The Impact of Altruistic Teaching on Foreign Language Enjoyment and Speaking Skill: A Positive Psychology Intervention

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Abstract
Responding to the paucity of research regarding the role of altruism in L2 education, we operationalized the phenomenon in the L2 context and sought to determine whether teachers' concern about the growth and welfare of the students has any influence on their language learning. In doing so, the effectiveness of a three-staged altruistic teaching intervention was tested on foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and speaking skills of 50 EFL learners, where 25 learners were assigned to the experimental group, and the remaining 25 were involved in the control group and attended the program for ten consecutive weeks. This quantitative study relied on the data obtained from the scores of the groups on the FLE scale and IELTS Speaking Test before and after the intervention. The data was analyzed using Repeated Measures ANOVA, One-Way ANCOVA, and Simple Effect analysis. Results illustrated that altruistic teaching makes language learning more enjoyable. Moreover, the results showed that altruistic teaching not only hones the learners' speaking proficiency but is also beneficial for its retention. Several theoretical and pedagogical implications and directions for future research on positive psychologically-informed interventions are also discussed.

1. INTRODUCTION

Being a teacher entails caring for the students' competence and ensuring their growth, happiness, and welfare. In other words, one's altruism functions as a guiding motive for becoming a teacher. Altruism represents one's eagerness to help others without expecting anything in return (Batson et al., 2002). Acknowledging their teachers' altruism, students will become motivated and willing to overcome learning challenges and move toward achievement (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2021; Li & Wei, 2023). In second language (L2) learning contexts however, the students' growth and accomplishments are influenced by positively and negatively branded psycho-emotional notions such as enjoyment, grit, anxiety, and shame (Dewaele, 2020; Ghafouri & Hassaskhah, 2025). In such emotionally diverse and intense contexts, language teachers are suggested to infuse more subjectivity into their class atmosphere to reduce and alter the detrimental influences of anxiety and other disturbing feelings (Wang et al., 2021). The significance of being responsive to the rollercoaster effects of emotions in the L2 learning domain rests upon the premise that asserts that the language classroom channels the emotions in-between the students and their teachers

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through a contagious effect according to which the students' emotional fluctuations conform to their teachers' feelings vice versa (Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2021). Thus, tending to learners' diverse emotional needs, which is among the objectives of the current study, not only helps them to learn better but is also beneficial to the welfare of the teachers and would lead to promoting the well-being of all stakeholders; hence, fulfilling the most important goal of educational systems (Mercer, 2021).

In doing so, applied linguists have relied on positive psychology (PP) in the pursuit of psychology-informed strategies and stress-coping alternatives by which language teaching and learning become more enjoyable, effective, and bearable (Gregersen et al., 2016; Zare & Al-Issa, 2024). PP, as a branch of humanistic trends of mainstream psychology, provides the opportunity to study, categorize, discuss, and promote positive notions that influence one's emotions, motivation, meaning of life, perseverance, and well-being (Seligman et al., 2005). Similarly, the framework acknowledges negative notions that will impact one's mental and physical health but tries to reduce negative influence by suggesting and testing various positive psychology interventions (PPI) (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). Reliance on PP and PPI has helped the researchers to evidence the presence and impact of various emotions like joy and enthusiasm among language learners (Wang et al., 2021). However, entities such as altruism, have received relatively less attention from scholars.

Altruism comprises one's willingness to help others grow and flourish (Batson et al., 2002). Individuals with altruistic behaviors are motivated toward the welfare of others (Batson et al., 1986). Further, it has been argued that altruism is among the proclivities the possession of which leads to becoming a teacher (Friedman, 2016). The concept resides within a highly intertwined network of higher-order constructs, including empathy, sympathy, generosity, and love (Sternberg, 1986). Thus, it is essential to identify the potentialities that lie in the altruistic behaviors of teachers because, based on the fundamental premises of PP, the identification of already existing mental strengths, building upon them, and finding ways to broaden the boundaries of those strengths are among the primary goals of PP research (Fredrickson, 2001). However, very few studies have addressed altruism within the L2 context (Gregersen et al., 2016; Murphey, 2016; Zare et al., 2023; Zare & Al-Issa, 2024).

The existing results indicate that altruism triggers empathy, compassion, connectedness, gratitude, and self-esteem while fostering L2 learning (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023). Nevertheless, the generalizability of the results could have been more pervasive since most of them have emerged from qualitative or correlation-based analyses. Also, the literature indicates that language learners would become less anxious if they enjoy the process more, and tending to learners' enjoyment could lead to more willingness to communicate, engagement, perceived competence, and higher academic achievement (Khajavy et al., 2018; Mierzwa, 2018; Jin and Zhang, 2021; Zhang et al., 2020). However, the problem with L2 literature reveals when one realizes that the majority of discussions and generalizations have been made based on correlational analyses, and the effectiveness of positive psychological interventions on language skills is also less documented (Dewaele, 2019; Zare et al., 2023). Moreover, to our knowledge, none of the existing studies have operationalized altruistic teaching in L2 classrooms. In doing so, the present study tried to determine the influence of altruistic teaching on learners' speaking skills and foreign language enjoyment. Language learning enjoyment occurs when the learners share positive experiences in the language class and perceive the joy and pride caused by overcoming language learning challenges (Ergün & Dewaele, 2021). Having these points in mind and in light of the current understanding of altruism, we aimed to find the answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent does altruistic teaching affect the foreign language enjoyment of EFL learners?
2. To what extent does altruistic teaching affect the foreign language speaking skill of EFL learners?
3. To what extent does altruistic teaching affect the retention of the speaking skill of EFL learners?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Positive Psychology and SLA

Over a decade ago, Swain (2013) stated that L2 emotions are "poorly studied, poorly understood, seen as inferior to rational thought" (p. 195). Nowadays, the field of second language teaching and learning enjoys a surge of interest and effort that scholars have shown in studying the psycho-emotional proclivities of language teachers and learners (MacIntyre et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021). The arrival of PP to SLA studies showed directions to less explored realms within the boundaries of language teachers' and learners' psyche. The deeper the scholars dive within the ocean of L2 emotions and mental factors, the more complicated aspects are revealed. Based on the findings, we know that positive notions such as guilt, grit, resilience, growth mindset, enjoyment, and motivation contribute to various aspects of language learning, such as willingness to communicate, engagement, and buoyancy (Ghafouri & Tahriri, 2023; Khajavy et al., 2018; Li & Wei, 2023; Sadoughi et al., 2023). Informed by PP principles, researchers have shown interest in applying PPIs, the utilization of which helps teachers and learners remain immune from various stressors and move towards personal growth and flourishing, which are two utmost goals of PP-laden studies and theories (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2001; Seligman et al., 2005; Snyder & Lopez, 2001). In doing so, Gregersen et al. (2016) reported that altruism, laughter, music, and similar interventions positively influence language learning (Gregersen et al., 2016). Using dialogic reading techniques for 78 learners, Hui et al. (2020) showed that PPIs help children understand complex syntactic features and reflect more verbal creativity. The listening and coping skills, along with hope and interpersonal relations of 45 EFL learners, were honed using hope and gratitude-based interventions, as reported by (Abdolrezapour & Ghanbari, 2021). However, the field could have enjoyed more from PPI-laden studies, and many aspects of L2 emotions have remained untouched and less explored.

Altruism

Altruism involves trying to increase the welfare of others, satisfy an inner motive, and ensure the emergence of a benefit for oneself or others (Batson et al., 2002). Altruism manifests itself in the form of altruistic behaviors that are undertaken to hone the well-being of others while maintaining one's ulterior egocentric motives residing deep inside one's inner psyche (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2021). In discussing the epistemological foundations of altruism, one faces motivation and empathy as two core conceptual pillars of the notion, which are empowered by a sense of caring and a helping tendency towards others (Batson et al., 2002). Diving deeper within the conceptualizations of altruism, one realizes that the concept is an integral part of a bigger domino wherein other notions, such as compassion and kindness, as two indicators of humanity, dwell (Seligman et al., 2005).

Arguably, altruistic behaviors might be traceable in one's altruistic personality principled moral reasoning and internalized personal values (Oliner & Oliner, 1988). Scholars also believe that altruism is a means by which a person maintains one's self-concept or an escape door to avoid feeling guilty; (Batson et al., 1986; Batson, 1991; Carlo et al., 1991; Eisenberg et al., 1989). In either case, isolating altruism from other positive notions such as generosity, care, niceness, and

love would underestimate and limit the boundaries of the concept (Sternberg, 1986). In recent conceptualizations of altruism, Arman (2023) metaphorically argues that altruism, sympathy, and empathy are three vantage points of compassion and caring triad wherein altruism as the quality of one's hand backed by the warmth of heart (i.e., sympathy) and triggered by the interest of mind (i.e., empathy).

Attempting to study the application of altruism, social psychologists found that altruism and engaging in any acts of kindness decrease social avoidance (Alden & Trew, 2012) and enhance social ties and engagement (Kurtz & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Studies also suggest that altruistic behaviors have a positive influence on physical health (Dunn et al., 2010; Sneed et al., 2013) in addition to well-being and happiness (Dunn et al., 2008; Lawton et al., 2002). The stress-altering function of altruistic behaviors is also evidenced, and it is argued that individuals with altruistic tendencies are more prone to experience a positive mentality along positive interpersonal relationships enriched by trust and love (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005; Kahana et al., 2012; Nelson et al., 2016). However, the notion has recently appeared in several language-related studies, and like other positive notions, the field of applied linguistics is in the early stages of recognizing the applicability of altruistic behavior and its outcomes within language classrooms. Discussions regarding altruism in educational circles rest on the role of altruistic teaching and the premises outlined by the well-becoming through teaching/giving hypothesis, based on which people learn and become better when they are engaged in acts that promote the welfare of others (Murphey, 2016). Altruistic teaching helps teachers to shift the focus from themselves to the growth and flourishing of their students (Murphey, 2016) and gives them a sense of self-esteem, efficacy, and organizational citizenship (Doo et al., 2020; Dussault, 2006; Friedman, 2016; Gregersen et al., 2016). Moreover, recent studies show that altruistic-laden instructions are also beneficial for language learners' summary writing skills, L2 achievement, efficacy, engagement, emotion regulation, and well-being (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Doo et al., 2020; Gregersen et al., 2016; Zare & Al-Issa, 2024). Specifically Zare (2023) focused on the interplay between altruism and learners' task engagement during essay writing. The results of the mixed-methods study conducted on 122 Iranian learners showed that altruistic teaching promotes short- and long-term task engagement through cultivating a sense of enjoyment, self-verification, bonding, responsibility, self-confidence, progress and group learning. Likewise, Zare and Al-Issa (2024) conducted a mixed-methods study and focused 116 Iranian EFL learners. The results of the study showed that altruistic teaching had a significant instructional impact on learners' reading comprehension.

Foreign Language Enjoyment

Enjoyment is defined "as good emotional states coming from breaking through homeostatic limits and stretching beyond oneself to accomplish something new or even unexpected, especially in the face of some difficult tasks" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014, p. 201) highlighting its long-term effect on personal development and well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Reflecting more on enjoyment and language learning, Botes et al. (2021) conceptualized the concept in three layers: private FLE, teacher appreciation, and social enjoyment. The first underlying component (i.e., private FLE) refers to positive emotions experienced due to personal success and accomplishment, such as improved L2 proficiency level or receiving positive feedback from teachers in front of peers. The teacher appreciation component describes EFL teachers' act of encouraging L2 learners and creating supportive attitudes and certain pedagogical practices to engage them in the process of learning, and finally, social FLE explains the act of establishing a joyful and constructive classroom environment where both teachers and learners form a positive whole including, for instance, the use of laughter.

The rationale behind considering enjoyment in EFL learning lies in its positive effect on self-perceived and actual language proficiency (Li et al., 2018), willingness to communicate (Khajavy et al., 2018), and interest in using EFL (Murphey, 2016). FLE improves L2 learning as it encourages learners to be creative and gritty (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016; Pan,2022), establishes social bonds (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016), and promotes psychological resiliency and personal well-being (Macintyre & Gregersen, 2012). Following PP principles, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2016) studied the interplay of FLE and language anxiety among 1746 language learners and found a significant negative correlation. Additionally, several scholars indicated that learners' feeling of enjoyment fluctuates over time under the influence of both teacher-centered variables (e.g., teachers' interpersonal behavior in an EFL classroom, positive feedback, and teachers' performance), and learner-centered variables (e.g., demographic variables, language proficiency, and perception) (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017; Mierzwa, 2019). Further, Boudreau et al. (2018) adopted a novel methodological approach to explore the rapidly changing relationship between enjoyment and anxiety in L2 communication, showing the divergent trajectories of enjoyment and anxiety in L2 communication. They noticed a highly dynamic relationship between the variables on a moment-to-moment timescale, in which the two emotions move either in a converging pattern or showing divergent trajectories.

FLE research has flourished in recent years and has been the topic of numerous PP-informed studies. For instance, Derakhshan and Noughabi (2024) analyzed the data from 200 EFL learners through the self-determination theory perspective to investigate the connections between learners' peace of mind, FLE, psychological capital, and academic engagement. The results showed that FLE outscored other variables in predicting academic engagement. Dewaele et al. (2025) recently reported how FLE helps learners overcome anxiety and boredom in the first year of L2 learning. Specifically, the researchers focused on 159 eleven-year-old pupils starting English foreign language classes in France and found that FLE negatively impacts foreign language anxiety and boredom while being a strong predictor of learners' oral proficiency. Similarly, Bielak (2025) tried to determine the extent to which foreign language anxiety and FLE correlate with L2 fluency. To do so, the researcher considered the relationship of the variables during a creative, collaborative oral L2 task among 43 mid-intermediate/high-intermediate language learners, concluding that teachers should focus on making learning tasks enjoyable and minimizing task anxiety to help their learners. Also, Bensalem et al. (2025) modeled the relationship between learners' grit, FLE, and boredom to profile their predictive power on students' willingness to communicate in a blended learning context. To do so, they obtained data from 345 learners, with results implying that educators can help their learners by introducing more engaging and enjoyable lessons, which leads to a higher willingness to communicate and instructional effectiveness.

English language speaking

Speaking is the most anxiety-provoking skill among the four language skills. It is strongly affected by psychological factors such as anxiety or emotion-related to nervousness, manifested by lower self-confidence and more risk-taking behaviors (Ozdemir & Papi, 2022). Addressing the impact of learners' emotionality within the L2 educational context is essential for English teachers to actively contribute to diminishing L2 learners' anxiety. Several scholars have investigated the factors affecting Learners' oral English production, regardless of their learning period and proficiency level, to eliminate the problems experienced by students in the process of foreign language learning. Muroya (2022), for instance, explored the conditions in which L2 learners are unwilling to communicate, suggesting self-perceived L2 communication competence, anxiety, and interlocutors as potential predictors of unwillingness. Similarly, Aubrey et al. (2020) revealed several factors contributing to L2 learners' engagement and disengagement during speaking tasks,

including learner-level (e.g., perceptions about language skills), lesson-level (e.g., understanding of the lesson), task-level (e.g., task design or the opportunity to speak), and post-task level factors (e.g., evaluation and reflection on the performance). Likewise, research has shown how different factors such as motivation, self-esteem, empathy, attitudes, positive classroom environment, and enjoyment (Arnold, 2005; Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017) affect students' willingness to communicate and their oral production, enabling students to strengthen their speaking skill through different communicative activities.

To summarize, the findings of the studies presented in this section suggest that more research is required to establish an agreed-upon conception about the ambiguity of altruism in their effectiveness for both positive emotions and L2 development.

3. METHOD

Context and participants

Fifty female English language learners from two intact classrooms in Tehran, Iran, participated in the study. All the respondents were from two branches of a private language institute, where each institutional term consisted of ten 90-minute sessions that were held twice a week, and the assessment was based on a written examination and spoken interviews to ensure that students have mastered a certain level in language proficiency framework before going on into the next educational level. The curriculum is designed based on an integrated multi-skilled syllabus, laying more emphasis on communicative language teaching, and offering discussion classes addressing speaking skills. The students of the present study were 20-25-year-old learners and had about six years of experience in learning English with diverse educational levels and participated in the experimental group (N=25) and a control group (N=25). Oxford Placement Test (Allen, 2004) was administered to ensure the homogeneity of the two groups, and the results from the independent sample t-test revealed no significant difference between the groups, and they were categorized as upper-intermediate (CEFR B1).

Instruments

Oxford Placement Test

The Oxford Placement Test (Allen, 2004) was administered to identify the differences in participants' language levels. It presented the candidates with 60 questions on a scale from 0 to 120 to measure their language knowledge and provide stakeholders with detailed information to make decisions. This scale contains two parts, grammatical and pragmatic knowledge, along with the learners' ability to apply this knowledge when communicating a range of meanings while listening, describing the learners' language proficiency level from beginner level (A1) to very advanced (C2), with 20 points corresponding to each CEFR level (e.g., a score of 42 would correspond to CEFR B1 level).

Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale

The Foreign language enjoyment scale developed by (Botes et al., 2021)was used to tap into foreign language learning enjoyment with three interrelated sub-constructs, namely (1) teacher appreciation (2) the private enjoyment of FL learning; and 3) the social enjoyment of FL learning, (i.e., cohesion and solidarity among peers). The scale encompasses nine items aligned on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1(Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with an acceptable Cronbach's alpha reliability of .782.

IELTS Speaking Tasks

A combination of speaking tasks from The Official Cambridge Guide to IELTS (Cullen et al., 2014) and Speaking for IELTS (Kovacs, 2011) were selected. Each task aimed at learners'

speaking skill by providing the required input for general topics such as job, hometown, personality, abstract thoughts, technology, and similar daily-life themes. Based on classroom instructions, tasks are designed to help the students nurture accuracy, fluency, coherence, and the vocabulary required for the task situation.

IELTS Speaking Test Checklist

To assess the quality of learners' speaking performance, the 9-band IELTS speaking descriptor was used and calculated by averaging four speaking subskills, including fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. The checklist reports a band score ranging from 1 to 9 and describes the characteristics of the learners based on reliable and validated criteria.

Altruistic Teaching Intervention

The intervention operationalizes altruistic teaching in three stages (Figure 1) which translate the empathy and caring proclivities of the teachers into three sets of observable endeavors that ensure the presence of teachers' help and caring throughout the entire learning experience. Our understanding of altruism and altruistic behavior reflects Batson (1991) and Batson et al. (2002) conceptualization of the notion asserting that the concept involves one's trial to increase the welfare of others. Thus, we treated altruistic teaching as a series of strategies undertaken by the English language teacher to increase L2 enjoyment and empower the students to autonomously overcome learning challenges in an emotionally supportive and friendly classroom. The definition builds upon empathy and caring as two core pillars in altruism conceptualizations (Arman, 2023; Batson et al., 2002). Although depicted in stages, the whole process is transparent and additive, meaning that each stage builds upon the previous one.

Rapport-building (Pre-Task)
- Non-verbal behaviors
- Providing a list of possible challenges
- Clarifying goals and expectations
- Modeling the task
- Sample analysis

Scaffolding (While-Task)
- Hinting & explaining
- Procedural assistance
- Feedback on process and effort
- Complimenting & encouraging

Reflection (Post-Task)
- Negotiating mistakes and errors
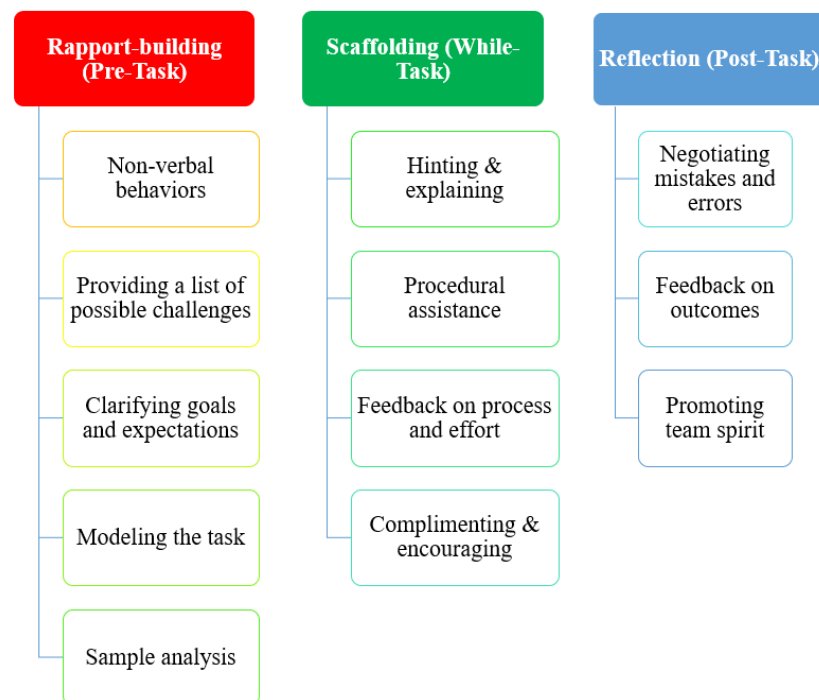- Feedback on outcomes
- Promoting team spirit

Figure 1: Schematic of the altruistic teaching in L2 class

The first stage (i.e., rapport-building) comprises teachers' trial for nurturing rapport and initial pre-task support which reflect friendliness and caring underpinnings of altruism (Batson, 1991; Carlo et al., 1991; Eisenberg et al., 1989). In this phase, the teacher relies on non-verbal behaviors such as smiling and friendly eye-contacts or uses humor to decrease the tension and generate or enhance the interpersonal relatedness which is an aspect of enjoyment (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Moreover, the teacher tries to clarify the goals and expectations and provide a list of possible challenges that students might face throughout the task which helps the students shape an insight about the goals and remain focused and interested in fulfilling the objectives (Hwang & Nam, 2021). Further, the teacher gives students a sense of confidence and support by modeling the entire task and analyzing a sample, so that students become aware of what follows. The inclusion of the first stage within the operationalization of altruistic teaching is further justified by noting that rapport and positive teacher-student relationships are significant predictors of L2 learners' engagement and positively influence learners' motivation and the quality of instruction (Dewaele & Pavelescu, 2021;Dotterer & Lowe, 2011).

In the second stage (i.e., scaffolding), the teachers' helping and caring behaviors are accompanied by scaffolding which includes hinting and explaining, procedural assistance, feedbacking on the process and effort along with giving compliments and encouragement. The second stage enables the learners to accomplish what they previously could not handle (Nguyen, 2022). Literature indicates that learners practice autonomy through scaffolding and teacher guidance which in turn helps them to enhance their knowledge and skills and obtain their learning outcomes (Zhang, 2023). As an outcome of the first two stages, students are emotionally supported and are empowered to overcome learning challenges independently. Finally, in the third stage (i.e., reflection) learners are taught that to fail means to learn and grow. In other words, the final stage functions as a vantage point from which the learners reflect on their efforts, process, and outcomes and the teacher encourages a team spirit by which the learners become aware of the importance of peer support. Thus, the students help their classmates and ensure that their friends are also capable of overcoming the task. By and large, as depicted in Figure 2, altruistic teaching provides an emotionally supportive and anxiety-reduced path jointly traversed by teacher and students to the point wherein the students themselves act altruistically.
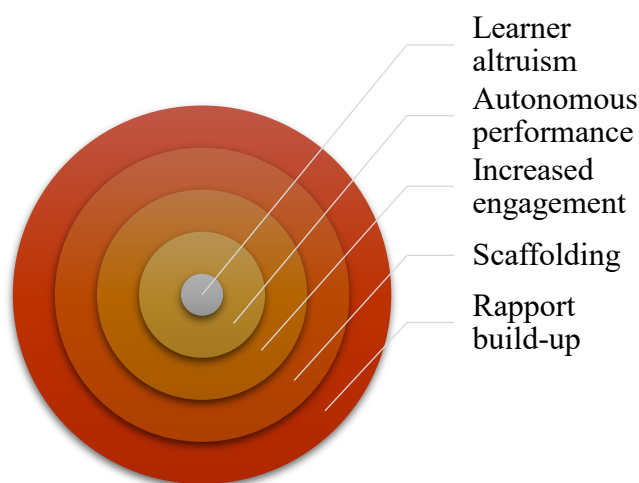

Learner altruism
Autonomous performance
Increased engagement
Scaffolding
Rapport build-up

Figure 2: Additive model of altruistic teaching in L2 context

Procedure

Prior to the conduction of the study, the researchers piloted all the instruments and procedures on 20 EFL learners who were at the same level of L2 proficiency as those recruited in the study to simulate the main study and ensure the reliability of the instruments. Afterward, two intact classes were divided into experimental and control groups. Both groups signed a consent form and were informed about the ethical considerations. Two weeks before the initiation of the experiment program, an OPT test was administered aimed to check the participants' homogeneity. One week before the treatment, a set of IELTS speaking tests was administered and all the participants filled out the foreign language enjoyment scale. The English classes were conducted over a period of ten, 90-minute sessions, and the same teacher with eight years of experience in teaching English was employed as the instructor for both the control (N=25) and experimental groups (N=25). The focus of each session was on the speaking and discussion skills of the learners. In the intervention stage, participants in both groups focused on IELTS speaking tasks derived from the Official Cambridge Guide to IELTS (Cullen et al., 2014) and Speaking for IELTS (Kovacs, 2011).

Moreover, the same learning management system and supplemented materials were used, and both groups were involved in presenting the lectures, individual oral reports, and group discussions. The students in the control group covered the contents based on a regular presentation-practice-production format where in the first stage, the goal is to present and teach the new content via audio files, videos, and PowerPoints, then students are given time to practice the target form, and drawing on their own linguistic resources to communicate meaningful information. The students in the experimental group, however, underwent the above-mentioned altruistic-based instruction (Figure 1 & 2) wherein each task was presented, practiced, and produced in an emotionally supportive learning environment where the teacher built interpersonal rapport, explained and discussed the task, and involved the learners in reflective practices.

To mitigate the experimenter-induced influence, a double-blind experimental approach was used where both the experimenter and participants were unaware of the assigned experimental condition. The applied method approach in the present study, therefore, avoids researchers' interaction with either the experimental or control group to keep their perspective on the infusion of positive emotions in the speaking class. Following the intervention stage, the same questionnaire, and a set of different IELTS speaking tests were administered in the final session to obtain data for the immediate post-test. The identical delayed post-test was used after two-week intervals. Then, data were analyzed using SPSS 26. At first, the scale's reliability was confirmed, and the normality of the data was probed. Then, the results of the OPT test were analyzed by running an independent samples t-test. For further analysis of the groups' homogeneity, one-way analyses of variance were run for the preintervention scores of both the speaking task and the FLE scale to survey whether there were any significant differences between the groups before the treatment. Other assumptions, including linearity, and homogeneity of regression slopes were considered as well for One-Way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and Simple Effect analysis required for answering the research questions.

4. RESULTS

Checking the normality and the obtained data, researchers found that the computed ratios were lower than ± 1.96, meaning that the normality assumption was retained (Field, 2018). Next step, was to check the reliability indices for the tests. The normality of OPT was checked using KR-21 method showing that the test enjoyed an acceptable KR-21 reliability of .77 (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). Further, the results of inter-rater reliability check of pre-test (r (48) = .761), post-test (r (48) = .740), and delayed post-test (r (48) = .786) represented large effect sizes, meaning that all scores

were in an acceptable and reliable range (Bachman, 2005). Similar results were also estimated for the pre-test (r= .782) and post-test (r= .873) ratios of FLE scale. Afterwards, the groups were tested for homogeneity prior to the intervention phase using an independent sample t-test which analyzed OPT scores the results of which signaled the homogeneity of the groups; (t (48) = .492, p > .05) (Table 1).

Table 1: Independent-Samples t-test for Oxford Placement Test by Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.398	.531	.492	48	.625	.880	1.787		-2.714	4.474
Equal variances not assumed			.492	47.546	.625	.880	1.787		-2.714	4.474

First research question focused on the effectiveness of altruistic teaching on FLE. To answer this question, One-Way ANCOVA was run to compare the experimental and control groups' means posttest of foreign language enjoyment after controlling for the effect of pretest in order to probe the third null-hypothesis. Besides normality of data, One-Way ANCOVA has three more assumptions (i.e., homogeneity of variances of groups, linearity, and homogeneity of regression slopes). The results of Levene's test (F (1, 48) = 4.32, p < .05) signaled the green light for undertaking One-Way ANCOVA by assuming homogeneity based on equal sample sizes (Pallant, 2016). The significant results of the linearity test ((F (1, 49) = 48.97, p < .05, η2 = .788) signaled that there was a linear relationship between pretest and posttest of foreign language enjoyment performance.

The non-significant interaction (Table 2) between covariate (pretest) and independent variable (types of treatment); i.e. (F (1, 46) = 1.42, p > .05, Partial η2 = .030) showed that there were linear relationships between pretest and posttest of foreign language enjoyment across the experimental and control groups.

Table 2: Testing Linearity of Relationship between Pretest and Posttest of Foreign Language Enjoyment

|			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Posttest * Pretest	Between Groups	(Combined)	1182.666	24	49.278	3.871	.001
		Linearity	623.429	1	623.429	48.979	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	559.237	23	24.315	1.910	.059
	Within Groups		318.214	25	12.729		
	Total		1500.880	49			
Eta Squared			.788				

Table 3 and Figure 3 display the main results of One-Way ANCOVA (F (1, 47) = 72.96, p < .05, partial η2 = .608 representing a large effect size) indicating that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on posttest of foreign language enjoyment after controlling for the effect of pretest. Thus, the first null-hypothesis as "altruistic teaching did not significantly affect the foreign language enjoyment of EFL learners" was rejected.

Table 3: Testing Homogeneity of Regression Slopes for Foreign Language Enjoyment

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Group	6.832	1	6.832	.942	.337	.020
Pretest	726.377	1	726.377	100.209	.000	.685
Group * Pretest	10.339	1	10.339	1.426	.238	.030
Error	333.438	46	7.249			
Total	44484.000	50				

Table 4: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Posttest of Foreign Language Enjoyment by Groups with Pretest

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pretest	719.023	1	719.023	98.302	.000	.677
Group	533.674	1	533.674	72.962	.000	.608
Error	343.777	47	7.314			
Total	44484.000	50				
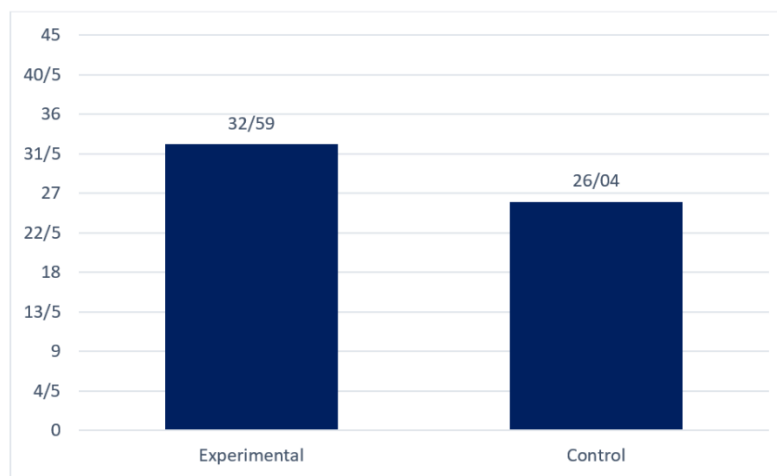
Figure 3: Means on Posttest of Foreign Language Enjoyment by Groups with Pretest

Table 5: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for Speaking Tests

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pretest	Based on Mean	.019	1	48	.890
	Based on Median	.001	1	48	1.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.000	1	47.101	1.000
	Based on trimmed mean	.000	1	48	.988
Post-test	Based on Mean	.017	1	48	.895
	Based on Median	.001	1	48	1.000
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.000	1	45.573	1.000
	Based on trimmed mean	.016	1	48	.900
Delayed	Based on Mean	6.576	1	48	.014
	Based on Median	5.297	1	48	.026
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	5.297	1	40.174	.027
	Based on trimmed mean	6.673	1	48	.013

The second and third research questions were concerned about the effectiveness of altruistic teaching on speaking proficiency and its retention among the learners. These questions were analyzed using Repeated Measures ANOVA plus Simple Effect analysis which compare the experimental and control groups' means on pretest, post-test, and delayed post-test of speaking. The results of Levene's test (Table 4) indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was retained on pretest (F (1, 48) = .001, p > .05), and post-test of speaking (F (1, 48) = .001, p > .05), and delayed post-test (F (1, 48) = 5.29, p < .05); while assuming the equality of sample sizes (Bachman, 2005; Pallant, 2016; Field, 2018; Tabachnick et al., 2014).

Table 5 shows the results of the Between-Subjects Effects. The results (F (1, 48) = 27.50, p < .05, pη2 = .364 representing a large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' overall means on pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest of speaking.

Additionally, Tables 6 and 7, and Figure 4 show that the experimental group (M = 4.56, SE = .204) had a higher mean than the control group (M = 3.00, SE = .204) on posttest of speaking. The results (MD = 1.56, p < .05) indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group on posttest of speaking. Thus; the first null-hypothesis as "altruistic teaching did not significantly affect the foreign speaking skill of EFL learners" was rejected.

Furthermore, Table 8 and Figure 5 show that the experimental group (M = 4.74, SE = .169) had a higher mean than the control group (M = 3.58, SE = .169) on the delayed posttest of speaking. Thus; the second null hypothesis "altruistic teaching did not significantly affect the retention of the speaking skill of EFL learners" was rejected.

Table 6: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Speaking Tests

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	1908.167	1	1908.167	1606.877	.000	.971
Group	32.667	1	32.667	27.509	.000	.364
Error	57.000	48	1.188			

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics for Posttest of Speaking by Group

Group	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental	4.560	.204	4.149	4.971
Control	3.000	.204	2.589	3.411

Table 8: Simple Effect Analysis for Comparing Groups on Posttest of Speaking

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental	Control	1.560*	.289	.000	.979	2.141

Table 9: Simple Effect Analysis for Comparing Groups on Delayed Posttest of Speaking

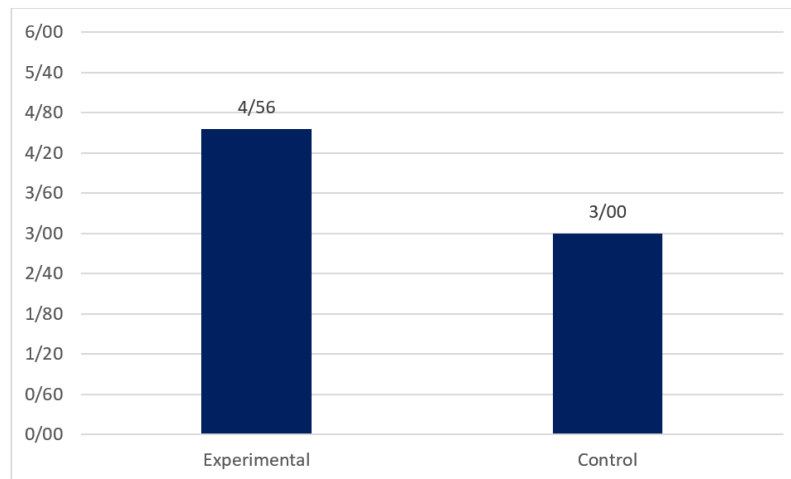| (I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental	Control	1.160*	.239	.000	.679	1.641

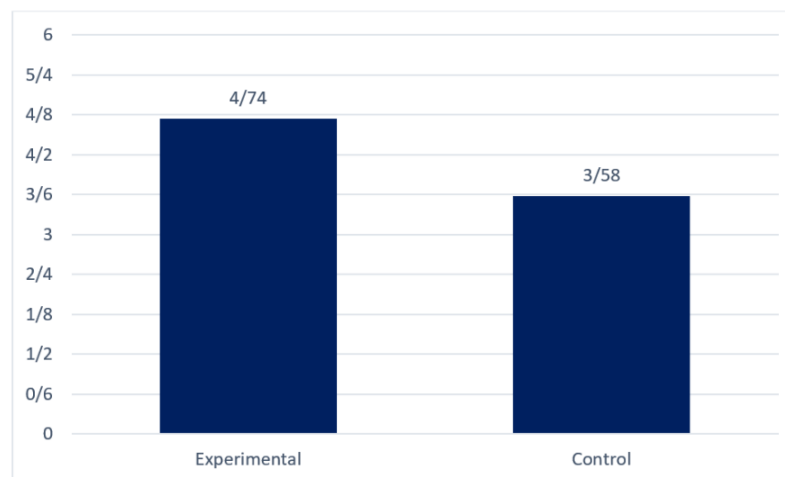**Figure 4: Means of Posttest Speaking by Groups**

Figure 5: Means of Delayed Posttest Speaking by Groups

5. DISCUSSION

Responding to the dearth of intervention-based inquiries in emotional trends of L2 studies, the researchers followed the principles of PP and investigated the effectiveness of a three-staged altruistic-based instruction. Accordingly, in line with previous studies, the results provided evidence of the effectiveness of altruistic teaching by suggesting that it significantly fuels learners' enjoyment which in turn leads to more engagement, motivation, and willingness to communicate (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Doo et al., 2020; Gregersen et al., 2016 ; Zare et al., 2023). Also, the results confirm the previously posed ideas asserting that teachers' commitment and dedication motivate the learners to face language learning challenges efficiently and overcome speaking anxiety (Gregersen et al., 2016; Li & Wei, 2023). In line with Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), enjoyment negatively correlates with anxiety, implying that speaking anxiety also negatively correlates with enjoyment. Arguably, as supported by the results, enjoyment reduces the learners' speaking anxiety and influences their self-confidence. The result further supports the findings of

Zare (2023) and Zare and Al-Issa (2024), who reported increased self-confidence and reading proficiency in light of altruistic teaching. Results also suggest that in light of the increased engagement, as operationalized in the study, learners become motivated and willing to partake in the tasks which in the long run hones their speaking proficiency (Arnold, 2005; Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017; Dewaele & Pavelescu, 2021; Zhang, 2023).

Results are also justifiable by considering the findings of Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) and Boudreau et al. (2018), who believed that anxiety would have fewer dialogues to utter when enjoyment becomes the central character in the classroom context. In other words, the emergence of more enjoyment as an outcome of altruistic teaching reduces the learners' anxiety, which would help the learners feel less stressed and engage more in the learning tasks. Moreover, the present results support the qualitative inquiry of Zare et al. (2023) who reported that altruistic teaching fostered L2 learning by triggering the learners' empathy, compassion, connectedness, and self-esteem. Results of the post-test and delayed post-test showed that altruistic teaching not only increases learners' ratings on speaking tests but also carves the required competency in their overall language knowledge and helps them maintain what they learned in the class. The idea suggests that in light of the procedural assistance and caring behaviors of the teacher, students can benefit from an anxiety-reduced atmosphere and focus on promoting their speaking skills while enjoying their inner perceived competence, teacher appreciation and support along with the strengthened interpersonal bonds shared by the classmates and teacher (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016; Pan, 2022; Khajavy et al., 2018). Reflecting on the results of post- and delayed post-test, we can further argue in line with social psychologists who noted that altruistic behaviors decrease social avoidance and positively enhance social ties and engagement between individuals since such behaviors increase the level of trust and love, which is shared by the individuals (Alden & Trew, 2012; Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005; Kahana et al., 2012; Kurtz & Lyubomirsky, 2008; Nelson et al., 2016). Additionally, the results support Gregersen et al. (2016) study, where they found that laughter and altruism promote language learning; however, the present study expands their interpretation of altruism by providing an extended operationalization of the phenomenon in the L2 teaching and learning domain. In line with Bielak (2025) and Dewaele et al. (2025), we further argue that increased FLE through altruism promotes speaking skills; thus, FLE is not only beneficial for learners' L2 fluency but also contributes to their oral proficiency, implying that teachers are better to keep tasks enjoyable and enthusiastic to the learners. The claim is also supported by Bensalem et al. (2025), who found that FLE contributes to learners' grit and willingness to communicate. The idea supports and is in line with previously PPI-laden studies where the researchers declared that such interventions enhance L2 fluency, listening, syntactic processing, coping skills, and summary writing (Bielak, 2025;Derakhshan & Zare, 2023;Derakhshan et al., 2023;Doo et al., 2020;Gregersen et al., 2016).

6. CONCLUSION

The present inquiry was one of the few attempts to shed fresh light on the significant contribution of altruistic teaching instruction resulting in learners' enjoyment and improving their speaking performance, which was maintained over a two-week interval. Hence, the findings can enlighten the practices of PP instruction to provide a better learning context for EFL learners to become more enjoyable and to improve their L2 oral communication compared to their counterparts receiving a regular presentation-practice-production format. The present study has several implications for L2 teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum developers. First, it further highlighted the importance of tending to the psycho-emotional needs of the learners. In doing so, the present study provides more justification for relying on PP-informed strategies and instructions and supports the inclusion of altruism-laden pedagogies in L2 classes. Further, the study signaled

that teachers' concern about the welfare of the students (i.e., altruism) not only enhances their language speaking skills but also makes learning more enjoyable, which in turn triggers a sense of accomplishment, competence, motivation, and engagement which are among the indicators of individuals' well-being. In other words, the study suggests that altruistic teaching minimizes the distance between the students' L2 achievement, growth, and overall well-being. The current and similar results on the consequences of altruistic teaching can inspire L2 practitioners, researchers, and teachers to identify the opportunities in altruistic behaviors and their impact on learners' achievement and growth.

Aside from theoretical and pedagogical implications, the study can be more inspiring in the subsequent trials in case of addressing its limitations. First, this study was limited in focusing on Iranian upper intermediate EFL students with a limited age range. Therefore, future research should include more diverse students, considering the sociocultural and demographic aspects. Second, longitudinal and qualitative designs can establish a comprehensive image of how PP exercises affect L2 learning gains over time. Future studies are suggested to replicate the altruistic teaching in L2 classes as operationalized in the present study to retest the effectiveness of such interventions. Also, the researchers are suggested to check whether altruistic teaching influences the teachers' feelings to see whether the proposed model of L2 altruistic teaching can be modified and updated. In doing so, the effect of altruism on language teaching enjoyment, grit, happiness, and similar constructs can be studied. The other idea worth investigating is that teachers' altruism can be the starting point for learners' altruism (Figure 2). In other words, such behaviors not only influence learners' proficiency but also inspire them to reflect altruistic behaviors as well. Thus, teachers' altruism can trigger the learners to be more caring and attentive toward their classmates' learning problems, hence enacting a more humane experience.

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