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**AKDENİZ UNIVERSITY**

**INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

**MA  
THESIS**

**DECODING THE MYSTERY OF NATIVE-LIKE FLUENCY:  
AN INSIGHTFUL EXAMINATION OF SHARED TRAITS AND  
TECHNIQUES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**MASTER'S PROGRAM**

**Antalya, 2024**

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**Supervisor:**

**Assoc. Prof. Başak Eda HANCI AZİZOĞLU**

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**T.C.**  
**AKDENİZ ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
**EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ**  
**YABANCI DİLLER ANABİLİM DALI**  
**İNGİLİZ DİLİ EĞİTİMİ TEZLİ YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI**

**ANADİL BENZERİ DİL AKICILIĞININ GİZEMİNİN**  
**ÇÖZÜMLENMESİ: İNGİLİZCE DİL EDİNİMİNDE ORTAK**  
**YAKLAŞIMLAR VE TEKNİKLERİN DERİNLEMESİNE BİR TETKİKİ**

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**Antalya, 2024**

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AKDENİZ ÜNİVERSİTESİ

EĞİTİM BİLİMLERİ ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

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**DECODING THE MYSTERY OF NATIVE-LIKE FLUENCY: AN INSIGHTFUL  
EXAMINATION OF SHARED TRAITS AND TECHNIQUES IN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

**ONAY:** Bu tez, Enstitü Yönetim Kurulunca belirlenen yukarıdaki jüri üyeleri tarafından uygun görülmüş ve Enstitü Yönetim Kurulunun ..... tarihli ve ..... sayılı kararıyla kabul edilmiştir.

## **ABSTRACT**

### **DECODING THE MYSTERY OF NATIVE-LIKE FLUENCY: AN INSIGHTFUL EXAMINATION OF SHARED TRAITS AND TECHNIQUES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

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Master of Arts, Department of Foreign Language Education

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The majority of English language learners (ELLs) fail to go beyond the intermediate level in the target language while only a minority develop a communicative competence with native-like pronunciation and fluency. It is enticing to uncover what unique traits bring out a diverse proficiency variation among learners regardless of the background education they are exposed to. Therefore, this research study aims to (1) discover and explore (a) the common characteristics regarding the affective, attitudinal, and motivational development of highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency and (b) English language learning techniques that they tend to develop and employ during their English language learning journeys, and (2) investigate the implications of their shared practices in terms of English language learning and teaching. A qualitative research study with a case study approach has been used and conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of what distinctive qualities, conditions, and circumstances can cause an explicit contrastive variable in language learners' proficiency levels.

The data was collected with a semi-structured interview model while the data analysis was conducted via a semantic linguistic coding system regarding the participants' direct quotes. The findings reveal the common characteristics that ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency share. The first finding uncovered the fact that all the participants enjoyed using English through fun activities that they autonomously engaged in, and they put in the necessary effort voluntarily. Secondly, they developed higher self-efficacy beliefs concerning their skills in

English as they gained competency in English, and they recognized their achievements and improvements. Finally, all the participants benefitted from technology through digital contents in English and sought opportunities to speak to either native or non-native speakers of English in person or via online platforms through technology use as language learning techniques. In this study, the common affective responses the participants revealed through their individual differences and motivational tendencies, the abilities and beliefs that they developed along with the techniques that they chose to adopt during their English language learning journeys have brought out a common linguistic pattern. Thus, highly accomplished language learners share significant personal and behavioral traits during their language learning journeys.

**Keywords:** *Fluency, Language Learning Techniques, Learner Autonomy, Motivation, Native-like Pronunciation, Speaking Practice, Technology Use, Watching Digital Content*

## ÖZET

### **ANADİL BENZERİ DİL AKICILIĞININ GİZEMİNİN ÇÖZÜMLENMESİ: İNGİLİZCE DİL EDİNİMİNDE ORTAK YAKLAŞIMLAR VE TEKNİKLERİN DERİNLEMESİNE BİR TETKİKİ**

İngilizce öğrenenlerin çoğunluğu hedef dilde orta seviyenin ötesine geçemezken, sadece belli bir azınlık, anadiline benzer telaffuz ve akıcılığa sahip iletişimsel bir yeterlilik geliştirebilmektedir. Haliyle, sahip oldukları eğitimin arka planına bakılmaksızın, dil öğrenenler arasında İngilizce yeterliliğindeki bu tür bir çeşitliliğe ve farklılığa neden olan özgün vasıfları ortaya çıkarmak ilgi çekici olacaktır. Bu nedenle, bu araştırma çalışması, (a) anadil benzeri telaffuz ve akıcılığa sahip ileri düzey İngilizce öğrenenlerin duygusal, tutumsal ve motivasyonel gelişimine ilişkin ortak özelliklerini ve (b) İngilizce öğrenme yolculukları boyunca kullandıkları ve geliştirme eğiliminde oldukları İngilizce dil öğrenme tekniklerini araştırmayı ve ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, İngilizce dilini öğrenme ve öğretme açısından ortak uygulamalarının olası etkilerini de araştırmayı hedeflemektedir. Hangi belirgin niteliklerin, koşulların ve durumların, dil öğrenenlerin yeterlilik seviyelerinde böylesine net bir varyasyona neden olduğunu derinlemesine idrak etmek için vaka çalışması yaklaşımına sahip nitel bir araştırma benimsenmiş ve yürütülmüştür.

Veriler, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme modeliyle toplanmış, veri analizi ise katılımcıların doğrudan alıntılarına dayalı olarak anlamsal dilsel kodlama sistemi aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular, anadil benzeri telaffuz ve akıcılığa sahip İngilizce öğrenenlerin paylaştığı ortak özellikleri ortaya koymaktadır. İlk bulgu, tüm katılımcıların otonom olarak iştirak ettikleri eğlenceli aktivitelerle İngilizceyi kullanmaktan keyif aldıklarını ve gerekli çabayı gönüllü olarak gösterdiklerini ortaya çıkarmıştır. İkinci olarak, katılımcıların hepsi İngilizce yeterliliklerini kazandıkça, İngilizce becerilerine ilişkin daha yüksek öz-yeterlik inançları geliştirmişler ve ilgili başarılarını ve gelişmelerini fark etmişlerdir. Son olarak, tüm katılımcılar, dil öğrenme teknikleri olarak, İngilizce dijital içerikler aracılığıyla teknolojiye yararlanmış ve teknolojiyi kullanarak, ana dili İngilizce olan veya ana dili İngilizce olmayan kişilerle şahsen veya çevrimiçi platformlar aracılığıyla İngilizce konuşma ve sohbet etme fırsatları aramışlardır. Bu araştırma çalışması kapsamında, katılımcıların bireysel farklılıkları ve motivasyon eğilimleri aracılığıyla ortaya koydukları ortak duyuşsal tepkiler, geliştirdikleri yetenek ve inançlar ile İngilizce öğrenme yolculukları sırasında kullanmayı seçtikleri teknikler,



dil ile ilgili ortak bir kalıp ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bu nedenle, yüksek düzeyde başarılı dil öğrenenler, dil öğrenme yolculukları sırasında önemli bireysel ve davranışsal özellikleri paylaşmaktadırlar.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Akıcılık, Anadil Benzeri Telaffuz, Dijital İçerik İzleme, Dil Öğrenme Teknikleri, Konuşma Pratiği, Motivasyon, Öğrenen Özerkliği, Teknoloji Kullanımı*



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CE:	Classroom Environment
ELL:	English Language Learning
EM:	Extrinsic Motivation
FLC:	Foreign Language Classroom
GMT:	Grammar Translation Method
IM:	Intrinsic Motivation
IREM:	Internally Regulated Extrinsic Motivation
ISM:	Instrumental Motivation
ITM:	Integrative Motivation
LLS:	Language Learning Strategy
SCT:	Social Cognitive Theory
SDT:	Self-Determination Theory
SE:	Self-Efficacy
SEE:	Self-Efficacy Expectancy
SEM:	Social-Educational Model
SLA:	Second Language Acquisition
SLE:	Second Language Learning Enjoyment
TL:	Target Language
WTC:	Willingness to Communicate



## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

English is the world's most studied second language (L2) (Newsdle, 2022), and it is adopted as an official language in multiple countries around the globe (The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, n.d.). Wherever people travel on the planet, they would have a better chance to communicate in the English language than in any other language. Therefore, it would not be inaccurate to claim that English has panned out to be the language of commerce, education, business, technology, science, and entertainment in today's globalized world over the years. Considering all its global charm and power, it is thus quite understandable that it is regarded as one of the primary languages being taught in the majority of countries.

Therefore, a large number of people all around the world including Turkey, where the participants reside, begin to learn English in formal and/or informal settings starting from an early age. English language learning and teaching was put into mandatory practice in the sixth grade in secondary schools in Turkey until 1997. Within the same year, new governmental policies commanded a regulation that started the mandatory English language education in fourth grade elementary schools by the Turkish Education Board of the Ministry of National Education. English language teaching currently starts in second grade elementary schools in Turkey per the new regulation that took effect at the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey. (Bayyurt, 2014; Ekus & Babayigit, 2013; Inam, 2009; Kacar, Serindag & Sezik, 2016). Therefore, millions of individuals worldwide start learning English in schools every year and continue learning it for the upcoming years until the end of their academic lives. Continuous and adamant regulations by the Ministry of National Education of Turkey that

aim to facilitate English language learning and teaching confirm the global popularity of the English language.

Nonetheless, not many of these English language learners (ELLs) seem to end up communicating it on a highly advanced level and turn out to become highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency. In other words, the majority of learners even fail to go beyond the intermediate level in the English language (Günes & Sarigöz, 2021; Kara, Ayaz & Dündar, 2017). They quit the venture they have enthusiastically started to become proficient ELLs at the beginning of their English language learning journeys. On the other hand, only a minority become highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency.

Without a doubt, there are a substantial number of reasons for the diverse preferences of these learners during the acquisition process whether it be a common or a personal one. One of the primary questions whose answer can help many future ELLs to a great extent is what those highly-accomplished ELLs experience emotionally, psychologically, and cognitively when they start learning the English language. Furthermore, what keeps them motivated enough to continue their journey successfully by ending up growing into such advanced ELLs is worth to investigate. If this early English language learning period is meticulously investigated, what common affective states they find themselves in, what type of attitudes they develop, and the motives that most stimulate them to continue learning English can be brought to light. Therefore, discovering and exploring the common qualities that they share in terms of their early affective, attitudinal, and motivational development and the techniques that they develop and employ during their English language journeys sound intriguing. Such an analytical attitude would then promise to have future ELLs take joy in their learning process while they become more capable, persistent, and confident learners. Thus, the purpose of this study is to find out about the early common affective, attitudinal, and motivational qualities that transform beginner ELLs into highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency in addition to the techniques they develop and put to use during their English learning process.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

This qualitative research study aims (1) to discover and explore (a) the common attributes regarding the affective, attitudinal, and motivational development of highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency and (b) the early English language learning techniques that they tend to develop and employ, and (2) to investigate their implications in terms of English language learning and teaching.

## **1.3. Research Questions**

1. How do highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency feel about their language learning process?
2. What abilities and beliefs do highly-accomplished ELLs develop towards the English language in this initial phase of their English language process?
3. What reasons, purposes, and intentions motivate highly-accomplished ELLs' English language learning journeys?
4. What early English language learning techniques do highly-accomplished ELLs develop and employ during this early stage of their English language learning?

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Literature Review on Emotions

Emotions, which can be defined as quick reactions hailing from the human brain as a result of the processing of neural signals, are considered to be deeply engraved in human nature (Cooks-Campbell, 2022; Scientific American, 2005). It has even been suggested that “human feelings may arise from the instinctual emotional action systems of ancient regions of the mammalian brain” (Panksepp, 2003, p. 238). Therefore, they have the prospect of affecting an individual’s psychological state in everyday life and, consequently, the potential to shape interactions among individuals in social contexts. They manifest themselves with the first baby cry at birth. Once this “emotional action system” is activated, emotions take over and keep directing human life by manipulating thoughts and behaviors to a great extent (MacIntyre et al., 2019) since mental and emotional processes are thought to be intertwined (Cooks-Campbell, 2022; MacIntyre et al., 2019; Scientific American, 2005; White 2018). Emotions, as responses to both inner and outside phenomena, may have a positive or a negative effect on individuals (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). For instance; negative emotions of stress or fear can be genuine demotivating factors while positive ones can boost morale, and they may take individuals to new heights in the course of their consequently shaped actions (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Moreover, even human intelligence cannot be considered separate and free from emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Zheng et al., 2018).

Learning or acquiring a second language also has its emotional dimension in addition to its linguistic and cognitive aspects. Additionally, language itself functions as the social glue of human interaction since it provides possibly the most sophisticated and complex form of communication that this planet may have ever seen in its four-and-a-half billion-year-old life (Pagel, 2017). The vital role that emotions play in language learning should not be overlooked because human behavior cannot be evaluated free from the affective components attached to it (Prior, 2019). Therefore, language learners interact with others in a social context during the language-learning process, and they are apt to react as an individual in certain ways not only cognitively and socially

but also emotionally (Richards, 2022). This simple fact should have put forth emotions as a significant variable in language learning long ago. Emotions, however, did not receive the attention that they rightly deserved for a long time from Foreign Language Learning (FLL) / Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers and practitioners (Dewaele & Li, 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2019; Prior, 2019). On the other hand, language learning in both formal and informal contexts as a cognitive and social undertaking, involves a variety of emotions and feelings of stress, fear, joy, anxiety, and satisfaction aside from its cognitive aspect.

### **2.1.1. Emotions in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Positive Psychology**

The recognition of the significance of the emotional aspect in language learning prompted a great deal of research, initially on *language anxiety* and its effects as an emotional response in language learning contexts (Chen, 2023; Dewaele & Li, 2020; MacIntyre et al., 2019; White 2018). Emotions made ground in the current literature since they were seen to have the potential to influence second language learners not only physically but also mentally, and therefore they frequently began to mostly appear in domains of education and social areas under the name of *affective factors* in the literature (MacIntyre et al., 2019; White 2018). Over the past decades, Horwitz et al. (1986) focused on how language anxiety is capable of hindering communicative competence in SLA. Likewise, Gardner (2006) and MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) proposed that since language anxiety leads to low-grade second language (L2) achievement; this substandard outcome, in return, feeds language anxiety more, which points to a reciprocal relationship between language anxiety and failure or poor performance in language learning. Similarly, Gardner and Lalonde (1985) paid attention to how language anxiety affects L2 learning motivation. For instance; one of the earliest and most well-known notions set forth regarding the affective side of language learning was Krashen's (1982) *Affective Filter Hypothesis*. According to Krashen, ELLs are likely to be less anxious and more confident and motivated relative to the one with a high(er) filter, if an individual possesses a low(er) or weak(er) affective filter. The impact of affective filter then determines the individual's attitudes toward the target language (TL) such as a tendency to look for more opportunities to obtain more language input. On the other hand, the individual with a higher filter would not be able to process the input properly due to the high filter itself, which weakens comprehension and preempts proper fluency as a result.

Both positive and negative emotions have become the subject of investigation over their connection to second language learning motivation. To demonstrate; Ushioda and Dörnyei (2009) put forth two motivational *L2 selves*: the *ideal L2 self* and the *ought-to L2 self*, both of which allude to how the individual visualizes himself or herself as an L2 learner in the future. This verifies the argument regarding that language learners build new personalities in the target language they set out to learn through interactions with others in a social context. The *ideal L2 self here* represents the qualities that an L2 learner wants to have such as personal desires, wishes, ambitions, or hopes while the *ought-to L2 self* refers to the characteristics that the L2 learner ought to have such as obligations or duties. If L2 learning is an essential part of the individual's either *self*, then s/he will get highly motivated to balance out the difference or cope with the inconsistency between his or her existing self and possible future selves.

Emotions under the name of *affectiveness*; however, started to appear within other language learning models and theories as well concerning other aspects of language learning. Oxford (2018), as an example, brings the *learner willingness*, which, as an affective factor, helps language learners come up with their own methods or tactics in order to manage their own learning into the equation. Thus, emotions may significantly contribute to individuals' *language learning strategy* (LLS) development according to Oxford. Hence, emotions have been considered to be inseparable and indispensable to individuals' consciousness and accumulation of knowledge during the language learning processes (White & Pham, 2017), which clearly highlights the central role that not only negative emotions such as anxiety but also positive emotions like willingness function as a variable in SLA.

Such a broader use of emotions by various frameworks in the scope of SLA together with the incorporation of positive emotions has brought about the emergence of Positive Psychology. To illustrate, MacIntyre and Vincze (2017) determined ten positive emotions *hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe, joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, and love* whereas nine negative emotions of *embarrassment, guilt, hate, sadness, anger, contempt, disgust, feeling scared, and being stressed* in their research study. Based on the integrative motivation of Gardner's Socio-Educational Model (Gardner & Lalonde, 1985), which highlights the *will* and *need* to be a member of the target language community; Dörnyei's (2006) L2 system as explained earlier; and Clément's (1986) socio-contextual model, pay close attention to the "fear of assimilation" by the second

language learners of minority groups. The participants, who are German-learning Italian secondary school children, have been observed to be more apt to go through positive emotions which show a strong correlation with L2 motivation. In a similar vein, positive emotions boost willingness to communicate (WTC) and bolster learner autonomy, which result in feelings of achievement and self-confidence in learners (Richard, 2022).

### **2.1.2. Second Language Learning Enjoyment (SLE)**

Among ever-expanding variables of positive and negative emotions that investigate the relationship between *Foreign Language Learning Enjoyment* and *Foreign Language Anxiety*, the term *foreign language* is replaced with *second language* (L2). Firstly, the world around us has become much smaller thanks to state-of-the-art technologies and the Internet by providing people all around the world with light-speed communication capabilities. As a result, such a technologically globalized world affords resources and opportunities for much faster and more extensive language learning than in the past. Therefore, language learning is no longer considered as foreign language learning since the globally-accessible virtual environment the Internet provides constructs the intellectual surrounding needed for the second language acquisition.

Although the two affective factors of language learning enjoyment and language learning anxiety tend to indicate a negative correlation, they are not related to each other. Even if enjoyment exists in the language learning process, there can still be anxiety that is involved in the language learning process. Therefore, they are found to be independent of each other. For instance; a low level of L2 anxiety does not necessarily implicate a high degree of L2 enjoyment. As language learners gain ground through achievement or perceived achievement, they begin to embrace enjoyment more, but anxiety less, which shows that participants experience L2 enjoyment more often than L2 anxiety. This, however, pans out to be considerably dependent on the teacher's skills and attitudes, and how supportive or discouraging the peer group is (Dewaele & Li, 2022; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Likewise, Khajavy et al. (2018) indicate that positive language learning settings nurture both *willingness to communicate* and *enjoyment* while minimizing *anxiety*, which supports the significant role played by the teacher and peer groups in the classroom environment. Yeşilçınar and Erdemir's (2023) recent research study that aims to investigate L2 enjoyment and L2 anxiety has produced similar results with Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), which demonstrates

that enjoyment and anxiety, as disparate dimensions, are not interdependent in the Turkish context, either. Turkish L2 prep school learners who have participated in the study appear to have had a high degree of L2 enjoyment in addition to a medium degree level of L2 anxiety. In parallel, their English proficiency levels have been found to have a strong effect on enjoyment as well. As a result, Yeşilçınar and Erdemir (2023) indicate that (1) anxiety and enjoyment can co-occur with varying degrees or intensities of both emotions depending on the characteristics of the individuals and surroundings, and (2) participants show an obvious tendency to take relatively more joy in language learning as they progress, which is similar to what Dewaele and Li's (2022) and Dewaele and MacIntyre's (2014) research studies have proposed.

To sum up, the majority of the researchers base their studies on the ways and extent of L2 enjoyment and L2 anxiety influence on language learning as to whether there is a corresponding relationship between the two. When the focus is only confined to enjoyment and its influence on language learning, the results make it clear to a certain degree that L2 enjoyment increases as learners especially improve their proficiency as long as they are supported in an encouraging environment (Zeng, 2021). By the same token, Dewaele and Dewaele (2018) have come up with similar results showing that the teachers' positive attitude and frequent use of the target language in the classroom environment lead to L2 enjoyment. For example; Elahi Shirvan et al. (2020) have utilized a sampling method via journals and interviews, called *Ecological Momentary Assessment*, which is about tracing and recording how participants act and behave in their ordinary lives based on varying timescales ranging from minutes, hours, days to weeks and months in addition to what they experience in real-time in order to explore the extent of L2 enjoyment. The results highlight the dynamic and complicated nature of L2 enjoyment since it has been observed again that enjoyment and its extent are very much dependent on the unique characteristics of the individuals in addition to the features of the surrounding environment.

From another point of view, Lee (2022) has concluded that enjoyment, a potential outcome of positive classroom environments including the teacher as a supportive figure, has the power to increase the learners' willingness to communicate in terms of the ways L2 enjoyment influences language learning. In a similar fashion, Resnik and Schallmoser (2019) have conducted a study to investigate the relationship between enjoyment and e-tandem language learning. E-tandem language learning relies on an online collaboration platform of language learners, who have the



desire to learn each other's native languages. One of the reasons observed to induce enjoyment is the authentic language communication taken place between real-life people, which is also free from the competitive atmosphere that most classroom environments bring about. Additionally, instant feedback received from the partner and the perceived immediate progress through it, have been reported by the participants to be another source of enjoyment in e-tandem learning. It is understood that authenticity and a stress-free setting afford a positive learning setting that leads to L2 enjoyment in e-tandem language learning. In return, the joy taken leads to perceived language learning achievement according to the reports of the participants. Therefore, Resnik and Schallmoser's (2019) study demonstrates the vital role that L2 enjoyment, a positive emotion and an outcome of a positive learning environment, is capable of enriching the language learning experience.

### **2.1.3. Volitional Effort**

L2 enjoyment and L2 anxiety emerge as individual differences in language learning since every single learner may feel both positive or negative emotions to varying degrees even under the same circumstances. Additionally, they depend on the individual's own perception of how positive or supportive the shared surrounding social environment can be. Therefore, positivity and support in language learning contexts increase the probability of getting more joy on behalf of learners without a doubt. This brings more enjoyment but less anxiety as a result of facilitating language learning in return (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Dewaele & Li, 2022; Elahi Shirvan et al., 2020; Lee, 2022; Resnik & Schallmoser, 2019; Yeşilçınar & Erdemir, 2023; Zeng, 2021). Learners' cognitive assets such as IQ or memory capacity, and noncognitive fortes including self-discipline and motivation affect their academic performance. Notwithstanding, self-discipline as a nonintellectual individual quality indicates a relatively more robust impact on academic performance than IQ or cerebral talent alone. Therefore, such non-cognitive individual differences can be the determining factor when it comes to academic performance, even among learners with equal IQs or similar observable talents. In other words, the lack of such noncognitive strengths can impede a better prospect of success in academic performance (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005). Therefore, overcoming difficult tasks and challenges takes more than talent or intelligence.

One of those individual differences proposed to affect both learning in general including language learning has been considered to be “perseverance and passion for long-term goals”, which is dubbed as “grit.” It can also be defined in terms of “working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress” (Duckworth et al., 2007, p.1087-1088). Grit is very much analogous to the physical endurance or persistence that any long-distance runner must possess if the goal is to attain achievement. Duckworth et al. (2007) have come up with the argument suggesting that grit is made up of *perseverance of effort*, which is interpreted as an unrelenting will to advance despite any hardships, and (2) *consistency of interest* as an enduring, ongoing devotion to chasing one’s goals. Furthermore, it has been argued that grit affords a valuable ability to predict success. For that purpose, Duckworth has come up with a 12-item Grit Scale, a product of a domain-general perspective, to be able to measure the two subconstructs *perseverance of effort* and *consistency of interest*, which are claimed to compose the high-order construct *grit*. Some, however, come forward to claim that subconstructs of *perseverance* and *consistency* are two disparate facades in nature and may not go together all the time. Credé et al. (2017) have conducted a meta-analytic research study based on the literature focusing on “the structure of grit and the relation between grit and performance, retention, conscientiousness, cognitive ability, and demographic variables” (p. 2). They have failed to predict performance, however, when they have put together the scores for both subconstructs, which suggests that *grit*, as a high-order construct, is not a valid variable to determine future success. They, however, argue that *perseverance* is a better predictor of performance relative to both *consistency* and the high-order construct *grit*. According to Yamashita’s (2018) study, the participants with stronger *perseverance* quality turn up performing rather poorly given the scores that they have received in extensive reading classes. To illustrate, this idea suggests that grit and perseverance do not have a positive correlation. On the other hand, the consistency factor indicates a mild positive association between the two. Yamashita’s (2018) study also fails to verify the high-order construct *grit* as a valid predictor of success or performance. Similarly, the correlation between *grit* as a high-order construct and academic achievement is at a poor to mild level while the *perseverance of effort* is found to be a better predictor than *consistency of interest* (Lam and Zhou, 2022).

Wei et al. (2019) have set out to investigate the impact of grit on Chinese middle school L2 learners' performance by utilizing the Grit-S Scale (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009), which bears a domain-general perspective. They have employed L2 enjoyment and classroom environment (CE) as mediators to gain insight into the link between grit and second language performance. Grit has been observed to affect performance positively unlike the results the above studies suggest. It is of great significance though to note that Wei et al. (2019) have used (1) L2 enjoyment as a mediator between second language performance and grit; (2) CE as a medium between L2 enjoyment and grit, and (3) CE as another medium between second language performance and grit. The results suggest that grit considerably affects both L2 enjoyment and second language performance, if CE is particularly and positively constructed.

Feng and Papi (2020) have conducted a study making use of Duckworth et al.'s (2007) 12-item domain-general scale to examine the relationship between motivational intensity, Ushioda and Dörnyei's (2009) L2 selves, and persistence in second language learning. The subconstruct *perseverance of effort* turns out to be an important predictor of motivational intensity while *consistency of interest* fails at it. Additionally, *perseverance of effort* and motivational intensity are moderated by L2 selves. Similar to what Credé et al. (2017); Lam and Zhou (2022); and Yamashita (2018) found, the results were unable to verify grit as a high-order construct.

Teimouri et al. (2022) have chosen not to use the domain-general instruments in their study and hence devised the *Language-Domain Grit Scale* in order to find answers as to how language learning grit is related to motivation, emotion, and language achievement. Firstly, and most importantly, although both language-domain-specific grit and domain-general grit are positively associated with motivational factors and second language achievement, the former reveals a positive correlation that is nearly twice as strong as the latter does. This finding has been interpreted by Teimouri et al. (2022) as a piece of evidence indicating that scales, specifically designed for language learning, are more likely to predict grit. Secondly, learners who have relatively more grit turn out to be more willing to put effort into their second language learning process, which is in parallel with other grit studies regarding the perseverance of effort as being a better success predictor (Credé et al., 2017; Feng & Papi, 2020; Lam & Zhou, 2022; Yamashita, 2018).

Pawlak et al. (2022) have set out to investigate whether variables of age, gender, and experience cause differences in the intensity of second language learning grit (L2 grit), and in what

ways L2 grit is linked with L2 curiosity, L2 enjoyment, L2 anxiety, and domain-general grit. They have come up with findings that support Teimouri et al.'s (2022) results that argue that L2 grit, which only refers to grit for learning a second language, is different from general grit across all areas. Secondly, the study has indicated that language learning enjoyment explicitly predicts L2 grit for relatively younger learners, which is in line with Wei et al.'s (2019) findings.

When the literature is reviewed for *volitional effort*, there is a limited number of studies whereas a considerable number of studies on grit, passion, and perseverance emerge. Thus, the code volitional effort is seen to be in line with perseverance of effort and positively correlated with motivation, a supportive language learning environment, and L2 enjoyment.

## **2.2. Literature Review on Motivation Types**

Motivation has become the subject of numerous schools of thought and theories in social sciences of psychology, language learning, and education. As a result, it has panned out to be one of the most studied phenomena by quite a few scholars in various domains. It has been investigated in a wide-ranging spectrum, which has churned out somewhat similar and somewhat less alike approaches concerning what it is, how it works, and how it should be interpreted. To illustrate, *behaviorists* view motivation as the drive to get rewards, which is developed through reinforcement. According to *cognitivism*, motivation emerges when the stimuli in the environment are subjected to cognitive processing by the individual. In other words, the individual reflects the observed behavior and its probable consequences based on subjective expectations, beliefs, emotions, thoughts, and choices. Similarly, *constructivists* argue that each and every individual is unique in their own way. Every person possesses their own collection of knowledge and experiences based on their unique lives in their unique environments. Therefore, every person develops a type of motivation that is unique to them, which, as a result, will be different from others according to the constructivist view (Brown, 2000). Then, different theories exist regarding the phenomenon of motivation, which causes complexity rather than clarity concerning what exactly motivation is and how it should be understood. Therefore, Baumeister (2016) has tried to present a general framework by providing common patterns of motivation that could help researchers have a clearer perspective to connect the dots between different approaches. He defined it as “wanting

[and] a condition of an organism that includes a subjective sense (not necessarily conscious) of desiring some change in self and/or environment” (p. 1) in order to offer a comprehensive understanding that could be applicable across the specific domains of motivation, which, on the flip side, does not seem likely to become such an umbrella definition as intended. First of all, motivation is not a tangible object that can be directly observed. It flourishes within the individual on a very subjective basis in a specific environment, which points to a unique feeling or phenomenon (Xize, 2014). Another reason is that motivation is too complex to be explained as a phenomenon and understood with a single definition or a limited description. For instance, *wanting* or willingness alone, is not considered sufficient for an individual to be able to become truly motivated as opposed to Baumeister’s definition. Additional factors such as hard work and enjoyment appear to be as significant as *wanting* in order for an individual to get and remain motivated (Gardner 2006, 2007; Gardner & Lalonde, 1985). For that reason, the multifaceted nature of motivation requires additional features, also depending on the domain, which has prompted a great number of understandings and perceptions in the literature based on various theories of motivation. Thus, the focus of this research study will be on the models and theories that approach the concept of motivation from an L2 learning point of view since one of the aims of this research study is to look into how individual motivation differences affect the performance of highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency and regarding the function and the quality of motivation they tend to have during their English language learning journeys. Hence, it would be better to start with the Social-Educational Model (SEM), one of the earliest and most dominant theories to explain the role of motivation in L2 learning (Lamb et al., 2019).

## **2.2.1. L2 Motivation Models**

### **2.2.1.1. Motivation in terms of the Socio-Educational Model (SEM)**

Motivation is regarded as one of the individual differences that play a crucial role in L2 learning along with cognitive factors of intelligence or language aptitude versus affective factors of anxiety or enjoyment. Moreover, it is considered indispensable in order for an individual to acquire high proficiency in the target language (TL). Instead of defining motivation, however, the SEM chooses to lay out the qualities of a motivated individual due to its complexity. Therefore, a

motivated individual is considered to be the one who is intrigued enough by a goal, which is L2 achievement while having both the desire and motives to act or perform accordingly. In other words, a motivated L2 learner is goal-directed and persistent about reaching their goals.

#### **2.2.1.2. Integrative Motivation (ITM) and Instrumental Motivation (ISM)**

Cultural patterns within the TL community and familiarity with the general characteristics of its members influence motivation and its intensity. Namely, a motivated language learner is also willing to embrace such social and cultural unfamiliarities and differences. Therefore, L2 learning is regarded as an emotional undertaking in which the language learner must cope with the challenges of the new social and cultural characteristics embedded in the target language together with its culture-bound linguistic patterns. As a result, language learners' attitudes, called *integrative attitudes* are considered to affect the individual's willingness and readiness to accept these different and novel patterns. Hence, *integratively motivated* individuals or language learners with "integrative motivation (ITM)" are thought to be willing to assimilate themselves into the culture of the L2 community. Krashen (1982) also discusses the existence of integrative motivation, which he similarly defines as the will and need to be a member of the community in which the TL is spoken. According to him, such motivation may positively affect proficiency and increase the chances of L2 achievement. The presence of integrative motivation is bound to promote voluntary interaction with the speakers of the TL, which would eventually help learners to significantly achieve L2 learning. If foreign culture is seen as a threat, which leads to a low level of integrative motivation, failure in L2 achievement is more likely to take place according to the SEM. In summary, L2 learners' integrative orientation, which symbolizes their interest in the second language (L2) and their positive attitudes toward the L2 community, significantly influences their motivation. This means that how learners perceive the language and its associated culture plays a crucial role in their willingness to learn and engage with the language community (Gardner, 2006, 2019; Gardner & Lalonde, 1985). In addition to *integrativeness*, the *instrumentality* factor as another individual difference is also considered to influence learner motivation according to the SEM.

*Instrumentality* or *instrumental motivation (ISM)* is regarded for the drive of learning an L2 in order to simply benefit from it or gain a practical advantage of some sort such as getting a better

job, a higher pay, or a promotion, which would obviously vary between individuals. Both motivation types are effective in L2 learning and achievement (Gardner & McIntyre, 1991; Listyani, 2022; Zhang et al., 2020) although instrumentality turns up relatively stronger and more influential especially when the practical benefit of L2 achievement is perceived as valuable (Kiziltepe, 2000; Krashen, 1981; Listyani, 2022; Sultan & Hussain, 2010). On the other hand, integrative motivation can be a solid predictor of L2 achievement and proficiency (Hernández, 2006; Samad et al., 2012; Wei, 2022); while instrumental motivation may be determined by learners' future career expectations in the L2 context, integrative motivation, however, does not turn up as consistent as instrumental motivation in this context. Unlike SEM's claim that integrative motivation is more powerful and effective than instrumental motivation, instrumental motivation could be superior to integrative motivation in some L2 contexts (Dörnyei, 1990)

A vital detail that has been overlooked by SEM is that the English language is perceived as an international language around the globe for particularly L2 learners. This fact points to a general tendency toward learning English as a world language that provides a connection with the international community rather than a TL that stimulates certain attitudes toward a particular English speaking community (Dörnyei, 1990; Lamb, 2004; Warden & Lin, 2000; McClelland, 2000). In other words, integrative orientation is then less likely to motivate L2 learners with such a perception when compared to instrumentality.

#### **2.2.1.3. Motivation in terms of Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

Self-determination theory (SDT) puts forth that motivation should be interpreted not only as a solid, one-piece phenomenon, which varies in amount or intensity but also as one that has different types. To put it differently, individuals' unique ulterior goals and experiences determine the very nature of motivation that prompts different motivational orientations in language learners. To illustrate, material gains can stimulate an individual to act in a certain way as a motive whereas interest can arise as a motivating factor in another to behave in a similar fashion. The amount of motivation in both can be the same or very close although they are different sorts in quality. Therefore, SDT comes up with three kinds of motivational orientations, one of which is *amotivation*. It refers to the absence of willful inclination to get involved in any task or activity.

The other two are called intrinsic motivation (IM) and extrinsic motivation (EM), which depend on distinctive motives (Reeve, 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

#### **2.2.1.4. Intrinsic Motivation (IM) and Extrinsic Motivation (EM)**

SDT adopts the assertion that humans are “active, inquisitive, curious, and playful creatures, displaying ubiquitous readiness to learn and explore” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 56). In order to develop and operate properly, humans feel the fundamental need (1) to perform capably and efficiently, (2) to execute autonomy while performing or acting, and (3) to relate to the *social environment*. In other words, humans are prone to do certain acts efficiently in connection with their surroundings and the elements in their surroundings out of pure inherent reasons based on their own decisions and choices by also determining and controlling how they go about it without any or little interference from the outside world (Reeve, 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, intrinsic motivation is considered to have a significant impact on L2 achievement (Jiao et al., 2022). At this point, it is important to note that the teacher, as the key component of formal classroom contexts, plays a major role in providing an environment that supports self-determination.

In schools, the facilitation of more self-determined learning requires classroom conditions that allow satisfaction of these three basic human needs—that is that support the innate needs to feel connected, effective, and agentic as one is exposed to new ideas and exercises new skills. (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 65)

To put it differently, the innate needs of competency, autonomy, and relatedness should be met in order for intrinsic motivation to emerge (Reeve, 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000). That is, behaviors performed intrinsically are hence “volitional and accompanied by the experience of freedom and autonomy [and] emanate from one’s sense of self” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 65). Therefore, more self-determination and a sociable environment provided by the teacher are likely to enhance the joy and satisfaction that the learners get, which in turn leads to high degrees of involvement and participation (Liu, 2022; Stipek, 2002). Thus, how the teacher is perceived by learners, as an authority figure or a facilitator, determines whether intrinsic motivation will thrive in the classroom (Noels et al., 1999). That is, they become and remain intrinsically motivated, connected, and autonomous if they get support from the environment (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Reeve, 2022; Ushioda,



2003). Thus, social support acts as an enhancer of individual self-worth and self-esteem by alleviating negative emotions of stress and anxiety (Jia & Cheng, 2022).

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation (EM) is acquired via factors that not only provide *instrumental value* for the individual such as a materialistic and/or a career benefit but also function externally as rewards or punishments such as monetary prizes, salary cuts, good or bad grades as the adjective *extrinsic* already suggests (Brown, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, extrinsically motivated behaviors can be considered to be “accompanied by the experience of pressure and control, and they are not representative of one’s self” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 65). Hence, extrinsic motivation alludes to the absence of autonomy unlike intrinsic motivation (Noels et al., 1999). “Extrinsically motivated behaviors—those that are executed because they are instrumental to some separable consequence—can vary in the extent to which they represent self-determination. Internalization and integration are the processes through which extrinsically motivated behaviors become more self-determined” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 65). *Internalization* refers to making an observed behavior, value, or attitude a person owns. *Integration* is the process of regulating an internalized behavior or value to the extent that it complies with the extant behavior. Hence, extrinsic motivation can be regulated in four different ways with respect to self-determination: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. *External regulation* is the least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. It is regulated fully externally through rewards and punishments. Secondly, there could be partially external factors such as individual concerns for self-worth or self-image, or efforts made to refrain from negative feelings including stress, guilt, or depression, which are responsible for the emergence of extrinsic motivation. They can be considered partially external. This second sort is called *introjected regulation* of extrinsic motivation. *Identified regulation* of extrinsic motivation alludes to identifying with certain values, behaviors, or attitudes that are regarded as significant by accepting them as their own. It can be perceived as partly internal. The most self-determined form of extrinsic motivation is *integrated regulation*. It is fully internally regulated. The behaviors, values, or attitudes regulated through identification become fully assimilated and made a part of one’s own nature. Therefore, *internally regulated extrinsic motivation (IREM)* or *integrated regulation of extrinsic motivation* may overlap with intrinsic motivation on many levels such as autonomy and willingness. There is, however, still an instrumental value to integrated regulation. If any behavior

is performed due to the instrumental value, then it is carried by the individual autonomously in a voluntary manner even if it is regulated by a force. Then, it simply means that it is only done to reach a separate outcome that does not originate from pure joy, fun, or satisfaction of performing the behavior per se, which is the very reason why it is still considered to be extrinsic motivation (Noels et al. 1999; Reeve, 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation can both coexist and be beneficial. Both can serve as solid stimulators that lead to L2 achievement although intrinsic motivation is considered to be a stronger drive (Listyani, 2022).

### **2.2.2. The Dichotomy between the SDT's Intrinsic-Extrinsic Motivation Constructs and the SEM's Instrumental-Integrative Motivation Orientations**

SDT's intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation constructs and SEM's instrumental motivation and integrative motivation orientations seem to introduce similar concepts concerning motivation. Thus, it is significant to make a distinction between them as much as possible. First of all, SEM's integrative motivation requires favorable attitudes toward the L2 community and culture. Thus, this positive approach is often confused with the SDT's intrinsic motivation, which refers to acting or carrying out tasks or activities for inherent reasons on an autonomous basis. Intrinsic motivation and integrative motivation might well overlap in many instances, but it may not always be the case in others. For instance, an individual who has the desire to communicate with the members of the TL to be accepted by the respective community can be considered to have both intrinsic motivation and integrative motivation when/if the source of motivation comes through the individual. In this case, it is a sign of both inherence and self-determination to become part of the L2 culture (Brown, 2000).

Similarly, integratively-oriented individuals may appear as the ones who are also more likely to relate to autonomous orientation. To demonstrate, learners would like to interact more with the members of the L2 community, if they hold a desire to learn an L2. The underlying cause for this preference is the fact that learning a language intrigues them with joy as well as personal gain. In other words, intrinsic orientation through self-determination or autonomy may lead to integrative orientation by encouraging learners to establish more interactions for the purpose of learning. On the other hand, the individual may be coaxed or talked into learning L2 by the parents, which would obviously be an extrinsic factor, with the purpose of adapting to the L2 culture. In

this case, integrative motivation seems to coexist with extrinsic motivation instead of intrinsic motivation since an external force is applied to get the individual to habituate to the L2 community. Therefore, integrative and intrinsic orientations should not be thought of as the same because taking joy in learning the L2 and desiring to interact with the L2 community and even be part of it do not often take place concurrently. The wish to integrate into the L2 community then means developing an identity and a feeling of a strong commitment toward the L2 community and culture, which is not counted as a characteristic of intrinsic orientation. Even though both orientation types may help boost the intensity of effort, they do this by functioning independently (Noels, 2001).

A similar confusion seems to appear making the distinction between the SEM's instrumental motivation and the SDT's extrinsic motivation. They may overlap in many instances, too.

“Externally regulated extrinsic motivation and the instrumental orientation are similar (at least in terms of their operational definitions) in that they both emphasize the role of tangible rewards external to the language learning process in sustaining language learning at least as long as those rewards are available to the learner” (Noels et al., 1999, p. 31)

To exemplify, a company may want its employees to learn a L2 so that they can better serve the community. In this example, most employees are likely to be instrumentally motivated to learn the L2 since they would like to keep their jobs. Additionally, they can be assumed to be extrinsically motivated as well since the company, not themselves, wishes them to learn the L2.

SEM's instrumental motivation might also overlap with some of the SDT's self-regulated types of extrinsic motivation in terms of certain aspects. To illustrate, if an individual wishes to reach a goal without any external reward or punishment, and if they believe that learning English would help attain the goal that is desired for inherent reasons, then they should no doubt be regarded as extrinsically motivated. This extrinsic motivation is regulated or determined internally, by the individual's own desire and interest, which would point to internally regulated extrinsic motivation (IREM) (Noels et al., 1999).

Instrumental motivation and intrinsic motivation may also be at work together in some instances. For instance, a person may have a desire for a better career, and learning the L2 may help acquire it. In this scenario, the individual may be considered intrinsically motivated to reach a dream career and the L2 functions as an instrument to get it (Brown, 2000).

There seems to be one more confusion worth discussing here. If the ultimate goal through integrative orientation is to be assimilated into the L2 culture, integrative orientation to learn the L2 may also be regarded as an instrumental motive in itself since L2 learning simply becomes an essential part of the individual's assimilation process. Therefore, it can be argued that integrative motivation could be taken as a highly internalized extrinsic motivation (Bonney et al., 2008; Noels et al., 1999).

As can be seen clearly, it may not always be possible to clearly distinguish between the types of motivation. A clear distinction seems to depend on the specific situation at hand as in the examples and interpretations given above. Moreover, different motivation types may overlap or coexist together. Thus, within the scope of this research study, though both SEM's instrumental motivation and SDT's self-regulated types of extrinsic motivation stem from an external motive, they will be differentiated by the nuance of the presence of *internal regulation* or *self-regulation*. Any practical reason that refers to materialistic, academical, or career related gains for learning English, which would not be counted as inherent in nature, will be assessed in the scope of SEM's instrumental motivation. An external reason, however, can be internally- or self-regulated, which would point to an inherent motive to perform or achieve it.

Thus, if learning English is to serve this very purpose by helping reach this innate goal, then it means that there exists a motivation internally regulated during the learning process. Yet, the source of motivation would not be directed toward learning English per se, but the task, activity, or goal that is innately desired. Therefore, such self-regulated motives will be assessed within the scope of SDT's self-regulated types of extrinsic motivation.

## **2.3. Literature Review on Abilities and Beliefs**

### **2.3.1. Bandura's Self-Efficacy**

Humans are complex beings with different expectations, choices, beliefs, thoughts, and emotions, and they can direct themselves according to their own choices or decisions. The environment in which the individual acts and reacts is unique. In other words, not only would people have different expectations, choices, beliefs, thoughts, or emotions but also external conditions surrounding them may greatly vary. People are even capable of choosing their

environments or partially establishing the character of their surroundings based on their cognitions and emotions (Bandura, 1989) when they have the chance. This should also lead to variation of surroundings among individuals. Therefore, cognitions and emotions are considered to act as mediators between the environment and the behavior, which indicates that even if stimulus is the same, different individuals are likely to turn up with different outcomes.

To put it differently, the stimuli or the input in the environment are subjected to cognitive processing by the individual, through which the individual reflects the observed behavior and its probable consequences based on his or her subjectivity. Therefore, three factors: (1) the input in the environment, (2) cognitive factors as mediators, and (3) the resultant performance or behavior interact with each other (Bandura, 1971, 2023; Brown, 2000; Compeau & Higgins, 1991; Graham, 2022). Humans, as conscious agents, are also then considered to exercise self-regulation (SR) to an extent through their efforts to control their behaviors by assessing their actions. In other words, they can be directed by the goals they set for themselves and they strive to achieve those goals by forming strategies without resorting to any external reinforcers (Bandura, 1971, 1999; Graham, 2022).

Regarding choices, though, people tend to avoid taking action and shy away from fulfilling tasks if they believe they cannot cope with them or they do not have the corresponding mastery. As a result, they end up choosing not to engage in the learning activity. On the other hand, they will be readily inclined to choose to do them if they think that they are capable of dealing with them. Thus, the individual seems to pan out with two expectations, one of which is associated with the belief that the behavior performed will or will not yield the outcome. The other is related to the belief that the individual has the capacity to deal with situations at hand and to carry out the activities that are necessary for the emergence and fulfillment of whatever the outcome is expected to be. Therefore, the concept of *self-efficacy* (SE) alludes to a person's belief in his or her capability and competence to perform behaviors or to carry out certain tasks to reach a goal (Bandura, 1982, 1999). One's belief in his or her self-efficacy may influence how they go about with their thought and emotional processes. Having lower self-efficacy beliefs, which can also be called a lower self-efficacy expectancy (Low SE) or low perceived self-efficacy, might delay actions or impede behaviors. If the opposite is the case, then it may help the individual take the plunge. Therefore, it is clear that people should be sure of their capabilities to set any goals for themselves. In other

words, the higher the level of self-efficacy (High SE), the more sophisticated plans they come up with and the more engaged they can become. Hence, self-efficacy beliefs also act as a determinant of motivation. Since individuals with higher SE levels are likely to become more motivated, they will apply more effort; and this persistence is very likely to lead to personal accomplishments. Additionally, people with strong self-efficacy expectancy are more likely to experience less stress and discouragement due to their high level of motivation. (Bandura, 1989; Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003).

It is argued that four sources of self-efficacy expectancy help develop people's beliefs in their capabilities. *Mastery or performance experiences* denote personal success or failure, which is, hence, thought to be the most influential type of experience on self-efficacy expectancy. The second one refers to observational experiences acquired through observing, modeling, and imitating. They are called *vicarious experiences* and they act as the second most potent experiences on one's beliefs in their capabilities. *Verbal or social persuasion*, as the third source, alludes to the credible and appealing stimuli provided by the environment. Emotional states such as stress, anxiety, and depression, which are associated with mediocre performance, failure, or incompetence make up the fourth and the final source, which is *emotional arousal*. The optimal interaction of these sources brings numerous benefits for individuals such as enhanced performance, better management of negative emotions, high motivation, and as a result, a better chance of achievement (Bandura, 2023; Maddux & Stanley, 1986; Pajares, 2003).

According to Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), humans are then in charge of their cognitive and emotional processes, and they can direct their actions accordingly in an intentional manner to reach their goal(s) based on their own choice(s). Therefore, self-efficacy (SE) is regarded beyond the mere belief that one can simply achieve a goal or surmount an obstacle successfully. Individual agency and self-regulation play a significant role in the emergence and development of SE (Graham, 2022).

### **2.3.2. Language Learning and Self-Efficacy**

It has been found that the capability in language proficiency affects SE beliefs (Genc et al., 2016). Thus, there is a positive correlation between SE beliefs and language proficiency, which tends to conform with Bandura's self-efficacy theory. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight a

detail suggesting that the intensity of SE appears to depend on the culture and community that an L2 learner lives in. For instance; individuals from East Asia and Middle Eastern cultures possess a stronger relationship between their SE levels and language proficiencies when compared with individuals from Western cultures (Wang & Sun, 2020).

In addition to the fact that SE belief can be a strong predictor of L2 achievement, the likelihood of L2 achievement can be enhanced by developing SE belief, which indicates the significant role that SE belief plays in language learning (Chao et al., 2019; Teng et al., 2021; Thompson et al., 2022). For language learners' SE beliefs to grow stronger, language learners must first possess the essential body of knowledge and skills, and thus they can successfully deal with a demanding and desired task by using self-regulatory strategies (Graham, 2022; Sardegna et al., 2018). SE has been observed to increase in correlation with a higher level of English proficiency (Kim & Cha, 2017). Additionally, lower-level SE belief predicts much less persistence. Higher-level SE beliefs increase perseverance along with enjoyment (Genc et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2022) and they encourage language learners to take actions such as speaking to native speakers or participating in class activities and they even take risks in order to attain improvements (Genc et al., 2016; Sardegna et al., 2018). Thus, self-regulation and self-efficacy interact in a reciprocal relationship in L2 learning. That is, higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to enhance self-regulation in the learning process (Su et al., 2018).

### **2.3.3. Autonomous Language Learning Ability**

From a psychological perspective, autonomy is thought to be one of the innate needs to be met and so it naturally exists in the human psyche. Therefore, it does not have to be learned. Thus, it brings about accountability for one's learning to acquire a better commitment to it. This facilitates the emergence of internally regulated motivation by providing more effective and efficient learning (Little & Dam, 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2013). In a similar vein, autonomy seems to have a positive relationship with learner identity. As more autonomy is provided in formal contexts, individuals' identities as learners get stronger (Lai, 2019a; Lamb, 2011). An individual with an autonomous language learning ability or learning autonomy is considered to possess the capability and skills to carry out any language learning task independently (Holec, 1981). That is, an autonomous language learner has the ability to organize, direct, observe, assess, and evaluate his or her learning in the

environment in which he or she exists (Little, 2022). Therefore, autonomy development is a multidimensional process with cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social aspects (O'Leary, 2018), which is why it plays a significant role in L2 learning and L2 achievement (Chan et al., 2002).

#### **2.3.4. Technology Use and Language Learner Autonomy**

Technological resources such as computer or mobile-assisted language learning tools (CALL or MALL), with the help of the Internet recently, immensely assist language learners in getting access to various L2 environments based on their interests, which increases learner autonomy (Hamilton, 2013; Lan 2018; Warschauer & Liaw, 2011). In addition to interests, it is important to also remember that factors of motivation, L2 proficiency, L2 contexts, accessibility to technological tools, and support concerning how technologies are to be used have an important effect on what type of technology is to be chosen by the learner and what the interaction with it is to be like (Lai, 2019b).

The use of smartphone applications by L2 learners is observed to increase learner autonomy together with learners' cognitive abilities, motivation, and confidence (Kaceti & Klímová, 2019). Similarly, L2 learners who use Zoom videoconferencing to chat face-to-face in the target language with their peers about the topics regarding their courses are observed to develop a considerable amount of learner autonomy (Lenkaitis, 2020). The use of technology is found to help language learners become more creative during their language-learning journeys through equipping them with more intriguing, fun, and entertaining alternative ways of learning an L2. This approach also enhances learner-centeredness in formal contexts by providing better motivation skills and getting language learners to execute more autonomy (Ahmadi, 2018).

Technology use can provide a variety of language learning experiences in both formal and informal contexts. Furthermore, the latest technological advancements, their ubiquity, and availability present language learners with various choices to pick from, which would prompt language learners to employ more control over their own learning (Reinders & White, 2016). More familiar and relatively older technological tools such as online dictionaries, films, and videos, for instance, are known to be autonomously used by language learners based on their unique purposes in informal contexts (Trinder, 2016).



The literature then suggests that technology use in formal and informal language learning and teaching contexts prompts learner autonomy to flourish. Moreover, the way the technology is used in L2 classrooms could promote language learners' autonomous technology use in informal L2 contexts, which also accentuates the role of the teacher and in-class activities through autonomous language learning skills (Lai, 2019a).

## **2.4. Literature Review on Techniques**

### **2.4.1. Learning in the Digital Wild**

The concept of *Learning in the Digital Wild* alludes to technology-oriented language learning and teaching that are generally conducted beyond formal L2 learning environments. This type of learning can also be incorporated into classroom contexts with varying degrees. The term *wild* points to the ever-evolving and hard-to-predict nature of technological resources that are not built specifically for learning and teaching purposes. On the other hand, this wild nature can also be tamed in conformity with pedagogical concerns (Sauro & Zourou, 2019). To illustrate, online English language learning platforms such as mobile applications provide resources to support L2 learners and emerge as personal L2 learning grounds where L2 learners can self-regulate by managing their own learning in a stress-free manner. Moreover, these types of natural learning platforms particularly increase the exposure time to L2 through informal engagements, which enhances L2 development. Similarly, regulating or directing one's own learning via online social media networks affords L2 learners the flexibility to engage in activities at any time and for any amount of time that they wish based on their unique paces and likes by increasing the L2 exposure time. The freedom to choose what, when, and how much to study or learn allows L2 learners to solely focus on their specific needs, which makes L2 learning more efficient. (Beaven, 2021; Sockett, 2023).

### **2.4.2. Watching Digital Content in English**

Advancements in technology keep introducing a stack of new opportunities for ELLs to enhance their overall skills in the English language (Reinders & White, 2016; Trinder, 2016). Watching digital content in English including movies, TV shows, and documentaries, can be

regarded as a valuable medium in many respects, especially for particular individuals who learn English. Watching movies makes it possible for ELLs to observe and experience real-life-like situations vicariously in meaningful contexts, which provides them with authentic input (Al Murshidi, 2020). Therefore, watching content in English as a language learning technique turns out to help ELLs improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and results in ELLs benefitting from it to a great extent in proficiency development (Al Murshidi, 2020; Albiladi et al., 2018; Baharum et al., 2022). It especially assists ELLs in improving their accent and fluency (Al Murshidi, 2020; Vadivel et al., 2019). ELLs who rely on *YouTube* to watch and listen to content in English for entertainment purposes get better motivated toward learning the English language. Such technologies also help better cope with the mental and physical stress caused by such an overwhelming task of learning a language. *YouTube*, as the source of an almost limitless number of videos on nearly any topic, can provide ELLs with authentic and real-life contexts, advice and tips to improve themselves through thousands of free video lessons (Styfanyshyn & Kalymon, 2020). Furthermore, the use of YouTube videos in teaching speaking skills to English L2 learners can be more effective than that of the traditional approaches that are performed in the classroom setting. Although the traditional approach is also beneficial in enhancing overall speaking skills and performances in the categories of fluency, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and pronunciation; learners who are taught the speaking skills through YouTube videos show superior progress. The pronunciation and fluency are the ones that improve the most (Saed et al., 2021). Moreover, the visual presentation of the content in videos and movies helps ELLs not only retain challenging vocabulary items longer in their memories but it also affords a deeper understanding of relevant topics (Cutter, 2015; Zhang & Wen 2013). To maximize its uses, the content to watch on the cultural elements in the target language must be proficiency-wise suitable and intriguing so that learners' needs can be met accordingly (Albiladi et al., 2018; Xing, 2011). Additionally, watching movies in English when the caption mode is on results in unintentional vocabulary learning. Any unplanned or unintentional pronunciation improvement, however, has not been spotted for learners watching movies without captions, which is considered to occur due to an insufficient amount of input. It is asserted though that pronunciation benefits can only be acquired if direct attention is given to pronunciation itself with or without captions (Wisniewska & Mora, 2020).

### 2.4.3. Speaking Practice

The ability to converse in many respects from casual, informal talk to certain formal modes of conversation, especially with native speakers with flying colors is considered an indication of high proficiency in the target language. It, however, requires a lot of practice through interaction inside and outside the classroom using the newly learned structures, words, and rules in authentic contexts to be able to achieve this ultimate goal (Jackson & Kaplan, 2001). Successful ELLs pan out to be the ones who are provided with and engage in talks and discussions in classes or situations where they could use the target language intentionally and meaningfully. This fact hints the significance of practicing the target language in the process of language learning (Huang & Naerssen, 1987). Participating in discussions in formal language learning environments is also found to help learners improve their communication skills. Language learners who often get involved in class debates try their best and make solid efforts to express their thoughts and feelings, which assists language learners in enhancing their fluency in the target language (Fauzan, 2016). Similarly, classroom participation is regarded to have the merits of enhancing English language fluency (Elkolli & Atma, 2010). Active participation or frequently taking the floor during classes, however, does not necessarily demonstrate a correlation with language proficiency or development for chatty individuals. The accuracy and intricate nature of utterances produced by learners in talks or class discussions seem to be more useful for gaining fluency. It may be suggested that striving for more error-free and advanced speech prompts a more intensive engagement, which leads to superior gains in fluency (Delaney, 2012).

Technology then enables ELLs to connect and interact with any person in any country around the globe so that they can help each other enhance their overall linguistic skills through developing mutual cultural awareness. The media of *Skype* and *Facebook* are found to be quite beneficial in this regard when they are purposefully used to learn the target language (Schenker & Kraemer, 2017; Thome-Williams, 2016). Online platforms involving *Cambly* and *HelloTalk* let ELLs have authentic online conversations with native speakers from any country in the world when, where, and how much they would love. These online educational resources are found to increase language fluency by prompting higher levels of self-efficacy beliefs (Styfanyshyn & Kalymon, 2020). Similarly, video chats provide individuals who learn English with real-life situations. To illustrate, beginner-level learners of English who interact with native speakers of

English through video chatting have managed to develop the skills of starting and continuing small conversations in English after a five-week experience in video chatting. They have become more confident and comfortable, which results in ELLs developing intrinsic motivation to better communicate with their English-speaking partners (Sevy-Biloon & Chroman, 2019). Even communicating via voice messages on *WhatsApp* works much better for ELLs than the one that is done through text messaging since the learners who are made to communicate through voice messages show better development in verbal interaction. Voice messaging prompts ELLs to become more engaged and motivated when it comes to practicing the target language (Minalla, 2018).

Impromptu and unprepared speaking activities in and out of the classroom may have language learners go through challenging experiences in which they find themselves trying hard to apply their present knowledge of the target language, use physical expressions and gestures to compensate for any insufficiencies through rewording their utterances. Such stimulating speaking practices may also help increase motivation and learners' self-efficacy beliefs when applied paying close attention to learners' proficiency levels (Klinger, 1999).

## **2.5. Literature Review on Grammatical Competence and Mutual Intelligibility**

### **2.5.1 Grammatical Competence**

According to Chomsky (1965), grammar is the intellectually built-in knowledge and understanding that an individual subconsciously possesses. To put it simply, it is what an interlocutor knows unconsciously, not a clear awareness or a conscious grasp of what s/he knows. Anyone with such knowledge of language is regarded as one with grammatical competence. It affords the medium for speakers and hearers to utter and understand an infinite number of thoughts in a limitless spectrum of contexts through syntactic units called *sentences*. Moreover, *performance* per se is argued to be the literal application of this competence in real life. Such an internalized system of linguistic rules equips individuals with the skills not only to recognize the *acceptability* of utterances but also to produce grammatically appropriate sentences. Thus, an individual's grammatical competence can be assessed through speech and/or writing, which are acts of *performance*.

In terms of second language learning, the acquisition of L2 grammar in a context outside of the native environment can occur both in an explicit and an implicit nature. If it is acquired explicitly, learners can only gain the related information and concepts regarding grammar in a conscious manner, which points to explicit grammar competency. This kind of grammar knowledge does not help much in terms of communication skills. If learners are allowed to get regularly exposed to authentic language contexts through digital content including animations and movies, it greatly helps them internalize grammar rules in an unconscious manner. This refers to implicit grammar competency. More internalized knowledge of grammar leads to achievement in L2 communication through better fluency (He, 2013). Therefore, it can be argued that possessing a native-like fluency simply demonstrates the existence of a solid implicit grammar competency.

Consequently, if a language learner is capable of producing acceptable sentences grammar-wise in a fluent way, it can be taken as a piece of evidence for grammatical competence based on Chomsky's (1965) seminal work and He's (2013) research study.

### **2.5.2. Mutual Intelligibility**

Speakers and hearers must have a reciprocal understanding for communication to take place. The precondition of such an understanding is to possess the capacity to recognize utterances, which alludes to *intelligibility*. Only then can meaning be acquired and shared by interlocutors, which refers to *comprehensibility*. The final phase is interpreting the real intent or seeing beyond superficial meaning, which is called *interpretability* (Smith, 1992). Therefore, it does not seem possible to successfully communicate in a target language if there exists no or little mutual intelligibility since comprehensibility and interpretability heavily rely on a sufficient amount of it.

Native-like pronunciation was long considered an essential attribute in order for intelligibility to transpire. Notwithstanding, a plethora of evidence has demonstrated that utterances produced in a foreign accent, even in a thickly accented one, do not hinder intelligibility, and for that matter, comprehensibility at all so long as utterances are recognizable enough (Levis, 2005; Munro & Derwing, 1999). In other words, intelligibility does not even require native-like pronunciation. If speech is recognizable by interlocutors, it simply means that mutual intelligibility is achieved, which leads to comprehensibility and ultimately successful communication.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In today's ever-globalizing world, English is one of the world languages that is mostly desired to be mastered (Drubin & Kellogg, 2012; Middlebury Language Schools, 2023; Newsdle, 2022). A considerable number of people in Turkey start learning English in the second grade in primary schools with a similar tendency (Bayyurt, 2014; Ekus & Babayigit, 2013; Inam, 2009; Kacar et. al, 2016). On the other hand, only a minority of individuals pan out to become highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like fluency and pronunciation. The majority can barely acquire an over-average level of proficiency when it comes to their English communication skills even after years of formal education (Günes & Sarigöz, 2021; Kara et al., 2017). Hence, investigating the experiences of proficient English Language Learners who have attained native-like fluency and pronunciation could provide valuable insights. Such understanding may offer future ELLs more effective and streamlined approaches to mastering English. Therefore, this qualitative research study aims to discover the common affective, attitudinal, and motivational characteristics and shared language learning techniques that highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency possess, develop, and employ during their English language journeys.

A qualitative research study with a case study approach was applied to conduct an in-depth exploration. In this way, a deeper understanding through exploring the perspectives of a small homogeneous group of highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency is achieved. The results have become explanatory concerning what common features and skills highly-accomplished ELLs possess and what similar experiences they share during their English language learning journeys.

Within this research study, the concept of native-likeness refers to the existence of an unconscious systematic knowledge of L2 linguistic rules in addition to the capability of (1) proper and accurate pronunciation and (2) correct lexical and syntactical stress placement in conformity with standard English. It is of great importance to remember that English is not a language that is exclusively spoken only in native English-speaking communities and contexts. English, as a global language, is also widely used for intercultural communication in multicultural contexts for a variety

of purposes throughout the world. Therefore, an internalized system of L2 grammar is considered necessary for native-like fluency not only to be able to produce grammatically acceptable phrases and sentences at a natural speech speed but also to recognize the grammatical appropriateness of utterances produced by others. Intelligibility, the quality to be able to be understood by others, is regarded as the primary precondition to sound native-like. Native-likeness, however, is believed to require more than intelligibility such as accurate pronunciation of unfamiliar sounds in English with a solid capability of correct stress placement. As a result, an ELL with native-like fluency and pronunciation is considered as an individual who can effectively and successfully achieve communication both in mono- and multicultural settings. (Chomsky, 1965; He, 2013; Levis, 2005; Munro & Derwing, 1999; Wang & Jenkins, 2016).

### **3.1. Design of the Study**

This research study employed a data collection procedure through a semi-structured interview technique that provide the interviewer with more autonomy and a keener focus to uncover extra vital perspectives on the pertinent topic (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). The study design is aimed at exploring the distinctive characteristics, habits, and perspectives of individuals who attain native-like fluency and pronunciation in the early stages of their English language learning journeys. Kvale's (2012) *Doing Interviews* was of great source of how to prepare and conduct semi-structured interviews. Several semi-structured interviews provided in Kvale's (2012) *Doing Interviews* were carefully examined beforehand in order to become more familiar with the technique. Furthermore, several authentic interviews were digitally observed to get a better idea concerning how to effectively and efficiently manage an interview. As importantly, interviewing is a professional and formal conversation that is more than simply exchanging ideas. Hence, it also carries moral and ethical issues since the interview itself is an interaction constructed and determined by only one side, which is the interviewer. In addition to it, interviews are carried out to obtain information about people's private lives and experiences. Therefore, the ethical guidelines established by Kvale (2012) in a detailed manner in *Doing Interviews* were taken into account to act in a more ethical, fair, and moral way. The purpose of the study, consequences of the interview, participants' consent, confidentiality, and protection of the data were thus the significant issues that

were carefully taken into consideration in this particular study. In accordance with what Kvale (2012) proposed, the interview questions were constructed in a simple, brief, and plain manner for the specific purpose of prompting the participants to narrate their English language learning journeys in a sincere manner. Consultation on the set of interview questions was sought from a researcher and a linguistic professor in the field. Moreover, the *introductory* questions referred more to concrete matters. A series of *follow-up* questions were preferred to be more direct to extend the participants' answers. To get more details, *probing* and *specifying* questions became of great assistance. In addition, *interpreting* questions were used for clarification and confirmation. Finally, Kvale (2012) also offered valuable insights regarding the ways of recording the interviews and taking down notes during interviews in addition to the setting in which the interview takes place.

### **3.2. Research Site**

The undergraduate and graduate programs of major academic departments where English is embraced as the medium of instruction were chosen as the research site for this research study. These programs and departments randomly include Computer Engineering, English Language Teaching, and Sociology departments. All the purposefully selected participants, whether they be undergraduate or graduate students, have been compelled to use the English language in all academic settings that they have ever been to as a sole communication tool to create, discuss, and exchange ideas on advanced and complicated matters. The shared purposeful criteria for the participants is the fact that they eventually managed to master the English language successfully. Thus, the selected participants were asked fundamental questions about their English language learning experiences during the initial phases of their learning process. In addition, the elements that inspired these learners' virtually kindled love towards English is scientifically investigated. Therefore, the goal of this study is to reveal the perceptions, perspectives, and actions of these highly-accomplished ELLs during their English language learning journeys to internalize the process stages that bring them the ultimate success unlike other ELLs.



### **3.3. Sampling selection**

In this research study, adult participants between the ages of 20-45 were selected to represent the group of individuals who started learning English as an L2. Their shared linguistic quality is that all of them systematically ended up becoming ELLs with native-like fluency and pronunciation. The purposive sampling approach was employed for the initial determination of the candidates to reach the most pertinent participants with recorded high proficiency levels through their language output. Additionally, purposive sampling is more beneficial within the context of this study since an interview-based research study can thoroughly be applied to a limited number of participants. Therefore, determining who becomes research participants based on specific criteria serves to obtain relevant information and a better intuitive understanding (Knott et al., 2022).

For this purpose, the candidates who either have been studying at a college/university program in which the English language is the medium of instruction or the candidates who have graduated from such a university program were considered eligible for this particular study. This purposive approach aimed to ensure the selection of actual participants with native-like pronunciation and fluency. Hence, the participants with a comparable academic background and context along with similar experiences for mastering the English language at a consistent duration of time are purposefully selected.

### **3.4. Research Participants**

First, ten candidates were determined as possible participants with native-like fluency and pronunciation based on the participants' linguistic observable performance through the observations of a linguistics professor along with the recommendations conferred by the professors of each candidate at their respective departments in the university. The initial interview questions that had been primarily designed for the research study were also used as a screening test to be able to ensure that all the participants had the essentially shared native-like fluency and pronunciation as their linguistic output data. Thus, all ten candidates fully participated in the interviews.

With the initial participant selection process, the first four-minute section of each candidate's recorded interview was carefully analyzed to find out what each candidate's speech

rate was and whether their speech rates were in the same range as an average native English speaker's. This variable determined whether all of the pre-selected candidates were indeed possess native-like fluency for their target language. The average speech rate of a typical native American English speaker is regarded as between 120 words per minute (wpm) and 150 wpm for conversations (Barnard, 2022). The total number of words in the first four-minute recorded speech of each participant was counted manually and then divided by the four minutes long speech segments. The first four-minute part of each candidate's recording was listened to for several times to calculate the speech rate.

The eligible candidates for fluency were later scrutinized in terms of their native-like pronunciation skills. There is not as direct and easy way of evaluating one's pronunciation skills as a wpm count, which was done for fluency above. For that matter, the literature was reviewed to find out about the challenges and difficulties that Turkish learners of English generally go through regarding the pronunciation of English vowels, diphthongs, and consonants. It has been seen that Turkish ELLs have difficulty pronouncing the consonants /w/, /θ/, /ð/, and /ŋ/, which do not exist in the Turkish sound system. For instance, most Turkish ELLs confuse the consonants /w/ and /v/ with one another. Moreover, they tend to incorrectly articulate the *th* sound as /t/ instead of /θ/. Similarly, they substitute /d/ for the *th* sound /ð/. Another frequently mispronounced English consonant is the /ŋ/ sound. Turkish ELLs seem to substitute /ng/ or /nk/ for it (Ercan, 2018). Seven vowel sounds and diphthongs, which are /æ/, /ou/, /ɑ/, /ə/, /ʊ/, /u:/, and /ɔ:/, are also as troublesome alike with the consonants above (Topal & Altay, 2022).

Furthermore, one of the candidates is originally from Iran and thus her native language is Persian. When the literature was reviewed for the pronunciation difficulties of Iranian ELLs, it was seen that learners whose mother tongue is Persian also have problems while pronouncing the same consonants of /w/, /θ/, /ð/, and /ŋ/ as Turkish learners do since the relevant sounds do not exist in Persian either. Regarding English vowels and diphthongs, Iranian learners had difficulties in pronouncing the sounds /ə/, /æ/, and /aʊ/ correctly (Nosratinia & Zaker, 2014; Seddighi, 2012). As a result, the focus was placed on unfamiliar English vowels and consonants in the Turkish and Persian languages, and the diphthongs in English in order to obtain a reliable picture concerning candidates' pronunciation skills. One hundred words from each candidate's recording, which contained unfamiliar English sounds, were determined and extracted to be checked for

pronunciation accuracy. These words were carefully examined several times to ensure that they were articulated correctly.

Regarding stress, candidates' utterances were checked for the stress pattern accuracy in English at both lexical and syntactic levels. At the lexical level, the stress can be on (1) the first or primary syllable, (2) the second syllable in two or more syllabled words, and (3) the third syllable in polysyllabic words. Moreover, there are syllables in polysyllabic words that are weakly stressed (Demirezen, 2009). Therefore, not only the proper pronunciation of sounds but also the correct placement of stress in words must be acquired and mastered in order for an ELL to sound similar to a native speaker of English. Hence, the candidates' knowledge and capability of putting stress on the correct syllables in the related words were also carefully examined. The same one hundred words that had been determined earlier for pronunciation were also checked for correct and proper use of word stress.

It is indeed more complicated to learn and master the English sentence stress for Turkish and Iranian ELLs since both Turkish and Persian are syllable-timed languages unlike English, which is a stress-timed language (Aghai & Sayer, 2016; Demirezen, 2009; Kucukoglu, 2012). In a syllable-timed language, all the syllables in the words that constitute a sentence are uttered at the same amount of time. In English, only the stressed syllables in words take up a similar amount of time, which eventually determines the length of a sentence. This difference emerges as an important aspect to be acquired in order for Turkish and Iranian ELLs to sound more like native speakers of English. Furthermore, the mobility of stress in English sentences has the power to change the meaning of a sentence to a great extent, which also arises as a challenge for ELLs.

Moreover, the stress can be put on any word in an English sentence to give the intended meaning. If the stress is placed on a different word in the same sentence, which is also possible in English, the whole intention during the communication process or even the entire meaning can change dramatically. Thus, mastering sentence stress in English is extremely vital to be able to understand the intention of interlocutors and the true nature of the speech or conversation in addition to being able to make proper use of this mobility of stress to be understood correctly. So, the capability of uttering stress within a sentence is an essential skill to be acquired to sound like a native speaker of English (Demirezen, 2009; Kucukoglu, 2012).

The participants were selected based on (1) the candidates' speech rates, (2) the candidates' capabilities concerning the pronunciation of unfamiliar English sounds, and (3) the accuracy rate of the stress placement into English words and sentences. Out of ten candidates, only six of them managed to come up with an average speech rate that was between 120 wpm and 150 wpm as shown in Table 3.1. Hence, the four candidates were found to be disqualified since they failed to meet the speech rate, which was determined as an important criterion for fluency in this study. In addition, sentences and phrases each participant uttered in the determined section of their recordings were confirmed for grammatical competence. Minor mistakes and errors such as misuse or omission of prepositions in addition to incorrect conjugations of verbs were spotted per occasion. They, however, did not impede the communication, interaction, or efficient and effective use of the language during the interview, and this type of daily and minor language errors are part of native speakers regardless of the first language in question (Jones, 2019; Kucera, 2020). Moreover, all candidates were comfortably capable of forming many compound and complex sentences in their speeches with a high percentage of grammatical accuracy even though four of them failed to speak at a native-like speed. So, this contradiction can be a subject matter of a future study yet used as a participant elimination method for this specific study.

The same six candidates were also observed to be very well aware of the distinctive sounds in English and have the necessary awareness, knowledge, and capability to be able to pronounce phrases which are mutually intelligible. In terms of word and sentence stress, they performed successfully by placing the stress on correct syllables in words and correct words in sentences based on the function and place of the stress. Consequently, the six individuals with similar linguistic input were selected as participants, and they were regarded as possessing native-like fluency and pronunciation after the pre-tests were completed.

#### **3.4.1. Borat**

Borat holds a doctorate in Sociology, and he is also a graduate of the English Language Teaching program in the Department of Foreign Language Education (FLE). The medium of instruction was English in both programs. He was born and raised in Turkey, and Turkish is his native language. He first started learning English as L2 in the sixth grade within a public secondary school at the age of twelve. Borat is a fluent English language speaker with a 143 wpm on average.

He is capable of forming compound and complex sentences on advanced topics with insignificant grammatical mistakes. His capability to pronounce the English sounds that are unfamiliar in his native language, Turkish, was outstanding. The natural use of word and sentence stress was also error free and thereby native-like.

#### **3.4.2. Jersey**

Jersey is a graduate student in Computer Engineering. She is now doing her master's degree in the same department. The medium of instruction is English in both degrees. She was born and raised in Turkey. Turkish is her native language. Jersey started learning English as L2 in the fourth grade within a public primary school at the age of ten. She had, however, already been exposed to English before she began learning it in school. Her elder sister always engaged in activities such as watching videos, listening to music, and playing computer games in English at home. Therefore, it should be stated that Jersey's first exposure to English took place in two separate ways, one of which took place informally at home through videos, songs, and computer games through accompanying her elder sister. The other is when she got acquainted herself with it in a formal context through English classes in the fourth grade in primary school. Jersey is a fluent English language speaker with a 144 wpm on average. She could comfortably form compound and complex sentences on advanced matters with very few grammatical mistakes. She can pronounce all English sounds outstandingly. Additionally, she can skillfully use word and sentence stress in English with a native-like linguistic accuracy.

#### **3.4.3. Kurt**

Kurt is an undergraduate student in Computer Engineering. The medium of instruction in this academic program is English. He was born and raised in Turkey. His native language is Turkish. Kurt first got acquainted with the English language in the third grade of a public primary school at about the age of ten. Kurt is a fluent English language speaker with a 147 wpm. He could come up with highly complex sentences with high grammatical accuracy on both academic and informal topics. He can pronounce distinctive English sounds with flying colors. Moreover, he can masterfully manipulate the stress on both lexical and syntactic levels.

#### **3.4.4. Goldie**

Goldie is an undergraduate student in the English Language teaching program. The medium of instruction is English. She was born in Iran. Her native language is Persian. She lived there until the end of her secondary school education. She and her family later moved to Turkey. She first started learning English as an L2 in a public primary school in Iran. Goldie is a fluent English speaker with a 124 wpm. She is fully capable of forming compound and complex sentences on nearly any topic with rare insignificant grammatical mistakes. She is quite successful in pronouncing challenging English sounds that are unfamiliar in the Persian language. Furthermore, she is also very familiar with word and sentence stress in English on a metalinguistic level.

#### **3.4.5. Hank**

Hank has just completed his studies, and he graduated from the English Language Teaching program. The medium of instruction in the program was English. He applied to the Ministry of Education to be assigned as a full-time English teacher in a public school. He was born and raised in Turkey. His native language is Turkish. He first started learning English in the fourth grade within a public primary school. Hank is a fluent English language speaker with a 126 wpm. He has an advanced level of grammatical competence, which lets him comfortably come up with compound and complex sentences in his speech on almost any subject or topic. He does not have any difficulties with the pronunciation of unfamiliar English sounds. In addition, he is very adept at the correct placement of stress in English words and sentences in accordance with what he intends to mean.

#### **3.4.6. Mary**

Mary graduated from the English Language Teaching program. She is now doing her master's degree in the same program. The medium of instruction is English in both. She works as an English teacher at a reputable private school. She was born and raised in Turkey. Her native language is Turkish. She first got acquainted with English at home thanks to her mother before school. She formally started learning English as an L2 in second grade within a public primary school at the age of nine. Mary is a fluent English language speaker with a 121 wpm. She is quite

capable of forming compound and complex sentences in her speech with high grammatical competence. She is perfectly skillful at pronouncing unfamiliar English sounds with native-like accuracy. Additionally, she is skilled at manipulating the stress on both lexical and syntactic levels.

**Table 3.1**

*Profile of Participants*

	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Average Wpm</b>	<b>Native Language</b>	<b>Starting Age for Learning English</b>	<b>Education Level</b>
1.	Borat	143	Turkish	12 (Secondary School)	Doctorate in Sociology
2.	Jersey	144	Turkish	10 (Primary School)	M.Sc. Student in Computer Engineering
3.	Kurt	147	Turkish	10 (Primary School)	Undergraduate Student in Computer Engineering
4.	Goldie	124	Persian	9-10 (Primary School)	Undergraduate Student in English Language Teaching
5.	Hank	126	Turkish	10 (Primary School)	Majored in English Language Teaching
6.	Mary	121	Turkish	9-10 (Primary School)	M.A. Student in English Language Teaching

### **3.5. Research Instruments**

#### **3.5.1. Interviews with Participants**

One-to-one interviews are powerful tools in order to achieve a deeper understanding of individuals' perspectives, perceptions, lives, and experiences on certain phenomena. Such a challenge of subjectivity though makes it a complex process. Therefore, in-depth qualitative interviews must be as flexible as possible with initial open-ended questions until more focused interaction on concrete matters is succeeded. In this way, more abstract follow-up questions can be followed in the course of the interview to bring out the thematic relationships (Knott et al., 2022; Langley & Meziani, 2020). For these thematic relationships to emerge, open-ended questions are directed to the participants to accumulate the first set of data within the context of this particular research study. Three of the interviews were held in places where participants felt more comfortable and secure such as in a classroom in the department and outside in a garden with no other people present. These interviews were recorded on a smartphone. The other three interviews were conducted online through Zoom Meetings at participants' discretion. They were recorded via Zoom's Record feature. All the recordings were stored on a computer as digital sound files. The duration of each interview differed depending on how much the participants wished to share, what aspects they wanted to focus on, and from what angles they wished to approach certain matters that varied based on their unique personal characteristics and experiences. Notwithstanding, it could be said that the interviews took between 40 mins and 80 mins.

### **3.6. Research Protocol**

The following section gives information about the research protocol including both the data gathering, and data analysis processes:

#### **3.6.1. Inviting Participants to the Research Study**

Participants were invited to participate in this research study. They were given the informed and voluntary consent forms (Appendix 3 and 4). They were provided with an overview of the study and its purpose. The whole process and how it would take place were explained to the



participants through following the code of ethics. Participants' questions were meticulously answered. All data and identities were kept confidential. Each participant was interviewed in separate meetings.

### **3.6.2. Data Collection**

The data collection was conveyed through both face-to-face and online Zoom meetings. The participants' recorded interviews were securely stored as digital sound files, and each participant was given a pseudonym. Each participant was interviewed one by one to accumulate as much information as possible to gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions, perspectives, and experiences concerning their English language learning journeys:

- The participants' unique feelings when they first started learning English,
- The participants' motives to continue learning the L2,
- The initial abilities and beliefs that the participants voluntarily began to cultivate,
- The participants' first attitudes and the techniques that they autonomously tended to develop.

### **3.6.3. Sources of Data**

The participants in this research study were asked one set of interview questions (Please see Appendix 1). The interview questions explored the common characteristics that the participants with native-like fluency and pronunciation shared in terms of how they felt and reacted, what type(s) of motivation they developed, and the early language learning techniques that they invented or resorted to during their English language learning journeys. The participants not only narrated their journeys but also reflected on their past experiences. Therefore, open-ended questions together with follow-up questions had them ponder certain occurrences or instances. In this way, they had the potential of affording significant clues regarding how they actually started their journeys that eventually led them to becoming such successful ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency. The coding system brought out a systematic array of data according to categories that were detected and labeled in participants' responses by taking the interview questions as a guide. All the themes were coded based on the participants' responses and the common frequency of the themes that appeared in the characteristics that they revealed in their responses by using direct

quotes in order to keep the genuineness of participants' statements. In the next section of Analysis of the Findings, each theme and its codes will be stated, and direct quotes from the participants will be cited to back up the logic that unravels all the categories.

#### **3.6.4. Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed based on both the inductive and the deductive data analysis approaches. The participants' comments and remarks that were found to be relevant and used in the analysis have all been shared in the Findings chapter in order to put forth a more reliable pattern and avoid any possible inconsistencies.

The *Deductive Approach* is used to sort out the data and to resolve it into categories that are determined based on the existing knowledge and theories in the literature (Bingham, 2023). Hence, two main categories/themes and their four subcategories/codes deductively emerged once the interviews and the respective literature review were done.

On the other hand, the *Inductive Approach* is not based on any predetermined theories or established propositions in the literature, unlike the deductive method. Themes and codes are discovered, identified, and labeled by using the coding methods called *open/initial coding*, *axial coding*, and *selective coding*. In other words, the extract meaning from the raw data is derived and converted into linguistic semantic codes, which eventually leads to themes. During the whole inductive process, everything including the data, possible codes, and themes was meticulously compared and revised in order to condense a substantially large amount of data into the most meaningful semantic linguistic unit via the *Constant Comparative Method of Analysis*. Thus, the raw data obtained from the participants were accordingly analyzed via *open*, *axial*, and *selective coding* and *constant comparative method of analysis*, which eventually led to four common characteristics shared by all the participants.

Furthermore, memoing, a course of recording and note-taking during the whole process, was also resorted as to avoid missing significant aspects in every phase of the data collection phases and analysis. Therefore, memoing provided a growing but ever-changing narrative of the data, which panned out to be a useful tool for extracting codes and themes and reaching solid interpretations (Bingham, 2023). Since the whole analysis involves a thorough sorting, organizing, identifying, classifying, and labeling process, a computer program called *MAXQDA* was used.

In addition, the following procedure was conducted based on the propositions of Gay et al. (2012) and Negrin et al. (2022) in order to guarantee the reliability and credibility of the study and ensure a trustworthy interpretation: (1) The data were made to be solely based on the observations and participants' statements. (2) The recordings containing the statements were cross-checked (3) The recordings were done either face-to-face or online at the participants' discretion to make them feel as comfortable and safe as possible so that they could provide more candid and valuable information to reflect on their perspectives by openly revealing information concerning their experiences. (4) The purpose of the study was thoroughly explained to the participants for ensuring the best possible group of participants. (5) The participants were interested in the study itself. They were also excited to find out about what actually made them such highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency. Therefore, they became motivated to volunteer for the study with the pure intention of sharing valuable insights.

Both the participant and research bias possibilities are eliminated. In terms of participant bias, participants might tend to act in accordance with the researcher due to reasons such as to please the researcher or simply because they feel tired. In order to reduce such a bias, a semi-structured interview was designed with open-ended questions frequently followed by follow-up inquiries. Secondly, it is always possible within the nature of any interview that participants may wish to appear or sound more sophisticated or might be after being liked and accepted, so they may provide not-so-reliable information. Therefore, inclusive language was adopted during the whole interview process to make them feel that they were accepted whatever their answers were. Hence, the questions were carefully verbalized, and occasionally indirect questions were preferred to avoid imparting a negative vibe. It was also emphasized that it was not a test at all and what mattered was their feelings and thoughts. Regarding researcher bias, a researcher might find himself or herself trying to prove his or her point and thus may tend to interpret the data to back up his or her arguments. In order to avoid such a bias, the data together with codes and themes were scrutinized several times, and multiple respective reevaluations were made to eliminate any biases possibly hailing from the researcher. Secondly, interview questions might direct or lead the participants to the responses the researcher wishes to hear or acquire. Therefore, the interview questions were designed in a simple and plain manner without any words or phrases with the potential of a favorable direction or lead (Shah, 2019).

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter represents the participants' abilities, beliefs, emotions, motives, and the techniques that they utilized during their English language learning journeys. The data in this research study reflect the initial experiences of the participants with native-like fluency and pronunciation. Upon careful examination, eight common characteristics that all the participants shared emerged as subcategories or sub-codes that were ordered under the four main themes as seen in Table 4.1. Moreover, each shared characteristic was accordingly encoded as shown below in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.1**

#### *Themes and Codes*

Themes	Abilities and Beliefs	Emotions	Motivation Types	Techniques
Codes	Autonomous Learning Ability	Enjoyment	Instrumental Motivation	L2 Video Input
	Self-Efficacy	Volitional Effort	Internally Regulated Extrinsic Motivation	Speaking Practice

The purpose of this research study is to explore the experiences of the individuals who eventually ended up with native-like fluency and pronunciation. Discovering what they did so differently and uniquely during their English learning process and then ultimately achieved becoming such advanced ELLs with native-like fluency and pronunciation was the key for the study. To accomplish this, carefully designed interview questions were asked to the participants for eliciting information concerning their English language learning experiences. Each participant was given a pseudonym. All the participants with their native-like fluency and pronunciation in English were either still studying a program in which English was the medium of instruction or completed

such a program. Direct quotes and citations from participants compose the raw data in this research study. It was transcribed and categorized by using the open/initial, axial, selective coding methods along with the constant comparative method of analysis to demonstrate the thematic relationships effectively. The coding system is illustrated as follows in Table 4.2.:

**Table 4.2**

*Classification of Coding*

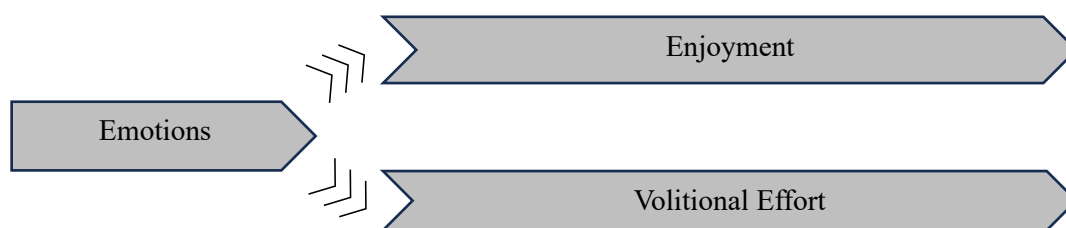
Classification of Coding	Subcoding	
Abilities and Beliefs	Autonomous Learning Ability	AB-AL
	Self-Efficacy	AB-SE
Emotions	Enjoyment	E-En
	Volitional Effort	E-VE
Motivation Types	Instrumental Motivation	Mo-ISM
	Internally Regulated Extrinsic Motivation	Mo-IREM
Techniques	L2 Video Input	T-VI
	Speaking Practice	T-SP

## 4.1. Analysis of the Findings

### 4.1.1. Data Analysis on Emotions

**Figure 4.1**

*Data Analysis on Emotions*



According to this research study, the concept of *emotion* hints at the feelings, approaches, ways of thinking, and attitudes that the participants develop during their English learning process. When the participants, who are highly proficient language learners with native-like pronunciation and fluency, were asked about how they felt at the beginning of and along their English language

learning journeys, the two recurring shared subcategories of *enjoyment* and *Volitional Effort* related to the main category of *emotion* emerged in all participants as shown in Figure 4.1.

*Enjoyment* refers to the joy and pleasure that the participants took in the English learning process even though they had to confront and deal with the challenges in the meantime. It also includes somewhat of a self-discovery journey since the participants' perceptions and awareness regarding what they liked to do while learning English and why they cared to do them were observed. *Volitional Effort* alludes to the efforts they voluntarily made and their dedication to keeping those efforts alive. It is significant to note that these two subcategories keep feeding one another positively in a mutual manner as the joy received from doing a certain action or performing it in a particular way would definitely contribute to the willingness for effort and exertion. This approach makes it indeed more tolerable by increasing the volitional allocation of time dedicated to the relevant activity or performance. In other words, *enjoyment* and *volitional effort* emerged to be correlational subcategories under the main category of *emotions*.

#### **4.1.1.1. Findings on Enjoyment**

All of the participants, including the ones who had developed negative attitudes at the beginning of their English language learning journeys, eventually came up developing positive attitudes and emotions towards learning English. *Enjoyment*, as a positive emotion, appeared as a subcategory when the raw data was examined, which is represented by the code of E-En. The capital letter E stands for the main category of *emotions*, and the subsequent letters E and n are for the subcategory *enjoyment*. The shared particular remarks and specific responses given by the participants indicated the joy, delight, and pleasure they took during their English learning processes usually after they had just obtained sufficient competence in English. This indeed cultivated a certain amount of self-confidence in them concerning their language skills and capabilities. It was also observed that any psychological or material support provided by the parents and teachers in addition to their attitudes during the whole learning process have helped four of the six participants. With this affective support, they relatively felt more secure, which bears great significance in terms of developing and retaining the joy and delight they felt. The following are the direct quotes from the participants' interviews conducted in English that signify the emergence of *enjoyment* during their English language learning process:

“I was just writing the English versions in writing next to them. I was solving the problems. And I **enjoyed that process** because it was just like playing a game.” E-En

“It was **really enjoyable** for me because ... I was now feeling safe. I knew the words. ... Now they were something, they meant something.” E-En

“English was always so **exciting** and **fascinating**.” E-En

“**No one was bored**. We were **all having fun**.” E-En

“I met one of my favorite teachers till this day, Selcuk Hoca, I still remember his name. That guy taught me **how to learn English while enjoying it**. ... He let us watch movies through our smart boards, like English movies.” E-En

“It was **feeling very, really good** because I never had the chance to talk English with other people.” E-En

“I **love to watch the Euronews** when I was a child.” E-En

“I **really enjoyed** the process.” E-En

It is understood from the above quotes that the participants took joy in getting involved in both in-class and out-of-class tasks and activities during their learning process. Additionally, they progressively developed a personal taste for specific tasks and activities that they voluntarily preferred getting engaged in through a self-discovery process. This signifies that they grew to become more autonomous ELLs. For instance, Kurt developed a fondness for playing PC games and watching TV shows in English while Participant Hank went for engaging in reading and watching the news instead. Therefore, their gradual transformation into more confident and competent language learners as they improved their English language skills prompted them to believe in their own capabilities as well. The mutual relationship between the subcategories or codes was quite apparent as participants' higher self-efficacy expectancy beliefs contributed to the

emergence of self-determination capabilities such as engaging in more activities in informal settings. The higher levels of these two codes in turn immensely contributed to the increase of the joy taken in the English language learning process. To put it differently, the above quotes, therefore, clearly indicate that the level of enjoyment taken during the learning process increased as the participants' self-determination abilities and self-efficacy beliefs enhanced, which are determined as the codes for the theme of *abilities and beliefs*.

#### 4.1.1.2. Findings on Volitional Effort

The second subcategory of *emotions* is *volitional effort*, which is represented as E-VE in this research study. By the same token, the theme of *emotions* is designated by the letter E while VE stands for *volitional effort*. The second common emotion exhibited by all the participants was found to be their dedication and commitment to learning and improving their English in both formal and informal contexts. It is also clear from the participants' remarks that the two subcategories *enjoyment* and *volitional effort* usually display a tendency to go hand in hand during participants' learning process since enjoyment amplifies endurance and tolerance, especially in the face of more challenging situations.

Below are the quotes that indicate the perseverance that they exhibited during their English language journeys:

“All I was asked to do was read and write and do the grammar, memorize the vocabulary and you don't have to have conversations in English, whatever. **But still, I wanted to learn in every way I could, and I did it.**” E-VE

“**I prepared for the university exams**, then I managed to enter a university.” E-VE

“**I watch movies at least every two days. ... I always talk English with my friends. ... I always Google ...**” E-VE

“My family always said to me, like, don't play all these games, or don't watch all those movies. ... **but I still did play them and watched them anyways.**” E-VE



At the time I was playing a game called GTA San Andreas. ... You **have to play it nonstop** for a few weeks to finish it. ... So, I **played it again, again, and again** while **watching all the cut scenes** and **trying to understand** what all the characters are saying, what is happening.” E-VE

“I really liked English. And I **was studying for it**. And I really liked getting high grades from English as well.” E-VE

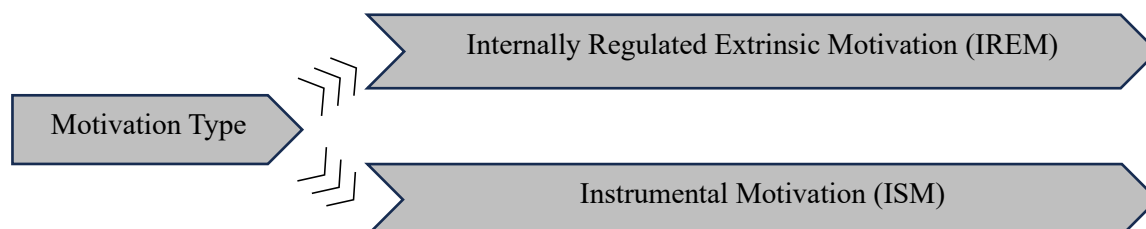
“I just **almost took no breaks from these courses**, these practical courses of such nature ... **from that point on until the end of my high school years**.” E-VE

As it is clear from their direct quotes, the participants kept making efforts during their English language learning processes in both formal and informal contexts even if there emerged various types of difficulties, challenges, or obstacles depending on their subjective lives. They kept up hard work engaging in in-class tasks or extracurricular activities to their liking and never took their eyes off the ball. In other words, the participants developed a solid tenacity, whether they were formal tasks of tests or informal activities such as watching movies to achieve success in learning English. As already stated earlier, higher levels of joy have prompted enthusiasm in participants for more volitional hard work making the demanding language learning process more tolerable and manageable. Therefore, an apparent correlation has emerged between *enjoyment* and *volitional effort*, which should be regarded as an important correlation.

#### 4.1.2. Data Analysis on Motivation Type

**Figure 4.2**

*Data Analysis on Motivation Type*



In this research study, the conceptual theme of *motivation type* hints at the kind of impetus regarding why learners act or perform in a certain way(s). Since motivation is also a subject area that has been investigated and studied for decades by many scholars, there exist various approaches and theoretical models to what motivation is and in what ways it influences people's learning in general. In this research study, the ones that have been considered the most relatable to English language learning and acquisition were adopted as a guide. The types of motivation that have correspondingly been embraced and determined as codes in this research study are the *instrumental motivation* and *integrative motivation* of the *Socio-Educational Model* (SEM), and the *intrinsic* and *extrinsic motivation* of the *Self Determination Theory* (SDT). These include the roles of teachers and parents as authority figures with respect to learner's motivational development.

Even though all the motivation types mentioned above were more or less exhibited in the raw data, only two of them were found to be common to all the participants. They are internally regulated extrinsic motivation of the SDT and instrumental motivation of the SEM. Although they belong to separate models, the two concepts, are considered to be very close in meaning to one another, and as a result, it is often times hard to distinguish between them. Nonetheless, there is one noteworthy nuance that can help differentiate them, which is related to the existence or lack of *internal regulation*. Therefore, in this research study, instrumental motivation alludes to any rational and functional reason for learning the English language such as getting higher grades on tests, which would provide an advantage or benefit. Learning English is thus considered as an instrumental goal to be acquired for a varying benefit that is determined by the learner. It is crucial to note that the ultimate goal, as being a reward for instance, is desired for their practical benefit, but not fully inherent for dynamics such as feelings for satisfaction, or fun, which could then be regarded as the only piece of a variable. Internally regulated extrinsic motivation refers to the internal regulation of extrinsic motivation, which means that learning English functions as a subordinate action and performance to be able to reach the ultimate goal. This goal is desired for inherent reasons such as a craving for playing a game and joy taken out of it, which works, in actuality, as an external factor for learning English. To be brief, IREM envelops inherent motives as opposed to ISM which centers more on pragmatic reasons. Both, however, act as external determiners for English language learning and they may often overlap and coexist in varying multiple instances. Therefore, the above distinguishing quality, may not be sufficient to clearly lay

out this distinction in numerous varying instances. This is the rationale as to why the two motivational concepts of two important theoretical models were taken into consideration together during the raw data analysis.

#### 4.1.2.1. Findings on IREM and ISM

The participants were asked what motivated them to continue learning English. IREM and ISM emerged as the codes or subcategories of the main category *motivation*, which are represented by the codes Mo-IREM and Mo-ISM. Mo stands for motivation while IREM for *internally regulated extrinsic motivation*. In a similar vein, ISM is used for *instrumental motivation* in this research study. Participants' responses reflected not only the internal control that they developed to realize the end goal, which was not learning English. It is rather a successfully engaging activity through the use of English to have fun or satisfaction. Along with these pragmatic reasons to obtain, it becomes a very desired goal by making use of English. Below are the direct quotes from the participants that indicate IREM and ISM during their English language learning journeys:

“I was trying to speak English. I was trying to say things in English to my classmates. And they did the same. And, you know, having enough of it was one of the problems because once it **turned into a game for me** that's something that made sense that I felt confident about playing, **I wanted to play that more.**” Mo-IREM

“I also enjoyed the experience of **dominating the class.** ... When I felt that, I was at a certain level of proficiency, and I was, kind of, I got the upper hand in the class against my classmates. **I really enjoyed that feeling.**” Mo-IREM

“As the years go by, probably because of **my passion for YouTube** because I, to be honest, spent a lot of time in high school watching YouTube videos on YouTubers. There were a lot of British YouTubers at that time, at that time of YouTube. **They were really popular.** And sometimes it was kind of hard to understand what they were talking about, so maybe that also kind of made me go and motivated me because **I wanted to understand what they were talking about.** Because at the end of the day, a lot of their viewers were from the UK, and the USA, so they were native speakers. And **I didn't**

want to feel left out, and I wanted to understand everything, every joke, every aspect of their video.” Mo-IREM

“I played it [GTA, PC game] again, again, and again. ... While playing this game, I picked some more along the way, and I was a bit better at English thanks to this game.” Mo-IREM

“I really wanted to understand ... without trying to catch up with the subtitles. I really didn’t want to read all that ... I just wanted to watch and understand what was happening. It motivated me at the time.” Mo-IREM

“In my childhood, I wondered the other cultures, other countries, other countries’ policies, other countries’ events.” Mo-IREM

“I wanted to learn it [English] because I thought it was important because my mom said so.” Mo-IREM

“I really liked English. And I was studying for it. and I really liked getting high grades from English as well.” Mo-ISM

“When I first came here [Turkey], I just needed a language to communicate with others.” Mo-ISM

“English is the universal language. We all know that and wherever we go, we need that language, like in TikTok, in other countries where we want to travel, when we want to access to, like, sources or knowledge which I need. I mean we need English. So, it was my motivation. I needed it. So, I learned it.” Mo-ISM

“I thought that, in my childhood, English is a key to learn, to create relations with the whole world, to understand the videos, ... to read the books, ... to understand the world, other parts of the world.” Mo-ISM

“Then as I was growing up, I figured it out for myself that speaking English has actually important merits when you live in Turkey.” **Mo-ISM**

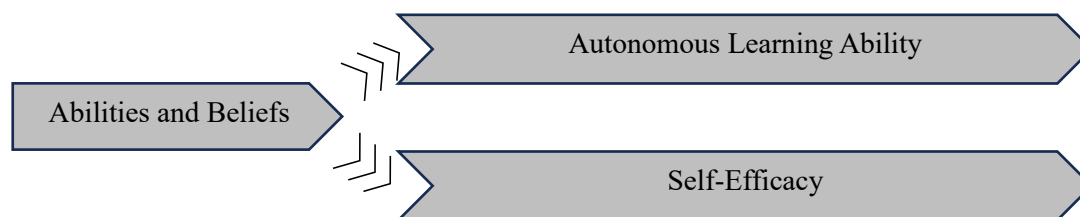
“I had to pass those classes if I wanted to make it through the school.” **Mo-ISM**

The direct quotes above from the participants demonstrate that they tended to make use of English as an instrument to achieve a more valued goal in their eyes. In parallel, their actions correspondingly stimulated the act of learning by improving their English during their English language learning journeys. In other words, all the participants invariably showed the tendency to utilize English to reach a more desired end goal whether what was appealing to all of them was a fun activity that brought them joy or a goal that provided them with an advantage that they cared about. Nonetheless, the codes or subcategories that labeled the direct quotes were assigned based on the nuance (explained earlier). This nuance indicates whether the action or performance to which learning or using English was considered secondary by the participants, was realized more with internal factors such as having fun or solely as an external reason that simply afforded a benefit. Therefore, the first seven of the direct quotes above were clearly categorized by Mo-IREM while the other six were by Mo-ISM. The reason why they were analyzed together is that both concepts, even though they were put forth by different theoretical models regarding motivation, point to an external factor that fueled learning and improvement of English. This quality appears as an attribute common to all participants.

#### 4.1.3. Data Analysis on Abilities and Beliefs

**Figure 4.3**

*Data Analysis on Abilities and Beliefs*



In this research study, personal growth in ability and development of corresponding individual belief in those abilities to achieve their goals emerge as a common attribute of highly proficient ELLs during their English language journeys. When the raw data was examined, *autonomous learning ability* and *self-efficacy* appeared as two recurring subcategories that point to the main category of *Abilities and Beliefs* as demonstrated in Figure 4.3.

*Autonomous learning ability* refers to the independence and freedom that the participants possess to make their own decisions and choices concerning their English language learning process. *Self-efficacy* alludes to the belief and self-confidence that the participants develop regarding their own capabilities at the beginning of and along the English language learning process. As importantly, the two subcategories seem to affect one another mutually, which indicates a correlation between them as each participant has been found to invariably have the two codes in their motivational profiles. In other words, a learner who lacks *autonomous learning ability* cannot be expected to develop a high level of *self-efficacy*.

#### **4.1.3.1. Findings on Autonomous Learning Ability**

The participants were asked when they first started learning English, what their initial attitudes and feelings were like, what kept them learning it, and what strategies they came up with along the way during their English language learning journeys. The first code or subcategory turned up as *autonomous learning ability*, which was represented by the code AB-AL within this research study. The letters A and B stand for the main category *Abilities and Beliefs* while the A and L are the initial letters of the subcategory *autonomous learning ability*.

Certain responses from the participants indicate a development process that puts forth the inevitable emergence of *autonomous learning ability*. Four of the participants clearly remarked their initial negative attitude towards learning English at the very beginning of their English language learning journeys. Similarly, another four were dependent on particular authority figures of parents and teachers for almost every aspect of their progress at first. Nonetheless, they achieved converting into independent learners who can direct their own actions while making their own decisions. The following direct quotes from the participants indicate the transitional process from dependent ELLs to autonomous individuals:

“In the next year, I just attended another private class, ... to support the school classes, just to get better grades. ... I attended another type of English class in the same private language school. This time it was a specific practical English course. It was really enjoyable for me.”

AB-AL

“[We] had some foreign TV channels installed at home. ... I was able to do some listening practice. [My father] brought a set of books and a set of cassettes, audio cassettes home and gave them to me. ... I was able to, you know, go through that stuff like as leisure activity.” AB-AL

“As I grew older, when I was, like, ten, eleven, we had Internet, finally, in Turkey. So, I started to look up games online that I can play.” AB-AL

“And also, I had a blog when I was younger when I was eleven, twelve ... That was a private blog, for myself. ... And sometimes, if I feel like it, I would write it in English.” AB-AL

“I, to be honest, spent a lot of time in high school watching YouTube videos on YouTubers. ... I wanted to understand everything, every joke, every aspect of their video.” AB-AL

“It came at 6th grade. I started watching a movie called Doctor Who. I watched it on BBC.” AB-AL

“I really wanted to understand [Doctor Who] ... without trying to catch up with the subtitles.” AB-AL

“At the time I was playing a game called GTA San Andreas. ... I played this game over, over and over again with subtitles on, so this was a long game, a really long game.” AB-AL

“I was watching movies and series. ... I watch movies at least every two days.” AB-AL

“I have a lot of foreign students; I always speak English with my friends.” AB-AL

**“I always google ... to learn some new phrases ... to find out which phrases or expressions are OK to use.” AB-AL**

“I loved to **watch the Euronews** when I was a child and I tried to understand what they were saying in English.” AB-AL

**“I want to be a part of the foreign language class** in the high school.” AB-AL

“When I was in high school, I **wanted to major in English language teaching.**” AB-AL

“I started watching TV series and movies and I **loved taking down words** that I don’t know.” AB-AL

The direct quotes above demonstrate that the participants started to act relatively more autonomously by taking their English learning into their own hands by resorting much less to authoritative directives or commands. Once they began to take joy in learning English they got more eager to move on learning it as they gained self-confidence in the meantime. They looked for extracurricular activities to their liking and directed their focus on them. Moreover, they attempted to find additional ways of obtaining the information they needed regarding English to improve their skills with less dependence. Additionally, they even started to make their own choices and plans regarding their future educational and professional lives, which are also indicators of *autonomy development* that they went through over time.

#### **4.1.3.2. Findings on Self-efficacy**

The other subcategory of *Abilities and Beliefs* is *self-efficacy*, and it is represented as AB-SE in this research study. Similarly, *self-efficacy* is denoted by the first initials SE while AB is for *abilities and beliefs*. The second finding with respect to *Abilities and Beliefs* is related to the development of participants’ self-confidence and beliefs regarding their capacities and abilities during their English learning journeys. Some of the quotes from the participants can be interpreted to indicate both *self-efficacy* and *autonomous learning ability* since the two concepts are often



correlational. Therefore, the choice of quotes has been made based on the context they were used in. The following direct quotes indicate the gradual transformation of the participants from timid learners with low self-efficacy beliefs to confident ELLs with higher self-efficacy beliefs:

“When I was in high school, I wanted to **major in English language teaching.**” AB-SE

“I was always taught in the traditional methods, like the most traditional ways ever, basically, I didn’t even know that we could teach English through songs. **But still, I learned English.**” AB-SE

“I **wanted to be a part of the foreign language class** in the high school.” AB-SE

“I prepared for the university exams, then **I achieved to enter** a university.” AB-SE

“I have a lot of foreign students, foreign, like, friends ... **so I always talk English with them.**” AB-SE

“When I first started ... talking, it was feeling very, really good because I never had the chance to talk English with other people, you know. ... so, **it was really feeling good, ... I can talk another language too.**” AB-SE

“While playing this game, I picked some more along the way, and **I was a bit more good at English thanks to this game.**” AB-SE

“After meeting this teacher and making my family meet him and talk with them, they slowly started to see that, **these games made me what I was in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.** I was not that super at the language, **but I was good for my peers at the time.**” AB-SE

“That was a private blog, for myself. And sometimes, **if I feel like it, I would write it in English.**” AB-SE

“Now **I can talk to a real person**, and she understands me. And she tells me things and **I understand**, and **we do things together**.” AB-SE

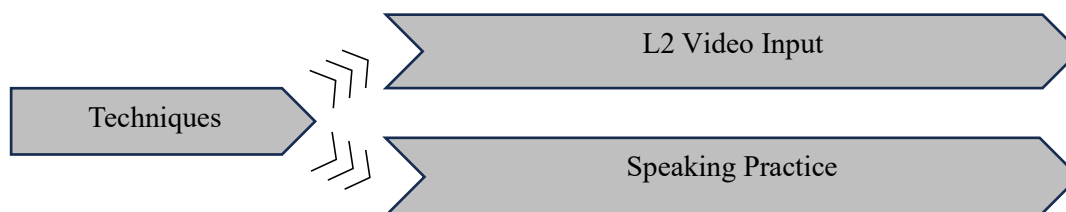
“I was **at a certain level of proficiency**, and I was, kind of, I **got the upper hand in the class against my classmates**. I really enjoyed that feeling.” AB-SE

The above quotes from the participants demonstrate that the learners at first relied more on authority figures around them such as their parents or teachers. Next, they managed to cultivate confidence in their capabilities regarding English to continue engaging in more voluntary tasks and activities in both formal and informal settings. Even if they experienced certain difficulties possibly resulting in negative feelings and attitudes in the beginning they experienced growth while acquiring the target language proficiency. Moreover, the higher the level of their self-efficacy beliefs, the more independent learners they ended up becoming. The way they set their academic goals on their own can be analyzed from the two quotes above with which they indicated their intentions of preparing for the university entrance examination and majoring in an ELT program. This correspondingly points to the correlational dynamic between *self-efficacy* and *autonomous learning abilities*.

#### 4.1.4. Data Analysis on Techniques

Figure 4.4

*Data Analysis on Techniques*



In this research study, the theme of *Techniques* alludes to the learners’ own inventions of specific ways of handling hardships and challenges. By dealing with the challenges of language learning process and controlling the whole respective process through their personal discovery and individual experiences, they were able to develop a native-like pronunciation and fluency in

English. Upon the examination of the raw data, *L2 Video Input* and *Speaking Practice* emerged as two repeating codes that turned out to be common to all the participants in this research study, which, as a result, points to the *strategy or technique invention and use* as demonstrated above in Figure 4.4. *L2 Video Input* refers to making use of visual and audial materials such as TV shows or series, movies, and news in English on a regular base for reasons of having fun, getting informed, and learning in general. *Speaking Practice* refers to the ventures and efforts that are partly put forth by the participants out of utter curiosity and joy, and partly out of necessity to be able to communicate with both native and non-native speakers of English. It is of great significance to take note of the fact that all the participants voluntarily engage in the above activities in a fully autonomous manner for mostly authentic or real-life reasons such as having fun or being kept informed about matters they personally care for. In other words, they are much less apt to utilize the above undertakings just for the sake of improving their skills in the English language.

#### **4.1.4.1. Findings on L2 Video Input**

The participants were asked what techniques, methods, or strategies they came up with along the way and which ones they thought had worked well for them to pick up native-like pronunciation and fluency in English during their learning journeys. The first code or subcategory came up as *L2 Video Input*, represented by the code T-VI within this research study. The letter T stands for the main category *Techniques* while the VI hints at the subcategory *L2 Video Input*.

All the participants clearly expressed that they began to watch TV shows, movies, and news especially right after they became relatively more autonomous and then they developed higher self-efficacy beliefs concerning their skills in English. Additionally, they voluntarily chose to continue to do so for the rest of their English language learning journeys. This is mainly due to the fact that they took great joy in those activities, and they also perceived them as useful tools not only for improving their English language skills due to personal reasons but also for the sake of learning about the nature of concepts in general. The following direct quotes from the participants indicate the strategic ways they used and benefitted from *L2 Video Input* via watching digital content in English as a language-learning strategy:

“[We] had some foreign TV channels installed at home. ... I was able to plug in the headphones or I was able to turn up the volume of BBC, for example, or CNN and I was able to do some

listening practice. ... I was exposed to the language. It was attempting. It is just carefree, stress-free exercise for me, actually.” **T-VI**

“I really am into movies. I really would like to watch TV shows on YouTube, some, you know, majority of them, mostly English, movies in English.” **T-VI**

“I was watching movies and series. ... I watch movies at least every two days, I mean. And yes, they help a lot. I learned a lot of new phrases. Yeah, that just helps me a lot.” **T-VI**

“I practiced my English abilities and also as everyone ... I watched some videos about history and other things and this contributed to me.” **T-VI**

“I loved watching the news about the other cultures ... I loved to watch the Euro news when I was a child and I tried to understand what they were saying in English and generally they had an English broadcasting and I tried to understand that.” **T-VI**

“I have grown up watching a lot of videos online. ... I usually spent time watching a lot of YouTube videos, but by that I mean a lot of them, I spent 3 hours, 4 hours watching YouTube videos, and then I watch a lot of TV series.” **T-VI**

“There were a lot of British YouTubers at that time, at that time of YouTube. ... I mean, mostly I was in the part of English that is not formal at all, I was watching YouTubers and real-life people.” **T-VI**

“I was watching a TV show called “How to get away with murder. ... it also teaches a lot of idioms, that’s great.” **T-VI**

“I watched a lot of movies, a lot of series. ... I told you, guys, through this whole interview, that playing games and watching movies is a lot more helpful than you ever think.” **T-VI**

“I was watching BBC, and I would just be curious about what they might be talking about.” **T-VI**

“I started watching TV series and movies and I loved taking down words that I don’t know. And so, I started making vocabulary lists from the shows that I loved to watch.” **T-VI**

The direct quotes above clearly indicate that all the participants willingly favored engaging in watching digital content in English such as TV shows, movies, and news. They mainly took delight in finding themselves curiously and voluntarily getting involved in real-life situations with real-life people via various authentic visual and audial materials. The autonomous and intrinsic nature of their voluntary preferences for doing so have stimulated them to take part in such activities for longer periods of time for the rest of their lives. Additionally, they all have noticed how useful the strategy of watching digital content in English could be as they become more fluent and more native-like speakers of the English language, which also points to their meta-cognitive development in the meantime.

#### **4.1.4.2. Findings on Speaking Practice**

The other technique that all the participants shared in common turned up to be the *speaking practice* when they were inquired about what methods or tactics they used, and, as a result, they became such native-like and fluent speakers of the English language. *Speaking Practice* emerged as the second code or subcategory in this research study, which was represented by the code T-SP. The letter T stands for the theme *Techniques* while the following two letters S and P were chosen for the code *Speaking Practice*. The following direct quotes from the participants show that they strived to create opportunities for themselves both in formal and informal contexts to be able to practice their speaking skills:

“... in college, it turns out you have to [communicate in English], otherwise, you fail. And then, me being forced to use it productively, I got used to using it productively. By productively, I mean, in communicational ways.” **T-SP**

“A huge part of my speaking practice happened when I was in Denmark for 5 months [as an exchange student]. That was challenging but after that, I started to get used to speaking and oral practice as well, so I believe it is all about practice.” **T-SP**

“I did a lot of talking through Discord, to other people, to Romanians, to Moroccans, to Arabs. It was a platform where you could join other channels and talk with people all around the world. It is a good platform to practice your English. You can find all kinds of people there.” **T-SP**

“I [did] go on and continue communicating with native speakers because English is like, I think, riding a bike. As much as practice you do, it will get better automatically, in my opinion.” **T-SP**

“I had a lot of foreign friends online and I have a Brazilian friend, we used to talk through video chat because she is from Brazil. We were actually practicing together, probably a couple of times a month. That really helped.” **T-SP**

“I understood that more practice would help me. Exposure was the biggest thing that helped me ... I had a friend. His speaking abilities were very good at prep school. Then, he helped me and then I helped him.” **T-SP**

“Being part of the communication and being part of the discussion in the classroom environment is a great approach ... [brings] positive things for learning languages.” **T-SP**

“Participation in every discussion could be the biggest strategy that I used because I knew that if I hadn’t taken part in sessions, I wouldn’t have improved my speaking.” **T-SP**

“I have a lot of foreign students, foreign, like, friends. They are students here, so I always talk English with them.” **T-SP**

“Speaking, actually speaking was my favorite skill to work on. I’ve always liked speaking more than the others.” **T-SP**

“I attended another type of English class in the same private language school. [There was] a native teacher to interact with. That really helped put things in perspective for me about English

because now I felt like I moved on to another level of learning English. It was like I was in the real English speakers league now.” **T-SP**

“It was a matter of, you know, more and more practice; a problem of immersion of exposure all the time.” **T-SP**

“I had enough opportunities in class to practice my English. ... I had the opportunity to, you know, really visit international social context, international settings.” **T-SP**

The above quotes clearly indicate that all of the participants developed a natural tendency to practice their speaking skills on almost every occasion that they could find or create. They either made attempts to go to foreign countries as tourists or for academic reasons whenever they could, or they tried to make friends with people around them or on virtual platforms to be able to practice their language skills. It is also worth mentioning that the direct quotes demonstrate that they all made these decisions by themselves and put in the necessary effort accordingly as autonomous language learners. Last but not least, through experience, they also became cognizant of the fact that doing such speaking practices as much as the conditions that they had willingly shows their meta-cognitive ability as well.

To conclude, all the relevant direct quotes from the participants were directly shared in this chapter. Moreover, the direct speech data was analyzed regarding the frequency level of the themes, and they were categorized for the meaning they conveyed. The semantic relationships emerged for the purpose of showcasing a consistent pattern regarding how participants became ELLs with native-like fluency and pronunciation.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Reaching high proficiency in the English language with native-like pronunciation and fluency requires complex but harmonious multi-dimensional operations that include: psychology, cognition, motivation, emotions, innate abilities, and skills. Even though motivation is there for the one who craves sounding like a native speaker, the ability or tendency to successfully pick up and imitate native-like pronunciation on a physical base must be available during their language learning process. Therefore, this research study aspires to discover and explore the common characteristics that proficient ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency during their English language learning journeys not only in terms of affective, motivational, and attitudinal development but also ability and technique-wise. Based on the participants' responses received as the raw data, four main categories or themes with their respective subcategories or codes emerged through careful analysis as the common attributes of proficient ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency. Henceforth, this chapter deals with interpreting and putting these findings in a meaningful perspective.

#### **5.1. Discussion of Research Findings**

In this section, the purpose is to see the whole picture to make sense of participants' affective, attitudinal, motivational, and technique-wise development by analyzing the findings. For that reason, the following categories evolved as common and shared themes and investigated:

- (1) The participants' emotions, perceptions and understandings of their own feelings,
- (2) The participants' developed beliefs and abilities in terms of their confidence and competence
- (3) The participants' insights on what motivated them to learn and improve their English
- (4) The techniques or methods that the participants invented or came up with to facilitate their own learning, and strategies that they deliberately think worked well for them during their English language learning journeys.



Thus, the following research questions were accordingly established to obtain a better and deeper understanding concerning what highly proficient ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency do so differently from the majority that they ended up achieving such a hard-to-get goal. In addition, this study discovers and explores the connections with what is in the literature regarding emotions, abilities, beliefs, motivation, and techniques in learning a second language.

- How do highly proficient ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency feel about their language learning process?
- What abilities and beliefs do they develop towards the English language in this initial phase of their English language process?
- What reasons, purposes, and intentions motivate their English language learning journeys?
- What first/early English language learning techniques do they develop and employ during this early stage of their English language learning?

The interview questions about when participants started learning English, how they happened to learn it, how they felt when they started learning it, what motivated them to continue learning it, and what techniques or methods they implemented and utilized during their journeys were asked to find solid responses to the above research questions. The participants gave lengthy explanations to the interview questions. The points common to all the participants can be declared as follows:

1. All the participants started learning English as a second language.
2. Five of the six participants started learning English in primary school even though two of them became exposed to English informally earlier at home to some extent. Only one participant started learning English in secondary school.
3. All the participants developed positive affective, attitudinal, and motivational responses to learning English after the first exposure to it during their English language learning journeys.
4. All the participants willingly and independently preferred to engage in extracurricular activities that entailed the development of their English language skills.

The following four themes or main categories, which are *Abilities and Beliefs*, *Emotions*, *Motivation Types*, and *Techniques* naturally emerged when participants' responses to the questions in the interview were diligently analyzed. In this way, it is possible to better understand what

proficient ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency go through motivationally, affectively, attitudinally, and ability-and-techniques-wise. Each theme has two separate subcategories. The theme of *Abilities and Beliefs* consists of the subcategories *Autonomous Learning Ability* and *Self-efficacy* to explore how participants begin to take control of and responsibility for their own learning by voluntarily picking up informal activities or even independently making future plans and career decisions in addition to how they develop the necessary beliefs and confidence to learn, improve, and maintain their English. The theme of *Emotions* is for exploring the attitudes and feelings that participants developed during the learning process, and it is made up of the subcategories *Enjoyment* and *Volitional Effort*, which indicate that participants both enjoy and make efforts to improve and further their English. The theme of *Motivation Types* has two conceptually similar subcategories, which are *Instrumental Motivation* and *Internally Regulated Extrinsic Motivation*.

**Table 5.1**

*Main Categories and Subcategories*

Main Categories	Subcategories
Abilities and Beliefs	Autonomous Learning Ability
	Self-Efficacy
Emotions	Enjoyment
	Volitional Effort
Motivation Types	Instrumental Motivation
	Internally Regulated Extrinsic Motivation
Techniques	L2 Video Input
	Speaking Practice

These two concepts, despite being proposed by two different theoretical models, may refer to very similar situations in most cases, and as a result, it may become difficult on occasion to make a clear distinction between them. The only difference lies in the internal regulation of the performance or action to which English functions as a subordinate tool. Both motivation types, however, invariably point to an external factor that stimulates learners to learn and improve their English, which is the

very reason why the related findings were given together in the data findings section in the previous chapter.

## **5.2. Analytical Category I: Abilities and Beliefs**

### **5.2.1. Discussions and Outcomes of Autonomous Learning Ability**

The subcategory *Autonomous Learning Ability* in this research study represents the independence and freedom that participants gained along the way to make their own choices and decisions regarding the activities in their own English learning process. This ability is observed to be even extending to the use of autonomy regarding their future and career plans without feeling the need or urge to resort to anyone else.

All the participants, regardless of how they felt when they were first introduced to English and whether it happened in formal or informal learning settings, first exhibited observable dependence on an authority figure, whether a teacher or a family member, until they developed confidence and competence in their knowledge and skills. They began cultivating positive feelings via the activities that they favored most. The ensuing primary confidence and competence they demonstrated together with the positive feelings further led to positive attitudes because they also recognized that learning and mastering English had the potential of providing them with other uses, benefits, and opportunities that they might desire including the fun and joy that they would acquire. As a result, all the participants found themselves engaging in informal or out-of-class activities to their liking or based on their subjective interests by using English as the main communication tool. It is crucial to emphasize that the themes and subcategories discovered in this research study are mutually relational and influential. For instance, one cannot develop positive attitudes without positive feelings, or it is not possible to talk about motivation or autonomy use for learning English, if one does not take joy while using the English language. Therefore, the participants developed the tendency to independently determine what activities they wanted to get involved in informal contexts by taking some control of their own English learning. For this purpose, each participant is observed and explored regarding their specific preferences during their language learning process.

#### 5.2.1.1. Borat

Borat was introduced to English in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time in a formal context. English was a compulsory course. Learning English or taking classes related to English was not his preference or choice in the first place as the following quote of his shows clearly.

“It [the English class] was not my own decision. It was just like a compulsory part of my education syllabi, actually.”

His first feelings were quite negative. He did not have a say in his own learning at all. Moreover, he received very low grades on English tests in the first semester. Therefore, his parents decided that he had to take English lessons from a private tutor to improve his grades on English exams so he could pass the class without a hitch. As can be seen, taking English lessons out of school was not his independent decision or choice, either. He just obeyed the request of his parents. Thus, the fact that learning English was not his choice or decision at the very beginning shows the absence of any autonomy whatsoever.

The private lessons helped him understand the topics that caused him trouble at school. The initial confidence and competence that he cultivated through private tutoring prompted the first boost in his self-confidence. Later, he enrolled in a private English language school with the same main purpose of improving grades. He, however, was drawn to a special class called *Practical English Course* among other classes. It was designed to improve learners' communication skills in English.

“In the next year, I just **attended another private class**, ... to support the school classes, just to get better grades. ... I **attended another type of English class in the same private language school**. This time it was **a specific practical English course. It was really enjoyable for me.**”

#### AB-AL

He specified that he chose to be in this class among other options including the one for supporting school classes. He did not mention anything about his parents' decisions, requests, or even recommendations regarding his choice to be in this specific class in the language school, which indicates that he exercised autonomy to an extent regarding in which class he wanted to be or was supposed to be. He went on to attend practical English classes in the following months in the language school because he took joy in learning and studying in them, which points to the self-

determination or autonomy that he began to exercise concerning his English language learning process.

Borat also began to utilize English language materials around him such as cassettes designed specifically for improving listening skills in English or a TV set with foreign TV channels that broadcast in English. He engaged in watching and listening to them in his free time without anybody's urge or push, which is quite clear from the following statements of his:

“[We] had some foreign TV channels installed at home. ... **I was able to do some listening practice.** [My father] brought a set of books and a set of cassettes, audio cassettes home and gave them to me. ... I was able to, you know, **go through that stuff like as leisure activity.**” AB-AL Borat began to take control of how he should go about learning English and improving it to a certain degree even though the materials were provided by his parents. It is apparent that he developed an interest in them and independently chose to get involved in them in his free time without his parents' push.

To summarize, Borat began to determine the course of action by making his own decisions and choosing to engage in activities freely and independently regarding his English learning journey, which indicates that he started to acquire self-determination abilities, which was the first step for him to becoming a more autonomous ELL.

#### **5.2.1.2. Jersey**

Jersey was especially intrigued by the out-of-class activities that her sister got involved in by using the English language. She, however, was not competent or ready enough for such engagements since she had not even started primary school yet. She began to take English classes in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in primary school. Although she was pleased to learn English in English classes in a formal setting, it was not her own decision to take those classes. Therefore, she was not able to exercise any self-determination capabilities at the early stages of her English language learning journey. Later, however, she started to engage in out-of-class activities once she reached just enough competence in English, just as her sister had done, such as listening to music, reading magazines, or watching movies in English outside of the formal learning setting. All these informal activities were executed independently and voluntarily based on her preferences and likings:

“As I grew older, when I was, like, ten, eleven, we had Internet, finally, in Turkey. So, I started to **look up games online** that I can play.” AB-AL

Jersey searched on the Internet by herself for games based on her own likes and interests. She found many online games most of which used English as the medium of instruction and communication.

“And also, I **had a blog** when I was younger when I was eleven, twelve ... That was **a private blog, for myself. ... And sometimes, if I feel like it, I would write it in English.**” AB-AL

She independently decided to start and run a blog as a diary. And she specified that she wrote her blogs in English whenever she felt like it. Again, she had total control of engaging in this informal activity and using English as the language of communication without anybody’s direction just as she did with online games.

“I, to be honest, **spent a lot of time in high school watching YouTube videos** on YouTubers. ... I wanted to understand everything, every joke, every aspect of their video.”

AB-AL

In a similar vein, she discovered YouTubers broadcasting content in English on YouTube, and she seems to have put in the effort to understand what was going on in the videos and what those YouTubers were talking about. Again, she exercised self-determination to engage in such informal activities.

In brief, she was intrinsically motivated to get involved in the activities she took joy in. Those activities happened to be predominantly in English. Therefore, it is fair to say that her intrinsic motivation was not solely for learning the English language itself but for engaging in those fun and interesting out-of-class activities. She considered the English language the primary tool to engage in what she loved to do at the beginning of her English language learning journey just as Borat did. Consequently, she got involved in the informal activities that she decided on or chose freely and independently, which in turn shows that she began to develop self-determination or autonomous learning abilities.

### 5.2.1.3. Kurt

Kurt’s first exposure to English took place in primary school, or as the SEM proposes, in a formal setting just like Borat’s. Additionally, taking English classes and learning English was not his own choice, either. It was a compulsory course that he had to take in accordance with the school

syllabi. Therefore, it can be asserted that he had no autonomy regarding his own learning at the very beginning, either.

Later, in secondary school years, Kurt came across a British TV show called Dr. Who. According to his accounts, he got so absorbed in it that he developed a desire to understand what the actors or characters were saying without feeling the need for any subtitles, which can also be deemed as the first time Kurt saw the instrumental value of the English language:

“It came at 6th grade. I **started watching a movie called Doctor Who**. I watched it on BBC.” AB-AL

“I really **wanted to understand** [Doctor Who] ... **without trying to catch up with the subtitles.**”

AB-AL

As he continued watching Dr. Who and became a fan of the show, he also took up other out-of-class activities along the way such as playing PC games in English:

“At the time **I was playing a game called GTA San Andreas**. ... while **watching all the cut scenes** and **trying to understand** what all the characters are saying.” AB-AL

As is clear from his account, Kurt developed the same desire as he did for Dr. Who to be able to flawlessly understand what was being spoken in the game's cinematics. Therefore, it is apparent that he put in the necessary effort to learn English through improving his skills successfully via out-of-class activities of watching Dr Who and playing GTA. Thus, Kurt also realized the value and significance of learning English, which led him to becoming an autonomous English language learner during his English language learning journey, which has been very similar to what Borat and Jersey experienced.

#### 5.2.1.4. Goldie

Goldie began her English learning journey by taking compulsory English classes in primary school in Iran. Again, learning English was neither her own choice nor did she ever get exposed to English before her formal education as in Borat's and Kurt's cases. A life-changing event happened, and she and her family moved to Turkey in 2018. Since she could not speak any Turkish, and people around her could not speak Persian, which is Goldie's native language, the only communication tool available was English to her. It can surely be suggested that she literally felt the need to communicate in English. This need seems to spur her to improve her English, and as a result, she

began to get involved in informal activities as Borat, Jersey, and Kurt already did as is clear from the below remark of hers:

“I was **watching movies and series**. ... I **watch movies** at least every two days.” AB-AL

She began to independently determine what activities she should engage in and decided on them according to her liking and preferences as others did. She came up with various alternatives of informal activities to improve her English as she specifies it in her following remark:

“I have a lot of foreign students; I **always speak English** with my friends.” AB-AL

**“I always google ... to learn some new phrases ... to find out which phrases or expressions are OK to use.”** AB-AL

According to her accounts, Goldie tried to practice her English by communicating with foreign students and friends since she realized how significant it was to be able to communicate in English in real life. She also resorted to researching on the Net via Google to obtain the knowledge she needed regarding the practical use of English such as grammar rules or vocabulary. As can be analyzed clearly, Goldie herself decided on all these activities by choosing the ones she needed and liked to do, which points to her becoming an autonomous English language learner.

#### 5.2.1.5. Hank

Hank’s English learning journey started in a formal setting as well. English was a compulsory course that he had to take in the 4th grade. Therefore, it was not his own preference to learn English, which again indicates the absence of self-determination or autonomy in the beginning. He, however, got interested in English over time since he thought that English would be a helpful tool for obtaining knowledge in general and understanding and learning about the rest of the world. Especially, he started to get involved in informal activities with this open-mindedness of his, which he carried out independently and freely:

“I loved to **watch the Euronews** when I was a child and I **tried to understand** what they were saying in English.” AB-AL

Hank even made future career plans independently as he remarked:

**“I want to be a part of the foreign language class** in the high school.” AB-AL

As in previous participants’ cases, Hank began to act independently once he reached sufficient competency. As importantly, he recognized the usefulness of the English language as a tool to



understand foreign people and their ways of life. Watching the news in English was an activity that he came up with independently. Hence, he made his own choices about what activities he should pick up or engage in to make sense of the outside world. Additionally, he also independently decided to study English in high school and continued pursuing it in his academic life. Both remarks of his demonstrate the development of self-determination capabilities that he acquired during his English language learning journey.

#### **5.2.1.6. Mary**

Mary, just like Jersey, got exposed to English to an extent at home before school. Her mother tried to teach her some basics such as the English alphabet and casual vocabulary. It was her mother's decision and preference though as an adult to teach her English because she thought that high proficiency in English was a valuable asset to possess. Mary started taking compulsory English classes when her formal education started. In a similar vein, learning English at home or taking English classes in school were not her pure independent choices in the beginning even though she got interested in English thanks to her mother's efforts.

Mary, as others did, began to immerse herself in informal activities where English was the primary communication and instruction tool, and it was her independent preference and decision to do that:

**“I started watching TV series and movies and I loved taking down words that I don't know.”**

#### **AB-AL**

Mary not only made her decision to watch TV shows based on her likes and interests but also voluntarily chose to make vocabulary lists of unfamiliar words, which was outright independently directed toward learning and improving her English.

Similar to Hank, once Mary got to a level where she felt more competent and confident in her English skills, she made a broader decision regarding her future academic life linked with English as she remarked:

**“When I was in high school, I wanted to major in English language teaching.”** **AB-AL**

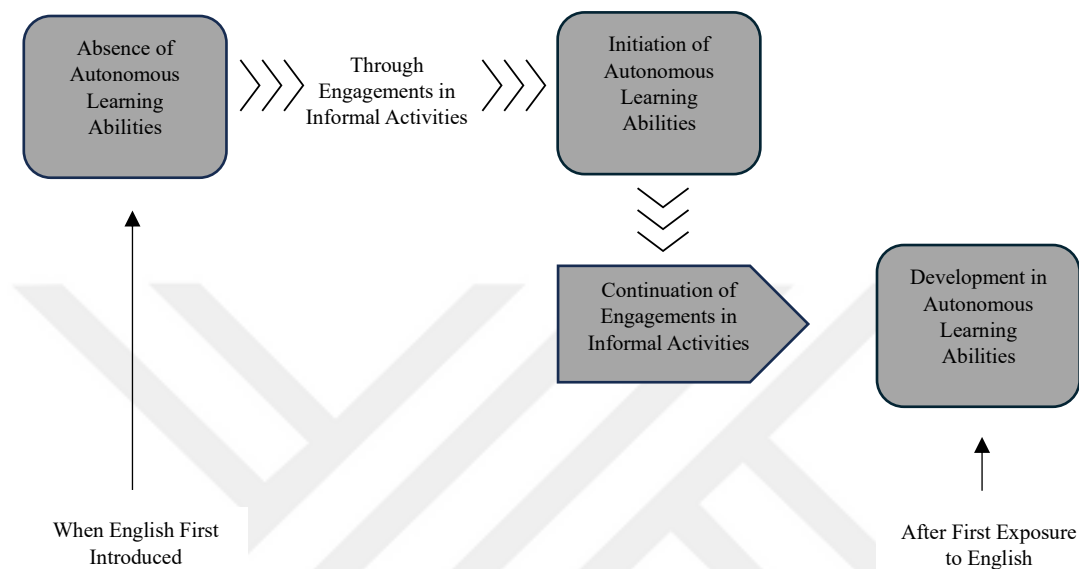
Just as Hank did, Mary also willingly and independently extended his interest in English to an academic life. Hence, both of the informal activities she freely chose to do and her plans regarding the future indicate the autonomy that she developed.

### **5.2.2. Conclusions on Autonomous Learning Ability**

It has been found that all the participants started learning English predominantly in formal language learning settings even though two of them got acquainted themselves with English through their family members to an extent at home in an informal manner. Regardless of the exact time when they started learning it, they began their English language learning journeys without self-determination capabilities or autonomous language learning abilities. They were under the control and authority of others such as teachers or parents. Once they gained just enough competence and confidence, they began to tend to get involved in extracurricular activities to their liking and based on preferences such as watching movies and TV shows in English, and news on broadcasting English TV channels, listening to cassettes, playing computer games, writing blogs, googling for information, and engaging in YouTube. The English language was the primary tool to be able to engage in the tasks in those informal activities. Therefore, they began to develop autonomous language learning abilities by choosing and deciding on what kind of informal engagements they should execute and how they should operate them. They simply took a lot of joy in getting involved in these extracurricular activities, which also provided the essential motivation to carry on engaging in them. Therefore, they were able to spend a considerable amount of time using English in order to achieve what they desired in those freely chosen activities. Consequently, it has been discovered that proficient ELLs with nativelike pronunciation and fluency ended up acquiring autonomous language learning abilities once they achieved a certain competency in their skills and their knowledge of English (Please see Figure 5.1). Such autonomy development is found to be extra crucial since they can make use of it as a lifelong learning skill for learning, improving, and maintaining their English, and even extending it to learning other languages.

**Figure 5.1.**

*Autonomous Learning Ability Development*



When the raw data was analyzed, it was observed that acquiring autonomous learning skills not only assisted participants in gaining more efficient and systematized learning. In addition, the emergence of more internally regulated motivation of the participants through independently chosen informal activities complies with what Little and Dam (1998) and Ryan and Deci (2013) suggested in their studies regarding autonomy as the control and responsibility for one's own learning and dedication to it. The participants in this research study were observed to develop the ability to independently find activities based on their subjective likes and preferences. They observed themselves and directed their engagements accordingly based on their psychological, cognitive, metacognitive, emotional, academic, and motivational assessments and evaluations of themselves. For instance, Borat independently chose to attend and keep attending the practical language classes among other options in the language school since he took much more joy in it than in others. Mary decided to keep a journal of unfamiliar English words that she encountered in her favorite TV shows and movies. Goldie thought that speaking with foreign students in her college would help her become more fluent. Therefore, she deliberately tried to create more opportunities for herself by meeting English-speaking foreign students on and out of campus. She

directed herself accordingly and chose to socialize with other people based on her personal evaluation. Hank and Mary went even further and chose to have a career that involved English. Therefore, they voluntarily chose to study English language teaching in college. Kurt found it significant to understand what was going on in his favorite TV show. He made efforts to understand what was being spoken without resorting to the subtitles. He extended this behavior to his next favorite activity, computer games, and he paid close attention to what was going on in the cinematics of the game. Hence, as Holec (1981), Little (2022), and O'Leary (2018) already asserted in their works, the participants in this research study also tended to observe, organize, assess, evaluate, and direct their learning in the environment based on various aspects such as cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social dimensions.

The participants developed a tendency to make use of technology and technological devices to be able to behave as autonomously as they could in their language learning processes. In other words, technology seems to have helped them become more self-reliant since they could reach what they needed or liked more easily and fast via technological resources. To illustrate, Borat preferred to listen to cassettes that consisted of speeches and conversations in English, and he watched the news as well on the channels broadcasting in English in his free time without anybody's push or advice. Hank independently did the same by following the news on the EuroNews channel. Almost all of them binge-watched TV shows and movies. Jersey followed YouTubers and ran a blog of hers thanks to the Internet. Kurt spent a considerable amount of time playing computer games. As can be analyzed easily, all of the participants got access to technology or were equipped with a technological device to be able to direct and manage their learning by taking almost all the control of it. Since Hamilton (2013), Lan (2018), Reinders and White (2016), and Warschauer and Liaw (2011) argued in their studies, technological resources provided both the tools and contexts for language learners so that they could pick and get involved in the activities that they craved for based on their specific likes, interests, and preferences. It is of significance to point out though that at the beginning of the participants' English language journeys, mobile internet or smartphone technology via the Internet either did not exist or was not readily available. The most recent technological resource, the Internet, came to be so ubiquitous mobile-wise much later when the participants' ages were taken into consideration. To be concise, thanks to the technology at hand, all the participants developed a considerable amount of learner autonomy

through more familiar and relatively older technological tools such as films, videos, TV channels, PC games, and google as Lenkaitis (2020) and Trinder (2016) asserted. In accordance with what Ahmadi (2018) argued, technology use helped all of the participants become more creative and resourceful during their language-learning journeys and equipped them with more intriguing, fun, and entertaining alternative ways of learning English. For example, Kurt enjoyed playing his PC games and picked up a lot of knowledge language-wise in the meantime also because of his interest and commitment to a deeper understanding of the background stories of the games through game cinematics. Jersey came up with the idea of keeping an online diary and willingly chose to write about her thoughts and feelings in English in her blog although the production attempts such as writing might be considered much more demanding by many at the beginning of their language learning journeys. Mary kept and valued her vocabulary lists while enjoying watching her favorite TV shows and movies even if it might be tedious work for some others. Goldie thought that socializing with other people via English would benefit her much more. These original ways of engaging in favored activities enhanced learner-centeredness and induced more internally regulated motivation, which, as a result, got them to execute more autonomy. In other words, the inclusion of technological resources by all the participants based on individual interests in English language learning contexts was observed to prompt their autonomous learning abilities to flourish as Lai (2019a) argued.

### **5.2.3. Discussions and Outcomes of Self-efficacy**

The subcategory self-efficacy in this research study alludes to participants' views and verdicts that they have the capacity and competence to carry out certain tasks or execute certain actions to be able to reach a goal or goals. Therefore, it can be considered in this research study that self-efficacy plays a major role in developing autonomous learning, which indicates the reciprocal relationship between autonomous learning abilities and self-efficacy beliefs. Three of the participants in the study began their English language learning journeys with a low self-efficacy expectancy (Low SEE) while the other three with a moderate self-efficacy expectancy (Mod SEE). They all, however, ended up having high self-efficacy expectancy levels (High SEE), regardless of the initial, relatively lower expectancy levels, a while after the first exposure in the beginning. It can be argued that the initial discrepancy in self-efficacy belief at the beginning can also be taken

as a sign of a dominating higher affective filter. Thus, a higher filter does not allow proper linguistic input processing by decreasing comprehension and especially production in the target language (Krashen, 1982). As stated earlier, the themes and subcategories in this study are mutually effective. That is, developing positive feelings and attitudes prompted autonomous learning abilities to a degree. Then, these self-determination capabilities or becoming more autonomous learners in turn enhanced the intensity of positive feelings and attitudes by causing improvement in participants' English competencies. This, as a result, has increased their self-efficacy expectancy levels. Below is the analysis of each participant regarding how their self-efficacy expectancies developed.

#### **5.2.3.1. Borat**

Borat's initial feelings were negative when he started learning English in the formal context as he clearly stated:

"At the beginning, it was really quite bad ... it really didn't work well for me."

He accounted that he got pretty low grades on English exams in the first semester as well. The performance experiences, according to Bandura's self-efficacy, which are the personal successes or failures such as low grades, negatively affected Borat's self-efficacy expectancy (SEE) beliefs. Therefore, in terms of Bandura's self-efficacy (SE), Borat seems to have had a very low level of self-efficacy expectancy (Low SEE) belief when he first got exposed to English due to his apparent belief that he did not possess the capacity to learn what was taught in the English class, which appears to have stemmed from the challenging and demanding nature of learning a new language as he shared the following:

"It was something new ... it didn't make sense to me ... that was the biggest challenge!"

Borat's parents thereupon intervened and got him a private tutor so that he could improve his grades at school. This private tutoring worked well and helped him understand some of the topics that he had failed to grasp. Borat was able to see that he could do it for the first time and began to take joy as well unlike how he felt in the formal context. Therefore, it can be concluded this was the first boost in his self-confidence affecting his self-efficacy expectancy beliefs. The following year Borat began to attend a private English language school mainly with the same purpose of improving his English grades. He chose to be in a special class called *Practical English Course*, which had been designed to improve learners' communicative abilities in four skills.

Private lessons had already propped up his self-confidence, and he now happened to get the opportunity to practice the language in this new class:

“I was now feeling safe. I knew the words. ... Now they were something, they meant something. I was able to catch up.”

According to his account, these classes provided a lot more fun activities that attracted his attention and, as a result, he kept performing better and better as time passed. He even began to feel the confidence to compete with his classmates and enjoyed being competitive. In other words, he aspired to be a better English speaker than the rest, which indicates the higher SEE belief that he developed as clearly understood from the below remark of his:

“I was **at a certain level of proficiency**, and I was, kind of, I **got the upper hand in the class against my classmates**. I really enjoyed that feeling.” AB-SE

Borat chose to participate more often in the tasks and activities during the lessons and tried to outcompete his classmates because he began to believe in his knowledge and skills in English, which is the very evidence of a high SEE belief that he acquired. When he outdid the rest, he liked it, which seems to have stimulated him to become a more active learner.

Additionally, one of the teachers in this special class was a native speaker of English, which provided Borat with the opportunity to practice with a real person as authentically as possible in an artificial environment such as a classroom as he said:

“Now **I can talk to a real person**, and she understands me. And she tells me things and **I understand**, and **we do things together**.” AB-SE

Borat was very cognizant of the competency that he gained, and he saw firsthand that he had the skills to communicate in English, which is another indication of the high SEE that he developed over time.

Consequently, he began to establish a solid belief that he could communicate in English effectively and efficiently during his English language learning journey. In other words, he reached a higher level of self-efficacy expectancy belief compared to his first exposure when he first started learning English in the sixth grade.

#### 5.2.3.2. Jersey

Jersey's first exposure to English took place through informal contexts that her elder sister got involved in at home. Jersey seems to have been interested in almost every informal activity that her elder sister engaged in, which also hints that she must have felt admiration for her sister. This points to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which suggests that people can learn through observation, which in turn requires a model. The first phase of modeling or observational learning of Bandura's SCT is to pay attention to the desired behavior or performance. (Bandura, 1971, 2023; Brown, 2000). In Jersey's case, she seems to have already gotten attracted to the activities her elder sister was doing since her elder sister enjoyed doing them and Jersey also might have seen her as a role model. Hence, it is understood that the desired behavior, attention, and the possible role model were already there as she shared the following:

"When I was a child, my sister, like I said, spent a lot of time playing computer games. And I always wanted to play computer games."

Her desire was not directly related to the English language but to the informal activities that the elder sister took joy in doing. Therefore, it could be claimed that English as a second language seems to have attracted her positive attention as the main ingredient of the activities her elder sister performed, which should also be considered the first step in her English language learning journey. This interest and admiration seem to have prompted her to develop positive feelings and attitudes towards English at a very young age even before she started taking English classes in the 4th grade of primary school. Therefore, it can be asserted that she had already been stimulated towards English even before school. So, she happened to become absorbed in the English classes immediately once they got started as can easily be seen from the following statement that she openly shared:

"I was so excited for English classes. Normally I wasn't a student to be excited to go to school because I didn't like the maths and social sciences, kind of boring for me. English was always so exciting and fascinating."

Thus, it is fair to suggest that the positivity she had developed toward the English language and the interest she had been fostering in it helped her cultivate the belief that she could learn the English language. This is the reason why it is considered in this research study that she had a moderate self-



efficacy expectancy belief (Mod SEE) when she first got exposed to English in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade when compared to the other participants who started off with negative sentiments.

Jersey began to put to use what she learned in English classes in the online blog that she created, which, incidentally, requires a certain proficiency level in English to be able to run it. She was stimulated and encouraged enough to give it a try to write her thoughts and feelings concerning her personal life in the English language as she shared the following:

“That was a private blog, for myself. And sometimes, **if I feel like it, I would write it in English.**”

#### **AB-SE**

It is apparent from the above remark that she acquired the necessary confidence and believed in her skills and knowledge to express herself in English. She literally did it in her blog. Her constant engagement in informal activities and eagerness to communicate in English in those informal contexts as clearly expressed above should be taken as an evident sign of *high self-efficacy expectancy belief* (High SEE) that she achieved to develop during her English language learning journey. One more point that should be highlighted is that the initial positive sentiments and her being able to maintain them along the way have helped her reach a high level of SEE relatively more quickly.

#### **5.2.3.3. Kurt**

Kurt started learning English in the 3rd grade in primary school. It was not a good start for him, though, as he stated the following:

“At the time I was really bad at English. ... I was really bad.”

Although his teacher tried to encourage him by giving him the classic advice of *studying more*, it is understood from his accounts that it did not work well for him. Kurt was as confused and frustrated as Borat was since he could not comprehend almost anything concerning English, which seems to have led to Language Anxiety (LA) at the very beginning of his English learning process. These negative affective factors seem to have prompted him to possess low self-efficacy expectancy (Low SEE) belief or low perceived self-efficacy levels, which is considered to negatively influence his motivation to a great extent as can be understood from the following statement he shared:

“When I was in 4th grade or something, I still didn’t understand the language. I still didn’t understand what they were saying.”

In his secondary school years, he came across a TV show called Dr. Who, which was broadcast in the English language. He was so absorbed in it that he developed a desire to understand the characters without resorting to the subtitles. Additionally, the PC games got his attention as well, and they were also in English. As a result, Kurt found himself being engaged voluntarily in the informal contexts in which the English language was used as the instruction and communication instrument. The more he got involved in the informal activities that he liked, the more confident he became because he began to learn and understand more and more. Hence, Kurt began to develop a higher level of SEE belief over time during his English language journey as he got involved in the informal activities that he willingly chose to participate in as the following remark corroborates:

“While playing this game, I picked some more along the way, and **I was a bit more good at English thanks to this game.**” AB-SE

Not only did Kurt himself become aware of the progress he made through informal contexts, but also his English teacher in secondary school came to notice it. Thus, the teacher even talked to his parents regarding the importance of engagement in informal activities in terms of learning and advancing one's English so that the parents who actually considered them a waste of time for Kurt and even tried to prevent him from getting involved in them could at least get convinced to let him freely continue his own learning through informal contexts at home as Kurt clearly stated:

“After meeting this teacher and making my family meet him and talk with them, they slowly started to see that, **these games made me what I was in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.** I was not that super at the language, but **I was good for my peers at the time.**” AB-SE

Kurt was also aware of his improvement over the months, and he developed a genuine belief in his competency in English as Borat was, which again indicates the higher SEE belief that Kurt reached during his English language learning journey.

#### 5.2.3.4. Goldie

Goldie started learning English as a second language in primary school in Iran. She never developed positive feelings and attitudes towards English or learning English during her life in Iran. Moreover, she rarely voluntarily got involved in informal contexts during this period:

“I didn’t really like them [English classes]. So, if I want to be honest with you, I was always cheating in English exams.”

“It [English] was a course, a lesson you need to pass.”

In addition to her negative perception of her own English competency at the time, she also criticized the quality of the English language teaching in Iran as a response upon being asked about English language education in Iran:

“... basic English, you know, like other Turkish students, like, you always have basic English in school.”

Goldie never needed to use English in real terms as a tool of communication in any aspect of her life in Iran. Again, she was never motivated enough to put in the necessary effort to even get satisfactory grades to pass the class, which seems to be the reason why she cheated on her exams. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that she had a low SEE belief in addition to a low level of motivation at the very beginning of her English learning process.

Goldie and her family moved to Antalya in 2018, and she started to continue her high school education in Turkey. This great change in her life became the reason that entirely changed her perception of the English language. She was now compelled to use it as a tool to communicate and socialize with others, gather information, and become more knowledgeable in academic subjects. She, as a result, began to gain self-confidence regarding her skills in English as she remarked as follows:

“When I first started ... talking, it was feeling very, really good because I never had the chance to talk English with other people, you know. ... so, **it was really feeling good, ... I can talk another language too.**” AB-SE

“I have a lot of foreign students, foreign, like, friends ... **so I always talk English with them.**” AB-SE

She directly viewed that she could communicate in English to an extent that would help her deal with a moderate level of academic and daily matters when it came to it, which seems to have boosted her belief in her capabilities. Therefore, it is clear that the pressure to use English on a daily basis both casually and academically because of the Turkish language barrier and the experience she kept acquiring along the way provided her with a higher level of self-efficacy expectancy (High SEE) belief compared to the time when she was in Iran.

#### 5.2.3.5. Hank

Hank's English language learning journey began in the 4th grade in a formal setting. According to his accounts, he had mixed feelings about English and learning English in the very beginning. Learning a new language together with the cultural and social aspects that it would entail was the same primary reason for both his anxiety and excitement as can be seen from the remark he stated upon being asked about how he felt when he first got acquainted with English :

“... a bit excited because ... you start to learn a new thing, a new culture, a new language. And also, I [was] a bit ... frightened maybe, ... I say, anxiety ... because [of] a new language.”

The excitement he felt and the subsequent awareness he developed regarding the benefits that the English language could afford as an instrument seems to have stimulated him to engage in informal English language learning contexts. Therefore, it can be suggested that he had the belief in his capability to an extent to learn English, which can be considered more of a moderate self-efficacy expectancy belief in the very beginning.

The moderate SEE belief that he possessed has prompted a voluntary involvement in informal activities such as watching the news and videos and reading books in English to his liking. These engagements can be regarded as a piece of evidence indicating the incremental increase in his self-confidence in learning English. He later willingly chose to be in the foreign language class (FLC) in high school. By the same token, this choice of his also hints at the high SEE belief that he developed as well. That is, he seems to have managed to cultivate the belief that he had the necessary skills to use the English language at a more advanced level and improve it further as the following remark of his demonstrates:

“I **wanted to be a part of the foreign language class** in the high school.” AB-SE

Hank went ahead and achieved to get admitted to the English Language Teaching (ELT) program at a university in Turkey as he said:

“I prepared for the university exams, then I **achieved to enter a university**.” AB-SE

He emphatically highlighted that he achieved it, which is, again, a clear indicator of the higher self-efficacy expectancy belief (High SEE) that he managed to cultivate.

#### 5.2.3.6. Mary

Mary first got acquainted with English at home through her mother's efforts to teach her the basics of English regarding grammatical rules and vocabulary items to a degree that she could manage. The very reason why her mother acted this way was that she believed that a meaningful proficiency in English was necessary since it would afford career and academic benefits for her daughter. Therefore, all these attempts seem to have driven Mary to harbor positive feelings toward English and learning it as she openly asserted:

"That got me curious and excited about learning English."

Therefore, it is quite appropriate to suggest that the belief in her capability that she could be a successful English language learner by performing well. The belief for the necessity to learn English was already established before formal education, which can be interpreted that she had at least a moderate level of self-efficacy expectancy belief at the very beginning of her English language learning journey.

The positivity she had been fostering had a constructive influence on her perception of English and how she learned it in a formal setting of the classroom once the school started according to the following account of hers:

"When I got to learn English at school, I never wanted to let it go."

Mary's accounts indicate that the sole English language teaching method used in formal English classes that she attended was the Grammar translation method (GTM), which is considered a very traditional and teacher-centered way of teaching English (Benati, 2018). It is understood from her remarks that the English language teaching in the English classes was not done as it should have according to her current perspective of how English should be taught. Mary especially emphasized that the traditional way of teaching in formal contexts was the dominant method, yet she still improved her skills in English as she expressed herself as follows:

"I was always taught in the traditional methods, like the most traditional ways ever, basically, I didn't even know that we could teach English through songs. **But still, I learned English.**" AB-SE

The highlighted part of the above remark indicates that she fostered a solid belief in her capabilities and competency to excel at learning English no matter what difficulties or setbacks got in her way, which hints at a higher level of self-efficacy expectancy belief that she achieved to cultivate.

Furthermore, she already made her decision to study in an ELT program at university when she was still in high school as Hank did as can be analyzed from the following remark of hers:

“When I was in high school, I wanted to **major in English language teaching.**” AB-SE

Again, such a decisive career plan concerning her future life should be taken as a good piece of evidence showing that she developed a high SEE belief concerning her English language skills.

#### **5.2.4. Conclusions on Self-efficacy**

Individuals with high SEE beliefs can better cope with tasks and carry out activities to attain a desired goal. They tend to be more engaged and come up with more sophisticated plans. Therefore, self-efficacy is more than a mere belief or confidence to achieve a goal or surmount an obstacle. They become in control of their cognitive and emotional processes by directing their actions intentionally to achieve the goal(s) they set based on their own choices, beliefs, decisions, and plans. In essence, it equips individuals with agency and self-regulatory skills (Bandura, 1982, 1989; Graham, 2022). All the participants in this research study, who are ELLs with nativelike pronunciation and fluency, were observed to direct themselves according to their own choices, expectations, thoughts, and emotions in their unique environments. To demonstrate, Borat intentionally chose to attend practical English classes in a private language school to become a better English learner. Jersey willingly started an online blog and deliberately wrote about her personal life in English. Kurt purposefully kept insisting on being able to understand the dialogues in his favorite TV show and video game cinematics without any subtitles. Goldie chose to communicate in English in her social and academic life after she and her family moved to Turkey since she could not speak any Turkish. She pressed forward and tried to create more opportunities to practice her English by making international friends on purpose. Hank intentionally followed a news channel that broadcasted in English and made a career plan to study an ELT program at the university. Mary showed deliberate persistence in becoming a better English language learner even though the teaching methods in the formal setting were too traditional and out of date. She also set her aim to study an ELT program as Hank did.

As can be analyzed easily, each participant developed mostly different expectations, choices, thoughts, or emotions in their unique environments surrounded with subjective conditions during their English learning journeys. Therefore, they came up with different methods, solutions,

or coping mechanisms in such distinctive situations. These cognitive, psychological, and emotional differences seem to have mediated between the circumstances and their behaviors and actions, which comply with what Bandura (1971, 2023), Brown (2000), Compeau and Higgins (1991), and Graham (2022) have asserted. In sum, all of the participants, as conscious agents, put in the necessary effort and exercise self-regulation through their intentional choices and decisions based on their cognitive and affective processes without any external reinforcers as Bandura (1971, 1999) and Graham (2022) put forth. In other words, their higher levels of self-efficacy beliefs made it likelier for them to exercise more frequent self-regulation in their learning. Their self-efficacy beliefs reciprocally increased, which is in accordance with what Su et al. (2018) asserted in their study since they became more independent and self-regulatory in their own learning process.

It is apparent that the level of individuals' beliefs in their self-efficacy affects how they direct their thoughts and emotional processes. The participants with low SEE; Borat, Kurt, and Goldie, at the very beginning of their English language learning journeys avoided taking meaningful actions and shied away from fulfilling tasks or getting involved in formal or informal activities because they believed that they were not capable of successfully dealing with them. That is, low SEE made them delay and prevent actions. A meaningful boost in self-efficacy belief also heralds a relatively lower affective filter that the participants developed over time. A decreasing affective filter leads to less language anxiety but more positive attitudes toward the target language, which encourages ELLs to take the stage more often when it comes to communicating in the target language (Krashen, 1982). Hence, once each participant developed a relatively higher SEE belief due to their reduced affective filter, they became more encouraged and motivated to act based on their unique expectations, thoughts, emotions, and choices. Furthermore, Mary and Hank, two of the participants, even came up with future plans regarding their careers and academic lives. They began to prepare for university entrance examinations. As a result, they turned out to be more engaged in order to realize their goals as Bandura (1982, 1999) asserted in his seminal works.

Additionally, higher SEE beliefs helped all the participants experience less stress since they take more joy and have higher levels of motivation. All the participants felt more motivated and encouraged, and even took more delight once they began to get involved in informal activities based on their choices and expectations in accordance with what Bandura (1989), Bandura and Schunk (1981), Genc et al. (2016), Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003), and Thompson et al. (2022)

put forward in their studies. For instance, Borat developed the confidence and motivation to compete with his classmates in practical English classes. He even enjoyed out-competing the rest of the class. Hank and Mary became so stimulated that they independently decided to study the ELT program at the university. Jersey enjoyed running a blog in English. Kurt loved watching his favorite TV show and playing video games. Goldie took joy in communicating with international students in English.

Regarding the source of self-efficacy expectancy beliefs, the one that was common to all the participants turned out to be *mastery or performance experiences*. Their successes through competency helped them build their self-confidence and motivation resulting in higher SEE belief. Borat, Kurt, and Goldie failed in English classes when they just started learning English. Later, they gained a certain level of competency and got involved in voluntary activities. Borat did it through private lessons. Kurt immersed himself in his favorite TV show and video games. Jersey wrote about her personal life on her blog. Mary and Hank worked hard to realize their goal of studying the ELT program at the university. Goldie socialized with English-speaking people on campus. The findings, again, support the assertion that *mastery or performance experiences* are the most influential source of SEE beliefs in compliance with what Bandura (2023), Maddux and Stanley (1986), and Pajares (2003) proposed. On the other hand, Jersey and Mary, additionally exhibited *vicarious experiences*, which require individuals to observe, model, and imitate another person resulting in developing higher SEE beliefs. Jersey's elder sister and Mary's mother seem to have functioned as models to boost and maintain Jersey and Mary's positivity and self-confidence during their English language learning journeys, which again no doubt shows a solid parallel with what was proposed by Bandura (2023), Maddux and Stanley (1986), and Pajares (2003).

It was found that self-efficacy beliefs got stronger as the participants got more proficient in the English language as Genc et al. (2016) and Wang and Sun (2020) found in their studies. To illustrate, Borat began to get better grades after a while as he continued taking private lessons from a tutor. The tutor focused on what he failed to grasp in English classes at school. Such improvements made him believe in his capability to improve his English further and, in return, he chose to attend practical English classes in a private language school. He experienced authentic communication with an English teacher who is a native speaker of English in those classes. The fact that he was capable of communicating with a native speaker prompted him to acquire an even



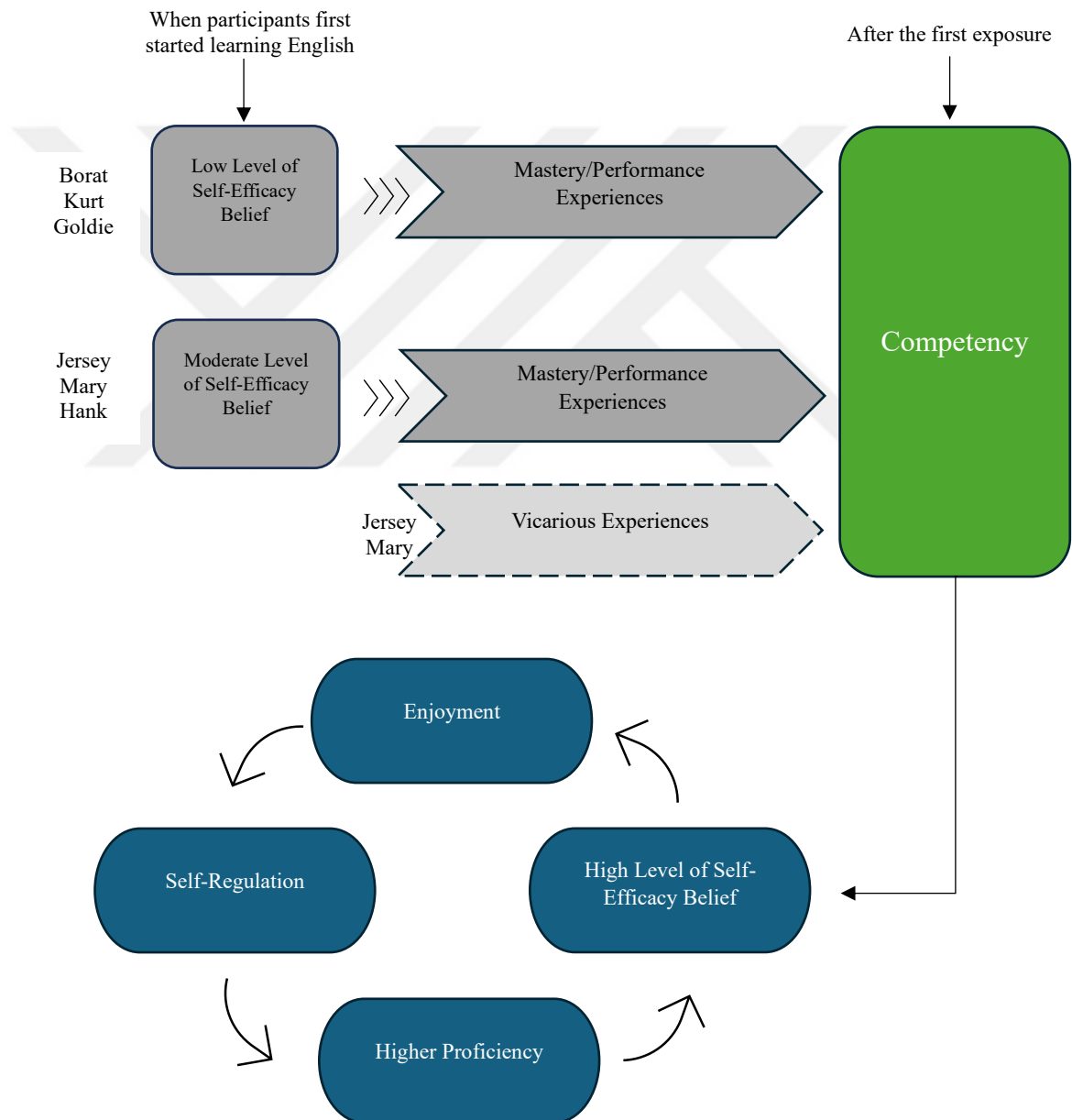
higher level of self-efficacy belief. Even though Jersey had begun to write in Turkish in her blog, she later switched to expressing herself in English once she reached a certain level of proficiency in English. The competency she gained over time made her believe that she could also communicate her feelings and thoughts in English. Kurt relied mostly on subtitles while watching his favorite TV show, Dr. Who. After he brought his listening skills up to a certain level, he gave up depending on the subtitles and even extended this newly developed skill to video games and cinematics since the competency he acquired made him cultivate a higher level of SEE belief. Mary and Hank both voluntarily chose to attend English language classes in high school to be able to get better prepared for university entrance examinations so that they could meet the standards to study English language teaching (ELT) programs at the university. Such early career decisions indicate that they achieved to acquire a relevant degree of self-efficacy beliefs in their skills and knowledge of English in conformity with their proficiency levels in English. All the participants demonstrated significant improvement by enhancing their proficiency levels as their SE beliefs kept developing. Increased SE beliefs in return significantly kept contributing to their improvement reciprocally as Chao et al. (2019), Teng et al. (2021), and Thompson et al. (2022) asserted in their studies. It is of great importance to remember that all the participants had to acquire the essential body of knowledge and skills in the English language to get their SE beliefs to flourish and grow stronger as Graham (2022) and Sardegna et al. (2018) put forth in their research studies.

To summarize, regardless of the level of SE belief that they had possessed when they first started learning English, all the participants first achieved competency through performance/mastery experiences to a degree. They later began to self-regulate their actions via informal activities that they liked to get involved in. They decided on what activities they needed to engage in based on their likes and interests. Two of them, Jersey and Mary, also had family members that they admired as role models, which caused them to go through vicarious experiences as well. Competency and self-determination led to higher proficiency and a higher level of SE belief, which inevitably resulted in enjoyment. From that moment on, as can be seen in Figure 5.2, all these resultant elements created a cycle in which all of them mutually positively affected each other. If there was enjoyment, they more frequently got involved in the activities that they voluntarily and independently decided on. Therefore, more time spent engaging in informal

activities through self-regulation or self-determination led to higher levels of proficiency, which predictably caused enhanced SE beliefs.

**Figure 5.2**

*Development of Self-Efficacy Beliefs*



### 5.3. Analytical Category II: Emotions

The main category or theme *Emotions* in this research study represents the affective and cognitive reactions the participants with native-like pronunciation and fluency exhibited based on the feelings, thoughts, and sentiments that they developed during their English language learning journeys.

It is of utmost importance to be aware of the fact that all the themes and subcategories in this study demonstrate a mutual relationship with the potential to affect and promote one another. That is, autonomous learning ability and self-efficacy development were also observed to affect the level of enjoyment and willingness to put in the necessary effort to reach the desired goal. Below is the discussion on the subcategory of enjoyment.

#### 5.3.1. Discussions and Outcomes of Enjoyment

The subcategory *Enjoyment* in this research study alludes to the joy, delight, and pleasure that the participants took during their English language journeys.

All the participants ended up enjoying the tasks and activities in their English learning process even if three of them, who are Borat, Goldie, and Kurt, started the process first with very negative sentiments. The two of the rest, Jersey and Mary, had positive feelings even at the very beginning. On the other hand, the remaining participant Hank, was seen to harbor more like neuter feelings since he had a head start with mixed emotions of both anxiety and excitement. Regardless of how they felt when they first started learning English, they all eventually managed to cultivate enjoyment and pleasure after they gained just enough competency. Subsequently, they all began to engage in informal activities and tasks that they found intriguing and enjoyable based on their subjective or unique preferences and likes. The English language was the primary instrument in the tasks and activities that they took part in. Hence, this joy they acquired cannot be said to be directly related to the learning act of the English language itself. Therefore, it can be asserted that they were surely intrinsically motivated but not toward learning English or the English language itself in the beginning. The intrinsic motivation at hand seems to have been directed toward the fun activities that they took pleasure in doing.

Since “a motivated individual is the one who desires to achieve a goal, works hard to achieve that goal, and enjoys the activity involved” (Gardner and Lalonde, 1985, p. 7), enjoyment is regarded as one of the three pillars that bolster motivation by the SEM. Therefore, all the participants in this study showed an inclination to take joy in the activities that they took part in in accordance with what Gardner and Lalonde (1985) proposed in their seminal work, which also helps the participants become better motivated. Below is the analysis regarding how each of the participants cultivated and fostered enjoyment during their English language learning journeys.

#### 5.3.1.1. Borat

Borat’s initial sentiments were very negative since he could not make any sense of what was being taught in the English class when he first started learning English in the formal setting. To make matters worse, he received deficient grades on the English tests. To put it briefly, Borat started taking compulsory English classes in 6th grade and failed. As a result, there emerged no positive feelings let alone joy at the very beginning when Borat first got exposed to English. His parents intervened his failure as soon as they saw the low grades in his school report at the end of the first term and got him a private tutor with the hope that Borat would improve his English so that he could get higher grades and pass the class.

The private tutor helped him better understand the topics that Borat could not have learned in class such as numbers in English. Additionally, the tutor utilized tasks and activities, which Borat likened to playing games as can be seen from the following remark of his:

“She was just giving me numbers ... in a numeric sense, she was putting them on the paper, and I was just writing the English versions in writing next to them. I was solving the problems. And I **enjoyed that process** because it was just like playing a game.” **E-En**

While the tutor tried to teach him the basic topics knowledge-wise, she also made the learning process more entertaining for him by adopting a more friendly and game-ish manner of teaching. Therefore, it was the first time Borat began to take joy in learning English thanks to the fun way that the tutor cared to assume.

Borat later enrolled in a private English language school and chose to be in a special class, *Practical English Courses* as he called it, which was specifically formed to improve learners’

English communicational skills. It is quite clear that the joy and pleasure he had begun to feel kept on. It can be analyzed as follows:

**“It was really enjoyable for me** because ... I was now feeling safe. I knew the words. ... Now they were something, they meant something.” E-En

As is clear from the above remark, the competency he acquired thus far seems to have made it possible for him to enjoy the classes. Subsequently, positive feelings of joy and pleasure in learning English ensued during his English language learning journey even though he made quite a poor start upon his first exposure to English, which is in accordance with what the SEM proposed regarding the significance of enjoyment in establishing motivation.

#### 5.3.1.2 Jersey

Unlike Borat, Jersey had already developed positive feelings toward informal activities in which English was the sole communication and instruction language even before compulsory English classes started in the formal context. She was intrigued by many informal activities that her elder sister liked to engage in at home such as playing PC games, watching movies, and listening to songs, which were in the English language. For that matter, the elder sister, was also admired and taken as a role model by Jersey. Thus, it did not take long for Jersey to find the informal activities that she would like to get involved in and develop an interest in them. According to Jersey’s accounts, she had already been looking forward to the English classes that would start in 4<sup>th</sup> grade as her following remark clearly shows:

“I was so excited for English classes. And normally I wasn’t a student to be excited to go to school because I didn’t like the maths, social sciences, kind of boring for me.”

Jersey’s subsequent engagements in both informal and formal activities turned out to become more entertaining and enjoyable for her. For instance, her English teacher in primary school was, according to her accounts, prone to sharing autonomy with learners by building and presenting game-like, fun activities that Jersey and her peers would love to do in the classes, which is clear from the two following quotes of hers:

“English was always so **exciting** and **fascinating**.” E-En

“My teacher was really open-minded, ... also she had the passion, she had the awareness. ... **No one was bored. We were all having fun.**” E-En

When compared to the participants who had a poor and even discouraging start, it can be suggested that Jersey's prior interest in informal activities seems to have prompted her to enjoy the activities and tasks in English at an earlier time. Additionally, the teacher's influence has played a significant role in creating a class environment that provides entertainment and fun, which resulted in progress in English language learning.

### **5.3.1.3. Kurt**

Kurt first got acquainted with English when the compulsory English classes started in the formal context, which is very similar to what Borat went through. Comparably, what was being taught in the class did not make any sense to Kurt either. Thus, this lack of comprehension seems to have made him initially go through frustration and confusion, which appears to have led him to language anxiety as he stated the following:

"I was really bad at English. ... It did not progress."

These negative sentiments continued until he ran into a TV show that was broadcast in English with Turkish subtitles. According to his accounts, he got addicted to it, and he later began to develop a desire to be able to understand the dialogues, conversations, and speeches in the TV show without a need to read the subtitles, as is apparent from the following remark of his:

"I really wanted to understand ... without trying to catch up with the subtitles. I really didn't want to read all that ... I just wanted to watch and understand what was happening. It motivated me at the time."

Furthermore, Kurt also began to play PC games whose instructions and operations were all in the English language, and he got very keen on them, too. These two informal activities, watching a TV show and playing PC games, that he liked to engage in began to become the source of his enjoyment at the time and the English language was the primary instrument to attain it:

"At the time I was playing a game called GTA San Andreas. ... I played this game over, over and over again with subtitles on."

In secondary school, he met an English teacher, whom he calls "one of my favorite teachers." This teacher seems to have adopted a learner-centered way of teaching and preferred sharing autonomy with learners by taking learners' wishes, choices, and interests into account. To illustrate, he got them to watch movies in English during class hours as a task, and afterwards he

gave them quizzes regarding them. It is clear that Kurt happened to have fun activities in the formal setting as well in addition to what he did in his leisure time as he remarked as follows:

“I met one of my favorite teachers till this day, Selcuk Hoca, I still remember his name. That guy taught me how to learn English while enjoying it. ... He let us watch movies through our smart boards, like English movies.” **E-En**

Very similar to what Borat and Jersey experienced, the teacher came up with enjoyable activities in class. In other words, in addition to the enjoyment that he took in the informal settings, the formal context also afforded enjoyable tasks thanks to the teacher’s interactive methods and philosophy of teaching. Such a fun way of teaching and learning in the formal context has helped him a lot to advance his English. According to his accounts, the competency that he acquired over time let him relatively better understand the conversations and speeches both in games and shows, which resulted in more joy.

Consequently, it has been observed that Kurt, just like the rest of the participants, began to enjoy the tasks and activities while learning English during his English language learning journey.

#### **5.3.1.4. Goldie**

Goldie started learning English in Iran as a second language in a formal setting. In 2018, she and her family moved to Turkey. When in Iran, she never became truly motivated to learn English in any way. According to the following accounts of hers, she did not feel like learning it at all and was never willing to put in the necessary effort to learn it:

“I wasn’t really willing for it. I really wanted to go into courses but ... it was very hard for me sitting there, listening to teachers so I never tried to learn in classes.”

“I didn’t really like them [English classes]. So, if I want to be honest with you, I was always cheating in English exams.”

When the above remarks are taken into consideration, it is fair to assert that Goldie did not feel almost any enjoyment when she first got exposed to English in the formal setting.

After moving to Turkey, Goldie had to communicate with the people around her either at school or in her social life by using the only language in common, which is English, since she could not speak the dominant language, Turkish. Thus, it is important to note that her initial motivation was to be able to overcome the language barrier with the help of English in her new social and

academic environment. It was not directed toward English or learning the English language per se. Seeing firsthand that she could utilize English as an effective communication tool seems to have both boosted her self-confidence and prompted her to take joy in her achievement communication-wise, which can be analyzed clearly from the following quote of hers:

“When I first started ... talking, **it was feeling very, really good** because I never had the chance to talk English with other people.” **E-En**

The initial feeling of enjoyment came with her relatively more successful efforts in communicating with others in the English language. In other words, Goldie, as the others did, reached a point of adequate competency and motivation that let her in return begin to take joy in the social, personal, and academic conversations that she engaged in during her English language learning journey.

#### **5.3.1.5. Hank**

When Hank began his English language learning journey in a formal language learning environment, he felt mixed emotions of both excitement and anxiety. He was intrigued by the concept of a new language and the new culture that came with it although it caused him to be threatened at the same time by the potential challenges and difficulties that it could bring along. Hank’s initial positive sentiment toward a language that he had not known anything about seems to have resulted from his innate inclination to discover new phenomena, which points to the open-mindedness that he possessed through his following remark:

“In my childhood, I wondered about the other cultures, other countries, other countries’ policies, other countries’ events.”

As discussed earlier in the literature review section, such open-mindedness toward a foreign culture and language, according to the SEM, is regarded as a strong indicator of integrativeness. As a crucial nuance to take note of notwithstanding, it seems quite definite from the above remark that his natural tendency to learn about other countries and cultures was not only limited to specific English-speaking communities and their respective cultures. The remark after all points to his interest in international communities and global cultures around the world, which is definitely in accordance with Ushioda and Dörnyei’s (2009) argument that integrativeness is not only about a specific English-speaking community but also about a much larger, global English-speaking



community. Therefore, this excitement can be considered to have also turned into a source of his enjoyment at the very beginning of his English language learning journey. That is, the more he got more knowledgeable about the language, community, and culture, the more joy he would take in it. Actually, this eagerness to get more information regarding the target language, culture, and community seems to have prompted him to watch the news on international TV channels which would be the best place for anyone who wishes to learn more about the target language, culture, and community as is clear from the following remark:

**“I loved to watch the Euro news** when I was a child and I tried to understand what they were saying in English.” **E-En**

Hank’s open-mindedness led him to engage in informal activities to his liking, which was watching international news in English in Hank’s case. He openly stated that he loved watching the news presented in English. Additionally, it is interpreted from both his accounts and the quote above that he achieved an adequate level of competency to be able to follow and make sense of the news in English. This proficiency made it possible for him to enjoy the activity of watching the news in English.

#### **5.3.1.6. Mary**

Similar to what Jersey experienced in her early childhood, Mary became exposed to English before her formal English language learning started. This prompted her to develop and foster initial positive sentiments. To illustrate, Mary’s mother turned on the channels that broadcasted in English such as BBC so that Mary could hear the language and get more interested in it, and maybe hopefully pick up as well. She also tried to teach her some basic concepts concerning English such as the English alphabet. All these efforts got Mary’s attention and she developed a desire to learn the English language as is obvious from the remark she shared:

“I wanted to learn it, I wanted to speak it.”

Mary had already begun to develop a positive attitude and motivation toward English even before she started school, which would help her quickly embrace a more favorable perception of the English classes in the formal language learning context as follows:

“When I got to learn English at school, I never wanted to let it go.”

Upon being asked directly how she felt regarding her English learning process, she openly expressed that she took enjoyment in it by sharing the following statement of hers:

**“I really enjoyed the process.” E-En**

Mary’s mother considered that a high level of proficiency in English would help Mary become a successful individual academically and career-wise according to Mary’s accounts. Her ensuing efforts to this end of making Mary embrace the English language seem to have paid off and caused her to acquire the necessary motivation much earlier. In other words, her mother came up with the informal activities that prompted her to enjoy the process and subsequently develop positive feelings toward the English language and learning it as well.

Consequently, Mary, just like the other participants, began to enjoy the English language learning process.

### **5.3.2. Conclusions on Enjoyment**

In this research study, four of the six participants; Borat, Kurt, Hank, and Goldie went through negative emotions such as anxiety, frustration, confusion, boredom, and indifference when they first got acquainted with English and started learning it in the formal language learning context. Goldie demonstrated more of a lack of interest and concern rather than anxiety or frustration though. In brief, these four participants first started off their English language learning journey with negative feelings and sentiments. In the course of their formal education, however, they began to generate positive feelings toward English. In Borat’s and Kurt’s cases, the reason was their teachers’ skills, attitudes, and interactive teaching methods, which prompted a positive classroom/learning environment as a result. In a similar vein, Jersey’s positive attitudes that she had developed earlier were reinforced by her primary teacher’s support and autonomy-sharing nature. A relatively less stress-free learning setting has helped the emergence of joy and pleasure as Resnik and Schallmoser (2019) showed in their research studies. These three participants felt more enjoyment and willingness but less anxiety in such encouraging classroom environments created by supportive teachers, which also conforms with the findings of Dewaele and Dewaele (2018), Lee (2022), and Zeng (2021). Instead, Hank managed to foster positivity toward English due to his innate curiosity toward foreign cultures and people even though the challenging nature of learning a second language also intimidated him, which was also the reason why he

demonstrated negative emotions in the first place. As Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) and Yeşilçınar and Erdemir (2023) discussed in their studies, positive and negative feelings such as anxiety and enjoyment can co-occur with varying degrees in language learning, and they are independent of each other. On the other hand, having to live in a foreign country whose language she could not speak changed her perception of English in Goldie's case. The immediate need to be able to communicate with people in her new surroundings made her socialize with people who could speak English. Her efforts to communicate in English and improve her skills in it caused her to cultivate positive feelings. The joy that she acquired through her engagements in conversing in English as she progressed made her more willing to take part in such activities and involvements by looking for more opportunities to encounter and socialize with English-speaking people, which agrees with what Dewaele and Li (2022), Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), and Yeşilçınar and Erdemir (2023) found in their studies.

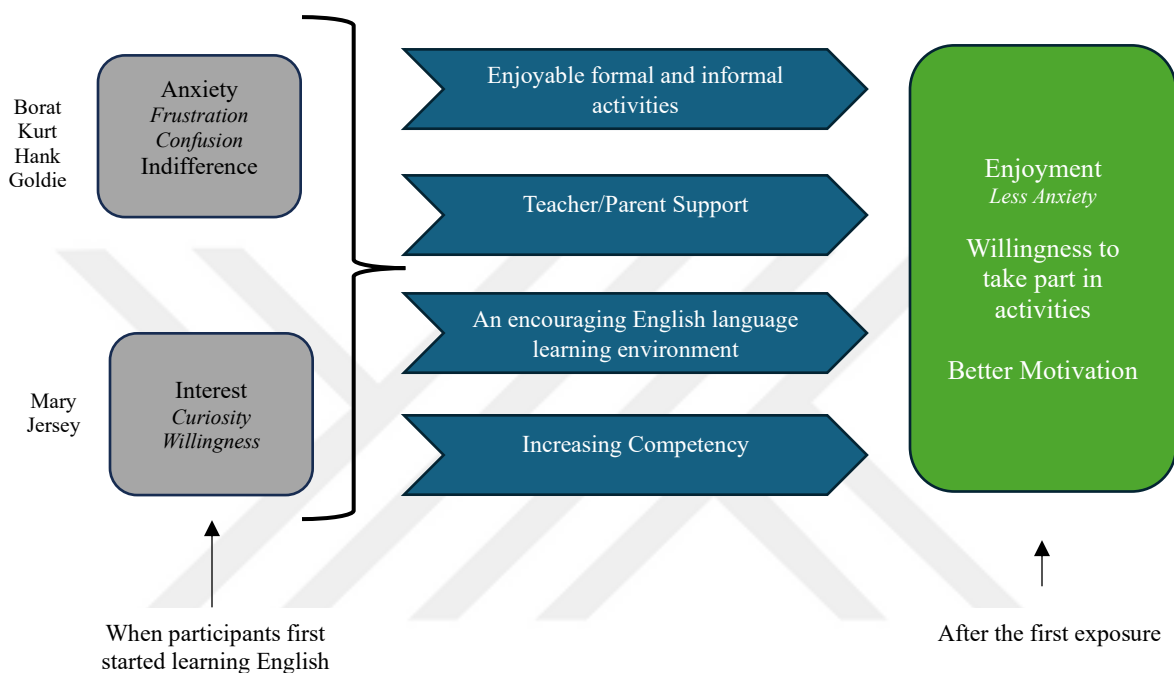
On the other hand, Mary and Jersey, the other two participants, first got acquainted with English at home, in an informal setting, thanks to their family members. Their accounts showed that curiosity, love, and willingness were the first feelings that they felt. Jersey got swept up by the enjoyable informal activities that her elder sister got involved in and also developed a strong tendency to engage in similar informal activities such as playing PC games in English, watching movies in English, and listening to music in English. She voluntarily and independently looked for fun games, interesting movies, and pleasant songs that suited her likes and preferences. For instance, she explored YouTube or discovered online game platforms to this end. The willingness and joy that she felt, as affective factors, resulted in her inventing her own ways and tactics for finding fun English activities, which is in agreement with what Oxford (2018) put forth concerning emotions. Additionally, Jersey, very similar to what Borat and Kurt experienced, had a supportive teacher who was very talented at coming up with enjoyable English language learning activities. According to her accounts, the teacher succeeded in creating a stress-free learning environment in the classroom, which again confirms the findings of Dewaele and Dewaele (2018), Lee (2022), and Zeng (2021). Mary's mother tried to teach Mary the basics such as the English alphabet or greetings in English in the comfortable and free environment of their home. She also tried to introduce her samples of authentic and standard English through English broadcasting TV channels such as BBC. Furthermore, she made direct efforts to make Mary cognizant of the significance of having high

proficiency in the English language by emphasizing the prospective benefits and advantages. Thus, a competition-and stress-free environment made it possible for both Mary and Jersey to experience positive feelings such as joy and love when they were first introduced to English, which is also in conformity with what Resnik and Schallmoser (2019) discussed in their study. These earlier positive feelings, furthermore, helped both participants to embrace the English classes in the formal language learning setting as well. That is, they continued adopting positive feelings and sentiments in their English language learning journeys regardless of the learning environment being formal or informal.

Consequently, all the participants in this research study, who are highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency, ended up fostering enjoyment, which, as Elahi Shirvan et al. (2020) discussed in their paper, relies on the unique personal features and characteristics of the environments that they found themselves in. More importantly, they showed an apparent tendency to take relatively more joy in both formal and informal activities and tasks as well as in English language learning as they increasingly progressed by gaining competency and proficiency in English, as Dewaele and Li (2022), Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), and Yeşilçınar and Erdemir (2023) proposed in their studies. Moreover, taking pleasure or enjoyment in learning is regarded as one of the three qualities of a motivated language learner according to the SEM. Learners' attitudes in concert with the desire and the motivational intensity make up the learners' motivation to learn a second language (Gardner & Lalonde, 1985). That is, simply wanting is not enough. Just hard work is not sufficient. Similarly, merely enjoying the activities does not guarantee the right sort of motivation to appear. These three qualities must be present all at once to be able to regard an individual as a truly motivated learner as the SEM proposes. All the participants in this study developed enjoyment and thus fulfilled one of the three requirements for the right kind of motivation to emerge in accordance with the SEM.

**Figure 5.3**

*Emergence of Enjoyment*



**5.3.3. Discussions and Outcomes of Volitional Effort**

The subcategory *volitional effort* in this research study represents the participants' willingness to put in the necessary effort and hard work as well as the capability of preservation of endurance and tolerance without being intimidated by the demanding tasks and activities. In the process of their English language learning, these specific attitudes improve their English language skills.

All the participants exhibited a noticeable devotion to learning the English language once they developed certain degrees of self-efficacy and autonomous learning ability. Enjoyment contributed to their perseverance while engaging in activities and tasks in both formal and informal contexts since such positive feelings as joy and pleasure, as discussed earlier, are considered one of the three pillars that play a major role in establishing motivation. According to the SEM, working

hard to achieve the desired goal, in addition to enjoyment, is the other pillar that is considered significant in the emergence of motivation (Gardner & Lalonde, 1985). Hence, all the participants in this research study, have been observed to develop a tendency to work hard and put the necessary effort into the activities that they engaged in, which seems to be in accordance with what the SEM proposed. Below is the analysis regarding the dedication and commitment each participant voluntarily demonstrated during their English language learning journeys.

#### **5.3.3.1. Borat**

Borat's first exposure to English in the formal context did not pan out well since he made almost no sense of the English language, and as a result, he went through certain hardships that caused him to significantly struggle in the very beginning. The English lessons that he took from a private tutor and the practical English Course in the private language school that he subsequently attended turned him into a learner with a relatively higher SE belief. These extracurricular boosts got him to enjoy the activities and tasks in both informal and formal contexts. The ensuing relative improvement in his performance cultivated more positive sentiments and encouraged him to apply more effort to learning English as is clear from the following statement that he shared:

“I just **almost took no breaks from these courses**, these practical courses of such nature ... **from that point on until the end of my high school years**.” E-VE

The above remark clearly shows that Borat became a learner who was more willing to strive to learn the English language and improve his skills in it. In other words, he managed to demonstrate volitional effort during his English language learning journey especially after he had reached a certain level of SE belief and autonomous language learning ability.

#### **5.3.3.2. Jersey**

Jersey had already developed positive feelings and attitudes toward informal activities in which English was the instruction and communication language before her formal English language learning thanks to her elder sister. Once she acquired just enough competency in English, which also enhanced her self-confidence, her engagement in informal activities and eagerness to use English in those activities such as keeping an online diary in English took off. In other words, her high level of self-efficacy belief (High SE) together with her developing autonomous learning

abilities prompted her to become a more active learner. She began to look for more opportunities to get involved in informal activities including watching YouTube videos, as is clearly understood from the following quote:

“I spent a lot of time in high school watching YouTube videos.” E-VE

All this volitional effort and time that she put in also indicates that she became more motivated as perseverance is considered one of the SEM’s three qualities of a motivated learner in addition to enjoyment.

Her positive attitudes and sentiments, motivation, and determination continued strengthening in the formal language learning contexts, too. The English teacher was supportive, autonomy-sharing, and creative. Therefore, Jersey developed an admiration for her English teacher in primary school as she had done for her elder sister, which seems to have had a great influence on her motivation toward the English classes in the formal setting as well. Therefore, she demonstrated voluntary efforts and persistence, which is clear from the following statement of hers: “I really liked English. And I was studying for it. And I really liked getting high grades from English as well.” E-VE

The two quotes above indicate that she did not abstain from hard work whatsoever, whether in informal or formal learning contexts when it came to learning and improving her English.

#### **5.3.3.3. Kurt**

Kurt’s acquaintance with the English language started with the English classes in the formal language learning context. Very similar to what Borat went through, Kurt did not make any sense of English or comprehend the purpose of the formal classes when English was first introduced to him. It caused frustration and confusion for him, which in turn seems to have led to Language Anxiety (LA). These negative emotional factors prompted him to possess low self-efficacy beliefs (Low SE), which is considered to influence motivation to a great extent in a negative way. It can easily be seen from the statement that he imparted:

“I was really bad at English. ... It did not progress.”

Kurt’s perception of English began to dramatically change when he ran into his favorite TV show-to-be, Dr. Who. Over time, he developed a desire to acquire the capability to understand what the characters were talking about in the show. Additionally, PC games, in which all the instructions

were given in English, began to catch his attention and interest as well in the meantime. Kurt began to spend more and more time engaging in these informal activities, where English was the primary communication and instruction instrument, willfully and purposefully as is clear from the following accounts of his:

“At the time I was playing a game called GTA San Andreas. ... You **have to play it nonstop** for a few weeks to finish it. ... So, I **played it again, again, and again** while **watching all the cut scenes and trying to understand** what all the characters are saying, what is happening.” E-VE

“My family always said to me, like, don’t play all these games, or don’t watch all those movies. ... **but I still did play them and watched them anyways.**” E-VE

Kurt put in a great deal of effort, and he imparted as much time voluntarily to take part in the above informal activities and also to improve his English skills through them due to the need and desire to be able to operate in these activities more efficiently despite his parents’ objections and interference, which shows the unbreakable perseverance that he developed.

#### 5.3.3.4. Goldie

Like Kurt and Borat, Goldie’s English language learning journey also began in a formal language learning setting. She did not develop any positive sentiments either toward the language itself or learning it when she first got exposed to it, which is pretty obvious from the remarks she shared:

“I wasn’t really willing for it. ... it was very hard for me sitting there, listening to teachers so I never tried to learn in classes.”

“I didn’t really like them [English classes]. So, if I want to be honest with you, I was always cheating in English exams.”

She was quite unwilling to even work a tad to get satisfactory grades that would have been sufficient to pass the class. Instead, she cheated. Therefore, it is apparent that she demonstrated no sign of perseverance when English was first introduced.

When she and her family moved to Turkey, she happened to feel the urgent need for a common language, which was English, to be able to communicate with other people in her immediate environment since she could not speak any Turkish at all. This new period in her life was the very time when she saw firsthand the significance of the English language as a



communication tool. From then on, she voluntarily chose to put in more effort and time to improve her communication skills in English, which is obvious from the below response upon being asked about what exactly she did to achieve such progress:

**“I watch movies at least every two days. ... I always speak English with my friends. ... I always Google ...”** E-VE

Goldie showed a solid commitment to improving her English based on the unique conditions that she found herself in. She looked for and discovered the informal activities that she liked to voluntarily engage in to fulfill what she urgently needed. In addition, she was always on the lookout for more opportunities to converse with native and non-native speakers of English. Her willful and purposeful commitment and dedication to these engagements are clear signs of the volitional effort that she put in.

#### **5.3.3.5. Hank**

Hank went through mixed feelings of anxiety and excitement when he first got acquainted with the English language. He felt excited because he was going to learn a new language and discover a new culture that would come embedded with it. On the other hand, the challenging and taxing nature of it made him experience just an opposite, negative feeling, which was anxiety. Hank got involved in informal activities to his liking once he became aware of the instrumental value of the English language as Goldie also came to realize. He went a step further though, and he independently decided to be in the foreign language class (FLC) in high school and craved to advance his competency and proficiency in English after he acquired a higher SE belief and developed an autonomous learning ability to a certain extent as all the participants did. His goal was not only to continue his English language learning journey however, but also to go beyond it by studying in the English language teaching program (ELT) at the level of a bachelor's degree. He demonstrated the voluntary perseverance to make it happen, which is clear from the following remark of his:

**“I prepared for the university exams,** then I managed to enter a university.” E-VE

This remark indicates he was able to manage to develop the necessary commitment and a sense of persistence in order to get a high enough score from the English test of the university entrance examination. This exam is officially held once a year in Turkey, and this achievement verified his

goal and dream of getting admitted to the undergraduate program of ELT. The fact that he did achieve it with flying colors can be taken as solid evidence of years long voluntary effort and time that he put in his language learning process.

#### 5.3.3.6. Mary

Mary first got exposed to English in the comfort of her home via her mother's efforts. Therefore, she had already begun to develop positive sentiments toward the English language and learning it. This positivity continued to strengthen after she started school and began to take English classes in the formal language learning context. Just like the rest of the participants, she managed to gain autonomy and cultivate self-efficacy capabilities to a certain degree during her English language learning journey.

Mary's following remarks indicate that the sole English language teaching method used in the English classes in the formal English language learning contexts that she attended was the Grammar translation method (GTM), which is considered a very traditional, outdated, and teacher-centered way of teaching English (Benati, 2018):

"I started learning English at school formally in second grade. ... I was going to a public school. All I was asked to do was read and write and do the grammar, memorize the vocabulary and you don't have to have conversations in English, whatever. **But still, I wanted to learn in every way I could, and I did it.**" E-VE

It is understood from her above remarks that the English language teaching in the English classes was not done as they should have according to Mary's current point of view of English language teaching. Therefore, she was never truly asked to use English communicatively in formal English language contexts. She, however, could still maintain her devotion to learning English and worked willingly hard to learn it despite unfavorable conditions, which no doubt points to the volitional effort she made along the way during her English language journey.

Another piece of evidence that can also point to her developed perseverance is that she also chose to be in the foreign language class in high school and set the goal of studying at the ELT program in college just as Hank did, which is pretty obvious from the following account of hers:

"When I was in high school, I **wanted to major in English language teaching.**" E-VE

Mary also put in years-long voluntary hard work to realize her goal of getting admitted to an ELT program, which points to the volitional effort that she developed and embraced.

#### **5.3.4. Conclusions on Volitional Effort**

As discussed in the previous parts, all the participants in this research study developed autonomous learning abilities, and they reached higher levels of SE beliefs especially once they gained a certain degree of competency in English. They all got busy getting involved in informal activities to their liking over time, which added enjoyment to their English learning process. Additionally, they extended their high SE beliefs and enjoyment to the formal English language learning contexts as well. Additionally, a positive environment in both formal and informal learning contexts is observed to have been established with the help of supportive teachers, peers, or family members, which ensured the emergence and fostering of enjoyment in language learning as opposed to anxiety. Accordingly, positivity and support in language learning contexts also favorably affected the whole learning process including the willfully chosen persistence and dedication that participants would demonstrate. Therefore, the *volitional effort* or voluntary perseverance and persistence followed as a natural result of better competency in English, higher SE beliefs, and enjoyment.

It is undoubtedly noticed that the two subconstructs of *perseverance of effort* and *consistency of interest* are considered to make up the concept of *grit* when the current literature is reviewed as already discussed in the literature review section. *Perseverance of effort* refers to the relentless desire to be improved despite any hardships while the *consistency of interest* alludes to an ongoing interest, which is going after one's goals (Duckworth et al., 2007). The subcategory *volitional effort* in this research study represents the participants' willingness to put in the necessary effort and hard work as well as the capability of preservation of endurance and tolerance without being intimidated by the demanding tasks and activities in the process of English language learning so as to successfully continue engaging in the informal activities that they freely chose to improve their skills in English. Therefore, the code *volitional effort* seems to be conceptually closer to the subconstruct of *perseverance of effort* of Duckworth et al. (2007). *Perseverance of effort* is considered a superior predictor or indicator of performance and success (Credé et al., 2017; Feng & Papi, 2020; and Lam & Zhou, 2022). All the participants in this research study endeavored to

improve their skills in English, and they allocated the necessary time for it, which helped them turn into highly-accomplished ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency, in compliance with the findings of Credé et al. (2017), Feng and Papi (2020), and Lam and Zhou (2022).

To clarify, Borat never quit attending practical English courses at the private language school in his hometown until he had to leave for college. He kept improving his communicative skills in English. Jersey never gave up her engagements on YouTube and other online platforms. She kept moving forward to become a better English language learner as she also made efforts to become a successful English language student in the formal context as well. Mary and Hank not only strived for better English skills but also decided to major in English Language Teaching. Therefore, they put in years of purposeful and voluntary hard work to prepare for the English Test in the University Entrance Examination. Kurt kept getting involved in informal activities including watching TV shows and playing video games, and thus he continued improving his skills in English without taking any breaks despite his parents' objections and interference.

Goldie worked hard to improve her communicative skills in English so that she could socialize with people around her. She always looked for foreigners to practice and improve her speaking skills. All the participants managed to retain the will to move forward and become better ELLs despite the unique hardships and shortages that they had to face. Given that all the participants in this study panned out to be native-like and fluent ELLs, the volitional effort can be considered to be a better predictor of performance, success, and motivational intensity following the findings of Credé et al. (2017), Feng and Papi (2020), Lam and Zhou (2022), and Teimouri et al. (2022).

All the participants demonstrated enjoyment in getting involved in activities in which English was the main communication tool. The joy and pleasure that they attained via such activities seem to have prolonged the time that they spent and increased the effort that they made. Therefore, it can be asserted that the enjoyment and volitional effort that the participants developed had a positive correlation, which is in line with the findings of Pawlak et al. (2022) and Wei et al. (2019). That is, language learning enjoyment was an explicit predictor of perseverance and persistence in L2 learning. In addition, *enjoyment* and *perseverance* are counted as the attributes of a motivated language learner in addition to the *desire* to learn the language according to the SEM (Gardner, 2006, 2019; Gardner & Lalonde, 1985). All the participants developed autonomous

language learning abilities by engaging in especially informal or extracurricular activities that demanded considerable time, energy, and effort. As a result, they all ended up with frequent engagement or involvement in both formal and informal activities based on their tastes and preferences, which resulted in more voluntary effort and time. As Feng and Papi (2020) also found out, perseverance panned out to be a better predictor of motivational intensity. Since all the participants in this research study without an exception ended up developing perseverance during their English language learning journeys, the volitional effort that they developed together with enjoyment assisted them in becoming better-motivated language learners, which complies with what the SEM proposed (Gardner, 2006, 2019; Gardner & Lalonde, 1985).

In summary, all the participants in this study, who are ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency, apparently put in a lot of effort and time engaging in activities where English was perceived as the primary communication tool. In other words, they showed the necessary voluntary and willful dedication to getting involved in both in-class and out-of-class tasks and activities in which English is used as the primary communication and instruction language regardless of how taxing they might be. Furthermore; the feelings of joy, delight, or pleasure that the participants acquired during their language-learning processes have provided a more manageable endurance by helping them put in more deliberate time and effort. Therefore, the code *volitional effort* in this research study is positively correlated with motivation, higher SE beliefs, self-determination capabilities, a supportive language learning environment, and enjoyment.

**Figure 5.4**

*Emergence of Volitional Effort*



## 5.4. Analytical Category III: Motivation Types

### 5.4.1. Discussions and outcomes of IREM and ISM

The SEM and the SDT, as two distinct theories, came up with their own concepts of motivation regarding language learning. In this research study, it has been found that all the participants came to realize the instrumental value of the English language during their English language learning journeys. This instrumentality is related to both the SEM's instrumental motivation and the SDT's external motivation. Jersey and Kurt, as an example of instrumentality, needed the English language to be able to successfully engage in informal or out-of-class activities that they loved. Goldie, Borat, Hank, and Mary considered proficiency in English more of an important asset to cash in on to attain certain benefits. These two motivation types that belong to separate models or theories are actually quite hard to distinguish in many cases or situations as Noels et al. (1999) had already specified.

The crucial point is that the participants did not develop an internal or intrinsic impetus merely toward learning the English language per se or the English language itself during their English language learning journeys. They all just regarded English as a very useful tool to reach a desired goal or to effectively and efficiently operate in certain desired activities. The two of the participants; Kurt and Jersey were observed to be intrinsically motivated toward the wanted goal or activity and they just made good use of English to that end. Therefore, it has been thought to be *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* in this research study when the instrumentality of the English language was utilized by the participant to reach a goal that was innately sought after.

If, however, the English language was intended to be used to solely gain an advantage or benefit without a natural desire for the end goal, then it has been considered to be *instrumental motivation*. To be brief, the instrumental aspect of their motivation was found to be the common quality that all the participants exhibited during their English language learning journeys. The internal regulation or intrinsic dimension as a noteworthy nuance, however, was also taken into account when the raw data was analyzed and coded in this research study. Yet, this intrinsic nature was towards the informal activity that they voluntarily chose to be engaged in, not for learning the English language per se. As a result, the instrumental motivation and the internally regulated extrinsic motivation, which are two very similar concepts of two separate models, were found to

be the common attributes that all the participants have shared. Below is the analysis of each participant regarding the type of motivation they ended up with during their English language learning journeys.

#### 5.4.1.1. Borat

Despite the language anxiety that he went through when he first got exposed to English in a formal setting, he became aware of the fact that he had to receive satisfactory grades to be able to pass the class. Therefore, he felt compelled to learn English in order to achieve it, which is clear from the following account he shared:

**“I had to pass those classes** if I wanted to make it through the school.” **Mo-ISM**

This demonstrates that the impetus for improving the low grades that he received by being the only motivating factor in the first place, which is also an example of SEM’s instrumental motivation. His parents got him a private tutor once they realized that he had been struggling and Borat agreed to it. Here, *externally regulated extrinsic motivation* (EREM) seems to be at work as well, which separates Borat from the rest of the participants, since his parents played a major role by talking him into receiving extra private English classes. It was not his own absolute inherent decision. It is understood from Borat’s following remark that the tutor was receptive to what materials or what sorts of exercises would be most liked by Borat, and therefore, she appears to have specifically designed and organized the process that would most intrigue him:

“She was just giving me numbers ... in numeric sense she was putting them on the paper, and I was just writing the English versions in writing next to them. I was solving the problems. And I enjoyed that process because it was just like playing a game.”

It seems that he began to take joy in the activities or tasks for the first time while learning English, and thus, it is considered the first sign that points to the fact that the initial *externally regulated extrinsic motivation* have been transforming into a more *internally regulated extrinsic motivation*, which hints at the development of internal regulation with respect to the activities that he would be engaging by using the English language. He later attended a specifically designed English class that he called *Practical English Course* at a private English language school primarily with the same intention of improving his school grades. This time, however, it was his own choice to be in this class, which indicates not only his developing self-determination capabilities but also the

impetus that was getting more internally regulated. He kept enjoying the tasks and activities in this new class of his, which is clear from the below account that he imparted:

“... giving us some tasks to solve, ... some role-playing to do, some listening with some gaps in it to fill, and a native speaker to interact with. ... I was in the real English speakers league now. I was not just a school kid who was trying to memorize things.”

It is also apparent from what he revealed that he also began to develop a higher level of SE belief regarding his communicative skills in English. What is of great importance at this point is that he took more joy as he got more confident, which suggests that his improvement or transition from the more external end of the motivational spectrum to the more internal end was developing pretty well. As is already discussed in the literature review section, different constructs of motivation can co-exist or the intensity of each may fluctuate depending on the situation at hand. Thus, it has been witnessed here a transition from an *externally regulated extrinsic motivation* to a more self-regulated extrinsic motivation (SG-EM) or *internally regulated extrinsic motivation*. His desire to learn English and the effort he wished to put into it noticeably improved since the extrinsic motives that he fostered began to get internally regulated. In other words, he started to regard the English language as a valuable instrument not only to perform academically better but also to take as much joy as he could in the activities or tasks that he was to engage as shown below:

“I was trying to speak English. I was trying to say things in English to my classmates. And they did the same. And, you know, having enough of it was one of the problems because once it **turned into a game for me** that’s something that made sense that I felt confident about playing, **I wanted to play that more.**” **Mo-IREM**

“I also enjoyed the experience of **dominating the class**. ... When I felt that, I was at a certain level of proficiency, and I was, kind of, I got the upper hand in the class against my classmates. **I really enjoyed that feeling.**” **Mo-IREM**

It is quite clear that he became more intrinsically motivated toward the English class since he was taking pure joy in his own superior success relative to the others in the class. The same inherent intrinsic orientation towards the English language itself, however, was not observed at that point. To put it briefly, it seems that he tended to use English as an instrument to show that he was much better than the rest of the class.



#### 5.4.1.2. Jersey

Jersey became intrigued by the informal activities that her elder sister engaged in by using the English language of playing PC games in English and listening to English songs, at a very young age. Thus, she had already developed a positive attitude toward the English language via this early exposure thanks to a role model like her elder sister before her formal education started. This positivity was present when she began to take formal English courses in the formal language learning context and kept soaring afterward. Her primary teacher seems to have played an important role in it according to her accounts as she revealed the following remarks:

“I was in a public school. But my lecturer was an amazing person. She was really a lecturer and teacher. And she plays a big role, big part in my English today.”

“She wasn’t someone that is strict. ... She always motivated us.”

Here, a pattern shows up indicating that Jersey’s way of learning, and the level and intensity of her motivation appear to have depended on the role models in her life at the very beginning, which confirms what Gardner (2001) proposed regarding the importance of teachers’ attitudes on learners’ motivational development. Furthermore, it also agrees with the proposition that role *models* serve as examples for learners to observe and imitate their behaviors, as Bandura’s social learning theory suggests, which can be internalized after a proper reinforcement process.

When she thought that she had sufficient competence and confidence to take part in informal activities as her elder sister did, she started to engage in them more independently in every way that she could according to her taste and preferences. To illustrate, she started to play online games in which English was the primary language to communicate with other players or members, which is clear from what she shared:

“As I grew older, when I was, like, ten, eleven, we had Internet, finally, in Turkey. So, I started to look up games online that I can play.”

“That kind of made me go because everyone on the online games was speaking English. And I felt kind of left out, so maybe that’s that.”

As is quite obvious from the above remarks of hers, she began to perceive the English language as a valuable tool to be able to perform successfully in out-of-class activities that she would love to take part in. Therefore, English has specifically functioned as a major *instrument* at this point to reach the desired goal of hers, which was to play games and to interact with English-speaking

people online. She has begun to get intrinsically motivated toward informal activities that she chose to be engaged in, which can be analyzed from the lengthy account of hers below:

“As the years go by, probably because of **my passion for YouTube** because I, to be honest, spent a lot of time in high school watching YouTube videos in YouTubers. There were a lot of British YouTubers at that time, at that time of YouTube. **They were really popular.** And sometimes it was kind of hard to understand what they were talking about, so maybe that also kind of made me go and motivated me because **I wanted to understand what they were talking about.** Because at the end of the day, a lot of their viewers were from the UK, and the USA, so they were native speakers. And **I didn’t want to feel left out, and I wanted to understand everything, every joke, every aspect of their video.**” Mo-IREM

The above remarks of hers clearly show that the English language became the primary tool for her to be able to successfully take part in her favorite informal activities such as surfing on YouTube to socialize with English-speaking people, and playing PC and/or online games. As importantly, her concern about being left out in the online community may hint that she also wished to be a respected member of the English-speaking community, which points to the SEM’s *integrative motivation* or the L2 Motivational Self System’s *integrative orientation*. In terms of the *L2 Motivational Self System*, *integrative orientation* has become related to the desire not only to be identified with a certain English-speaking community and culture but also with a more global community in which English is used as the lingua franca. In Jersey’s case, people in an online game community could be from anywhere in the whole world. In this sense, it can be suggested that Jersey was also developing an *international posture* through an integrative orientation, which has also affected her motivation towards English.

Jersey has also noticed the possible pragmatic benefits of having a certain level of English language competency, which seems pretty apparent from the following remark of hers:

“I really liked English. And I was studying for it. and **I really liked getting high grades from English as well.**” Mo-ISM

Her desire to receive higher grades on her English exams or tests by improving her English points to a definite advantage that she would benefit from in certain ways, which is perceived as a sign of the SEM’s instrumental motivation in this study.

Consequently, Jersey developed the *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* and *instrumental motivation* during her English language learning journey. The English language have become a perfect instrument to be able to do the activities that she enjoyed doing and provided her with certain advantages in her social and academic life.

#### 5.4.1.3. Kurt

Kurt's first acquaintance with the English language took place when he started taking the compulsory English course in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. It was a disappointing start for him. Just as what happened to Borat, he could not make any sense of the language, and he failed to improve any positive attitudes and feelings toward the English language and learning it when he first got exposed to it. Later, he ran into a TV show, called Dr. Who, broadcasted in English, and he subsequently developed a desire to understand what the characters spoke without a need to read the subtitles. Moreover, PC games in the English language began to become his favorite free time activities. Therefore, the informal activities that he got intrinsically motivated toward made him realize that the English language was the primary instrument to be able to successfully get involved in them. His intrinsic motivation was not toward the English language itself, which is pretty clear from the following remark of his:

**"I played it [GTA, PC game] again, again, and again. ... While playing this game, I picked some more along the way, and I was a bit better at English thanks to this game."** Mo-IREM

The above remark clearly indicates that he made use of the English language as an instrument to play his favorite PC games. They, in return, helped him learn more and improve further in English, which was more of a bonus for him. It is vital here to see that learning English was not his primary purpose after all as the following quote from him makes it clearer:

**"I really wanted to understand ... without trying to catch up with the subtitles. I really didn't want to read all that ... I just wanted to watch and understand what was happening. It motivated me at the time."** Mo-IREM

The inherent desire and the joy he got from watching Dr. Who seems to have been the main reason for him to improve his English, which was obviously a product of the self- or *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* of the SDT. It should be considered extrinsic because it was not his sheer

yearning to learn the English language itself but the joy that he felt from watching his favorite TV show, which was certainly regulated internally.

In summary, Kurt also came to realize the instrumental value and the use of the English language through especially informal activities internally regulated by Kurt himself during his English language learning journey.

#### 5.4.1.4. Goldie

Goldie, at the age of sixteen, moved to Turkey with her family from Iran. She had to go on with her education at a new school in a new country whose language she could not speak at all. Since her native language was Persian and she could not speak any Turkish, she had to communicate with her peers at school using the only common language at hand, which was English. It is quite apparent that she felt the urgent need to use the English language as a communication tool, which she had never felt before when she was back in Iran, which can be seen from the following account of hers:

“When I first came here [Turkey], **I just needed a language to communicate with others.**” Mo-ISM

She began to perceive the English language more pragmatically. In other words, Goldie noticed the vitality of English firsthand as an instrument both in her personal and academic life since she felt obliged for the first time in her life to use English in real terms. Consequently, there is no doubt that she became instrumentally motivated (ISM) toward the English language since she realized that it would afford her certain advantages and practical benefits in her new social and academic life.

Goldie also came to be cognizant of the fact that the English language is a global or international language spoken by millions of people all around the world. That is, the English language was just like a master key to being able to get access to all kinds of sources of information available out there both in the real and virtual worlds. Hence, she started to see a much broader use of the instrumentality of the English language, which is quite clear from the following account of her:

“**English is the universal language.** We all know that and wherever we go, **we need that language,** like in TikTok, in other countries where we want to travel, when we want to access to,

like, sources or knowledge which I need. I mean **we need English**. So, **it was my motivation. I needed it**. So, I learned it.” **Mo-ISM**

To summarize, Goldie began to see the instrumental value of the English language. She felt more of a need, not much of a desire to excel at it so that she could benefit from it and gain an advantage in her social and academic life using it. This quality points more to *instrumental motivation* rather than *internally regulated extrinsic motivation*. Similarly, she managed to see that the English language has become an international language connecting people and communities across the world and through the Internet over the virtual reality. This discovery of hers also hints at the instrumental value of English, which she preferred to cash in on.

#### **5.4.1.5. Hank**

Hank’s affective reaction when he first got exposed to the English language in the formal language learning context was a tad complicated since he openly disclosed as follows that he felt both excited and anxious at the time:

“I [felt] ... excitement and anxiety. ... a bit excited because ... you start to learn a new thing, a new culture, a new language. And also, I [was] a bit ... frightened maybe, ... I say, anxiety ... because [of] a new language.”

In actuality, these opposing feelings of his seem to have stemmed from the fact that English was utterly a new language to learn, which was perceived by Hank both as a challenge and also as an opportunity to progress. What is more intriguing here is that Hank developed a positive attitude at the very beginning even though he did not know almost anything about the English language and what the learning process would be like. His initial desire to explore a new territory language-and-culture-wise appears to have been the source of his excitement, which is quite clear from the below account of his:

“In my childhood, **I wondered the other cultures, other countries, other countries’ policies, other countries’ events**.” **Mo-IREM**

As discussed earlier in the literature review section, such open-mindedness toward the TL culture and community, is considered a strong indicator of *integrativeness* according to the SEM. Therefore, it is fair to argue that his initial positive attitude through his excitement and open-mindedness toward the language and culture point to an about-to-burgeon *integrative motivation*

(ITM). As a crucial nuance to take note of though, it seems quite definite from the above remark that his natural tendency to learn about other countries and cultures was not only limited to specific English-speaking communities and their respective cultures. The remark after all points to his interest in international communities and global cultures around the world, which is definitely in accordance with Ushioda and Dörnyei's (2009) argument that *integrativeness* is not only about a specific English-speaking community but also about a much larger, global one. Hence, it would sound more reasonable to claim that he began to see English as an instrument to become more knowledgeable about diverse people and cultures in foreign countries regardless of whether English was the main language spoken there. This serves as a perfect example of an *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* of the SDT. The excitement he felt when he started learning English has to do with his desire to satisfy his curiosity regarding people and cultures in foreign countries. It is important, therefore, to reiterate that his predisposition was not directly related to learning the English language itself but to learning about new cultures, communities, and countries. The English language for him was just a primary instrument to that end. Thus, he cannot be regarded as intrinsically motivated towards the English language and learning it.

The following remark of his hints at the fact that Hank also perceived the English language as an instrument for comprehending what he hears, sees, or reads in English, which would provide a practical advantage:

“I thought that, in my childhood, **English is a key to learn, to create relations with the whole world, to understand the videos, ... to read the books, ... to understand the world, other parts of the world.**” Mo-ISM

It is obvious from the above remarks that he also perceived the English language as a valuable instrument to attain practical advantages such as getting more knowledgeable and advancing intellectually thanks to it, which points more to the *instrumental motivation*.

#### 5.4.1.6. Mary

Mary got acquainted with the English language before school at the age of five through the efforts of her mother to impart the basic skills and knowledge of English to her. It is without a doubt that her mother prompted her daughter to develop a positive attitude toward the English language, which is obvious from the below statement she shared:

“That [her mother’s efforts] got me curious and excited about learning English.”

Mary seems to have got along very well with his mother and even taken her as a role model just as Jersey looked up to her elder sister, which is apparent from the following remark that she made:

“I wanted to learn it [English] because **I thought it was important because my mom said so.**”

#### **Mo-IREM**

The initial motivation that Mary developed appears to be related to parental encouragement and support (PES) in accordance with what Griffith (1996) and the SEM already suggested, which is that the involvement of parents has an influence on learners’ attitudes toward the language to be learned, their motivational intensity, and this helps them cope with negative affective factors such as anxiety. If the desire to please her mother and receive approval from her were considered the end goal she set for herself, then learning English would be used as an instrument to reach that goal. It seems that achieving something that her mother valued and cared for was a drive that she developed internally since she did not mention any practical advantage that she would acquire upon fulfilling it. Therefore, it is considered that Mary developed *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* toward the English language during her English language learning journey.

Furthermore, it is clear from her following statement that Mary came to realize the significance of the English language through her own experiences over time and began to appreciate it as a valuable instrument:

“Then as I was growing up, I figured it out for myself that **speaking English has actually important merits** when you live in Turkey.” **Mo-ISM**

It is pretty obvious from this remark that she became well aware of the fact that possessing above-average English language-speaking skills would provide her with certain benefits. This realization obviously prompted her to get instrumentally motivated (ISM) toward the English language and learning it.

To sum up, it has been found that Mary’s motivation centered on the instrumental value and the use of the English language just like the rest of the participants.

#### **5.4.2. Conclusions on IREM and ISM**

The common element that all the participants in this research study shared in their motivational profiles was observed to be the instrumental value and the use of English during their

English language learning journeys. As already discussed in the literature review section, two notable models, SEM and SDT, emphasize the importance of instrumentality in language learning. Both SEM's instrumental motivation and SDT's external motivation highlight the role of external incentives and encouragement in the language learning process.

The SEM's instrumental motivation is considered the drive to act in a certain manner or fulfill a task in order to benefit from it or gain an advantage. It was found to be effective in L2 learning especially if the advantage or benefit to be attained is regarded as a valuable asset to be possessed by the learner (Gardner & McIntyre, 1991; Kiziltepe, 2000; Krashen, 1981; Listyani, 2022; Sultan & Hussain, 2010; Zhang et al., 2020). All the participants except for Kurt were found to be instrumentally motivated toward learning English during their English language learning journeys. To elaborate, Borat began to take private courses from a tutor and then moved on to attend a practical English course as he called it at a private language school so as to become more successful academically by getting better grades on his English exams in school.

In a similar vein, Jersey developed a desire to get higher grades on her English exams in school and directly remarked the fact that she studied well for them. Goldie felt an immediate need for English to be able to communicate with the people around her in her new social and academic environment after moving to Turkey. Additionally, she also perceived English as a significant tool to gather information and become a more knowledgeable person. Very similarly, Hank also regarded English as an instrument for learning and understanding the outside world. Mary came to realize the potential benefits that English could provide in her academic and professional life. Therefore, instrumentality in language learning turns up as a strong, influential, and effective factor in L2 learning and achievement in this research study, which complies with the findings put forth by Gardner and McIntyre (1991), Kiziltepe (2000), Krashen (1981), Listyani (2022), Sultan and Hussain (2010), and Zhang et al. (2020).

SDT's integrated or *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* might overlap with intrinsic motivation in terms of autonomy and willingness. Unlike intrinsic motivation, which highlights the absence of any external motive, *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* still holds the instrumentality element. That is, the internal regulation is set towards a separate outcome and the behavior is simply performed to be able to reach the set objective. For instance, a kid who enjoys playing PC games, might want to improve his or her English in order to perform much more



effectively in the pertinent game. The internal regulation would not be towards English language learning per se in such a case but playing the favorite game (Noels et al. 1999; Reeve, 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000). All the participants in this research study apart from Goldie were extrinsically motivated through internal regulation. To enumerate, Borat found joy in being the best-performing learner in class by dominating others after he reached a certain level of proficiency in English. His desire to outlast the others and become the best in class was what he was really internally motivated toward. English was simply a valuable instrument that he made use of for what he wished to do.

Jersey had already been intrigued by the informal activities that her elder sister engaged in. Once she gained just enough competence in English, she also started to get involved in playing online games with foreigners and following YouTubers thanks to English. In parallel with Borat, English served as an important tool for Jersey to engage in the extracurricular activities that she loved. In a similar vein, Kurt felt the need to improve his English skills to get much better engaged in his favorite pastime activities such as watching Dr. Who and playing PC games. Hank had already been fond of learning about foreign cultures. English was the perfect tool to do it. Therefore, he happened to think that improving his skills in English as a global language would help him become knowledgeable about different cultures and peoples worldwide. For Mary, her mother's thoughts and feelings on how well she performed, especially in terms of English, were significant. As is clear from the quote shared earlier, her desire to please her mother and make her feel proud was the external motive that she internally regulated, and English was the primary instrument to fulfill it. Moreover, English was considered as a valuable instrument by all the participants, except for Goldie because the rest of the participants' goals were desired for inherent reasons in accordance with the assertions and arguments that are put forth by Noels et al. (1999), Reeve (2022), and Ryan and Deci (2000).

Goldie only developed *instrumental motivation* while Kurt fostered *internally regulated extrinsic motivation* instead even though the other four participants ended up having both motivation types during their English language learning journeys. It does not matter that Goldie and Kurt lacked the other motivation type because both motivation types mainly focus on the instrumental value and the use of the English language. Regardless of how their motives were regulated, whether the motive stemmed from an advantage to benefit from, or it was internally regulated, all the participants started to use the English language as an instrument to successfully

perform the activities or tasks that they engaged in. This helped them improve their English, which should be perceived as the first step on their way to becoming proficient ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency.

### **5.5. Analytical Category IV: Techniques**

In this research study, the theme *Techniques* represents the participants' unique ways of coping with difficulties, challenges, and problems through a personal discovery based on their preferences and how they direct the respective process. All the participants became motivated enough to gain sufficient competency in English in order to reach their subjective goals during their English language learning journeys. This determination and devotion prompted them to look for and find ways that would ultimately provide the skills of highly advanced ELLs. In other words, what they practiced differently resulted in them acquiring native-like pronunciation and fluency in their target language for the future. *L2 Video Input* and *Speaking Practice*, also determined as the codes of the theme *techniques*, and these were found to be the two common techniques that all the participants utilized to improve their skills in English during their learning process.

#### **5.5.1. Discussions and Outcomes of L2 Video Input**

After the participants acquired adequate competency in English, they became more autonomous through voluntary engagements in activities and tasks that they found enjoyable, and they developed higher self-efficacy beliefs. Watching digital content in English including watching TV shows, movies, news, and videos on online platforms such as YouTube emerged as one of the common activities that they all got involved in and turned out to be a shared common technique that all the participants made use of to improve their skills in English during their English language learning journeys. Below is the analysis regarding how the participants exercised techniques in greater detail.

##### **5.5.1.1. Borat**

Borat had to take supplementary lessons from a private tutor in order to enhance his academic success in school by receiving better grades. Then, he subsequently attended English

classes, which he called *practical English courses*, at a private language school, in a voluntary manner. He developed higher SE beliefs since he began to perform better than his peers in class, which prompted him to take more joy in dominating the whole class during the lessons. The thrill he got together with the better competency he acquired equipped him with autonomous language learning abilities. Therefore, he also started to join in extracurricular activities. Watching programs on the TV channels broadcasting in English in addition to movies and TV shows became his favorite informal activity that he liked to get involved in. When asked about what type of techniques he employed, he stated that he used watching programs on TV channels, movies, and TV shows in English as a technique to improve his English skills during his English language learning journey as can be analyzed from the following quotes:

“[We] had some foreign TV channels installed at home. ... I was able to plug in the headphones or I was able to turn up the volume of BBC, for example, or CNN and I was able to do some listening practice. ... I was exposed to the language. It was attempting. It is just carefree, stress-free exercise for me, actually.” **T-VI**

“I really am into movies. I really would like to watch TV shows ... you know, majority of them, mostly English, movies in English.” **T-VI**

#### **5.5.1.2. Jersey**

Jersey had already been enthralled by English at a very young age through the informal activities that her elder sister got involved in such as listening to English songs and playing PC games. Once she gained sufficient competence in English, as Borat did, she became more autonomous and began to join in similar informal activities as her sister had done. She remarked that watching digital content in English was one of the activities that she used as a technique during her English language learning journey. To elaborate, she spent a considerable amount of time following YouTubers on YouTube, and she watched a lot of TV shows, which helped her enrich her vocabulary as is understood from the following remarks that she made on the techniques that she employed:

“I have grown up watching a lot of videos online. ... I usually spent time watching a lot of YouTube videos, but by that I mean a lot of them, I spent 3 hours, 4 hours watching YouTube videos, and then I watch a lot of TV series.” **T-VI**

“There were a lot of British YouTubers at that time, at that time of YouTube. ... I mean, mostly I was in the part of English that is not formal at all, I was watching YouTubers and real-life people.”

**T-VI**

“I was watching a TV show called ‘How to get away with murder.’ ... it also teaches a lot of idioms, that’s great.” **T-VI**

#### **5.5.1.3. Kurt**

Kurt first got acquainted with English in primary school, in a formal language learning setting. He made no sense of it at all, and he therefore never got interested in learning it either, which is very similar to what Borat experienced. He, however, came across a TV show called Dr. Who, and he started watching and became a fan of it. He was so absorbed by it that he developed a desire to be able to understand the dialogues in the show without resorting to subtitles. From then on, he added other TV shows to his repertoire by also including movies and PC games in English. He stated that such engagements involving watching digital content in English together with playing PC games helped him fundamentally advance his skills in English. As all the other participants did, he used the informal activity of watching digital content in English as a reliable technique to improve his skills in English as is clear from the following quote of his:

“I watched a lot of movies, a lot of series. ... I told you, guys, through this whole interview, that playing games and watching movies is a lot more helpful than you ever think.” **T-VI**

#### **5.5.1.4. Goldie**

Goldie and her family had to leave their home country for Turkey when she was in high school. Therefore, she suddenly found herself in a new social and academic environment in which English was the only language that she could make use of to communicate with the people around her. She had never developed any desire or motivation to achieve any type of success in English or English classes when she was back in her home country. Additionally, she had never felt the urge for English to be able to use it communicatively in real life. Thus, her English was at the beginner level at the time when she started her new life in Turkey. This immediate need was the number one reason that pushed her to improve her English skills because acquiring competency in English would help her both academically and socially. One of the techniques that she found greatly useful

was watching digital content in English. She openly shared it upon being asked about the techniques that she utilized to further her English skills during her English language learning journey as is clear from the quote she stated:

“I was watching movies and series. ... I watch movies at least every two days, I mean. And yes, they help a lot. I learned a lot of new phrases. Yeah, that just helps me a lot.” **T-VI**

#### **5.5.1.5. Hank**

Hank was first exposed to English in the formal language learning context just like Borat and Kurt. Unlike the two participants though, he had a natural predisposition to know about other cultures and peoples in the rest of the world, which awakened positive feelings in him towards English since it would help him to achieve this innate desire. Yet, the challenging nature of learning a second language intimidated him. As all the participants did, Hank started to act more autonomously by engaging in extracurricular activities to advance his skills in English once he achieved a certain degree of competency in English. His advancement indeed cultivated a higher degree of SEE belief. One of the activities he voluntarily chose to get involved in and also used as a technique was watching digital content in English such as news and videos on certain topics including history and culture as he quoted the following:

“I practiced my English abilities and also as everyone ... I watched some videos about history and other things, and this contributed to me.” **T-VI**

“I loved watching the news about other cultures. ... I loved to watch the Euro News when I was a child and I tried to understand what they were saying in English and generally they had an English broadcasting and I tried to understand that.” **T-VI**

#### **5.5.1.6. Mary**

Very similar to what Jersey had experienced, Mary was also exposed to English before her formal education began. Her mother, who thought of competence in English as a significant skill to possess, even tried to teach the very basic concepts and topics in English such as the English alphabet or how to greet someone in English. Thus, Mary had already developed a positive attitude toward English, and this in turn caused her to become more motivated for the English classes in the formal language learning contexts. Once she acquired sufficient competence in English, she

developed a higher level of self-efficacy belief, and she became an autonomous English language learner as all the other participants eventually turned out to be. One of the engagements that she volitionally participated in and utilized was watching digital content in English. She began to watch the TV channels broadcast in English in a volitional manner. Additionally, she was into watching TV shows and movies as well. She also stated that she was fond of making lists of English vocabulary items that she was unfamiliar with when she saw or heard any during watching any content in English as can easily be seen from the following quotes that she shared:

“I was watching BBC, and I would just be curious about what they might be talking about.” T-VI

“I started watching TV series and movies and I loved taking down words that I don’t know. And so, I started making vocabulary lists from the shows that I loved to watch.” T-VI

### **5.5.2. Conclusions on L2 Video Input**

*L2 Video Input* through watching movies, TV shows, news, and videos on online platforms can be regarded as one of the existing opportunities that the current technology presents (Reinders & White, 2016; Trinder, 2016). It turns out to be a valuable resource of authentic input, especially for individuals who are learning English as a second language to be able to improve their language skills (Al Murshidi, 2020). Accordingly, it has been observed in this research study that all the participants resorted to watching digital content in English as a learning strategy during their English language learning journeys to be able to observe and experience real-life-like situations vicariously through it. All the participants, who ended up becoming ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency, remarked that watching digital content in English was one of the activities that they voluntarily chose to engage in as a technique upon being asked about what techniques they used to become such advanced ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency. This specific finding of this research study complies with what Al Murshidi (2020), Albiladi et al. (2018), Baharum et al. (2022), and Vadivel et al. (2019) put forth. Additionally, watching digital content in English, with or without captions or subtitles, seems to have helped improve participants’ pronunciation skills, which complies with what Wisniewska and Mora (2020) asserted in their research study. Jersey and Hank, two of the participants, showed tendency to watch videos on platforms such as YouTube based on their likes and preferences. Hank stated that he opted to watch videos on history and culture because of his inherent interest in learning about different peoples

and ways of living in different parts of the world. Jersey, similarly, followed YouTubers. Both participants liked to voluntarily engage in watching videos on YouTube as a useful technique that conceivably helped them eventually become fluent ELLs. This technique provided them with a near-limitless digital source of authentic or real-life situations. Watching YouTube videos seems to increase Jersey and Hank's overall speaking skills and performances, especially by improving fluency and pronunciation, which is in accordance with what Saed et al. (2021) and Styfanyshyn and Kalymon (2020) asserted regarding YouTube and its benefits in terms of English language learning.

Consequently, all the participants in this research study ended up incorporating watching digital content in English as a life-long learning technique to improve their English during their English language learning journeys. *L2 Video Input* through watching movies, TV shows, news, and videos helped the participants to a great extent, and they all turned out to be advanced ELLs with native-like pronunciation and fluency. This approach assisted them in achieving such a hard-to-reach goal, which supports the results of the latest studies done by the aforementioned scholars and researchers.

### **5.5.3. Discussions and Outcomes of Speaking Practice**

In this research study, *Speaking Practice* emerged as the second common technique that all the participants voluntarily embraced. In order for them to be able to communicate and perform successfully in real-life activities, they preferred to engage in speaking practices during their English language learning journeys. The participants autonomously put in their efforts and time to be able to make contact with both native and non-native speakers of English via the means, opportunities, and resources available to them in their respective environments for personal, academic, and social reasons. The occasions include having fun, getting sociable with other people and building friendships, and gathering information. Below is the analysis regarding how each participant practiced their speaking skills in greater detail.

#### **5.5.3.1. Borat**

Borat attended specific speaking classes that he called “practical English courses” at a private language school in his hometown. Once he acquired adequate competence in English, he

developed higher levels of self-efficacy beliefs concerning his skills in English. He took great joy in interacting with his peers and teachers in English during his learning sessions. He even specifically remarked that he enjoyed dominating the whole class by demonstrating a superior speaking performance relative to his peers. Therefore, making use of every opportunity to speak in English during these sessions turned out to be his favorite activity and the go-to technique to advance himself in communicating in English. Seeing that he gained more capability to explain himself in English, he could even successfully interact with the teacher who was a native speaker of English. This progress took his self-efficacy beliefs to new heights. Hence, he became more prone to creating opportunities to practice his English as far as he could and developed a tendency to utilize any opportunity to practice English when he stumbles upon it, which is clear from the following quotes that he revealed:

“I attended another type of English class in the same private language school. [There was] a native teacher to interact with. That really helped put things in perspective for me about English because now I felt like I moved on to another level of learning English. It was like I was in the real English speakers league now.” **T-SP**

“Speaking, actually speaking was my favorite skill to work on. I’ve always liked speaking more than the others.” **T-SP**

“It was a matter of, you know, more and more practice; a problem of immersion of exposure all the time.” **T-SP**

“I had enough opportunities in class to practice my English. ... I had the opportunity to, you know, really visit international social context, international settings.” **T-SP**

#### **5.5.3.2. Jersey**

Jersey had already been enticed by the informal activities that her elder sister chose to engage in for fun. Once she acquired sufficient competency in English, it did not take long for her to get involved in similar informal activities in which English was the main instructional language and communication tool. For instance, she followed YouTubers and tried to interact with them. She began to run an online blog about herself so that she could mostly keep a record of her personal and social life in English. When she was asked about what techniques or tactics she came up with to further herself in English during her English language learning journey, she revealed that she



made international friends through the Net and interacted with them in English via video chats. Additionally, she attempted to communicate with native speakers of English to practice her English as can be analyzed from the following remarks she shared:

“I had a lot of foreign friends online and I have a Brazilian friend, we used to talk through video chat because she is from Brazil. We were actually practicing together, probably a couple of times a month. That really helped.” **T-SP**

“I [did] go on and continue communicating with native speakers because English is like, I think, riding a bike. As much as practice you do, it will get better automatically, in my opinion.” **T-SP**

#### **5.5.3.3. Kurt**

Even though Kurt did not become intrigued by English outright when he first started learning English in primary school, he later began to develop a positive attitude toward English when he came across his favorite TV show *Dr. Who* broadcast in English. The fact that he got involved in activities of watching TV shows in English in addition to playing PC games that required a certain level of English proficiency stimulated him to strive to further his English language skills to be able to perform better in those activities. After Kurt got sufficient competence in his English skills, he became a more self-determined learner, and hence he kept on his involvement in those extracurricular activities. Joining in conversations on international online video chat platforms such as *Discord* to be able to converse in English with people from different parts of the globe became one of his favorite informal activities. Accordingly, he explained that he attended many chat rooms and conversed with a large number of people from various countries when he was inquired about what type of techniques he used to get better in English. Below is the quote that describes his learning process in his own words:

“I did a lot of talking through *Discord*, to other people, to Romanians, to Moroccans, to Arabs. It was a platform where you could join other channels and talk with people all around the world. It is a good platform to practice your English. You can find all kinds of people there.” **T-SP**

#### **5.5.3.4. Goldie**

After Goldie and her family moved to Turkey, she had to resort to English to be able to communicate with people in her new environment since she did not speak any Turkish at all.

Additionally, she began to major in English language teaching at a university a couple of years after she moved to Turkey. Her social life together with the academic career she chose to follow stimulated her to excel in the English language. When inquired about the techniques she wielded to make meaningful progress in English during her English language learning journey, she openly stated that she was always in contact with the foreigners where she lived and the international students at the university. She practiced her speaking skills by frequently conversing with them in English. She utilized it as a go-to technique to improve her speaking skills as is clear from the following quote of hers:

“I have a lot of foreign students, foreign, like, friends. They are students here, so I always talk English with them.” **T-SP**

#### **5.5.3.5. Hank**

Hank’s innate interest in other cultures and people afforded him the necessary stimulation to learn English since it was regarded as the number one global language. Moreover, possessing a sufficient level of proficiency in it would make it possible to make contact with foreign cultures that he had wondered about. This inherent perspective prompted him to seek informative videos such as the ones concerning history and cultures on the Net and also to follow the News channels involving *EuroNews*. When asked about the methods or techniques that he voluntarily chose to use, he remarked that he tried to practice his English speaking skills by conversing in English with a foreign friend of his at school. In addition, he emphasized that frequent participation in class discussions was the other useful technique that he made good use of, as can be seen from the following quotes that he shared:

“I understood that more practice would help me. Exposure was the biggest thing that helped me ... I had a friend. His speaking abilities were very good at prep school. Then, he helped me and then I helped him.” **T-SP**

“Being part of the communication and being part of the discussion in the classroom environment is a great approach ... [brings] positive things for learning languages.” **T-SP**

“Participation in every discussion could be the biggest strategy that I used because I knew that if I hadn’t taken part in sessions, I wouldn’t have improved my speaking.” **T-SP**

#### 5.5.3.6. Mary

Mary's mother considered having a high level of proficiency in English as one of the greatest skills and assets that one could possess academically and career-wise. Therefore, Mary had first become acquainted with English before her formal education started, as Jersey did, through her mother's efforts to teach Mary basic knowledge of English. Mary's mother thought that her efforts would prompt Mary to like English, which actually worked quite well, and this gave Mary the unbroken motivation to pursue learning English throughout her academic life. In accordance with what her mother hoped and planned for her, Mary was always fond of English classes during her formal education years, and she even voluntarily chose to be in the Foreign Language section in high school where the weekly hours of English classes were the most. Later, she focused and worked more on enhancing her grammar and vocabulary knowledge by developing reading skills in high school, but rather spent much less time on speaking. She also intended to have a major in an English language teaching program at college through her continuous efforts, which is clear from the following quote of hers:

"I wasn't expected to productively, like orally use English because I was going to a public school. All I was asked to do was read and write and do the grammar, memorize the vocabulary and you don't have to have conversations in English, whatever."

For the first time, Mary experienced an immediate need for solid English-speaking skills to be able to communicate with her peers and professors regarding academic contexts. She visited Denmark as an exchange student when she started college in Turkey. Mary stated that she had to express herself in English during classes in college when asked about the techniques that she utilized. By showing participation during classes, she made good use of the opportunity of being in a foreign country like Denmark while having to communicate in English all the time no matter how challenging it was for her at first. The college education and especially her stay in Denmark made her realize the important role of practicing English in real-life situations to achieve an excellent command of English. Such an awareness helped her make it count as a technique to improve her communication and speaking skills:

"... in college, it turns out you have to [communicate in English], otherwise, you fail. And then, me being forced to use it productively, I got used to using it productively. By productively, I mean, in communicational ways." **T-SP**

“A huge part of my speaking practice happened when I was in Denmark for 5 months [as an exchange student]. That was challenging but after that, I started to get used to speaking and oral practice as well, so I believe it is all about practice.” **T-SP**

#### **5.5.4. Conclusions on Speaking Practice**

All the participants in this research study interacted with both native and non-native speakers of English inside and outside the classroom, and they used it as a technique to be able to successfully communicate with people around them in their academic and social environments. To begin with; Borat, Hank, Goldie, and Mary stated that they made good use of classroom discussions in formal contexts, with or without being prepared, by exhibiting active and effective participation. Borat interacted with his peers and the teacher who is a native speaker of English at the language school. Hank was fond of participating in class discussions aside from the fact that he had a foreign friend with whom he could converse in English outside the classroom. Similarly, Mary liked to engage in classroom discussions because she felt compelled to do so in order not to fail in her classes. Additionally, she almost had to speak English all the time in and out of school when she was in Denmark as an exchange student, which served as an intense speaking practice. By the same token, Goldie interacted and socialized with English-speaking people to become a more capable speaker of English. Even though the participants' efforts to apply what they had learned thus far to both classroom discussions and the real world might be challenging, it is understood that their unrelenting endeavors to practice their verbal and conversation skills in real-life situations helped them enhance their fluency in English, motivation, and self-efficacy beliefs. This finding also complies with what Elkolli and Atma (2010), Fauzan (2016), and Klinger (1999) asserted.

Moreover, Kurt utilized an online chat platform called *Discord*, where people around the world could log in and converse with others in the language they wished for practicing. Kurt remarked that he video-chatted with numerous people on *Discord* to practice his English. Similarly, Jersey also frequently used video chatting in English with people from abroad, and she even made a couple of good friends. In addition, she always welcomed any opportunity to converse or interact with native speakers of English since she became well aware of the fact that *practice makes it perfect* through her living abroad experience. Kurt's and Jersey's technology use to practice their oral skills in English or their efforts to learn in the digital wild has increased their pertinent

capabilities, and this seems to have paid off since online media or platforms provided them with very authentic conversations with real people and enhanced L2 exposure time. Therefore, involving in conversations with English speakers has increased their English language fluency and motivation, which made them more engaged learners, and prompted their higher self-efficacy beliefs, which is in accordance with what Beaven (2021), Minalla (2018), Sauro and Zouro (2019), Schenker and Kraemer (2017), Sevy-Biloon and Chroman (2019), Styfanyshyn and Kalymon (2020), and Thome-Williams (2016) put forth in their respective works.

Consequently, all the participants in this research study with native-like fluency and pronunciation remarked that they used *speaking practice* as a common technique to improve their overall communication skills in English. This outcome has turned out to be in very much harmony with the results or outcomes that the previous studies came up with regarding speaking practice in English and its benefits.

## **5.6. Conclusion**

In terms of the affective aspect, individuals with native-like fluency and pronunciation were observed to enjoy using the English language itself through fun activities. All activities including mutual engagements require effort and time regardless of whether them being fun or not. Therefore, all the participants put in the necessary effort, and they did it voluntarily. That is, the effort demonstrated by all the participants was volitional.

In terms of the motivation aspect, all the participants were stimulated by an external motive to use or learn English during their language-learning journeys. Motives such as fostering academic success to reach an extrinsic reward or being able to perform better in an activity to get what they intrinsically wished encouraged them to use English as an instrument. In terms of abilities and beliefs, they began to act on their own to improve their skills in English without needing any directions from an authority figure. They began to acquire autonomous learning abilities by exploring and discovering new and fun ways of learning or engaging through specific extracurricular activities.

Secondly, they developed higher self-efficacy beliefs concerning their skills in English as they gained competency in English and recognized their achievements and improvements. They

believed that they could do better and tackle any obstacles in their way. In other words, they developed strong beliefs in their capabilities and competence to achieve their goals concerning using English. In terms of the techniques, all the participants tended to watch digital content in English such as movies, TV shows, news, and videos on social platforms as a technique to improve their English language skills. Additionally, they all sought and created opportunities to speak to either native or non-native speakers of English in person, or they resorted to online platforms via technology use. They even built friendships through such interactions, and they made English-speaking practice their daily routine.

All the characteristics discussed above were shared by all the participants in this research study. On the other hand, each participant was also found to demonstrate other traits that were not shared commonly if investigated individually. These individual characteristics were not revealed or discussed since they were not in the scope of this research study. Albeit individual differences, the common affective responses the participants showed, the motivational tendencies they embraced, the abilities and beliefs that they developed, and the techniques that they chose to adopt during their English language learning journeys have brought out a common pattern. This shared finding has the potential of guiding future beginning ELLs by affording them solid ideas concerning how to learn and improve their skills in English both in formal and informal English language learning contexts. Such guidance can also help them achieve higher proficiency in English and even become individuals with native-like fluency and pronunciation as the participants in this research study eventually panned out to be. Moreover, this common pattern can also assist English teachers, curriculum designers, policymakers, and material developers in creating more efficient teaching programs, efficacious lessons, and textbooks with more effective in-class activities and tasks.

#### **5.6.1. Pedagogical Implications**

The guidance that the results of this research study provide presents a framework that can be described as follows:

- The English language learning process should be enjoyable both in and out of the class. The joy and pleasure in return ensure that learners then demonstrate more durable endurance by putting in volitional effort during the challenging process of their language learning.

- ELLs should be taught and encouraged to be autonomous learners. Therefore, the curriculum should be learner-centered, and the English teachers should be willing to share autonomy with learners.
- ELLs should be allowed and even heartened to have or develop their unique language learning techniques, methods, and even strategies at their own discretion to further their capabilities while learning English.
- ELLs should be provided with and assisted in discovering their own tangible reasons and purposes, which would in turn prompt them to have an authentic and immediate need for using English in real-life settings.
- ELLs should be provided with miscellaneous intriguing digital content such as videos, movies, TV shows, etc. to watch. Reliable online or digital platforms can be of great use for ELLs.
- ELLs should be encouraged to speak with native and non-native speakers of English regularly. Online social or English language learning platforms can be utilized for this purpose since they are now more affordable and accessible. Class discussions should be allocated more time and ELLs should be heartened to participate.
- ELLs should be frequently informed about their developments and always appreciated for their achievements and improvements.

### **5.7. Limitations of the Study**

No research study can be fully exempted from all limitations, weaknesses, and disadvantages. Although maximum care was always applied in every phase of the current study by taking every precaution to thwart and minimize the probable risks that would harm the legitimacy of the study, potential limitations may still have affected the present study's data collection and data analysis processes, results, and findings.

In this research study, a qualitative research approach with a case study method was adopted, which turned out to be quite taxing. It required a great amount of time and effort to gather the necessary data and analyze it. Moreover, case studies may uniquely provide deep and detailed information but can be less valid and reliable due to the small sample size used in studies. There

were six active participants in this study, which is, on the one hand, a satisfactory number in a typical case study, yet may harbor the possible risk of not generalizing the findings to other contexts and even cases, on the other hand.

Secondly, a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions was employed in this qualitative research study to collect the data. It was also a demanding task per se since constant alertness had to be exercised to keep the delicate balance between the predetermined and unprompted questions during the interview. The spur-of-the-moment questions following the participants' subjective responses might easily lead to research bias. Therefore, the follow-up questions were asked with great attention to avoid leading the participants. Additionally, another factor that might affect the validity is that the very same semi-structured interview cannot be exactly repeated, unlike structured interviews. This in turn might make it harder to verify the results in a more objective manner. Furthermore, the hefty amount of data obtained through interviews through open-ended questions in addition to the set ones contain a lot of distinct personal information that cannot be measured and expressed in numbers. Thus, findings and results panned out to be based mainly on the best available analytical judgments and opinions.

In this research study, two themes and their four sub-codes emerged using the inductive data analysis approach. Although an inductive approach helped reach and discover new perspectives, a potential risk of minimal research bias that comes with an inductive data analysis approach may have influenced the findings. Moreover, its subjectivity does not allow the same replication with the same results. Therefore, it introduces difficulty in setting a standard and generalizing the results as is the case for all case studies.

The other two themes and their four sub-codes deductively emerged. The deductive data analysis relies on a theory and it generally serves to test the validity of the related hypotheses in the theory. Therefore, it is more applicable in quantitative research studies. Thus, the existing propositions and theories that were resorted to might have had a limiting effect on the current study, unlike the inductive approach, by blocking the subjectivity and hence impeding the propagation of new ideas.



## 5.8. Recommendations for Future Studies

In this research study, it has been revealed that technology plays an important role in every aspect of English language learning. To begin with, PC or video games which can be labeled as fun-providing technological products of computer programming, are found to be the activities that many human beings wish to engage in in addition to movies and TV shows. Most of the games are operated in English. A great number of people spend hours playing those games as a mundane routine of their lives. Such resources may help learners voluntarily put in more effort and time while learning and improving their English as well. A research study on how PC games would affect the English language learning process in terms of affective, motivational, and attitudinal aspects and how they can be utilized as an English language learning technique would be rather relatable to modern life, and it would put forth interesting outcomes providing new perspectives regarding English language learning.

Moreover, social media together with online platforms that are specifically created to communicate with real native speakers of English such as *Cambly* and *Open English* present a priceless virtual environment for learners to practice their speaking skills in English. Such accessible authentic platforms, would help increasing autonomous language learning abilities. As learners gain more competency, their motivation can be strengthened, and their self-efficacy beliefs may be enhanced. A research study on the individuals who attended such platforms can bring out valuable outcomes in terms of the improvement of speaking skills, development of native-like pronunciation and fluency in addition to learner autonomy development, and enhanced self-efficacy beliefs. Besides, it is also possible to get access to specifically designed English lessons by expert teachers on online platforms that focus on teaching pronunciation and intonation in English. Such informative lessons may help learners improve their relevant skills and become more proficient. More research studies on these virtual online lessons in terms of pronunciation and fluency development can also produce interesting results.

Consequently, technology is everywhere and even with us almost all the time thanks to smartphones and permanent connection to the Internet via them. Furthermore, AI technology has been developing at an unprecedented pace over the last few years. For instance, today Open AI's ChatGPT, has the capability of holding a meaningful conversation with real human beings. Any

learner who owns a smartphone or a tablet with an internet connection can practice their speaking skills with AI. Hence, any person in any place on the planet can learn English and improve their skills without a need for a school and a teacher as long as they are connected to the Internet, which can revolutionize language education as we know it. Therefore, conducting research studies on in what ways the latest technological developments and the respective tools influence individuals who learn English as a second language in terms of affective, attitudinal, and motivational aspects would put forth intriguing results that can afford new perspectives regarding English language learning and teaching.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix-1. Interview Questions

1. Can you please tell me what foreign language(s) you are proficient in?
2. When did you start learning it/them?
3. How did you happen to learn it/them?
4. How did you feel when you started learning it/them?
5. What motivated you to continue learning it?
6. Can you tell me about the difficulties that you went through?
7. How did you overcome the difficulties?
8. What are your strengths, which help you learn languages better?
9. Do you have your own particular techniques or tactics that you are making use of while learning languages?
10. How would you teach it if you were the only authority?

## Appendix-2. The Coding System

Classification of Coding	Abbreviation	Brief Description	Examples
<b>Abilities and Beliefs:</b>	<b>AB</b>		
Autonomous Learning Ability	<b>AB-AL</b>	The independence and freedom to make decisions and choices concerning their English language learning process	I loved to watch the Euronews when I was a child and I tried to understand what they were saying in English.
Self-Efficacy	<b>AB-SE</b>	The belief and self-confidence developed regarding capabilities during the English language learning process	I was at a certain level of proficiency, and I was, kind of, I got the upper hand in the class against my classmates. I really enjoyed that feeling.
<b>Emotions:</b>	<b>E</b>		
Enjoyment	<b>E-En</b>	The joy, delight, and pleasure taken during the English learning process	No one was bored. We were all having fun.
Volitional Effort	<b>E-VE</b>	The voluntary dedication and commitment to learning and improving English in both informal and formal contexts	I really liked English. And I was studying for it.
<b>Motivation Types:</b>	<b>Mo</b>		
Instrumental Motivation	<b>Mo-ISM</b>	Any rational and functional reason, or practical benefit for learning the English language	When I first came here [Turkey], I just needed a language to communicate with others.
Internally Regulated Extrinsic Motivation	<b>Mo-IREM</b>	Inherent motives for a desired goal in which English functions only as an instrument to reach it	I played it [GTA, PC game] again, again, and again. While playing this game, I picked some more along the way, and I was a bit better at





### **Appendix-3. Informed Consent Form**

This is an invitation for you to participate in my research study. I want to notify you of the general purpose of this research study so that you can make an informed decision based on the following information. You are chosen as a participant for this study because I am curious about your sincere ideas and feelings regarding how you achieved becoming a highly-accomplished English language learner with native-like pronunciation and fluency.

The objective of this research study is to explore the common qualities regarding the affective, attitudinal, and motivational development of highly-accomplished English language learners with native-like pronunciation and fluency in addition to language learning techniques that you developed and employed. Therefore, I will ask you some questions to better understand what you did so differently that you have ultimately become such a highly-accomplished English language learner with native-like pronunciation and fluency. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and it will not affect you in any way at all since you'll only be asked questions regarding your English language learning journey. Furthermore, it'll be my pleasure to answer any questions you have.

Hence, the interview will only focus on your individual English language learning story and experiences. It will be held at your convenience. Everything you will impart will be kept confidential and your identity anonymous at all times. Last but not least, you can withdraw from this study at any time you wish.

Sadettin YÜCETÜRK

## Appendix-4. Voluntary Consent Form

### Katılımcı İzin Formu

Anadil Benzeri Dil Akıcılığının Gizeminin Çözümlemesi: İngilizce Dil Ediniminde Ortak Yaklaşımlar ve Tekniklerin Derinlemesine bir Tetkiki

**Sadettin Yüçetürk**

Bu beyan Tarih girmek için tıklayın veya dokunun. tarihinde yapılan kayıtlı anket/mülakat (lar) ile ilgilidir. Akdeniz Üniversitesi ("Üniversite") tarafından yapılan araştırmaya ve diğer değerli düşüncelere katılımım göz önüne alındığında, aşağıdakileri beyan ederim:

Beyan:

- Bu çalışma için katılımcı bilgi sayfasını okuduğumu ve anladığımı onaylıyorum
- Gerekirse soru sorma fırsatım oldu ve bunları tatmin edici bir şekilde cevapladım
- Katılımımın gönüllü olduğunu ve herhangi bir zamanda herhangi bir sebep göstermeden çekilmeyi serbest bıraktığımı anlıyorum
- Geri çekersem verilerim çalışmadan kaldırılacak ve imha edilecek
- Akdeniz Üniversitesi Etik Kurulu'nun bu çalışmayı gözden geçirip onayladığını anlıyorum
- Üniversiteye ve Üniversite tarafından yukarıdaki projenin ve / veya video / filmin ve / veya ses kaydının görüntülerini çekmek ve / veya kaydetmek için izin verdim ("Kayıtlar")
- Üniversiteye, eğitim, araştırma, ticari ve tanıtım amaçlı olarak dünyanın her yerindeki kayıtlarda tüm platformlarda ve tüm medyada (kısmen veya tamamen, yazılı veya başka türlü) Kayıtları yayınlaması için başkalarına yetki verme hakkını ve hakkını veriyorum Üniversitede bu tür kullanımlar arasında, bunlarla sınırlı olmamak üzere, basılı ve çevrimiçi yayın ve yayın bulunabilir.
- Yukarıdaki çalışmaya katılmayı ve kayıt yapmayı kabul ediyorum ve işbu belgeyle, bu proje ve gelecekteki projelerden kaynaklanan tüm işlerde kullanımım için tüm telif haklarını üniversiteye atarım
- Verilerimin Kişisel Verileri Koruma Yasası uyarınca Üniversitede yönetilebileceğini, depolanabileceğini ve arşivlenebileceğini kabul ediyorum.
- Cevaplarımın kesinlikle gizli tutulacağını, tüm kişisel ve hassas verilerimin herhangi bir raporda veya yayında anonimleştirileceğini ve adımın herhangi bir raporda veya yayında tanımlanmayacağını anlıyorum.
- Bu görüşme sırasında hassas kişisel verilerin kaydedilebileceğini anlıyorum. Bu, ırk veya etnik köken, siyasi görüşler, dini inançlar, fiziksel / zihinsel sağlık, sendika üyeliği, cinsel yaşam veya cezai faaliyetlerle ilgili bilgileri içerebilir.
- Araştırmanın Anadil Benzeri Dil Akıcılığının Gizeminin Çözümlemesi: İngilizce Dil Ediniminde Ortak Yaklaşımlar ve Tekniklerin Derinlemesine bir Tetkiki ile ilgili olarak yazılacağını anlıyorum
- Diğer araştırmacılara ve düzenleyici makamlara gelecekteki ilgili araştırmalarda verilerime erişme izni veriyorum
- Bu çalışma ile ilgili endişelerimin veya şikayetlerimin nasıl dile getirileceğini anlıyorum
- Tazminat düzenlemesi olmadığının farkındayım
- İletişim bilgilerim değişirse araştırmacıyı bilgilendireceğim
- Bu onay formu her bakımdan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti yasalarına ve Türkiye Cumhuriyeti mahkemelerine tabi olacaktır.

İsim, imza ve tarih:

Katılımcının adı ..... Tarih ..... İmza .....

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İmzalı ve tarihli onay formunun ve katılımcı bilgi broşürünün bir kopyası katılımcıya verilmeli ve güvenli bir şekilde dosyada saklanması için araştırmacı tarafından saklanmalıdır.

## Appendix-5. Research Ethics Committee Approval

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 22.11.2022-510172



T.C  
AKDENİZ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ  
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Kurulu  
KURUL KARARI



TOPLANTI TARİHİ : 21.11.2022  
TOPLANTI SAYISI : 20  
KARAR SAYISI : 439

Üniversitemiz Eğitim Fakültesi Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Başak Eda AZİZOĞLU'nun danışmanlığını, Sadettin YÜCETÜRK'ün araştırmacılığını üstlendiği, "Yabancı Dil Öğreniminde Yetkin Seviyeye Ulaşmış Bireylerin Sahip Oldukları Öğrenme Stilleri ve Kullandıkları Dil Öğrenme Stratejileri" konulu çalışmanın, fikri hukuki ve telif hakları bakımından metot ve ölçeğine ilişkin sorumluluğun başvurucaya ait olmak üzere, proje süresince uygulanmasının etik olarak uygun olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.

Prof. Dr. Hilmi DEMİRKAYA  
Kurul Başkanı

Başkan  
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Gökhan AKYÜZ

## ÖZGEÇMİŞ

### Kişisel Bilgiler

Adı Soyadı: Sadettin YÜCETÜRK

### Eğitim Bilgileri

Lisans Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Yabancı Diller Eğitimi  
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[Tarih ve İmza]

Sadettin YÜCETÜRK

## İNTİHAL RAPORU

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