

An Empirical Study on Improving Literature C-E Translation Proficiency: From Perspective of Self-efficacy and Critical Thinking

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Abstract: This study investigated the relationships between self-efficacy, critical thinking, foreign language enjoyment (FLE), and Chinese-to-English (C-E) translation proficiency in translation majors, aiming to optimize educational practices and boost student performance. Employing a quantitative approach, 276 college students majoring in translation were assessed using various measurement tools and statistical analyses. The results indicated that lower self-efficacy was associated with moderate FLE and slightly moderated critical thinking. Notably, personal FLE and classroom climate-related FLE exhibited significant positive correlations with C-E translation proficiency, while teacher-related FLE did not significantly impact proficiency. Furthermore, both individual FLE and classroom climate-related FLE mediated the relationship between self-efficacy, critical thinking, and C-E translation proficiency. These findings underscore the importance of self-efficacy, a positive classroom environment, personal FLE, and critical thinking in enhancing translation skills, offering practical insights for improving teaching strategies and fostering student proficiency.

Keywords: Positive Psychology; Self-Efficacy; Foreign Language Enjoyment; Critical Thinking; Literature c-e Translation Proficiency

1. Introduction

Since the 1970s, positive psychology has triggered a wave of research in education academia especially second language acquisition (SLA) [1]. As a significant factor influencing learning outcomes, Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) has increasingly

become a key second language emotion in the spotlight of the second language community [2]. According to Oxford (2016), model of foreign language learners' well-being, the Self-efficacy and emotion are two of the dimensions, which interact with each other and play a key role in understanding the psychological processes of foreign language learners. Numerous studies have spoken to the significant prediction of Self-efficacy on learning outcomes and proficiency [3-6]. In addition, self-efficacy has also been found to be a predictor of FLE. However, few studies have examined whether foreign language learners' Self-efficacy affects learners' Literature C-E translation proficiency through FLE. On a methodological level, current research on emotions has mainly utilizes quantitative methods and relatively little exploration of causality [7]. Therefore, this paper takes college students of Literature C-E Translation proficiency translation major as the research object, from the perspective of positive psychology, using a combination of questionnaire surveys and individual interviews to explore the current situation of foreign language learners' Self-efficacy, Critical Thinking and Foreign Language Enjoyment. The relationship between Self-efficacy, Critical Thinking, FLE, and Literature C-E translation Proficiency is validated, in order to reveal the emotional dynamics of foreign language learners and promote the application of positive psychology in foreign language translation teaching.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Self-Efficacy in the Academic Context

Self-efficacy theory was coined by Bandura [8], referring to an individual's beliefs, judgments, or perceptions about whether he or

she is competent in a given situational task. It is a fundamental component of responsive pedagogy, aiming to assist educators in fostering students' belief in their own capabilities and enhancing their general self-concept [9]. Self-efficacy of foreign language learning can influence learning outcomes through learners' cognitive, affective, and motivational mediators. The questionnaire method was used by [10] to place self-efficacy as an antecedent variable, having found that self-efficacy influences students' participation on Literature C-E Translation proficiency speaking through ideal self, ought self, and language anxiety. Using the same methodology, Ávila-López and Espejo-Mohedano [11] found that self-efficacy influenced Literature C-E Translation proficiency through bilingual ideal self, and bilingual contingent self. With a longitudinal mediation modeling approach, Akamatsu, Nakaya, and Koizumi [12] found that metacognition and motivation play a significant role in mediating the effect of self-efficacy on Literature C-E Translation proficiency academic performance. In addition, some scholars have used self-efficacy as a mediating variable to examine the effects of cognitive, affective and motivational factors on learning outcomes. They explored the effects of motivational exhaustion on academic performance and mediating role of self-efficacy through one-way ANOVA, correlation analysis and regression analyses. Taking 501 Literature C-E Translation proficiency language learners as research subjects, Eccles and Wigfield [13] constructed a research framework based on social cognitive theory and the social cognitive expectancy-value model, and used structural equation modeling to validate the model, having found that the relationship between their emotional intelligence and academic achievement was mediated by learning motivation and self-efficacy in turn. Most current empirical studies focus on self-efficacy and cognitive, motivation, but fewer studies have examined affective factors. For example, Z. Chen (2021) used 298 Literature C-E Translation proficiency major college students as research subjects to examine the interaction between writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety. By using structural equation modeling, Ömer and AKÇAYOĞLU (2021) found that self-efficacy

significantly predicted foreign language learning anxiety. Demirdöken and Okur (2023) studied 526 Turkish Literature C-E Translation proficiency learners and found that Literature C-E Translation proficiency learning motivation and self-confidence played multiple mediating roles in self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation proficiency learning anxiety. It can be seen that these above-mentioned studies have found that self-efficacy predicts and influences anxiety. However, in recent years, scholars have begun to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and FLE. For example, with a survey of 300 non-Literature C-E Translation proficiency speaking college students, L. J. Zhang, Fathi, and Mohammaddokht (2023) found that self-efficacy positively predicted the enjoyment of foreign language learning, but such studies are relatively few.

2.2 Self-Efficacy in Translation

Subjective personality qualities have drawn a lot of attention lately in an attempt to explain the significant degree of diversity found among participants in process-oriented empirical investigations in translatology (Jaaskelainen, 2000). Furthermore, no specific research on the relationship between self-efficacy and translation has yet been published, despite a very wide variety of subjects, including ambiguity tolerance, emotional stability, coping methods, and even translators' personalities as a whole, having been studied in relation to translation. However, there is general agreement that translation scholars should focus more of their research on this specific field of study as well as other closely related constructs that we will discuss in this section because they are important for translation studies (Wæraas & Nielsen, 2016). The self-concept of translators is also strongly connected to that of self-efficacy, yet there has been considerable uncertainty regarding the distinctions between these two notions in terms of researchers and studies (Vural, 2023). Finally, in a university translation training scenario, Paskevich, Brawley, Dorsch, and Widmeyer (1999) discovered a somewhat favourable link between collective efficacy and cohesiveness in collaborative work groups. According to Bandura (2000), "a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action

required to produce given levels of attainments", collective efficacy is seen as an extension of the self-efficacy idea. Further field research on this issue is made possible by this initial donation.

2.3 Critical Thinking

Different definitions of the contentious concept of critical thinking may be found in the literature. It is one of the main problems in today's educational settings, according to Atkinson (1997). Several studies show how it affects learning techniques, translation, vocabulary acquisition, reading and listening comprehension, language ability, and other areas of learning a foreign or second language. Rashid and Hashim (2008) made an effort to investigate the connection between linguistic competency and critical thinking. 280 University Utara Malaysia undergraduate students completed the Literature C-E Translation proficiency language competency exam and the Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT) for this reason. The results showed a strong relationship between Malaysian students' critical thinking skills and their Literature C-E Translation proficiency language competency.

The argument made by certain western academics, who have taken an extreme universalist attitude and claimed that Asian pupils lack critical thinking skills, had sparked the majority of the research (Stapleton, 2001), especially when it is in the context of literature translation.

2.4 Foreign Language Enjoyment

Last decade has seen the multiplication of research on FLE, a surge aligning with the comprehensive perspective driven by the growing Positive Psychology movement in the field of SLA (Yongliang Wang, Derakhshan, & Zhang, 2021). Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) were the first to investigate FLE alongside Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), the most well-studied negative emotion, based on the influential broaden-and-build hypothesis of positive emotions. Piniel and Albert (2018) identified FLE and FLA as key nodes in the emotion network, which they metaphorically described as the "emotional feet" of every second-language learner. Dewaele and Li (2020) also argued that enjoyment improves foreign language learners'

mindset and reduces the interference caused by negative emotions when in a foreign culture. Li (2020) investigated 334 Literature C-E Translation proficiency learners from high school and found that foreign language enjoyment was significantly related to Literature C-E Translation proficiency achievement. X. Wang and Li (2022) surveyed 348 Chinese non-Literature C-E Translation proficiency majors by questionnaire and found that enjoyment had a significant positive effect on self-assessment of Literature C-E Translation proficiency test scores and learning effectiveness in online classes. All of the above studies take FLE as the independent variable, proving its direct positive effect.

There were also some scholars having used FLE as a mediating variable. Hu, Sidhu, and Lu (2022) conducted a study on 388 Literature C-E Translation proficiency majors in a Chinese university, and found that FLE plays a mediating role in development of mindset and Literature C-E Translation proficiency learning. Lau and Jong (2023), on the other hand, using Hong Kong junior high school students, found that FLE mediates the relationship between informal digital Literature C-E Translation proficiency learning and communicative intention. It can be seen that the mediating role of FLE has recognized. The above studies investigated the relationship between Self-efficacy, Foreign Language Enjoyment and Literature C-E Translation proficiency from a two-by-two perspective. However, there were not many studies having explored in-depth the relationship between the three. Therefore, with positive psychology being a theoretical framework, this study will explore the relationship between the three, answering the following three research questions: (1) What is the current status of Self-efficacy, Critical Thinking and FLE among college students majoring in Literature C-E Translation proficiency at private institutions in China? (2) What is the correlation between self-efficacy, Critical Thinking, FLE and Literature C-E Translation Proficiency? (3) Does FLE plays a mediating role between Self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation Proficiency? (4) Does Critical Thinking moderate the relation between Self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation Proficiency?

Through the analysis of related literature, the following hypotheses are proposed in this

study:

H1: Self-efficacy of college students in Literature C-E Translation proficiency major significantly and positively affects Literature C-E Translation proficiency.

H2: Self-efficacy has a positive effect on FLE.

H3: FLE has positive impact on Literature C-E Translation.

H4: FLE mediates the relationship between Self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation.

H5: Critical Thinking moderates the relationship between self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation.

A model that integrates these hypotheses regarding Self-efficacy, Critical Thinking, FLE, and Literature C-E Translation Proficiency is shown in Figure 1.

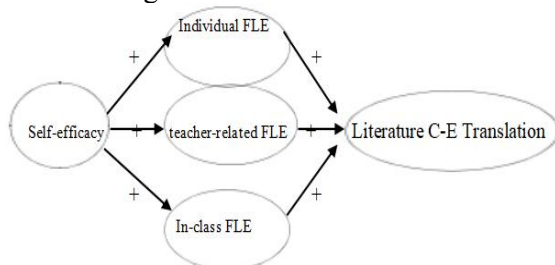


Figure 1. Hypotheses Model

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

In this study, 276 undergraduates who are majoring in Literature C-E Translation proficiency were selected as the research subjects, among which the number of second-year and third-year students are 178 (64.49%) and 98 (35.51%) respectively, with 156 male students (56.52%) and 120 female students (43.48%). In order to further understand students' Self-efficacy, Critical Thinking and FLE, based on the results of the questionnaire, the author designed four open-ended questions. Ten students were randomly selected from the 276 students who participated in the final questionnaire and were interviewed face-to-face and tape-recorded, numbered A1-A10. Ten students were randomly selected from the 276 students who participated in the final questionnaire and were interviewed face-to-face and tape-recorded, numbered A1-A10. The interviews lasted an average of 20 minutes and were transcribed and analyzed using the NVivo qualitative analysis software. The interviews lasted an average of 20 minutes per student and were transcribed using the NVivo

qualitative analysis software. The study was conducted by the instructor and the researcher in the library. Students took an average of 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. A total of 315 questionnaires were sent out and 276 valid questionnaires were returned, with a validity rate of 87.62%. The validity rate was 87.62%. SPSS 22.0 was used to analyze the data with descriptive statistics, Pearson SPSS 22.0 was used to conduct descriptive statistical analysis.

3.2 Research Instrument

The questionnaire was divided into three parts, the first part was the basic information, including students' gender, grade; the second and third parts were the main part of the questionnaire, which tested self-efficacy, Critical Thinking, FLE and Literature C-E Translation Proficiency respectively. The self-efficacy scale of a 10-item questionnaire with high reliability and widely used by researchers was derived from J. X. Zhang and Schwarzer (1995). Critical Thinking was originated from critical thinking motivational scale made by Stupple et al. (2017). FLE Scale was borrowed from Li et al. (2018) based on Chinese foreign language learners, which has good reliability and validity, with 11 questions, including three dimensions, namely, individual FLE (questions 1-5), teacher-related FLE (questions 6-8), and in-class FLE (questions 9-11). Self-efficacy Scale, Critical Thinking Motivative Scale, and FLE Scale are scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = not at all (almost) in agreement to 5=comply completely (almost), with 3 reverse questions, which were assigned in the opposite way to the forward questions. Reliability analyses were conducted using SPSS 22.0. The results showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the self-efficacy scale, and the foreign language enjoyment scale were 0.9 and 0.832 respectively, indicating that the scales had good reliability.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Self-Efficacy and FLE in General

As can be seen from Table 1, the self-efficacy of Literature C-E Translation proficiency majors' college students level is low, with a mean value of 2.84 (median 3.00), this result is

opposite to the results of Sun, Wang, Lambert, and Liu (2021) study, which may be related to the object of the study and the perspective of the study, and their study targeted the writing self-efficacy of junior high school students, which side by side indicates that the research subjects in this study need to improve their self-confidence in solving the problems of Literature C-E Translation proficiency as a way of enhancing their self-efficacy. However, FLE is generally at a moderate level, with a mean value of 3.21 (with a median value of 3.00).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Self-efficacy and FLE (N=276)

Variables	M	SD
individual FLE	3.23	.99
teacher-related FLE	3.79	.96
In-class FLE	2.61	.68
FLE	3.21	.81
Self-efficacy	2.84	.75

This finding confirms the findings of Shao et al. (2020), although they explored foreign language translation pleasure in an online teaching environment, it can be inferred that a medium level of foreign language pleasure is a common phenomenon among contemporary college students. Looking at the specifics of the dimension scores, the highest and lowest scores were teacher-related FLE, individual FLE, and in-class FLE, indicating that students felt pleasure in the classroom. Most of the students mentioned that even though the atmosphere around them was not good for learning Literature C-E Translation proficiency, the teachers always encourage and support them to learn Literature C-E Translation proficiency.

4.2 Correlation between Self-efficacy, FLE and Literature C-E Translation Proficiency

In order to examine self-efficacy, FLE and Literature C-E Translation proficiency, the Pearson's correlation was conducted in this study. Table 2 shows that self-efficacy, FLE and Literature C-E Translation proficiency are significantly positively correlated with each

other, indicating that students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to be more successful in Literature C-E Translation proficiency language learning. The higher the self-efficacy, the more positive emotional experiences students have in the process of Literature C-E Translation proficiency learning, and the better their Literature C-E Translation proficiency learning performance. This result supports Phipps (2023) that self-efficacy as a dependent variable can significantly predict Literature C-E Translation proficiency learning level. Students with high self-efficacy can anticipate the difficulties encountered in learning and put in more effort and time to overcome them, while students with low self-efficacy first consider their own and are susceptible to negative emotions such as anxiety, frustration, etc., and eventually become fearful of difficulties or even give up. The effects of the above self-efficacy on Literature C-E Translation proficiency were confirmed in the interviews, for example, student A5 mentioned in the interview, "I insist on learning Literature C-E Translation proficiency every day, even if I have to face a lot of problems. Similarly, Student A8 talked about how she sets goals in her Literature C-E Translation proficiency study and tries her best to achieve them, and as a result, her Literature C-E Translation proficiency performance has improved significantly. In addition, self-efficacy significantly influenced the dimensions of FLE, with correlation coefficients ranging from high to low individual FLE, teacher-related FLE, and in-class FLE, indicating that the higher the self-efficacy, the higher self-efficacy is. This finding positively corroborates the findings of Zhen et al. (2017) and Yabing Wang et al. (2021), echoing Pekrun (2006) proposed control-value theory of self-efficacy as a cognitive appraisal of controllability. The interviews further illustrated this finding, with some students noting that when they develop confidence in learning Literature C-E Translation proficiency and maintain a high level of enthusiasm, they enjoy the Literature C-E Translation proficiency translation process.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

	Individual FLE	Teacher-related FLE	In-class FLE	FLE	Translation Proficiency
Self-efficacy	.739**	.603**	.441**	.754**	.754**
Literature C-E Translation proficiency	.161**	-.031	.212**	.153	

The results in Table 2 also reflect a significant relationship between FLE and Literature C-E translation proficiency, indicating that if learners are more satisfied with themselves and the classroom climate, they are more likely to be satisfied with themselves. This validates MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) view that positive emotions help learners take a more holistic perspective in analyze problems, facilitate language absorption, and ultimately improve Literature C-E Translation proficiency. In addition to this, Li, Jiang, and Dewaele (2018) study likewise found a significant positive correlation between both FLE and test scores. It is worth noting that teacher-related FLE does not significantly influence translation proficiency, suggesting that even with a strong sense of identification with teachers, attitudes toward teachers do not necessarily translate into actions and results on improving translation proficiency. Student A1's interview further corroborated this finding, "I have a good relationship with my teachers. I have communication with my teacher during class, but the topics are mostly centered on my daily life. The results of the analysis further explain that students' pleasure comes mostly from the teacher, but cannot significantly affect the translation proficiency.

4.3 Moderating Effect of FLE between Self-Efficacy and Literature C-E translation Proficiency

Based on a self-constructed model (see Figure 1), the author hypothesized that self-efficacy as the antecedent variable, personal foreign language pleasure, teacher-related foreign language pleasure and teacher-related foreign language pleasure and classroom climate-related foreign language pleasure as mediating variables, and translation proficiency as the effect variable, with reference to Preacher & Hayes (2008) and Baron & Kenny (1986). Kenny (1986), SPSS 22.0 PROCESS was used to analyze the effect variables. v2.16.3 to conduct the bootstrap mediation effect test, and the results showed that the mediation effect of this model was significant. The results showed that the mediation effect of this model was significant, but teacher-related foreign language pleasure The results showed that the mediation effect of this model was significant, but teacher-related foreign language pleasure did not significantly predict translation

proficiency ($p=.15>.05$), so this path was excluded. Therefore, this path was excluded, and the mediation effect test results shown in Figure 2 were obtained.

Figure 2 shows that: (1) self-efficacy was significantly positively correlated with Translation proficiency ($r=.131$, $p<.05$); (2) self-efficacy positively affected personal FLE and in-class FLE ($r=.441$, $p<.01$); (3) even after controlling for the positive effect of self-efficacy on Literature C-E Translation proficiency, individual FLE and in-class FLE ($r=.441$, $p<.01$) with $r=.074$ and $r=.153$, respectively; (4) When individual FLE and in-class FLE were entered into the regression model as predictors of Literature C-E Translation proficiency, the coefficients of the model were R^2 of 0.51 and F of 180.31, with a $p<.01$, which indicated that the model was well fitted, and therefore the following conclusions can be drawn: individual FLE and in-class FLE play multiple parallel mediating roles between self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation proficiency. The mediating effect of classroom atmosphere-related foreign language pleasure was higher at .067, indicating that for every unit increase in self-efficacy mediated by in-class FLE, Literature C-E Translation proficiency increased by .067 units. The mediation effect of individual FLE was slightly lower at .054. The total mediated effect was .121, and the confidence intervals for each of the above paths were 95% and reached the significance level. It is found that individual FLE and in-class FLE play parallel intermediary roles in the relationship between self-efficacy and translation proficiency, indicating that self-efficacy indirectly affects translation proficiency by increasing these two FLE, and that a high level of self-efficacy can awaken personal and classroom FLE so that the learners will adopt positive coping methods to solve the difficulties, and ultimately improve their translation proficiency. This is consistent with Lev (1997) theory that self-efficacy is mediated through the processes of choice, cognition, motivation, and emotion, reflecting a combination of cognitive and affective factors that influence learning outcomes. The above findings are also in line with the viewpoint of complex dynamic systems theory, in which the interaction between learners and the learning environment is based on the interaction of cognitive,

affective and motivational subsystems, which ultimately affects learning behavior (Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

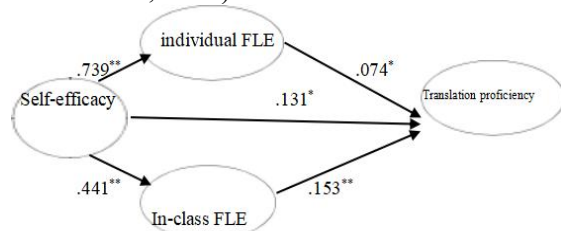


Figure 2. Moderating Effect

There was a significant positive effect of self-efficacy on individual FLE ($r=.739$, $p<.01$), indicating that the higher the self-efficacy, the more confident the learners were in learning Literature C-E Translation proficiency, the more they were able to discover the positive aspects of Literature C-E Translation proficiency. It is worth noting that classroom climate-related foreign language enjoyment played a stronger mediating role in the relationship between self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation proficiency than personal foreign language enjoyment, suggesting that the external environment has a more significant effect on Literature C-E Translation proficiency. This is similar to Rai and Chunrao (2016) view that students are influenced by traditional culture and are passive in their learning, mostly from external factors. On the other hand, this phenomenon may be due to the fact that personal pleasure in learning Literature C-E Translation proficiency is a gradual process, whereas the classroom atmosphere depends on the co-creation of the students and the teacher and is a short-term result. This also explains why some students in the interviews pointed out that they did better in Literature C-E Translation proficiency after the change of learning environment. It can be seen that students derive more pleasure from the atmosphere of the classroom, and they are more likely to be highly enthusiastic about Literature C-E Translation proficiency when they are surrounded by a good atmosphere for learning Literature C-E Translation proficiency.

5. Conclusion

Through questionnaires and interviews, this study explores the general situation of self-efficacy and foreign language enjoyment among Literature C-E Translation proficiency majors, and reveals the relationship between self-efficacy, foreign language enjoyment and

Literature C-E Translation proficiency. The results showed that the self-efficacy of Literature C-E Translation proficiency majors was generally low, while FLE was average, and the scores of each dimension were teacher-related FLE, individual FLE, and in-class FLE in descending order; learners' self-efficacy significantly and positively affected FLE and Literature C-E Translation proficiency, and the two dimensions of foreign language pleasure, i.e., individual FLE and in-class FLE, significantly and positively predicted Literature C-E Translation proficiency; the mediating effect of individual FLE and in-class FLE was between self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation proficiency.

Based on the results of the analysis, the author found that self-efficacy affects students' emotions, and ultimately has a significant impact on Literature C-E Translation proficiency. Therefore, by improving learners' self-efficacy, it can help to improve individual FLE and classroom atmosphere-related foreign language enjoyment, and ultimately achieve good learning results. The above analysis provides important insights for frontline educators. To achieve the desired learning outcomes, the author suggests that teachers should improve learners' self-efficacy and foreign language enjoyment in the following ways.

Bandura, Freeman, and Lightsey (1999) suggests that self-efficacy comes from students' correct attribution, so teachers should cultivate students' attribution awareness, leading them to analyze the reasons for their poor performance. Although Literature C-E Translation proficiency performance is an important indicator of college students' Literature C-E Translation proficiency, it is not the only indicator. In analyzing the reasons for their underachievement, it is important to emphasize internally controllable factors in order to increase their confidence and self-efficacy in learning Literature C-E Translation proficiency. Teachers should also guide students who are good at Literature C-E Translation proficiency and attribute their success to predisposing factors to focus on the whole learning process, not to be complacent, and to set reasonable goals and plans. Teachers should play the role of scaffolding according to the syllabus and, on the premise of staying within the scope of the curriculum, choose

teaching materials flexibly and keep the level of learning difficulty appropriate and graded. In addition, teachers should understand the differences in students' personalities, and assign work in a graded manner according to students' basic and individual developmental patterns.

There are some shortcomings in this study. First, the subjects in this study came from a single university with a relatively small sample size, which may affect the extrapolation of the results; second, this study only explored the positive psychological factor of foreign language enjoyment, and it remains to be verified whether the mediated effect model can be applied to other positive psychological factors, such as perseverance and flow of mind. Based on the above shortcomings, future research should expand the sample size and maintain a balanced selection of samples across majors, grades and regions. Finally, it is possible to examine whether other positive emotions mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and Literature C-E Translation proficiency, and to explore the dynamic balance between the elements in the model.

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