



FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENJOYMENT, SELF-EFFICACY, AND WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE: EVIDENCE FROM ARABIC LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Developing learners' communicative proficiency in Arabic requires not only linguistic competence but also a strong psychological disposition, particularly the willingness to communicate (WTC). Previous studies have highlighted the roles of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and self-efficacy (SE) in fostering WTC, yet empirical evidence in the context of Arabic language learning remains scarce. This study aims to examine the structural relationships among FLE, SE, and WTC among undergraduate students of Arabic Language Education. A quantitative design was adopted using path analysis through the Jamovi application. Data were collected from 101 participants using three validated instruments: the Short Form of the FLE Scale, the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale, and the Arabic WTC Scale. The findings reveal that FLE exerts a significant positive effect on SE ($\beta = 0.52, p < .01$). However, SE does not significantly predict WTC ($\beta = 0.11, p > .05$), indicating that learners' confidence alone does not guarantee communicative willingness. These results suggest that WTC is influenced by additional factors such as communicative contexts, classroom dynamics, and affective barriers. The study underscores the need for pedagogical interventions that integrate emotional engagement and contextualized communicative practices to strengthen Arabic learners' WTC.

Keywords: Arabic language; Foreign language enjoyment; Self-efficacy; Willingness to communicate

ABSTRAK

Pengembangan kemahiran komunikatif pembelajar bahasa Arab tidak hanya menuntut kompetensi linguistik, tetapi juga kesiapan psikologis yang kuat, khususnya willingness to communicate (WTC) atau kemauan untuk berkomunikasi. Sejumlah penelitian terdahulu menyoroti peran foreign language enjoyment (FLE) dan self-efficacy (SE) dalam membangun WTC, namun bukti empiris dalam konteks pembelajaran bahasa Arab masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji hubungan struktural antara FLE, SE, dan WTC pada mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan dengan metode path analysis melalui aplikasi Jamovi. Data diperoleh dari 101 responden menggunakan tiga instrumen teruji: Short Form of the FLE Scale, Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale, dan Arabic WTC Scale. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa FLE berpengaruh positif signifikan terhadap SE ($\beta = 0,52; p < 0,01$). Namun, SE tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap WTC ($\beta = 0,11; p > 0,05$), yang mengindikasikan bahwa kepercayaan diri saja tidak menjamin kesiapan berkomunikasi dalam bahasa Arab. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa WTC juga dipengaruhi oleh faktor lain seperti konteks komunikasi, dinamika kelas, dan hambatan afektif. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya intervensi pedagogis yang mengintegrasikan keterlibatan emosional dan praktik komunikasi kontekstual untuk memperkuat WTC pembelajar bahasa Arab.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Arab; Efikasi diri; Kesenangan berbahasa asing; Keinginan berkomunikasi

INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of second language acquisition is to cultivate the ability and habitual use of the target language as an instrument for communication. This process can be understood as an interactive exchange of information between two or more participants, encompassing both speakers and recipients (Parikh, 2001). Within the context of second language learning, using the target language in communication involves a complex interplay of multiple dimensions and variables (Macintyre et al., 1998). Moreover, the psychological disposition of second language learners significantly contributes to developing traits conducive to active and productive linguistic engagement, thereby reinforcing the regular practice of target language communication. This interplay of behavioral and cognitive factors ultimately cultivates a sustained pattern of communicative proficiency in the target language.

According to Macintyre et al. (1998), the above disposition, widely conceptualized as *Willingness to Communicate* (WTC), represents an individual's readiness to initiate discourse in the target language. Although this concept was initially developed within the framework of first language (L1) acquisition by (McCroskey & Baer, 1985), where it is defined as an individual's predisposition to initiate discourse with others (McCroskey, 2009; Zarrinabadi & Tanbakooei, 2016), its application in second language (L2) pedagogy has been reconceptualized. In L2 acquisition, WTC is interpreted as an individual's readiness and volition to engage in verbal or written discourse at a specific time with designated interlocutors, utilizing the target language as the medium of interaction (Macintyre et al., 1998). Scholarly consensus has long recognized WTC as a critical determinant of success in L2 learning, with empirical studies underscoring its significance in fostering linguistic engagement and proficiency (Lan et al., 2023; Lee et al., 2022; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Ushioda, 2009).

A salient issue arising in this context is the lack of psycholinguistically research on WTC in Arabic as a second language. Most established WTC frameworks have been developed and validated in the context of English; however, the application of WTC assessment tools to Arabic L2 acquisition is strikingly underdeveloped, with Fahri et al. (2024) being the sole study to validate a WTC construct specifically designed for Arabic learners. This disparity highlights a significant research gap, particularly given the crucial role of Arabic language proficiency among Indonesian university students. Mastery of Arabic not only facilitates linguistic competence but also enhances Indonesia's global standing as the world's most populous Muslim-majority nation, where Arabic serves as both a conduit for religious scholarship and a vehicle for enhancing cross-cultural diplomacy.

In addition to this empirical gap, Arabic language learners often exhibit suboptimal psychological dispositions toward communication. Empirical investigations, such as Rahman's (2018) seminal study on Arabic learners' motivation, indicate a marked dominance of *instrumental* over *integrative motivation* among the participants. Instrumental motivation, as operationalized in Rahman's (2018) research, involves learners' pragmatic aspirations, such as acquiring social capital or career advancement, as the primary impetus for language acquisition. Conversely, integrative motivation reflects a genuine desire to connect with the linguistic and cultural world of native Arabic speakers, promoting deeper communicative engagement and language use (Rahman, 2018). This distinction highlights the complex nature of motivation in L2 acquisition, particularly within Arabic pedagogy. Given this complexity, scholars are increasingly called to investigate positive psychology constructs, such as *self-efficacy* and *Foreign Language Enjoyment* (FLE), as potential catalysts for fostering sustainable linguistic behaviors among university students. Such

interdisciplinary inquiry could elucidate mechanisms to bridge the gap between learners' psychological readiness and their practical realization of target language proficiency.

Within the broader field of applied linguistics, numerous studies have explored WTC through affective and psychological perspectives. Syntheses by (Elahi Shirvan et al., 2019) reveal that communicative competence, motivation, enjoyment, self-efficacy, and anxiety are among the most consistent predictors of WTC. Furthermore, Lee & Chen Hsieh (2019) examined the impact of affective variables on WTC among English learners in Taiwan. Their findings indicate that affective variables play a pivotal role in facilitating WTC; however, the influence of each affective factor may differ depending on the specific communication context.

In line with the study mentioned above, (Pasban & Haddad Narafshan, 2020) revealed that academic goal motives are positively correlated with WTC among Iranian students in English classes. The study indicated that students are driven by both intrinsic factors, such as mastery, self-presentation, cultivated benevolence, and autonomous tasks, and extrinsic factors, including prospective achievement, family, peer influence, and lecturers. In addition to academic motives, (Zhou et al., 2023) confirmed a positive association between L2 proficiency and WTC among English learners in China, stating that learner anxiety negatively moderates the relationship between overall second language proficiency and WTC, as well as between reading and writing proficiency and WTC, but does not affect the relationships between listening and speaking skills and WTC.

Conversely, (Lee et al., 2022) found that both Korean and Taiwanese students exhibit a relatively low WTC in classroom settings, primarily due to apprehension about speaking in the target language (English). This reticence is influenced by factors such as peer dynamics, group cohesion, and an accuracy-oriented teaching pedagogy. Moreover, the study revealed that Korean students are more inclined to communicate outside the classroom compared to their Taiwanese counterparts. In digital environments, however, Taiwanese students demonstrate a greater willingness to engage in communication than Korean students. Furthermore, (Lee & Lu, 2023) revealed that among English learners in China an ideal level of self-motivation significantly influences and can predict learners' WTC, while qualitative findings demonstrated that these learners are willing to communicate in English in both contexts.

Utilizing an experimental design, (Sato & Dussuel Lam, 2021) revealed that comparisons of pre- and post-experiment WTC questionnaire scores showed only marginal differences between groups, with no group exhibiting any significant score changes over time. In contrast, behavioral analyses demonstrated that the group receiving *Metacognitive Instruction on WTC* (MIWTC) showed increased vocabulary use and more balanced target language participation. In the context of Indonesian English language learners, (Lee & Drajati, 2020) developed a construct for measuring WTC in both digital and non-digital learning environments. This process yielded an 11-item scale comprising three factors: in-class WTC, out-of-class WTC, and WTC within informal digital English learning contexts, all demonstrating high reliability and validity. Their Confirmatory Factor Analysis confirmed the three-factor model's reliability, extending WTC research into digital domains and providing educators with a practical tool to assess and foster learners' communicative engagement.

In addition to research on English language learning, studies on WTC have also compared learners of English and Mandarin. For instance, (Cheng & Xu, 2022) revealed that individual factors such as gender, age, academic program, and language proficiency play crucial roles in shaping learners' WTC. In the realm of Mandarin language studies, Lan et al. (2023) examined the predictive influence of a constellation of non-cognitive factors namely, shame, motivation, enjoyment, and boredom on WTC within a Mandarin language learning framework among

learners in New Zealand. Their findings suggest that the enjoyment mediates the relationship between the intensity of motivation and their WTC in Mandarin. Additionally, both shame and boredom concurrently moderate this relationship. In essence, emotions and personality traits collectively play a crucial role in driving Mandarin learners' WTC. Moreover, (Lv et al., 2021) suggested that while learners' pragmatic understanding is positively correlated with their WTC in Mandarin, the combined assessment of both pragmatic awareness and pragmatic understanding did not exhibit a significant correlation with WTC. Consequently, the study introduced age as a moderating variable in the relationship between pragmatic competence and WTC among Mandarin language learners.

Among language learners in general, (Jin & Lee, 2022) conducted a study on WTC and the predominant factors influencing it, employing a meta-analysis within a *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM) framework. Their findings reveal that perceptions of competence and anxiety are crucial determinants of both WTC and target language use among learners. Moreover, moderator analyses indicate that the effects of target language competence and anxiety on WTC vary significantly depending on the communication context (within or outside the classroom) and the learners' proficiency levels (basic versus advanced). In the context of Arabic language learners, Mahmoodi & Moazam (2014) reveal a significant correlation between WTC and Arabic language achievement among Iranian learners, suggesting that those more inclined to communicate tend to attain higher proficiency levels in Arabic. However, the correlation coefficients between Arabic achievement and the WTC subscales in the target language indicate that, while in-class communication exhibits the strongest correlation with Arabic achievement, the weakest correlation is observed between WTC with *non-native speakers* (NNS) and Arabic achievement. These results imply that, within the realm of second language learning, in-class opportunities remain the most effective means of fostering a willingness to communicate (Mahmoodi & Moazam, 2014). In terms of construct measurement, (Fahri et al., 2024) investigated the validity and reliability of the Arabic WTC construct. Their study demonstrated that the construct, which comprises three dimensions online communication, in-class, and offline contexts, is both valid and reliable for measuring WTC among Arabic language learners.

Based on the literature review presented above, it is evident that research on the WTC among Arabic language learners remains limited compared to studies on languages such as English and Mandarin. This gap is particularly concerning for Arabic language learners in Indonesia, where there is strong potential to develop Arabic instruction models that integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects, including the psycholinguistic dimensions of learning. Moreover, the rapid advancement of technology and social media has introduced additional variables into the study of target language communication. Consequently, this study seeks to determine the extent to which the Willingness to communicate in Arabic among Indonesian learners can be predicted by *foreign language enjoyment* (FLE), with *self-efficacy* in Arabic language learning serving as a mediating factor. In summary, the research aims to elucidate the relationship and influence of *foreign language enjoyment* (FLE) and *self-efficacy* on the Willingness and desire of Arabic language students to communicate in Arabic, both within academic settings and in everyday real-life contexts.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach using a structured survey method, thereby generating numerical data that can be analyzed in accordance with the proposed hypotheses. The analysis was conducted with the aid of Jamovi, a statistical software chosen for its integrated structural modeling capabilities and transparent output features that facilitate reproducibility and open-source accessibility. The participants comprised 101 undergraduate Arabic language students from UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Sampling was conducted using a convenience sampling technique due to the accessibility of participants within a single institutional context and their direct engagement in Arabic language learning. The sample was predominantly female, accounting for 66.3% (67 students), while males constituted 33.7% (34 students). The study was conducted during the even semester of 2024, with the majority of participants being second-semester students (55.4%, or 56 students), followed by those in the fourth semester (22.8%, or 23 students), sixth semester (7.9%, or 8 students), eighth semester (12.9%, or 13 students), and tenth semester (1.0%, or 1 student). Given this distribution, the study is considered to be sufficiently representative of Arabic language learners typically found in Indonesian higher education contexts.

Overall, this study employs three primary instruments: those measuring FLE, SE, and WTC. FLE is conceptualized as a profound and extensive positive emotion experienced by language learners when their psychological needs are met during the language learning process (Botes et al., 2021; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016). To assess FLE, the study utilizes the instrument developed by (Botes et al., 2021), which has been adapted for the context of Arabic language learning. This instrument comprises 10 items across three dimensions: teacher appreciation, personal comfort, and social comfort (e.g., "*I enjoy my Arabic class*" and "*There is a positive environment in my Arabic class*"), with responses recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "*strongly disagree*" to "*strongly agree*."

In contrast, SE is conceptualized as an individual's belief and confidence in their ability to complete tasks and achieve goals (Vaughan-Johnston & Jacobson, 2020). Within the context of Arabic language learning, SE is understood as a robust self-assurance regarding learners' capacity to accomplish educational tasks and ultimately attain their desired outcomes. To measure SE, this study employs the *Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale* (GSES) (Novrianto et al., 2019; Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995), which has been adapted to the context of Arabic language instruction. This instrument comprises 10 items (e.g., "*I can always solve difficult problems if I put in the effort*" and "*I am capable of finding ways to overcome obstacles that hinder my goals*") with responses recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "*strongly untrue*" to "*strongly true*."

Conversely, WTC is conceptualized as a strong desire or intense inclination to actively engage in communication (Mahmoodi & Moazam, 2014). In the context of Arabic language learning, WTC is defined as the robust self-motivation to participate in communicative activities in Arabic under any circumstances consistently. To assess this construct, the present study employs the WTC instrument developed by (Fahri et al., 2024), which comprises 12 items (e.g., "*I ... to communicate with native Arabic speakers through online media consistently*" and "*I ... to ask questions in Arabic during lectures*"), spanning three dimensions (online, classroom, and offline). Responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "*strongly unwilling*" to "*strongly willing*".

All instruments were adapted to the Arabic language learning context through expert review, and pilot testing. Content validity was evaluated by two experts in Arabic language

education and psycholinguistics, leading to minor lexical adjustments for contextual clarity. Construct validity was examined through *Confirmatory Factor Analysis* (CFA), and reliability coefficients for each instrument demonstrated high internal consistency: FLE ($\alpha = .86$), SE ($\alpha = .88$), and WTC ($\alpha = .90$). Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating stronger agreement or greater Willingness.

This study employs path analysis to examine the interrelationships among the observed variables, namely, FLE, SE, and WTC (Valenzuela & Bachmann, 2017). Initially, the analysis investigates the relationship between FLE and SE among Arabic language students, followed by an examination of the relationship between SE and WTC. Before conducting the main analysis, a series of assumption checks was performed to ensure the robustness of the model: Normality was assessed through skewness–kurtosis ratios and the Shapiro–Wilk test ($p > .05$), confirming approximately normal distribution of all variables. Multicollinearity was tested via Variance Inflation Factor ($VIF < 5.0$) and tolerance values (> 0.2), indicating no multicollinearity issues. Homoscedasticity and linearity were verified using residual plots, confirming consistency of error variances across predicted values. Several criteria have been established to ensure that the path analysis yields a robust model. A well-fitting model is indicated by a lower *Chi-Square* (X^2) value, a *Standardized Root Mean Square Residual* (SRMR) of less than 0.08, a *Root Mean Square Error of Approximation* (RMSEA) of less than 0.08, a *Comparative Fit Index* (CFI) exceeding 0.95, a *Tucker-Lewis Index* (TLI) exceeding 0.95, and a *Goodness-of-Fit Index* (GFI) above 0.90 (Aryadoust & Raquel, 2019). By adhering to these criteria, the analysis is expected to provide comprehensive insights into the relationships among the key variables. The analysis was conducted using the Jamovi software, owing to its superior flexibility in performing path analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Before presenting the main analysis results, it is essential to examine the characteristics and normality of the data based on the distribution revealed by the descriptive statistics.

Tab.1. Statistic Descriptive

	FLE	SE	WTC
N	101	101	101
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	28.7	39.3	41.6
Median	28	39	42
Mode	27.0	40.0	40.0
Sum	2897	3971	4204
Standard deviation	5.80	4.65	8.37
Variance	33.6	21.7	70.0
Range	32	21	39
Minimum	13	29	19
Maximum	45	50	58
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.966	0.988	0.976
Shapiro-Wilk P	0.072	0.501	0.085

Table 1 indicates that the dataset comprises 101 observations, with no missing data, and all are included in the analysis. In terms of central tendency, the mean score for WTC (41.6) is higher than those for FLE and SE, suggesting that students exhibit stronger communicative disposition than emotional enjoyment or perceived self-efficacy. Moreover, the median values closely approximate the means, suggesting a relatively symmetric distribution of the data. Regarding data dispersion, Table 1 reveals that the WTC variable exhibits the highest standard deviation (5.80) which indicates that the WTC data is more dispersed than the data for FLE and SE. Similarly, the variance for WTC (70.0) is substantially higher than that of the others two. Furthermore, the range (difference between maximum and minimum values) is broader for FLE and WTC (32 and 39, respectively), suggesting greater variability in the FLE and WTC scores compared to SE (21).

Next, the normality of the data was assessed using the *Shapiro-Wilk test*. According to the criterion, values approaching 1 with *p-values* greater than 0.05 indicate a normal distribution. Table 1 shows that the *Shapiro-Wilk* value for FLE is 0.966 ($p = 0.072$), for SE it is 0.988 ($p = 0.501$), and for WTC it is 0.976 ($p = 0.085$). Given that each variable's *Shapiro-Wilk value* is close to 1 and all *p-values* exceed 0.05, it can be concluded that the data for the primary variables are normally distributed. After reviewing the descriptive statistics, the next step involves examining the results of the tested model against the previously established model fit criteria.

Tab.2. Fit Indices

Label	X ²	df	p	AIC	SRMR	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	GFI
Model	1.24	1	0.266	1302	0.003	0.048	0.988	0.964	1.000

Based on Table 2, the tested model yielded a Chi-Square (X²) value of 1.24 with 1 degree of freedom and a p-value of 0.266. Since the p-value exceeds 0.05, the model does not differ significantly from the observed data, indicating an excellent fit. This is further supported by the SRMR value of 0.003, which is well below the threshold of 0.08, demonstrating that the residual error in the model is minimal. Similarly, the RMSEA value of 0.048, which is below the threshold of 0.08, indicates a good model fit. In addition, other fit indices further support the model's adequacy: the CFI stands at 0.988 and TLI at 0.964, both exceeding the benchmark of 0.95, while the GFI is a perfect 1.000, well above the standard of 0.90. Collectively, these indices confirm that the model is a robust representation of the observed data and can be deemed acceptable.

After confirming that the model meets the established fit criteria, the next step is to examine the R-squared values and parameter estimates, as detailed in the table below.

Tab.3. R-squared

Variable	R ²	95% Confidence Intervals		Wald X ²	df	p
		Lower	Upper			
WTC	0.0155	0.005	0.098	1.59	1	0.207
SE	0.1771	0.060	0.324	21.73	1	< .001

Table 3 demonstrates that the WTC variable has an R² of 0.0155, indicating that only 1.55% of its variance is explained by SE as a predictor in the model. In contrast, the SE variable shows an R² of 0.1771, meaning that FLE accounts for 17.71% of its variance as a predictor. Based on the Wald X² test results, the significance of the predictor variables (both SE and FLE) is evident. For WTC as the dependent variable, the p-value is 0.207 (> 0.05), indicating that SE does not

significantly influence WTC. On the other hand, for SE as the dependent variable, the p-value is < 0.001 , demonstrating that the predictor variable FLE significantly impacts SE.

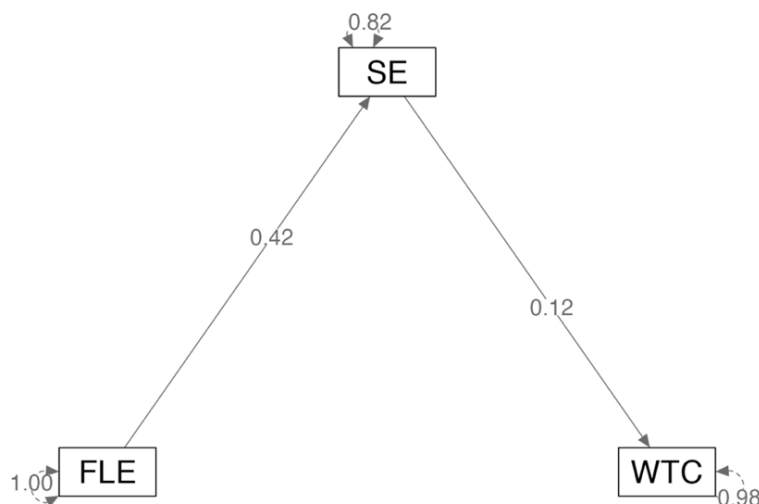
Tab.4. Parameter Estimates

Dep	Pred	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Intervals		β	z	p
				Lower	Upper			
WTC	SE	0.224	0.1775	-0.124	0.572	0.125	1.26	0.207
SE	FLE	0.338	0.0725	0.196	0.480	0.421	4.66	$< .001$

Table 4, which presents the parameter estimates, details the relationship between SE and WTC. The estimated coefficient is 0.224 with a p-value of 0.207, indicating that this relationship is not statistically significant. Moreover, the standardized coefficient (β) of 0.125 suggests that for every one-unit increase in SE, WTC increases by only 0.125 standard deviations. Additionally, the confidence interval ranging from -0.124 to 0.572 encompasses zero, further confirming that the relationship is not significant. In contrast, the relationship between FLE and SE, as reported in Table 4, shows an estimated coefficient of 0.338 with a p-value less than 0.001, indicating that FLE significantly influences SE. Moreover, the standardized coefficient (β) of 0.421 suggests that for every one-unit increase in FLE, SE increases by 0.421 standard deviations. This result is further supported by the confidence interval, which ranges from 0.196 to 0.480 and does not include zero, confirming the statistical significance of the relationship.

Based on these interpretations, the results of the path analysis are presented in the figure below.

Fig. 1. The Relation of FLE, SE, and WTC in Arabic Learning



Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that FLE significantly influences SE, with a path coefficient of 0.42, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two variables. In other words, the more learners enjoy studying Arabic, the greater their confidence in their ability to accomplish learning tasks and achieve desired outcomes. However, SE does not have a significant effect on WTC. This suggests that, although an individual may have high self-efficacy, it does not directly increase their Willingness to communicate in Arabic. All three variables demonstrate good reliability.

Discussion

In understanding the use of Arabic as a second language among Arabic language learners, it is crucial to delve deeper into the psychological aspects of language acquisition. According to Macintyre et al. (1998), WTC occupies a secondary layer, representing the behavioral intention that underpins the communication behaviors of second language learners. Moreover, learners' belief in their ability to complete academic tasks to achieve their learning objectives plays a vital role in Arabic language learning, complemented by the comfort and enjoyment they experience throughout the process.

Based on the analysis and interpretation, the present findings speak directly to the research gap identified in the introduction: despite the prominence of WTC in L2 scholarship, empirical evidence within Arabic learning remains sparse. Our model demonstrates an asymmetric pattern among the focal constructs: enjoyment reliably predicts self-efficacy, yet self-efficacy does not translate into greater Willingness to communicate. This finding complements the research by Guo et al. (2022), who posited that comfort and enjoyment in foreign language learning are essential. These factors enhance learners' motivation, engagement, and positive emotional states, thereby creating a conducive learning environment (Guo et al., 2022). Moreover, the study shows that comfort plays a substantial role in transforming positive emotional conditions into self-efficacy among language learners. In line with Zeng (2021), the importance of comfort and FLE lies in their critical role in boosting motivation and engagement, ultimately leading to long-term success and achievement in language learning (Zeng, 2021).

On the other hand, the path analysis results indicate that SE does not exert a sufficiently strong or significant influence on Arabic learners' WTC. Several theoretical and contextual explanations may account for this pattern. First, the level of analysis and measurement specificity may matter: the self-efficacy instrument employed captures a broad, generalized belief rather than task-specific speaking efficacy, whereas WTC is situational and moment-dependent. Second, sociocultural and pedagogical constraints in Arabic learning such as accuracy-oriented norms, concerns about face-threat in public talk, and register sensitivity (MSA vs. dialect), may dampen the behavioral expression of confidence. Under such conditions, learners with robust self-beliefs can still refrain from initiating Arabic communication if the situational stakes are high. Third, affective inhibitors like language anxiety can attenuate the efficacy, behavior link; even confident learners may defer participation when anticipatory anxiety or perceived risk remains unaddressed. Taken together, these mechanisms offer a principled explanation for why self-efficacy, though strengthened by enjoyment, did not emerge as a proximal predictor of WTC in our data.

Furthermore, this study was unable to substantiate the claims made by Xu & Yu (2024) regarding the three main factors influencing learners' Willingness to communicate, namely personality traits, the role of teachers, and the learning environment (Xu & Yu, 2024). Specifically, the personality trait represented by self-efficacy did not prove effective in enhancing learners' Willingness to communicate in Arabic. Consequently, the other two factors, the role of teachers and the learning environment, may need to be further explored to determine their impact on increasing learners' Willingness to use the target language.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings suggest that helping students feel confident is important, but confidence alone is not enough to make them speak more Arabic. Teachers can take several practical steps to bridge this gap. They can reduce students' speaking anxiety by creating low-pressure activities, such as short pair discussions or pre-task planning, and by keeping classroom interactions supportive and encouraging. Designing communicative tasks that focus on meaning rather than grammatical accuracy, and utilizing digital platforms where students

may feel more relaxed using Arabic, can also make a real difference. Together, these approaches can help turn students' inner confidence into genuine communication.

This study also has some limitations. Because the data came from one institution and used a convenience sample, the results may not represent all Arabic learners. The cross-sectional, self-report design might also introduce bias, and the general self-efficacy scale may not fully capture confidence in speaking Arabic specifically. Future research should include a wider range of participants, use longitudinal or experimental methods, and apply measures that assess speaking-specific confidence, anxiety, and real communicative behavior. Exploring how these factors interact in both classroom and digital settings would offer deeper insight into what truly drives Arabic learners' Willingness to communicate.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the model FLE, SE, and WTC is well-fitting and can effectively elucidate the interrelationships among these three variables in the context of learning Arabic as a second language. The findings indicate that FLE has a significant positive impact on SE among Arabic language learners; in other words, the greater the enjoyment they derive from learning Arabic, the higher their confidence in their ability to complete tasks and achieve learning objectives. Conversely, SE alone does not directly predict WTC, suggesting that confidence must interact with other affective and contextual variables before it manifests as communicative behavior.

Theoretically, these findings advance the integration of positive psychology within Arabic language education by demonstrating how emotional engagement and self-belief interact to shape learning experiences. Practically, the results highlight the value of teaching approaches that cultivate both enjoyment and emotional security, such as creating supportive classroom climates, designing low-stress interaction tasks, and promoting authentic communication in both physical and digital settings. Future research should broaden this framework by examining additional affective and contextual factors, including language anxiety, teacher immediacy, classroom climate, and intrinsic motivation, to construct a more comprehensive understanding of learners' WTC. Longitudinal and experimental studies would also be valuable for tracing how these variables evolve over time and across settings, thereby refining theoretical models and guiding innovative pedagogical practices in Arabic language instruction.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

[MF] served as principal investigator with comprehensive responsibility for conceptualising the research design, orchestrating the entire investigative process, coordinating interdisciplinary team collaboration, and exercising rigorous oversight across all project dimensions from initial theoretical formulation through to empirical completion. [MRM] functioned as a research associate, providing instrumental support in constructing the theoretical framework and establishing the conceptual paradigms underpinning the study, whilst contributing specialized expertise in theoretical conceptualization and collaborating in the formulation of methodological foundations. [AB] assumed primary responsibility for sophisticated data management and analytical procedures, encompassing systematic data collection protocols, comprehensive database administration, advanced statistical analyses, and meticulous interpretation of empirical findings whilst ensuring methodological rigor and data integrity throughout the investigative process. All authors contributed to the writing and revision of the manuscript and approved the final version for publication.

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