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A Bibliometric Analysis of Ten Years on Positive Psychology in Foreign/Second Language Education (2012-2022)

Yabancı/İkinci Dil Eğitiminde Pozitif Psikoloji Üzerine On Yıllık Bibliyometrik Bir Analiz (2012-2022)

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ABSTRACT: This bibliometric study examines the research trends, productivity, publication, and citation patterns of positive psychology in the field of foreign/second language education by analyzing 137 documents retrieved from the Web of Science (WoS) database between 2012-2022. Data analysis was conducted using various scientometric software, including MS Excel and Biblioshiny. Results reveal that the first publication on this topic appeared in 2012, with a major increase observed in 2021-2022, with the highest number of publications (*n* = 41) in 2022. The highest number of citations (*n* = 528) were observed in 2018. China was found to be the most productive country (*n* = 106), while Japan had the highest citation impact (*n* = 63). The most cited document received 198 citations. The study also found that the most frequently used word was "emotion" and the trending topic was positive psychology. The most productive university affiliation was found to be Birkbeck University of London in the UK.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, biblioshiny, foreign language education, positive psychology, second language education.

ÖZ: Bu bibliyometrik çalışma, 2012-2022 yılları arasında Web of Science (WoS) veri tabanından alınan 137 belgeyi analiz ederek yabancı/ikinci dil eğitimi alanında pozitif psikolojinin araştırma eğilimlerini, üretkenliğini, yayın ve atıf modellerini incelemektedir. Veri analizi MS Excel ve Biblioshiny gibi çeşitli scientometrik yazılımlar kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Sonuçlar, bu konudaki ilk yayının 2012 yılında ortaya çıktığını, 2021-2022 yıllarında büyük bir artış gözlendiğini ve en yüksek yayın sayısının (*n* = 41) 2022'de olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. En yüksek atıf sayısı (*n* = 528) 2018 yılında gözlemlenmiştir. Çin'in bu alanda en üretken ülke olduğu (*n* = 106), Japonya'nın ise en yüksek atıf etkisine (*n* = 63) sahip olduğu görülmüştür. En çok atıf alan belge 198 atıf almıştır. Çalışmada ayrıca en sık kullanılan kelimenin "duygu" ve trend konunun ise pozitif psikoloji olduğu tespit edilmiştir. En verimli üniversite ise Birleşik Krallık'taki Birkbeck University of London olarak tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Bibliyometrik analiz, bibliyoshiny, ikinci dil eğitimi, pozitif psikoloji, yabancı dil eğitimi.

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Recently, there has been a positive renaissance in the field of language education, as researchers and practitioners shift their focus from negative emotions to a more holistic examination of both negative and positive factors involved in the process of second language (L2) teaching and learning. This shift, first introduced by MacIntyre and Gregersen in 2012, has been driven by a growing interest in the role of emotions in foreign language learning (FLL) and teaching. Following their pioneering work, a number of early studies were published in peripheral journals, marking the beginning of a new area of research in the field.

Historically, research in applied linguistics has been dominated by a cognitive perspective which focused on the mental processes involved in language learning and teaching but in recent years, scholars have begun to investigate the impact of emotional states on language acquisition beyond previously established concepts such as foreign language anxiety and motivation. The field of educational research has been preoccupied on studying negative emotions, such as anxiety (Marcos-Llinás & Garau, 2009) and burnout (Vaezi & Fallah, 2011), within the realm of instruction for a prolonged period. However, in recent years, researchers inspired by the positive psychology movement have shifted their focus to the study and encouragement of eudemonic well-being (Jin et al., 2021). It may be argued that the conditions were favorable for the development of positive psychology within the field of applied linguistics due to the momentum of studies on the impact of "affective" factors, such as attitudes, motivation, and foreign language anxiety, which held a strong emotional component with a tendency to focus on negative emotions (anxiety) (Wang et al., 2021). Educational psychologists and teacher trainers had previously stressed the significance of positive emotions in FL classes (Arnold, 1999; Arnold & Fonseca, 2007) and the correlation between emotions and FL learning had been acknowledged (Bown & White, 2010; Dewaele, 2005, 2015; MacIntyre et al., 2019; Puozzo Capron & Piccardo, 2013). Despite this attention to the emotional aspect of FL learning, research in this area had remained relatively obscured in a field dominated by cognitive perspectives (Sharwood, 2017) and no link had been made to positive psychology. However, around the turn of the millennium, researchers began to shift their attention towards the role of emotions in FLL and teaching. This shift was driven by the recognition that emotions play a crucial role in shaping learners' and teachers' experiences of language learning and teaching, and that these experiences can have a significant impact on linguistic progress.

Positive psychology, henceforth abbreviated as PP for the sake of brevity, was initially proposed by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) which encourages a change in attention from only dealing with negative aspects of life to cultivating positive attributes (Gao et al., 2020; MacIntyre, 2021). Theoretically, PP is underpinned by the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, which suggests that positive emotions lead to exploration, undo negative emotions, promote resilience, build personal resources, and lead to greater well-being (Lopez, 2008; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Seligman, 2011). In contrast to the broaden-and-build theory, applied PP in L2 education emphasizes that negative and positive emotions cannot be easily segregated and, in many cases, complement each other (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Wang et al., 2021). Positive emotions, as opposed to negative emotions which limit mindset, can encourage inventiveness and originality, leading to the accumulation of physical, psychological, intellectual, and social resources (Fredrickson, 2004). Positive emotions

may enhance the enjoyment and personal value of learning and teaching L2, as well as help L2 teachers and learners be more resilient when confronted with challenges (Gregersen, 2013). The emergence of foreign language enjoyment (FLE), as well as the study of factors such as happiness, emotional intelligence, love, and pride, has contributed to this shift in focus. Since the introduction of PP in this field, an increasing body of empirical research utilizing different epistemological and methodological approaches has provided a more nuanced understanding of the impact positive and negative emotions have on language learning and teaching. Additionally, PP interventions have been put into practice in schools and institutions all over the world with the purpose of boosting language development by enhancing learners' and instructors' experiences of flow, hope, courage, well-being, optimism, creativity, happiness, grit, resilience, and laughter.

In this vein, MacIntyre (2016) has identified four major contributions of PP to L2 education: (1) the shift from negative to positive emotion, recognizing the importance of both types of emotions in educational outcomes (Li et al., 2020); (2) the introduction of the model of character strengths, comprising six core categories, which can promote flourishing for teachers and students (MacIntyre, 2021; Park et al., 2004); (3) Oxford's (2016) development of the PERMA model towards EMPATHICS, which comprises nine factors related to emotion and empathy, meaning and motivation, perseverance, agency and autonomy, time, hardiness and habits of mind, intelligences, character strengths and self-related variables (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020); (4) the concept of flow outlined by Csikszentmihalyi (1990), which offers potential for examining the influence of experience on language learning attainment and success, although it has not been explored much in SLA studies (Liu & Song, 2021). While there have been criticisms of PP and early adopters of PP in applied linguistics, it's important to note that using PP in L2 education has the potential to enhance language learning. By promoting positive emotions and reducing negative emotions, PP can lead to greater well-being for both teachers and students. Nonetheless, much like a snowdrop after winter, the introduction of PP principles has brought new life to the field, providing a fresh perspective on the role of emotions in language learning and teaching (Dewaele et al., 2019). The growth of this novel field has been spurred on by a rising number of SLA researchers and those looking to incorporate psychological principles in language classrooms. Thus, it is important to understand both its current and potential future state. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that no bibliometric studies have been conducted to analyze research trends in the application of PP in FL education. Bibliometrics provide current trends for researchers, educators, and institutions in any field by utilizing search keywords and related fields within a specified time frame (Höl, 2022). Therefore, this study aims to utilize bibliometric analysis to gain insight into research trends in the application of PP in FL education, as well as to aid future researchers in understanding these trends. In this vein, the current study was conducted using meta-data retrieved from the Web of Science database in aim to address the following research questions:

1. What are the publishing and citation patterns for research on PP in foreign and second language education?

2. Which countries, institutions, and researchers are the most productive in this field?

3. Which journals do researchers prefer to publish their studies on PP in foreign language education?
4. What are the most common keywords and trending topics in this field?

Method

In this study, a bibliometric analysis was conducted to investigate the use of positive PP in FL education. Bibliometric analysis involves quantitatively analyzing and measuring scholarly literature through bibliographic data and citation patterns to identify leading researchers and institutions, track the development of new fields, and identify under-studied or under-funded research areas (Tijjani et al., 2020).

A detailed analysis of bibliographic information was performed using Biblioshiny, which is a web-based software from the Bibliometrix package that has been specifically developed for the purpose of analyzing bibliographic data. This tool enables users to search for, retrieve, and study bibliographic information from databases along with providing visualization tools that can be used to make sense of the data and present it in a clear and meaningful way.

Database Selection

We began by gathering raw data, including citations and search terms, from the Web of Science (WoS) database, which is globally recognized and preferred by thousands of researchers (Höl, 2022). Although this database includes various document types such as journals, books, reviews, and conference proceedings, our study focused on published articles in which reviews and proceeding papers were included. The WoS database was chosen for several compelling reasons. Many databases offer social sciences citation indexing services, including internationally recognized ones like Scopus and Google Scholar. However, scholars have acknowledged that the WoS Core Collection possesses higher quality standards compared to Scopus (Gaviria-Marin et al., 2019), resulting in fewer inaccuracies in identifying authors and keyword differentiation, owing to the use of keywords plus, therefore making WoS the most widely accepted and utilized database for scientific publication analysis. Keywords plus, also known as automatically generated keywords, are terms pulled from the WoS database based on their frequency of appearance in a document's reference list in which prevents issues when comparing documents. Additionally, the WoS Core Collection-Citation database offers a unique feature of citation counts, which allows the relative importance of articles to be quantified through an objective measure of influence (Dzikowski, 2018). These features have made WoS the ideal database for data mining, and it has emerged as one of the most popular databases used by researchers in conducting bibliometric analysis (Gaviria-Marin et al., 2019; Waltman & van Eck, 2012; Yan & Zhiping, 2023). In this study, information such as titles, authors, keywords, and citations were extracted from WoS.

Search Query

To gather information about bibliographic data related to PP in foreign/second language education, we utilized the WoS website. We implemented a specific search strategy that involved utilizing keywords such as "positive psychology", "foreign language", and "second language" in the title, abstract, and keywords of the studies.

Initially, we received 159 records, but narrowed it down by applying filters such as document type (articles, reviews, and proceeding papers) and selecting WoS categories of education and educational research and language and linguistics, resulting in 137 records. We also did not limit the time span in this study. The Prisma diagram strategy, a method for improving the reporting of systematic reviews and meta-analyses, was employed in this study (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Moher et al., 2009).

Date of Data Extraction

The meta-data were retrieved on January 16, 2023, at Pamukkale University's Faculty of Education in Turkey using WoS to search for publications. This search query yielded a total of 137 items, including articles, reviews, and proceeding papers.

Data Analysis

Bibliometric analysis methods were used to extract relevant data from publications. Firstly, relevant keywords were used to identify all publications in the WoS database related to PP in FL education. This ensured that all pertinent data was included. For ensuring validity and reliability, the researchers conducted independent analysis of the bibliometric data, finding no differences in their results. Additionally, a thorough manual screening was performed, examining the title, abstract, and research questions/hypotheses of each article to determine their relevance to the fields of Positive Psychology and foreign/second language education. Moreover, although no language filters were applied, all retrieved publications were in English. The publications were then exported as plain text and analyzed using the Biblioshiny tool (version 4.2), which was accessed through Rstudio and the bibliometrix package. The Biblioshiny web interface was launched by entering "library(bibliometrix)" and "biblioshiny()" into the command line. The raw files were imported into the Biblioshiny tool for analysis. Finally, the results were analyzed using Microsoft Excel (V.16.61) to generate statistics, numbers, graphics, and charts.

Limitations

While this study offers valuable insights into the research productivity in PP in foreign/second language education, it has several limitations. Firstly, this study is restricted to the WoS database, which may exclude relevant publications from other databases such as Scopus or Google Scholar. Broadening the scope of the study could offer a more comprehensive perspective. Furthermore, the focus of the study was limited to specific subcategories within WoS, excluding other research areas like business, health, and politics. No filters were applied based on geographic location, language, or publication year. Secondly, methodological biases may arise from the focus on publication and citation metrics, which can prioritize quantity over quality. The reliability of bibliometric tools is subject to inconsistencies in citation practices and indexing variations, which can affect data accuracy. Highly cited papers may gain citations for reasons other than scholarly impact, such as being review articles or addressing popular topics. Thus, relying solely on citation counts to gauge research impact can be misleading. To address these issues, future studies should integrate qualitative assessments and alternative metrics to provide a more balanced and comprehensive evaluation of research contributions.

<div align="center">**Results and Discussion**</div>

General Information and Historical Background

The primary objective of the current study was to construct a comprehensive overview of the relevant studies on PP in the context FL education. Through a thorough analysis, it was determined that between the years 2012 and 2022, a total of 137 papers on this topic were published. Notably, the earliest publication on PP in the EFL context was a proceedings paper entitled "Social Media's Learning Outcomes within Writing Instruction in the EFL Classroom: Exploring, Implementing, and Analyzing Storify," which was presented at the International Conference on Education & Educational Psychology (ICEEPSY, 2012).

Table 1 presents the key data that was retrieved regarding the formats of the published documents. The table provides an overview of the different types of publications, such as conference proceedings, journal articles, and books, that have been produced in the field of PP in the context of FL education. This information is essential for understanding the distribution of research across different formats and the relative importance of each type of publication within the field. For instance, it allows researchers to discern whether certain types of publications, like journal articles versus conference proceedings, receive more attention or are deemed more influential within the academic community. This understanding aids in evaluating the scholarly impact and dissemination of research findings within the field.

Table 1

General Overview of Article Publications

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	2012:2022
Sources (Journals, Books, etc.)	42
Documents	137
Annual Growth Rate %	35.26
Document Average Age	3.36
Average citations per doc	17.94
References	1
DOCUMENT TYPES	
Article	99
Article; Book Chapter	20
Article; Early Access	5
Proceedings Paper	3
Review	10
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	313

Author's Keywords (DE)	476
AUTHORS	
Authors	280
Authors of single-authored docs	37
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	39
Co-Authors per Doc	2.39
International co-authorships %	27.01

Research Productivity

The current study aimed to investigate the trend of research related to PP in FL education. Specifically, the study sought to determine if there was an increase, stability, or decline in research in this area, as well as identifying any notable changes in trend and the years in which researchers were most prolific. In addition to analyzing the overall trend, the study included an analysis of the top ten countries and organizations based on their research productivity. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the global landscape of research in this area, highlighting the key contributors and their impact on the field. To begin, the annual research productivity in this field was analyzed using publications and citations data. Figure 1 illustrates the results of this analysis, which revealed that the first publication on this topic was published in 2012 and received a limited number of citations. However, a gradual increase in research productivity was observed, with a significant spike in 2021 and 2022, during which 54% of the publications were produced. Additionally, it was noted that the highest number of citations ($n = 528$) was received by 11 publications in 2018, with an average citation rate of 48% per year. The highest number of publications ($n = 41$) was reached in the year 2022. The annual growth rate of studies is approximately 35.26%. Overall, the analysis period of the recent decade demonstrates an upward trend in publications, with a particularly notable increase in popularity in 2016 and productivity beginning in 2020. In this vein, the year 2016 marked a significant milestone for PP in FL education, beginning a period of increased scholarly interest and productivity. Key events included the establishment of the International Association for the Psychology of Language Learning (PLL) following the second PLL conference at the University of Jyväskylä. This organizational step, coupled with initiatives like Multilingual Matters' new book series on 'Psychology of Language Learning and Teaching,' highlighted PP's growing influence in the field (Dewaele et al., 2019). Seminal edited volumes such as 'Positive Psychology in SLA' (MacIntyre et al., 2016) and 'Positive Psychology Perspectives on Foreign Language Learning and Teaching' (Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016) also underscored PP's practical applications. By 2017, established journals began integrating PP perspectives, solidifying its role in advancing theoretical frameworks and research methodologies in applied linguistics (Dewaele & Li, 2018; MacIntyre et al., 2019). These developments collectively marked 2016, referred to as the 'flowering' of PP in Applied Linguistics by Dewaele et al. (2019), as a pivotal year when PP gained significant attention and institutional support, reshaping discourse, and research agendas in language education.

Figure 1

Publications and Citation Trends from 2012 to 2022
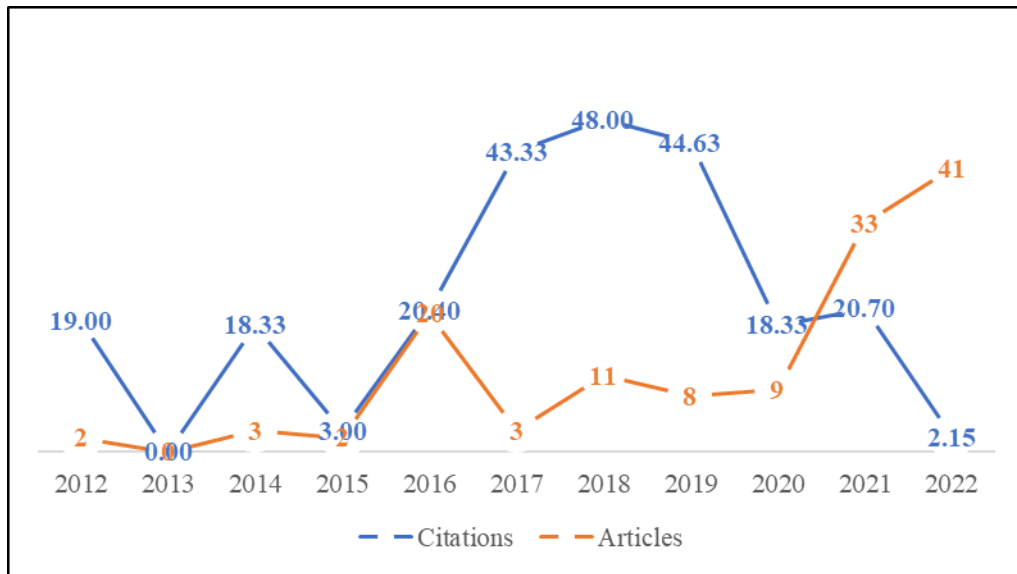
As a comprehensive analysis, this study examined the citation analytics of publications in the field of PP in FL education to identify the most highly cited publications. The data revealed that the average number of citations per study was 17.94. This suggests that the literature within this area is active and well-established, with researchers frequently engaging with and building upon the ideas presented in prior publications. Furthermore, the most highly cited article was found to be Wan YL (2021) with 198 citations, followed by Dawaela JM (2016) with 191 citations. Table 2 presents a detailed breakdown of the citation structure for the top 10 most cited article publications regarding PP in FL education. These findings demonstrate the importance and impact of these studies within the field and provide insight into the most prestigious research in this area.

Table 2

The Citation Structure of Positive Psychology in FL Education Publications

Paper	Total Citations	DOI
Wang YL, 2021, FRONT PSYCHOL	198	10.3389/fpsyg.2021.731721
Dewaele JM, 2016, SECOND LANG ACQUIS	191	10.21832/9781783095360-010
Dewaele JM, 2019, FRONT PSYCHOL	179	10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02128
Dewaele JM, 2018, STUD SECOND LANG LE	127	10.14746/ssllt.2018.8.1.2
Li CC, 2018, SYSTEM	126	10.1016/j.system.2018.06.004
Xie F, 2021, FRONT PSYCHOL	121	10.3389/fpsyg.2021.708490
Macintyre PD, 2017, STUD SECOND LANG LE	106	10.14746/ssllt.2017.7.1.4
Li CC, 2020, APPL LINGUIST REV	75	10.1515/applirev-2018-0043
Piniel K, 2018, STUD SECOND LANG LE	63	10.14746/ssllt.2018.8.1.6
Shao KQ, 2019, SYSTEM	57	10.1016/j.system.2019.102121

Leading Countries and Institutions

Table 3 presents a comprehensive analysis of the top ten countries and organizations in terms of research productivity in the field of PP in FL education. This analysis is based on three key metrics: the number of publications (TP), total citations (TC), and the citation impact (CI).

China emerges as the foremost contributor with 106 publications, significantly outpacing other countries. Iran and the United Kingdom also had a significant number of publications, with 29 and 26 publications respectively. On the other hand, Austria had the lowest number of publications (TP = 5). When examining total citations, publications originating from China had the highest number (TC = 706). However, Japan stands out with the highest citation impact (CI = 63), suggesting that its relatively fewer publications (TP = 8) are of high quality and significance.

Furthermore, Belgium had the lowest citation impact (CI = 4.64), despite having a moderate number of publications (TP = 6) and citations (TC = 51) among the top ten countries. Overall, it is important to note China's dominance in publication metrics may skew the overall view of global research trends. Its leading position in both publication count and citation numbers could overshadow valuable contributions from other countries with smaller research outputs. While volume is essential, other countries with smaller outputs but higher citation impacts, like Japan, contribute high-quality, impactful research. This imbalance can skew the true scope of research impact, as it prioritizes volume over quality and innovation. To address this bias, it is crucial to use a range of metrics that assess research quality and relevance, ensuring a fair representation of all contributions in the field.

Table 3

Leading Countries and Institutions

Top 10 Countries				Top 10 Organizations			
Rank	Country	TP	TC	CI	Rank	Organization	TP	TC
1	China	106	706	11.97	1	Birkbeck Univ London	7	584
2	Iran	29	449	34.54	2	Univ London	6	908
3	UK	26	399	57	3	Cape Breton Univ	6	193
4	USA	25	336	30.55	4	Ferdowsi Univ Mashhad	5	71
5	Poland	14	153	30.6	5	Henan Univ	5	377
6	Canada	10	123	24.6	6	Huazhong Univ Sci and Technol	5	216
7	Japan	8	63	63	7	Univ Macau	5	35
8	Australia	6	51	25.5	8	Xiamen Univ	5	251
9	Belgium	6	51	4.64	9	Michigan State Univ	4	25
10	Austria	5	41	13.67	10	South China Normal Univ	4	121

Note: In the header, "Rank", "Country", "TP", "TC", "CI" belong to Top 10 Countries; "Rank", "Organization", "TP", "TC" belong to Top 10 Organizations.

Regarding the research productivity of the top ten organizations in the field, the Birkbeck University of London stands out as the leader, with 7 publications and 584 citations. The University of London and the Cape Breton University also demonstrate a

high level of research productivity, with both organizations producing 6 publications and receiving 908 and 193 citations respectively. The remaining five organizations in the top 10 list have contributed 5 publications each, and the final two organizations have contributed 4 publications each. However, it is important to note that the number of publications does not necessarily indicate the quality or impact of the research. Further analysis, such as citation impact and the scope of the research, should be conducted to fully evaluate the contributions of these organizations in this field.

Most Productive Authors

When assessing an author's significance within a particular field, it is important to consider both their productivity and impact. The productivity of an author is evaluated based on the number of articles they have published within a certain time frame. Impact, on the other hand, is determined by the number of citations received by an author per year. Figure 3 illustrates the production of the top authors over time. It should be noted that the size of the circles represents the number of articles published by the author in a specific year, with larger circles indicating a higher number of publications. Additionally, the darkness of the circles represents the number of citations received per year, with darker circles indicating a higher number of citations. From the data presented in Figure 2, Dewaele, Li, Oxford and Macintyre are the most productive authors in the field, while Derakhshan received the highest number of citations per year after Dewaele. Additionally, Dewaele is a leading author in the field, with a consistent record of publications from 2016 to 2022.

Figure 2

Top Authors' Production Over Time
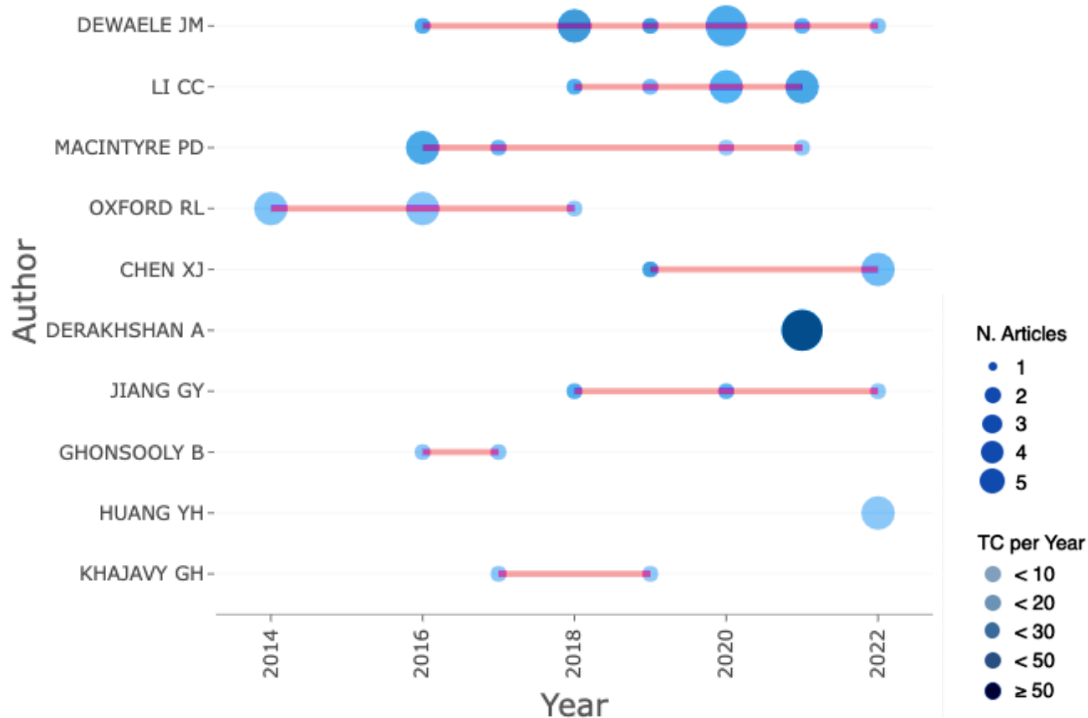
However, it is important to note that productivity alone is not a sufficient indicator of the overall quality of an author's work. Therefore, in Table 4, a thorough examination of the most prolific authors in the field of PP within FL education research is presented and two additional measures are provided to evaluate the top 10 most productive authors: the total citation number (TC), and the h-index. Furthermore, the table also includes details on the authors' affiliated institutions and countries, as well as their total number of publications (TP) and the number of citations associated with these publications (TC).

The authors with the highest number of citations in the dataset are Dewaele (TC = 782) and Derakshan (TC = 354), followed by Li (TC = 342) and Macintyre (TC = 341). Dewaele also demonstrates the best combination of productivity and impact, with 10 TP and an h-index of 7, indicating that he has published 7 articles that have received at least 7 citations. Li and Oxford have also performed well, with 6 and 5 total publications respectively and a h-index of 5. The overall results indicate that this is an emerging area with significant potential for future research.

Table 4

The Top 10 Most Influential Authors between 2012 and 2022

Rank	Author	Affiliation	Country	TP	TC	h-Index
1	Dewaele, J.M.	University of London	UK	10	782	7
2	Li, C.C.	Huazhong University of Science & Technology	China	6	342	5
3	Oxford, R.L.	University System of Maryland	USA	5	91	5
4	Macintyre, P.D.	Cape Breton University	Canada	5	341	4
5	Chen, X.J.	Tsinghua University	China	3	201	3
6	Derakhshan, A.	Golestan Univ	Iran	3	354	3
7	Ghonsooly, B.	Ferdowsi University Mashhad	Iran	2	32	2
8	Jiang, G.Y.	Shihezi University	China	3	202	2
9	Khajavy, G.H.	University of Bojnord	Iran	2	22	2
10	Lee, J.S.	Education University of Hong Kong	Japan	2	22	2

The present study found that a total of 254 out of 280 authors conducted a single publication on PP in the field of FLE. Additionally, an analysis of the productivity of authors revealed that one researcher had an exceptional level of productivity, having conducted ten studies on the topic. Another researcher also demonstrated a high level of productivity, having conducted six studies. These findings are further illustrated in Table 5, which provides a comprehensive breakdown of the productivity of authors in this field.

Table 5

Productivity of Authors

Documents written	Number of Authors
1	254
2	18
3	4
5	2
6	1
10	1

Most Influential Sources

The current study aimed to investigate the sources in which research on PP in FL education is preferred and published by researchers. A total of 42 different sources were identified, however, only the top ten sources were selected for further analysis. The sources related to PP in FL education, along with the number of publications indexed in WoS, were obtained. It was found that the most prominent source was *Frontiers in Psychology* ($n = 53$). Figure 3 provides an in-depth analysis of the most influential sources. Additionally, an examination of the source growth per year was conducted to compare the sources and their growth. Figure 4 illustrates the annual source growth, revealing an increasing interest in PP in FL education since 2020 which suggests a growing trend in this area of research.
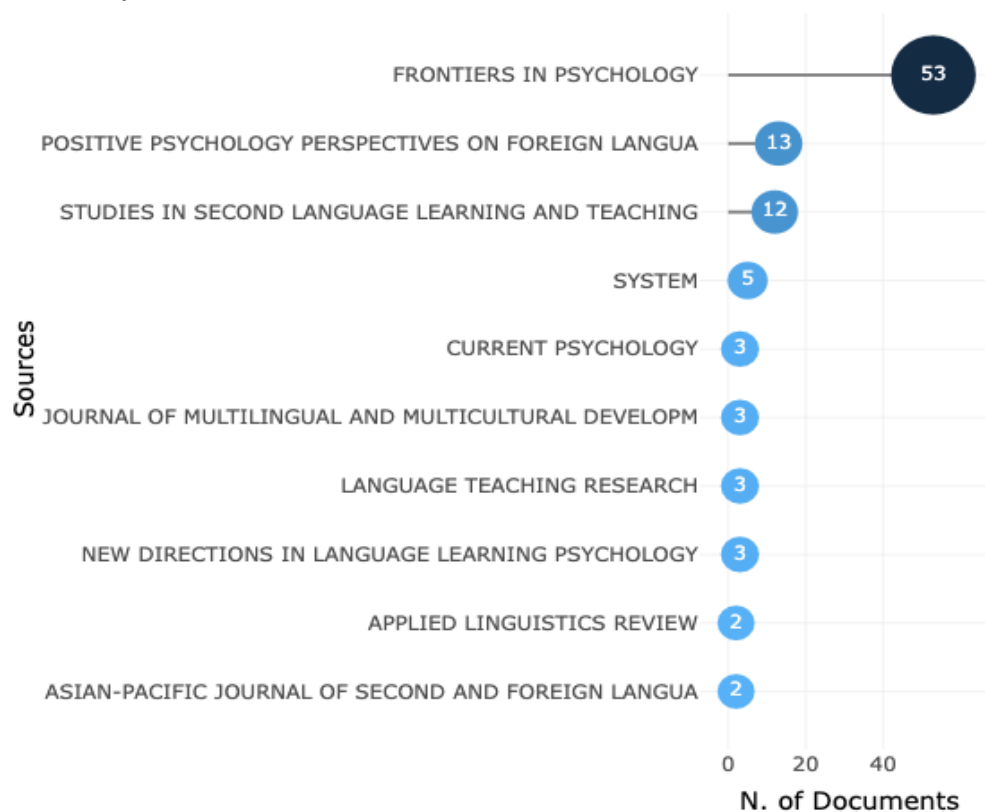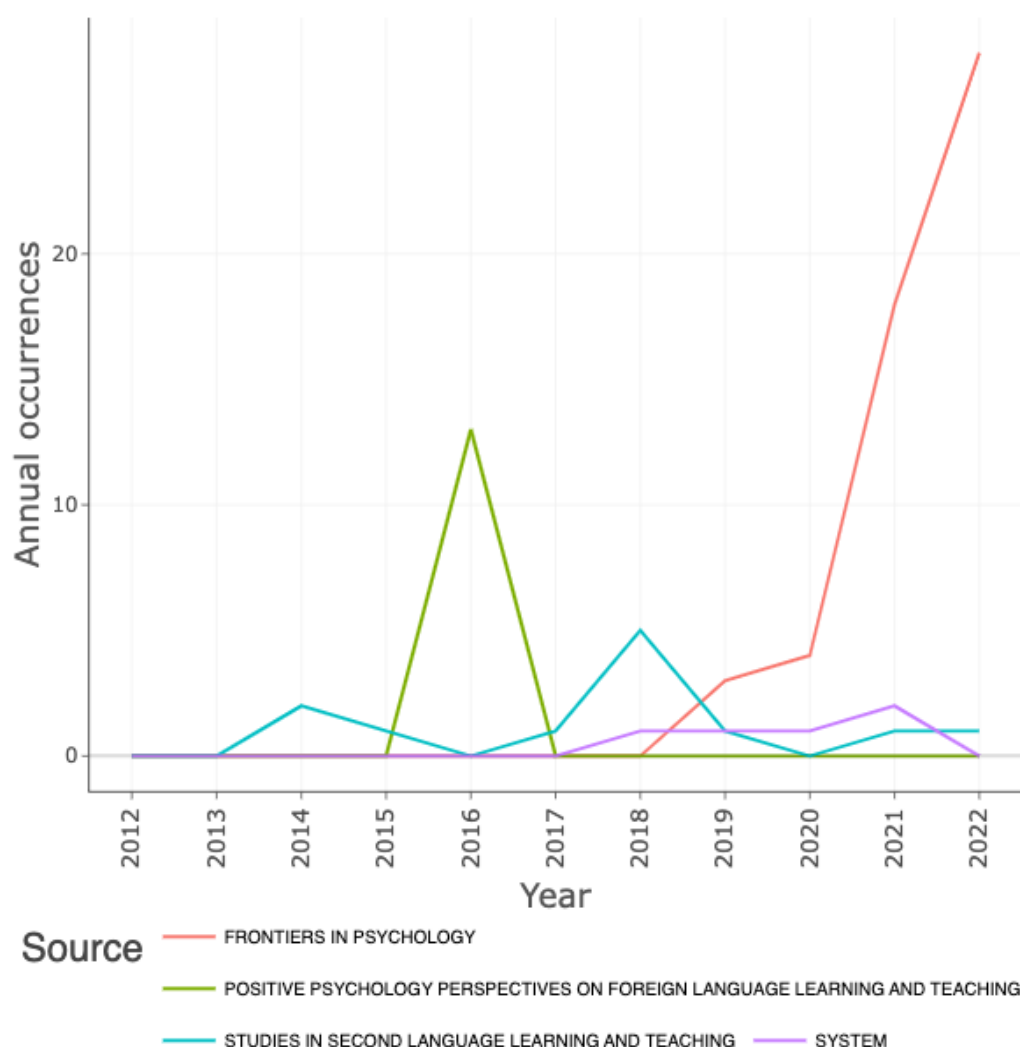
Figure 3

Sources of Publication

Figure 4

Source Growth per Year

Major Themes and Most Frequent Words

In a detailed examination of FL education publications, it was determined that the three most frequently used keywords among researchers are "positive psychology," "anxiety," and "emotions" which were cited 39, 37 and 31 times respectively. PP, which focuses on the study of positive emotions, well-being, and human strengths, has been a growing area of interest in the field of education, particularly in the context of language learning. The high frequency of this keyword in publications indicates the increasing attention being paid to the role of positive emotions in language learning and the development of students' overall well-being.

The frequent use of the term "anxiety" in language acquisition research may suggest a preoccupation with the study of negative emotions. However, scholars have recently directed their attention towards the examination of emotions in the context of FLL and teaching. This shift has prompted investigations into the impact of emotional states on language acquisition, extending beyond the conventional concepts of foreign language anxiety and motivation that were previously established in the field. Emotions, in general, have been acknowledged as a critical component of language learning, and

the high frequency of this keyword highlights the importance of understanding the emotional dimensions of language education.

The data on the most frequently used keywords is further visualized in Figures 5 and 6, which highlight the most prominent words and themes in the field. This visual representation allows for a clear understanding of the key concepts and themes that researchers are focusing on in their studies.

Figure 5

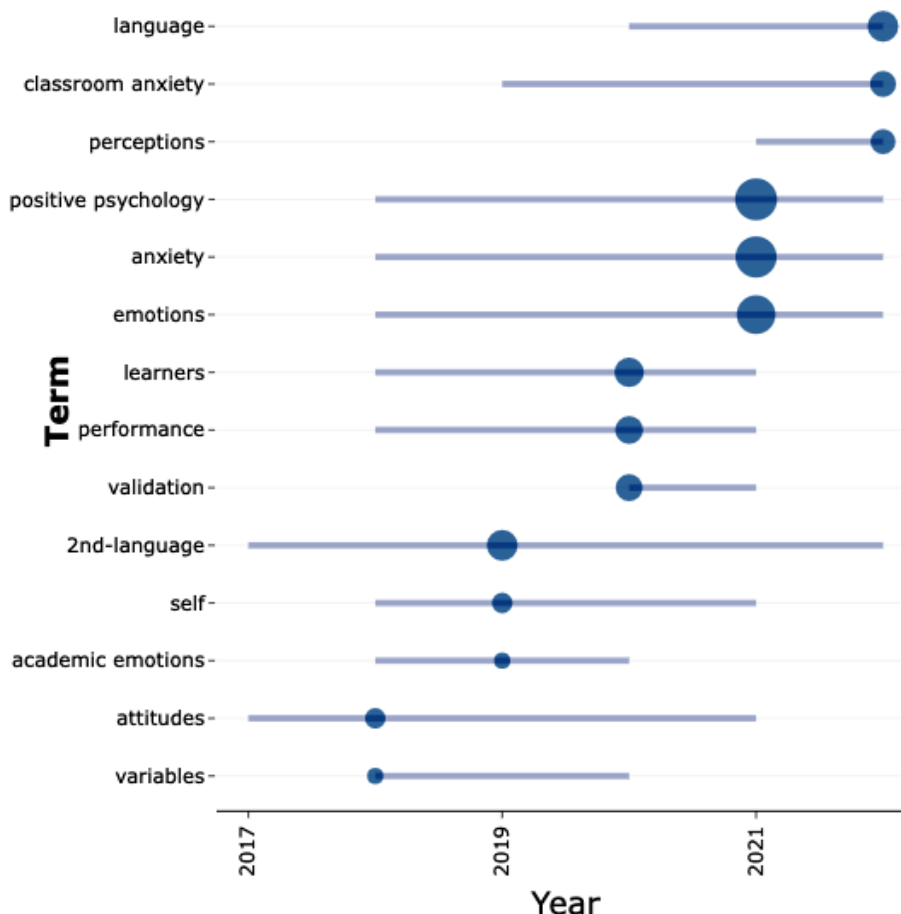*The Most Frequent Words and Top Twenty Themes*
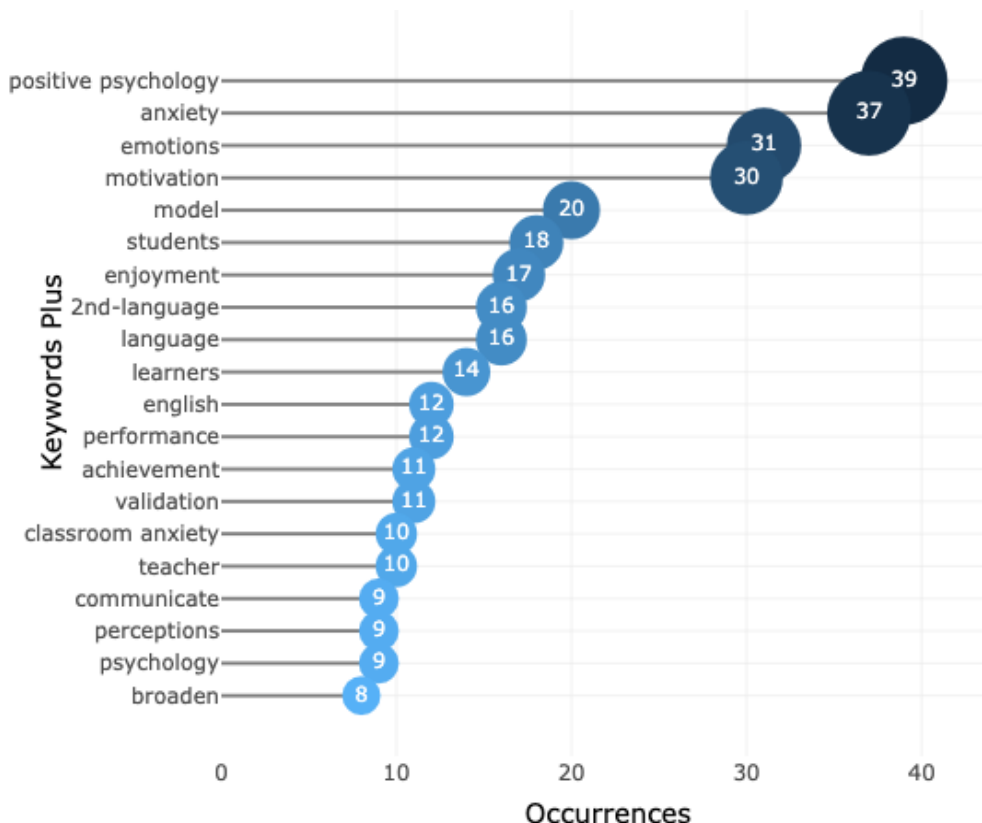
In addition to the analysis of the most frequently used keywords, an examination of the author's keywords (designated as "DE") revealed that there was a total of 476 keywords used in the publications. The top 50 of these keywords are depicted in Figure 6, providing a comprehensive overview of the research trends in the field. The utilization of multiple keywords in research articles was found to be a crucial factor in determining current trends in the field. It allows researchers to explore different aspects of the topic and provide a holistic understanding of the area of study.

The analysis conducted revealed that the most frequently used author keywords in the realm of foreign language (FL) education were "positive psychology", "emotion", and "foreign language enjoyment", accounting for 35 (14%), 28 (11%), and 28 (11%) frequencies, respectively. This finding underscores the fundamental role that these concepts play in the context of language education and the criticality of comprehending the affective aspects of language acquisition. The overall investigation of the themes and keywords in FL education literature offers essential knowledge into the present research advancements and the areas that necessitate further.

Figure 6

Tree Map of Author Keywords on Positive Psychology in FL Education

Trend Topics per Year

An in-depth analysis of the research trends in PP within the field of FL education has revealed a dynamic and evolving landscape. Examination of Figure 7 illustrates the shifting focus of trend topics throughout the years. In 2019, the trend topic of second language emerged, introducing the trend topic of validation in 2020, followed by a focus on learners and performance. In 2021, the trend shifted towards the topic of PP, anxiety, and emotions which have become the major trend. And in 2022, we can see that the trend topics have shifted once again, with language, classroom anxiety, and perceptions receiving growing attention. This dynamic shift in trend topics highlights the ongoing evolution of the field and the need for continued research to explore the various dimensions of PP in FL education. The emergence of new trend topics, such as validation in 2020 and classroom anxiety and perceptions in 2022, indicates a growing recognition of the importance of these areas in language education and the need for further research to understand their impact on language learning. As seen in 2021, for instance, the shifted focus in 2021 towards the major topic trends of PP, anxiety, and emotions, can imply that researchers were beginning to delve deeper into these areas of study. Moreover, the emergence of language, classroom anxiety, and perceptions as trend topics in 2022 suggests that researchers are now exploring the specific ways in which PP, anxiety, and emotions impact language learning in the classroom setting, as well as the perceptions of language learners and teachers. Furthermore, the consistent presence of the major topics of PP, anxiety, and emotions throughout the years highlights the ongoing significance of these areas in the field.

Overall, the analysis of the research trends provides valuable insights into the current state of research in the field as well as the areas that require further exploration.

It also serves as a reminder of the dynamic nature of the field and the need for continued research to keep pace with the ever-evolving landscape of FL education.

Figure 7

Trend Topics of Positive Psychology in FL Education

Systematic Literature Review

In the field of PP, we can see in Table 6 that the most cited publications are amongst studies that have focused on conceptual and comprehensive reviews. This trend can be attributed to several factors. To begin, conceptual reviews offer a comprehensive analysis of the literature of a certain topic or concept in the field. They include an overview of current research, highlighting key findings, gaps in the literature, and future research directions. These reviews are a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers since they give a thorough grasp of a certain field of study. Additionally, the increased interest in PP as a subject of research has resulted in a rise in the number of studies being undertaken on a range of issues. As a result, there is an increasing demand for conceptual and comprehensive assessments that synthesize and integrate this expanding body of information.

To identify possible study directions on PP in FLE, we conducted a systematic literature review on the top 10 cited publications published in respected journals of education and psychology. Due to this, we were able to pinpoint two key areas of

research: PP and emotions, which will be analyzed below. These key areas were also identified as major themes in Figure 7.

Table 6

The Overview of the Key Studies Reviewed

Article	Key Constructs	Theories	Characteristics	Context	Methodology
Wang et al., 2021.	The article provides an overview of the past, current, and future directions of research and practice of PP in second/foreign language learning and teaching.	Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 2004)	The article suggests key factors for empirical investigations and evidence in PP interventions in language learning and teaching: · Mechanisms of PP interventions · Effective implementation methods · Impact on different groups of learners · Long-term effects on learning outcomes · Use of technology, such as VR and gamification · Integration into curriculum, syllabus design, and assessment	Second/foreign language learning and teaching.	A conceptual review
Dewaele et al., 2016.	The article explores the correlation between FLE and classroom anxiety on language learners and their effects on motivation and learning outcomes.	Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 2004)	The study discovered a positive correlation between FLE and proficiency, and negative correlation between foreign language anxiety and proficiency. It also revealed gender and cultural differences in these factors. To enhance FL proficiency, the article suggests addressing anxiety and promoting enjoyment in the classroom.	1742 multilinguals between ages 11 to 75	Convergent parallel design, Online questionnaire
Dewaele, et al., 2019.	The article examines the use of PP in research on foreign language teaching and acquisition.	Positive Psychology	The authors contend that using PP in foreign language education can benefit learners' motivation, engagement, and well-being, while also boosting their self-esteem and language proficiency. However, further research is required to fully comprehend its advantages, as evidenced by the reviewed studies.	Second/foreign language learning and teaching	A Comprehensive Review
Dewaele, & Alfawzan, 2018.	The article discusses the question of whether the positive effect of enjoyment in FLL outweighs the negative effect of anxiety.	Positive Psychology	It is suggested that enjoyment can have a positive impact on language performance by increasing motivation, engagement, and attention, while anxiety can have a negative impact by causing stress, negative self-talk, and decreased motivation. These emotions were found to be influential in the decision to continue or stop studying English, and ultimately contributed to the level of proficiency in the language. In addition, teaching methods and practices were often reported to be the main causes of anxiety and enjoyment in learning English.	British secondary school students in the UK and adult university students in Saudi Arabia	Online Questionnaire

Article	Key Constructs	Theories	Characteristics	Context	Methodology
Li et al., 2018.	The article discusses the validation of the Chinese version of the Foreign Language Enjoyment scale.	Positive Psychology	The study links Chinese high school students' enjoyment of FLL to the teacher, learner, and classroom atmosphere, with the teacher having control. It notes that Chinese culture values power and authority, resulting in students being accustomed to teacher-centered activities. Overall, the study suggests that the Chinese version of the Foreign Language Enjoyment scale is a reliable and valid tool for measuring enjoyment in Chinese high school students learning a FL.	2000 Students from three high schools at different academic levels in China	Questionnaire
Xie & Derakhshan, 2021.	The article discusses the concept of positive teacher interpersonal communication behaviors in the classroom setting.	Positive Psychology	The article reviews positive communication behaviors, such as active listening, effective feedback, and emotional support, and their impact on student engagement and motivation. Understanding cultural and individual differences in communication styles and ongoing professional development are also highlighted. Overall, the article emphasizes the crucial role of positive teacher interpersonal communication in promoting student success.	Second/foreign language learning and teaching.	A conceptual analysis
MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017.	The article explores the impact of emotions on motivation for learning a L2	Positive Psychology and Differential Emotions Theory (Izard, 2007)	The study delves into several motivational concepts such as integrative orientation, L2 ideal/ought-to self, learning efforts, self-confidence, anxiety, perceived competence, contact with language speakers, and psychological acculturation. The study explores how these factors affect engagement in L2 learning and concludes that effective language instruction requires addressing both types of emotions to promote language learning motivation.	182 students in Italian language secondary schools	Scales
Li, Dewaele, & Jiang, 2020.	The article discusses the relationship between emotions in the classroom and EFL achievement in China.	Complex Dynamic Systems Theory and Positive Psychology	The study explores how FLCA and FLE affect self-perceived and actual English proficiency, as well as the impact of EA on FLE and FLCA. Positive emotions, emotional intelligence, and a positive classroom environment were found to enhance emotional well-being and EFL achievement. FLCA was a better predictor of English proficiency and achievement than FLE.	1,307 Chinese high school students	Exploratory Mixed-Method Approach Questionnaires
Piniel & Albert, 2018.	The article discusses the emotions that advanced FL learners experience in relation to the four skills of language acquisition.	Positive Psychology	Advanced language learners experienced positive emotions (e.g., motivation and satisfaction) while practicing all four skills, but negative emotions (e.g., frustration and anxiety) while speaking and listening. The study recommends providing learners with additional support and coping strategies for addressing these negative emotions and enhancing their language proficiency.	348 EFL students of higher education in Budapest, Hungary	Qualitative Approach Open-ended Questionnaires

Article	Key Constructs	Theories	Characteristics	Context	Methodology
Shao, Pekrun, & Nicholson, 2019.	The article explores the significance of emotions in classroom language learning, focusing on achievement emotions and the insights gained from related research.	Control-Value Theory (CVT)	The article advises teachers to foster positive emotions in the classroom by setting clear goals, offering feedback, and promoting autonomy, self-regulation, and a sense of belonging among students as emotions are crucial in language learning, and positive ones like enjoyment and satisfaction can enhance motivation and engagement, whereas negative ones like anxiety and boredom can impede it. Teachers should understand and manage these emotions and create a supportive learning environment to promote competence.	Second language acquisition	A conceptual analysis

Positive Psychology

PP has been identified as a potential holistic approach to FLL and teaching. This approach focuses on promoting well-being, motivation, and engagement among learners, which can enhance language proficiency and performance. Furthermore, it is becoming more and more important in the teaching of foreign languages. The focus of this field of research is to comprehend how individuals may cultivate and maintain positive emotions, wellbeing, and resilience in the face of adversity. This includes the shift from negative emotions towards the examination of how positive emotions, such as joy and gratitude, can enhance motivation and language performance, as well as the role of character strengths, such as curiosity and perseverance, in language learning success (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). PP research has demonstrated that students who have a positive attitude and perceive they can learn a new language are more likely to be successful (Dewaele et al., 2019). Positive emotions, including enjoyment and interest, have also been shown to be correlated with language acquisition results (Li et al., 2018). As a result, adding PP concepts into the teaching of foreign languages can support students' positive attitude development and enhance their language learning outcomes. One key area for further investigation is needed on the specific mechanisms through which PP interventions can enhance language learning and teaching. Effective implementation methods, impact on different learner groups, and long-term outcomes also require attention (Wang et al., 2021). Moreover, integrating technology, such as virtual reality and gamification, in PP interventions is another area of interest in which further research is necessary. The literature on virtual language instruction has demonstrated the significance of incorporating positive educational components. In this vein, future research should investigate the impact of factors such as resilience, loving pedagogy, well-being, engagement, grit, and enjoyment on language learning and teaching experiences in both conventional and digital contexts (Wang et al., 2021) to provide a deeper understanding of how the integration of these elements may enhance the overall effectiveness of language instruction.

Emotions

From the systematic review in Table 6, it can be seen that foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) and foreign language anxiety (FLA) in relation to enjoyment have been the center of focus. Recent literature has demonstrated a shift in focus

towards the examination of positive emotions, which can be attributed to the emergence of PP as a field of study (Seligman & Csíkszentmihályi, 2000). Research has revealed that positive emotions play a crucial role in the acquisition of second and foreign languages (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017). According to Fredrickson's (2003, 2008) broaden-and-build theory, the experience of negative emotions is associated with a limited cognitive and behavioral focus, whereas positive emotions are associated with an expansion of an individual's cognitive and behavioral repertoire, leading to the cultivation and enhancement of physical, intellectual, social, and psychological resources. Therefore, the study of positive emotions in educational contexts can be considered a paramount of importance, as it plays a significant role in the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

Furthermore, emotions can also affect the teaching and learning process, as teachers' emotions can influence their teaching behavior and the classroom atmosphere, which, in turn, can affect the teaching and learning process. For instance, research shows that FLE among Chinese high school students is linked to the teacher, learner, and classroom atmosphere established by interactions among them, with the teacher having the most control (Li et al., 2018). However, ESL/EFL teachers' emotional and personal investments in their professional performance have been neglected, and this has a negative impact on their well-being. Effective language teaching involves more than just imparting content and pedagogical knowledge and implementing cutting-edge teaching methods and techniques (Pishghadam et al., 2019); it also entails an emotionally charged endeavor where language teachers interact and communicate with each learner while passionately presenting the subject matter in an enjoyable learning environment (Xie & Derakhshan, 2021). The development and establishment of positive teacher-student relationships is essential for successful teaching and learning processes and desired outcomes which are facilitated using effective interpersonal communication tactics (Delos Reyes & Torio, 2020; Houser & Hosek, 2018). Moreover, the cultural backgrounds influence these interactions, making it imperative to comprehend the extent to which teacher-student interpersonal communication behaviors are perceived, enacted, and experienced in a similar or dissimilar manner across different cultural contexts. The fifth and sixth principles of the rhetorical and relational goal theory, which postulates that teachers' rhetorical and relational objectives and students' academic and relational requirements differ across situations and age levels, are in support of this claim (Xie & Derakhshan, 2021). The methods used to meet and accomplish these demands and goals also vary, emphasizing the need to study these issues in various geographical and cultural contexts (Houser & Hosek, 2018).

In essence, PP and emotions are the key areas of research which play a crucial role in our understanding of FLL and teaching. By incorporating the principles and findings from these areas of research, educators can create a more positive and supportive learning environment for their students, which can lead to improved language learning outcomes. Additionally, further research in these areas can also contribute to the development of more effective and efficient language teaching methods. From this point, instead of utilizing large-scale studies that gather data from extensive samples to enhance the generalizability of findings, future research could focus on examining the perceptions or experiences of a limited number of cases and collect rich data (Dörnyei, 2007). Longitudinal studies would also be advantageous in

this realm, as they demonstrate how individuals' perceptions, experiences, or behaviors evolve or remain constant over time. With cross-sectional studies being the prevalent methodology in the field, it is imperative to incorporate more longitudinal designs to make more conclusive causal inferences (Lazarus, 2003). Furthermore, there is a need for more PP-inspired interventional studies in foreign language classrooms, utilizing a diverse array of approaches, that aim to enhance learners' linguistic abilities and well-being (MacIntyre et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021).

Conclusion

This study employed a bibliometric analysis to investigate the current state of research on PP in the FL context, highlighting the growing interest and potential for this approach to enhance language learning and development. It is noteworthy that there is a dearth of research on this topic, as evidenced by the statistics, which indicate that there has been a total of 137 publications in the WoS database between 2012 and 2022. The identification of key trends, patterns, and areas for future research in this field highlights the importance of continued exploration and investigation in this area. The analysis of citation patterns within PP publications in the FL context provides valuable insights into the current state, the contributions of specific authors, institutions, and countries and the significant impact they have on shaping the field. Overall, the current study provides a comprehensive map of the relevant studies on PP in the FL education context, which may serve as a valuable resource for scholars and practitioners. The recent emergence of PP as a significant research area is particularly surprising given that psychology plays a significant role in fostering a more positive and successful language learning experience by promoting psychological well-being and a growth mindset (Dörnyei, 2009). Yet, despite the potential contributions that PP can make to the field, research in this area has been limited. According to PP principles, understanding how positive educational factors contribute to learners' flourishing across diverse cultural and instructional contexts is crucial (MacIntyre, 2021). Hence, there is a clear call for more comprehensive cross-cultural studies that delve into various positive educational variables to enrich our understanding (Wang et al., 2021). Empirical studies in PP within L2 education have predominantly relied on quantitative methods, often using closed-ended questionnaires, which may limit the depth of insights gained (Derakhshan, 2021; Khajavy, 2021). To address these limitations, future research should embrace qualitative and mixed methods approaches to capture more nuanced and real-time data (Dewaele & Pavelescu, 2021). Additionally, longitudinal studies could offer valuable insights into how these positive educational variables evolve over time in educational settings (Dewaele et al., 2022). Cross-cultural research in PP within L2 education is also relatively sparse, despite some international studies (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, 2019; Dewaele et al., 2022). Exploring how positive emotions and traits manifest across different cultural backgrounds is essential for developing culturally responsive educational strategies (Pishghadam et al., 2021). Addressing this gap could lead to more inclusive and effective educational practices that cater to diverse learner needs and contexts globally.

Therefore, while PP holds promise for enhancing L2 learning experiences through positive psychological interventions, there remains a critical need for further research. By adopting diverse research methodologies, including qualitative approaches

and cross-cultural studies, scholars can deepen our understanding of how positive educational factors contribute to successful language learning outcomes worldwide. This interdisciplinary approach not only enriches educational theory but also informs practical strategies for educators aiming to foster resilience, engagement, and well-being among L2 learners and educators alike. Thus, the scarcity of research in this area serves as a call to action for researchers to prioritize and expand their investigations, recognizing and addressing the neglect of this research area in the past.

To conclude, it is hoped that this analysis will contribute to the ongoing efforts to understand and improve the language learning experience for both students and teachers. Notably, one limitation of the present study is that it is focused solely on bibliometric analysis of publications indexed in the WoS database. While this methodology provides a useful perspective on the state of PP research in the context of FLE, it is important to note that there may be other valuable insights that can be gleaned from investigating publications outside of the WoS database. Additionally, it is crucial to recognize that bibliometric indicators, such as citation count and journal impact factor, are not the only measures of publication quality. Therefore, it would be beneficial for future research to expand the scope of the investigation to include publications from a wider range of sources to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the field.

Statement of Responsibility

Naile Canlı: Methodology, data analysis and interpretation, writing-original draft, visualization. Devrim Höl: Validation, writing-review and editing, supervision.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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