

MASTER IN ADVANCED ENGLISH STUDIES:
LANGUAGES AND CULTURES IN CONTACT

Departamento de Filología Inglesa

2021-2022



Universidad de Valladolid

Final Master Thesis

Activating Character Strengths in the EFL/ESL Classroom: A Theoretical Perspective

Alyssa Murphy

VALLADOLID 2022

The work presented in this MA thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original and my own work, except as acknowledged in the text. The work in this thesis has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Master in Advanced English Studies:
Languages and Cultures in Contact

to
Universidad de Valladolid

by
Alyssa Murphy

September 2022

Student's signature _____



Approved

Dr. Enrique Cámara Arenas

Supervisor's signature _____

Abstract

The application of positive psychology to the language classroom has mainly focused on the first pillar of positive psychology; positive emotions. Recent studies, however, suggest that the second pillar, character traits, contribute to language learner well-being (Oxford, *Powerfully Positive*, 21-22; Wang et al. 3; Piasecka 75). This research borrows from theories and models in positive psychology but lacks a contextualized theoretical understanding of the relationships between character strengths and other language learner variables such as identity and motivation. The purpose of this paper is to identify areas of theoretical weakness in a recent model of language learner well-being and propose a theory born from contributions of both positive psychology and SLA research.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Theoretical Background.....	2
<i>Character Strengths</i>	6
<i>PERMA</i>	12
<i>EMPATHICS</i>	14
<i>Theories of Identity</i>	21
<i>Theories of Reading</i>	23
Recent Studies.....	24
Theoretical Perspective.....	26
<i>Character Strengths and Language-Learner Variables</i>	26
<i>Optimal Activation of Character Strengths</i>	30
Considerations and Limitations.....	33
Conclusion.....	34
Works Cited.....	35

Introduction

Positive psychology, a subfield of psychology considered to be at the forefront of the humanistic psychology revival, has made important contributions to the field of second language acquisition (SLA) and foreign language learning (FLL). It concerns itself with factors that contribute to a good life including experiences, character traits, and institutions. Notable works include the Affective Filter Hypothesis, Broaden and Build Theory, models of motivation, models of well-being, and theories of the self and identity (MacIntyre and Mercer 153-154). Though research on the contributions of positive psychology to SLA and FLL is on the rise, thus far it has focused on experiences and affectivity rather than character traits or institutions (Wang et al. 2). A recent model of language-learner well-being, EMPATHICS, includes character traits in the form of Peterson and Seligman's Character Strengths (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision* 57) but they have not yet been addressed empirically within English as a foreign language (EFL) or English as a second language (ESL) teaching and learning and would benefit from further theorization (Wang et al. 3). A recent study claims to activate character strengths through encounters with literature, but it similarly relies on assumptions without accounting for the relationship between character strengths and other factors that contribute to EFL/ESL learning (Piasecka). The aim of this paper is to provide a theoretical perspective on the role of character strengths within a model of language-learner well-being that serves to provide the foundation for future empirical research. Focusing on the factors of character strengths, identity, and motivation, I propose that the activation of character strengths strengthens second language (L2) identity thereby increasing motivation and production. In addition, I postulate an optimal method of activation through the use of literature that likewise interacts with L2

identity for the purpose of increasing motivation and production in the foreign language classroom.

Theoretical Background

One of the main assumptions of psychology is that at some point, damage or trauma occurred that requires attention and care with the goal of overcoming it as an obstacle to reaching a state of positive emotional well-being. This perspective and application of psychology can be attributed to post-World War II efforts in treating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in returning soldiers. However, by focusing on pathology, the idea of fulfilled, thriving individuals as models of strength that can be built over time are excluded. Positive psychology targets this imbalance by shifting the focus from one's worst qualities to their best and aims to highlight the importance of strength building in the treatment and prevention of mental illness (Seligman, *Positive Psychology* 3-4).

It is important to note that positive psychology is not in the business of ignoring negative emotions. On the contrary, treatment and intervention involve bringing negative emotions to the forefront to strategize effective management based on a positive model and focusing on one's strengths (Seligman, *Positive Psychology* 4). In addition, positive psychology argues against the rhetoric that people should feel happy on a regular basis. The question is not "am I happy?" but "do I have what it takes to overcome the obstacles affecting my well-being?" (MacIntyre, *Exploring Applications* 4-5). These are some of the most common misconceptions exacerbated by way of social media and self-help promoters (Langley Group).

The three pillars of positive psychology are as follows: (1) positive experiences, (2) positive character traits, and (3) positive institutions. Positive experiences focus on emotional responses to external stimuli while positive character traits focus on

individual differences, both of which have been studied more extensively than the third pillar of positive institutions which highlights the role families, peers, governments, schools, and classrooms play in facilitating “flourishing” (MacIntyre, *Exploring Applications* 5-6). This paper is focused on the second pillar by way of character strengths, a more recent development within positive psychology, so let us first explore contributions to SLA and positive psychology that paved the way.

Though not explicitly considered under the umbrella of positive psychology, Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis was later linked to the first pillar of positive psychology when researchers questioned the possibility of co-occurrence of positive and negative emotions. The original hypothesis posits that there are a variety of affective variables that affect success rates in SLA (Krashen 30-31). Studies have mainly focused on the following affective variables:

- (1) Motivation. High levels of motivation usually indicate more successful performance in SLA.
- (2) Self-confidence. Confident learners with a good self-image usually perform better in the second language classroom.
- (3) Anxiety. Low levels of anxiety are conducive to the learning process regardless of the source as personal or environmental (classroom).

This hypothesis asserts that the strength with which the affective filter is set dictates the amount of input that reaches the part of the brain responsible for SLA. A weak or low affective filter is associated with an increase in input while a strong or high affective filter is associated with a low level of input able to be processed. Those who have a low affective filter are thought of as having a more positive attitude toward learning a second language as well as being more open to receiving input, and actively searching for opportunities to receive more input. Furthermore, this hypothesis implies

that pedagogical goals should not only focus on supplying appropriate input, but also take into consideration the creation of contexts that facilitate a low affective filter. In other words, the role of the teacher should include reducing classroom anxiety, finding materials to motivate students, and boosting the learners' confidence (Krashen 31). Through the lens of positive psychology, materials to motivate students and build their confidence would benefit from focusing on learners' strengths.

Focusing next on the influence of positive affect is Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory, one of the most notable works in positive psychology before the second wave (MacIntyre, *Exploring Applications* 9-10). In contrast to traditional models, Fredrickson affirms that positive emotions "[have] the ability to broaden people's thought-action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources" (Fredrickson 219). Applied to SLA, MacIntyre and Gregerson point out that the effects of the broaden-and-build theory on the foreign language learner include enhanced awareness of the environment (classroom) and foreign language input (197-198). As stated by Dewaele, "this is crucial because negative emotions cause a narrowing of focus and a restriction of the range of potential language input" (3). In short, applying the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotion from the field of positive psychology to the field of SLA provided useful insight and began the positive psychology movement within the field of second and foreign language education.

In addition, the dichotomy of positive and negative emotions, as implied in the affective filter hypothesis, was later contested in Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (MacIntyre and Mercer 162). In the affective filter hypothesis, affective variables are assumed to lie on a continuum whereas in the broaden-and-build theory they are "better conceptualized as two dimensions of

experience [in which] the function of positive emotion is qualitatively different from negative emotion” (MacIntyre and Mercer 162). Furthermore, the one-dimensionality of the affective filter hypothesis assumes a “see-saw” effect; when positive emotions increase, negative emotions decrease. This does not account for the possibility of co-occurrence. However, the duo-dimensionality of the broaden-and-build theory takes into account the possibility of positive and negative emotions occurring simultaneously. This conceptualization acknowledges the “see-saw” effect while also accounting for feelings of ambivalence and apathy which arise with the co-occurrence of low negative and low positive emotions, and highly negative and highly positive emotions respectively (MacIntyre and Mercer 163).

This reconceptualization paved the way for the evolution of the theoretical underpinnings of positive psychology to move away from black-and-white theories of affect toward a second wave of the positive psychology movement. In his paper characterizing said movement, or positive psychology 2.0 (PP2.0), Wong states that it is counterproductive to put *too much* emphasis on positive emotions “because negative emotions, such as guilt, regret, frustration, and anger, can all motivate us toward positive change” (70). To navigate this challenge, he suggests that future research should consider the role of character strengths because their development may be rooted in overcoming negative prior experiences (Wong 70). This seems to suggest a healthier alternative to encouraging happiness at all times in the EFL/ESL classroom by instead embracing what it means to be human (to make mistakes) and turning it into learning opportunities. Moreover, with regard to second and foreign language education, Wong argues that research and analysis at the level of the individual should not be excluded (72). This goes hand-in-hand with character strengths, as they influence and are influenced by people’s individual differences. As argued by MacIntyre, “institutions can

improve programs by applying principles of positive psychology” (*Exploring Applications* 14), especially at the level of the teacher who can take into consideration the individual differences of their students. However, capitalizing on learners’ individuality would first require identification of individual differences, which in this instance are character strengths.

Character Strengths

The early 2000s saw a pivotal moment concerning character strengths after a 3-year long study led by Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman funded by the Values in Action Institute on Character (VIA) resulted in Peterson and Seligman’s book *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* and the VIA Inventory of Strengths and the VIA Youth Survey (Niemi and McGrath). Then by 2011, Seligman came up with a new theory of well-being which was later expanded upon by Rebecca Oxford in an attempt to find an appropriate model of language-learner well-being. As I am proposing a theoretical perspective on the relationship character strengths have with other factors within a model of language-learner well-being, a comprehensive summary of character strengths and the evolution of Seligman’s PERMA theory of well-being into Oxford’s EMPATHICS model is necessary.

Peterson and Seligman identified six universal virtues that house 24 character strengths between them (31). The virtues include (1) wisdom and knowledge, (2) courage, (3) humanity, (4) justice, (5) temperance, and (6) transcendence (Peterson and Seligman 35-38). Next, I will provide a concise summary of each virtue and the strengths it contains.

Wisdom and Knowledge

The first of Peterson and Seligman’s six universal virtues is wisdom and knowledge, characterized a “positive traits related to the acquisition and use of

information”, otherwise known as “cognitive strengths” (95), and is comprised of the character strengths of creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, and perspective.

Creativity

The strength of creativity is further classified into originality and ingenuity; one’s ability to think of novel ways to do things (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Curiosity

Curiosity is subdivided into interest, novelty-seeking, and openness to experience. It can be defined as an interest for interest’s sake, exploration, and discovery (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Open-mindedness

The third character strength is that of open-mindedness which is broken down into judgment and critical thinking. It is characterized as one’s ability to examine the information from multiple angles and willingness to change their opinion based on new evidence (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Love of Learning

Love of learning is concerned with the mastery of new skills and topics (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Perspective

Perspective, the final character strength to make up the virtue of wisdom and knowledge, is one’s ability to provide useful advice and a sensible view of the world (Peterson and Seligman 29.) Next, let us move on to the virtue of courage.

Courage

The second virtue, courage, is defined as the “will to accomplish goals in the face of opposition” (Peterson and Seligman 199). It is comprised of the character strengths of bravery, persistence, integrity, and vitality.

Bravery

Bravery, or valor, is one’s ability to act on his or her convictions and tackle challenges in the face of opposition (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Persistence

Further classified as perseverance and industriousness, persistence can be summarized as staying on course and completing tasks that have been started, leading to enjoyment (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Integrity

Described as authenticity and honesty is integrity, the ability to act genuinely and sincerely without pretense (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Vitality

Finally, vitality is characterized as zest, enthusiasm, vigor, and energy. It speaks to one’s approach to life as excited and whole-hearted (Peterson and Seligman 29).

From here, let us move on to the character strengths of humanity.

Humanity

Humanity is the third universal virtue which refers to interpersonal strengths, showing generosity and kindness, and understanding when punishment is fair (Peterson and Seligman 37). It encompasses the three character strengths of love, kindness, and social intelligence.

Love

Love is considered as one's feelings of closeness to others, specifically when those feelings are reciprocated (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Kindness

Kindness is characterized by generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, and altruistic love; the goodness that motivates one's actions towards others (Peterson and Seligman 29).

Social Intelligence

The final character strength within the virtue of humanity is social intelligence which includes emotion and personal intelligence and is one's "aware[ness] of the motives and feelings of other people and oneself" (Peterson and Seligman 29). The next virtue is justice.

Justice

The character strengths of citizenship, fairness, and leadership are classified under the universal virtue of justice. Peterson and Seligman acknowledge that "life is not fair" and therefore justice refers to "the laws that give justice a fair shot" (36).

Citizenship

Citizenship is broken down into social responsibility, loyalty, and teamwork. It is characterized as one's ability to work as part of a group towards a common goal (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Fairness

Fairness refers to one's ability to remain unbiased and treat different members of society equally (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Leadership

Leadership does not necessarily refer to one's ability to lead but rather the ability to motivate members of a group to work toward achieving a common goal and maintain good relations (Peterson and Seligman 30). The virtue of temperance is next.

Temperance

The fifth universal virtue is temperance, and it generally refers to self-restraint and includes the character strengths of forgiveness and mercy, humility/modesty, prudence, and self-regulation (Peterson and Seligman 38; 30). It can be characterized as one's ability to forgive and avoid vengeance, having a realistic view of oneself, avoiding undue risks, and having discipline (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Forgiveness and Mercy

Forgiveness and mercy refer to practicing forgiveness toward wrongdoers, accepting that others may have shortcomings, believing in second chances, and *not* practising vengeance (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Humility/Modesty

This character strength denotes one's ability to let their actions speak louder than words and control the urge to seek the spotlight (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Prudence

The strength of prudence involves being careful, avoiding unnecessary risks, and thinking before acting (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Self Regulation

The final character strength within the virtue of temperance, also containing the factor of self-control, is self-regulation. This strength involves regulating one's thoughts and emotions and practicing discipline (Peterson and Seligman 30). Let us move next to the final virtue of transcendence.

Transcendence

The final universal virtue is transcendence which holds the belief that life has meaning, there is some higher power, and people have a purpose in life (Peterson and Seligman 38). It is comprised of the following five character strengths: appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humour, and spirituality.

Appreciate of Beauty and Excellence

Including awe and wonder, appreciation of beauty and excellence refers to one's ability to find beauty in the everyday experience (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Gratitude

Gratitude is one's ability to notice and express thanks for the good things that happen in life (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Hope

Optimism, future-mindedness, and future orientation characterize the strength of hope, which can be described as one's expectations and beliefs in a good future (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Humour

Also referring to playfulness, humour is one's enjoyment of experiencing and creating moments of laughter (Peterson and Seligman 30).

Spirituality

Finally, spirituality, further characterized by religiousness, faith, and purpose, is feeling confident in one's place in all things and "having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort (Peterson and Seligman 30).

As the field of positive psychology advances, more attention will be paid to intervention strategies "intended to cultivate and [...] sustain the good life" (Peterson and Seligman 640). To do so, tools are required in the form of adequate and specific

vocabulary to distinguish the many factors that contribute to a good life and assessment strategies to investigate said components (Peterson and Seligman 641). The classification of strengths and virtues along with the VIA surveys do just that. In fact, the VIA surveys serve as a tool to evaluate individual differences as well as intervention methods (Peterson and Seligman 642). That is to say, assessing one's character strengths should be the first step in an intervention so that deficits may be found and strengthened to contribute to well-being. Furthermore, applied to the classroom context, it could be helpful to identify individual differences and build confidence by focusing on and enhancing students' strengths as well as their weaknesses. However, for the purpose of this paper, I will later link character strengths with theories of identity within the context of the EFL/ESL classroom. Until then, let us continue with recent developments within the positive psychology 2.0 movement that have been applied to SLA.

PERMA

In his 2011 publication, *Flourish*, Seligman proposed a new well-being theory to reflect the shift from pathology and mental illness to a focus on what is good in life. His theory highlights the contributions of 5 factors that were chosen because they are intrinsically motivating, contribute to well-being, are pursued for their own sake, and can be defined and measured independently. These factors are (1) **p**ositive emotion, (2) **e**ngagement, (3) **r**elationships, (4) **m**eaning, and (5) **a**ccomplishments, and work together to produce a higher-order construct that predicts flourishing, giving rise to the PERMA model of well-being theory (Seligman, *Flourish* ch.1). Could this model be used to increase flourishing in more specialized groups, however, is a question that Rebecca Oxford investigated in her work examining the well-being of language learners (Oxford and Cuéllar).

Although believed to have some capacity to evaluate language-learner well-being, Oxford found that based on one of her studies, it needed to be “adapt[ed] significantly to correct some logical weaknesses” (Oxford *Powerfully Positive* 23). In her article, *Powerfully Positive: Searching for a Model of Language Learner Well-Being*, Oxford reviews said “logical weaknesses” and proposes alternatives. While I do agree with most of her proposal, there is one clear misinterpretation of the model. According to Oxford’s interpretation of the PERMA model, she claims that Seligman’s elements of PERMA are centered on the 24 character strengths but the “specific associations between [them] were not made” (*Powerfully Positive* 23). However, in Peterson and Seligman’s *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification* and Seligman’s *Flourish* where he describes his new model, character strengths are only proposed as a tool to measure the effectiveness of intervention methods (642; ch. 2). In other words, Oxford’s very first critique of the application of PERMA on language learners is based on a misinterpretation of an assessment tool as a key component to achieving well-being.

That said, Oxford does raise a few important issues to consider. For instance, she reminds us, in relation to the “P” of positive emotion, that learners experience both positive and negative emotions and states that although “less successful learners clearly experience anxiety and other negative emotions”, some negative emotions may have a positive effect, such as alertness in the classroom (Oxford, *Powerfully Positive* 24). In other words, when adapting a model of well-being to language learners, focusing solely on positive emotions would be erroneous if presented with an opportunity to capitalize on the potentially positive results of negative emotions, which is congruent to theories in positive psychology (Wong 70).

Additionally, Oxford critiques the separation of “engagement” and “meaning”, and the “vagueness of ‘accomplishment’” (*Powerfully Positive* 25). According to her, when applying the PERMA model to language learners, it seems only natural to combine “engagement” and “meaning” into *meaningful engagement* because students engage in classes and materials that hold meaning for them. Furthermore, she proposes language-learner operationalization of “accomplishment” to encompass “(a) the development of various degrees of language proficiency over time; (b) achievement in a particular curriculum or course; and/or (c) self-regulated behaviour, beliefs, affect, and strategies related to developing skills in the language and culture-related understanding” (Oxford, *Powerfully positive* 25). These proposals do seem to be a natural evolution of the PERMA model taking into account the uniqueness of the context of an ESL/EFL learner. Let us take a deeper look into the evolution from PERMA to EMPATHICS in the next section.

EMPATHICS

Oxford’s goal with the EMPATHICS model is to identify the “[most] important psychological dimensions that are part of human well-being and that positively influence language learners’ achievement and proficiency” (*Powerfully Positive* 26) and drew heavily from Seligman’s PERMA model of well-being (*Powerfully Positive* 21; *EMPATHICS Vision* 68). The acronym EMPATHICS stands for “*E: emotion and empathy; M: meaning and motivation; P: perseverance, including resilience; A: agency and autonomy; T: time; H: habits of [the] mind; I: intelligences; C: character strengths; and S: self factors, especially self-efficacy” (Oxford, *Powerfully Positive* 26). Though character strengths are listed as an individual component, they do, in fact, permeate almost the entirety of the model, suggesting they play a larger role than*

initially thought. In this section, I will provide a summary of each component and discuss its relation to character strengths.

E: Emotion and Empathy

The dimension of emotion is twofold. It contains emotional intelligence and positive emotions, both of which have already been discussed. According to Oxford, emotional intelligence is necessary for intercultural situations, and that it is the role of the language teacher to develop emotional intelligence within students for the purpose of communicating with people in the L2. Empathy is other-oriented and may arise in a learner when witnessing a classmate struggle with anxiety or confusion in the foreign language classroom, and motivate them to express compassion, sympathy or caring towards their classmate (Oxford, *Powerfully Positive* 27). Oxford hypothesizes a positive correlation between language-learner well-being and the ability to identify and manage emotions and experience empathy for others (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision* 12).

Emotional intelligence, as previously discussed, is considered part of the character strength of social intelligence described as “a keen understanding of [...] emotional relationships with others” (Peterson and Seligman 27), as well as one’s ability to strategize and perceive emotions (Peterson and Seligman 337).

M: Meaning and Motivation

Oxford hypothesizes that learners with a high sense of well-being actively seek meaning and purpose, which in turn, increases motivation levels. In other words, a more successful foreign language learner “seek[s] learning contexts, tasks, and materials that are meaningful” (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision* 18). Meaning is also linked to learner narratives whereby identity is expressed through addressing the following questions: (1) Who am I?, (2) How did I come to be?, and (3) Where is my life going in the future? (McAdams 241; Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision* 18-20). Therefore, materials that are self-

oriented or give students the opportunity to express their identity may increase production through motivation.

According to Oxford, motivation is linked inextricably to meaning as learners' motivation is based upon however meaningful the goal is (*EMPATHICS Vision 24*). In an in-depth chapter explaining EMPATHICS, Oxford explores intrinsic motivation, self-determination theory, functional self-determination theory, and Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System. I wish to draw attention to the latter and its theory of possible selves, or "future self guides", of which there are two: (1) the ideal L2 self, and (2) the ought-to L2 self (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision 28*; Dörnyei 105-106). The ideal L2 self refers to the person one would like to become as a speaker of an L2 which is a motivating factor to learn the L2 to "reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves" (Dörnyei 105). The ought-to self relates to the senses of duty, obligation, and responsibility, or external motivators. The theory suggests that if one believes they ought to obtain a particular attribute, it likewise motivates them to reduce the discrepancy for the purpose of avoiding a negative outcome (Dörnyei 105-106). To illustrate the difference, one might learn an L2 because they envision themselves as being a person who communicates in their L2 for a possible future job or because they have a desire to move abroad, while on the other hand, they might be motivated to learn the L2 to achieve a particular score within a mandatory language class.

Meaning and motivation are linked to a sense of purpose (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision 19*) which is considered a defining factor of the character strength of spirituality within the virtue of transcendence (Peterson and Seligman 600).

P: Perseverance

Perseverance, as argued by Oxford, contains a minimum of three factors including resilience, hope, and optimism, and facilitates task completion and

proficiency (*EMPATHICS Vision 29*). It has been shown that there is a positive correlation between resilience and successful language learners and can be fostered through (1) assets, such as materials, lesson plans, and opportunities to speak, (2) increased protective factors, including positive attachment toward the L2 teacher, and (3) reducing risks like public embarrassment (Oxford et al.; Masten et al.). Regarding hope and optimism, people with high hope tend to have more cognitive flexibility, and optimists engage in strategies such as acceptance, positive reframing, and humour (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision 35*; Carver et al. 305). Oxford hypothesizes that “language learners with high well-being persevere in their learning” (*EMPATHICS Vision, 29*)

In terms of character strengths, perseverance is also considered a factor of the character strength of persistence within the virtue of courage, while hope is a character strength within transcendence, of which optimism is also a part (Peterson and Seligman 29-30, 230, 569).

A: Agency and Autonomy

Specific to language learning, agency is described as the “capacity to act volitionally to affect outcomes” (Ryan and Irie 113; Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision 39*). According to Oxford, “the agentic person is the origin of his or her actions, has high aspirations and good problem-solving skills enjoys well-being, and learns from failures (Oxford *Powerfully positive 30*). An existentialist perspective of autonomy suggests a relationship between meaning and autonomy whereby meaning is created through building autonomy. As stated by van Deurzen, strengthening autonomy can be done through (1) the development and use of skills in the face of adversity, (2) having intrinsic motivation, and (3) forming collaborative relationships (6-10, 139, 185-199; Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision 40*). Based on this view of autonomy, Oxford contends

that learners can build their autonomy by taking the responsibility of making learning meaningful, honing learning strategies, and shifting motivation from external to intrinsic (*EMPATHICS Vision* 40).

Though autonomy is indirectly linked to the character strength of leadership through a higher likelihood of preferring autonomy (Peterson and Seligman 426), autonomy and agency seem to be independent of character strengths.

T: Time

In the EMPATHICS model, a non-linear approach to time is taken as it is believed that both the past and the future can influence language learners' behavior in the present (Oxford, *Powerfully Positive* 31). According to Ross and Wilson, temporal self-appraisal theory suggests that some people have a negative past self-perception compared to their present selves and hold the belief that their future selves will be better still (qtd. in Oxford *Powerfully Positive* 31). Furthermore, Oxford quotes Betts when she states people who have a future time perspective “actively [look] for future opportunities, [set] goals, [consider] future consequences of current behavior [...] and [employ] the present period to plan for the future” (*Powerfully Positive* 31). Therefore, it is hypothesized that high levels of well-being in language learners are positively correlated with positive temporal appraisal and that they will “have a time perspective that fits their needs for learning” (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision* 44).

If the character strength of perspective includes judgment used for the well-being of oneself (Peterson and Seligman 182), it applies to time as knowledge of one's past selves and goals for one's future selves that affect behavior (Oxford 31). Thus, yet another component of the EMPATHICS model is linked to character strengths.

H: Habits of the Mind

Oxford bases her sixth dimension of the EMPATHICS model on Costa and Kallick's 16 habits of mind and applied them to language learners. The habits include persistence, managing impulsivity, listening with understanding and empathy, flexibility, metacognition, striving for accuracy, questioning and posing problems, applying past knowledge to new situations, thinking and communicating with clarity and precision, gathering data through all the senses, creating (imagining; innovating), responding with wonderment and awe, taking responsible risks, finding humour, thinking interdependently, and remaining open to continuous learning (qtd. in Oxford *EMPATHICS Vision* 50-52). According to Oxford, her previous research indicated that learners with positive well-being engage in these habits (*Powerfully Positive* 32). This led to her hypothesis that "language learners with high well-being develop hardy attitudes and hardy action patterns and have useful habits of mind" (Oxford *EMPATHICS Vision* 47).

In this case, the way in which character strengths permeate the model is clearly seen as humour is regarded as a character strength in its own right within the virtue of transcendence (Peterson and Seligman 30, 584).

I: Intelligences

According to Gardner, people have a certain set of intelligences which can be capitalized on to empower them (qtd. in Oxford *Powerfully Positive* 32). Over the course of his research, he identified the following intelligences: (1) musical, (2) logical-mathematical, (3) verbal-linguistic, (4) visual-spatial, (5) bodily-kinesthetic, (6) interpersonal (social), (7) intrapersonal (introspective), (8) existential (spiritual), and (9) naturalistic (ecological, environmental) (qtd in *EMPATHICS Vision* 54). In EMPATHICS, Oxford applies Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences to language

learners. Probably the most obvious association is with the verbal-linguistic intelligence, accounting for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and vocabulary. Logical-mathematical could be helpful for some learners to learn grammar. Musical intelligence is associated with tonal and pitch variations, as well as sounds and rhythms. She contends that visual-spatial intelligence is important when learning to write with a foreign alphabet with characters unknown. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence may aid with the association of gestures and body language to the target language. Intrapersonal intelligence is said to aid with shifting identities. Existential intelligence helps learners to contextualize the beliefs of the target culture. She argues that as languages reflect ecosystems and many textbook topics include environments and ecosystems, naturalistic intelligence could likewise be adapted to the language learner. Overall, Oxford hypothesizes a positive correlation between language-learner well-being and recognition and capitalization of their intelligences (*EMPATHICS Vision* 53-55).

Existential and natural intelligences exist within the virtue of transcendence as the character strengths of spirituality and appreciation of beauty respectively (Peterson and Seligman 599, 537).

C: Character Strengths

As previously mentioned, character strengths are considered to be an entire dimension of the EMPATHICS model, however, Oxford does not expand on previously established classification, nor does she discuss the ways in which character strengths are related to the other dimensions. Their addition to the model are based on the hypothesis that language learners with a high level of well-being have a higher range of character strengths to aid their learning process (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision* 57).

S: Self Factors

The dimension of self factors focuses heavily on the factor of self-efficacy, described as one's belief in their ability to complete a task or reach a particular goal (Oxford, *EMPATHICS Vision* 60). The theory of self-efficacy is thought to be key to determining people's choice of goals and degree of effort, in lieu of motivation, intention, personality, or ability (Oxford, *Powerfully Positive* 33). A positive correlation between language learner well-being and self-efficacy is hypothesized by Oxford (*EMPATHICS Vision* 60).

Self-efficacy, as previously discussed, was identified as a key contributing factor of the character strength of persistence (Peterson and Seligman 29, 231).

This concludes the summary of Oxford's EMPATHICS model of language learner well-being. It has evolved from the PERMA model of well-being to target a specific population which has required input from the field of SLA to modify theories in positive psychology. Interestingly, the author chose to include character strengths as an independent factor in the model but did not provide any theoretical background as to its relationship with other language learner variables. Furthermore, as I have pointed out, some of the other dimensions are influenced by or contain character strengths as key contributing factors, thus leading to the argument that perhaps character strengths play a larger role than originally anticipated. In another section, I will discuss theoretical relationships character strengths have with other language learner variables, until then, let us first consider those variables.

Theories of Identity

Emerging theoretical perspectives on the identity of language learners are focused on the roles of motivation and autonomy. This brings to the forefront the importance of taking into consideration "the agency of the individual person as a

thinking, feeling human being, with an identity, a personality, a unique history, and background, with goals, motives and intentions” instead of past models that refer to learners as “theoretical abstractions” (Ushioda, 12-13). Ushioda highlights Richards’ adaptation of Zimmerman’s model of discursal and social identities with which he distinguishes three aspects of identity: (1) situated identities (teacher-student), (2) discourse identities (speaker, listener), and (3) transportable identities. The latter refers to the multiple roles in one’s life that make up their identity, such as being a mother or an avid football fan. It is argued that language learner motivation is likely to increase if students’ transportable identities are engaged in the classroom (Ushioda 16). In connection to Dörnyei’s theory of possible selves, engaging students’ transportable identities allows them to engage with their future possible selves because the future self-state influences the present projection of the imagined self (Ushioda 20). In other words, learners who reflect on the self and all its entirety (every transportable self that comes together to make a “whole” self), may experience increased motivation when they compare that self to an imagined future self.

Another emerging theory is that of identity as a chaotic system in which the phenomena of identity fractalization occurs. According to Sade, a person’s identity system is subdivided into fractals that ascribe to each new social identity that emerges as a person affiliates with new groups across their lifetime. It is believed that these identities interact with each other; new identities influence the old and the old likewise affect the new. In this theory, motivation is linked to social belonging and identity is a system that observes the merging of social identities (Sade 46-53). In the context of an ESL/EFL classroom, this could be seen as a student feeling motivated to communicate information from their L1 identity through the L2, thus contributing to an L2 identity.

Theories of Reading

In her transactional theory of reading, Rosenblatt highlights the role of the reader in meaning-making and proposes that readers construct meaning through efferent and aesthetic stances, contrary to the previously believed notion that text is inherently meaningful (Rosenblatt 1-25; Shin and Riazantseva 601-602). Lying on one end of the spectrum is efferent reading, in which the reader is disengaged on a personal level to concentrate on information seeking. Aesthetic reading, on the other end of the spectrum, is the act of *living through* the experience one is reading about (Rosenblatt 27). In both cases, however, these reader responses rely on and engage readers' prior knowledge, personal experience, beliefs, and personality characteristics (Shin and Riazantseva 602). Further research on reader responses by Lewis et al. has uncovered that readers engage with the text through comparison; they compare the actions and feelings of the characters to their own (qtd. in Shin and Riazantseva 602). It was also shown in Brooks's research that readers' personal experiences shape their expectations of the characters (Brooks 377). Applied to the context of the EFL/ESL classroom, if materials can evoke aesthetic reading, it would increase the likelihood of students having an authentic L2 experience.

One area of research that seems to be lacking is that of the L2 reader identity. Though little can be found, according to Shin and Riazantseva, in theory, it should be assumed that L2 readers integrate their personal experiences and storylines in response to the texts' emergent meanings and engage their multiple identities in order to formulate a coherent storyline (603). However, whether they are integrating their L1, L2 identity, or L1 identity communicated through the L2 is unknown.

Recent Studies

In the last 15 years, there has been a “positive renaissance” in the field of language education (Wang et al 2). Switching their focus from negative factors such as boredom, burnout, and anxiety, researchers are now investigating the role of positive factors including positive affectivity, reflectiveness, identity and self-expression (Ushioda), and character strengths (Piasecka, Oxford). It has been pointed out, however, that there is a lack of research on the applications of character strengths in the EFL classroom (Wang et al. 3; MacIntyre 11). That said, there are a few recent studies worth reviewing that help to bridge the gap between the theoretical background and my theoretical perspective.

The most closely related study was conducted by Piasecka in 2016, where she investigated the role of literary texts in the activation of character strengths within a foreign language context. Participants were asked to read two poems and participate in the “three good things” intervention activity which requires participants to write three positive things about each day for a week and how they came to be (Rashid and Seligman 44). In this case, participants were asked to write three good things about the poems. It was hypothesized that identifying the good things and reflecting on their origin “would activate, reveal, and support the participants’ character strengths” (Piasecka 82). Therefore, qualitative data was retrieved in the form of written reflections with which Piasecka subsequently linked to several character strengths including creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, honesty, social intelligence, self-regulation, and beauty (86-87).

There are two main limitations I would like to address. Firstly, Piasecka ignored the main goal of the three good things intervention, which is to create a positive bias over time that eventually leads participants to overcome their negative outlook on life

(Rashid and Seligman 44). Without further guidance, practicing the three good things intervention helps to foster an appreciation for beauty that is otherwise missed (Rashid and Seligman 44) but evidence is lacking to support the idea that this intervention reveals other character strengths. For that reason, it is usually used after participants complete the VIA questionnaire to first identify their character strengths so that they may later reflect on them (Seligman, *Flourish* ch. 2). Secondly, the choice of literary text may limit the range of character strength activation. For instance, Piasecka argues that the character strength of appreciation of beauty is activated because participants comment on the poems' "use of vocabulary and form" (87), but there is not much of a chance of activating forgiveness, for example, if it is not within the context of the literature or reading materials.

Moving on to the topic of reflectiveness and biographical narrative is a study conducted by Lasocinska and Zaorski-Sikora. The aim of the study was to determine how participants describe and visualize their lives in the past, present, and future. The researchers used a set of statements and questions to support participants' self-reflection and encourage them to analyze their biographical experiences. It was found that biographical tasks broaden participants' self-knowledge, increase their reflectiveness and deepen their self-reflection. Furthermore, the varied temporal perspectives of the statements and questions led participants to re-evaluate their past selves, form a more realistic view of their current selves and were better positioned to plan achievable goals in line with the view of their future selves (Lasocinska and Zaorski-Sikora). The results suggest that reflectiveness can be used as a tool to deepen understanding of the self, and if paired with positive psychology interventions in an EFL/ESL, it could identify strengths and areas of growth.

Turning the attention now to foreign language teacher training, Gabryś-Barker demonstrated that there are positive effects on the students in FL classrooms when teachers engage in activities founded on theories of positive psychology. In her study, teachers had undergone 15 hours of lectures and 30 hours of practical classes on the use of positive psychology in the FL classroom. These lectures followed Oxford's EMPATHICS model and therefore had lectures and activities dedicated to character strengths. The teachers later provided feedback on the course, stating that in the classes they subsequently taught, students were able to realize their potential, students seemed to forget they were learning a second language while engaged in positive psychology activities, students learned about and engaged their strengths, students had a longer attention span and approached tasks with more enthusiasm, and students displayed a more positive disposition (Gabryś-Barker). Furthermore, the personal nature of the topics means that the classes were relevant, increasing students' motivation to communicate in the L2 authentically.

Theoretical Perspective

Character Strengths and Language Learner Variables

Within positive psychology, it has been theorized that identifying character strengths is linked to increased positive affect, decreased symptoms of depression, and a more favourable self-image. In the context of the foreign language classroom, research on the role of character strengths has been limited to its contribution to language-learner well-being and its indirect activation through works of literature (Oxford, Piasecka). Oxford's EMPATHICS model and the research performed by Piasecka do not consider character strengths as variables with the power to enhance the foreign language learning experience, aside from contributing to positive emotions in the case of Oxford. Thus, it is arguable that the use of character strengths in the foreign language classroom has not

yet been fully optimized, and to do so would require a wider theoretical perspective. To fill this gap, I propose a deeper look into the variables of character strengths and identity, and how they affect the variable of motivation. A re-conceptualization of the activation of character strengths through literature is also required.

Thus far, concerning identity, I have reviewed several theories that have been linked to language learners, such as Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System, Temporal Self-Appraisal Theory, Richard's adapted Discoursal and Social Identities, Sade's Identity as a Chaotic System theory, and Reader Identity. What they all share in common is the idea that identity is an experience-based phenomenon. Therefore, it could be argued that identity and character strengths have a symbiotic relationship. On one hand, our character strengths define our identity as they influence the likelihood of acting and reacting in particular ways. On the other hand, experiences and one's idea of the self influence which character strengths to engage and develop. To illustrate this view, let us consider someone who scores high in the strength of humour. They are simultaneously using a character strength to influence their experience while their identity as being a "funny person" transmits feedback to regulate this engagement. If over time using humour is less successful, it's likely they would utilize other strengths, and humour would form less of a part of their identity. The idea that identity and character strengths continuously influence each other on a feedback loop can also be applied to the foreign language learner and one of their multiple identities responsible for their L2 self.

Recent research on language learner identity is primarily focused on Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System (Motivation CH 18 350). This theory posits that language learner motivation is linked to the difference found between the actual self and the ideal self; when the difference is large, the language learner will experience a higher level of

motivation to learn. As students with increased motivation are more likely to experience enjoyment and positive affect in the foreign language classroom (Dewaele et al. 2008: 16), it is also more likely that they engage their personal resources (Fredrickson 2002). Here, within the interaction of the actual and ideal self, where motivation increases, it is possible that the engagement of personal resources activate character strengths. As personal resources range from social to intellectual resources, we could assume that within those lie the character strengths of creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective, persistence, zest, leadership, teamwork, social intelligence, self-regulation, self-efficacy, and hope.

Furthermore, congruent to the L2 Motivation Self System, it may be possible that language learners wish to reduce the discrepancy between their L1 and L2 identity in terms of communication abilities and their subsequent influence on forming social bonds. This is related to targeting a language learner's transportable identities, or the social bonds, roles, likes, and dislikes that make up one's identity. The more a student is able to express ideas and opinions related to their transportable identities, the higher the likelihood is of being able to join a social group pertaining to one of their identities in the foreign language. For example, if a foreign language learner is going to relocate to a country that speaks their L2, and they are an avid cyclist, forming social bonds with a group of cyclists would entail the ability to express thoughts about the sport, sportsmen, races, bike maintenance, tips, advice, as well as the ability to describe their past personal experiences in cycling. This ability, I argue, strengthens the relationship between the L1 and L2 identities by increasing the ability to communicate about a transportable identity in the L2. Moreover, it has been found that encouraging students to speak as themselves increases motivation to produce language for the purpose of expressing their identity rather than to demonstrate knowledge of the language (Ushioda

16-17). Therefore, it could be said that motivation and identity are simultaneously affecting one another.

Next, let us focus our attention on L2 reader identity. As what could be considered a “fractal” of identity (Sade 45), L2 reader identity could be described as the identity that emerges through interaction with a text in a foreign language, including the activation of prior knowledge, engagement with multiple and transportable identities, making comparisons between the (actual or future possible) self and the character(s), and vicariously living through (experiencing) the text (Rosenblatt 27). Of course, this interaction is mediated by the language level and appropriateness of the text with regard to said level. Could it then be postulated that it is possible to activate character strengths through the L2 reader identity? Let us review.

Reading activities are quite common in the context of the foreign language classroom, which subsequently activates the L2 reader identity. Throughout the reading exercise, it could be assumed that to make sense of the text students are using their prior knowledge and personal experience, making comparisons between themselves and the character(s), and allowing these to influence their expectations of the characters (Shin 602). In theory, if identity, and L2 identity therein, share a relationship with character strengths as previously proposed, then are they not reflecting on their identities to do so? While reading, they are simultaneously narrating biographical or hypothetical differences between themselves and the character(s), or likewise drawing similarities.

Consider the following: In a novel, a character fails at his task and when given the chance to try again, he refuses because he does not believe in his abilities. When reading a situation like this, a reader may think to themselves “I would have tried again”. This comparison between their identity and that of the character’s is activating the character strengths of persistence (willingness to attempt the task again in spite of

obstacles), hope (a vision of future success), self-regulation (self-efficacy; the belief that they can succeed), and perhaps courage and bravery, depending on context. But how does this link to the L2 identity? By reflecting in the L2 on their past, actual, or ideal selves through comparison, which influence and have been influenced by character strengths, students are minimizing the discrepancy between their L1 and L2 identities by merging the L1 and L2 multiple selves. Thus, it should be theoretically possible to activate character strengths through the L2 identity.

I have thus far explained the theoretical relationships between character strengths and the language learner variables of motivation and identity. A visual representation of the interactions can be found below in Figure 1. But it does open the question next to *how* one might optimally engage character strengths through the L2, which I will address next.

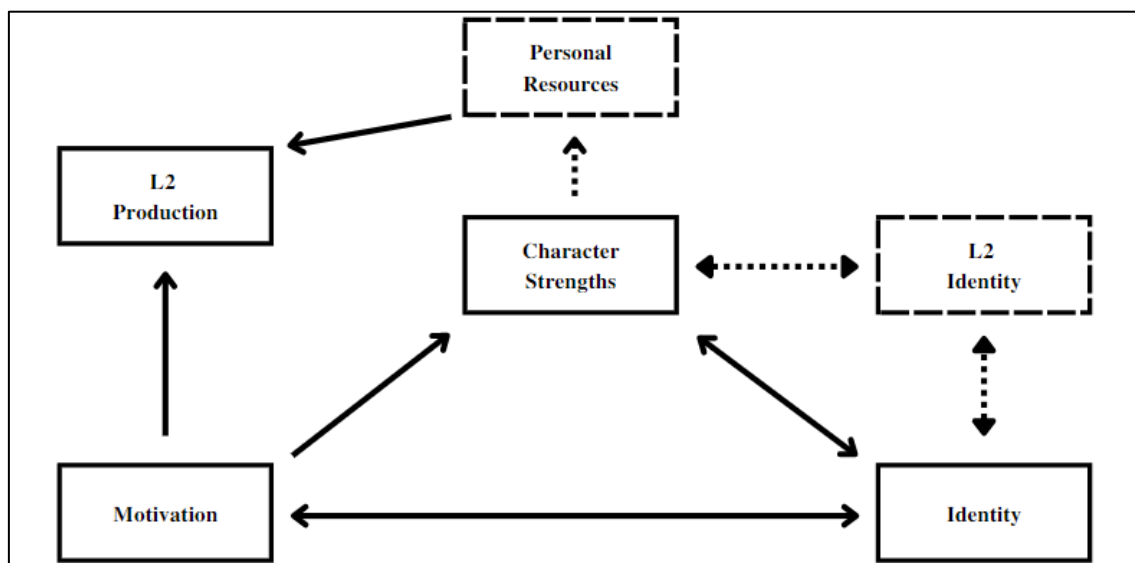


Figure 1: Character strengths and language learner variables

Optimal Activation of Character Strengths

So far, the only study that claims to have activated character strengths has done so indirectly through literature, poems, to be more exact (Piasecka 87). Based on my theory, I believe a direct approach using other types of text would be more beneficial. By directly activating character strengths, each strength can be targeted to produce a

result, whereas an indirect approach, such as the use of open-ended questions, may leave too much up to chance. In addition, using other types of text, such as a novel, will take the learner on an experiential journey through which they may encounter multiple situations that activate character strengths. In conjunction, a direct approach with a longer literary work would give ample opportunity to activate character strengths.

To directly activate character strengths, I propose using a modified VIA-120 survey. The VIA-120 survey is a shortened, but no less valid, survey that has been empirically validated as an accurate measure of character strengths (VIA Institute on Character). It contains 120 statements with 5 statements per character strength. Modifications should be such that the statements apply to a character in a novel to first have students think of a character. Each statement should be followed by a question to then encourage reflection, character, and self-comparison, with the production being in the form of a biographical narrative (see Figure 2). In this way, the student or participant is reflecting on the self in two ways, first through comparison and second, through self-reflection, all in the L2, thereby contributing to the L2 identity and strengthening the relationship between L1 and L2 identity by consolidating the experiences that make up the self.

The character always knows right from wrong and always chooses "right".

In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Hermione almost always does what's right until she realizes that sometimes those actions hurt others and ruin her chances at forming friendships.

What about you? Provide an example.

In my case, I usually do what's right. For example, I always do what my parents tell me to do, but sometimes when I was younger I would lie for my friends so they wouldn't get in trouble for breaking a rule.

Figure 2: Example Response

A reading task with 120 questions, however, is excessive and would deter student engagement. Instead, the questions should be grouped per character strength and the student or participant should be asked to select 1-2 questions thereby making the total number of questions to be answered between 24-48 questions. If the reading material is short, then perhaps one question would suffice, but if the reading material is a novel then students and participants should be able to answer at least two of the questions. The reason I suggest making all five questions per character strength available to choose from is to account for variation. There is a high probability that some of the statements might not be applicable to the character necessitating alternatives. For example, as illustrated in Figure 3, there are two similar statements, however, the participant may have trouble finding evidence in the text that supports the statement that the character *likes* coming up with new ways to do things. In that case, another option is provided where the participant can find evidence that it simply *occurs frequently*. Secondly, while a participant may be able to identify with a statement, they may feel uncomfortable sharing personal information and should have the freedom to choose to do so or select another statement. By offering a variety of statements, the likelihood of retrieving an applicable and reflective answer increases.

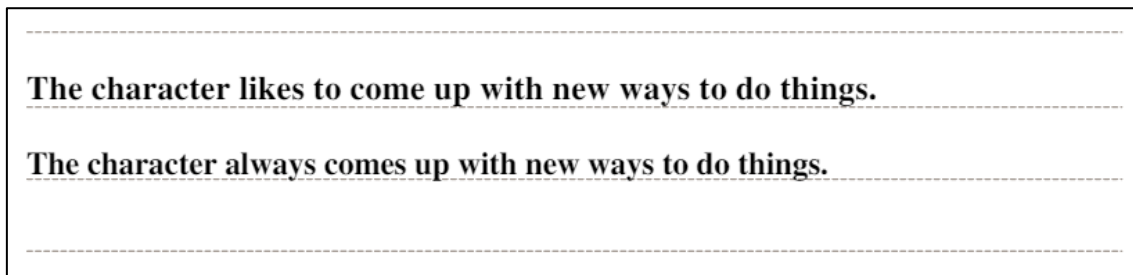


Figure 3: Example statements for the strength of creativity

In terms of literary texts, there are several reasons why novels would be advantageous. In a novel, a character experiences a variety of situations that put their strengths to the test. Compared to a poem, there is a higher likelihood of activating a larger range of character strengths through the various experiences of the character. Secondly, working with a novel would provide prolonged exposure to and input from the L2. And thirdly, though novels are not language learner materials, they have the benefit of being authentic L2 materials.

Considerations and Limitations

The purpose of this paper was to strengthen the theoretical foundation of the inclusion of character strengths as an influencing factor in language-learner well-being, theorizing optimal activation of character strengths compared to previous studies and theorizing the role it plays with motivation and L2 production. That said, it is not without limitations and some considerations should be made for anyone who wishes to empirically validate it.

Firstly, one must consider individual differences in motivation. Participants and/or students who perform the character strengths task may be intrinsically motivated due to the level of autonomy and self-oriented nature of the task, or they may be extrinsically motivated to complete the task for a grade, or simply because they “have to”, which may reduce the level of personal engagement (Dörnyei 77-79). Additionally,

the intention to penetrate and assimilate into the target language culture would likewise have an effect on motivation (Dörnyei 95-96).

The next consideration is a moral one. Consideration must be given to the fact that evoking students' transportable identities "involve[s] an investment of self" that may be emotional and should be respected. Therefore, teacher feedback and error correction should be performed with care (Ushioda 17).

Another consideration is to allow for negative responses in the form of disagreement or inability to relate to certain statements. Accurate narratives are crucial for the identification of a deficit in a particular strength that could later be built upon, which is precisely the aim of positive psychology (Seligman 3).

Though this type of proposed research answers the call for more qualitative analysis in this research domain (Wang et al 7), qualitative research in the form of a biographical narrative is time-consuming and the environment is uncontrolled.

Conclusion

Though humanistic psychology has had an influence on second and foreign language learning and teaching since the 1970s and positive psychology is known as humanistic revival, it wasn't until less than 10 years ago that positive psychology was specifically applied to the field of language learning (MacIntyre and Mercer 158). Since then, research has switched from focusing on the effects of negative variables such as boredom, anxiety, and burnout to the effects of *both* positive and negative influencing factors, as well as the potential of positive factors striking a balance (Wang et al 2-3). Two of the biggest contributions to positive psychology with the potential to have a direct impact on second and foreign language education include character strengths and the EMPATHICS model of language-learner well-being, the "C" of which stands for character strengths. Though an impact was hypothesized, the relationships character strengths have with other variables and the way in which it can be activated lacked

theoretical support. In other words, character strengths were assumed to have an effect, but little research could be found to explain why within the context of second and foreign language education.

To fill this theoretical gap, I have drawn from empirically validated sources concerning the variables of identity, character strengths, and motivation and have described how they interact with one another in a way that positively influences language-learner well-being and L2 production through the strengthening of L2 identity. I have theorized that character strengths and identity, including L2 identity, share a symbiotic relationship, that increased motivation due to self-oriented tasks and materials targeting identity opens the pathway to utilizing character strengths through personal resources, that motivation and identity simultaneously affect one another due to a desire to reduce the discrepancy between the L1 and L2 selves as well as the desire to form social bonds shaped by L2 identity, and that character strengths can be optimally activated through L2 reading tasks and activities. Overall, it serves as a method to increase personal engagement and motivation in L2 production while contributing to language learner well-being.

Works Cited

- Bandura, Albert. *Self-Efficacy the Exercise of Control*. Freeman, 2000.
- Brooks, Wanda. "Reading Representations of Themselves: Urban Youth Use Culture and African American Textual Features to Develop Literary Understandings." *Reading Research Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 3, 2006, pp. 372–392. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4151751>.
- Costa, Arthur L., and Bena Kallick. *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind: 16 Essential Characteristics for Success*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2018.
- Dörnyei, Zoltán. *The Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition*. Edited by Susan Gass et al., Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2005.
- Fredrickson, Barbara L. "The Role of Positive Emotions in Positive Psychology: The Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions." *American Psychologist*, vol. 56, no. 3, March 2001, pp. 218-226. *APA PsycNet*, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.218>.
- Gregersen, Tammy and Peter D. MacIntyre. *Capitalizing on Language Learners' Individuality: From Premise to Practice*. Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783091218>.
- Krashen, Stephen D. *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Internet ed., Pergamon Press Inc., 2009. <https://b-ok.xyz/book/919260/c97e57>. PDF.

- Langley Group. "Busting Myths in Positive Psychology." *Langley Group IP Trust*, 2022, <https://langleygroup.com.au/busting-myths-in-positive-psychology/>.
- MacIntyre, Peter D. "Exploring Applications of Positive Psychology in SLA." *Second Language Learning and Teaching*, edited by Katarzyna Budzińska and Olga Majchrzak, 2021, pp. 3-17. *Springer Link*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-64444-4_1.
- MacIntyre, Peter D., and Sarah Mercer. "Introducing Positive Psychology to SLA." *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2014, pp. 153-172. *ERIC*, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1134778>.
- Marhaeni, Aain. "Rosenblatt's Transactional Theory and Its Implementation in the Teaching of Integrated Reading." *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, vol. 5, 2016. *Research Gate*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307834200_Rosenblatt's_Transactional_Theory_and_Its_Implementation_in_the_Teaching_of_Integrated_Reading. PDF.
- Masten, Ann S., and Marie-Gabrielle J. Reed. "Resilience in Development." *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by C. R. Snyder and Shane J. Lopez, Oxford UP, New York, New York, 2002, pp. 74–88. *ZLibrary*, <https://b-ok.xyz/book/959709/4d9e3e>. PDF.
- McAdams, Dan P. "Studying Lives in Time: A Narrative Approach." *Advances in Life Course Research: Towards an Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Life Course*, edited by Ren Levy et al., vol. 10, Elsevier, 2005, pp. 237-258. *Science Direct*, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1040-2608\(05\)10009-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1040-2608(05)10009-4).

Oxford, Rebecca L. "Toward a Psychology of Well-Being for Language Learners: The 'EMPATHICS' Vision". *Positive Psychology in SLA*, edited by Peter D.

MacIntyre, Tammy Gregersen and Sarah Mercer, Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit:

Multilingual Matters, 2016, pp. 10-88. *DeGruyter*,

<https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783095360-003>.

Oxford, Rebecca L., and Lourdes Cuéllar. "Positive Psychology in Cross-Cultural

Narratives: Mexican Students Discover Themselves While Learning Chinese."

Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, vol. 2, 2014, pp. 173–203.,

<https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2014.4.2.3>.

Peterson, Christopher, and Martin E. P. Seligman. *Character Strengths and Virtues: A*

Handbook and Classification. APA and Oxford UP, 2004, *ZLibrary*, [https://b-](https://book.xyz/book/2206991/c3736a)

[ok.xyz/book/2206991/c3736a](https://book.xyz/book/2206991/c3736a).

Ryan, Stephen, and Kay Irie. "Imagined and Possible Selves: Stories We Tell About

Ourselves." *Multiple Perspectives on the Self in SLA*, edited by Sarah Mercer and

Marion Williams, Multilingual Matters, Bristol, 2014, pp. 109–126. *DeGruyter*,

<https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783091362-009>.

Ross, Michael, and Anne E. Wilson. "It Feels like Yesterday: Self-Esteem, Valence of

Personal Past Experiences, and Judgments of Subjective Distance." *Journal of*

Personality and Social Psychology, vol. 82, no. 5, 2002, pp. 792–803. *APA*

PsychNet, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.82.5.792>.

Sade, Liliane. "Emerging Selves, Language Learning and Motivation through the Lens

of Chaos." *Identity, Motivation and Autonomy in Language Learning*, edited by

Garold Murray et al., *Multilingual Matters*, Bristol, 2011, pp. 42-56. *DeGruyter*, <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847693747-005>.

Seligman, Martin E. P. *Flourishing: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being*. E-book ed., Random House Australia Pty Ltd, 2012.

Seligman, Martin E. P. "Positive Psychology, Positive Prevention, and Positive Therapy." *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by C. R. Snyder and Shane J. Lopez, Oxford UP, New York, NY, 2002, pp 3-9. *ZLibrary*, <https://b-ok.xyz/book/959709/4d9e3e>. PDF.

Shin, Changok, and Anastasia Riazantseva. "Reader Identity: A Case Study of Korean Graduate Students' Meaning Construction of an L2 Literary Text." *Language and Intercultural Communication*, vol. 15, no. 4, 16 Sept. 2015, pp. 600–615. *Taylor & Francis Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2015.1061535>.

Snyder, C. R., Rand, Kevin L., and David R. Sigmon. "Hope Theory: A Member of the Positive Psychology Family." *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, edited by C. R. Snyder and Shane J. Lopez, Oxford UP, New York, New York, 2002, pp. 257–276. *ZLibrary*, <https://b-ok.xyz/book/959709/4d9e3e>. PDF.

Ushioda, Ema. "Motivating Learners to Speak as Themselves." *Identity, Motivation and Autonomy in Language Learning*, edited by Garold Murray et al., *Multilingual Matters*, Bristol, 2011, pp. 11–24. *Taylor & Francis Online*, <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847693747-003>.

van Deurzen, Emmy. *Existential Counselling & Psychotherapy in Practice*. 3rd ed., SAGE, 2012. *ZLibrary*, <https://b-ok.xyz/book/896864/116401>. PDF.

Wang, Yongliang et al. "Researching and Practicing Positive Psychology in Second/Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: The Past, Current Status and Future Directions." *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 12, no. 731721, 19 Aug. 2021. *PubMed*, doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2021.731721.

Wong, Paul T. "Positive Psychology 2.0: Towards a Balanced Interactive Model of the Good Life." *Canadian Psychology / Psychologie Canadienne*, vol. 52, no. 2, 2011, pp. 69–81. *APA PsycNet*, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022511>.