



Investigating the Relationships between Regulatory Foci, L2 Grit, and L2 Writing Enjoyment among Iranian EFL Learners*

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Abstract

Objective: Despite the renewed interest in individual differences in second language acquisition (SLA), there is still limited research on the interconnections among regulatory focus (promotion and prevention), L2 grit (Consisting of perseverance of effort and consistency of interests), and emotions.

Methods: A total of 85 undergraduate English majors (54 women, mean age = 20 years) from two comprehensive universities in Iran took part in the research. In order to assess the participants' promotion and prevention focuses, L2 grit, and English writing enjoyment, three questionnaires were used. The data collected was analyzed using IBM SPSS (26.0) software.

Results: The correlational analysis revealed that regulatory focus, L2 grit, and L2 writing enjoyment are interconnected. Specifically, promotion focus positively correlated with L2 writing enjoyment and L2 grit. Additionally, L2 grit (Perseverance of Effort) showed a meaningful connection with L2 writing enjoyment. On the other hand, prevention focus demonstrated significant negative correlations with L2 writing enjoyment and L2 grit. Lastly, there was no significant relationship found between L2 Grit (consistency of interest) and L2 Writing Enjoyment.

Conclusions: The study's results demonstrate the crucial findings regarding the interplay between different dimensions of grit, emotion and personal best goals.

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Introduction

When individuals engage in the challenging activity of learning a second language, their approach to this process, their response to the instructional methods used, and their success in this endeavour depend on their characteristics. Certainly, empirical research into the influence of individual difference (ID) factors embodies a dynamic field within SLA studies. This research has not only highlighted a variety of ID factors but also provided strong evidence that these factors can significantly influence, or even dictate, both the process and outcomes of learning a second language (e.g. Dornyei, 2014; Dornyei & Ryan, 2015; Griffiths & Soruç, 2020; Li, Hiver, & Papi, 2022; MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Clément, 2016; Pawlak, 2017, 2020, 2021). In this regard, according to Zhang and Guo (2012), writing is often considered the most challenging skill among all language skills for English as foreign language (EFL) learners. This is because the writing process provides less guidance when compared with other language learning domains. This lack of support can make the writing process more challenging and hinder progress (Bruning & Horn, 2000). Additionally, writing is a highly intricate and multifaceted task affected by individual differences.

Over the years, there has been a persistent drive to expand the ambit and techniques of SLA research to incorporate ID factors across multiple domains. It is important to note that some variables, like motivation and aptitude, have undergone modifications in their conceptualization. However, these modifications have not diminished the significance of prior theoretical positions that still inspire empirical endeavours. We must keep these in mind while conducting research and analyzing data to ensure that our findings accurately represent the complexities of these variables. Moreover, experts have been actively exploring new aspects of individual differences, often those examined by educational psychologists but unnoticed by researchers in second language acquisition, such as grit and emotion. It's also crucial to recognize that the significance of individual differences must be evaluated based on their various combinations rather than as separate variables.

It is surprising that in the field of SLA, there are still a few studies that explore the interrelationships among different tendencies (promotion vs. prevention) and affective behavior (L2 grit and emotions), including those that are relatively new to the field. These studies are crucial in determining how such variables associate with learners' L2 writing in different ways.

This study aims to fill a critical gap in language learning. By examining the interplay between motivational processes, L2 grit, and emotions, we seek to shed light on how these factors influence Iranian upper-intermediate students. By providing a deeper understanding of these complex relationships, our study will pave the way for more effective and targeted language learning strategies. It would be helpful to understand the effects of these variables when they are considered together in terms of magnitude and direction.

Literature review

Regulatory Focus Theory

In psychology, regulatory focus theory proposes distinct motivational paths towards the ideal and ought-to L2 selves based on process-oriented motivation. The ideal and ought-to L2 selves

are linked to different goal-pursuit behaviours and motivational regulations, serving as various goals. People with ideal or ought self-orientations may use distinct motivational strategies, promotion or prevention focus. (Higgins, 1987; Higgins, 1997; Higgins, 1998). A promotion-focused approach entails adopting willing tactics aimed at advancing toward an ideal self-concept, whereas a prevention-focused approach involves employing vigilant avoidance strategies to steer clear of potential negative outcomes, thereby aligning more closely with one's sense of duty or obligation (Han & McDonough, 2019).

In applied linguistics, the overarching aim of achieving proficiency in a second language can lead to varied motivational outcomes. This variability is contingent upon the individual learner's perception of the goal. Individuals motivated by an ideal L2 self may have a promotion focus, aiming for positive outcomes such as achieving high grades or becoming proficient in their second language. On the other hand, those driven by an ought-to L2 self may have a prevention focus, aiming to avoid negative outcomes such as failing a course or being misunderstood in their second language (Han & McDonough, 2018). It should be noted that the concepts of promotion and prevention are not mutually exclusive or strictly binary. Highly motivated learners can display both a strong promotion focus and a strong prevention focus at the same time (Papi & Teimouri, 2014).

L2 Grit

Grit undeniably plays a crucial role in the success of students, providing additional predictive validity for achievement outcomes beyond what natural or inherent ability alone can predict (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). Grit, a newly recognized non-cognitive skill and personality trait, has demonstrated significant potential in driving success in both personal and academic realms (McCain, 2017). According to Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007), it has been characterized by two distinct dimensions: perseverance of effort (PE) and consistency of interest (CI). Perseverance of effort is the tendency of an individual to dedicate sustained effort over an extended period, while consistency of interest denotes an individual's steady enthusiasm for a significant goal, despite facing hurdles, obstacles, or setbacks. In other words, the former enables individuals to attain mastery despite encountering failures, while the latter underpins the commitment to deliberate practice necessary for gaining mastery (Credé & Tynan, 2021). Collectively, what becomes evident from these definitions is that the dual aspects of grit significantly enhance one's ability to achieve success.

While the literature on grit has significantly expanded following Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly's (2007) seminal work, a handful of studies have begun to explore the notion of grit within the realm of second language acquisition (e.g. Yamashita, 2018; Wei, Gao, & Wang, 2019; Lee, 2020; Teimouri, Plonsky, & Tabandeh, 2020; Pawlak, Zarrinabadi, & Kruk, 2022). For example, Pawlak, Zarrinabadi, and Kruk (2022) showed that a consistent interest and the persistence of effort significantly influenced behaviour driven by motivation. The students exhibited notably high degrees of enjoyment and second language grit, encompassing both essential aspects.

Enjoyment

Over the past few years, scholars who study SLA have been focusing more on the positive emotions that can affect learning a new language, including enjoyment. Enjoyment is now seen

as a complex emotion that involves various dimensions. It exemplifies the relentless human determination to achieve success in the face of difficult tasks. (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016). Enjoyment refers to the positive emotions of pleasure and happiness an individual experiences while engaging in an activity (Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021). Teimouri (2017) defined L2 enjoyment as the positive feelings language learners experience while learning or using the target language, whether in a classroom or an authentic setting. Several studies have investigated the relationship between learners' enjoyment in L2 classes and their regulatory focus and grit. As part of their survey of 644 Chinese senior high school students, Ming, Liu, Gao, Zhuang, Wei, and Di (2016) investigated the interplay between regulatory focus, achievement emotions, and grit. The study suggests that certain emotions, such as cheerfulness and dejection, can affect the relationship between promotion focus and grit. Similarly, agitation, rather than satisfaction, can affect the relationship between prevention focus and grit. These emotions act as mediators and can either activate or deactivate our response to achieving goals. In addition, research has found a strong correlation between hope, a positive trait emotion, and grit, which is triggered by the tendency to avoid unfavourable outcomes. The statement is consistent with the avoidance aspect of prevention focus (Davidson, 2014; Poels & Dewitte, 2008). Thus, If L2 learners are looking to progress in their language learning journey, it's important to keep their spirits high and stay motivated. By fostering hope and enjoyment, they can boost their enthusiasm and put in more effort, which will ultimately lead to better results.

To address the gaps in the existing literature, this study aims to answer the following question:

What are the interrelationships between promotion and prevention motivational processes, L2 grit, and L2 writing enjoyment among Iranian EFL learners?

Method

Design of the Study

For this study, a correlational research design was employed. In this regard, we take a quantitative approach toward research methods, data collection and analysis procedures and inferences. Convenience sampling was used to select about 85 Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners. At first, informed consents were obtained, and then the intended scales were given to them to collect the required data. They were asked to fill out the Regulatory Focus Questionnaire used by Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009), the L2 grit scale developed by Teimouri, Plonsky, and Tabandeh (2020), and the English writing enjoyment scale developed by Jin (2023). Afterwards, based on the findings from these instruments, the data were analyzed.

Participants

The study included 85 participants (31 men, 54 women) who were Iranian university students with an average age range of 20 (ranging from 18 to 22). They were all upper intermediate English as a foreign language (EFL) learners studying literature, translation, or teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in two universities in Isfahan, Iran. All participants spoke Persian as their first language. Thirteen participants were excluded from the data analysis due to issues with their questionnaire responses. To ensure homogeneity in English proficiency level, the Quick Oxford Placement Test (version 2) was administered.

Instruments

Regulatory Focus Questionnaire (RFQ)

To assess the participants' promotion and prevention focuses, we used the questionnaire developed by Taguchi, Magid, and Papi (2009). This questionnaire consists of 6 items related to promotion and 7 items related to prevention. Participants were asked to rate the items using a 6-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly agree and 6 = strongly disagree. For the statistical analyses, the scale is reversed. The internal consistency is $\alpha = .67$ for promotion and $\alpha = .81$ for prevention.

L2 Grit Scale

To examine the participants' L2 grit, the L2 grit scale developed by Teimouri, Plonsky, and Tabandeh (2020) was used in this study. The scale contains 9 items classified under the two subscales of perseverance of effort (5 items) and consistency of interest (4 items). The participants were given the items and will be asked to rate them on a 5-point 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The internal consistency measures obtained by Teimouri, Plonsky, and Tabandeh (2020) were $\alpha = .75$ and $\alpha = .78$ for perseverance of effort and consistency of interest respectively.

English Writing Enjoyment Scale

We assessed the participants' enjoyment of writing in English by using the questionnaire developed by Jin (2023). The reliability of the 9-item EWES was estimated using data from the second, third, and fourth participant groups. The resulting Cronbach's alpha values were .94, .95, and .94, indicating excellent internal reliability of the scale.

Procedure

The data collection took place at Isfahan and Kashan Universities. At the beginning of the study, all participants were asked to take part in the Quick Oxford Placement Test (version 2) to ensure their homogeneity. Then, participants were invited to fill out the questionnaires in a paper-based format. Before the administration, written consent was obtained from each participant to assure them of confidentiality. Finally, the collected data were entered into the computer using IBM SPSS (26.0) for data cleaning and analysis.

Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using IBM SPSS (26.0) software. First, descriptive statistics such as standard deviations, means, kurtosis, and skewness of all the variables were calculated to describe the dataset. Second, Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to uncover the relationships among the promotion and prevention motivational processes, L2 grit, and L2 writing enjoyment.

Results

Relationships between Promotion Motivational Processes and L2 Writing Enjoyment

To investigate the hypothesis of the relationship between the promotion focus and L2 writing enjoyment, we utilized Pearson's correlation coefficient test. The results of this test are in the table 1 below.

Table 1. *Correlation of Promotion and L2 Writing Enjoyment*

Pearson Correlation Coefficient		L2 writing enjoyment	promotion
L2 writing enjoyment / promotion	Correlation Coefficient	1	0.352
	Level of sig.		0.011
	Freq.	85	85

The investigation into the hypothesis regarding the relationship between promotion focus and L2 writing enjoyment has revealed a significant and direct relationship between these two variables ($r=0.352$, $Sig.=0.011$). In simpler terms, as the promotion focus increases, writing enjoyment in a second language also increases. The correlation between these two variables is 0.352, indicating an average level of correlation.

Relationships between Prevention Motivational Processes and L2 Writing Enjoyment

To investigate the hypothesis of the relationship between the prevention focus and L2 writing enjoyment, we utilized Pearson's correlation coefficient test. The results of this test are in the table 2 below.

Table 2. *Correlation of Prevention and L2 Writing Enjoyment*

Pearson Correlation Coefficient		L2 writing enjoyment	prevention
L2 writing enjoyment / prevention	Correlation Coefficient	1	-0.486
	Level of sig.		0.001
	Freq.	85	85

The investigation of the hypothesis regarding the relationship between prevention focus and L2 writing enjoyment indicates a significant and negative correlation between these two variables ($r = 0.001$, $Sig. = -0.486$). As the prevention focus increases, writing enjoyment in a second language decreases. The correlation between these two variables is at a medium to high level, suggesting a relatively strong inverse relationship between them.

Relationships between Promotion Motivational Processes and L2 Grit

To investigate the hypothesis of the relationship between the promotion focus and the L2 grit, we utilized Pearson's correlation coefficient test. The results of this test are in the table 3 below.

Table 3. *Promotion and L2 Grit*

Pearson Correlation Coefficient		L2 grit	promotion
L2 grit / promotion	Correlation Coefficient	1	0.388
	Level of sig.		0.005
	Freq.	85	85

The findings from the investigation into the relationship between the promotion focus and L2 grit indicate a significant and positive correlation between these two variables ($r=0.388$, $p=0.005$). This means that as promotion focus increases, so does the L2 grit. The correlation coefficient of 0.388 indicates a moderate relationship between the two variables.

Relationships between Prevention Motivational Processes and L2 Grit

To investigate the hypothesis of the relationship between the prevention focus and the L2 grit, we utilized Pearson's correlation coefficient test. The results of this test are in the table 4 below.

Table 4. *Prevention and L2 Grit*

Pearson Correlation Coefficient		L2 grit	prevention
L2 grit / prevention	Correlation Coefficient	1	-0.531
	Level of sig.		0.001
	Freq.	85	85

The findings related to the investigation of the hypothesis of the relationship between the prevention focus and L2 grit indicate that there is a significant and inverse relationship between these two variables ($r=-0.531$, $\text{Sig.}=0.001$). In other words, the correlation coefficient obtained from this relationship shows that along with the increase in the *prevention* focus, the respondents' L2 grit decreases. The correlation coefficient obtained from this relationship is equal to -0.531, which indicates a moderate to high correlation.

Relationships between L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort) and L2 Writing Enjoyment

To investigate the hypothesis of the relationship between L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort) and L2 Writing Enjoyment, we utilized Pearson's correlation coefficient test. The results of this test are in the table 5 below.

Table 5. *L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort) and L2 Writing Enjoyment*

Pearson Correlation Coefficient		L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort)	L2 Writing Enjoyment
L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort)/(L2 Writing Enjoyment	Correlation Coefficient	1	0.307
	Level of sig.		0.012
	Freq.	85	85

The findings related to examining the hypothesis of the relationship between L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort) and L2 Writing Enjoyment show a significant and direct relationship between these two variables ($r=0.307$, $\text{Sig.}=0.012$). In other words, with the increase in the respondents' L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort), the excitement of their L2 Writing Enjoyment increases. The correlation obtained from this relationship is at an average level (0.307) and relatively favorable.

Relationships between L2 Grit (consistency of interest) and L2 Writing Enjoyment

To investigate the hypothesis regarding the relationship between L2 Grit (consistency of interest) and L2 Writing Enjoyment, we utilized Pearson's correlation coefficient test. The results of this test are in the table 6 below.

Table 6. *L2 Grit (consistency of interest) and L2 Writing Enjoyment*

Pearson Correlation Coefficient		L2 Grit (consistency of interest)	L2 Writing Enjoyment
L2 Grit (consistency of interest)/(L2) Writing Enjoyment	Correlation Coefficient	1	-0.199
	Level of sig.		0.068
	Freq.	85	85

The findings related to examining the relationship hypothesis between L2 Grit (consistency of interest) and L2 Writing Enjoyment show no significant relationship between these two variables ($r=0.199$, $\text{Sig.}=0.068$). In other words, L2 Writing Enjoyment is still the same based on L2 grit, as it focuses on the consistency of interest in the respondents of this research, and this relationship is not significant.

Discussion

The study delves into the connections between the promotion and prevention motivational processes, L2 grit, and L2 writing enjoyment among Iranian EFL learners. Our findings offer empirical evidence supporting significant linkages among the variables under investigation. In this regard, we will delve into six key relationships among the variables.

Relationships between Promotion Motivational Processes and L2 Writing Enjoyment

First, concerning the link between regulatory focus with L2 writing enjoyment, the relationship between promotion focus and L2 writing enjoyment has revealed a significant and direct relationship between these two variables. These results may be because university is a time of welcome move and positive progress. Most students are more likely to follow up and achieve positive behavioural interventions and outcomes, actively provide learning experiences and opportunities, focus on playing to win, and dauntlessly take chances to attain their goals and the means to cope with challenges. According to [Fredrickson and Branigan \(2005\)](#), positive emotional experiences can help people enhance their promotion mindsets.

This discovery supports previous studies that have demonstrated a strong link between regulatory focus as a motivational factor and L2 enjoyment. [Mei, Yan, and Shen \(2024\)](#) highlighted a significant positive correlation between promotion focus and enjoyment, as well as a notable negative correlation between promotion focus and boredom, in line with the regulatory focus theory. In essence, higher promotion focus levels are associated with more positive activating emotions, while lower promotion focus levels are linked to more negative deactivating emotions. In another study, in line with these findings, [Pattershall, Eidelman, and Beike \(2012\)](#) asserted the indirect and positive impact of the promotion focus on earning engagement through the expression of positive academic emotions. This is due to the fact that learners with a promotion focus are more inclined to experience and respond to positive emotions.

Relationships between Prevention Motivational Processes and L2 Writing Enjoyment

The investigation of the hypothesis regarding the relationship between prevention focus and L2 writing enjoyment indicates a significant and negative correlation between these two variables. These results showed that students with a higher prevention focus tended to become bored, anxious, and less hopeful in language acquisition. Learners' negative emotions have a significant impact on the learning process. These emotions restrict cognitive resources, increase cognitive load, and impede thought processing. As a result, they affect the sustainability of learning. This impact is especially noticeable among learners with prevention-focused tendencies, as they are inclined to be more focused on the challenges and negative aspects of learning. Understanding and addressing these tendencies is crucial in creating an environment where all learners can thrive and excel. It is also crucial to address and manage these negative

emotions to create an environment conducive to effective and sustainable learning (Deng, Lei, Guo, Li, Ge, & Hu, 2022). Hence, educators must embrace effective pedagogical strategies that counteract the detrimental effects of a prevention-focused mindset. Our result also confirmed previous studies that have demonstrated the inverse relationship between these two variables (Pattershall, Eidelman, & Beike, 2012; Mei, Yan, & Shen, 2024). On the contrary, this finding does not provide empirical backing for the hypothesis proposed by Papi and Teimouri (2014) regarding the facilitating and debilitating impact of anxiety as a negative emotion on students' motivation. Teimouri (2017) suggests that L2 anxiety aligns with the motivational orientation of learners with a predominant prevention focus and serves as a facilitator by keeping them vigilant to potential negative outcomes. This insight sheds light on the constructive role of anxiety in maintaining motivation and focus.

Relationships between Regulatory foci and L2 Grit

Concerning the link of regulatory foci with L2 grit, promotion focus was positively correlated with L2 grit, while prevention focus was negatively correlated with L2 grit. This correlation suggests that maintaining a focus on achieving goals and growth (as promotion mindsets) is associated with a higher level of grit in second language learning. On the other hand, a focus on avoiding mistakes and failure (as a prevention mindset) is linked to lower levels of grit in learning a second language. This insight emphasizes the importance of promoting a positive and growth-oriented mindset to enhance grit and success in language learning.

These findings are crucial as they align with previous studies that have demonstrated a strong association between regulatory focus and general grit. The evidence from studies by Higgins (2008), Lake (2013), Ming, Liu, Gao, Zhuang, Wei, and Di (2016), and Mei, Yan, and Shen (2024) all point to the significance of regulatory focus as a motivational factor. This connection underscores the importance of understanding regulatory focus in cultivating perseverance and passion for long-term goals.

According to a recent study by Gao, Hodis, and Tait (2022), students with strong or very strong levels of promotion and prevention showed significantly higher consistency of interest and perseverance of effort compared to their peers. This suggests that a focus on both promotion and prevention could lead to better outcomes in terms of both dimensions of grit. The result stays in contrast with the findings of our study with regard to the relationship between prevention and L2 grit.

Relationships between L2 Grit and L2 Writing Enjoyment

This study aimed to enhance our understanding of the connection between grit and enjoyment of L2 writing in the classroom among Iranian university EFL learners. The data revealed the following results: Firstly, there is a significant and direct relationship between Grit (Perseverance of Effort) and L2 Writing Enjoyment. It is suggested that EFL learners with more grit, who persistently work to improve their English skills, are more likely to feel excited about English writing. EFL students who demonstrate a higher level of perseverance show a strong tendency to work diligently on challenging tasks, such as L2 writing and performance

(Lee, 2020). As a result, they are more likely to feel a sense of accomplishment in writing. This highlights the significant impact of perseverance on language learning.

The interpretation is well-supported by prior studies consistently reporting an overall grit score. For instance, individuals with high levels of grit demonstrate a strong work ethic and steadfast commitment to achieving challenging long-term goals, even in the face of adversity in specific areas (e.g. Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007) and general areas (e.g. Robertson-Kraft & Duckworth, 2014).

A recent study by Mei, Yan, and Shen (2024) revealed that L2 grit is moderately linked to positive achievement emotions such as enjoyment and hope while showing moderate negative correlations with negative emotions like boredom and anxiety. These findings support and build upon previous studies examining the connection between achievement emotions and L2 grit (Liu & Wang, 2021; Wei, Gao, & Wang, 2019; Pawlak, Zarrinabadi, & Kruk, 2022). In other words, people who feel more positive and fewer negative emotions while learning a new language are more likely to keep working towards their learning goals. This shows how important positive emotions are for second language learning (MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Clément, 2016).

Another finding is that L2 Writing Enjoyment remains consistent based on L2 grit. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between the two factors. The current findings support the growing body of evidence from prior studies (Credé, Tynan, & Harms, 2017; Karlen, Suter, Hirt, & Merki, 2019) demonstrating that a specific aspect of grit may provide a more dependable link to L2 writing enjoyment than broader traits (a combination of perseverance and consistency of interests). Hence, Credé, Tynan, and Harms (2017) assert that it is crucial to treat the two facets of grit independently for a more comprehensive understanding. Another potential reason for this result could be that the validity of the grit scale in terms of interest consistency is questionable, and it may need revision accurately to measure the consistency of interests.

Conclusion

In this study, we have examined the interrelationships among regulatory focus, L2 writing emotions, and L2 grit. Drawing on correlational analysis of our collected data, we have obtained the following research findings.

Firstly, the examined constructs showed significant and positive relationships. Specifically, the relationship between promotion focusses and L2 writing enjoyment, the relationship between promotion focusses and L2 grit, and the relationship between L2 Grit (Perseverance of Effort) and L2 Writing Enjoyment all demonstrate meaningful connections. Secondly, there were significant and negative correlations between prevention focus and L2 writing enjoyment, as well as between prevention focus and L2 grit. Thirdly, there is no significant relationship between L2 Grit (consistency of interest) and L2 Writing Enjoyment.

The current study's findings may have theoretical and practical implications for research on language learner psychology and language teaching practice. The study may potentially contribute additional empirical evidence to the L2 motivational self-system (L2MSS), explore the specific application of regulatory focus theory in second language acquisition, and provide

deeper insights into the mechanism underlying the relationship between motivation, emotion, and L2 grit. In practical terms, our findings suggest that teachers should encourage and assist their students in developing a promotion-focused learning attitude. This attitude is characterized by a desire for positive outcomes, a growth mindset, and an orientation towards ideal selves. When students are influenced by these motivational behaviors, they will make persistent efforts to achieve their ideal selves through continuous progress once they set a goal. The emotional well-being of students should also be taken into consideration in L2 teaching. Teachers need to be mindful of students' emotional states and changes in class so that they can appropriately address their emotions.

This study has a few limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the data collected for this study were correlational; hence, no causal speculation can be made. This is an important consideration because drawing causal conclusions from correlational data can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. It's essential to accurately represent the nature of the data and the limitations of the study to ensure that conclusions are based on solid evidence. Second, the study participants were exclusively from two universities in Iran. Therefore, the findings may not be fully representative of the entire population of Iranian university students. This limitation underscores the need for caution when generalizing the findings to a broader context. Finally, it is essential to consider the use of qualitative methods in addition to quantitative ones to gain a deeper understanding of the link between grit, emotions, and regulatory focus dimensions. By incorporating qualitative methods, we can delve deeper into the intricate nuances of these factors and gain valuable insights that quantitative methods alone may not provide. This approach will enrich our understanding and contribute to more comprehensive and meaningful research in L2 achievement.

This study revealed that motivation dimensions effectively encapsulated the intricate interplay between regulatory focus and individual differences within a cohort of Iranian university students. Consider the varying motivations of students, which are influenced by economic and contextual factors that differ across geographical areas within a country. Understanding these differences is crucial for providing effective support and resources to help all students succeed. Thus, future research could explore the regulatory foci in other samples of Iranian university students. This future work has the potential to enhance the applicability of the findings to a broader population. Therefore, it would be interesting to investigate in future studies if similar orientations are found in other cultures or countries and across a broader range of ages.

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