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THE INTERACTION BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, SELF-EFFICACY AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY AMONG JORDANIAN EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract:
This study is designed to examine the effect of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy on foreign language anxiety among EFL university students. It further attempts to explore whether the aforementioned variables interact with students' gender, age, academic qualification, study level and GPA. The study further aims to explore whether EFL students' foreign language anxiety can be predicted by their emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. Data were collected from 187 Jordanian EFL university students. The participants' emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and foreign language anxiety were measured using three questionnaires. The findings exhibited a modest increase in foreign language anxiety as well as emotional intelligence among Jordanian university EFL students. All three variables were significantly affected by the participants' demographic information. Furthermore, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy were found to be negatively correlated with foreign language anxiety. However, a positive correlation was observed between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence. Finally, the results revealed that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy have limited power in predicting the participants' foreign language anxiety.

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1. Introduction

Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) or second language anxiety is an extensively examined notion within the setting of learning or teaching a foreign language (Horwitz, 2001). This trending line of research is gauged by the pressing need to understand learners' feelings and their detrimental effects on EFL learning/teaching progression. FLA is considered a multi-facet concept that reflects learner' individual differences which have paved the way to a multidisciplinary research area. Despite considering it as an intellectual-psychological construct related to FL learning and teaching, investigating FLA has resulted in inconsistent findings. Human emotions are established as a key element in managing our views, ideas, actions and decisions. Emotional intelligence (EI) can be defined as the capacity to recognize and regulate feelings, which may pointedly influence our real-life actions (Budak and Mede, 2022). EI was coined by Salovey and Mayer (1990), who defined it as "*the ability to monitor one's own and others' moods and emotions, distinguish between them, and use this information to guide one's thinking and actions*" (p. 189). Many researchers (e.g., Gardner 1983; Goleman 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990) have argued that standard IQ tests do not depict a full picture of people's intelligence, and hence they are not accurate indicator of success or failure in life, work, or study. As a result, it is still vital to consider both people's cognitive and emotional aspects when determining their likelihood of success, as people with high IQs may still be unproductive in some aspects of life (Goleman, 1995). Nevertheless, emotional intelligence as a construct has been investigated less recurrently than mental intelligence (Kostić-Bobanović, 2020).

Self-efficacy (SE) denotes people's views about their capacity to accomplish tasks that are required to obtain certain desired outcomes (Hall & Vance, 2010). According to Luszczynska *et al.* (2014), it is supposed that most individuals can fairly engage in different activities effectively. However, those with higher self-efficacy are expected to stay calmer under pressure or stress, which can facilitate improved or better adaptation to changing circumstances. Self-efficacy is predicted to affect task selection, effort, perseverance, resilience, and accomplishment (Bandura, 1997). Luszczynska *et al.* (2014) argue that self-efficacy can predict not only EFL learners' performance and achievement, but also their foreign language anxiety. Accordingly, self-efficacy is suggested to influence individuals not only academically, but further psychologically.

2. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a quality that enables people understand one's own and others' emotions with positive consequences on effective communication (Goleman, 1995). Bar-On (2006) advocates for the interaction between emotional, personal, and social intelligences in real life settings. Emotional intelligence involves reasoning about

one's and others' emotions and using these emotions to enhance thinking and understanding. On the other hand, personal intelligence involves thinking about one's own and others' personalities, thoughts, feelings, plans, self-awareness, and self-control (Goleman, 1995). Thus, it is suggested that emotional and personal intelligences may overlap because they are interconnected.

Goleman was the pioneer who coined the term "*emotional intelligence*" in 1995 to describe people's ability to recognize and understand one's own as well as others' emotions. According to Bar-On (2004), our emotional facilitators and interconnected networks of skills and competencies determine our ability to express ourselves, and further enhance our social effectiveness. Bar-On (2004) coined the term "*emotional social intelligence*" (ESI) to describe emotional intelligence that combines psychological and social skills. According to George (2000), affective intelligence is defined as the ability to understand others' emotions through one's own thinking, processing, and structuring of emotional information. Therefore, a lack of emotional intelligence makes it harder for individuals to adapt and build fruitful social or academic networks (Mayer *et al.*, 2001). Emotional intelligence is assumed to benefit not only in social interaction but also in academic interaction, with more emphasis on EFL learners and teachers (Awwad, 2022).

Human sentiments that comprise psychological, experimental, cognitive, and motivational elements are multifaceted and uneasy to identify. Emotional intelligence as a multilayered construct incorporates four interconnected dimensions (Ylmaz, 2009). Emotional perception, the first dimension, encompasses decoding, seeking, and capturing emotional indicators like facial expressions. The second dimension is cognitive emotion usage, which involves a combination of emotional and cognitive processes and explains how emotions affect cognition. The third dimension is understanding emotions, which is crucial for successful social relationships. It further entails recognizing, organizing, and categorizing of emotions, as in the absence of these emotions and stimulants, boredom and rage can take over (Mayer *et al.*, 2001). People who are self-aware of others' emotions as well as their own can better empathize with others. Thus, empathy involves directing emotions and sharing beliefs and ideas (Bar-On, 2004). The fourth dimension of emotional intelligence is managing emotions of self and others (Mayer *et al.*, 2001). Individuals visibly trust that managing or handling emotions effectively can result in positive consequences on the quality of their lives, particularly through the influence that emotion management can have on people's social relationships with others (Tran, 2012).

Researchers on emotional intelligence have proposed four separate prototypes for assessing emotional intelligence, each comprising its own unique forms and tools. The four models are the Ability Model, the Goleman Competency Model, the Bar-On Emotional Social Intelligence Model, and the Trait Model. The ability model suggests that when one's sentiments are involved with specific knowledge, they can assimilate, access, and employ that knowledge to steer challenging situations more sensibly and effectively (Mayer *et al.*, 2001).

Emotional intelligence is hence predicted to assist people formulate better balanced options. Mayer and Salovey (1997) put forward an emotional intelligence model that outlines what people undergo through the four stages of emotional intelligence. Emotional awareness refers to the capability to utilize one's and others' emotions by integrating them in intellectual processes to undergo different tasks successfully. Hence, people can utilize their own emotions or others' emotions to accomplish a task by investing those sentiments. Emotional comprehension integrates one's ability to understand emotional messages, diagnose interrelationship between different feelings, classify emotions, and identify their causes. Such integration depends on the individuals' ability to control their own and others' emotions to achieve their desired outcomes, instead of being instinctively and negatively affected by these sentiments (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004).

The Goleman Competency Model (Goleman, 1998) incorporates four aspects of emotional intelligence that are connected to specific talents or skills. The first aspect is personal competency, which contains the traits of self-awareness and self-management. Social skills encompass competencies like self-awareness and the ability to manage interpersonal relations. These talents branch from the acquisition and grasping of a set of core skills. Understanding one's ideas and emotional state is a vibrant facet of self-awareness according to this model (Goleman, 1998). The Trait Model (Petrides and Furnham, 2003) is considered an assessment technique that assists EI archetypes. This model refers to the composition of self-perceptions and tendencies related with emotions, which can be assessed through self-reporting approaches of EI. According to this model, trait emotional intelligence is defined as "*a collection of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that affect an individual's capacity to manage environmental demands and pressures*" (Bar-On, 1997, p. 14). Hence, emotional intelligence is a central feature in achieving life goals within different personal, academic, social, and professional domains.

Bar-On Model of Emotional and Social Intelligence (Bar-On, 1997) comprises five primary components: personal traits, interpersonal relationships, adaptation, stress management, and mood. Each of these components possesses a varied array of subskills that are endeavored to assess or quantify individuals' empathy. Bar-On (2006) identified five non-cognitive skills constituting emotional intelligence, i.e. interpersonal relationships (empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal connections), stress management (stress tolerance and impulse control), adaptability (resilience and problem-solving), and a general disposition of optimism and happiness. Following this model, Bar-On (2004) designed the Emotion Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), which represented the initial self-report of emotional intelligence assessment.

3. Self-efficacy

Bandura (1994) defined self-efficacy (SE) as individuals' perceptions of their ability to learn, perform tasks, and control events that influence their lives. People's thoughts about their SE influence their feelings, ideas, motivation, and behavior through four main

processes: cognition, motivation, emotion, and assessment methods (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy, a widely researched construct in psychology, has been extensively studied across various fields, including sociology, public health, medicine, nursing, and education, to link it to various social and psychological indicators. (Maddux & Gosselin, 2012). Therefore, self-efficacy can be described as people's confidence in their capacity to complete tasks. Consequently, SE can predict learning and motivation, inspiring personal goal setting (Bandura & Barab, 1973). These beliefs are predicted to enhance life by transforming individuals lives through their lifestyle choices.

Bandura (1986) further defines self-efficacy as "*people's judgments about their ability to organize and carry out a sequence of actions that are required to achieve certain types of achievement*" (p. 391). He also defines it as a person's confidence in his ability to work hard and succeed (Bandura, 1977). This means that people with high self-efficacy claim they can complete any task efficiently. Bandura (1994) defines self-efficacy as the positive beliefs about one's ability to learn or perform tasks. They also define self-efficacy as people's beliefs in their ability to control life events through specified performance levels. Thus, SE thoughts can shape feelings, ideas, motivation, and behaviors through our cognition and assessment of the tasks we accomplish (Bandura & Barab, 1973).

Researchers have examined every aspect of self-efficacy to link it to other social and psychological indicators (Maddux & Gosselin, 2012). According to Bandura (1997), a student's self-confidence affects academic aspirations, motivation, performance and achievement. Academic achievement in science or language or any subject can be associated with the students' levels of SE. Consequently, students with high self-efficacy believe that they can succeed in many academic settings. Research links self-regulated learning to self-efficacy as possessing a gift or talent is different from using it in difficult situations. Learners who believe they can achieve their goals or learning outcomes are more likely to engage in goal-oriented activities, work harder, be more resilient to adversity, and hence achieve higher accomplishment (Bandura, 1997). Researchers in self-efficacy have proposed four sources of self-efficacy, i.e. verbal belief, indirect experience, emotional stimulation, and individual achievement (ibid).

Lunenberg (2011) designates verbal belief as a significant contributor to self-efficacy. He calls it the Pygmalion effect, which predicts that an anticipated outcome influences the likelihood of its occurrence, offering the most advantageous mindset for a specific activity. Bandura (1977) has noted that individuals can generalize their linguistic beliefs when they believe that positive concepts can assist them in performing a task or action efficiently. However, this clue does not seem liable upon personal experiences, but is rather attributed as an insufficient motivation for self-efficacy that can be hindered by the remembrance of past faults. Indirect experience as another source of SE designates that most people depend on their subsidiary experience in their awareness of their self-efficacy (Bandura & Barab, 1973). Emotional stimulation, the third source takes place during challenging situations with positive consequences on promoting self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). This designates that feelings rising from a stressful situation may impact one's perception of their interpersonal skills. People regulate their emotional arousal to

nurture their self-efficacy beliefs. Consequently, it is assumed that managing one's emotions positively is more likely to affect self-efficacy perception (ibid.). Individual achievement, the last source of SE is derivative from individuals' prior experiences. Positive experiences are anticipated to boost learners' sense of self-efficacy, and hence can impact individuals' self-assessment of their capacities. As a result, the consistent high achievement in a specific area is predicted to cause robust and stable self-efficacy in that area (Bandura, 1977). Conversely, failure to manage or do a challenging task successfully might result in diminishing one's self-efficacy.

4. Foreign Language Anxiety

Suffering anxiety designates that one's nervous system is overstressed, which results in a sharp feeling of discomfort and uneasiness (Tran, 2012). Learning and using a foreign language in classroom or real-life settings has proved to be challenging and stressful for many learners. Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is accompanied with the setting where a foreign or second language is being learned or taught (Young, 1991). To distinguish between people who experience worry across several contexts and those who feel discomfort in specific situations, psychologists employ the phrase 'anxiety reactions' (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986). Studies have reported a correlation between anxiety and various academic pursuits such as examinations, motivation and achievement (Alkhutaba *et al*., 2021). Experts in second language acquisition have indicated that anxiety is significantly associated with the process of learning a second/foreign language (Horwitz *et al*., 1986). Tran (2012) indicates that studies on foreign language acquisition have recognized language anxiety as a significant concern that requires extensive investigation. Horwitz *et al*. (1986) proposed the notion of foreign language anxiety, which pertains to the anxiety linked to the acquisition or study of a foreign language and has been employed in several research investigations within this domain. Many students who learn a foreign language at school or university may notice that their beliefs, attitudes and emotions affect their learning (Horwitz *et al*., 1986). Macintyre and Gardner (1989) coined the term "*linguistic anxiety*" to describe the anxiety, negative feelings, or uncertainty that foreign language students may experience when using or learning a foreign language.

According to McIntyre and Gardner (1989), FLA has five types, i.e. personality, learning situation, evaluation, communication, and examination. The first type is 'Trait Anxiety', which refers to a person's natural tendency to feel anxious regardless of circumstances. Because of its complex psychological causes, teachers need to monitor their students' trait anxiety. Thus, understanding trait anxiety can reduce its negative effects on student engagement. 'Situational Anxiety', the next type of FLA, arises when EFL learners feel anxious during specific situations, such as reacting to external stimuli. Therefore, learners may decide to avoid talking to teachers and classmates due to the fear of being wrong, criticized, corrected, or inferior. 'Fear of Negative Evaluation', the third type takes place when EFL students feel worry about what other students or teachers

think about them (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986). 'Communicative Anxiety', the fourth FLA category, is related to any fear allied with situations that requires verbal interaction. The last type, 'Exam Anxiety', is associated to learners' fear of their previous test results, which can have a negative impact on their current exam performance. Accordingly, students may become more nervous or anxious about receiving similar poor results, leading to consistent negative exam attitudes.

Young (1991) classifies several sources of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), counting EFL learners' subjective apprehensions, their perceptions of the whole language acquisition process, teachers' outlooks on teaching and instruction, lesson plans and class procedures, and anxiety linked to exams and assessments. FLA displays in two forms of symptoms, i.e. psychological and physical symptoms. Psychological symptoms comprise sharp negative emotions, discomfort, diminished perception, amplified hostility, and forgetfulness. Physical indicators encompass palpitations, heightened tension, handshakes and chest discomfort. (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

5. Previous Studies

Aridah and Rusmawaty (2025) scrutinized the interaction between gender and learners' FLA, and further explored the link between FLA and English language achievement. The researchers administered a questionnaire to 105 EFL university learners in Indonesia, i.e. the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCA) to gauge their anxiety. The study adopted the participants' final academic year scores as an indicator of their English language achievement. Data analysis revealed that the EFL learners reported a high level of FLA, with female participants suffering slightly higher anxiety than their male counterparts. The correlation analysis confirmed a negative relation suggesting that FLA had little to no impact on the participants' English language achievement.

Güneş (2025) studied the awareness of self-efficacy, enjoyment, and FLA with their predictive impact on language achievement among university EFL learners in Turkey. Data were gathered from 471 EFL learners through a composite questionnaire. The results showed that the participants reported increased levels of self-efficacy and enjoyment with moderate FLA. The analysis indicated that self-efficacy had the power to predict language achievement. Enjoyment and FLA both influenced language achievement through a mediating role of self-efficacy. Henceforth, it was concluded that enjoyment enhanced self-efficacy, while anxiety was found to weaken it. This conclusion highpoints the key role of self-efficacy as a direct predictor of and mediator for language achievement.

Li *et al.* (2025) inspected the influence of mindfulness, resilience, and self-efficacy on foreign language anxiety (FLA) among Chinese university EFL learners. The study also aimed at identifying the key predictor of foreign language anxiety. The study adopted a quantitative approach by gathering data from 323 EFL learners through validated scales and surveys. Pearson correlation analyses captured significant negative correlations between all three variables and FLA. Nevertheless, the multiple regression

analysis designated that self-efficacy was the variable that had power to predict FLA. The study concluded that promoting self-efficacy of EFL students can be a fundamental strategy for decreasing FLA and cultivating EFL experiences.

Afifah *et al.* (2024) investigated the interrelationship between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, FLA and L2 speech performance. Data were collected from 128 high school EFL learners in Indonesia through closed-ended surveys and a speaking test. The data analysis captured a high positive correlation between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence. However, the results failed to identify any correlation between FLA and emotional intelligence. It was also confirmed that both self-efficacy and emotional intelligence had positive consequences on speech production performance while diminishing the negative impact of FLA.

Budak and Mede (2022) studied emotional intelligence, foreign language anxiety, and the demotivational factors of EFL university learners at a university in Turkey. For data collection, the researchers adopted the EQ-Turkish and EQ-i with the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) translated in Turkish. The participants' responses specified that learning a foreign language triggers feelings of stress and anxiety. In addition, it was found that the three variables, i.e. emotional intelligence, foreign language anxiety, and demotivational factors exhibited significant positive correlation with one another.

Awwad and Alkhutaba (2021) examined the interrelationship between general self-efficacy (SE), language skill self-efficacy, and emotional intelligence (EI) of EFL learners at Jordanian universities. The study further attempted to find out whether self-efficacy and emotional intelligence among EFL learners were affected by their academic level, academic achievement and gender. Validated online surveyed were administered to gauge the participants' overall SE beliefs, EFL skills SE and EI. The findings captured a strong relationship between general SE, language skills SE, and EI. The findings also detected a positive relationship between the participants' academic success and their language skills SE. Finally, it was confirmed that general SE and EI had the capacity to account for variation in English language SE.

Kostić-Bobanović (2020) surveyed the association between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of EFL teachers with diverse levels of teaching expertise. For data collection, Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire–Short Form (TEIQue-SF) and Test of Self-efficacy (TSE) were administered to 213 foreign language instructors. Self-control and sociability components, as well as classroom management effectiveness, were found to be greater in the experienced instructors than in the novice teachers of foreign languages. The findings confirmed that the educators' effectiveness was linked to their own feeling of self-efficacy. The findings further captured a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy.

Jee (2019) assessed the relationship between FLA and self-efficacy of the readers, writers, speakers, and listeners of intermediate Korean as a foreign language (KFL). The participants' FLA and SE were gauged using online surveys. All language skill-specific tests appeared to be very stressful for the KFL students who had high levels of anxiety

during classroom activities compared to students who had low anxiety. Higher levels of anxiety were associated with reduced self-efficacy among KFL students regardless of their language proficiency.

Huerta *et al.* (2017) examined emotional intelligence (EI), writing anxiety, and self-efficacy of university students in the United States. The study examined writing anxiety, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of a sample of undergraduate students by administering a survey. Writing anxiety was shown to be significantly predicted by self-efficacy, but not by emotional intelligence, even though the metadata suggested a substantial relationship between emotional intelligence and first language, despite the fact that self-efficacy was shown to be a significant predictor of writing anxiety. That is, whether the student reported that English was their first language or not. Even if self-efficacy was present, gender continued to be a major predictor of language anxiety in favor of females.

Radwan (2010) examined the relationship between FLA and SE among university students in Oman. The general SE scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1989) and the Kuwait University Anxiety Scale KUAS (Abdel-Khalek, 2000) were applied to 212 male and female students. The findings indicated that male students reported higher FLA and lower SE than their female counterparts. High and medium SE participants reported similar degrees of FLA. The findings advocated self-efficacy as a reliable predictor of foreign language anxiety, which can help language learners reduce their anxiety.

Şakrak (2009) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and foreign language anxiety (FLA) of Turkish university students who were learning English as a second language. The Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQI) was used to collect data on EI (EQ-i), while the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Questionnaire (FLCAS) was used to assess students' apprehensions about learning a new language. The participants who were more anxious about learning a new language had five unique aspects of EI, i.e. adaptability, stress management, mood, interpersonal skills, and intrapersonal skills. FLA was shown to be negatively correlated with EI among the study participants. However, the subskills of emotional intelligence were shown to be adversely linked to FLA.

The review of the previous research studies suggests that this line of research attempts to broaden our understanding of how these variables correlate or overlap with one another. However, a scarcity of studies can be noticed that examine whether emotional intelligence and self-efficacy can predict EFL learners' foreign language anxiety. Moreover, there is a lack of predictive studies targeting university students in Jordan to explore how emotional intelligence and self-efficacy overlap to impact their foreign language anxiety. Henceforth, there is a pressing need to consider a broader understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy and foreign language anxiety among EFL Arab students at university level. This can be achieved by adopting a more systematic approach to comprehensively capture such a complex relationship between the three constructs. This study is accordingly designed to detect whether EFL Jordanian students' emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy

and foreign language anxiety correlate significantly. The study is further designed to inspect whether EI, SE, and FLA can be influenced by the participants' gender, academic year and academic achievement. Finally, the study aims to explore whether emotional intelligence and self-efficacy have the power to predict EFL learners' foreign language anxiety. The following research questions were formulated to guide the study into achieving its objectives:

RQ1: What is the level of emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy of Jordanian university EFL students?

RQ2: What is the level of foreign language anxiety of Jordanian university EFL students?

RQ3: Do EI, SE and FLA vary according to students' gender, qualification, level, GPA or age?

RQ4: To what extent do emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy contribute to predicting EFL students' levels of foreign language anxiety?

6. Methods

6.1. Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative approach exploiting descriptive statistics, correlational and regression analyses to examine the impact of emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy on foreign language anxiety among Jordanian EFL students. Hence, emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy served as independent variables, while foreign language anxiety of EFL university students was adopted as a dependent variable. The participants' gender, age, qualification, study level and GPA were considered as independent variables to explore whether the students' EI, SE, and FLA vary accordingly. Data were collected through a cross-sectional surveying directed via a self-administered and voluntary online questionnaire.

6.2 Participants

The study involved 187 EFL university students aged 18-33, studying English Literature, Applied Linguistics, and Translation at various Jordanian universities. The students were divided into four study stages and had varying academic achievements. The sample comprises 42 males (22.46%) and 145 females (77.54%). Regarding the educational qualifications of the participants, approximately 164 individuals (87.70%) possess a bachelor's degree, while 23 individuals (12.30%) hold a master's degree. Regarding their academic standing, 12 students (6.42%) are in their first year, 60 (32.09%) in their second year, 47 (25.13%) in their third year, and 68 (36.36%) in their fourth year. The participants' grade point averages (GPAs) varied, as illustrated in Table 1. Only 2 individuals (1.07%) possess a passing GPA, 34 individuals (18.18%) have a good GPA, 95 individuals (50.80%) have a very good GPA, and 56 individuals (29.95%) have an excellent GPA. Additionally, 88 individuals (47.06%) are aged 18-22 years, 53 individuals (28.34%) are aged 23-27 years, 11 individuals (5.88%) are aged 28-32 years, and 35 individuals (18.72%) are aged beyond

33 years. All ethical rules were adhered to, and the participants' identities were kept confidential. They were also informed of their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences.

Table 1: The demographic characteristics of the participants

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Male	42	22.46
Female	145	77.54
Age	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
18-22	88	47.06
23-27	53	28.34
28-32	11	5.88
Above 33	35	18.72
Qualification	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Bachelor	164	87.70
Master	23	12.30
Study Level	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
First Year	12	6.42
Second Year	60	32.09
Third Year	47	25.13
Fourth Year	68	36.36
Grade Point Average GPA	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Pass	2	1.07
Good	34	18.18
Very Good	95	50.80
Excellent	56	29.95

6.3 Research Instruments and Data Procedure

Data were gathered through utilizing four questionnaires: a background questionnaire for demographic information, the TEIQue-SF for assessing emotional intelligence (Petrides, 2009), the ASE survey for evaluating academic self-efficacy (Chemers *et al.*, 2001), and the FLCAS for measuring foreign language anxiety (Horwitz *et al.*, 1986). The demographic information questionnaire gathered information about the participants' age, gender, year of study, academic qualification and GPA. To measure EFL learners' emotional intelligence at the Jordanian universities, the TEIQue-Short Form (Petrides, 2009) was administered. It comprised 30 statements that adopt a 7-point Likert scale that spans from "Completely Disagree" to "Completely Agree" to obtain information about participants' assessments of their emotional intelligence. To quantify the participants' academic self-efficacy, the Academic Self-efficacy (ASE) questionnaire (Chemers *et al.*, 2001) was administered. The ASE questionnaire adopts a 7-point Likert scale that spans from "Completely Disagree" to "Completely Agree" to obtain information about the participants' perception of their self-efficacy. The questionnaire includes items on managing time to complete tasks, the ability to take notes, the ability to study to pass exams, the ability to understand academic tasks, and enjoyment during academic activities. The Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) Questionnaire (Horwitz, *et al.*, 1986)

consist of 33 items using a five-point Likert scale about the participants' thoughts and attitudes toward English as a foreign language and anxiety over learning a new language.

The four questionnaires, i.e. demographic data, emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy, and foreign language anxiety, were combined in one electronic version using Google Form Application. The potential participants were reached out via their university faculties and departments. Data that were obtained from the responses of the participants on the questionnaires were summarized and transferred to an Excel sheet in order to enable running relevant statistical analysis. Data were then entered into IBM SPSS software that enables us running a number of statistical analyses to examine whether or not there were statistically significant differences in the students' levels of emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy and foreign language anxiety. To answer the research questions raised earlier, a number of descriptive tests (means and standard deviations) and referential analyses, including Pearson correlation coefficient, Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and regression analysis were computed.

7. Results

7.1 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analyses (means and standard deviation) were computed to detect the levels of EFL Jordanian university students' emotional intelligence (EI), self-efficacy (SE), and foreign language anxiety (FLA). The results captured a moderate to high level of EI among EFL university students (M = 4.79, SD = .681). The findings further revealed that the participants reported a high level of SE (M = 5. 080, SD = 1.183). Finally, the descriptive analysis concerning FLA identified a modest level among EFL university students (M = 3.25, SD = .667).

7.2 EI, SE and FLA According to the Participants' Demographic Data

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was computed to identify how EFL university students' emotional intelligence (EI), self-efficacy (SE), and foreign language anxiety (FLA) vary according to their gender, qualification, study level, GPA and age. The MANOVA output (Table 2) failed to capture any statistically significant differences between EI and all the demographic variables combined, i.e. gender, qualification, study level, GPA and age (F = .338, p = .976). Moreover, the results of the MANOVA failed to attain any statistically significant differences for EI in relation to any of the participants' variables, i.e. gender, qualification, study level, GPA and age.

Table 2: MANOVA for emotional intelligence according to the demographic variables

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1.794[a]	11	.163	.338	.976
Intercept	522.096	1	522.096	1080.74	.000
Gender	.033	1	.033	.069	.793
Study Qualification	.071	1	.071	.148	.701
Study level	.361	3	.120	.249	.862
GPA	1.128	3	.376	.778	.508
Age	.496	3	.165	.342	.795
Error	84.541	175	.483		
Total	4388.373	187			
Corrected Total	86.334	186			
a. R Squared = .021 (Adjusted R Squared = -.041)					

The MANOVA output (Table 3) revealed a statistically significant difference between academic self-efficacy and all the demographic variables combined, i.e. gender, qualification, study level, GPA and age (F = 3.059, p = .001). As for the individual demographic variables, academic self-efficacy was found to be significantly attributed only to the participants' GPA (F = 7.483, p = .000). However, the results of the MANOVA failed to attain any statistically significant differences for self-efficacy in relation to the participants' gender, qualifications, study level and age.

Table 3: MANOVA for self-efficacy according to the demographic variables

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	42.012[a]	11	3.819	3.059	**.001***
Intercept	601.057	1	601.057	481.351	.000
Gender	.018	1	.018	.014	.906
Study qualification	.431	1	.431	.345	.558
Study level	4.279	3	1.426	1.142	.334
GPA	28.031	3	9.344	7.483	**.000***
Age	1.487	3	.496	.397	.755
Error	218.520	175	1.249		
Total	5087.864	187			
Corrected Total	260.532	186			
a. R Squared = .161 (Adjusted R Squared = .109)					

As for FLA, the MANOVA output (Table 4) revealed a statistically significant difference between FLA and all the demographic variables combined, i.e. gender, qualification, study level, GPA and age (F = 2.460, p = .007). As for the individual demographic variables, FLA was found to be significantly attributed to gender (F = 4.649, p = .032) and GPA (F = 4.205, p = .007). However, the results of the MANOVA failed to attain any statistically significant differences for FLA in relation to the participants' qualifications, study level and age.

Table 4: MANOVA for FLA according to the demographic variables

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11.110[a]	11	1.010	2.460	**.007***
Intercept	243.40	1	243.40	592.77	.000
Gender	1.909	1	1.909	4.649	**.032***
Study Qualification	.070	1	.070	.171	.680
Study Level	2.646	3	.882	2.148	.096
GPA	5.181	3	1.727	4.205	**.007***
Age	1.366	3	.455	1.109	.347
Error	71.859	175	.411		
Total	2057.615	187			
Corrected Total	82.969	186			
R Squared = .134 (Adjusted R Squared = .079)					

7.3 Correlational and Regression Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were computed to find whether emotional intelligence and self-efficacy have the power to predict the participants' foreign language anxiety. The output of the Pearson correlation coefficient revealed a moderate positive correlation (*r* =.410) between emotional intelligence (EI) and self-efficacy (SE). That means that learners who scored higher in emotional intelligence tended to have higher levels of self-efficacy. However, the results showed a moderate negative correlation (*r* = -.366) between emotional intelligence (EI) and foreign language anxiety (FLA), which means that learners who scored higher in emotional intelligence tended to have lower levels of foreign language anxiety. Furthermore, there was another moderate negative correlation (r = -.428) between self-efficacy (SE) and foreign language anxiety (FLA). That means that learners who scored higher in emotional intelligence tended to have lower levels of self-efficacy, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Pearson correlation coefficient between EI, SE and FLA

Dimensions	Emotional Intelligence	Self-efficacy	Foreign Language Anxiety
Emotional Intelligence	1	.410**	-.336**
Self-efficacy	.410**	1	-.428**
Foreign Language Anxiety	-.336**	-.428**	1

The output of the coefficients analysis, as shown in Table 6 below, confirmed that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy had the potential to predict foreign language anxiety of the Jordanian university EFL students.

Table 6: Coefficients of the independent variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.156	.318		16.235	.000*
	EI_M	-.189	.070	-.193	-2.694	.008*
	SE_M	-.197	.040	-.348	-4.860	.000*
a. Predictors: (Constant), SE_M, EI_M						

The regression model as presented in Table 7 below revealed that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy combined have the power to predict foreign language anxiety (*r* =.214). Furthermore, the model explains 21% of the variance in the independent variable, i.e. Jordanian university EFL students' levels of foreign language anxiety.

Table 7: Regression model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
1	.462	.214	.205	.59540
a. Predictors: (Constant), SE_M, EI_M				

Table 8 shows the results of a linear regression analysis with two predictor variables, emotional intelligence (EI-M) and self-efficacy (SE-M), and one dependent variable, foreign language anxiety (FLA-M). The intercept (constant) has a value of (*b*= 5.156), which means that when the predictor variables are zero, the predicted value of the dependent variable is (*b*=5.156). The coefficient for emotional intelligence (EI-M) is (*b*=-0.189), which means that for every one-unit increase in emotional intelligence (EI-M), the predicted value of foreign language anxiety (FLA-M) decreases by 0.189 units. The coefficient for self-efficacy (SE-M) is -0.197, which means that for every one-unit increase in self-efficacy (SE-M), the predicted value of foreign language anxiety (FLA-M) decreases by 0.197 units. The standardized coefficients (*betas*) show that self-efficacy (SE-M) has a stronger effect on the outcome variable (-0.348) than emotional intelligence (EI-M) (-0.193). This suggests that self-efficacy (SE-M) is a more important predictor of foreign language anxiety (FLA-M) than emotional intelligence (EI-M). Both predictor variables have statistically significant effects on the outcome variable, as indicated by their t-values (EI_M: -2.694, SE_M: -4.860) and p-values (EI_M: 0.008, SE_M: 0.000). This suggests that both EI_M and SE_M are important predictors of FLA_M.

Table 8: Regression results of EI, SE and FLA

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	5.156	.318		16.235	.000	4.530	5.783
	EI_M	-.189	.070	-.193	-2.694	**.008***	-.328	-.051
	SE_M	-.197	.040	-.348	-4.860	**.000***	-.276	-.117
a. Dependent Variable: FLA_M								

As depicted in Figure 1 below, the regression line of EI and SE in predicting EFL students' FLA shows that the regression line is positive. This confirmed that as EI and SE increased, FLA decreased, which can be consistent with the idea that EI and SE are important factors in reducing FLA. The regression line is not perfectly linear, which means that there is some variation in FLA that cannot be explained by EI and SE, and therefore could be predicted or explained by other factors. Overall, Figure 1 shows that EI and SE are

significant predictors of FLA in EFL students. EI and SE can be used to help EFL students reduce their FLA, and thus improve their foreign language learning experience.

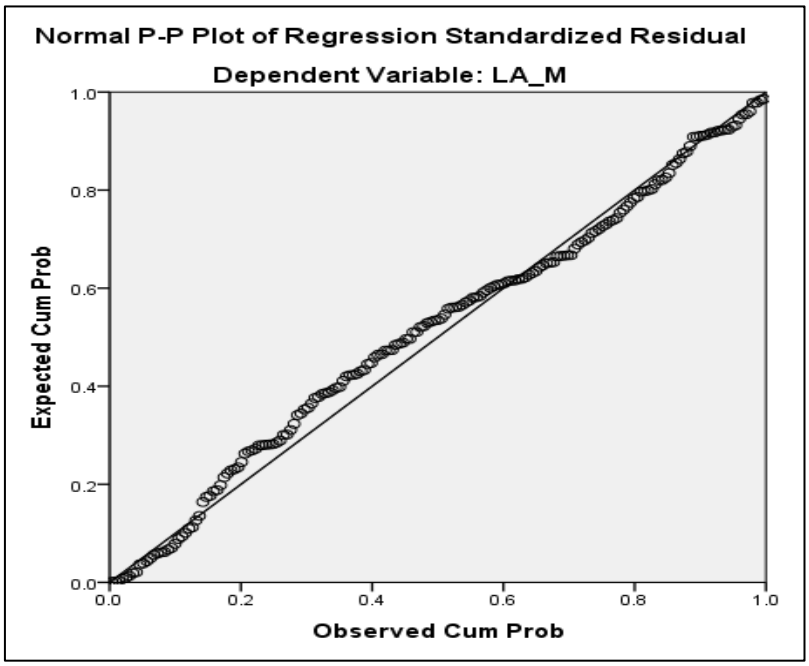

Figure 1: Regression line of EI and SE in predicting EFL students' FLA

8. Discussion

The findings showed that Jordanian university EFL students self-reported to have a high level of emotional intelligence (EI) and academic self-efficacy (SE). They further reported a moderate level of foreign language anxiety (FLA). The results found that only SE varied according to the participants' demographic variables combined, i.e. gender, qualification, study level, GPA and age. The findings indicated a moderate positive association between emotional intelligence (EI) and self-efficacy (SE). Individuals who possess elevated emotional intelligence typically demonstrate greater self-efficacy, and vice versa. The results further designated a moderate negative association between emotional intelligence (EI) and self-efficacy (SE) on one side and foreign language anxiety (FLA) on the other side. The findings finally suggested that EI and SE combined have some potential to predict foreign language anxiety, with SE as a stronger predictor than EI.

According to the aforementioned key findings, it can be concluded that EFL learners with higher emotional intelligence and self-efficacy typically exhibit reduced levels of foreign language anxiety. Such results would indicate that worry regarding the use of a foreign language is directly associated with a decline in both emotional intelligence and self-efficacy in that domain. Likewise, EFL learners with higher emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are likely to exhibit a decrease in foreign language anxiety. Anxiety and pressure can weaken comprehension, leading to a substantial loss of control, precision, mental focus, and concentration. Consequently, it can be anticipated that students with high emotional intelligence will establish greater productivity and

success contrasted to those with low emotional intelligence, as it endorses effective awareness, empathy, interconnection, and collective motivation (Goleman, 1998).

Emotional intelligence can pointedly impact individuals' success, cognitive processes, relationships, and emotional states. It may lessen feelings of nervousness, anxiety, tension, and trepidation triggered while learning or using a second or foreign language (Bar-On, 2006). Contrariwise, anxiety is conditional upon people's perception of their self-efficacy and their self-confidence in managing challenging tasks more sufficiently. Eventually, it can be suggested that among Jordanian university EFL learners, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy can forecast a degree of FLA. The findings of Budak and Mede (2022) validate these findings, demonstrating a noteworthy connection between emotional intelligence and foreign language anxiety. Furthermore, our findings indirectly validate the findings of Kostić-Bobanović (2020), which designated a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy.

The results of the current research are aligned with Jee (2019), who discovered that raised FLA levels correlated with diminished self-efficacy among EFL students, irrespective of their language proficiency. Furthermore, the findings of Afifah *et al.* (2024), who investigated the influence of self-efficacy, foreign language anxiety, and emotional intelligence on speaking performance among Indonesian students, partially back these outcomes. While Afifah *et al.* (2024) found that self-efficacy directly impacted emotional intelligence, its direct impact on speech production was partial, suggesting that the effect of self-efficacy on speaking skill might be principally intermediated through its influence on emotional intelligence.

The findings of this research captured a modest rise in FLA among EFL learners. The participants verified high level of emotional intelligence, which designated a positive attitude and the capability to adapt to challenging tasks or situations. Their high level of self-efficacy demonstrate that they are fully aware of their academic responsibilities, L2 proficiency, and exams requirements. The study highpoints the challenges that encounter EFL students in learning a foreign language. Foreign language anxiety levels do not vary significantly based on gender, study qualification, study level, GPA, and age. However, female learners reported to hold the highest levels of FLA, which could be due to specific social issues. This conclusion is in harmony with the finding of Aridah and Rusmawaty (2025) who reported that female EFL learners experienced higher FLA compared to their male counterparts. However, this result contradicted Radwan (2010), who reported that male EFL learners reported higher FLA than female learners.

The study found a moderate positive correlation between emotional intelligence (EI) and self-efficacy (SE), suggesting that learners with higher EI tend to have higher self-efficacy. Conversely, a moderate negative correlation was found between SE and EI and FLA, which could verify the findings of Şakrak, (2009), who also reported significant positive correlations between SE and EI on one side, and a negative correlation with FLA on the other side. Our study suggests that anxiety over learning or using a foreign language is more likely to be linked with a decline in emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. Students with higher SE and EI are more productive and successful, as these

variables can promote effective awareness, empathy, connectedness, and group motivation. Emotional intelligence and self-efficacy predict anxiety among Jordanian university EFL students about learning a foreign language. These findings are in the same direction of those reported by GÜNEŞ (2025), Li *et al.* (2025) and Radwan (2010) who found that the EFL students had high SE and moderate FLA with SE as a reliable predictor of FLA. This further supports previous studies by Budak and Mede (2022) and Kostić-Bobanović (2020), who found a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and foreign language anxiety. This study found that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are inversely proportional to anxiety among Jordanian university EFL students. Self-efficacy was high with significant changes attributed to EFL learners' GPA. Our results resemble the findings of Awwad and Alkhutaba (2021), who captured a positive correlation between SE and EI, which can vary according to learners' specific individual variables. Our findings are in partial agreement of the findings of Huerta *et al.* (2017), who found the FLA was predicted by only SE not EI.

9. Conclusion

This study discloses that the two observed factors, i.e. self-efficacy (SE) and emotional intelligence (EI) are negatively connected with FLA, with self-efficacy evolving as the most noteworthy predictor of foreign language anxiety (FLA). These findings highpoint the vital role of attending self-efficacy and emotional intelligence in any intercessions designed to diminish the negative consequences of foreign language anxiety, providing appreciated perceptions for all stakeholders including EFL practitioners, decision-makers, and researchers within the area of foreign language learning and teaching. Our findings afford insights regarding self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and foreign language anxiety within EFL contexts, accentuating a pressing need for targeted intercessions to facilitate a more effective and supportive learning-teaching environment to boost EFL experiences. Taking into consideration the captured interrelation between SE, EI and FLA, our study advocates for specific techniques to maximize EFL learners' SE and EI and minimize their FLA while learning English as a foreign language.

EFL learners and teachers need awareness sessions on the key roles of SE and EI in managing their learning, and thus facilitating a more positive learning-teaching environment that can reduce the negative impact of FLA. Integrating mindfulness and relaxation exercises is assumed to assist EFL learners in regulating their anxiety and stress, and hence stay more attentive during classroom sessions. EFL learners should be trained to cultivate their self-efficacy and emotional intelligence, and lessen their foreign language anxiety by offering classroom activities that result in incremental but limited accomplishments that boost their self-confidence. This can go side by side with encouraging and facilitating peer and team work, as well as accepting constructive feedback. Anxious EFL students need to be diagnosed properly, and should then receive appropriate therapy interventions that can assist them in controlling their language anxiety, and promote their general foreign language learning practices.

It is worth highlighting a number of limitations and recommendations that need to be considered by future research in the areas of EFL learners' individual differences. The study looked at general emotional intelligence traits, and thus, further research is recommended to examine the trait EI's subcomponents, including self-awareness, self-control, social abilities, empathy, and motivation. The study adopted only a quantitative approach to data collection and analysis. Future studies should adopt different methods, such as semi-structured interviews, that can shed more light on the complicated association between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and foreign language anxiety. The current study was limited to EFL university students in Jordan. Therefore, further studies are needed to compare between school students and university students in different contexts. Moreover, it is recommended that other studies compare between students with different first languages or from different cultural backgrounds. It is proposed that future research should investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy on one hand and other learner's individual variables from the other hand (e.g., motivation, language proficiency, previous learning experience, learning styles; personality traits, language aptitude, intelligence, and working memory).

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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