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The Impacts and Reflections of Emotion Regulation in the Process of Language Learning in Emerging Studies

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ABSTRACT

With the emergence of Positive Psychology, research in EFL and ESL contexts has increasingly changed its focus from solely negative emotions, such as anxiety and stress, to positive ones including enjoyment, resilience, and well-being. Consequently, emotion regulation (ER) has emerged as a key psychological process supporting effective EFL and ESL learning. This study presents a systematic review of empirical research on ER in English language education contexts published over the last 15 years. The review examines ER studies in terms of their research focus, learning contexts, methodological designs, and ER strategies. The findings demonstrate that ER research in EFL and ESL contexts has mainly focused on higher education contexts and has largely employed quantitative and correlational research designs. Among studies, cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression was the most frequently examined ER strategies, displaying the strong influence of Gross's process model of emotion regulation. The reviewed studies consistently reported correlations between effective ER and positive emotional experiences, learner engagement, psychological well-being, and academic performance. Despite their scarcity, intervention-based and longitudinal studies provided promising evidence that ER can be developed through instructional practices, resulting in improvements in both emotional and language learning outcomes. The findings point out ER as a central component of effective and sustainable English language learning rather than an incidental affective factor. The review underlines the need for more longitudinal, intervention-based, and context-sensitive research to better understand how ER strategies can be explicitly taught and maintained across different EFL and ESL learning settings.

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Pesen, S., & Ergenekon, S. (2026). The impacts and reflections of emotion regulation in the process of language learning in emerging studies. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 16(2), 95-117.

The role of emotions in the history of foreign language and second language education research has gradually transformed from avoidance to acceptance within the period of time. Earlier research in second language education focused largely on cognitive factors, while emotional factors remained relatively understudied compared to cognitive approaches (Shao et al., 2019). Afterwards, research began to acknowledge the role of emotions in language education through the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Krashen, 1985), and with the seminal work of Horwitz et al. (1986) on Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (Dewaele & Li, 2020). In the recent years, there has been a growing tendency to examine the role of positive emotions together with negative emotions in second language learning and teaching contexts (Dewaele & Li, 2020). Before the 2000s, the most commonly studied emotions in the field of foreign language or second language education were negative emotions, particularly foreign language anxiety, as well as stress and fear (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2020; Horwitz et al., 1986). However, the influence of Positive Psychology in early 2000s has encouraged researchers to look at emotions from a broader perspective. More positive and supportive emotions such as enjoyment, interest, hope, love, flow, and gratitude have increasingly drawn researchers' attention in language learning research (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Shao et al., 2020).

Emotions have gradually become the focus of a growing body of research, with a particular emphasis on the constraining effects of negative emotions and the supporting role of positive ones in language learning (Plonsky et al., 2022). According to Control-Value Theory of achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun & Perry, 2014), higher levels of negative emotions such as boredom, anxiety and anger are associated with lower performance in high-stakes examinations. Recent extensions of the theory also support these associations (Pekrun, 2024). Conversely, students experiencing elevated positive emotions are inclined to show better performance in such exams. Lower performance associated with negative emotions may be explained by the fact that negative emotions can

impair students' cognitive processing capacity. According to Processing Efficiency Theory, negative emotional states, such as anxiety and worry can consume students' attentional resources and reduce processing efficiency by making more difficult for learners to focus, stay motivated, use effective learning strategies and keep engaging in language tasks as they put their effort into getting rid of the negative results of their perceived threatening conditions. This may result in less efficient processing and weaker task performance, especially in cognitively demanding tasks (Eysenck & Calvo, 1992; Liu et al., 2025; Zeidner, 1998).

Since teachers and learners exchange their beliefs, emotions, and values during teaching and learning processes, and emotions play a significant role in these processes, language classes are considered emotionally rich contexts (De Costa et al., 2018; Shao et al., 2019; White, 2018; Xu, 2013). According to MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012), positive and negative emotions have separate functions and should not be viewed as opposite ends of a single continuum. While positive emotions can mitigate the effects of negative emotions such as stress and anxiety (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), it can also enable optimal learning and achievement (Li et al., 2021). Moreover, in their study examining the impact of emotional experiences on students' foreign language learning experiences, Méndez López and Peña Aguilar (2013) argued that both positive and negative emotions contribute significantly to students' foreign language learning (FLL) and motivation, as these emotions support learning processes as well as emotion regulation. Findings suggest that negative emotions, such as fear, worry, and sadness may also facilitate learning under certain conditions, and they can be considered motivating rather than purely inhibiting factors in FLL. As affective factors play an important role in learners' decisions to study a foreign language (FL) and persist in the learning tasks, emotional experiences are vital in FLL. For this reason, emotions experienced during FLL or teaching should be well understood so that FL instructors can adopt appropriate approaches that help reduce emotions with negative consequences on learners' motivation, and foster positive emotions that increase students' motivation

(Méndez López & Peña Aguilar, 2013), attention span, willingness to develop their well-being, and ability to remain resilient over time (Oxford, 2015). Since language learning involves both cognitive and emotional processes, language learners are encouraged to take an active role in coping with their stress in order to cultivate positive emotions when they are learning a FL. This can be achieved through emotion regulation strategies that support learners in regulating their emotions and sustaining their motivation (Kantaridou & Psaltou-Joycey, 2022). Beyond identifying the presence of emotions in language learning, recent research has begun to investigate emotion regulation as a process through which learners cope with their affective challenges and their internal emotional capacities and strengths in instructional contexts.

Emotions emerge when individuals come across with situations that are meaningful for them. In some cases, emotions develop when something we consider important is at risk or in response to immediate events. At times, some troubling or dangerous situations, such as feeling afraid when we see a bear, evoke emotions (LeDoux, 1995; Scarantino & de Sousa, 2021). In other cases, emotions emerge when individuals make interpretations and evaluations about certain situations in relation to things they value or consider important for their well-being. Their emotions such as shame, blame or anger after a certain negative situation are often linked to the personal meaning individuals assign to that event (Moors et al., 2013; Nussbaum, 2001). Regardless of how emotions are triggered, emotions activate several responses, including behavioral, experiential, and physiological responses that occur simultaneously and influence individuals' reactions to specific situations they perceive as either challenges or opportunities (Gross, 2002). On the one hand, some of our emotional responses align with individuals' needs in life and guide their behaviors; on the other hand, they can sometimes be maladaptive in modern contexts, prompting individuals to regulate their emotions in order to better support their goals (Gross, 1999; Gross, 2002).

Emotion regulation involves a set of processes through which individuals influence emotions they feel, when and how they feel them and, respond to

them (Gross 1998). It can change how psychological, behavioral, and experiential responses are coordinated when someone has emotional experiences (Gross, 2002). Intrapersonal emotion regulation refers to the individual's attempt to achieve a specific goal in managing their positive and negative affect. Gross (1998, p. 282) proposed the "process model of emotion regulation" to conceptualize this multifaceted process. This model identifies five different emotion regulation strategies based on when they intervene during the unfolding of an emotional response. These are "situation selection", "situation modification", "attentional deployment", "cognitive change", and "response modulation" (Gross 2002, p. 282). These strategies differ in that they operate at different points in ER process. Situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, and cognitive change are considered antecedent-focused emotion regulation strategies, which refer to the regulatory actions taken before the emotion develops sufficiently to shape behaviors. Seeing an exam as a tool for growth rather than a potential source of anxiety shows the use of antecedent-focused strategies. Conversely, response-focused modulation strategies include regulatory actions implemented after an emotional response has already been initiated once response tendencies have emerged. Concealing anxiety triggered by a specific situation can be considered as an example of response-focused regulation (Gross 2002).

Emotion regulation strategies are commonly classified as adaptive and maladaptive strategies. Adaptive strategies include problem-solving, cognitive reappraisal, and acceptance, whereas maladaptive strategies involve rumination, avoidance, and expressive suppression (Aldao & Schweizer, 2010). Expressive suppression, in particular, can be considered as a maladaptive emotion regulation strategy, especially in learning contexts, because it involves concealing or inhibiting the emotional expression rather than altering the emotion itself. In such cases, the emotion is still felt internally despite not expressed externally. Therefore, although expressive suppression may function as an initial emotion regulation strategy, it is generally viewed as providing short-lived effectiveness while having

negative relationship with well-being and bypassing cognitive reappraisal processes (Cutuli, 2014; Gross & John, 2003; Jiang et al., 2016; John & Gross, 2004). For instance, when a student feels anxious during a classroom activity, such as a speaking task and tries to hide physiological responses such as hand tremors or voice shaking, the anxiety persists internally, which may reduce enjoyment and engagement (Bilaek & Wiartelak, 2020; Solhi et al., 2025). In contrast, cognitive reappraisal is regarded as an adaptive emotion regulation strategy because it involves modifying how individuals interpret a situation. When individuals reframe meaning of an event and their thoughts about it, their emotional reactions to that situation changes. As a result, this leads to increased positive emotions and reduced negative emotions (Frijda, 1986; Solhi et al., 2025; Sorić et al., 2013). For example, during a speaking task, the same anxious student may react differently to mistakes by viewing them as a normal part of learning a language (Bilaek & Wiartelak, 2020). Given that a foreign language classroom involves a wide range of emotions, from negative to positive ones, that clearly influence engagement and learning outcomes (Benesch, 2017; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Oxford, 2015), further studies are needed to understand the way teachers and students manage their emotions and how positive emotions can be fostered to enhance the learning potential (Greenier et al., 2021; Gross, 2015). For instance, during the process of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), students regularly encounter difficulties arising from academic challenges such as classroom tasks and learning materials. In this respect, they need to give constructive responses to these academic challenges. In dealing with such challenges adaptive and effective emotion regulation strategies can play an important role in shaping both the learning process and its outcomes in English language learning contexts (Zhang et al., 2024). However, research remains limited in clarifying the specific contributions of emotion regulation strategies to EFL learning (Zhang et al., 2024). Although research on L2 learners' emotion regulation strategies has expanded lately, further investigation is required to examine more thoroughly how these strategies interact with other

key variables in second language learning. A better understanding of the factors influencing emotion regulation processes may contribute to more effective use of emotions to support not only their academic success but also their psychological well-being (Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022).

As can be seen from the aforementioned background information, the influence of Positive Psychology in EFL, ESL, and FLL research has encouraged scholars to investigate not only negative emotions but also positive ones in recent years. Accordingly, in order to create an optimal learning atmosphere in English language classrooms, the literature suggests that emotion regulation plays a significant role in both EFL and ESL learning contexts. Although studies conducted in EFL and ESL contexts so far vary in their focus, aims, designs, and data collection tools, the existing body of research still appears to be limited. Consequently, our understanding of how emotion regulation is investigated in EFL contexts and how it relates to English language development still remains unclear. To address this issue, this study conducts a systematic review of empirical research examining the influence of emotion regulation on English language learners' learning experiences. By synthesizing existing research findings, this study aims to shed light on current research trends in order to identify gaps that might guide future research and inform pedagogical implications. With this aim, the present study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the research settings and participant characteristics of ER studies in the field of English language learning?
2. Which emotion regulation strategies have been studied in English language contexts?
3. What are the methodological designs of ER research in the field of English language teaching?
4. What are the focal points of emotion regulation (ER) research in English language learning (EFL and ESL) contexts?
5. What psychological and academic outcomes of ER are reported in EFL and ESL research?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study adopts a systematic review of the studies conducted on the use of emotion regulation in the English language context. Systematic review studies aim to find, combine, analyze, and interpret related studies in a structured and transparent manner, in line with predefined research objectives. The goal of the researchers is to be comprehensive and meticulous enough so that no important study could be skipped. Before making a literature review, clear inclusion and exclusion criteria are required to be established in order to select or evaluate the quality of the studies so that weak ones can be excluded (Grant & Booth, 2009; Kitchenham, 2004; Moosapour et al., 2021). Researchers may benefit from tables and structured data displays to present and synthesize the findings of the selected studies when reporting their detailed evaluation. Systematic reviews focus on the background information, findings, research designs, implications, and suggestions for the studies to be conducted in the future (Moosapour et al., 2021). Broader research questions are asked so that researchers can provide a comprehensive synthesis of collected empirical research (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006).

2.2. Data Sources and Search Strategy

Meticulous searches were conducted by using the key words *Emotion Regulation (ER)*, *English as a Foreign Language (EFL)*, *English as a Second Language (ESL)*, *English Language Teaching (ELT)*, and *English Language Learning (ELL)* across credible and well-established academic databases in applied linguistics, foreign language education, and educational research. Related empirical studies included in this review were identified basing on systematic searches of major indexing and publishing platforms, such as Taylor & Francis online, Scopus, ERIC, Web of Sciences, MDPI, Science Direct, Google Scholar, SpringerLink, DOAJ, and open-access journal portals, as well as ResearchGate, institutional dissertation archives (e.g., GAZI), DergiPark, and other regional open-

access resources. Most of the journals included in this review are indexed in the major international databases such as Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) (e.g., System Modern Language Journal; Language Teaching Research; Journal of English for Academic Purpose), and Scopus (e.g., Current Psychology, International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning). Some Psychology focused journals, such as BMC Psychology and Current Psychology, which are indexed in credible Psychology databases (e.g., PsycINFO, PubMed) and the Web of Science Core Collection, were also included in this review because ER is primarily associated with the field of Psychology.

2.3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Since ER is a novel topic in the field of foreign language education, a small number of regional or emerging journals with limited indexing were also included in order to enable a comprehensive investigation into the content and focus of the studies conducted in the field of English language education. Only peer-reviewed articles were taken into consideration to ensure the relevance and methodological rigor of the included studies. After of a rigorous screening process, studies focusing on teacher emotion regulation were excluded. As a result, 26 empirical studies on emotion regulation in the field of EFL and ESL, which have been conducted over the last 15 years between 2014 and 2025, were included in the review. Although most of the studies included in this review were published in major indexed journals, some were published in lower indexed or emerging journals. This inclusion was intentional and justified, as emotion regulation has been a relatively novel and interdisciplinary phenomenon in EFL/ESL research, especially when learners, not teachers, are the primary focus of analysis. Excluding such studies could risk overlooking early empirical studies contributing to this emerging research area.

2.4. Study Selection Process

After a rigorous screening process, eligible studies were selected based on the relevance to emotion regulation in EFL/ESL contexts. All

selected studies involved EFL or ESL learners as participants and were published in 26 distinct peer-reviewed journals (See Appendix).

2.5. Data Extraction and Coding Procedure

To enable consistency and accuracy in the data extraction process, all included studies were carefully read and organized according to predefined criteria. These criteria included publication details, participant characteristics, research design, data collection instruments, examined variables, EFL focus, and key findings in EFL and ESL learning contexts. Following a structured and iterative approach, the coding process was conducted over a longer period of time. Studies were read multiple times, and categories were refined through a repeated and careful comparison. During this process, the researchers returned to the studies several times and made small revisions to the categories in order to improve clarity and ensure the accuracy of the analysis.

2.6. Data Analysis

Following a content-based analysis approach, the reviewed studies were coded and classified according to key thematic and methodological categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This process allowed for the identification of patterns, similarities, and variations in how emotion regulation has been examined in EFL and ESL learning contexts. As it is done in systematic review studies, content analysis can help to identify the main analytical categories in order to draw inferences and conclusions from the selected research based on these classified categories, thus leading to a structural analysis of the studies. This content analysis helped identify emerging and recurring research trends, themes, key points, and in ER research within EFL and ESL educational contexts.

This analysis initially followed a top-down approach, using pre-defined categories to identify key study characteristics based on the aforementioned categorizations. Afterwards, a bottom-up approach was employed to synthesize the main findings of the reviewed studies,

presenting repeating patterns, relationships, and learning and psychological outcomes related to learners' emotion regulation in EFL and ESL settings.

3. Findings

Table 1 shows the distribution of reviewed studies according to their publication years.

Table 1
Distribution of the Studies and Publication Years

Publication Year	Number of Studies
2014	1
2020	1
2021	1
2022	6
2023	3
2024	6
2025	8
Total	26

As shown in the table, research on EFL and ESL contexts remained scarce until 2022, with only one study per year between 2014 and 2021. A noticeable increase in 2022 and onwards demonstrates a growing scholarly interest in emotional management in EFL and ESL contexts. One possible reason for this rise may be the increased awareness of learners' emotional problems resulting from Covid-19 pandemic measurements including isolation from one another, the rapid shift from face-to-face education to remote learning, increased stress, and uncertainty about future. Therefore, recent studies may have focused on emotion regulation as a key factor in supporting learners in terms of their well-being, engagement, achievement, and academic adjustment when they are exposed to such stressful conditions (Chaudri et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2025; Shi & Sun, 2025; Zheng & Zhou, 2022). Another reason for the increase in the number of publications may be the influence of Positive Psychology on English language education and research, as the latest studies have shifted their focus from negative emotions to positive ones such as language learning engagement, enjoyment, achievement, learners' well-being, grit,

belongingness, and resilience. In this regard, emotion regulation is conceptualized as an ability that helps learners to manage their emotional responses towards challenging situations while building positive emotions in EFL and ESL contexts (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2024; Solhi et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2022).

In sum, the publication trend shown in Table 1 indicates a growing research interest in ER within EFL and ESL contexts in recent years. To move beyond publication trends and provide a more detailed understanding of the reviewed studies, Table 2 (see Appendix) demonstrates the key characteristics of the selected empirical research. It categorizes the summarized information in terms of research settings, participant characteristics, research designs, focal variables, and main outcomes, which directly give information about the research questions of the present review.

3.1. Research settings and participant characteristics of ER investigation studies in the field of English language learning

The analysis of the reviewed studies reveals that participants were mostly EFL learners. These learners studied English as a foreign language in non-English-speaking countries such as Iran, China, and Turkey (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Solhi et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2022). The majority of ER studies in EFL and ESL contexts have been conducted at universities. Among the included research shown in Table 2 (see in Appendix), nineteen studies confirm that university EFL and ESL learners are the most frequently investigated population in the field (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Heydarnejad et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022). Moreover, one study included middle school learners supported by a university-level comparison group (Liu et al., 2025). Two studies examined high school learners: one exclusively at the secondary level (Zhang et al., 2024), and one in comparison with university students (Shi & Sun, 2025). This finding indicates a growing, but still limited interest in examining ER among adolescent or child populations in English language learning contexts. In addition to formal school contexts, five studies were conducted with learners in private educational or language

institutions (Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022; Taghaddomi & Madadkar Shandi, 2023; Xiao et al., 2024; Yetiş, 2025), while one study involved adult learners enrolled in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program at an American community college (Haga & Reinders, 2021). These cases represent institutional learning environments outside mainstream schools and universities. The proficiency level of learners ranged from intermediate to advanced. The sample sized ranged from qualitative case studies to large-scale quantitative surveys involving several hundred participants (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Heydarnejad et al., 2022). Finally, studies in this review typically examined learners' emotional experiences, and ER strategies in relation to language engagement, enjoyment, anxiety, self-efficacy in classroom and technology supported contexts. This includes research by Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2024), Liu et al. (2025), Shi and Sun (2025), Taghaddomi and Madadkar Shandi (2023), Xiao et al. (2024), and Zhang et al. (2022).

In terms of learning settings, most studies focused on face-to-face classroom environments; however, some studies incorporated technology-mediated contexts into their instructional designs. Particularly, the studies examined in this review reported one blended learning setting, three online learning contexts, one digital collaborative reading environment, one AI-supported online learning context, and one AI-assisted learning environment (El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025; Su & Guo, 2024; Xiao et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2022; Zhang, 2025). Although less frequently examined than face-to-face English learning contexts, these findings indicate a gradual increase in emotion regulation research in digital and technology supported EFL settings. A few studies also investigated ESL or study-abroad contexts where learners learn English for social or academic purposes (Chaudri et al., 2023; Haga & Reinders, 2021; Yetiş, 2025). In sum, the distribution of settings and participants indicates that emotion regulation research in English language education has mainly focused on adult learners in higher education settings, whereas research involving learners in secondary or primary education and technologically enhanced or more diverse language learning settings remains relatively limited.

3.2. Emotion regulation strategies that have been studied in English language contexts

The reviewed studies mainly focus on how learners regulate their emotions while learning English. Most research highlights cognitive-based emotion regulation strategies, such as rethinking difficult situations, accepting emotions, and positively reinterpreting experiences. These strategies help learners manage emotional challenges more effectively, as shown in studies like Amini Farsani et al. (2024), Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2024), El Deen and Mahmoud (2025), Karimi et al. (2022), and Yıldırım and Atay (2024). This indicates that ER research in EFL/ESL contexts prioritizes cognitive and reflective strategies, over those aimed at avoiding the emotional experience or relying solely on behavioural reactions.

Among all reviewed studies, the most frequently examined strategies were cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. A considerable number of studies (around twelve) particularly focused on these two strategies, showing the influence of Gross's (1998, p. 271- 299) process model of emotion regulation in foreign language education research, as evidenced by studies such as Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2024), Karimi et al. (2022), Liu et al. (2025), Shi and Sun (2025), Yıldırım and Atay (2024), and Zhang et al. (2022). Among the findings of the studies, cognitive reappraisal was consistently correlated with positive learning-related outcomes, such as higher enjoyment, stronger engagement, better academic performance, greater grit, and improved well-being (Akram & Oteir, 2025; Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2024; Shi & Sun, 2025; Solhi et al., 2025). On the contrary, using expressive suppression as a maladaptive ER strategy resulted in getting less adaptive outcomes, such as increased anxiety, reduced enjoyment, or weaker engagement, especially among younger or less proficient learners. Therefore, this contrast indicates that the way students manage their emotions has a visible effect on the emotions they experience during learning (Amini Farsani et al., 2024; Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2024; Chaudri et al., 2023; Su & Guo, 2024).

The second most employed ER strategy category is broader than the previous one, adaptive emotion

regulation strategies such as attention deployment, cognitive change, response modulation, situation modification, and situation selection (Gross, 1998) through which learners used flexibility while experiencing a challenging task, situation, or context. These studies emphasized that language learners do not only depend on a single strategy, but instead, they make shifts among strategies when they face difficult situations such as speaking anxiety, group work, or demanding academic tasks (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2024; Chaudri et al., 2023; Karimi et al., 2022; Su & Guo, 2024; Yetiş, 2025). Another meaningful strategy investigated, besides cognitive reappraisal in a few studies, is problem-solving. Unlike cognitive reframing, problem-solving brings a more proactive attitude towards emotional challenges. With this strategy, learners try to reduce the impact of emotional discomfort by finding concrete solutions and adapting their learning behaviours when necessary. For instance, learners in blended EFL learning contexts used problem solving strategies to cope with anxiety or technostress by handling task requirements, seeking support, or reorganizing their study routines, especially in online learning contexts which can trigger emotional discomfort (El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025). Similarly, learners preferred problem solving strategy during writing tasks or feedback sessions to cope with negative emotions such as shame and low confidence by correcting their work, clarifying their expectations, or actively replying their instructor's feedback (Amini et al., 2024). These findings may indicate that problem-solving plays a supportive role in emotion regulation when learners come across particular academic difficulties, and it allows them to gain their control back and sustain their engagement in demanding language tasks (Amini et al., 2024; El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025).

Finally, acceptance is another ER strategy examined in a limited number of studies, typically used alongside the strategy of cognitive reappraisal rather than alone. In these studies, acceptance was defined as learners' ability to accept and acknowledge negative emotions, such as stress, anxiety, shame, or frustration, rather than trying to suppress or avoid them. As a result, learners could reduce emotional burden and sustain their

engagement with their learning tasks in EFL and ESL contexts. Despite the limited exploration of the correlation between acceptance and English language learning, its presence in qualitative and intervention-based research demonstrates that researchers' interests in acceptance-oriented perspectives are growing, especially in relation to reflective learning and emotional awareness (Amini Farsani et al., 2024; Chaudri et al., 2023; Karimi et al., 2022).

To sum up, the findings of this review reveal that ER research in EFL and ESL contexts has mainly focused on cognitive and adaptive strategies. This highlights that learners' flexible use of emotion regulation strategies plays a key role in managing their emotional challenges and maintaining engagement in English language learning.

3.3. Methodological designs of ER research in the field of English language teaching

Considering Table 2 (see Appendix), it can be claimed that methodological designs adopted in ER regulation studies conducted in the field of English language education display a popular preference for quantitative and mixed methods research designs compared to a smaller and meaningful category of qualitative inquiry. This proportion reflects researchers' inclination to observe measurable patterns of ER, while giving less attention to solely spotting the nuanced and context-bound nature of students' ER experiences in detail when they are learning English.

With 15 studies, quantitative research designs make up the largest methodological group of this systematic review. These studies relied on surveys, standardized questionnaires, and statistical modelling in order to explore the relationship between English language learners' ER and their psychological variables with their learning outcomes, as revealed in studies such as Heydarnejad et al. (2022), Liu et al. (2025), Rokni et al. (2014), and Shi and Sun (2025). Quantitative designs vary from descriptive and cross-sectional surveys to more analytical and advanced designs such as correlational and comparative analysis, as well as structural equation modelling (SEM) and path analysis, as presented in studies Solhi et al.

(2025), Yüksel et al. (2025), and Zheng and Zhou (2022). Moreover, some of the quantitative studies adopted longitudinal or cooperative designs that allowed researchers to examine the changes occurring over time or differences taking place depending on the contexts or educational levels, as seen in Akram and Oteir (2025), Karimi et al. (2022), and Liu et al. (2025). In addition, a few studies implemented experimental or quasi-experimental designs, and some included randomized control group interventions and longitudinal comparisons (Akram & Oteir, 2025; Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Karimi et al., 2022; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022; Taghaddomi & Madadkar Shandi, 2023). These research designs demonstrate that there is a clear quest to understand potential causal and developmental correlations between ER and English language learning along with identifying their relationships.

The second most frequently employed research design in this review is the mixed-methods approach. This design allows researchers to obtain a clearer and fuller picture of the impact of ER in EFL and ESL contexts by integrating multiple perspectives (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). These studies supported quantitative data, such as surveys, questionnaires, or test results, with qualitative data, including interviews, reflective journals, vignette-based responses, and learner narratives, as put forward in Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020), El Deen and Mahmoud (2025), Karimi et al. (2022), and Su and Guo (2024). The mixed-methods studies employed various designs, including pre-and post-test intervention studies, case studies, and approaches that combined novel techniques, such as idiodynamic analysis, with survey data, as seen in Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2024) and Derakhshan and Zare (2023). In particular cases, mixed-methods design was especially useful in intervention-based research because statistical findings were enriched with learners' own insights into their emotional experiences, strategy use, and their attitudes towards classroom practices. In sum, these mixed-methods designs show researchers' aspiration to go beyond statistics by complementing measurable data with rich contextual insights in the way students experienced and managed their

emotions when they were learning the English language (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Dörnyei, 2007; Greene, 2007).

The least employed methodological design was the qualitative design, which played an important role in highlighting learners' emotional experiences in ESL and EFL contexts. Approaches used in these studies included multiple case studies, vignette-based qualitative inquiry, and longitudinal narrative research (Amini Farsani et al., 2024; Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025). By collecting qualitative data on learners' use of ER strategies in particular learning situations, such as writing tasks, classroom interactions, and feedback processes, researchers prioritized learners' perspectives and provided in-depth insights into how learners employed ER strategies in specific situations while learning English (Creswell, 2014). In eight studies, qualitative design was employed in addition to quantitative design to obtain enriched, experience-based explanations. This combination provided clarification on the impact of ER and how and why English language learners regulated their emotions in specific contexts (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025; Karimi et al., 2022; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022).

In conclusion, the methodological inclination of ER research in English language education indicates a strong emphasis on quantitative research designs, followed by the use of mixed-methods, which add depth and triangulation. Qualitative studies, few in number but meaningful, also contributed to the studies conducted in ER in ESL and EFL contexts. Although the current research has successfully provided insights into key patterns and relationships, the findings also indicate a need for more qualitative design and intervention-based studies to have a better understanding of how emotion regulation develops and impacts language learning.

3.4. The focal points of emotion regulation (ER) research in English language learning (EFL and ESL) contexts

Based on the ELT focus category in Table 2, research on ER in EFL and ESL contexts mainly focuses on learners' ways of experiencing and managing emotions during the English language

process. Most of the studies in this review examined several key emotional experiences, such as enjoyment, foreign language anxiety, stress, achievement emotions, and well-being in relation to ER in EFL and ESL contexts, revealing their connection with learners' language learning engagement and performance, as shown in Amini Farsani et al. (2024), El Deen and Mahmoud (2025), Karimi et al. (2022), Rokni et al. (2014), and Shafiee Rad and Jafarpour (2022). Another major focus is the use of ER strategies, especially cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression, in English language learning contexts. Many studies investigated frequently used strategies, their effectiveness, their relation to positive outcomes such as increased language enjoyment, better academic engagement, developed writing or speaking skills, and stronger emotional well-being among English language learners, as shown in Amini Farsani et al. (2024), El Deen and Mahmoud (2025), Karimi et al. (2022), Rokni et al. (2014), and Shafiee Rad and Jafarpour (2022).

Additionally, ER research often connected emotion regulation to broader psychological and learning-related factors, including emotional intelligence, resilience, belongingness, motivation, engagement, and grit. These studies revealed that ER interacts with other personal and contextual factors in creating learners' language learning experiences (Akram & Oteir, 2025; Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Karimi et al., 2022; Rokni et al., 2014; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022). Moreover, an increasing number of studies focus on particular learning contexts, such as collaborative and cooperative tasks, blended and online learning, and AI-supported language learning. These studies shed light on the effect of learning settings on learners' emotional challenges and emotion regulation strategies (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025; Su & Guo, 2024; Taghaddomi & Madadkar Shandi, 2023; Xiao et al., 2024; Yüksel et al., 2025).

Finally, there are a few intervention-based studies in this review, such as ER training programs, student exposure to English media, positive psychology interventions, altruistic teaching (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023), or physical exercise. These studies focused on actively supporting

learners in regulating their emotions and observing the changes that occurred afterwards. They suggested that ER could be taught, practiced, and strengthened in the classroom setting. In conclusion, ER research in English language learning contexts mainly focuses on learners' emotional experiences, the strategies they use to regulate these emotions, and how these strategies influence learners' learning and well-being. In addition, studies explore how emotions and emotion regulation vary depending on different learning settings, such as traditional classrooms or digital environments where emotions emerge and are regulated.

3.5. Psychological and academic outcomes of ER reported in EFL/ ESL research

As a result of the reviewed 26 studies, it could be asserted that ER is observed to play a meaningful role in the psychological functioning and academic performance of English language learners (see Table 2 in Appendix). The findings suggest that learners who have improved emotion regulation abilities tend to experience more positive emotions and have better learning related outcomes in EFL and ESL contexts.

Regarding the psychological perspective, most of the studies report a positive correlation between ER and positive affective variables. A successful emotion regulation process is connected to increased foreign language enjoyment, emotional well-being, resilience, grit, emotional intelligence, and belongingness, as shown in studies such as Akram and Oteir (2025), Derakhshan and Zare (2023), Karimi et al. (2022), Rokni et al. (2014), and Shafiee Rad and Jafarpour (2022). According to these findings, learners who have developed emotion regulation skills are likely to experience more positive emotions and tend to be more engaged in language learning. On the other hand, ineffective emotion regulation is correlated with anxiety, stress, and emotional distress (El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025; Karimi et al., 2022; Rokni et al., 2014). According to the findings of several correlational and structural studies, learners who frequently use adaptive ER strategies, especially cognitive reappraisal, can cope with negative emotions arising from language learning difficulties

such as communication breakdowns, feedback, or performance pressure better (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020, 2024; Shi & Sun, 2025; Yıldırım & Atay, 2024; Yüksel et al., 2025). On the contrary, the frequent use of maladaptive strategies, such as expressive suppression, is often associated with increased anxiety and lower emotional well-being, although its impacts may change depending on contexts and participant characteristics (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Liu et al., 2025; Shi & Sun, 2025; Zhang et al., 2024).

In terms of academic outcomes, ER is often associated with learners' engagement, achievement, and language skill development. Studies which focused on language performance revealed that effective emotion regulation supports increased academic success, developed writing and speaking performance, stronger learning engagement, and more persistent effort in language learning tasks (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Liu et al., 2025; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022; Yüksel et al., 2025). In some studies, ER functioned as a bridge between emotional variables (e.g., anxiety, enjoyment) and academic outcomes, helping learners transform their emotional experiences into productive learning behaviours (Shi & Sun, 2025; Zhang et al., 2022; Zheng & Zhou, 2022). In other words, the way students manage their emotions may help explain why emotions support or hinder language learning. In short, learners' ER clarify how emotions can both support and interfere with language learning. ER, therefore, is not only about handling emotions, but also about directing them toward more effective learning behaviours in EFL/ESL contexts.

Although they are fewer in number, intervention and experimental studies provide a better understanding with stronger evidence for the influence of ER on the academic outcome. These types of studies demonstrate the possibility of improving ER ability through developed practices such as ER training programs (Karimi et al., 2022), positive psychology-based interventions (Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022), exposure to emotionally supporting input, such as English cartoons (Taghaddomi & Madadkar Shandi, 2023), altruistic teaching approaches (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023), and even physical exercises (Akram & Oteir, 2025). Learners who participated in these interventions

improved both their emotional well-being and language-related outcomes, including writing proficiency and learning engagement. Compared to correlational research, intervention and experimental studies provide more concrete and stronger evidence that ER is teachable in the class and improves when instructional support is provided.

Another factor that may shape learning outcomes is the learning context. Studies conducted in online, blended, digital, and AI-supported learning settings display that these learning environments can be more emotionally demanding for language learners (El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025; Su & Guo, 2024; Xiao et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2022). In such contexts, ER becomes more important as it helps learners stay motivated, remain engaged, and cope with their boredom. Similarly, research focusing on collaborative and cooperative learning settings suggests that ER is closely linked to social interactions, as learners often regulate their emotions together through supporting one another, sharing responsibilities, which in turn shape both their emotional experiences and their effectiveness in learning cooperatively (Su & Guo, 2024; Zhang et al., 2022; Zheng & Zhou, 2022). In sum, the reviewed studies indicate that ER has either direct or indirect psychological and academic benefits in English language learning. While intervention-based and longitudinal studies suggest that improving ER can lead to measurable improvements over time, correlational studies have shown consistent relationships between ER, emotions, and achievement (Akram & Oteir, 2025; Karimi et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2025; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022; Shi & Sun, 2025). According to the existing research presented in Table 2, ER is not only an ability linked to psychological well-being, but also a variable that enables effective and sustainable language learning (Yıldırım & Atay, 2024; Yüksel et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2022).

4. Results

This systematic review analysed and synthesized 26 empirical studies that investigated emotion regulation (ER) among learners of EFL/ESL and broader English language learning contexts, and which were published between 2010 and 2025. By

using the keywords *Emotion Regulation (ER)*, *English as a Foreign Language (EFL)*, *English as a Second Language (ESL)*, *English Language Teaching (ELT)*, and *English Language Learning (ELL)*, only studies focusing on learners were included, whereas those focusing on teacher ER were intentionally excluded. Results show that dominant research settings and participant characteristics are higher education contexts and university learners. However, there are also a small number of studies conducted in high school settings, adult learners enrolled in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs, and learners from private or institutional language schools. These small but meaningful diversity suggests growing interest beyond high school education contexts. Learning environments varied from face-to-face classrooms to online, blended, digital, and AI-supported contexts, displaying the latest shifts in education contexts in English language education. As for methodological trends, quantitative research design was the most preferred category, followed by mixed-methods approaches, and finally, qualitative approaches. While many studies employed self-report questionnaires (most commonly ERQ-based instruments), a few studies adopted longitudinal, experimental, or intervention-based designs, providing deeper insight into changes that occur over time or through a process and their instructional impacts.

Regarding the commonly used ER strategies, cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression were the most investigated strategies. Other adaptive strategies, such as acceptance, problem solving, attention deployment, situation selection, and situation modification took place mainly in qualitative and mixed-methods research. Moreover, ER research was most commonly linked with foreign language anxiety, enjoyment, engagement, well-being, grit, and belongingness in English learning contexts. Language learning performance outcomes examined together with ER strategies and psychological outcomes included writing, speaking, and general English language proficiency. In terms of explicit interventions or experimental designs, five studies examined the changes occurring after ER training programs, positive psychology-based instruction, exposure to English cartoons, altruistic teaching, and physical exercise interventions.

Although these studies were limited in number, they consistently reported positive effects on learners' emotion regulation, well-being, and language outcomes.

Reviewing the findings together, it can be concluded that emotion regulation is not just an extra or a secondary emotional mechanism in English language learning, but a central psychological process that contributes to the way learners learn English and the outcomes of their learning. Among diverse learning environments and groups, ER was consistently associated with academic engagement, emotional wellbeing, and language performance (Amini Farsani et al., 2024; Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018; El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025; Li & Xu, 2019), which supports earlier claims that emotion and cognition are deeply interrelated in second language learning (Gross & John, 2003; Pekrun, 2006).

5. Discussion

The findings of this systematic review show several clear patterns in the way ER has been studied in English language learning contexts. First, the visible dominance of the studies conducted in higher education settings suggests that ER research in EFL and ESL has so far concentrated on primarily on university learners. While this may partly indicate accessibility and methodological convenience, it also reveals a considerable gap in adolescent-focused and school-based ER research in EFL and ESL contexts.

The second pattern is about the methodological tendency of the field. The strong preference for quantitative and correlational designs reveals that the field has focused more on identifying patterns and measurable relationships between ER or other psychological and academical variables (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Dörnyei, 2007). Although the studies provided valuable evidence regarding repeating patterns and associations, they offer less insights into how ER takes place in real-time classroom interaction and how learners regulate their emotions in specific contexts and within social interaction (Creswell, 2014; Mackey & Gass, 2016). In this respect, the smaller number of qualitative and mixed-methods research has important contribution by revealing how learners interpret,

experience, and manage emotions in authentic language learning situations.

Another important pattern is the strong emphasis on cognitive regulation as an ER strategy. Its prominence may indicate that ER in EFL and ESL contexts widely conceptualizes regulating emotions as a conscious and reflective process. In particular, cognitive reappraisal is continuously correlated with positive outcomes, such as increased enjoyment, engagement, perseverance, and improved language performance. On the other hand, expressive suppression, generally considered as a maladaptive strategy (Gross & John, 2003; Gross, 2015), has been associated with negative emotional and academic consequences (Karimi et al., 2022; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022). ER strategies less frequently studied were acceptance and problem solving, which appeared mainly in qualitative or intervention-based studies, may indicate that strategy diversity remains underexplored.

The review also shows that emotionally demanding learning environments, particularly online, blended, and AI-supported contexts, may increase the necessity for the use of ER strategies. In these contexts, learners are more likely to encounter anxiety, isolation, frustration, technostress and uncertainty which may increase the need for using adaptive ER strategies in order to have sustainable motivation and engagement for learning (Akram & Oteir, 2025; Cazan et al., 2024; El Deen & Mahmoud, 2025). Similarly, studies focusing on collaborative and cooperative learning demonstrate that learners' emotional experiences and emotion regulation processes may depend on social interactions such as group relationships, peer behaviour, and interaction patterns. In these settings, learners often regulate their emotions collectively by supporting one another, sharing responsibility, and engaging in interpersonal emotion management; thus, underlining the role of co-regulation in English language learning contexts (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Yıldırım & Atay, 2024).

One of the most important points of this review is relatively the limited number of intervention-based studies. And yet, their findings are particularly important. In comparison with correlational research, intervention-based studies

provide stronger evidence with their before and after process tracking and offer insight into how ER can be developed over time. Thereby, in these intervention studies, it is inferred that emotion regulation is teachable, learnable, and responsive to instructional support (Derakhshan & Zare, 2023; Karimi et al., 2022; Shafiee Rad & Jafarpour, 2022). These results suggest that ER, rather than being considered as a fixed learner trait, can be intentionally developed, supported and practiced through pedagogical practices. This makes intervention-based studies particularly valuable for understanding the practical role of ER in English language learning and teaching.

To sum up, these patterns suggest that ER research in English language learning has made meaningful progress, but it is still limited in some areas. The field has developed a clearer understanding of psychological role of ER, but important gaps in terms of learner groups, methodological variation, and classroom practice still remain.

6. Conclusion

This systematic review examined 26 empirical studies published between 2014 and 2025 in order to synthesize how ER has been studied in EFL and ESL areas. The findings demonstrate that ER is an increasingly inquired research area in English language education which has been researched in relation to learners' emotional experiences, academic performance, well-being and learning engagement.

The reviewed studies show that ER is not just a side issue in language learning, but actually a key process that affects how learners experience, manage, and respond to challenges they face during their English learning. In different contexts, ER was studied connected to emotional and academic outcomes, such as enjoyment, anxiety, well-being, and language performance. However, this review also shows some methodological and contextual gaps in the field, with a strong concentration of university students, quantitative designs, and a limited number of intervention-based studies.

In sum, these findings demonstrate that ER plays a meaningful role in English language learning, and seems to require more sustained attention in future

English language education and research. Although emotion regulation has been addressed through broader research in second or foreign language learning, this present review offers a learner-centred and systematic synthesis of existing studies in the field. By doing so, researchers aim to contribute to the field by compiling the findings of the existing studies and highlighting emerging trends, patterns, and gaps that may influence future research.

7. Implications

7.1 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this review suggest that ER should be treated as a meaningful part of language teaching rather than a secondary emotional concern. Since learners' emotional states and experiences are closely related to their well-being, engagement, and language performance, practicing emotion regulation may help creating more effective and emotionally sustainable learning environments.

One implication is that English language teachers may benefit from viewing ER as a teachable, supportable classroom skill. Therefore, learners will be able to cope with negative emotions such as anxiety, stress, uncertainty, and performance pressure when they are given opportunities to notice their emotions and emotional responses and respond to challenges in more adaptive ways. Consequently, classroom practices encouraging reflection, emotional awareness, supportive feedback, and coping skills may help learners manage these emotional challenges more effectively while staying engaged in language learning tasks.

The findings also suggest that this kind of support may be particularly important in digitally mediated learning contexts, where learners may experience additional emotional challenges, such as uncertainty, technostress, and isolation. In such contexts, instructional practices supporting learners in terms of their emotions may play an important role in helping learners sustain motivation and engagement. Moreover, the reviewed studies indicate that integrating emotionally supportive practices into English language learning may not only benefit language learners' emotional well-

being, but also support them in terms of their academic performance.

7.2 Implications for Future Research

In light of the reviewed evidence presented in this study, several implications for future research can be put forward. First and foremost, as most of the studies covered in this systematic review were conducted in university settings, future studies could include more adolescent learners, younger students, such as those in school-based classroom-based contexts, in order to balance the visible dominance of university samples. Investigating the ways younger learners regulate their emotions while learning English may help us better understand how ER processes develop over time and how it can be supported early on.

Second, considering their limited number, more experimental and longitudinal intervention studies are needed to investigate how emotion regulation strategies can be taught, practiced, and maintained over time because existing evidence largely relies on a cross-sectional design that identifies the relationship between ER and language learning outcomes at a single point in time rather than examining the instructional effects of ER-focused interventions over time. Future research will benefit from experimental and longitudinal intervention designs in order to better understand if the ER training can enable long-term changes in learners' language learning performance and well-being.

Moreover, while existing studies have highlighted learners' use of different ER strategies, fewer studies have directly explored how these strategies relate to achievement, proficiency development, engagement, or maintained motivation. Exploring these relationships can help us understand whether ER is actually useful in practice for learning English successfully. Thus, there seems to be a need for more research examining the impact of ER on learners' academic success and language learning outcomes.

In addition, as the most studied ER strategies were cognitive reappraisal and expressive

suppression, researchers can move beyond them to make more explorations on acceptance, problem-solving, social regulation, and culturally embedded strategies. A wider focus may provide a deeper understanding of how learners regulate emotions across different learning conditions.

Moreover, since most of the studies in this review adopted quantitative and mixed-methods designs, there is a need for more qualitative and mixed-methods research so that researchers could record learners' emotional experiences and explain how ER may unfold in authentic learning situations.

Future research may also examine EFL and ESL contexts separately in order to identify and compare potential differences and similarities in learners' ER processes. Since EFL and ESL learning contexts may differ in terms of language exposure, communicative demands, and sociocultural conditions, these comparative studies may provide beneficial insights into how contextual factors influence ER in English language learning.

Finally, because of recent technological developments leading to a growing use of digital, blended, and AI-supported learning environments, future research may focus on how these learning environments may create different emotional challenges for English language learners and demonstrate how learners regulate their emotions while they are learning English.

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Conflict of Interest

The researchers have no personal or financial conflicts of interest with other individuals or institutions related to this research.

Author Contributions

Both authors planned, discussed, verified, and approved the manuscript.

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Appendix

Table 2
Table of ER Systematic Review

Authors (Year)	Publication Source	Country	Participants	Methodology	Data Collection	Experimental	Variables	EFL Focus	Findings (Brief)
Akram, H., & Oteir, I. N. (2025)	<i>BMC Psychology</i> , 13(1), 44	Bahrain	University students (L1 & L2 learners)	Longitudinal comparative study	Questionnaire	Quasi-experimental	Emotional well-being, physical exercise, emotion regulation (Cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression)	L2 learning & emotional well-being	Regular exercise improved mental well-being and emotional regulation-increased cognitive reappraisal (CR), decreased expressive suppression (ES) among L2 students.
Amini Farsani, M., Oroomieh, D., & Ramezanzadeh, K. (2024)	<i>Current Psychology</i> , 43(48), 36884–36896	Iran	13 Iranian MA Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) students	Qualitative – multiple case study	Semi-structured interviews, diaries, narrative inquiries	No (qualitative exploratory)	Emotion regulation strategies during argumentative writing & feedback	Argumentative writing + feedback-related emotions	Students initially felt shame, disappointment, stress, and low confidence; they regulated emotions mainly through acceptance, cognitive reappraisal, and problem-solving; instructor support also played a major role.
Bielak, J., & Mystkowska-Wiertelka, A. (2020)	<i>System</i> , 90, 102208	Poland	133 Polish EFL university students (English majors; B1–B2 CEFR). Additional interviews with 16 students and 9 English teachers.	Vignette-based qualitative study	Vignette responses (scenario-based questionnaire called Managing Your Emotions for Language Learning), interviews	No	Emotion-regulation strategies	Emotion regulation strategies used by English majors during foreign language learning tasks, explored through classroom-based scenarios (vignettes).	Students experienced both positive and negative emotions and used diverse ER strategies depending on the situation. The vignette tool revealed a rich ERS repertoire, and both learners and teachers found these strategies effective for managing emotions in EFL.
Bielak, J., & Mystkowska-Wiertelka, A. (2024)	<i>The Modern Language Journal</i> , 108(3), 688–718	Poland	10 advanced EFL learners (idiodynamic) + 103 English majors (survey)	Mixed-methods (idiodynamic + quantitative)	Video-recorded speaking tasks, per-second emotion ratings, stimulated-recall interviews, CERQ survey	No	Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE), ER strategy use (mainly cognitive ER)	L2 speaking tasks (pair/group work)	FLA fluctuated moment-to-moment more intensely than FLE; emotional patterns were highly individual; anxiety spikes linked to errors & performance pressure; learners used cognitive reappraisal, attention shifting & social ER often in clusters; survey confirmed cognitive ER as the most common strategy.
Chaudri, A. I., Pervaiz, A., & Ali, R. A. (2023)	<i>International Journal of Linguistics and Culture</i> , 4(1), 83–108	Pakistan	University ESL students	Descriptive (mainly quantitative with qualitative categorization)	MYE scenario-based questionnaire	No	Emotion regulation strategies (Situation Selection, Attention Deployment, Cognitive Change, Situation Modification, and Response Modulation), emotional intelligence	Emotions experienced in ESL University classroom	Students used cognitive change, acceptance & reassurance, situation modification most often when facing negative emotions. Females most often reported interest and excitement, while males showed more aggression; genders differed in their use of emotion regulation strategies.
El Deen, A. A. M. M., & Mahmoud, M. M. A. (2025)	<i>Forum for Linguistic Studies</i> , 7(11), 728–741	Saudi Arabia	120 University EFL learners	Mixed-method Case study	The ERQ, and the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), semi-structured interviews, and reflective journals	No	Emotion regulation, emotional experience	Blended EFL learning	Learners mainly used adaptive ER strategies (reappraisal, problem-solving, prayer), but suppression & avoidance were still common. Online learning increased anxiety & technostress. Face-to-face settings boosted enjoyment. Cultural & religious practices played a key role in their emotional coping.

Table 2 (cont'd)

Authors (Year)	Publication Source	Country	Participants	Methodology	Data Collection	Experimental	Variables	EFL Focus	Findings (Brief)
Haga, E., & Reinders, H. (2021)	English Teaching & Learning, 45(3), 245–262	USA	Adult ESL learners at American Community College	Mixed method study	Survey, In depth semi structured interview	No	Emotional responses, feedback processing, Emotion Regulation	English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program at a small community college in the USA	Learners reported negative emotions in response to feedback and used regulation strategies to cope. Learners experienced mixed emotions and managed them through a four-phase ER process; negative emotions also facilitated learning.
Heydarn ejad, T., Ibrahim, K. A. A. A., Abdelrasheed, N. S. G., & Rezvani, E. (2022)	Language Testing in Asia, 12(1), 57	Iran	395 Iranian EFL University learners.	Quantitative	The academic emotion regulation questionnaire (AERQ), the core of self-assessment questionnaire (CSAQ), and the academic buoyancy scale (ABS)	No	Academic emotion regulation, self-Core of assessment, academic buoyancy	How EFL learners regulate academic emotions and how this regulation influences their self-assessment beliefs and academic resilience.	Emotion regulation strongly and positively predicted EFL learners' self-assessment and academic buoyancy. Learners with higher AER showed higher confidence, resilience, and positive academic beliefs. CSA also significantly boosted their self-assessment beliefs and academic resilience.
Karimi, M. N., Hashemi, M. R., & Oghyanous, P. A. (2022)	TESL-EJ, 26(2), n2	Iran	10 Female EFL adult L2 learners (age 21–28), intermediate level, selected from 37 emotionally dysfunctional students.	Qualitative (Narrative inquiry; longitudinal) (from the qualitative strand of a larger mixed-methods project)	4 rounds of semi-structured interviews + learner diaries	Yes – ER intervention (longitudinal ER training program)	Achievement emotions, emotion regulation strategies, emotional development through ER training	Learners' use and development of ER strategies in L2 learning context (Online EFL classes)	ER workshops improved learners' control over achievement emotions and increased the use of adaptive ER strategies. Positive emotions increased and negative emotions decreased after ER training; learners shifted from distraction/suppression to more adaptive strategies (self-regulated learning, reassurance, competency-focused strategies); improved control of negative emotions and more effective ER use across time.
Kantaridou, Z., & Psaltou-Joycey, A. (2022)	Selected Papers of ISTAL 24, 401–419	Greece	106 university EFL students	Mixed-method study	Managing Your Emotions (MYE) for Language Learning questionnaire.	No	Positive emotions, self-regulation strategies, EFL Classroom situations	EFL Classroom situations: <i>having one-to-one tutorials, working in groups, and grammar rule repetition.</i>	One-to-one tutorials generated the most positive emotions, group work was the most emotionally difficult, and grammar repetition was manageable due to learners' self-regulation strategies.
Liu, M., Wu, Q., & Wang, Y. (2025)	Education Sciences, 15(11), 1434	China	Middle school & university students (347 8th graders and 460 s-year university Students)	Comparative study	Questionnaires& English test (Final term English exam, 63-item Achievement Emotion Scale and the 10-item Emotion Regulation Questionnaire)	No	Achievement emotions, emotion regulation	English performance	Emotion regulation (ER) predicted better English performance. Middle schoolers showed lower English performance and stronger emotion-performance links, while university students showed stronger ER-emotion links; CR boosted performance for both, but ES hindered it for middle schoolers.
Rokni, S., Hamidi, H., & Ebadi, H. (2014)	International Journal of Basic Sciences and Applied Research, 3, 376–380	Iran	University EFL learners	Quantitative, correlational study	Test and questionnaires	No	Emotional intelligence, emotion regulation	General EFL learning	Emotional intelligence positively correlated with emotion regulation ability. No significant gender difference in ER scores.
Shafiee Rad, H., and A. Jafarpour. (2022)	Reading & Writing Quarterly, 1–20	Iran	L2 learners from an English language institute (2 classes- age: 19-24)	Experimental intervention study (randomized control and experimental groups)	Writing tasks; well-being, grit, ER, and resilience questionnaires	Yes	Well-being, grit, emotion regulation, resilience, writing proficiency	L2 writing skills	Positive psychology-based interventions significantly enhanced learners' emotional well-being and L2 writing performance.

Table 2 (cont'd)

Authors (Year)	Publication Source	Country	Participants	Methodology	Data Collection	Experimental	Variables	EFL Focus	Findings (Brief)
Shi & Sun (2025)	Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology 98 (2025) 101773	China	298 senior high school EFL learners + 306 college EFL learners	Comparative quantitative study	Adapted ERQ, SWEMWBS (well-being), and Reeve & Tseng's Academic Engagement Scale (agentic, behavioral, emotional, cognitive) for EFL context; all administered via Likert scales.	No	Emotion Regulation: cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression Outcomes: well-being, academic engagement (agentic, behavioral, cognitive)	Learners' ER and engagement in Chinese EFL instruction	Reappraisal was common and boosted engagement in both groups, with well-being mediating this only for high school students. College students used more suppression and showed lower engagement overall (except higher cognitive engagement). Suppression had no significant effects.
Solhi, M., Derakhshan, A., & Ünsal, B. (2025)	Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 46:2, 224-243	Turkiye (Istanbul universities)	259 Turkish university EFL students (mean age = 20.6)	Quantitative – Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)	Online questionnaires: L2 Grit Scale, ERQ, Boredom Coping Strategies Scale	No – non-experimental correlation SEM study	Predictor: L2 Grit (perseverance of effort, consistency of interest) Outcome: Boredom coping strategies Moderator: Emotion regulation (reappraisal, suppression)	Learners' psychological traits (grit, boredom, ER) in university-level English learning	L2 grit strongly predicted boredom coping—especially cognitive approach. ER was correlated but did not moderate the grit-boredom link. Gritty learners used more adaptive coping and reframed boring tasks as valuable.
Su, Y., & Guo, H. (2024)	Journal of Academic Purposes, 71, 101404	China	72 Chinese EFL undergraduate university learners (B2–C1)	Mixed-methods	Vignettes, emotion reports, interviews	No (digital collaborative reading project)	Emotions during digital academic reading; ER strategies (co-regulation, cognitive change, attention, task strategies, response regulation, situation modification)	Digital collaborative reading (EAP reading tasks)	Positive/negative/mixed emotions fluctuated; anxiety most common. Negative emotions were triggered by task difficulty, pressure, and performance worries. Cognitive and social (co-regulation) strategies were most used to manage them.
Taghaddomi, M. S., & Madadkhar, Shandi, M. (2023)	Iranian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 26(2), 231–253	Iran	120 Adolescent EFL learners recruited from English institutes in Tehran	Mixed-methods approach with a pre-test/post-test quasi-experimental design	Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy (QESE), the ERQ, Semi-Structured Interviews	Yes (Pre-post-tests, experimental and control group)	Independent variable: Watching English language cartoons on adolescent (intervention) Dependent variables: Emotion regulation, Self-efficacy	Impact of English-language cartoons on adolescent EFL learners' emotional regulation and self-efficacy in English learning context	Watching English cartoons improved learners' self-efficacy and emotion regulation. The experimental group outperformed the control group, and interviews showed gains in language skills, positive emotions/motivation, sustained learning, and mixed but generally positive effects on self-efficacy.
Xiao, T., Yi, S., & Akhter, S. (2024)	International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 25(3), 77–96	China	Private institute EFL learners (intermediate) (online AI-supported context)	Quantitative, correlational study	Standardized questionnaires (CERQ, Self-esteem Scale, FL Enjoyment Scale, Researcher made test)	No	Cognitive-emotion regulation, self-esteem, academic enjoyment	AI-supported online English learning	Enhanced self-esteem improved Cognitive ER, academic enjoyment, and language success, showing AI-supported classes boost well-being and academic engagement.
Yetiş, K. (2025)	Journal of Adult Learning, Knowledge and Innovation	Hungary (study abroad context; Turkish students in Hungary)	38 Turkish BA/MA/PhD students (non-English majors) studying in Hungary	Qualitative exploratory + mixed-methods (MYE includes multiple-choice + open-ended responses)	Adapted Managing Your Emotions Questionnaire (30 vignette scenarios; 300 questions) via Google Forms	No	Emotions experienced in study-abroad English-use scenarios. ER strategies (individual & interpersonal). Realism/fit of in-class and out-of-class scenarios	Emotion regulation during English use in academic and social SA contexts (in-class and out-of-class English communication scenarios)	Ss often experienced anxiety & mixed emotions while using English abroad and relied mainly on CA to regulate emotions, with self-regulation more common than seeking others' help.

Table 2 (cont'd)

Authors (Year)	Publication Source	Country	Participants	Methodology	Data Collection	Experimental	Variables	EFL Focus	Findings (Brief)
Yildirim a. C., & Atay, D. (2024).	<i>TEFLIN</i> , 35(1)	Turkiye	49 intermediate-level EFL learners (prep-class)	Mixed-method	Questionnaires (Achievement Emotions Questionnaire, ERQ) + qualitative narratives	No	Emotion regulation strategies (cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression), achievement emotions	Role of ER strategies on achievement emotions among EFL students	Cognitive reappraisal led to more positive emotions; expressive suppression associated with more negative emotions.
Yüksel, H. G., Solhi, M., Özcan, E., & Giritlioğlu, N. B. (2025)	<i>The Language Learning Journal</i> 2025, Vol. 53, NO. 3, 306-322	Turkiye	191 Turkish EFL university students (ELT majors; ages 19-26)	Quantitative – Path analysis (correlational/mediational)	Questionnaire (Belongingness Scale; ERQ; self-rated proficiency)	No	Predictors: Social & academic L2 belongingness (peers, teachers) Mediators: ER strategies (reappraisal; suppression) Outcome: Self-perceived L2 proficiency	Online L2 learning; belongingness ; ER strategies; perceived proficiency	Belongingness did not directly predict proficiency. Only cognitive reappraisal (CA) mediated the effect of belongingness (peer & teacher) on perceived L2 proficiency. Suppression showed no mediation effect.
Zhang, Z., Gao, X., Liu, T., & Lee, C. B. (2022)	<i>Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching</i> , 12(3), 459-481	China	336 University EFL learners (in an online collaborative English learning environment)	Quantitative survey	Questionnaires (the Adaptive Instrument for Regulation of Emotions, the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale)	No	Emotion regulation, enjoyment	Online collaborative writing	ER positively impacted learners' enjoyment and engagement in writing tasks. Group and peer emotion regulation predicted higher enjoyment in online collaborative EFL writing; group regulation had the strongest effect.
Zhang, Y., Hu, Y., & Yu, M. (2024)	<i>Language Teaching Research</i> , 13621688241266184	China	High School Adolescent EFL learners	Quantitative survey	Online survey	No	Emotional support, emotion regulation strategies (Cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression)	Adolescent EFL learning engagement	Teacher support boosted EFL engagement directly; cognitive reappraisal mediated positive links, and emotion suppression mediated a negative link between peer support and engagement.
Zhang, S. (2025)	<i>British Educational Research Journal</i>	China	Chinese EFL learners (details not specified in abstract)	Quantitative correlational study	Questionnaires (ERQ, The Short Warwick Edinburgh Well-being Scale, Academic Engagement Scale)	No	Emotion regulation strategies, grit, self-compassion, L2 learning experience, academic demotivation	L2 learning in AI-assisted environments	Emotion regulation strategies were positively associated with self-compassion and grit, and negatively associated with academic demotivation, influencing L2 learning experiences.
Zheng, S., & Zhou, X. (2022)	<i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health</i> , 19(19), 12604	China	115 Chinese university freshmen EFL learners	Cross-sectional Quantitative study	ER questionnaire (ERQ). The FLE scale. PGI scale and PPS scale.	No	Emotion regulation, cooperative learning,	EFL Learners' Foreign language enjoyment	Cooperative learning combined with ER enhanced learners' enjoyment. Students with stronger ER skills experienced higher enjoyment in learning, and positive group support during collaborative learning also increased FL enjoyment.