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The Effects of Positive Psychology Interventions on EFL Learners' Well-Being

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By

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Abstract

The application of positive psychology interventions (PPIs) in the language classroom has received increased attention from educators and researchers for their utility. Using these activities, educators hit two targets with one arrow: enhance learners' well-being and language learning journeys and achievements. The current study aimed to investigate the efficacy of PPIs in promoting the well-being of English as a foreign language (EFL) students in a public school in Armenia. It also uncovered the students' and teacher's attitudes towards the activities as well-being promoting and language learning tools. The participants were 20 ninth-grade students and their English teacher. Twice a week for six weeks, the students engaged in the PPI activities. As a mixed methods action research, qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data. Qualitative data sources included student written reflections, a focus group discussion, and a teacher questionnaire. As for the quantitative data, they were collected once before and once after the intervention using the following surveys: the WHO-5 well-being survey and the GR-6 gratitude survey. The pre- and post-intervention survey results revealed a significant increase in the students' well-being. However, there were no significant gains in gratitude. Finally, qualitative data collected from the students and the teacher surfaced their perspectives on the PPIs.

Keywords: positive psychology, positive psychology interventions, positive education, well-being, character strengths, emotional intelligence, empathy, gratitude, attitudes.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“School years are the years when we are growing up. We are communicating and making friends. It’s really important to get to know ourselves in these years because we are developing into a full person. In school we learn about the history of other people, we learn about geography, and our world. But I guess there should be at least one subject about us.” (15-year-old EFL student, Yerevan)

The above quote was made by a 15-year-old student in a public school in Yerevan. The amount of insight and awareness in her comment is just astonishing. It also sheds light on a need that is poorly addressed in Armenia: learner well-being. Positive psychology, which advocates the focus on fostering human virtues and thriving, has gained increased attention in recent years (Froh, 2004; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Owing to this, the notion of promoting learner well-being became the preoccupation of institutions and researchers (Alford, 2017). Specifically, in the EFL and SLA fields, researchers have investigated the relevance of positive psychology interventions and their relation to promoting well-being, positive emotions, and effective learning. Studies have shown that positive psychology intervention activities can influence learners’ well-being, peer relations, positive affect, autonomous learning, and school engagement (Eryilmaz, 2015; Laakso et al., 2021; Macaskill & Denovan, 2013; Shoshani et al., 2016). In addition, it also has the capacity to impact language enjoyment, anxiety, and performance (Jin et al., 2021; Li & Xu, 2019; Wei et al., 2019).

1.1 Problem Statement

Rising rates of mental illnesses and emotional disorders among teenagers, triggered by a myriad of personal, social, economic, and political stressors, are alarming. With teenagers spending most of their time at school, the responsibility rests on educational institutions and

teachers to actively seek ways to help foster students' well-being. Lately, researchers have turned to positive psychology interventions for help in this regard. However, from the schools' side, there seems to be a lack of consideration for the issue of learner well-being and insufficient knowledge of how well-being and positive emotions are, in fact, essential ingredients for a successful learning experience. Moreover, for the positive psychology interventions to be functional, local research is needed to 1) test and validate their impact on Armenian EFL students and 2) cater the activities to the local students' needs.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study investigates the effects of positive psychology interventions on EFL learners' well-being and reveals the students' and teacher's perceptions of the activities. The activities are inspected as tools for promoting well-being and aiding language learning. To this end, this research addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How can positive psychology interventions implemented in an EFL classroom impact students' well-being?

RQ2: What are the students' and teacher's perceptions and attitudes toward positive psychology intervention activities for language learning?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study strives to bring the issue of learner well-being out of the shadows. Moreover, it aims to show that with the help of positive psychology interventions, focusing on both language learning and well-being is practical and effective. The results of this research will help inform the teacher on the relevance and usage of positive psychology intervention activities in the classroom to foster students' well-being and language learning. In addition, by participating in this study, students will learn some techniques and exercises that they can use to promote their

well-being, explore themselves, and nurture positive traits. The results of this study will inform about the viability and capacity of using positive psychology interventions to increase EFL students' well-being in Armenia. Ultimately, this study would help reshape the educational model, making students' well-being a primary purpose, not only academic achievement.

1.4 Definition of Terms

As an understanding of specific terms related to positive psychology is central to the purpose of this paper, below are the definitions of these terms to ensure clarity and avoid confusion.

Positive psychology (PP) “is about valued subjective experiences: well-being, contentment, and satisfaction (in the past); hope and optimism (for the future); and flow and happiness (in the present).” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.5)

Positive education is used to denote the usage of positive psychology notions and interventions in the educational field, be it general education or EFL.

Positive psychology interventions (PPIs) are “treatment methods or intentional activities aimed at cultivating positive feelings, positive behaviors, or positive cognitions” (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009, p. 467) to increase well-being.

‘Positive psychology interventions’, ‘positive psychology activities’, and ‘activities’ will be used throughout this study to mean the same thing.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Positive psychology has gained tremendous attention from scholars in various fields. In general education, EFL, and SLA fields, educators and researchers have turned to positive psychology to harness its benefits on students' well-being, performance, and motivation, among many others. Positive education, which utilizes positive psychology concepts and theories in education to foster personal and academic achievements, has been tested in various contexts and has mostly proven effective (Eryilmaz, 2015; Laakso et al., 2021; Shoshani et al., 2016). However, there has been no research on positive education in Armenia, to my knowledge. Research implemented in the local context is needed to (1) understand to what extent positive education can help enhance the well-being of EFL students in Armenia, (2) increase the effectiveness of the positive psychology interventions and cater them to the needs of the Armenian students.

This literature review outlines the theoretical framework and provides an overview of empirical studies on positive education. First, the definitions of positive psychology and well-being, which are cornerstones of positive education, are discussed. In addition, main well-being models are presented. Then, with this background information, the exact field of positive education is examined, with its history, guiding theories, potential benefits, and value. Finally, empirical evidence-based research on positive education from various backgrounds is presented, focusing on its application in the EFL and SLA fields.

2.1 What Is Positive Psychology?

Positive psychology (PP) is the branch of psychology that studies how humans flourish and thrive (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). At its core, it has the goal of fostering human virtues, character strengths (Froh, 2004), and what makes "life most worth living" (Park &

Peterson, 2008, p. 85). It focuses on well-being, gratitude, life satisfaction, hope, optimism, flow, joy, resilience, and individual strengths (Ackerman, 2020; MacIntyre, 2016; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000;).

It is debatable as to who is the father of PP; however, its roots extend to the works of ancient philosophers and humanistic psychologists such as Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and William James (Al Taher, 2021; Froh, 2004; Peterson, 2006). As for the modern narrative, it started in 1998 when the theme of the APA convention was about the prevention of illnesses (MacIntyre, 2016; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Up until the turn of the century, traditional psychology was predominantly preoccupied with treating causes of disorders and afflictions (a.k.a. the disease model). However, leading figures in the field have challenged this limited sole focus on illnesses and healing, arguing that one cannot help people thrive by just focusing on remedies. Although the focus on pathology has produced an ample amount of beneficial research and theories, it has come at the cost of poorer knowledge concerning what is good in life (Peterson, 2006). PP does not call for abandoning the study of human problems and concerns (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). However, it does call for “as much focus on strength as on weakness, as much interest in building the best things in life as in repairing the worst, and as much attention to fulfilling the lives of healthy people as to healing the wounds of the distressed” (Peterson, 2006, p. 5).

Criticism in the field stem from the following concerns:

- the positioning of PP as a radically different field,
- the culturally specific definition and visualization of the notion of well-being,
- the idea and meaning of the term ‘positive’,

- the dichotomy of positive and negative, with positive being always sought and negative always avoided,
- the expectation that a person should always be optimistic, and
- the shift of viewing the natural human feelings of sadness and grief as disorders (Lomas, 2016; Lomas & Ivztan, 2016).

This criticism has led to further development and evolution of the field. For example, the field today recognizes the inherent dialectical relationship between negative and positive emotions (Lomas, 2016). Furthermore, PP does not deny the existence of difficulties or claim that getting rid of negative emotions is the ultimate solution to human problems. Instead, the focus is now on equipping people with the skills and strengths to cope with challenges, thrive, embrace life, and live up to their potential.

Incorporating PP in the language learning classroom has become more of a necessity rather than a luxury. There is an inevitable presence of emotions in language learning, both positive and negative (MacIntyre, 2016). Thus, viewing language learners only from the cognitive perspective is insufficient since emotions are just as significant (Mercer & MacIntyre, 2014). PP offers this gateway to viewing language learners holistically, with both cognition and emotions playing an equally important role (Schiavon et al., 2020).

2.2 What Is Well-Being?

Sought by people everywhere, well-being has become an ultimate concern for not only positive psychologists but also increasingly for parents and educational institutions. Definitions of well-being differ in different fields and among various researchers (Oades & Mossman, 2017). In general terms, it is ‘the discipline concerned with promoting a good and worth-living life’ (Slade et al., 2017). To be more precise, Kern et al. (2015) defined well-being as the personal

sense of flourishing that humans get from various areas of life. In addition, they distinguished between being a “non-depressed, law-abiding citizen who is satisfied at maintaining the status quo” (Kern et al., 2015, p.67) and living life to the fullest by being curious, hopeful, grateful, and compassionate.

It may seem that PP’s approach to well-being is mainly focused on hedonic well-being. That is a focus on happiness, pleasure, and pain avoidance (Oades & Mossman, 2017). However, PP pertains to eudaimonic well-being just as much (Kern et al., 2015), which is based on Aristotle’s view that true happiness focuses on behavior that provides meaning, fulfillment, and self-actualization (Gale et al., 2013, as cited in Oades & Mossman, 2017, p.8). Thus, regardless of the multitude of definitions, recent ones assert the fusion of hedonic and eudaimonic happiness to give a holistic view of well-being (Norrish et al., 2013).

Many question the idea of whether being in a positive state necessarily means the absence of negative emotions (Dewaele et al., 2019; Lomas, 2016; Lomas & Ivtzan, 2016). This question has been a significant area of criticism in the field. However, according to the principle of complementary which states that well-being encompasses both positive and negative experiences, aspects such as well-being and distress are argued to be not only present at the same time but also dependent on each other (Ryff & Singer, 2003, as cited in Lomas & Ivtzan, 2016, p. 1755).

Another central area of criticism was the ethnocentric cultural approach to defining well-being and happiness, mainly centered on western views (Lomas & Ivtzan, 2016). Different people in different cultures view even the most simplistic feelings, such as happiness and sadness, entirely differently. However, this situation was rectified by what Lomas and Ivtzan (2016) called ‘second wave positive psychology’, which accounts for these cultural differences.

Cultural consideration has always been an integral part of teaching and curriculum design in education. A prominent example is adjusting language books to students from different cultural and language backgrounds. Thus, it would not be a new concept to argue that there is a need to consider language learners' society and culture for positive psychology interventions (PPIs) to be effective.

Still, the main question remains, can well-being skills be taught? Authors state that using well-designed interventions, variables such as engagement, hope, social and emotional intelligence, intellectual curiosity, and empathy can all be promoted (Cooperrider et al., 2018).

To conclude, PP's objective when it comes to language teaching is twofold: to boost well-being as a supportive tool in the language classroom and promote personal, mental, and educational prosperity (Kern et al., 2015; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Understanding students' well-being and what it depends on in the classroom context is essential to realize this goal.

2.3 Positive Psychology Well-Being Models

A strong advocate and a promoter (also considered the modern founder) of PP, Seligman proposed a multidimensional framework of five measurable elements that make up well-being, and he called this model PERMA. The acronym stands for Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (Seligman, 2018). Since the presence of the PERMA model, different researchers have used it as their primary framework to apply PP in schools (Au & Kennedy, 2018; Shoshani et al., 2016). Kern et al. (2015) tested and validated the PERMA model and its separate constructs and found evidence that supports this multidimensional approach. In addition, they argued that breaking down a big construct such as well-being enables educators and educational institutions to tackle it (Kern et al., 2015). For

language teachers, it is indubitably less overwhelming and more fruitful to work on smaller separate elements than well-being as a whole. Likewise, teachers can more easily incorporate these individual elements of the model in the curriculum and classroom activities.

Oxford (2016a) challenged Seligman's model, claiming that the model fails to make essential connections to character strengths. In addition, she stated that PERMA emphasizes 'false' independence of the model's different elements and does not consider social context. She argues that "PERMA is the most widely known well-being model because it is offered through inexpensive, mass-market, trade paperbacks, ... However ... PERMA reflects oversimplification" (Oxford, 2018, p. 2). Thus, Oxford proposed an extended model, the EMPATHICS, specially designed for learner well-being. EMPATHICS stands for emotion and empathy; meaning and motivation; perseverance including resilience, hope, and optimism; agency and autonomy; time; hardiness and habits of mind; intelligences; character strengths; self-factors such as self-efficacy, self-concept, self-esteem, and self-verification (Oxford, 2016b). When creating a language course or designing activities for students, educators can find the EMPATHICS model to have an edge, as it is more elaborate and comprehensive, making it easier to apply.

2.4 Positive Psychology in Education: Positive Education

Education should be concerned with more than just academic achievement, paying more interest and attention to students' well-being. White and Murray (2015) said it best: "As educators we teach students first and subjects second" (p. 6). As teachers work directly with students, they are undoubtedly employed in a context that deals with psychology, motivation, anxiety, and many more (Helgesen, 2016; Komorowska, 2016). Thus, it is logical to incorporate

students' emotional and mental well-being considerations when planning lessons and designing curriculums.

2.4.1 Why Focus on Well-being and Emotions in Education?

During adolescence, a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, students go through physical and social changes that shape and significantly impact their lives (Sawyer et al., 2018; Zaky, 2017). Thus, it is crucial during this transitional phase to ensure prosperity and well-being (Zaky, 2017). With students spending plenty of time at school, it naturally becomes the responsibility of educational institutions and teachers to have students' well-being as a priority.

In addition, the modern world is full of stressors that can lead to a myriad of illnesses. With the pandemic, political unrest, wars, and societal and digital stressors, the lives of thousands of people are changing. These issues have raised mental health concerns among the population, which is a threat that should not be overlooked (Markosian et al., 2021). With these conditions that teens and youth live under, it rests upon the educational system to provide the students with the necessary support to enhance their resilience and skills to deal with the ongoing life challenges (Arslan & Burke, 2021; Markosian, 2021; White & Murray, 2015; Wyn, 2007). Yet, there seems to be a lack of consideration for what learners need besides academic knowledge (Wyn, 2007).

There is yet another vital necessity to consider with the social and developmental needs for well-being: the academic aspect. According to the broaden-and-build theory proposed by Fredrickson (2001, 2004), positive emotions are not mere indicators of happiness and well-being. Positive emotions have the capacity to broaden the students' thought-action repertoire, which, consequently, expands mental processing (Fredrickson, 2001). Thus, positive emotions are essential for ideal functioning, characterized by a widened scope of thinking and attention

(Fredrickson, 2001). With this theory, a focus on reducing negative emotions in the language classroom is insufficient since it is not the same as cultivating positive emotions (Rahimi & Bigdeli, 2014).

In addition, positive emotions have long-lasting power, which provides humans with personal resources that can be utilized at later events and states (Fredrickson, 2004). MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) supported Fredrickson's (2004) views, judging positive emotions as broadening and resiliency boosters. Furthermore, positive emotions reverse the negative emotions' narrowing effects (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). With this, it can be inferred that positive emotions and well-being are rather complementary to academic progress and are not mutually exclusive (Norrish, 2013).

For the EFL and SLA fields, Mercer and MacIntyre (2014) point out that with the 'humanistic movement' in language teaching, language learners became holistically viewed, with cognition and affect playing an equally important role in the learning process. This gave rise to SLA models that integrate both cognition and affect (Mercer & MacIntyre, 2014). Many authors support this idea of a 'holistic learner' (Chafouleas & Iovino, 2021; Ryan & Liu, 2022; Schiavon et al., 2020; Shao et al., 2020). For instance, to ensure the healthy development of students, educators need to place the students at the center of attention and aim to develop their well-being and academic potential (Chafouleas & Iovino, 2021; Schiavon et al., 2020). Similarly, Ryan and Liu (2022) emphasized that language teaching should provide more than just language abilities.

In brief, emotional and psychological well-being plays a vital role in the students' lives and learning journeys. It helps students safely develop and discover themselves during this adolescent transitional phase. Furthermore, being resilient and equipped with coping strategies is

essential in a world full of problems. What is more, they perfectly align with their learning needs. Thus, focusing on PP as a tool in education to enhance well-being is highly relevant.

2.4.2 How to Apply Positive Psychology in Language Teaching

There is a wealth of activities and suggestions on incorporating PP in education to ‘teach’ or promote well-being. However, an important distinction should be made between explicit and implicit well-being teaching (Au & Kennedy, 2018). The first is when PP and well-being teaching have a dedicated curriculum and are explicitly taught to the students. In contrast, the latter is about incorporating or hiding the activities in the curriculum of different subjects and outside-of-class activities. Helgesen (2016) suggested and described 11 positive PPI activities (see Table 1 for some examples) to use in the language teaching classroom. In addition, he presented how they can be adjusted to different levels and linked to the target language points and topics. Fresacher (2016) also outlined a range of PPIs that language teachers can use with their students (see Table 1 for some examples).

Table 1

Sample PPI Activities for the Language Classroom (Fresacher, 2016; Helgesen, 2016)

Activity	Target Language Practiced or Goal
Gratitude: remembering good things	Past and present tenses
Acts of kindness: giving compliments	Complimenting, reported speech
Health and habits	Likes and dislikes, modal auxiliary
How to deal with stress	Habits, tenses (present, past)
Three good things	Past and present tenses
Character strengths	Exploring and using strengths

Active constructive dialogs	Communicating, active listening
Meditation	Visualizing, describing
Positive portfolios	Keeping track of personal life and connecting it to the classroom

The example activities above tackle emotional intelligence, character strengths, gratitude, and healthy relationships. All of which are markers of well-being (according to PERMA and EMPATHICS models). At the same time, language learning, such as grammar and vocabulary practice, was incorporated into the activities.

Gush and Greeff (2018) developed a coursebook for Afrikaans as a second language course based on the PERMA model, VIA character strengths (see Appendix A), and other psychology theoretical frameworks. Although this coursebook is not developed for the English language, it offers a perfect example of the process and product of creating a language course based on PP. Here is a summary of the textbook development process, in chronological order:

- research the public and private schools' curriculum and examination guidelines,
- research and collect appropriate PPI activities,
- collect relevant texts and sources and identify grammar points to include,
- set a theme for each chapter based on one or more of the VIA character strengths,
- allocate a positive emotion and one of the PERMA constructs to each chapter, and
- assign each chapter a couple of the PPI activities.

See Appendix B for a picture of the initial topic-based scope and sequence.

To sum up, promoting positive emotions enhances the students' well-being and, thus, learning and classroom experience. Positive emotions have the power to broaden the students'

cognitive capacities and affect, both essential for language learning. Language teachers can easily use PPI activities such as those mentioned above. Also, they are flexible enough to provide a range of alterations that makes them possible to utilize with different levels, ages, and lesson topics. It is the perfect example of hitting two targets with one arrow.

2.5 Positive Education: Empirical Research

Because of its potential benefits and high relevance to education, PP became a very compelling area of research not only in education in general but also in SLA and EFL.

Amalgamating educational and PP goals by using interventions in the classroom can help increase students' well-being and academic performance (Gregersen, 2022; Waters, 2011).

Numerous studies, which aimed to test the efficacy of the previous goal, show positive effects of using PPIs as explicit and implicit activities (Au & Kennedy, 2018; Gregersen, 2016; Platt et al., 2020; Shoshani et al., 2016).

2.5.1 Positive Education Interventions in the Classroom

One of the longitudinal studies that tested positive education interventions in a whole-school context was the Maytiv school program (Shoshani et al., 2016). The program's goal was to increase the adolescent students' well-being, social skills, emotional intelligence, peer relations, personal and academic fulfillment, and happiness. Results revealed that the intervention group experienced improved subjective well-being, positive emotions, peer relations, school engagement, and achievement, in contrast to the control group, which experienced no increase or, in some cases, even a decrease (Shoshani et al., 2016). Similar to the Maytiv program, this study aims to enhance learners' well-being and learning experiences.

By the same token, Au and Kennedy (2018) aimed to test the effectiveness of an intervention embedded into the curriculum of different subjects, such as history and language

classes, and in various extracurricular activities. The program adopted the PERMA model and focused on the following variables: character strengths, emotions, engagement, accomplishment, purpose, relationships, and health. Findings based on the focus group discussions and surveys suggest that the whole programs and the activities were effective and beneficial.

Can short-term intervention programs with teens in the school context be effective?

Evidence has shown that even over six weeks, students still experience improvement in well-being, grit, and hope (Platt et al., 2020). Meanwhile, not all studies report strong positive results, with some finding no significant influence of the intervention on outcomes such as well-being, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, and social behavior (Goldberg et al., 2021).

A major area that attracted widespread attention was character strength training. Different reviews found that promoting character strengths positively affects students' emotions and cognitive abilities, such as learning enjoyment and academic confidence (Schiavon et al., 2020; Waters, 2011). Furthermore, exploring and using one's strengths increases self-esteem and autonomous learning (Macaskill & Denovan, 2013). For language learning, this can be of great use to students for self-regulation, which is necessary for language learning. Cultivating character strengths can even support students outside the classroom by increasing their satisfaction with life, an essential element of well-being (Duan et al., 2014; Proctor et al., 2014).

The exploration of positive and negative affect was the focus of Laakso et al.'s (2021) research. Over one school year and with a group of 140 students, Laakso et al. (2021) found that students in the experimental group experienced an increase in positive affect, compared to a slight decrease in the control group. In addition, 78% of the participants found it beneficial in relationships and understanding themselves. Eryilmaz (2015) also found similar results, along with higher engagement and subjective well-being. In language learning, lowering the affective

filter is vital for being open to receiving input (Krashen, 1985). Encouraging positive emotions is an effective way to lower the affective filter.

Another area that researchers and educators sought to explore was the effect of positive education on mental health symptoms, such as depression, anxiety, and well-being. Different studies found an increase in optimism, self-esteem, and self-efficacy (Shoshani & Steinmetz, 2014; Halliday et al., 2020). Although not all studies reported a significant decrease in mental illness factors, they did find that in intervention groups, there was no increase in the symptoms; however, in the control groups, rates of anxiety and depression showed an upward trend (Zhao et al., 2019; Halliday et al., 2020). This indicates that positive education programs have this preventive or protective effect, which shields students against additional stress created by the classroom environment (Zhao et al., 2019).

Besides reporting on how positive education impacts students' academic performance and well-being, researchers became more interested in finding how students in schools with a positive education system view success and well-being. Students who had experience with positive education viewed well-being in a deeper and more detailed manner, broadening their understanding from solely focusing on physical well-being to including emotional and mental well-being. (Waters & Higgins, 2022). It was also found that both students in positive and traditional schools associate success with happiness (Trask-Kerr et al., 2019). However, students studying in schools that provide positive education gave more importance to personal achievements and self-actualization than wealth (Gill et al., 2021; Trask-Kerr et al., 2019; Waters & Higgins, 2022). In addition, students valued internal appraisal, self-satisfaction, and self-kindness over being extrinsically oriented (Gill et al., 2021, Waters & Higgins, 2022). Some patterns of focus on individualism rather than collectivism were discerned in Trask-Kerr et al.'s

(2019) study. This individualism issue was raised by Allison et al. (2020), arguing that positive education focuses on promoting individual rather than collective flourishing. Yet, in terms of the students' voice, other studies discovered that students highly value relationships, an inseparable part of their well-being during the adolescence phase (Gill et al., 2021; Halliday et al., 2019; Waters & Higgins, 2022).

2.5.2 Positive Education Interventions in EFL and SLA

Spurred by PP, there has been a movement in research on language learning: instead of a sole focus on cognition, there is increased integration of emotions as well (Dewaele et al., 2019). This movement helps better account for the interrelation of emotions and cognition in SLA theories (Diert-Boté, 2022). Literature on PP in the language learning classroom employs various interventions, such as strategy training, gratitude, character strength exploration, development of emotional intelligence, grit, self-regulation, use of music, physical exercise, and pets.

Before delving into the findings of PPI studies, here is a review related to emotions language learners experience in the classroom and their effects on learning. For a more holistic view of language learners, researchers need to consider more than just language anxiety and integrate other emotions (Diert-Boté, 2022). Enjoyment has gained increased attention from researchers for its perks (Dewaele, 2022). Higher foreign language enjoyment has been linked to higher achievements, which provides evidence for the broaden-and-build theory (Li, 2020; Li & Wei, 2022). Interestingly, Li and Wei (2022) did not find a correlation between enjoyment and anxiety, which indicates that emotions are multidimensional and that positive and negative emotions are not polar opposites.

In language classrooms, especially ones that follow the communicative approach, oral communication is essential for developing communicative abilities. Research shows the

significance of emotions and their influence on the students' willingness to communicate (Alrabai, 2022). Alrabai (2022) uncovered that motivation followed by anxiety were the two most influential emotions on students' willingness to communicate.

When talking about emotions and enjoyment, it is essential to hear the students' voices on what they consider enjoyable and essential. Research shows that students think a positive classroom environment and well-designed interactive activities are crucial (Diert-Boté, 2022; Su, 2022). In addition, teacher-related factors, naturally, did affect their enjoyment levels (Diert-Boté, 2022; Su, 2022). As for anxiety in the classroom, they were mainly related to self-factors (Su, 2022). This suggests that to undo the lingering effects of negative emotions and affect, teachers need to boost the students' self-factors, which is what positive education is all about.

Li and Xu (2019) were interested in investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and emotions experienced in the English language classroom. With a group of 1,718 high school students from China, a mixed methods design with a pre-test, intervention, post-test, and interviews was used (over six weeks). Results revealed that trait emotional intelligence was positively related to language enjoyment in the classroom and negatively associated with language anxiety, proving its importance and relevance to language learning (Li & Xu, 2019). For instance, students in the intervention group experienced (1) an increase in emotional intelligence, (2) an increase in language learning enjoyment, and (3) a decrease in language anxiety. In addition, student interviews revealed that students did benefit from the training. Other studies corroborate the finding of higher emotional intelligence and lower foreign language anxiety (Dewaele et al., 2008; Li, 2020). In addition, Li (2020) found that a higher trait emotional intelligence was associated with higher achievement, providing evidence of its influence on learning outcomes.

Cultivating gratitude using interventions in the classroom has increased in popularity. Different studies show a positive correlation between using gratitude activities in the classroom and improving subjective well-being and flourishing (Gregersen, 2016). Abdolrezapour and Ghanbari (2021) sought to investigate how different PPIs, such as gratitude, can improve students' listening skills. Besides enhancing the students' listening comprehension, they found that gratitude exercises improved students' coping strategies, hope, and social and interpersonal relationships.

The usage of empathy activities became of high relevance to language learning. For Mercer (2016), learning a language is a sharing and relationship-creating process through communication; therefore, empathy, which improves interpersonal relationships, is essential. Abdolrezapour and Ghanbari (2021) observations revealed that empathy activities enhanced cooperation among the students, social relationships, and positive emotions. Furthermore, students' reports show that they were interested in and enjoyed considering others' feelings and well-being.

Another compelling area for researchers was the relationship between positive education and different language skills (such as reading and listening). Researchers reported various gains from blending PP elements and reading (Hui et al., 2020; Leung et al., 2019; Piasecka, 2016). PPIs were proven to help readers by improving their self-efficacy (which impacts self-confidence and reading strategies), activating their character strengths (which affects achievement and well-being) (Leung et al., 2019; Piasecka, 2016), and improving their verbal creativity and syntax (Hui et al., 2020).

Students need a set of skills and abilities to succeed in their language learning journey. One of these skills is 'grit'. To investigate if there is a relation between grit, language

performance, enjoyment, and classroom environment, Wei et al. (2019) collected data from 832 teenage students from China using surveys. Results indicated a positive relationship between grit and language performance and enjoyment, mediated by having a positive classroom environment. Thus, they concluded that improving grit and positive emotions is essential for language learning (Wei et al., 2019).

Another skill necessary for language learners is having a high level of self-regulation. Researchers wanted to investigate how PPI can aid language learners with self-regulation and goal setting. Results were affirmative, showing positive effects on the learners' self-awareness and, thus, goal setting and self-regulation (Noori and Ashrafganjoe, 2018) and metacognitive control, satiation, and commitment (Kossakowska-Pisarek, 2016).

Gregersen (2016) found that using PPIs (such as music, gratitude, altruism, pet, exercise, and laughter) with adult learners increased their subjective well-being and improved their L2 learning experiences. Physical activity and laughter were the most effective, and altruism was the least. However, although students reported enjoyment and improvement after the interventions, there was still some suspicion related to the connection between the intervention and language learning (Gregersen, 2016). Skepticism from the learners does not necessarily refute the effectiveness of the intervention. This doubt can be explained by the fact that students were unfamiliar with such activities and, thus, found it hard to see the link to language learning.

Based on the preceding theoretical and empirical research results, the usage of PPI activities in the language classroom offers a wide array of personal, social, and educational benefits to the students and teachers. Incorporating such activities in the Armenian public EFL classroom should be explored to take advantage of their benefits.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This study is action research that explores the effects of positive psychology on EFL students in an Armenian public classroom setting. Specifically, it aims to improve and understand how positive psychology interventions can impact EFL students' well-being and learning experiences in the language classroom. In addition, it seeks to uncover the students' and teacher's attitudes towards the activities. This chapter first describes the setting, the participants of the study, and the instruments, then the data collection and analysis procedures. In addition, it represents in detail the overall process of the activities and discusses the ethical considerations that guided the study.

3.1 Research Design and Questions

Action research is a form of investigation that aims to bring positive change and improvement where research is conducted (Burns, 2015). It generates knowledge that contributes to the development and growth of practice and theory (Burns, 2015). This study takes a mixed methods action research approach (MMAR), in which both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to address the research questions. In general, mixed methods research uses both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis to draw conclusions (Creswell & Clark, 2017). By combining action research and mixed methods approaches, researchers secure a set of advantages, such as enhanced engagement of the research participants, meticulous evaluation of the problem, and rigorous and coherent conclusions (Ivankova and Wingo, 2018). Consequently, this design was chosen because it provides a more profound and fuller picture of the research problem, consolidates the data collected from both the qualitative and quantitative, enhances the results and understanding, and harnesses the strengths and offsets the weaknesses of the separate designs (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

Within the MMAR approach, this study uses the intervention design, which is an intervention or experiment with a qualitative strand (Meixner & Hathcoat, 2019). In terms of the flow of data collection, it starts with a qual strand, followed by concurrent QUAN and QUAL strands (qual \Rightarrow QUAN + QUAL). This data and methodological triangulation contribute to the validity and credibility of the research.

This study was guided by two research questions:

RQ1. To what extent can positive psychology interventions implemented in an EFL classroom impact students' well-being?

RQ2. What are the students' and teacher's perceptions and attitudes towards positive psychology activities for language?

3.2 Setting and Participants

The research was conducted in an EFL classroom in a public school in Yerevan, Armenia. Participants were recruited using convenience sampling based on the teacher's availability and willingness to participate in the research (Dornyei, 2007). The participants were 20 students (12 girls and eight boys) and their English teacher. The students, aged 14 to 16, were in their ninth year of schooling. Their English language proficiency level varied from elementary to intermediate. The teacher had a linguistics background. The native language of all the participants was Armenian. The students and the teacher met for the English classes three times a week for 45 minutes. The teacher initially agreed to conduct the activities. However, she later refused, and the researcher was the one to lead the activities. As for the students, they needed to follow and do the designed activities, which will be elaborated on in the following section.

Along with the research participants, the researcher also played a role as a participant. First of all, the researcher was the one to administer the activities in the classroom. Moreover,

the researcher kept classroom observation notes during the implementation of the activities. In qualitative research, it has been argued that it is inaccurate and of limited benefit to draw a strict dichotomy between researchers and research participants, as there is an inherent relationship between the two (Probst, 2016). Thus, the observations made by the researcher were of high value and relevance to the results and their interpretation.

3.3 Intervention Activities and Overall Procedure

Based on Oxford's (2016a, 2016b) EMPATHICS model, a 12-session plan that includes PPI activities was created to improve the students' well-being and language abilities. Oxford, a researcher in language learning and psychology, developed this model specifically for the well-being of language learners. It includes nine well-being dimensions with their subthemes, which interact dynamically to help language learners improve their well-being and make the most out of their learning experiences (Oxford, 2016a). In general, well-being teaching can be implemented in two main ways: as a separate subject in the school curriculum or as embedded activities in the curriculum of other subjects (Au & Kennedy, 2018). The latter form was used for this study, also referred to as implicit well-being teaching. In addition to the well-being dimensions, specific target language and language skills were incorporated into the plan, such as vocabulary related to character strengths, speaking practice, etc.

The PPIs included activities that target the following themes: character strengths, emotional intelligence, empathy, and gratitude. Primarily, these four themes were chosen based on their efficacy in the language classroom. Character strengths training involves helping students identify their strengths and plan how to use them in their daily lives (see Appendix C for examples). Character strengths training has been found to improve well-being (Shoshani et al., 2016), satisfaction with life (Duan et al., 2014; Proctor et al., 2014), and cognitive and emotional

behavior (Schivan et al., 2020). The second theme is emotional intelligence (see Appendix D for examples), defined as the awareness, understanding, and management of one's own and others' emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It helps increase resilience for language learners, which is essential for the ability to cope with ups and downs in the language learning journey (Oxford, 2016a). Emotional intelligence was linked to lowering levels of foreign language anxiety (Dewaele et al., 2008; Dewaele, 2013, as cited in Oxford, 2016). Third, empathy is the capacity to perceive and feel emotions and concern for other peoples' needs (Oxford, 2016a) (see Appendix E for examples). Empathy can help improve relationships in the classroom (Abdolrezapour & Ghanbari, 2021), which leads to a more positive classroom environment and, thus, better learning experiences. Finally, gratitude is the virtue of being thankful for life experiences and hopeful for the future (see Appendix F for examples). It is essential for cultivating positive emotions and outlook on life. Besides their previously mentioned promising effects, the four chosen well-being themes were also flexible enough to use and adapt to the students' needs and proficiency levels.

The process went as follows:

- the researcher conducted the activities, and the teacher acted as a co-teacher and actively contributed to the process,
- the activities were administered at the beginning of the class and lasted for around 15-20 minutes,
- after the activities, the teacher continued with the usual class (based on their textbook),
- the researcher continued the rest of the class as an observer.

The process extended over a period of 12 sessions, which started on the 2nd of February 2022 and ended on the 14th of March 2022. Due to a surge in Covid-19 cases in Armenia at the beginning

of February, the first three sessions were conducted online using Zoom. The remaining nine sessions were conducted face-to-face.

3.4 Instruments

As a mixed methods research, a range of qualitative and quantitative instruments was used to collect data:

- Pre-study needs analysis: informal teacher interview and a classroom observation
- Pre-study student survey
- Post-study student survey
- Student reflection
- Student focus group discussion
- Teacher questionnaire
- Classroom observations

3.4.1 Pre-study Needs Analysis

Before starting the research, an informal needs analysis was conducted by interviewing the teacher, observing the classroom, and having a classroom discussion with the students. To create a suitable plan, the researcher interviewed the teacher to better understand the level of the students and their needs. The teacher shared that the students' level is elementary and that she would like to work on their speaking skills. In addition, the teacher said that she had never heard of PP and its usage in the classroom, yet, she was excited to try it out.

The researcher also observed the classroom before the start of the study to get a better sense of the students' proficiency level and understand the classroom dynamics. In addition, two speaking activities were conducted to get to know the students and their personal and educational needs. This session revealed a huge variation in the students' levels, which ranged from beginner

to intermediate. In terms of the students' needs, almost all of them wanted to improve their speaking skills, listening skills, and pronunciation.

3.4.2 Pre-Study and Post-Study Surveys

Two surveys were used to measure some aspects of the students' well-being: the WHO-Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5) and the Gratitude Questionnaire – Six Item Form (GQ-6) (see Appendix G).

The WHO-5 is a 5-item index that measures subjective well-being. It can be used with children nine and above. It has been proven to be adequate as a measure of generic well-being and a screening tool for depression (Topp et al., 2015). Wu (2014) tested the reliability and validity of WHO-5 and found that it has high content, construct, and criterion-related validity and reliability. Platt et al. (2020) reported a WHO-5 Cronbach's α of 0.84. The survey was translated into Armenian by a native Armenian speaker for this study. Then, it was checked for accuracy and appropriateness by another professional translator. The reliability of this Armenian version of the WHO-5 was measured, and Cronbach's α is 0.753. The GQ-6 is a 6-item self-reported index that measures an individual's experience of gratitude, with Cronbach's α ranging from 0.76 to 0.84 (Macaskill & Denovan, 2013). This questionnaire was also translated into Armenian and checked for accuracy by two different translators. The reliability coefficient was calculated for GQ-6, and Cronbach's α is 0.721. In general, a Cronbach alpha of 0.7 or more is considered sufficient evidence for internal consistency (Phakiti, 2015; Wagner, 2015). Thus, it was concluded that the Armenian versions of the surveys are reliable.

Both surveys (WHO-5 and GQ-6) were administered twice, before the PPI activities' start and after their completion. These surveys aimed to measure changes (if any) in the students' well-being after doing the PPIs for six weeks.

3.4.3 Student Reflection

At the end of the study, all students were given a set of reflection (see Appendix H) questions to complete. The reflection prompts were written in Armenian and English to ensure that the students understood the questions. The purpose of this reflection was to find out more about the students' perceptions and attitudes toward the PPI activities. Questions were both open-ended and closed-ended. Moreover, they were related to well-being as well as learning outcomes. Nineteen out of 20 students completed the reflection questions.

3.4.4 Focus Group Discussion

A focus-group discussion was conducted with three students at the end of the study on the 23rd of March 2022 (see Appendix I). Questions were updated according to the themes identified in the reflection responses. For this discussion, maximum variation sampling was used to hear from students with different experiences (Dornyei, 2007). The objective of this discussion was to get insights and different perspectives from students.

3.4.5 Teacher Questionnaire

At the end of the study, the teacher answered a questionnaire on the 1st of April, 2022 (see Appendix J). Some of the identified themes from the reflection and focus group discussion were included in the questionnaire. Questions were both open-ended and closed-ended. This questionnaire aimed to uncover the teacher's opinions and attitudes toward the PPI activities.

3.4.6 Classroom Observations

As a participant in the study, the researcher took notes of the students' performance, engagement, and comments during the implementation of the PPI activities. Notes were taken for all the 12 sessions separately to minimize confusion and mistakes.

3.5 Data Collection

For the needs analysis before the start of the study, the teacher was interviewed face-to-face. Also, the class was observed, and a classroom discussion was implemented in the form of two speaking activities. Based on these results, an intervention plan and activities were created.

On the first day of the activities, the students answered the pre-study survey. This survey was conducted online via zoom, as the school was closed due to an increase in Coronavirus cases. The activities continued for 12 sessions, and observation notes were taken. Although the activity plan was already created, changes were constantly made to the activities throughout the sessions based on observations.

The students answered the post-study survey on the last day of the activities. It was conducted face-to-face and lasted 10-15 minutes. A great attempt was made to ensure that students answered the questions independently, without any peer influence. Then during the next class, the students wrote their reflections. Clear instructions were given before distributing the reflection prompt. In addition, any questions raised by the students were addressed and explained. Based on the reflection, several themes were identified.

The students participated in a focus group discussion one week after the reflection. Although the focus group discussion questions were already created, the themes identified in the reflection reshaped the questions. The discussion was conducted online via Zoom with three students and lasted for around 30 minutes. Subsequently, additional themes were identified.

Finally, at the end of the process, the teacher answered a questionnaire on the 1st of April, 2022. The questionnaire was created and distributed online.

3.6 Data Analysis

As a mixed methods research, quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze data. The WHO-5 and GR-6 questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS, statistical analysis software, and excel for descriptive statistics. For the accuracy of the survey translations, inter-rater reliability was ensured by having two different translators translate the surveys. The reliability of the translated surveys was measured using Cronbach α . Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to analyze the pre and post-survey results. Wilcoxon signed-rank test is appropriate for analyzing pre and post-tests for one group with a small sample size. In addition to this statistical test, descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, were computed for both survey results.

Data from the students' reflections were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative means. Close-ended questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as percentages. For open-ended questions, thematic data analysis was used. Thematic analysis is a flexible and versatile form of qualitative data analysis, which is appropriate to use for understanding the experiences and perceptions of different participants (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). First, responses were coded. Then, similar patterns were identified and divided into themes. Finally, the themes were reviewed and named appropriately. For the data from the focus group discussion and teacher questionnaire, the same process was used.

For this study, the data analysis process was iterative, which increased the dependability of the results. In addition, this methodological triangulation promotes the validity of the results and conclusions.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This study conformed to a set of ethical considerations. The school principal approved conducting the study in one of the EFL classrooms. The teacher was provided with a full explanation of the purpose of the study and gave consent to participate. An official letter from the university explaining in writing the aim and process of research was also provided. The privacy of all the participants was protected throughout the study, and their identities were kept confidential. Finally, the classroom and teachers' time were always taken into account.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The goal of this study is to determine the impact of positive psychology activities on EFL learners' well-being and language learning experiences. In addition, it seeks to unpack the students' and teacher's attitudes toward the activities as a learning and well-being instrument in the language classroom. Based on the data collected from the research instruments, this chapter reports on the answers to the research questions. The analysis is based on student surveys, student reflections, focus group discussion, and teacher questionnaire.

Changes in the pre and post-intervention surveys, which answers the first research question, are presented in the first subchapter. In addition, these quantitative results are integrated with qualitative data from the students' reflections. The second subchapter answers the second research question by presenting the students' and teacher's perceptions and attitudes toward the activities.

4.1 Changes in Well-Being

Well-being was measured using two surveys: the WHO-Five Well-Being Index (WHO-5) and the Gratitude Questionnaire – Six Item Form (GQ-6). For the WHO-5 survey, scores of less than 50 indicate poor well-being, and scores less than 28 indicate the probable presence of depressive symptoms (Omani-Samani et al., 2019, Topp et al., 2015). The pre and post-intervention scores of the 20 students are presented in Table 2. Before the intervention, seven students scored less than 50, with three students scoring exactly 28. After the intervention, six students had scores below 50, and none had 28 or less. This suggests that the activities may have contributed to improving the low-scoring students' well-being.

Table 2

WHO-5 and GR-6 Pre and Post Intervention Scores

Student	WHO-5 Pre-score	WHO-5 Post-score	GR-6 Pre-score	GR-6 Post-score
1	68	80	17	20
2	52	36	13	9
3	36	56	9	14
4	56	76	14	19
5	28	44	7	11
6	36	56	9	14
7	68	80	17	20
8	28	40	7	10
9	32	32	8	8
10	68	80	17	20
11	64	76	16	19
12	68	80	17	20
13	72	72	18	18
14	84	72	21	18
15	44	64	11	16
16	88	80	22	20
17	28	32	7	8
18	60	48	15	12
19	76	80	19	20
20	68	60	17	15

To analyze the scores of the two surveys, SPSS (a statistical software) was used. Descriptive statistics, such as the means and standard deviations, were computed to compare the pre and post-intervention scores. As demonstrated by the summary of the results in Table 3, the mean of the post-intervention scores of the WHO-5 survey was higher than the mean of the pre-intervention scores ($62.2 > 56.2$). For the GR-6 survey, the post-intervention mean was also higher ($27.9 > 26$). Thus, indicating an improvement in the overall students' well-being and gratitude. In addition to the mean, there were interesting observations in the minimum and maximum scores of the surveys. For the GR-6 survey, the minimum and maximum scores did not change. However, for the WHO-5 survey, the minimum score increased, but the maximum score decreased. This may be explained by the fact that students took this survey right after returning from their winter break, which could have been a more favorable period for them.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics

Survey	Time	N	Mean	StDev	Min	Max
WHO-5	Pre-intervention	20	56.2	19.4	28	88
	Post-intervention	20	62.2	17.9	32	80
GR-6	Pre-intervention	20	26.0	6.54	15	36
	Post-intervention	20	27.9	6.28	15	36

To find out whether these improvements were statistically significant, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used. Wilcoxon test is a nonparametric test that can be used when the assumption of normality is not present to compare two sets of data from the same participants

(McCrum-Gardner, 2008). Based on the test statistics for the WHO-5 survey (Table 5), it can be inferred that the difference between the pre and post-intervention scores is statistically significant (p-value $0.034 < 0.05$). However, the test statistics for the GR-6 (Table 7) revealed that the difference between the pre and post-intervention scores is not statistically significant (p-value $0.078 > 0.05$). This statistical insignificance is predictable when the duration of the study is short. However, the improvement in the mean suggests a potential for further improvements in the long run.

Table 4

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for WHO-5

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Post-score – pre-score	Negative Ranks	5 ^a	7.50	37.50
	Positive Ranks	13 ^b	10.27	133.50
	Ties	2 ^c		
	Total	20		

a. Post-score < Pre- score
b. Post- score > Pre- score
c. Post- score = Pre- score

Table 5

Test Statistics^a (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for WHO-5)

Post-score – pre-score	
Z	-2.115 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.034

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks

Table 6

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for GR-6

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Post-score – pre-score	Negative Ranks	5 ^a	6.80	34.00
	Positive Ranks	11 ^b	9.27	102.00
	Ties	4 ^c		
	Total	20		

a. Post-score < Pre- score
b. Post- score > Pre- score
c. Post- score = Pre- score

Table 7

Test Statistics^a (Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test for GR-6)

Post-score – pre-score	
Z	-1.762 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.078

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks

The WHO-5 and GR-6 survey results indicated improvements in students' well-being and gratitude based on mean calculations. However, although the improvement in well-being was statistically significant, the improvement in gratitude was not. To understand whether students attribute any progress in their well-being to the PPIs, they were asked to share whether they think the activities helped improve their well-being or not. Sixty-three % of the students (12 out of 19 students) shared that they believe the activities helped them achieve a more positive state of mind. This suggests that besides the quantitative improvement in their well-being, students realize the effect of the activities on their emotional state and believe that participating in these activities was helpful.

4.2 Students' and Teacher's Perceptions

Data from the student reflections, focus group discussion, and the teacher questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to learn more about their perceptions and attitudes towards the PPIs as language learning and well-being promoting tools.

4.2.1 Causes of Stress in the Classroom

Students spend most of their time at school. Thus, it is crucial to understand the causes of stress in the classroom to try and remediate these hindrances. Interestingly, students mentioned that factors related to their personal lives, family, and friends were the primary cause of stress in school. In addition, one of the students said that health problems related to themselves or a close family member were another cause of anxiety. Most other students also agreed. Besides these personal factors, school-related factors such as exams, not doing the homework, and not knowing the answers to questions were other stressors that affect the students' mood and experiences in the classroom. Yet, they came as secondary to the personal life factors. This shows that personal life challenges carry into the school, and it is one of the significant causes of stress in the classroom.

4.2.2 General Perceptions of the PPI Activities

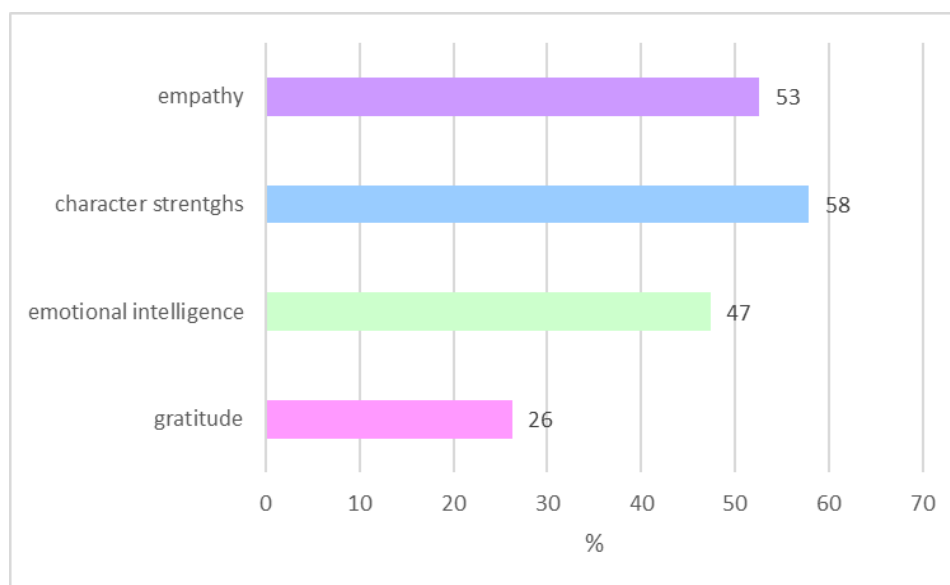
To find out if they enjoyed the PPI activities and understood the difference between these activities and their regular language tasks, students were asked to reflect on their experience. Based on the findings, all the students agreed that the activities were enjoyable, fun, and interesting. The teacher also found the activities interesting and modern, altering how she thought about language tasks. In addition, during the implementation of the activities, it was observed that students were actively engaged. This observation indicates that the students did find the PPIs exciting and enjoyable.

Another recurring theme in the students' responses was how the activities helped, to some extent, make the classroom environment more positive. For example, one student mentioned that s/he "liked the atmosphere in the classroom." The teacher also supported this notion of an increased positive atmosphere in the classroom, as she found that the students have become friendlier.

Students were asked to what extent were the activities challenging. Only one student reported that s/he found the activities difficult and unclear, while the rest felt that they were appropriately challenging. Likewise, the teacher also considers the activities appropriate and effective for all students. This was particularly surprising as it was not directly consistent with data from the observations, which showed that students with lower proficiency levels struggled, to some extent, with the activities. This suggests that although the activities were challenging to some students, they still found them useful and perceived their language and personal development benefits.

The PPIs were based on the four following well-being dimensions: gratitude, character strengths, emotional intelligence, and empathy. According to the findings, character strengths activities were the students' favorite, and gratitude activities were the least favorite (Figure 1). However, it is worth noting that all the three dimensions, except gratitude, had close percentages.

Figure 1

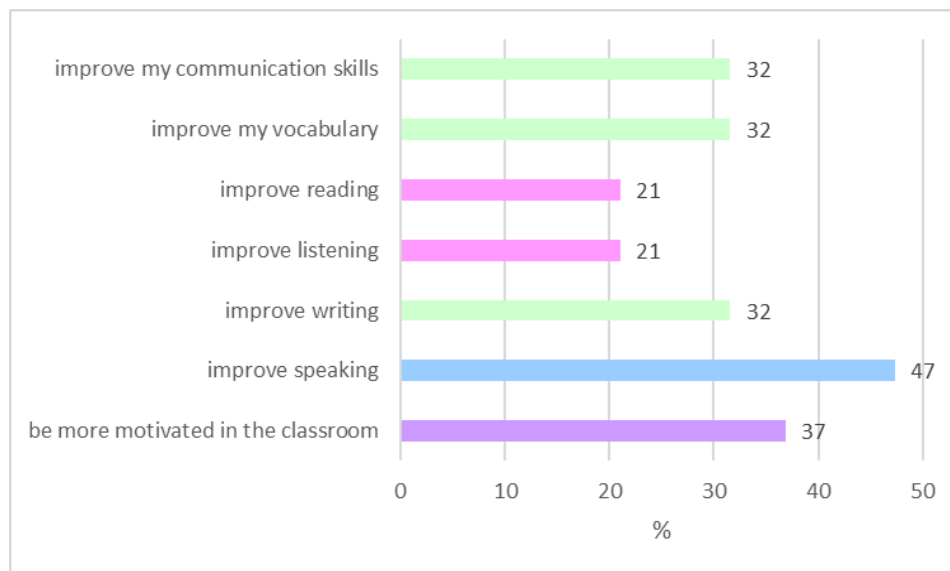
Favorite Activities**4.2.3 How the PPI Activities Affect Learning**

To find out more about their experiences with the PPI activities for language improvement, the participants were asked to choose in what areas the activities were helpful for language learning. Based on the students' (Figure 2) and teacher's responses, the activities helped improve their speaking skills the most. The teacher also added that the activities do not take away from learning or waste classroom time. On the contrary, she found that the activities helped increase the students' motivation and likelihood to engage in a speaking activity. This opinion of increased motivation was also mentioned and supported by the students. In addition, students also noted improvements in their communication, vocabulary, and writing skills. One student said that "I started to understand English better." Based on the observations, it was evident that shy students became more willing and motivated to speak by the end of the study.

However, during the observations, a student questioned how these activities could help language learning.

Figure 2

How the Activities Helped Learning



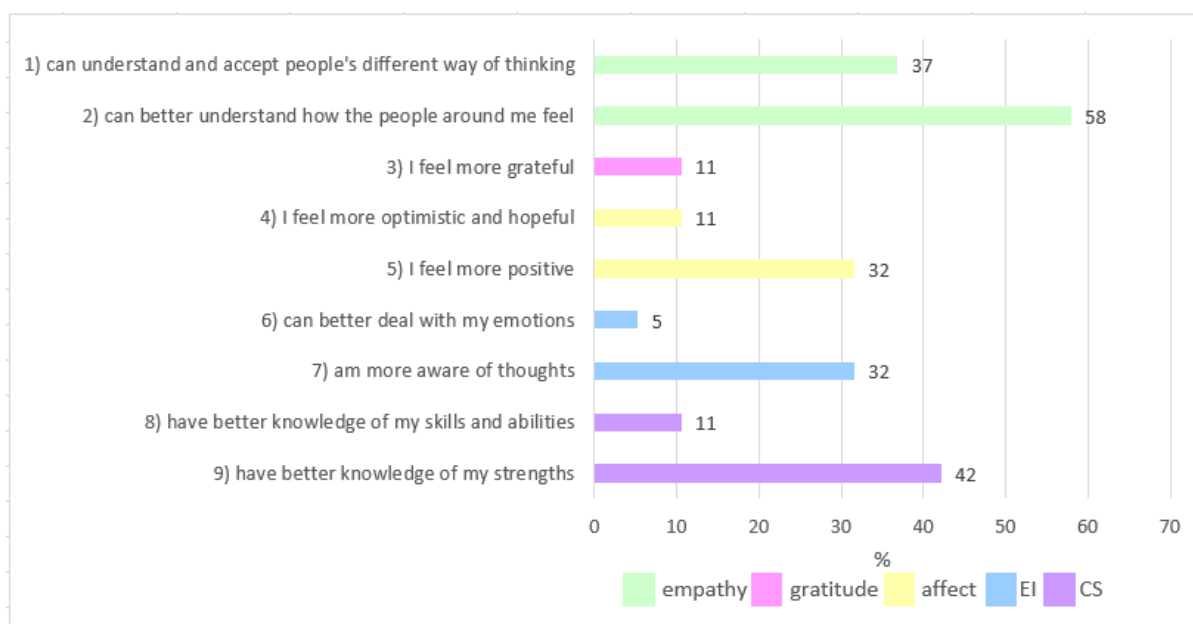
Based on the needs analysis conducted before the start of the study, the vast majority of the students said that they would like to improve their speaking skills. Thus, as it was their primary goal, it made sense to try and understand when students are more likely to speak or engage in a speaking activity in the language classroom. The options included affect, abilities, and teacher-related options. The results indicated that factors such as feeling confident and being in a positive state were just as important as knowledge of the topic or knowing the correct answer.

4.2.4 How the PPI Activities Affect Well-Being Dimensions

To understand how the intervention activities impacted their well-being, students were asked to choose what changed after the 12 sessions of PPIs. As shown in Figure 3, empathy (factors 1 and 2) and character strengths (factor 9) were areas where students perceived the most improvements. It is important to note that factors 1 and 2 can be categorized as both empathy and social competence factors of emotional intelligence. The following two areas with the highest gains were increased thought awareness (emotional intelligence) and positive feelings (affect) (factors 5 and 7). However, students did not perceive as much improvement in areas such as feeling more grateful and optimistic and can better deal with emotions (factors 3, 4, and 6). Compared to empathy, which is about being open and receptive to others' needs and feelings, these factors require students to look inside and be honest with themselves, which was more challenging.

Figure 3

How Activities Impacted Well-Being Dimensions



Students' gave different remarks in the reflections and focus group discussion on how they found the activities helpful. Initially, the expected responses were presumed to focus primarily on personal accomplishment. Interestingly, their responses were equally divided into individual as well as peer-related factors (see Table 8 for some examples). This suggests that the activities may have promoted not just looking inside but also looking outward and being more aware of others and their needs. Some students mentioned that they liked how they learned what others thought of them. At first glance, this may appear to be a negative outcome. However, in reality, it meant a different thing. For example, one student mentioned that she has always thought of herself as a lazy person. But, during one of the activities, her classmates said that she is a hard worker. Thus, what others thought of her was better than how she pictured herself, and there were other similar cases. This indicates that students were able to see each other's strengths, which helped them see themselves in a different and more positive light.

Table 8

Students' Comments on the PPI Activities

Personal	Peer related
"Helped me understand situations better"	"To understand myself and our peers"
"Interesting to understand myself"	"Helps us to know more about each other"
"Helpful to discover myself"	"Help in friendships"
"Made me more positive"	"Good to know what others think about me"
"Activities make us more comfortable in these (stressful) situations"	"Found out what my friends think of me"
"They (the activities) made us think and learn	"Learn new things about my friends"

interesting facts”

“Not only do they help me understand myself,
but also the surrounding world”

Based on the data collected from the students and teacher, the activities were perceived to have positively contributed to the students’ well-being. However, it was also essential to understand whether the students know what well-being is in general. Thirteen out of 19 students answered that they did not know what well-being meant. The remaining students gave answers such as “I think well-being is having fun”, “when you aren't overthinking and feeling positive”, “when you are in peace and balance”, and “when you do something correctly and feel good about that.” These results suggest that well-being literacy among the students is low.

4.2.5 Suggestions on how to Improve the PPI Activities

Students gave suggestions on how the activities could be changed to be more effective and relevant. Most of the students (58%) recommended dedicating more time to the activities. Furthermore, a student said that although the activities were interesting and beneficial, they are still not enough to help students change, as improvement should be in actions and not only thinking. Thus, having practical activities as a part of the school curriculum is essential. The teacher mentioned that having several versions of the same activity for students of different proficiency levels is very important.

To understand whether the PP activities are relevant to the English language classroom or not, students were asked in which subject they would like to have the activities. Fifty-three % of the students said they would like to have the activities as a part of the English language classroom, as they were relevant to their language needs. Nevertheless, 26% suggested doing the

activities in Armenian, as they would be easier, more understandable, and convenient.

Furthermore, some students suggested having them as a separate subject.

4.2.6 The Role of School

Students shared that it is crucial to learn more about themselves and know their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, they agreed that it is necessary to learn more about their classmates, as they naturally spend half of the day in school with them. When asked about the role of school in these goals, they stated that it makes sense to learn about themselves and their well-being at school. One student pointed out that it is imperative to discover themselves and skills during school years because it is the time of their growth and development. She also suggested having well-being education as a separate subject, arguing that “in school we learn about the history of other people, we learn about geography, and our world. But I guess there should be at least one subject about us.”

The students seem to realize the importance of well-being education and think there’s a need for it. As for the teacher, she also observed that having such activities as a part of the English subject is relevant. However, she did not think it was essential for language learning. When asked if she would like to include positive education activities in her teaching, she was hesitant, worrying that planning and implementing these activities might take a lot of her time. Yet, she noted that she is interested in getting positive education training. This indicates that the teacher is interested in and willing to learn more about positive education and include it in her practice.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

This study aimed to understand the effect of PP activities on EFL students' well-being and language learning experiences. Furthermore, it sought to elicit the student's and teacher's opinions on the effectiveness and relevance of the activities. To this end, in this chapter, the study's key findings are highlighted and discussed in light of previous research and theory.

To what extent can positive psychology interventions implemented in an EFL classroom impact students' well-being?

Regarding the first research question about the effect of PP activities on the students' well-being, the results demonstrate that there was a significant improvement. This suggests that even over a short period, positive PP can still be effective in improving the students' well-being. These results support Platt et al.'s (2020) findings that participation in short-term PPI programs can significantly enhance well-being. However, this present study adds to Platt et al.'s results by collecting qualitative data from the students and teachers, strengthening the results by demonstrating the participants' opinions of their experiences with the activities.

In contrast to the significant improvement in well-being, improvement in gratitude was not substantial or significant. These results could be due to the fact that students did not like the gratitude activities much, which, in turn, can be explained by the nature of gratitude activities. Gratitude activities require a deep and thought-provoking type of reflection. During the implementation of the research, it became evident that when faced with gratitude prompts, students found it hard to engage and reflect to respond thoroughly. In general, the students' answers did not show signs of thorough contemplation. Another reason for gratitude activities not being popular can be that students are not used to them in general. In contrast, students are

not new to empathy, character strengths, and emotional intelligence concepts. Students have experience, even if not conscious and direct, thinking about their strengths, emotions, and others' emotions. However, thinking of what they are thankful for and why is less common, personally and culturally.

RQ2. What are the students' and teacher's perceptions and attitudes towards positive psychology activities for language?

In response to the second research question, which aimed to uncover the teacher and students' experiences during the six weeks, the findings suggest that students do realize the benefits of PPIs and perceive a need for them. This need can be characterized as both personal and educational. These findings are in line with previous research, in which participants reported positive experiences with the activities (Au & Kennedy, 2018; Li & Xu, 2019). Additionally, the students shared that the PPIs helped them understand themselves and their relationships, which confirms Laakso et al.'s (2021) same results. The teacher also found the activities novel and effective; however, she thought implementing them in her practice would be time and energy-consuming. Nonetheless, she was interested in the idea of participating in additional positive education training. This suggests that the reluctance to incorporate the activities was not related to their ineffectiveness or time constraints. Instead, the issue appears to be the lack of knowledge or resources needed to use the activities effectively.

Another interesting finding was related to the improvement in the classroom environment reported by the students and the teacher. One possible explanation for this can be the improved peer relations and more friendly attitudes in the classroom. This enhanced peer relations and classroom environment were also present in other research (Abdolrezapour & Ghanbari, 2021; Diert-Boté, 2022; Shoshani et al., 2016). It is crucial to note relationships are important for

positive personal as well as learning experiences in the classroom. Specifically, during adolescence, students give a lot of meaning to social relationships (Gill et al., 2021; Halliday et al., 2019; Waters and Higgins, 2022). Furthermore, Wei et al. (2019) found that the classroom environment was a mediator between “grit” and “foreign language enjoyment” and “foreign language performance”. Thus, peer relations and classroom environment improvement may help improve the language learning experience.

Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that the activities may have contributed to growth in the sense of collectivism, as shown in the classroom environment and student relationship improvement. Allison et al. (2019) claimed that flourishing, or well-being, can or should occur as a collective phenomenon, suggesting that it is important to distinguish between individual from collective well-being. Yet, although this study was focused on promoting individual well-being, it seems that the EMPATHICS model, which has a factor for empathy, was enough to encourage collectivism among the students. In addition, although Allison et al.’s (2019) argument for group flourishing is valid and essential, individual well-being should not be disregarded, as it might hinder improvement in collective well-being.

In regards to learning, based on the students’, teacher’s and the research observations, the activities helped advance speaking skills and speaking motivation the most. Though, there were perceived improvements in other language areas as well. These findings may be attributed to Fredrickson’s (2001) broaden-and-build theory, which states that positive emotions are key to broadening the brain’s processing capacity, essential for successful learning experiences. Another explanation for the increased motivation to speak can be attributed to the positive classroom environment and the relevance of the topics to the students’ lives. In fact, students mentioned that what predominantly inhibits or decreases their motivation to speak in the foreign

language classroom are affective and confidence-related factors. This further supports Norrish's (2013) views on the complementarity of well-being and positive emotions to learning, highlighting its necessity in education.

Interestingly, this research offers further support on how factors that cause anxiety in the classroom are primarily personal and not school-related. Su (2022) also found that self-factors mainly caused foreign language classroom anxiety. Students do not draw a line between what is happening in their lives inside and outside of the school, viewing their lives more holistically. This implies a need to focus on enhancing the students' well-being, resilience, and coping strategies to deal with causes of stress and anxiety outside the school. In return, this will boost classroom and learning experiences.

Finally, it should be noted that well-being literacy among the students was low. This gives rise to the question of whether an individual can be 'well' or effectively engage in a well-being activity without knowing the meaning of 'well-being'. The response can only be that students cannot effectively engage in critical thinking activities without fully understanding the meaning of critical thinking. Some students suggested having a well-being course as a separate subject, arguing that they need to know themselves and how to deal with their different life situations and emotions during their school years. There is high awareness on the students' side that one ought to seek optimal development during the transitional period of adolescence (Zaky, 2017). Yet, with the argument of whether to have well-being education as a separate or merged into other subjects, one thing remains constant, the need for it in the curriculum.

5.2 Implications for Professional Practice

The results of the study have implications for professional practice. First and foremost, we need to view language students holistically, as young members of society coming to not only

learn a language but also develop their personalities and skills (Diert-Boté, 2022; Schiavon et al., 2020). Raising educators' awareness of the concept of positive education and its benefits is crucial. Additionally, teacher training on using PP activities is essential (Wang et al., 2021). This will increase the teachers' motivation, ease, and effectiveness in implementing the activities.

Curriculum designers need to consider incorporating PPIs in books and materials (Gush and Greeff, 2018). Finding suitable activities is a time-consuming and demanding process. Having the activities naturally integrated into the foreign language (or any subject) curriculum will save the teachers' time and reduce their reluctance to use the activities. In addition, having professional psychologists and curriculum designers collaborate on designing activities suitable for the students' ages and proficiency levels is more productive and proper.

Regarding students, they need to fully comprehend the concept of 'well-being' and the reason behind such activities. With this clarification, the efficacy of the activities would increase. In addition, students would feel more responsible for their well-being and success.

Besides student well-being, the critical issue of teacher mental and emotional well-being should also be taken into consideration. Plus, for a teacher to effectively teach or pass on knowledge related to well-being strategies and training, s/he needs to have experience with the process as well. That way, it will be a more efficient and integrative process that extends to incorporate teachers, students, and ideally the whole school eco-system.

5.3 Limitations and delimitations

There are, of course, a number of limitations to the study. For example, the duration of this research extended over a period of six weeks, which could have benefitted from an increase. This limited time restricted the variety and depth of data collected and, thus, the validity of the

research. Another limitation was the number of participants. With a small sample size, the results of this study cannot be generalized.

As for the delimitations that set this study's scope, they include the context in which the research was conducted, a public school in Yerevan, and the age of the participants, who were teenagers.

5.4 Recommendations

Further research on this topic could benefit from testing the effects of PPIs on Armenian EFL students over a more extended period and with larger sample size. Another interesting research question is to explore the impact of only gratitude interventions on the students. Based on the findings of this research, students did not like or benefit from gratitude interventions as much as the other PPIs. Thus, it would be beneficial to uncover the students' perceptions and experiences associated with gratitude activities. Since this research focused only on the effects of PPIs on students, it would be intriguing also to investigate their impact on teachers' motivation, well-being, and mental health.

In addition to the main three recommendations mentioned above, here is a list of further questions to consider:

- the effects of individual vs. collective well-being training on classroom environment and relationships,
- factors that inhibit or demotivate students to speak in the EFL classroom,
- sources of stress in school or the classroom and their effect on students' well-being and performance, and
- effectiveness of well-being teaching as a separate subject vs. merged into another subject.

5.5 Conclusion

The results of this study shed light on how PPIs implemented in an EFL classroom can positively impact students' well-being. Over and above, the students' and teacher's attitudes towards the activities were favorable. The students perceived the PPIs as effective for both language learning and well-being improvement. As for the teacher, although she found the PPIs effective and suitable for the language classroom, she does not believe that considering students' well-being is critical. Thus, raising awareness of learner well-being is of the utmost importance.

This research revealed that with minimum resources and human capital, well-being education could be effectively implemented and functional in enhancing students' well-being and learning experience. The potential for running such programs in a broader scope, including more classes and institutions, is highly plausible. However, for this to successfully happen, cooperation from researchers, curriculum designers, and the ministry of education is needed.

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Appendix A

VIA Youth 24 Character Strengths



Source: viacharacter.org

Appendix B

Gush and Greeff (2018) Curriculum

Table 3 Detailed topical structure of the textbook

Chapter	Strengths	Wellness	*PERMA	Emotion	Exercise
1 Spelling and words that seem similar	Vitality and persistence	Physical and emotional	P, E and M	Joy	Dispute negative thinking and look forward to something
2 Pronouns and prepositions	Love and kindness	Emotional and social	P and R	Love	Active constructive responding and acts of kindness
3 Word order	Humour, creativity and curiosity	Intellectual and emotional	P and E	Inspiration and amusement	Have an experience
4 Revision	Bravery and integrity	Physical and emotional	M and A	Inspiration	Identify your signature strengths
5 Tenses	Gratitude and appreciation	Spiritual and social	P, R and M	Awe	Savouring, what went well? and have a beautiful day
6 Negatives	Leadership and fairness	Social	P, R and M	Hope	Appreciative inquiry (Tell me about you at your best) and gratitude visit
7 Revision	Love of learning	Occupational and intellectual	E, M and A	Interest	Visualise your best possible future
8 Conjunctions	Social intelligence and citizenship	Social	R and M	Pride	Appreciative inquiry for group work and connect with others
9 Plurals and diminutives	Perspective and open-mindedness	Intellectual, social and spiritual	M and R	Interest	Develop distractions and what is going right for me?
10 Degrees of comparison and intensive forms	Prudence and self-regulation	Intellectual and physical	M and A	Pride	None
11 Revision	Spirituality and hope	Spiritual	M	Serenity	Mindfulness/ meditation and connect with nature
12 Direct and indirect speech	Humility, forgiveness and mercy	Emotional and spiritual	R and M	Gratitude and love	None
13 Additional grammar exercises	All	All	All	All	None

Note. P = Positive emotion, E = Engagement, R = Positive relationships, M = Meaning, A = Accomplishment.

Appendix C

Character Strengths Activities

Name:

MY JOURNAL

Circle your strengths from the choices below, or add your own at the bottom.

I am ...

Honest

Brave

Funny

Enthusiastic

Forgiving

Creative

Kind

Modest

Confident

Loving

Open-minded

Intelligent

Sociable

Patient

Athletic

Friendly

Grateful

Independent

Fair

Wise

Adventurous

Flexible

Artistic

Ambitious

Name:

MY JOURNAL



STRENGTHS EXPLORATION

List the strengths that help you in your friendships. Why/how?

List the strengths that help you in your school. Why/how?

Name:

MY JOURNAL



For next week, write a brief plan for using your strengths.

EXAMPLE Strength: Kindness
Plan: I will bring food for my friends.
I will smile more.

DAY 1 Strength:
Plan:

DAY 2 Strength:
Plan:

DAY 3 Strength:
Plan:

DAY 4 Strength:
Plan:

DAY 5 Strength:
Plan:

MY JOURNAL



Things that make me special...

.....

.....

.....

Compliments I have received...

.....

.....

.....

What I like about my appearance...

.....

.....

.....

Challenges I have overcome...

.....

.....

.....

I have helped others by...

.....

.....

.....

Things I am good at/proud of..

.....

.....

.....

... is most important to me

.....

.....

.....

Times I have made others happy...

.....

.....

.....

Appendix D

Emotional Intelligence Activities

Name:

MY JOURNAL



What makes you happy?

What makes you unhappy?

How to stop being unhappy?

For example: breathe deeply, take a break, go for a walk, take a shower, distract yourself, lie down, write about it

Name:



MY JOURNAL

Circle all the emotions you feel today!

Positive Emotions - happy, proud, satisfied, cheerful,
excited. Why did I feel so?

Choose how you feel today!

Negative emotions - sad, unhappy, angry, depressed,
lonely. Why did I feel so?

What do you do when you have negative emotions?

Name:

MY JOURNAL



It is very important to be able to understand why someone feels the way they do. Look at the pictures and match them with the emotions they feel. Match the pictures on the left with the emotions listed on the right. You can choose more than one emotion for each picture.



Stressed

Peaceful

Excited

Angry

Fearful

Anxious

Angry

Sad

Relaxed

Joyful

Upset

Worried

Tired

Calm

Happy

Appendix E

Empathy Activities

For this activity, the students had to do the following:

1. write their names on a small piece of paper and fold it
2. put all their names in a small box
3. randomly pick a name and not tell anyone about it
4. write a note that includes 2 good things about the classmate they picked
5. fold the paper and give it to the teacher

Then, the teacher called each student to read the note s/he received, and guess who wrote it.

Name	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	

You are on the playground and you see someone get pushed down on the ground. Put yourself in their shoes. How would you feel? What could you do to help?



A Classmate is being made fun of because of the way they look. Put yourself in their shoes. How would you feel? What could you do to help?



You see that a friend got a bad grade on a test and they seem really sad about it. Put yourself in their shoes. How would you feel? What could you do to help?



Optical Illusions

- Ask students to open the optical illusions
- Ask them to share what is the first thing they see
- Ask: Did you all see the same things? What does that mean?



Pictures

- Ask students to look at the pictures and describe how they feel
- Ask all to share their favorite pictures and why
- Discuss how and why they all had different reactions and choices



Appendix F
Gratitude Activities

Name:



MY JOURNAL



I'M THANKFUL FOR

1

2

3

Name:



MY JOURNAL



One good thing that happened
to me today...

Something good that I saw
someone do...

Today I had fun when...



Name:



MY JOURNAL



List 5 things that made you smile in the past week.

Name a person you appreciate and explain why.

What is something in nature that you love and why?

Steps:

- Pick a paper from the box
- In pairs, discuss the prompt
- In the meantime, the teachers pass to all the students and asks them to share

Who makes you feel loved? Why?

Name something that makes you happy.

Name something that you are grateful to have.

What do you like to do with your family and why?

Name someone that makes you smile.

List 3 best things that happened today.

What qualities do you love about yourself?

What makes you laugh?

What is your favorite memory?

What is your favorite part of the day?

What is your favorite part about nature?

What is your favorite place in your city?

Appendix G

Translated WHO-5 and GR-6 Surveys

Name:

	Խնդրում ենք ընտրել վերջին երկու շաբաթվա ընդացքում ունեցած Ձեր զգացողությունները այս հինգ նախադասություններից յուրաքանչյուրի վերաբերյալ:	ամբողջ ժամանակ	գրեթե միշտ	կեսից շատ դեպքերում	կեսից քիչ դեպքերում	երբեմն	երբեք
1	Ես ուրախ եմ և ունեմ լավ տրամադրություն						
2	Ես հանդարտ եմ և հանգիստ						
3	Ես ակտիվ եմ և էներգիայով լի						
4	Ես արթնանում եմ թարմ և հանգիստ						
5	Իմ կյանքը լի է ինձ հետաքրքրող բաներով						

Օգտագործելով այս սանդղակը որպես ուղղորդիչ, ինչ որ թիվ նշիր ամեն նախատասաության դիմաց, որը կարտահարյտի թե ինչքան համաձայն ես դու:

1 - քնդիանրապես համաձայն չեմ

2 - համաձայն չեմ

3 – թեթևակի համաձայն չեմ

4 - չեզոք

5 – թեթևակի համաձայն եմ

6 - համաձայն եմ

7 - միանշանակ համաձայն եմ

_____ 1. կյանքում շատ բան ունեմ երախտապարտ լինելու համար

_____ 2. եթե ստիպված լինեի նշել այն բաները, որոնց համար երախտապարտ եմ, երկար ցանկ կստացվեր

_____ 3. երբ աշխարհին եմ նայում, քիչ բաներ եմ տեսնում երախտապարտ լինելու համար

_____ 4. ես երախտապարտ եմ բազմաթիվ մարդկանց

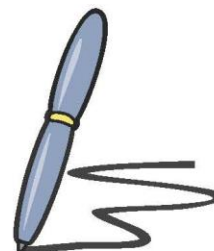
_____ 5. մեծանալիս ավելի շատ եմ գնահատում մարդկանց, իրադարձությունները եւ դեպքերը, որոնք իմ կյանքի պատմության մասն են կազմում

_____ 6. շատ ժամանակ է պետք, որ ես սկսեմ երախտապարտ լինել ինչ որ մեկին կամ ինչ-որ բանի համար

Appendix H

Students Reflection

Reflection



1. I enjoyed doing the activities.

Դու հավանեցի՞ր դասերը:

Yes

Այո

No

Ոչ

Not sure

Համոզված չեմ

2. I found the activities:

Ես կարծում եմ, որ այս վարժությունները

choose as many as applicable

Ընտրիր այնքան տարբերակներ, որքան ճիշտ էին

Easy

Հեշտ

Enjoyable

Հաճելի

Difficult

Դժվար

Useful (to learn more about yourself and the people around you) **Օգտակար (իմ ու ինձ շրջապատող մարդկանց մասին ավելի շատ բաներ սովորելու հարցում)**

Interesting

Հետաքրքիր

Boring

Ձանձրալի

Helpful (in learning English)

Օգտակար (անգլերենի հարցում)

Not understandable

Անհասկանալի

Other

Այլ _____

3. I used what I learned from the activities in my daily life.

Իմ կյանքում ես օգտագործեցի այն ամենը, ինչ սովորել էի այս վարժություններից:

Yes

Այո

No

Ոչ

Not sure

Համոզված չեմ

How?

Ինչպե՞ս _____

4. After doing the activities, I:

Վարժություններն անելուց հետո, ես

choose as many as applicable

Ընտրիր այնքան տարբերակներ, որքան ճիշտ էին

- Have better knowledge of my strengths
Ավելի լավ գիտեմ իմ ուժեղ կողմերը
- Have better knowledge of my skills and abilities
Ավելի լավ գիտեմ իմ հմտություններն ու կարողությունները
- Am more aware of my thoughts
Տեղյակ եմ իմ մտքերի մասին
- Can better deal with my emotions
Կարողանում եմ իմ էմոցիաները կառավարել
- I feel more positive
Ես ավելի դրական եմ զգում
- I feel more optimistic and hopeful
Ես ավելի լավատես և հուսադրաված եմ զգում
- I feel more grateful
Ես ավելի երախտապարտ եմ զգում
- Can better understand how the people around me feel
Կարող եմ ավելի լավ հասկանալ, թե ինչ կարծիք ունեն մարդիկ իմ մասին
- Can understand and accept people's different way of thinking
Կարող եմ ընդունել և հասկանալ մարդկանց տարբեր մտածելակերպերը
- Other
այլ _____

5. The activities helped me:

Վարժություններն օգնեցին ինձ...

choose as many as applicable

Ընտրիր այնքան տարբերակներ, որքան ճիշտ էին

- Be more motivated in the classroom
Լինել ավելի մոտիվացված դասարանում
- Improve my speaking skills
Բարելավել իմ խոսակցական հմտությունները
- Improve my writing skills
Բարելավել իմ գրելու հմտությունները
- Improve my listening skills
Բարելավել իմ լսելու հմտությունները
- Improve my reading
Բարելավել իմ կարդալու հմտությունները
- Improve my vocabulary
Բարելավել իմ բառապաշարը
- Improve my communication skills
Բարելավել իմ հաղորդակցվելու հմտությունները
- Other
այլ _____

6. Would you say you were happier/in a more positive state during these last few weeks while participating in these activities?

Դու ավելի երջանիկ կամ ավելի դրական է՞իր վերջին շաբաթների ընթացքում, մինչ մասնակցում էիր այս վարժություններին:

7. The activities I liked the most were:

Ես հավանեցի հետևյալ վարժությունները:

choose as many as applicable

Ընտրիր այնքան տարբերակներ, որքան ճիշտ էին

The gratitude activities
Երախտագիտության վարժություն

The emotions activities
Զգացմունքների վարժություն

The strengths activities
Ուժեղ կողմերի վարժություն

The picture activities
Նկարով վարժություն

The friend's activities
Ընկերոջ վարժություն

Other
այլ _____

And why?

Եվ ինչու՞ _____

8. Would you rather do these activities in Armenian? Why or why not?

Ավելի լավ է, որ այս վարժությունները հայերենով անեիր: Ինչու՞ այո կամ ոչ:

9. Any suggestions/explanation of how the activities you did not choose can be improved?

Ի՞նչ առաջարկներ կան բարելավելու այն վարժությունները, որոնք չես ընտրել:

choose as many as applicable

Ընտրիր այնքան տարբերակներ, որքան ճիշտ էին

- Spend less time on the activities
Ավելի քիչ ժամանակ անցկացնել այս վարժությունների վրա
- Spend more time on the activities
Ավելի շատ ժամանակ անցկացնել այս վարժությունների վրա
- Do the activities only at home
Անել այս վարժությունները տանը
- Do the activities only in the class
Անել այս վարժությունները դասարանում
- Do it in Armenian
Անել հայերենով
- Not sure
Համոզված չեմ
- Other
այլ _____

10. After spending this time doing the activities, explain in your own words what you think well-being is.

Այս վարժություններն անելուց հետո, բացատրիր քո բառերով, թե ինչ է նշանակում մտավոր հոգեպես լավ զգալը:

11. What courses would benefit from having such activities?

Ո՞ր դասերին օգուտ կլինեին այս տեսակի վարժությունները:

choose as many as applicable

Ընտրիր այնքան տարբերակներ, որքան ճիշտ էին

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian language
Հայերեն | <input type="checkbox"/> History
Պատմություն |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics
Մաթեմատիկա | <input type="checkbox"/> Geography
Աշխարհագրություն |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sciences
Բնագիտություն | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical education
Ֆիզկուլտուրա |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Այլ _____ | |

12. When are you more likely to speak in a language classroom?

Ե՞րբ ես դու խոսում դասարանում:

When:

Երբ...

choose as many as applicable

Ընտրիր այնքան տարբերակներ, որքան ճիշտ էին

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I know the answer
Ես գիտեմ պատասխանը | <input type="checkbox"/> We work in groups or pairs
Մենք աշխատում ենք զույգերով |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I feel confident
Ես ինքնավստահ եմ զգում | <input type="checkbox"/> I feel positive
Ես դրական եմ զգում |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I am not worried
Ես անհանգստացած չեմ | <input type="checkbox"/> I am happy
Ես երջանիկ եմ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The teacher is friendly
Ուսուցիչը ընկերական է | <input type="checkbox"/> The teacher gives me time to think
Ուսուցիչը ժամանակ է տալիս մտածելու |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Այլ _____ | |

Appendix I

Student Focus Group Discussion

1. What do you think causes stress for students in class? First let them speak then give the following options:

Having to answer a question directly asked of you
 Exams, tests, quizzes
 Having to stand in front of class to read or act out something
 Writing essays (any kind of writing, timed writing)
 Sitting next to someone I don't really know or like
 Homework check/not having done the HW
 Speaking / speaking activities

Do you think these activities helped lower stress levels in the classroom?

2. What did you like about the activities? What would you change in the activities? What was hard? What was easy?

List all and check one by one

3. Did you find the activities helpful? Yes, no? In what ways? First let them speak then give the following options:

To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements:

1. Made me feel comfortable
2. Made me more positive in the classroom
3. Made me less stressed or anxious
4. Made me interested to learn
5. Made me motivated in this class
6. I enjoyed working with my classmates
7. I got to know a bit more about my peers
8. I found out something new/interesting about my peers
9. I like this classroom environment more
10. I liked the activities but I don't think it changed anything

4. Is it important to know more about your classmates?

Yes

No

Not sure

Not interested really

Why or why not?

5. Do you think these activities help with language learning?

(For example, listening, reading, speaking, writing, increasing vocabulary knowledge, grammar, other:)

Which skill more, which skill less?

6. Have you learnt about yourself after participating in the activities we did in class? How?

For example:

I know myself better

I know my strengths, in personal life and when it comes to learning.

I also realized my weak points, and I am working on improving or I am a bit de-motivated

I know how to better deal with my emotions,

I know better how to deal with my in relationship (with friend, family, teachers),

I have become happier, more positive as a person

I don't really think anything has changed

I am not sure

Other:

7. Do you think there is a need for something like this (a program to help your well-being and developing thinking skills) at school? Why or why not?

8. What would work better, having well-being teaching as a separate subject, or as a part of other subjects?

Would have liked to have such activities during other classes and not just English?

Appendix J

Teacher Questionnaire

1. After the activities, do you find any changes in the students?

2. After the activities, do you find any changes in the students? choose as many as applicable:
 - more focused
 - less focused
 - more motivated
 - less motivated
 - more open to learning
 - less open to learning
 - more likely to speak
 - less likely to speak
 - easier to manage the class
 - harder to manage the class
 - none of the above
 - Other:

3. Do you think the activities were appropriate/effective for all students? If no, Why? *

4. The activities are appropriate for (choose as many as applicable): *
 - all levels
 - more proficient students
 - beginner students
 - all ages
 - older students (16 and above)
 - younger students (8-16)
 - girls and boys
 - girls only
 - boys only
 - Other:

5. How did the activities impact the students, if any?

6. The activities helped the students (choose as many as applicable): *
 - improve listening
 - improve speaking
 - improve writing
 - improve reading
 - improve grammar
 - improve vocabulary
 - improve communication
 - improve relationships in the classroom
 - improve the well-being and psychological health
 - improve their emotional intelligence
 - improve their empathy
 - Other:

7. What did you like about the activities?

8. What do you think should be changed in the activities? (for example duration, frequency, content, level, timing, etc.)

9. Do you think the activities waste class time or take-away from learning?

10. What are, if any, negative outcomes of providing positive psychology (such as the activities I did) during language teaching?

11. Would you consider implementing such activities in your practice? Why or why not?

12. Would you consider participating in additional positive education training if it was offered? If no, why not?

13. Do you think positive education should be considered in terms of curriculum in the Armenian education system in general? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- never thought about it

14. Is well-being education important for language learning?

15. Should well-being learning be a separate subject or a part of other subject (such as English)?

- Separate
- Part of English subject
- Other:

16. Do you think teachers themselves should have their own positive psychology activities? Why?

17. Any extra comments?