies to help to development the intercultural and emotional competence. Virtual exchanges, game-based simulations, and digital storytelling tools offer immersion and an emotional experience which stimulates cognitive and affective engagement with the topic being addressed. Such instruments could also be used to model life situations to which students will be exposed, and to give students an opportunity to rehearse for active engagement, tactical disengagement, emotional self-regulation, and recovery in an accepting and reflective environment. Further, adaptive learning systems and digital portfolios provide learners with customized learning pathways that favor the self-regulated growth of ICA and psychological maturity.

Even though some interesting and useful findings have been obtained, this study has also certain shortcomings. The cross-sectional nature of the study does not allow for causality inferences, and the results are derived from a single sample of Turkish EFL students, potentially limiting generalizability. Accordingly, further investigations are needed to expand on the current results. Longitudinal studies could explore how these psychological relationships evolve over time, particularly in response to structured intercultural interventions. Additionally, cross-cultural comparative studies could help to determine the universality or context-specificity of the identified pathways across diverse educational and cultural settings.

In conclusion, this study makes a meaningful contribution to the evolving discourse on intercultural competence by foregrounding the affective and dispositional dimensions that often remain underexplored. By identifying proactive personality, patience, and resilience as key psychological constructs linked to ICA, this research encourages educators and scholars to reconceptualize intercultural learning as a transformative process of personal growth. Intercultural competence, as suggested by the findings, is not merely an external skill set to be acquired but an internal journey shaped by personality, emotional strength, and reflective engagement. This perspective invites a more integrative, human-centered approach to both the theory and practice of intercultural education.

Building on the pedagogical implications of this study, several directions for future research can be proposed. First, given the finding that proactive personality significantly predicts ICA, future studies could investigate specific classroom interventions that aim to nurture proactive behaviors in students. Longitudinal or experimental studies may be particularly useful in assessing whether teaching

approaches designed to foster autonomy, initiative, and engagement contribute to the development of ICA over time.

Additionally, further research could explore the emotional and psychological dimensions of intercultural learning. Since patience and resilience were identified as key mediators, qualitative or mixed-methods studies might examine how learners experience, develop, or struggle with these traits in diverse educational settings. Such research could provide rich insights into the affective challenges students face in intercultural communication and how educators can support them more effectively.

In terms of curriculum and materials development, future studies could evaluate the design and implementation of content that explicitly targets the development of resilience, patience, or self-regulation. Researchers might compare different approaches—such as task-based, project-based, or SEL-infused curricula—to determine which methods are most effective in enhancing learners' ICA.

Another interesting field to explore is teacher education. Future research might also explore how the results of intercultural competence development can be implemented together with social-emotional learning in the design of professional development initiatives. Studying how teacher beliefs, pedagogical strategies, or student achievement change as a result of these programs would offer important insights into the teacher's role in fostering ICA.

Finally, considering the growing role of digital tools in education, further research is needed to assess the effectiveness of educational technologies in supporting the development of ICA and related personal traits. Virtual exchanges, intercultural simulations, digital portfolios, and adaptive learning platforms present rich ground for experimentation. Comparative research might reveal whether promoted intercultural

competencies are fostered more effectively through technology-enhanced methods compared to traditional methodologies.

Generally, future studies should further investigate this supplement of personality and emotional resilience in intercultural learning, if possible, in different cultural and educational settings with quantitative and qualitative methods.

Considering these constraints and the implications of the study, some suggestions for further study are made. Future studies could adopt longitudinal designs to examine how proactive personality traits and emotional competencies evolve and influence ICA over time. Interventions aimed at enhancing patience or resilience in multicultural classrooms could also be tested using experimental methods. Comparative research in other cultural and institutional settings could demonstrate global variation in these patterns.

Furthermore, a comparative study data of the resilience of patience and ICA could be collected through the digital resources and online intercultural communication in the future. Investigating the emotional engagement and reflective practices supported by educational technologies would contribute valuable insights to the design of tech-supported intercultural curricula.

6.2 Recommendations for Teaching Practices

The results of the research suggest that proactive personality can predict ICA by patience and resilience as mediators. This draws attention to how the classroom climate to encourage learner autonomy, initiative and confidence in challenging interculturality. Teachers have the potential to make this experience a transformative one by creating learning opportunities that stimulate students to take charge of their own intercultural development. One practical implication is the incorporation of project-based learning and student-led intercultural dialogues, where learners are

encouraged to explore and present cultural topics of personal or global relevance. Furthermore, experiential learning approaches, such as simulations, role-playing, and community engagement projects, can provide authentic opportunities for students to apply intercultural skills while taking initiative and exercising autonomy. These practices are not only beneficial for enhancing ICA but also for nurturing key affective qualities associated with global competence.

To ensure that the findings of this study have meaningful pedagogical value, the following chart outlines sample in-class activities aligned with the key constructs examined—namely, ICA, patience, resilience, and proactive personality. These activities are designed to be practical, adaptable, and reflective of EFL classroom realities in Türkiye and similar contexts. Importantly, each activity can be flexibly adapted to suit different age groups, proficiency levels, subjects, and institutional settings, making them relevant for a wide range of learners. By translating psychological insights into classroom practices, the aim is to provide educators with tangible strategies to cultivate both cognitive and affective dimensions of intercultural competence in their learners.

Table 10.

Recommended In-Class Activities Aligned with Research Constructs (Developed by the Researcher)

Target Construct	Activity Title	Brief Description	Suggested Format
Intercultural Awareness (ICA)	Change the Role	Students act out everyday situations from two cultural perspectives, then reflect on misunderstandings.	Group Role-Play and / or Discussion
Patience	Listen to my heart	In pairs, students take turns sharing personal experiences and feelings while the listener practices not interrupting.	Pair Work and / or Reflection
Resilience	My Learning Map	Learners create a mind map, a flow chart, or a swot chart of a personal challenge, highlighting strategies used and lessons learned.	Individual Task and Group Share
Proactive Personality	Pin Your Project	Students are asked to identify something they want to improve in their classroom or school environment encouraging initiative-taking and pin the best one(s).	Small Group Project and Show & Tell
ICA+Patience	Story Time	Learners participate in a structured storytelling circle where each student shares a culturally meaningful personal or family story. Listeners must wait their turn, respond respectfully, and ask thoughtful, delayed-response questions—promoting patience and empathetic engagement with cultural perspectives.	Whole-Class or Small Group Storytelling & Discussion
ICA + Resilience	Virtual Journals	Engage in a digital exchange with students from another country; write reflective journal entries weekly.	Individual Work and Pair/Groups Share
ICA + Proactive Personality	Poster Gallery	Students collaboratively design and implement posters (e.g., visual displays, infographics, or digital designs) to raise awareness about cultural diversity in their school or community, and their products are displayed in the corridor or an area.	Group Project and Exhibition

Proactivity + Patience	Plan, Wait, Act	In small groups, students analyse a real-life intercultural or classroom scenario (e.g., a misunderstanding during a group task with international peers, a clash in communication styles, or a peer being excluded) and compare immediate reactions with delayed, thoughtful responses. They create an action plan that balances proactivity and patience, role-play both versions, and reflect on the outcomes.	Group Work and Role Play
Patience + Resilience	Waiting, Feeling, Growing	Learners maintain a weekly journal in which they reflect on personal or academic challenges they faced, how they responded emotionally, and how they managed to stay engaged despite difficulties. The focus is on recognizing emotional triggers, delaying reactions, and reframing setbacks as growth opportunities.	Individual Writing + Optional Sharing or Peer Feedback

6.3. Recommendations for L2 Learners

Given that patience and resilience emerged as significant mediators between proactive personality and ICA, it becomes essential to intentionally cultivate these attributes in learners. Teachers should help students develop their emotional self-regulation and tolerate ambiguity that are fundamental for successful intercultural encounters. Pedagogically, instructional activities could involve reflective journaling as students consider their emotions and affective responses to intercultural experiences, and storytelling about intercultural encounters that involve cultural dilemma and misunderstanding by narrative participants or recipients. Similarly, preparing for challenging intercultural scenarios such as case studies or role-play offers a scaffolded opportunity to expose learners to challenging experiences and reflection, and creates a space to build psychological resilience. This type of practising embedded in education

not only heightens the emotional preparedness for differences but also educates learners in responding productively to cultural differences.

Beyond these affective assets, students may also be helped to enhance their emotional and intercultural development through a lifelong learning attitude. Such predispositions as curiosity, sense of agency and willingness to engage with uncertainty, which are typically associated with lifelong learning, are at the same time only integral to the skillset required for reaching across cultures to the other. A study on university students' lifelong learning tendencies pointed to the significance of affective resilience, an openness to new perspectives, and adaptability in uncertain environments (Erdoğan & Aşçı, 2013). These characteristics are not only crucially important for maintaining learner motivation but are also identified as key elements in resilience and intercultural readiness.

This relationship between lifelong learning and emotional learning is corroborated in the field of education as well. According to Diker Coşkun (2009), lifelong learning is a multidimensional process that requires not only cognitive flexibility but also the development of affective traits such as responsibility, adaptability, and motivation. By incorporating dispositions of lifelong learning into classroom practices—like open-ended inquiry, reflective dialogue, and learner-led projects—students can assimilate these habits, even as they cultivate their intercultural competency.

In line with this, Atasoy (2023) confirmed that language learners with previous intercultural exposure (such as being multilingual or having experienced contact with culturally different others) reported significantly more intercultural sensitivity. Her results highlight the necessity to not only communicate culture but also confront participants with genuine intercultural encounters that require emotional flexibility and

reflective involvement. This culture can be integrated into the curriculum through simulations, multilingual activities, or community cultural activities.

To fully benefit from such experiences, however, learners also need to adopt internal attitudes and beliefs that encourage them to persist and grow emotionally in the presence of cultural complexity. Specifically, L2 learners should be encouraged to develop a growth mindset toward language learning, especially when they encounter intercultural facts and/or ambiguity and/or communication difficulties. As Kambur (2024) points out, recent studies carried out in Türkiye have revealed that a growth mindset impacts academic achievement in a positive way and encourages learners to keep on trying in the face of failure. This attitude builds emotional resilience, self-regulation, and an openness to explore challenging or unfamiliar material, qualities which are consistent with resilience, patience and a proactive willingness to engage with future studies' emphasis on resilience and patience—and proactive engagement as psychological resources that can enhance intercultural understanding. If learners see setbacks as developmental challenges that are part of second language acquisition, then they are more likely to be successful navigators of the complexities of intercultural communication, and more confident and adaptable participants in the global learning contexts.

To bridge the gap between theory and practice, the researcher built a model, called ADAPT, based on three resources from the psychological realm (resilience, patience and proactive personality) as important predictors of L2 learners' ICA. ADAPT operates as an acronym for learner actions that support regulation, engagement and expansion in varied educational contexts and environments. Not explicitly addressed in the study, this model is suggested as a guide for future applications and interventions.

Although the acronym ADAPT has appeared in other contexts—most notably in teacher education for differentiating instruction (see Chamblin, 2018) and in coaching frameworks (see Hoffman, 2020)—these adaptations are designed for very different purposes. In contrast, the present ADAPT framework is an original model developed by the researcher to support L2 learners in managing the affective and psychological demands of intercultural communication through proactive, reflective, and resilient engagement.

The table below outlines the ADAPT components and their pedagogical relevance.

Table 11.

*The ADAPT Framework: A Conceptual Tool for Enhancing Intercultural Awareness
(Developed by the Researcher)*

ADAPT Initial	Component	Description	Message to Learners
A	Accept	View setbacks as learning opportunities rather than failures	Always search for the positive
D	Develop	Cultivate intercultural confidence and awareness through active engagement	Believe it and be in it
A	Actively Reflect	Reflect on experiences, emotions, and perspectives during intercultural encounters	Breathe in, breathe out; stop, pause, and continue
P	Persist	Remain motivated through ambiguity, discomfort, or cultural misunderstandings	Never give up—growth comes in baby steps
T	Thrive	Apply growth to real-world intercultural contexts and global communication	Open your mind to the world

6.4. Recommendations for the Use of Educational Technologies

The study's findings also have important implications for the strategic integration of educational technologies in developing ICA and the affective traits that support it. As the results underscore the mediating role of patience and resilience and the influence of a proactive personality, digital resources can be leveraged to provide experiential, emotionally engaging, and learner-driven intercultural learning opportunities.

Educational technology is also especially well-suited to support the development of the psychological constructs on which ICA is based, for example, patience and attribute persistence to adversity; proactive and even persisting to share in direct/active, reciprocal, and supportive exchanges with others. As Ergin (2024) explained, students who have received adequate education on design thinking such as the use of cognitive flexibility and reflective problem solving have been shown to have higher rates of emotional readiness and intellectual engagement. These are qualities critical in digitally mediated intercultural spaces where learners need to negotiate ambiguity, handle emotions and deal with ethnic boundaries. When integrated with such tools as virtual exchanges, simulations, or digital reflection journals, educational technology can support the development of affective skills that underlie intercultural competence.

For instance, virtual exchange platforms such as eTwinning, Global Classrooms, or UNICollaboration can provide learners with genuine peer interaction with people from different cultures and the opportunity for real-time intercultural engagement which calls for learners to control their emotions and be a proactive speaker. Such environments provide opportunities to work through cultural confusion, make sense of what is being communicated, and manage emotional reactions, all of which are directly related to the acquisition of ICA.

Additionally, game-based learning platforms and intercultural simulations—such as Cultural Detective, BaFa' BaFa', and Roll the Dice (an online adaptation of the BARnga game)—engage learners in scenarios requiring complex decision-making, persistence, and empathy. These simulations replicate the emotional demands of intercultural interactions, helping learners develop the patience and resilience needed for thoughtful engagement. In addition, creative digital storytelling tools such as Machinima, Storybird, Pixton, ThingLink, and Book Creator facilitate learners, both in teams and individually, to script, visualize and create culturally loaded narratives, promoting empathy, affective reflection and communicative agency by means of multimodal storytelling.

Collectively, these digital environments offer more than surface-level engagement with cultural content—they actively involve learners in emotional, reflective, and collaborative processes that mirror real-life intercultural communication. To synthesize these examples and highlight their pedagogical relevance, the following table categorizes selected technology-enhanced tools according to their function and contribution to key affective constructs in this study—resilience, patience, and proactive personality. These tools were chosen for their potential to enhance ICA by encouraging learners to navigate ambiguity, persist through complexity, and actively engage cultural complexity and diversity in both content and peers.

Table 12.

Examples of Technology-Enhanced Tools and Platforms that Support Intercultural Awareness

Tool Type	Examples	Key Benefits for ICA Development
Virtual Exchange Platforms (see O'Dowd, 2018; Helm 2015)	eTwinning Global Classrooms UNICollaboration	• participating in real-time peer interaction • negotiating meaning • navigating cultural ambiguity
Game-based Intercultural Simulations (see Thiagarajan, 2001; Hofner Saphiere, 2004; Kimmig, 2021)	Cultural Detective BaFa' BaFa' Roll the Dice	• building empathy • developing resilience • fostering persistence • engaging in experiential learning
Creative Digital Storytelling Tools (see Thomas & Schneider, 2011; Robin, 2016)	Storybird Machinima Pixton ThingLink ToonDoo	• applying perspective-taking • encouraging emotional reflection • expressing cultural identity • collaborating with peers

Furthermore, through digital reflection tools, such as video journal, blogs, or e-portfolio, learners can capture and analyze their intercultural experiences throughout time. These tools promote self-awareness and metacognitive insight, reinforcing proactive learning behaviors and fostering long-term personal growth. Reflection not only reinforces the learning process, but also develops emotional intelligence, which are both central to ICA.

Lastly, adaptive learning environments that customize learning paths and provide feedback based on learner performance may assist educators in fostering resilience. Rather, these platforms establish a liminal zone in which learners are allowed

to fail, reflect and try again; promoting resilience and adaptive coping strategies: important elements of both intercultural and academic success.

Taken together, this study emphasizes the importance of a more multi-faceted, integrated approach to intercultural education that also focuses on personality and emotional capacities rather than simply knowledge and awareness. Teachers, learners, curriculum developers and educational technologists each have a part to play in creating spaces in which ICA can thrive in the cultivation of patience, resilience and pro-activity. By making effective use of pedagogical strategies and useful web-based tools for advancing these goals, educational stakeholders of all levels can help to prepare students for culturally diverse and emotionally challenging global contexts.

6.5. Recommendations for Curriculum and Materials Development

The findings imply that the inclusion of some social emotional learning (SEL) objectives in language programs is highly recommended. When planning the curriculum, opportunities to foster intercultural sensitivity alongside emotional resilience and patience should be included. Teaching materials can provide stories, case studies, reflective questions, peer discussions and critical incidents for individuals to explore cultural differences at both cognitive and affective levels. It is particularly powerful to use simulated conflict or misunderstanding to inspire students to acquire knowledge, understanding and interpersonal and cross-cultural heritage empathy, perspective and emotional literacy through reflection and peer discussion. Furthermore, curriculum frameworks should emphasize not only the knowledge of cultural facts but also the development of intercultural attitudes and skills, aligning cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of learning.

In parallel with curriculum designs that promote cultural knowledge, materials should also elicit openness, empathy and reflection – affective dispositions that inform

students' readiness to engage interculturally. Babanoğlu and Ağçam (2023) found pre-service teachers to have very positive attitudes toward multicultural education and they often associated multicultural education with diversity, respect and language awareness—thereby indicating that such affective dimensions of intercultural engagement are facilitated via positive attitudes. Similarly, Durmuş and Korkmaz (2023) emphasized the role of multicultural education in fostering intercultural understanding and empathy, particularly by promoting critical thinking, personal reflection, and inclusive teaching strategies. According to the findings of the study, teachers should not limit the curricular content to what might generally fall under the categories of “cultural information” (comparison and reflection about facts), but instead integrate exercises for identity awareness, reflection, and on real life multicultural occurrences, fostering ICA and emotional sensitivity.

To achieve these goals, materials themselves should be wholly reconceptualized in terms of reflecting the diverse cultural realities and communicative needs of learners rather than native-speaker norms. For example, with English as an International Language, it is no longer acceptable to frame coursebooks in terms of native-speaker norms and Anglo-American cultures. Knowledge of other English for Specific Cultures should be integrated into the materials in terms of linguistic and cultural knowledge in the form of cultural meaning that can be negated. This adds value to both affirming the learners' cultural identities and developing intercultural competence, which is essential for authentic global communication. Therefore, the design of future EIL-based materials should move beyond monolithic native-speaker models toward a pluralistic and culturally responsive orientation (Solhi Andarab, 2014).

Curriculum materials should also be designed to foster positive emotions that reinforce intercultural engagement. According to Fredrickson (2004), positive affect

broadens learners' perspective-taking and builds resilience over time, while Alparslan (2013) suggests that happiness in institutional contexts can be purposefully cultivated to improve motivation and overall performance. Materials that embed emotionally engaging tasks—such as appreciation journals, values-based role-plays, or culturally diverse success stories—can help learners build the affective strength and openness needed for intercultural success.

However, beyond revising materials at the activity level, more comprehensive curriculum restructuring is also needed to ensure that intercultural learning is addressed systematically. Research shows that Türkiye's high school English curriculum pays limited attention to intercultural communicative competence—most culture-related content is superficial, focusing on customs or holidays without fostering deeper intercultural understanding (Saygı & Köksal, 2021). Çelik (2021) further highlights that the 2014–2017 curricula included only 16 culture-oriented objectives across four grades, primarily addressing surface-level “product” aspects (e.g., food, clothing), with minimal focus on values, beliefs, or critical reflection. Educators in EFL contexts, such as Poland, report that intercultural teaching often remains marginal, constrained by curriculum structure and lack of teacher preparation (Sobkowiak, 2021). Based on these insights, it is recommended that the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) incorporate a dedicated “Culture” subject in high school—beyond embedding culture within language classes—to promote deep intercultural competence. This standalone subject would enable students to engage with cultural values, beliefs, communication styles, and identity through structured learning and critical inquiry, aligning with international best practices and better preparing students for multicultural interactions.

6.6. Recommendations for Teacher Training

The results indicate that teachers themselves should be well-equipped to facilitate intercultural competence and emotional resilience in their teaching. Teacher training programs including the MoNE ones should include these constructs within their curricula and provide specific examples of how to foster these skills in students. Training could focus on guiding, inclusive classroom conversations, understanding and handling emotional reactions in culturally charged incidents, and applying culturally relevant pedagogy. Offering further support, Zembylas (2021) insists the development of teachers' emotional abilities (e.g. empathy and reflexivity, critical emotional literacy) is crucial to helping them negotiate the tensions and dilemmas that multicultural classrooms raise. In addition, it is also important for preservice teachers to critically reflect on their culture and bias, and be part of intercultural experiences (e.g., virtual exchange or international collaboration projects). These experiences can raise the level of readiness of teachers to support their students' foci of emotional and cultural learning in emotionally and culturally challenging spaces of learning.

Alongside of these intercultural objectives, it is also critical that teacher preparation programs strengthen teachers' emotional self-awareness and regulation capacities. As highlighted in the thesis by Öner (2022), teachers with higher levels of emotional sensitivity and control are more able to manage stress in the classroom, establish positive relationships, and create inclusive learning environments. Although the study did not focus solely on patience, its findings reinforce the value of emotional traits—such as composure, empathy, and reflectiveness—that closely align with patience. The inclusion of targeted training on these affective competencies could not only support the well-being of teachers but could contribute towards fostering

classroom climates for intercultural understanding, resilience, and inclusive engagement.

That apart, in the national-level educational policy statements, the teachers' competency in all respects beyond the subject knowledge have also been emphasised. Diker Coşkun (2020), in the *Eğitim İzleme Raporu 2020: Eğitimin İçeriği*, reported that effective teaching in diverse classrooms—comprising students from varied backgrounds—requires communicative, reflective, and cultural competences, not just content competence. The incorporation of targeted training in these dimensions into teacher education (e.g., in reflective practice, intercultural communication and emotional awareness) has the potential to enhance teaching professionals' capacity to establish inclusive, empathetic and culturally responsive learning contexts.

6.7. Visual Framework for Recommended Areas of Focus in Teacher Training

To guide the implementation of this study's findings, the following framework in Figure 4 highlights key areas where teacher training can be aligned with the demands of globalized language education. The figure outlines how ICA, resilience, patience, and proactive personality can be developed by enhancing educational technologies, teaching practices, curriculum and material. It pays special attention to the support of general and L2 learners in tech-enhancing education and their socio-emotional development, available to the teacher both teaching and intercultural and psychological competencies today increasingly need in diverse classrooms.

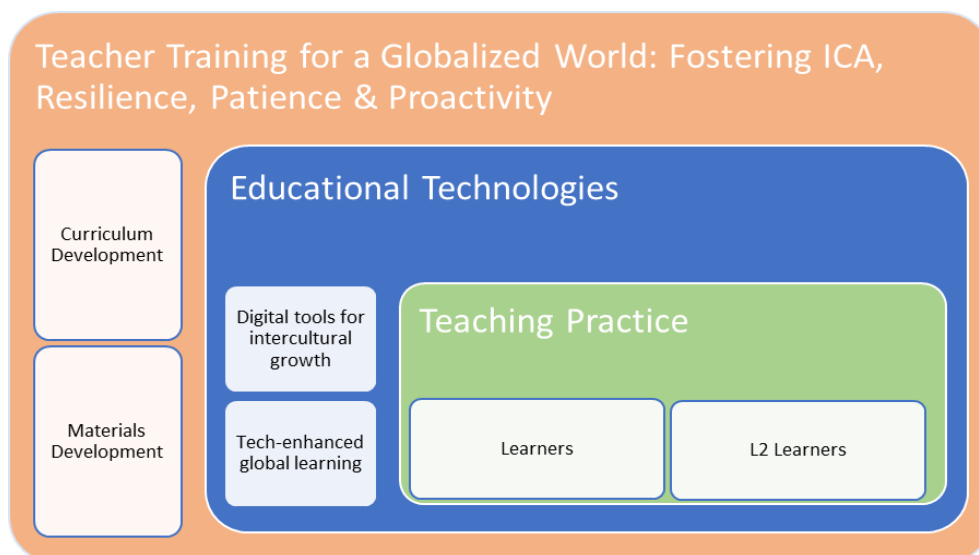


Figure 4. A Visual Framework for Teacher Training in Globalized ELT: Integrating Intercultural Awareness, Resilience, Patience, and Proactive Personality

6. 8 Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study contribute to a growing body of research on the psychological predictors of ICA in language education. However, like all research, it is bounded by certain contextual and methodological limitations. To deepen and broaden the understanding of how proactive personality, resilience, and patience interact to influence ICA, further research is encouraged. The following recommendations highlight potential directions that future studies could take to build upon the current work, explore underexamined areas, and apply the model in varied educational and cultural settings. Advancing this line of inquiry may offer valuable insights for educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers seeking to cultivate intercultural competence through evidence-based approaches.

6.8.1. Replication in Different Institutional Contexts

As this study was conducted at foundation universities, it offers context-specific insights into the strengths and areas for improvement in such institutional settings. Future research could replicate the study in state (public) universities to enable

comparative analysis and assess the generalizability of the findings across different higher education contexts.

6.8.2. Development of a Culture-Focused Curriculum Guide

Based on learner and teacher feedback, a structured guideline or booklet could be developed to support the integration of culture-related activities into English language curricula. This resource could be evaluated through future research to assess its effectiveness in raising ICA in diverse classroom settings.

6.8.3. Adapting to Globalized Language Education

Given the growing influence of globalization on language education, future studies should further investigate how global trends shape language instruction and intercultural outcomes. The implementation of culturally responsive teaching in diverse regions could be a fruitful area of research.

6.8.4. Exploration of Educational Technologies

Further research may explore how digital tools—such as AI-powered learning platforms, gamified environments, and intercultural simulations—support the development of patience, resilience, and ICA. Investigating these tools may help identify innovative pathways for enhancing affective and intercultural competencies.

6.8.5. Testing the Model Across Diverse Demographics

To improve the external validity of the model, future research should be conducted with students from varied cultural backgrounds, academic disciplines, and age groups. This would help determine whether the observed relationships among proactive personality, patience, resilience, and ICA are consistent across different populations.

6.8.6. Use of Longitudinal and Intervention-Based Designs

Since this study used a cross-sectional design, future research should employ longitudinal or experimental methods to examine how proactive personality traits, patience, and resilience evolve over time and how they impact ICA in different learning environments.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS SCALE (ICAS) (ORIGINAL VERSION - ENGLISH)

Saka, F., & Asma, B. (2020). A Study on Developing Intrcultural Awareness Scale (ICAS) and Examining learners' Intercultural Awareness. *International Journal of Current Approaches in Language, Education and Social Sciences*, 2(1), 445-461.

	ORIGINAL SCALE ITEMS
1	I am interested in learning other cultures.
2	It is enjoyable to have friends with different cultural backgrounds.
3	I like discovering beliefs of other societies.
4	I am open to experiencing other cultures.
5	I am interested in learning the taboos of different cultures.
6	I am interested in reading about the literature of different cultures/countries.
7	I respect the cultural diversity of a society.
8	I believe in the mutual understanding of different cultures.
9	I respect other cultures.
10	It is important to learn the culture of the language we are learning.
11	It can be enjoyable to participate in intercultural activities.
12	I can easily handle when there is a misunderstanding between me and people from other countries.
13	I am aware of differences in the characteristics of different cultures.
14	Learning about new cultures helps me improve my personality.
15	I would like to explore the target culture.
16	I love communicating with the foreign students at our university.
17	I am aware of the differences between my culture and other cultures.
18	I am interested in learning the local language of the host country.
19	I believe cultural activities are great opportunities to learn about other cultures.
20	I can easily adjust my behavior if I stay abroad.
21	I can tolerate different ways of behavior of people from other cultures.
22	I respect the values of people from different cultures.
23	I feel confident when interacting with people from different countries.
24	I wouldn't accept the opinions of people from different countries.

APPENDIX B: INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS SCALE (TRANSLATED VERSION - TURKISH)

	<u>TRANSLATED SCALE ITEMS</u>
1	Diğer kültürleri öğrenmeye meraklıyım.
2	Farklı kültürel geçmişleri olan arkadaşlarımla olma eğlenceli.
3	Başka toplumların inançlarını keşfetmeyi severim.
4	Başka kültürleri deneyimlemeye açıyım.
5	Farklı kültürlerin tabularını öğrenmeye meraklıyım.
6	Farklı kültür ve ülkelerin edebiyatını okumaya meraklıyım.
7	Bir toplumunun kültürel çeşitliliğine saygı duyarım.
8	Farklı kültürlerin karşılıklı anlayışına inanırım.
9	Başka kültürlere saygı duyarım.
10	Öğrendiğimiz dilin kültürünü öğrenmek önemlidir.
11	Kültürlerarası etkinliklere katılmak eğlenceli olabilir.
12	Ben ve başka ülkelerden olan insanlar arasında bir yanlış anlaşılma olduğunda kolaylıkla başa çıkabilirim.
13	Farklı kültür özelliklerinin değişiklik gösterebileceğinin farkındayım.
14	Yeni kültürleri öğrenmek kişiliğimi geliştirmeme yardımcı olur.
15	Hedef kültürü keşfetmeyi severim.
16	Üniversitemizdeki yabancı öğrencilerle iletişim kurmayı severim.
17	Kendi kültürüm ile başka kültürler arasındaki değişikliklerin farkındayım.
18	Ev sahibi ülkenin yerel dilini öğrenmeye meraklıyım.
19	Kültürel etkinliklerin başka ülkeler hakkında bir şeyler öğrenmek için mükemmel bir fırsat olduğuna inanıyorum.
20	Yurt dışında kalırsam davranışlarımla kolaylıkla uyum sağlarım.
21	Başka kültürlerden insanların farklı davranış biçimlerini hoş görebilirim.
22	Farklı kültürlerden insanların değerlerine saygı duyarım.
23	Farklı kültürlerden insanlarla etkileşime girdiğimde kendime güvenli olduğumu hissediyorum.
24	Farklı ülkelerden insanların fikirlerini kabul etmezdim.

APPENDIX C: PROACTIVE PERSONALITY SCALE (ORIGINAL VERSION - ENGLISH)

Bateman, T. S., Crant, J.M. (1993). The Proactive Component of Organizational Behavior: A Measure and Correlates, Journal of Organizational Behavior, 14 (2): 103 - 118

	<u>ORIGINAL SCALE ITEMS</u>
1	I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life.
2	I feel driven to make a difference in my community, and maybe the world.
3	I tend to let others take the initiative to start new projects.
4	Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change.
5	I enjoy facing and overcoming obstacles to my ideas.
6	Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality.
7	If I see something I don't like, I fix it.
8	No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.
9	I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition.
10	I excel at identifying opportunities.
11	I am always looking for better ways to do things.
12	If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.
13	I love to challenge the status quo.
14	When I have a problem, I tackle it head-on.
15	I am great at turning problems into opportunities.
16	I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.
17	If I see something in trouble, I help out in any way I can.

**APPENDIX D: PROACTIVE PERSONALITY SCALE (TRANSLATED
VERSION - TURKISH)**

	<u>TRANSLATED SCALE ITEMS</u>
1	Hayatımı geliřtirmek için sürekli yeni yollar arařtırıyorum.
2	Toplumumda hatta dünyada farklılık yaratmak için azimliyim.
3	Yeni projelere başlamak için inisiyatif alma konusunda başkalarına izin vermeye yatkınım.
4	Nerede olursam olayım yapıcı bir deęişiklik için güçlü bir etkim oldu.
5	Fikirlerime karşı olan engellerle karşılaşmayı ve onların üstesinden gelmeyi severim.
6	Hiçbir şey fikirlerimin gerçeęe dönüşmesinden daha heyecan verici olamaz.
7	Hoşuma gitmeyen bir şey olursa düzeltirim.
8	Ne olursa olsun, bir şeye inanırsam onu gerçekleřtirebileceęime inanırım.
9	Başkalarının düşüncelerine aykırı olsa da fikirlerim konusunda şampiyon olmayı severim.
10	Fırsatları belirlemede çok iyiyim.
11	Bir şeyleri daha iyi yapabilmek için her zaman farklı yollar ararım.
12	Bir fikre inanırsam, hiçbir engel beni onu gerçekleřtirmekten alıkoyamaz.
13	Statükoya meydan okumayı severim.
14	Bir sorunum olduęunda doğrudan üstesinden gelirim.
15	Sorunları fırsatlara dönüřtürmede mükemmelim.
16	İyi bir fırsatı dięerlerinden çok önce fark edebilirim.
17	Birinin başının dertte olduęunu görürsem her şekilde yardım ederim.

APPENDIX E: PATIENCE TENDENCY SCALE (ORIGINAL VERSION - TURKISH)

Çeliköz, N., ve Gül, Y. E. (2018). Üniversite Öğrencileri Sabır Eğilim Ölçeği: Geçerlik ve Güvenirlik Çalışması, Hamarta E. vd. (Ed.), *Eğitim Bilimleri Araştırmaları İçinde*, e kitap, 11-21, Çizgi Kitabevi, ISBN: 978-605-196-187-3.

Alt Boyut	Madde	Hiç katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne katılmıyorum ne katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
<i>Tahammülsüzlüğe karşı sabır</i>	1. Akademik çalışmalarında zorluklarla karşılaştığında sabrederim	1	2	3	4	5
	2. Derslerde başarılı olabilmek için sabırla çalışılması gerektiğini düşünüyorum	1	2	3	4	5
	3. Derste öğrenilen bir konuyu başkalarına anlatırken sabırlı olunmalıdır	1	2	3	4	5
	4. İnsan sıkıntıları karşısında dayanabilmeli	1	2	3	4	5
	5. Sabrı çok gerekli bir değer olarak görüyorum	1	2	3	4	5
	6. Öğrenciler sınıf içerisinde birbirlerine tahammül edebilmelidirler	1	2	3	4	5
	7. Sinirlendiğimde bunu davranışlarıma yansıtmam	1	2	3	4	5
	8. Arkadaşlarım kötü bir şaka yaptığında sabırla karşılarım	1	2	3	4	5
	9. Kantinde bir şey alırken kuyruk olduğunda tahammül gösterebilirim	1	2	3	4	5
	10. Arkadaşlarımla her türlü davranışlarına tahammül edebilirim	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Aceleliliğe karşı sabır</i>	11. Sınav notları duyuruluncaya kadar sakince beklerim	1	2	3	4	5
	12. Bir işle uğraşırken acele etmem	1	2	3	4	5
	13. Minibüs veya otobüse binerken acele etmem	1	2	3	4	5
	14. Sınıf arkadaşlarım genelde beni sabırlı bulurlar	1	2	3	4	5
	15. Ders bittiğinde dışarı çıkmak için acele edilmemelidir	1	2	3	4	5
	16. Kitap okurken bitirmek için acele etmem.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Öfkeye karşı sabır</i>	17. Yurtta/evde arkadaşlarımla gürültü yapmaları beni öfkelenmez	1	2	3	4	5
	18. Yemekhane sırasında birisinin önüne geçmesi beni kızdırmaz	1	2	3	4	5
	19. Kütüphanede çalışırken öğrencilerin yaptığı gürültü beni sinirlendirmez	1	2	3	4	5
	20. Kendimden daha başarılı bir öğrenci beni öfkelenmez	1	2	3	4	5
	21. Spor oyunlarında yenildiğimde öfkelenmem	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX F: RESILIENCE FOR ADULTS SCALE (ORIGINAL VERSION - TURKISH)

Basım, H. Nejat ve Çetin, Fatih (2011). Yetişkinler için Psikolojik Dayanıklılık Ölçeği'nin Güvenilirlik ve Geçerlilik Çalışması, *Türk Psikiyatri Dergisi*, 22, 2, 104-114.

1. Beklenmedik bir olay olduğunda...		Her zaman bir çözüm bulurum		Çoğu kez ne yapacağımı kestiremem
2. Gelecek için yaptığım planların...		Başarılması zordur		Başarılması mümkündür
3. En iyi olduğum durumlar şu durumlardır...		Ulaşmak istediğim açık bir hedefim olduğunda		Tam bir günlük boş bir vaktim olduğunda
4. ...olmaktan hoşlanıyorum		Diğer kişilerle birlikte		Kendi başıma
5. Ailemin, hayatta neyin önemli olduğu konusundaki anlayışı...		Benimkinden farklıdır		Benimkiyle aynıdır
6. Kişisel konuları ...		Hiç kimseyle tartışmam		Arkadaşlarımla/Aile-üyeleriyle tartışabilirim
7. Kişisel problemlerimi...		Çözemem		Nasıl çözebileceğimi bilirim
8. Gelecekteki hedeflerimi...		Nasıl başaracağımı bilirim		Nasıl başaracağımdan emin değilim
9. Yeni bir iş/projeye başladığımda ...		İleriye dönük planlama yapmam, derhal işe başlarım		Ayrıntılı bir plan yapmayı tercih ederim
10. Benim için sosyal ortamlarda rahat/esnek olmak		Önemli değildir		Çok önemlidir
11. Ailemle birlikteyken kendimi ... hissederim		Çok mutlu		Çok mutsuz
12. Beni ...		Bazı yakın arkadaşlarım/aile üyelerim cesaretlendirebilir		Hiç kimse cesaretlendiremez
13. Yeteneklerim...		Olduğuna çok inanırım		Konusunda emin değilim
14. Geleceğimin ... olduğunu hissediyorum		Ümit verici		Belirsiz
15. Şu konuda iyiyimdir...		Zamanımı planlama		Zamanımı harcama
16. Yeni arkadaşlık konusu ... bir şeydir		Kolayca yapabildiğim		Yapmakta zorlandığım
17. Ailem şöyle tanımlanabilir ...		Birbirinden bağımsız		Birbirine sıkı biçimde kenetlenmiş
18. Arkadaşlarımla arasındaki ilişkiler ...		Zayıftır		Güçlüdür
19. Yargılarıma ve kararlarıma ...		Çok fazla güvenmem		Tamamen güvenirim

20. Geleceğe dönük amaçlarım ...	Belirsizdir							İyi düşünülmüştür
21. Kurallar ve düzenli alışkanlıklar ...	Günlük yaşamımda yoktur							Günlük yaşamımı kolaylaştırır
22. Yeni insanlarla tanışmak ...	Benim için zordur							Benim iyi olduğum bir konudur
23. Zor zamanlarda, ailem ...	Geleceğe pozitif bakar							Geleceği umutsuz görür
24. Ailemden birisi acil bir durumla karşılaştığında...	Bana hemen haber verilir							Bana söylenmesi bir hayli zaman alır
25. Diğerleriyle beraberken	Kolayca gülerim							Nadiren gülerim
26. Başka kişiler söz konusu olduğunda, ailem şöyle davranır:	Birbirlerini desteklemez biçimde							Birbirlerine bağlı biçimde
27. Destek alırım	Arkadaşımdan/aile üyelerinden							Hiç kimseden
28. Zor zamanlarda ... eğilimim vardır	Her şeyi umutsuzca gören bir							Beni başarıya götürebilecek iyi bir şey bulma
29. Karşılıklı konuşma için güzel konuların düşünülmesi, benim için ...	Zordur							Kolaydır
30. İhtiyacım olduğunda ...	Bana yardım edebilecek kimse yoktur							Her zaman bana yardım edebilen birisi vardır
31. Hayatımdaki kontrol edemediğim olaylar (ile) ...	Başa çıkmaya çalışırım							Sürekli bir endişe/kaygı kaynağıdır
32. Ailemde şunu severiz ...	İşleri bağımsız olarak yapmayı							İşleri hep beraber yapmayı
33. Yakın arkadaşlarım/aile üyeleri ...	Yeteneklerimi beğenirler							Yeteneklerimi beğenmezler

APPENDIX G: BIO-DATA

Merve Oflaz completed her B.A. in English Language Education at Marmara University in 1998. Since then, she has been involved in English education and has taken different roles such as a teacher, an educational consultant, a materials developer, a blogger in the education field, a teacher trainer, a head of department, a learning and teaching advisor, an education manager, and an international exams manager. She was awarded a full scholarship and completed her first M.A. in English Language Education at Yeditepe University in 2008. In 2019, she graduated with honors from the Curriculum and Instruction M.A. Program at Yeditepe University. Additionally, she possesses a Cambridge ICELT Certificate (In-service Certificate in English Language Teaching).

Merve has produced a wide variety of presentations and workshops at conferences in Türkiye and abroad. She has been invited to schools as a speaker to train teachers and parents in several cities across Türkiye. Furthermore, she has reviewed and provided feedback on course books and ed-tech products for international publishers and institutions. She has received awards for her work in creating lesson activities, delivering presentations, directing children's plays and blogging.

In 2020, she was honored as one of the women in the British Council project '80 Years, 80 Women, and 80 Stories,' and in 2024, she received the 'Global Teacher Award', often regarded as the Nobel Prize for Education. Currently, she is a lecturer and the Professional Development Unit Coordinator at the School of Foreign Languages of a Foundation University. Her interests include learning preferences, integration of technology in curriculum and intercultural awareness.