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Dewaele, Jean-Marc and Witney, J. and Saito, Kazuya and Dewaele, L. (2017) Foreign language enjoyment and anxiety: the effect of teacher and learner variables. *Language Teaching Research* 22 (6), pp. 676-697. ISSN 1362-1688.

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Foreign Language Enjoyment and Anxiety: The effect of teacher and learner variables¹

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Abstract

Positive psychology has boosted interest in the positive as well as the negative emotions that Foreign Language learners experience. The present study examines whether -and to what extent- foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and FL classroom anxiety (FLCA) are linked to a range of learner-internal variables and teacher/classroom-specific variables within one specific educational context. Participants were 189 British high school students learning various FLs. Levels of FLE were linked to higher scores on attitudes towards the FL, the FL teacher, FL use in class, proportion of time spent on speaking, relative standing and stage of development. Lower levels FLCA were linked to higher scores on attitudes towards the FL, relative standing and stage of development. FLCA thus seems less related to teacher and teacher practices than FLE. The pedagogical implication is that teachers should strive to boost FLE rather than worry too much about students' FLCA.

I Introduction

Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) pointed out that despite the fact that emotions play a crucial part in our lives, they have been largely “shunned” by Second Language Acquisition (SLA) scholars (p. 9). The authors attribute this to the cognitivist tradition in the field and argue that it is time to overcome the general “emotional deficit” in SLA research. They wonder how as researchers we can “accommodate positive emotions more effectively into our descriptions of learner psychology?” (p. 205). This statement recognizes that the role of positive emotion, although vaguely recognized in the field, still has a long way to traverse before positive emotion assumes the place it deserves (Dulay & Burt, 1977, Gardner, 1985; Krashen, 1982; Schumann, 1978) but it is true that it seems to have remained a little bit in the shadows of the vibrant research into negative emotions, mostly foreign language anxiety. The situation may be changing because of the influence of Positive Psychology, the empirical study of how people thrive and flourish. Positive Psychology wants to broaden the general perspective in

¹ Pre-print version of the paper (Article first published online: February 17, 2017)
Language Teaching Research <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168817692161>

general psychology with its focus on abnormalities, disorders, and mental illness and the development of ways to reduce pain and learn to cope with negative experiences, in favour of the development of tools to build positive emotions, foster greater engagement, and boost the appreciation of meaning in life and its activities (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014). Just as the interlanguage paradigm superseded the error analysis tradition in the 1970s, with a move away from an exclusive focus on second language learners' deficits, the Positive Psychology approach advocates a more holistic view on humans, which in SLA terms means moving away from the overwhelming focus on negative emotions (foreign language classroom anxiety - FLCA) to include L2 learners' positive emotions, such as Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, 2016; Dewaele, MacIntyre, Boudreau, & Dewaele, 2016).

As MacIntyre and Mercer (2014) put it eloquently:

Many language educators are aware of the importance of improving individual learners' experiences of language learning by helping them to develop and maintain their motivation, perseverance, and resiliency, as well as positive emotions necessary for the long-term undertaking of learning a foreign language. In addition, teachers also widely recognise the vital role played by positive classroom dynamics amongst learners and teachers, especially in settings in which communication and personally meaningful interactions are foregrounded (p. 156).

The present study proposes to investigate the role that foreign language teachers play in orchestrating the emotions of their students, in addition to learner-internal sources of emotions (Dewaele, 2009).

II Literature review

Research on affect and emotions - mainly negative ones such as language anxiety- has been vibrant in SLA research since the 1970s. The first studies into the effects of anxiety on SLA (Chastain, 1976; Kleinmann, 1977) gave contradictory results which Scovel (1978) attributed to the fact that: "anxiety itself is neither a simple nor well-understood psychological construct and that it is perhaps premature to attempt to relate it to the global and comprehensive task of language acquisition" (p. 132). Looking back at the early research, MacIntyre (2017) agreed with Scovel, explaining that "not all types of anxiety that can be defined and measured are likely to be related to language learning" (p. 12).

MacIntyre (2017) argued that the so-called early "Confounded Approach" ended with Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's (1986) ground-breaking study which heralded the start of the Specialized Approach in foreign language (classroom) anxiety (FLCA) research. The original definition hints at the complexity of the concept, defining FLCA as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to classroom learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p. 128). FLCA was identified as having a debilitating effect on L2 learning and achievement. The findings have been replicated in different countries around the globe, with different types of language learners. More than twenty years later, Horwitz emphasised again that the concept of anxiety is "multi-faceted" (2010, p. 145). She explained that learners who experience FLCA "have the *trait* of feeling *state* anxiety when participating in language learning and/or use" (Horwitz, 2017, p. 33).

The idea that negative emotions such as fear, embarrassment, self-doubt, and boredom hamper progress in L2 development is not new: Krashen (1982) argued that

every learner has an affective filter that determines “the degree to which the acquirer is “open”” (p. 9). He attributed the idea to Dulay and Burt (1977). When the filter is “up”, a learner’s understanding and processing of language input would be reduced. To bring learners’ filters down, teachers were encouraged to spark interest, provide low-anxiety environments, and bolster learners’ self-esteem (Krashen, 1982, p. 10). Schumann (1978) had developed a similar concept in his acculturation hypothesis for SLA. Sufficient contact and social integration with the target language group would enable a learner to acquire the target language (TL) if “he is psychologically open to the TL such that input to which he is exposed becomes intake” (p. 29).

Similar ideas were developed outside the field of SLA by Fredrickson (2003), who reported that negative emotions such as anger lead to the urge to destroy obstacles in one’s path. However, positive emotions can “broaden people’s momentary thought-action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources” (Fredrickson, 2003, p. 219).

MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) pointed out that effects of positive emotion go beyond pleasant feelings: they enhance learners’ ability to notice things in classroom environment and strengthen their awareness of language input. This, in turn, allows them to absorb the FL. Positive emotions also help flush out lingering effects of negative arousal. This is crucial because negative emotions cause a narrowing of focus and a restriction of the range of potential language input. Positive emotions also promote students’ resilience and hardiness during difficult times. Crucially, positive emotion encourages learners to explore and play, two key activities that boost social cohesion.

Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) developed a Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) scale consisting of 21 items with Likert scale ratings reflecting positive emotions towards the learning experience, peers and teacher, which they combined with 8 items reflecting FLCA. A moderate negative correlation was found to exist between FLE and FLCA, suggesting that they are partially inter-related but essentially separate dimensions. Further statistical analysis revealed that those among the 1740 FL learners (from all ages and from all over the world) who were more multilingual, who had reached intermediate or higher levels in the FL, who felt that were performing rather better than their peers in the FL class, who were higher up in the education system (university rather than high school) and who were older, experienced significantly higher levels of FLE and significantly less FLCA. A complementary analysis of feedback from 1076 out of the 1746 participants on an open-ended question related to enjoyable episodes in the FL class showed that specific positive classroom activities can boost FL learners’ levels of FLE. These included unusual activities such as debates, making a film or preparing group presentations. What these activities had in common was that they empowered students, giving them a choice in shaping the activity so that it matched their concerns and interests. It confirmed that having a sense of autonomy and having to be creative enhances performance in the FL. What also emerged from the narratives was that the classroom environment played a crucial role in the experience of FLE and FLCA. Participants reported episodes where teachers had been positive, used humour judiciously, were well-organised, respectful, and praised students for truly good performance. Sympathetic laughter was appreciated when things went wrong because it defused a potential negative emotional atmosphere. The narratives showed that teachers played an important part in their students’ FLE, confirming previous research (Arnold, 2011). Learners’ feedback also indicated that peers can boost – or destroy -

FLE. Class size was also mentioned, with smaller groups engendering a better atmosphere, more individual use of the FL and the establishment of closer social bonds with peers.

A follow-up study by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2016) used a Principal Components Analysis of the same dataset, and revealed three dimensions explaining a total of 45% of the variance, and showing the independence of social and private FLE. FLCA was the first dimension, explaining 26% of the variance, social FLE accounting for 13% of the variance and Private FLE explaining an additional 6% of variance.

A third study on the same dataset focused on the gender differences at item-level (Dewaele, MacIntyre, Boudreau & Dewaele, 2016). Statistical analyses revealed that the 1287 female participants reported having significantly more fun in the FL class, agreed more strongly that they learned interesting things, and were prouder of their FL performance than the 449 male peers. They tended to experience more enjoyment and excitement in a positive FL classroom environment that allowed them to be creative, and tended to agree more that knowing a FL was “cool”. However, the female participants worried significantly more than male peers about mistakes and lacked in confidence in using the FL. No gender difference emerged for the items reflecting the paralyzing effects of FLCA. The authors argued that the females’ heightened emotionality might boost the acquisition and use of the FL.

Arnold (1999) attracted the attention of researchers and teachers to the concept of “affect” in the FL classroom. A growing number of special issues have been devoted to the topic recently (Arnold, 2011; Avila-López, 2015; Berdal-Masuy & Pairen, 2015; Puozzo Capron & Piccardo, 2013). Establishing a good emotional atmosphere in the classroom depends on both learners and teachers and is crucial for learning to happen. Teachers do play a central role at several levels. They need to produce comprehensible discourse and create – through verbal and non-verbal means: “a true learning environment where students believe in the value of learning a language, where they feel they can face that challenge and where they understand the benefit they can get from attaining it” (Arnold & Fonseca, 2007, p. 119). Progress in the FL occurs when good chemistry develops among students, and between students and their teacher. Good pedagogical practices are crucial to maintain and boost students’ motivation levels and positive emotions (Piccardo, 2013). The FL teacher needs to use non-threatening techniques in order to create a positive FL learning experience. This involves supporting and promoting group solidarity and creating an emotionally safe classroom environment where linguistic experimenting is encouraged (Arnold, 1999; Baider, Cislaru, & Coffey, 2015; Borg, 2006; Dewaele, 2015; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Dörnyei & Murphy, 2003; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Williams, Burden, Poulet, & Maun, 2004). Having a positive emotional atmosphere in a FL classroom is particularly crucial as learners’ self-image is vulnerable in the FL (Arnold, 2011) and fear of losing face in front of classmates and teacher can be daunting. Fostering a positive emotional atmosphere can create linguistic contagion where everybody is “caught” in the FL use (Murphy, 2009).

One crucial aspect in FL classes is that the subject matter needs to be pertinent, appealing and relevant to FL learners (Arnold, 1999). Developing this argument, Dewaele (2005, 2011, 2015) has argued that FL classes are too often emotionally uninteresting or emotion-free which leads to routine, boredom and lack of engagement. This is not necessarily the teachers’ fault as they are often bound by strict guidelines about course material and delivery. However, too much rigidity and overly predictable classroom activities limit the potential for interesting challenges

involving risk-taking, for unpredictability that might cause surprise, and for humour that boosts enjoyment. Dewaele (2015) pleaded for teachers to have the liberty to do unexpected, challenging and funny things in their classrooms.

What emerges from the literature review is that although a fair amount of research has been carried out on language anxiety and FLCA in particular, the study of positive emotions in the FL classroom merits further investigation. It is crucial to look simultaneously at both negative and positive emotions because - as Dewaele and MacIntyre (2016) put it- they are the metaphorical left and right feet of learners on their way to acquiring the FL. What remains unexplored is to what extent the same learner-internal and learner-external variables affect both FLCA and FLE within a specific age-range and a single educational context. This is what the present study aims to address.

III Research questions

- 1) What is the relationship between FLE and FLCA?
- 2) To what extent are FLE and FLCA within one specific educational context linked to **learner-internal variables** (age, gender, degree of multilingualism, attitude towards the FL, level of mastery of the FL, relative standing among peers in the FL class) and **teacher/classroom-specific variables** (attitudes towards teacher, frequency of use of the FL by teacher, time spent reading, writing, listening and speaking in the FL class and predictability of the FL class)?
- 3) What are the pedagogical implications of identifying sources of FLE and FLCA?

IV Methodology

Languages in UK secondary schools and language attitudes in the UK

The study of a FL is compulsory in UK maintained sector schools at Key Stage 3 only (students aged 11-14). At Key Stage 4 (students aged 14-16) an FL has to be offered by the school but it is no longer compulsory (<https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum/key-stage-3-and-4>). FL students in British secondary schools face two national tests which are high stakes for themselves and for their schools. The results determine students' admission into Sixth Form colleges or universities and constitute the basis for the calculation of national league tables which play a crucial part in the prestige of the schools. Key Stage 4 students are preparing the national General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams this involves strict exam preparation and a fair amount of stress for students and teachers. The majority of pupils sitting their GCSE exams in the UK are 15 years old but at Westminster School three quarters of student sit their IGCSE¹ French a year early at 14. Pupils are under pressure from parents and school to perform to an expected level and meet targets. FLs are no longer compulsory at A-level. However, teachers and students are under an equal amount of pressure as universities typically make conditional offers to secondary school students who are in their final year, based on students' personal statement, GCSE results, predicted A-level results and sometimes university entrance tests and interview performance. A conditional offer for a language or linguistics degree at Oxford is typically "AAA" for Cambridge it typically is "A*AA", meaning a very high score for three courses. Schools are eager to highlight how many of their former pupils obtained "A" scores and how many went on to prestigious universities (see footnote 2).

The broader societal context also shapes attitudes towards FL learning and FLs. Attitudes towards languages are linked to the perception of the group speaking that language (Gardner, 1985; Mettwie, 2015). In the case of French in the UK, French is regarded positively. It has traditionally been the most frequently studied FL in secondary education. As an academic subject it is considered tough and it is highly recommended to students who wish to go to good universities. The language and its speakers have an air of sophistication in love, food, culture, and fashion (Dewaele, 2010). France is a popular holiday destination and place of retirement for British citizens (pre-Brexit). These characteristics of the context are important, because Gardner pointed out that: “students’ attitudes towards the specific language group are bound to influence how successful they will be in incorporating aspects of that language” (1985, p. 6).

Participants and Demographics

A total of 189 high school students (49 females, 140 males) participated in the study. They came from two schools in Greater London: 63 students were from Dame Alice Owen’s, a semi-selective state school in Potters Bar, and 126 students were from Westminster School, an independent boarding and day school within the precincts of Westminster Abbey, which is selective and fee-paying. Both schools are amongst the top performing schools in the UK². Dame Alice Owen’s employed 16 full-time and part-time FL teachers, Westminster School employed 22 full-time and part-time FL teachers. All students in the study were studying FLs, and 85 students from Westminster School were also enrolled in courses of Latin and/or Ancient Greek. Participants’ age ranged from 12 to 18. Eleven were 12 years old, 23 were 13 years old, 55 were 14 years old, 53 were 15 years old, 18 were 16 years old, 16 were 17 years old and 13 were 18 years old.

A large majority of participants were British ($n = 156$), often with double nationalities. Other nationalities included American, Argentinian, Australian, Belgian, Brazilian, Canadian, Chinese, German, Greek Cypriot, Hungarian, Indian, Iranian, Irish, Israeli, Italian, Korean, Lebanese, New Zealand, Nigerian, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Singaporean, Swiss and Turkish.

One hundred and sixty-nine students reported to have English as a first language (L1) with was often combined with other L1s, such as Afrikaans, Arabic, Bengali, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Dutch, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Kannada, Korean, Macedonian, Mandarin, Portuguese, Punjabi, Polish, Russian, Sinhalese, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, Telugu, Tulu, Turkish and Urdu. Close to a third of participants ($n = 57$,) reported growing up with more than one language from birth.

Most participants were studying French as a FL ($n = 144$, 68%), while others were studying Spanish ($n = 21$), German ($n = 15$), with smaller numbers studying Arabic, Dutch, English, Farsi, Hindi, Modern Greek, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, and Russian³.

Participants were also asked about the point they had reached in their FL journey. Very few described themselves as “beginner” ($n = 2$), more so as “low intermediate” ($n = 21$), “intermediate”, ($n = 58$), “high intermediate” ($n = 92$), and “advanced” ($n = 26$). The categories of “beginner” and low intermediate” were merged.

Students compared their own FL performance with that of their peers in their FL class (ranging from “far below average” ($n = 1$), “below average” ($n = 12$), “average” ($n = 58$), “above average” ($n = 92$), and “far above average” ($n = 26$). The

categories of “far below average and “below average” were merged. These values were positively correlated with self-reported results on their last major FL test ($r(187) = .50, p < .0001$). These test scores ranged from 49% to 100%, with a mean of 87.7% ($SD = 10$). In other words, these were very good FL students.

II The instrument

The questionnaire started with a demographics section from which the above information was retrieved. Following this, participants were asked to respond to an item on their attitude towards their first modern FL (as some students learned two FLs simultaneously), on a 5-point Likert scale. Because very few reported “very unfavourable” attitudes, this level was merged with the next level, i.e. “unfavourable” attitudes ($n = 18$), followed by “neutral” ($n = 22$), “favourable” ($n = 80$) and “very favourable” ($n = 69$) attitudes. Mean score on the Likert scale was 3.1 ($SD = 0.9$).

The next question asked whether the student had just one or two FL teachers for the FL1. Attitudes towards the one - or first- FL teacher were collected using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from “very unfavourable” ($n = 9$), “unfavourable” ($n = 10$), “neutral” ($n = 10$), “favourable” ($n = 78$), to “very favourable” ($n = 74$) attitudes⁴. Mean score on the Likert scale was 4.0 ($SD = 1.0$).

The following question inquired about frequency of use of the FL in class by the FL teacher. Answers ranged from “hardly ever” ($n = 6$) to “not very often” ($n = 12$), “sometimes” ($n = 35$), “usually” ($n = 77$) and “all the time” ($n = 59$). Mean score on the Likert scale was 3.9 ($SD = 1.0$).

The next four questions inquired about the average proportion of time spent on writing, reading, listening and speaking by the teacher: the options ranged from 0-10% to 90-100% of the time. Mean scores were highest for writing (36%), followed by reading (34%), speaking (33%) and listening (32%). In other words, participants felt that they spent about a third of the time on each of the four skills.

The final question in this section asked how predictable the teacher was during his/her classes (ranging from “very unpredictable” ($n = 3$), “unpredictable” ($n = 22$), “medium un/ unpredictable” ($n = 92$), “predictable” ($n = 52$), to “very predictable” ($n = 13$). Because so few participants rated their teacher to be “very unpredictable”, a single level was created (“very/unpredictable”). Mean score on the 4 point Likert scale was 2.3 ($SD = 0.8$).

Students were then invited to complete 10 items, which were extracted from the Foreign Language Enjoyment questionnaire (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). They were chosen to capture the reliability of the original scale without sacrificing the reliability of the measurement. They included items reflecting the three FLE dimensions: Social FLE, Private FLE and Peer-controlled versus teacher-controlled positive atmosphere in the FL classroom (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016). They were based on standard 5-point Likert scales with the anchors “absolutely disagree” = 1, “disagree” = 2, “neither agree nor disagree” = 3, “agree” = 4, “strongly agree” = 5. All items were positively phrased. A scale analysis revealed high internal consistency (Cronbach alpha = .88). Mean score for FLE was 3.9 ($SD = 0.6$).

Another 8 items were extracted from the FLCAS and reflected physical symptoms of anxiety, nervousness and lack of confidence (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). They also captured the reliability of the original scale (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Two FLCA items were phrased to indicate low anxiety and six were phrased to indicate high anxiety. The low anxiety items were reverse-coded so that high scores reflect high anxiety for all items on this measure. A scale analysis

revealed high internal consistency (Cronbach alpha = .85). Mean score for FLCA was 2.4 ($SD = 0.8$).

The questionnaire was completely anonymous: no names of participants or their teachers were collected. After the research design and questionnaire obtained approval from the Ethics Committee of the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy at Birkbeck, University of London, the headmasters of Westminster School and Dame Alice Owen's School were contacted to obtain their approval. The first author presented the research design to the FL teachers at Dame Alice Owen's, the second author did the same with his colleagues at Westminster School. Consent was obtained in two stages: parents were contacted by the school to explain that their children would be contacted to participate in a survey on affective variables in the foreign language classroom. They were invited to contact the researchers to obtain extra information. A couple of parents did so, and none opted out of the survey. Next, the parents received an email in which they were asked to invite their child to participate in the study. The student's individual consent was obtained at the start of the survey. The questionnaire was posted online using GoogleDocs.

V Results

I The relationship between FLE and FLCA

A Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant negative correlation between FLE and FLCA ($r(188) = -.194, p < .007$). In other words, higher levels of FLE seem to be linked to lower levels of FLCA but both dimensions share only 3.8% of variance, a small effect size (cf. Plonsky & Oswald, 2014: 889).

II Learner-internal variables

One-way ANOVAs revealed that age had no effect on FLCA ($df(6, 189), F = .6, p = ns$) but did have a significant effect on FLE ($df(6, 189), F = 4.0, p < .001, \eta^2 = .118$), Cohen's $d = .73$ which represents a medium effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014)⁵. Mean scores for participants in each subgroup are presented in figure 1.

INSERT FIGURE 1

Two independent t-tests revealed that the 49 female participants scored higher than the 140 males on FLE: (Females $Mean = 4.2, SD = 0.5$; Males $Mean = 3.8, SD = 0.6$). Female participants also scored higher on FLCA: (Females $Mean = 2.6, SD = 0.9$; Males $Mean = 2.3, SD = 0.7$). These differences were significant for FLE ($df = 187, t = 3.7, p < .0001, Cohen's d = 0.54, r^2 = 0.07$) and for FLCA ($df = 187, t = 2.5, p < .014, Cohen's d = 0.37, r^2 = 0.03$) respectively). According to Plonsky and Oswald (2014) these are small effect sizes.

One-way ANOVAs showed that the number of languages known to the participants was unrelated both to FLE and FLCA ($df(5, 185), F = 1.6, p = ns$ and $df(5, 185), F = 1.9, p = .09$ respectively).

One-way ANOVAs showed a significant effect of level in the FL on both FLE and FLCA. More advanced FL learners reported significantly more FLE ($df(3, 185), F = 4.4, p < .005, \eta^2 = .066, Cohen's d = .53$, a small effect size and significantly less FLCA ($df(3, 185), F = 12.3, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .166, Cohen's d = .89$ - a medium to large effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014) (see figures 2 and 3). Post-hoc Gabriel tests⁶ only showed significant differences in FLE between those who labelled themselves as low intermediate and intermediate ($p < .013$). Lower-intermediate

learners reported significantly more FLCA than high intermediate ($p < .0001$) and advanced learners ($p < .002$). High intermediate learners were significantly less anxious than the low intermediate and intermediate groups (both $p < .0001$).

INSERT FIGURES 2 AND 3

Relative standing among peers in the FL classroom was also significantly linked to FLCA ($df(3, 185)$, $F = 13.4$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .076$, Cohen's $d = .57$ - a small effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014) (see figure 4), but not to FLE ($df(3, 185)$, $F = 2.3$, $p = ns$). Post-hoc Gabriel tests showed that participants who felt below average compared to peers in their class reported more FLCA than those who felt above or far above average ($p < .002$ and $p < .0001$ respectively). Participants who felt average also suffered more from FLCA than those who felt above or far above average (all $p < .0001$).

INSERT FIGURE 4

The attitude towards the FL was found to have a significant effect on FLE ($df(3, 185)$, $F = 24.8$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .287$, Cohen's $d = 1.27$, which is a large effect size (see figure 5), and on FLCA ($df(3, 185)$, $F = 4.0$, $p < .009$, $\eta^2 = .069$, Cohen's $d = .54$ - a small effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014) (see figure 6). Post-hoc Gabriel tests showed significant differences in FLE between those with (very) unfavourable attitudes towards the FL and those with favourable ($p < .002$) and very favourable attitudes ($p < .0001$). Those with very favourable attitudes had significantly higher FLE scores than the three other groups (all $p < .0001$). Differences in FLCA were only significant between those with the most negative and the most positive attitudes towards the FL ($p < .019$). It was marginally significant between those with favourable and very favourable attitudes ($p = .064$).

INSERT FIGURES 5 AND 6

III Teacher-centred variables

One-way ANOVAs showed that attitude towards the teacher had a significant effect on FLE ($df(4, 184)$, $F = 16.7$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .267$, Cohen's $d = 1.2$ - a large effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014)- but had little effect on FLCA ($df(4, 184)$, $F = 2.3$, $p = .06$). Unsurprisingly, more positive attitudes corresponded with higher levels of FLE (see figure 7). Post-hoc Gabriel tests showed significant differences in FLE between the group of participants with very unfavourable attitudes towards their teacher and all other groups (all $p < .018$ or smaller). Similarly, the group of participants with very favourable attitudes towards their teacher reported significantly higher FLE than all other groups (all $p < .001$ or smaller).

INSERT FIGURE 7

The frequency with which a teacher used the FL in class had a significant positive effect on FLE ($df(4, 184)$, $F = 6.2$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .118$, Cohen's $d = .73$ - a medium effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014) - but did not affect FLCA ($df(4, 184)$, $F = 0.7$, $p = ns$). In other words, more frequent FL use by the teacher was linked to a linear increase in levels of FLE among students (see figure 8). Post-hoc Gabriel tests revealed significant differences in FLE between teachers that used the FL hardly ever and those who used it usually ($p < .036$) or all the time ($p < .006$). Similarly, at the other end of the scale, students who had teachers that used the FL all the time had

significantly higher FLE scores than students with teachers who used the FL hardly ever ($p < .006$), not very often ($p < .001$) and sometimes ($p < .024$).

INSERT FIGURE 8

The proportion of time that students spent on reading, writing and listening turned out to be unrelated to levels of FLE and FLCA. However, the amount of time students spent speaking the FL was positively linked to FLE ($df(6, 182)$, $F = 2.5$, $p < .023$, $\eta^2 = 0.076$, Cohen's $d = .57$ - halfway between a small and a medium effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014) - but not to FLCA ($df(6, 182)$, $F = 0.9$, $p = ns$). Levels of FLE increased gradually with more time spent on speaking and topped off at 50-60% of the time dedicated to this activity, after which it dropped off sharply (see figure 9). However, post-hoc Gabriel tests revealed no significant differences in FLE between the different groups.

INSERT FIGURE 9

Teacher predictability was found to have no effect on FLCA ($df(3, 185)$, $F = .2$, $p = ns$) but did have a significant negative effect on FLE ($df(3, 185)$, $F = 3.9$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .06$, Cohen's $d = .50$ - small effect size (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014) (see figure 10). Higher levels of predictability were linked to lower levels of FLE. Post-hoc Gabriel tests revealed only marginal differences in FLE between those who described their teacher as medium un/predictable and those who found their teacher to be predictable ($p = .058$) or very predictable ($p = .076$).

INSERT FIGURE 10

VI Discussion

The first research question addressed the relationship between FLE and FLCA. A small but significant negative relationship was found, with the dimensions sharing less than 4% of variance. This confirms the pattern in Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), where the amount of shared variance was bigger (13%). The low amount of shared variance in the present study can be interpreted as further evidence that enjoyment and anxiety are separate dimensions. In other words, while participants who score high on FLE will tend to score low on FLCA, it is also possible for individuals to score high -or low- on both dimensions. Simona, a participant in Dewaele, MacIntyre, Boudreau and Dewaele (2016), reported such an ambiguous experience of high anxiety and high enjoyment: "We were supposed to have a 2-minute speech before our peers and our professor on a topic we chose (...) at first I was a bit nervous and felt my heart pounding, but it felt great standing there and expressing my opinion and knowing that all of the other students are listening to you with attention" (p. 53).

A quick look at the overview of the effects in table 1 shows that **learner-internal** variables (e.g., age, gender, FL proficiency levels and attitudes) were more often linked with FLE and FLCA than the **teacher-centred** variables (e.g., attitude towards teachers, teachers' FL use, predictability), and that the effects of learner-internal variables were more strongly significant and explained a greater amount of variance in the two dependent variables (see table 1).

INSERT TABLE 1

The results for age follow the pattern reported in Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) with older learners in that study (i.e. those in their thirties, forties, fifties and sixties) reporting higher levels of FLE than younger learners. The relationship in the present study was not linear however: the fourteen and fifteen year-olds seemed to enjoy their FL classes least of all. The explanation may lie with the organisation of

the British FL curriculum. The looming GCSE and A-level exams force teachers to prepare students for the exams and to “teach to the test”, producing what is referred to in the literature on assessment and learning as a “negative backwash effect” (see Ahmad & Rao, 2012). This undoubtedly has a negative effect on FLE. The same phenomenon could be expected for older, more advanced learners who sit their A-level exams. However, this effect appears to be overridden by students’ increased motivation to study the FL, which they have deliberately chosen to pursue at that stage. This group of students is more likely to enjoy the FL classes. When pupils in the UK move from eight or nine subjects at age 15 to three or four in their final two years of schooling, they are generally choosing subjects that they most enjoy and the skills acquired hitherto are employed in developing greater learner autonomy and an engagement in more challenging tasks relevant to their chosen path. Other independent variables undoubtedly affect the overall picture, such as significantly reduced class sizes, more informal pupil-teacher relationships and greater maturity.

The gender effects uncovered in Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) and Dewaele, MacIntyre, Boudreau and Dewaele (2016) were replicated here. The female students reported both more FLE and more FLCA than their male peers. The findings were interpreted as an indication that the female learners were more emotionally involved in the FL learning, experiencing more emotional highs and lows than their male peers.

No significant relationship emerged between the degree of multilingualism and the dependent variables. This could be linked to fact that the present cohort was already highly multilingual (an average of 4 languages) so that the knowledge of extra FLs may have made no further difference. Because this result is difficult to interpret, it should not be taken to indicate that multilingualism and FLE/FLCA are unrelated but rather that the study did not produce evidence that they are related.

More experienced FL learners reported both more FLE and less FLCA, reflecting the finding in Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014). The biggest jump in FLE and concomitant drop in FLCA was situated between those reporting intermediate and those reporting high intermediate levels in the FL. One possible explanation is that the activities that these learners engage in become intrinsically more motivating, as their newly acquired skills allow them to take on more challenging task including more autonomy.

The relative standing among peers in the FL class, found to be strongly positively correlated with the students’ most recent test results, had a significant negative effect on FLCA, but no effect on FLE. The awareness of not being as good as the peers is an obvious source of social anxiety. However, feeling stronger than the peers did not increase participants’ FLE. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) found that higher relative standing was linked to both more FLE and less FLCA.

Unsurprisingly, students who had a more positive attitude towards the FL reported both significantly more FLE and less FLCA. These students may have developed a stronger motivation to master the FL and a more burning desire to invest the time and effort needed to reach that goal.

The aim of the present study was to complement learner-internal variables with the specific effects of one regional context, namely the teacher and the FL classroom practices in two Greater London schools. The finding that there is a positive relationship between positive attitudes towards the teacher and FLE was expected. A well-loved teacher can boost the enthusiasm of students during classes (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Gardner, 1985). Enthusiastic students are more likely to find themselves in a state of flow (Czimmermann & Piniel, 2016; Dewaele, 2015), which can boost their actual -and self-perceived- performance in the FL. More

surprising was the finding that the attitude towards the teacher was unrelated to FLCA. In other words, students were equally anxious with much-loved and less-loved teachers, which suggest that well-loved teachers can create anxiety, but not necessarily more or less anxiety than other teachers - as indicated by a lack of significant differences. The present study showed that there are various sources of anxiety including peer relationships, attitudes, proficiency but previous research has highlighted the effect of variables, including personality traits, types of evaluations, curriculum (Dewaele, 2013; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Horwitz, 2017). Even if the teachers in the present study did not seem to cause heightened anxiety, some teachers do, consciously or unconsciously cause anxiety. Those who cause unusually high levels of anxiety should actually be concerned and adapt their behaviour in an attempt to reduce its negative effects.

An interesting finding was also that more FL use by the teacher was linked to more FLE, but not to more FLCA. The debate on the optimal use of the L1 and the FL in the FL classroom is on-going (Ellis, 2012). There seems to be agreement that maximising FL use is good wherever possible, but that occasional L1 use can be very effective (Nation, 2003). Being forced to use the FL can be a source of embarrassment for beginning and shy learners (Nation, 2003). We do keep in mind that our results might not apply to the more general FL learner population. Our participants were very good FL students in selective schools. They were therefore more likely to enjoy the challenge of having to function in the FL with little L1 use.

Only one type of activity was linked to higher levels of FLE: students who reported more time speaking the FL also enjoyed their FL classes more, up to sixty per cent of the time – after which there is a dip. The non-linear relationship indicates that more is better – up to a point, but that the optimal amount of time spent on speaking is relatively high. This could be linked to the fact that flow experiences, which are inherently enjoyable, typically involve speaking in the FL classes with peers and teacher listening – as the experience of Simona referred to in Dewaele et al. (2016) illustrated. Listening, reading and writing may be less prone to experiences of flow. The lack of a statistical effect for these three skills is related to the fact that there was no clear agreement on what the “optimal” proportion of time would be. The lack of effects of time spent on the four skills on FLCA shows that how much time teachers choose to spend on the various skills does not affect how anxious students feel in the FL classroom.

We are aware that since our research design was non-experimental, we cannot automatically assume that teachers “cause” variation in FLE because it could be argued that student behaviour is antecedent. Some students may experience less FLE because of various reasons. Teachers give grades that reflect the lack of investment, which further lowers students’ FLE and could boost their FLCA. It is important to point out that we identified relationships between variables without claiming direct causality. We also avoided claims about the extent to which FLE or FLCA could predict un/successful FL learning.

The third research question focused on the pedagogical implications for teachers of good FL students (as we do not claim that our sample is a representative sample of the general FL student population). First and foremost, we recommend that teachers should focus on making their classes enjoyable, because our findings noted a strong relationship between what teachers actually do in their classrooms and the extent to which FL students enjoy the FL learning. According to previous literature on L2 education, there are a number of activities to this end (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Dörnyei & Murphy, 2003). For example, it has been

shown that students' enjoyment can be positively influenced by student-centred activities where they can have freedom on how to learn the FL in alignment with their own interests (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Another crucial technique is to make FL classroom environments adequately unpredictable, surprising and challenging for students (Dewaele, 2015).

In contrast, teachers should not be overly concerned about FLCA as they do not appear to be the main cause of it. Rather, FL students' anxiety **in our sample** seemed to be related to their general FL proficiency and attitude towards FL, regardless of their immediate FL learning experience with teachers. In fact, FLCA might be an phenomenon that has unduly monopolized the attention of researchers. Gardner's (1985) motivation construct acknowledged the existence of both negative and positive emotions in the learner – it seems surprising that the negative emotions have attracted most research attention. Just like the deficit view of learners in the 1960s, when the exclusive focus was on the errors that they produced, researchers on affective variables have for too long remained obsessed with learners' negative emotions. Importantly, our findings suggest that insights from Schumann (1978), Krashen (1982), and Arnold (1999) about the role of affect were right and that Positive Psychology can help us further to gain a more balanced view of the emotions that drive FL (cf. Dewaele, MacIntyre, Boudreau, & Dewaele, 2016; MacIntyre, Gregersen & Mercer, 2016; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014).

It is important to mention the fact that a self-selection bias may have skewed the results towards a more positive portrayal of the FL learning. Although all FL students in both schools were contacted through their parents, only a fraction filled out the online questionnaire. It is likely that those who did not feel strongly about their FL classes were less willing to spend 20 minutes filling out a detailed questionnaire about their FL classroom experiences. While this may seem like a drawback, it is in fact also strength. Indeed, Wilson and Dewaele (2010) reported that the feedback from volunteer FL participants is of much better quality than from participants who were forced to fill out a questionnaire. Our findings may thus not be generalised to the whole FL population, but it gives us a very good panorama of those who probably best described as “good language learners”.

VII Conclusion

Our British secondary school learners reported significantly higher levels of FLE than FLCA, with a weak negative relationship between both. It confirms the observation that FLE does not represent the positive pole of some generic emotion dimension with anxiety at the negative pole. FLE and FLCA are independent emotion dimensions with a very small amount of overlap. This means that students could score high, or low, on both dimensions. The pedagogical implication is that teachers' attempts to reduce FLCA will not automatically boost student' FLE.

Positive attitudes towards the FL, the FL teacher, a lot of FL use by the teacher in class, a strong proportion of time spent by students on speaking, a higher relative standing among peers in the FL class and a relative advanced stage of development of the FL all contributed to higher levels of FLE.

Fewer variables were linked to lower levels of FLCA, namely positive attitudes towards the FL, higher relative standing among peers in the FL and a relative advanced stage of development of the FL. The striking difference between the dimensions of FLE and FLCA is that the latter dimension seems much less related to teacher and teacher practices than FLE.

We conclude that effective teachers fuel learners' enthusiasm and enjoyment and do not spend too much time worrying about their FLCA. This includes the creation of friendly low-anxiety environments without fixating on single negative emotions. Metaphorically, we suggest that teachers should seek to light the students' fire by being engaging, by creating interest in the FL and by using it a lot in class rather than worry too much about students feeling cold. Once the right emotional temperature is reached, students will forget about the cold and will jump into action, reaching their own optimal temperature. The advice is not new but the evidence to support the argument certainly is.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Dr Davison, the Headteacher, the Head of Languages, Ms Davies and the teachers of Dame Alice Owen's as well as the Head Master of Westminster School, Mr Derham, the Head of Languages and the language teachers for allowing us to contact their FL students. Thanks also to the students' parents and the students themselves for their collaboration in this project.

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Table 1: Overview of the effects on the independent variables on FLE and FLCA

Variables	FLE	FLCA
Age	***	ns
Gender	***	*
Multilingualism	ns	ns
FL level	**	***
Relative standing	ns	***
Attitude FL	***	**
Attitudes towards teacher	***	ns
Frequency of use of FL by teacher	***	ns
Time spent reading	ns	ns
Time spent writing	ns	ns
Time spent listening	ns	ns
Time spent speaking	*	ns
Predictability	**	ns

Figure 1: The effect of age group on FLE

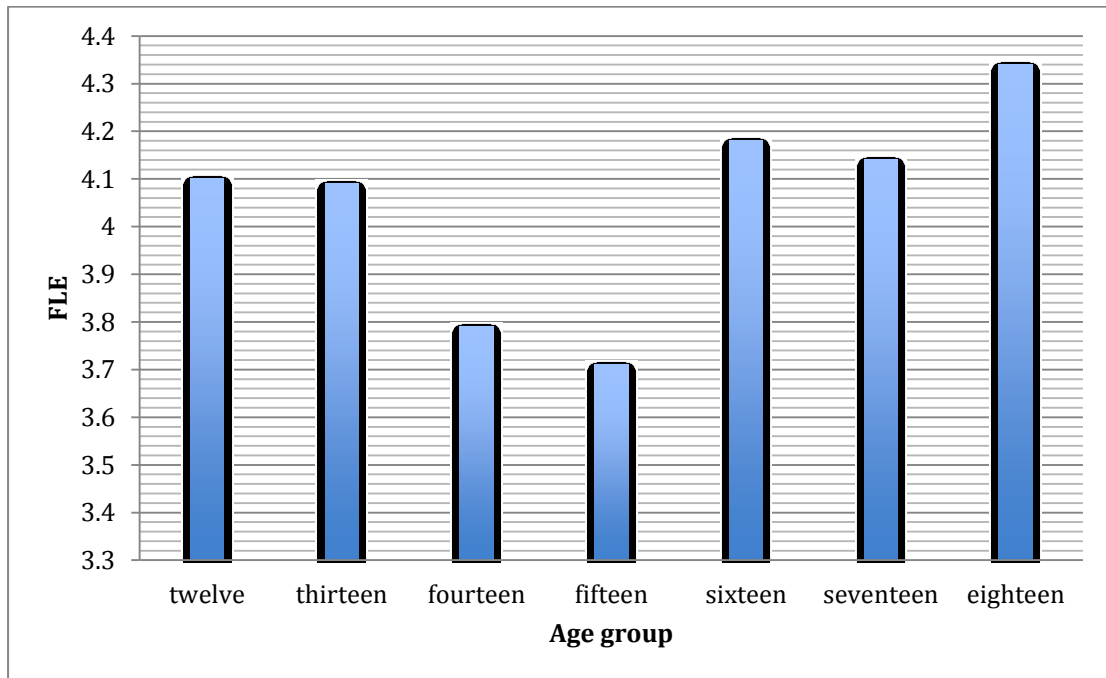


Figure 2: The effect of level in the FL on FLE

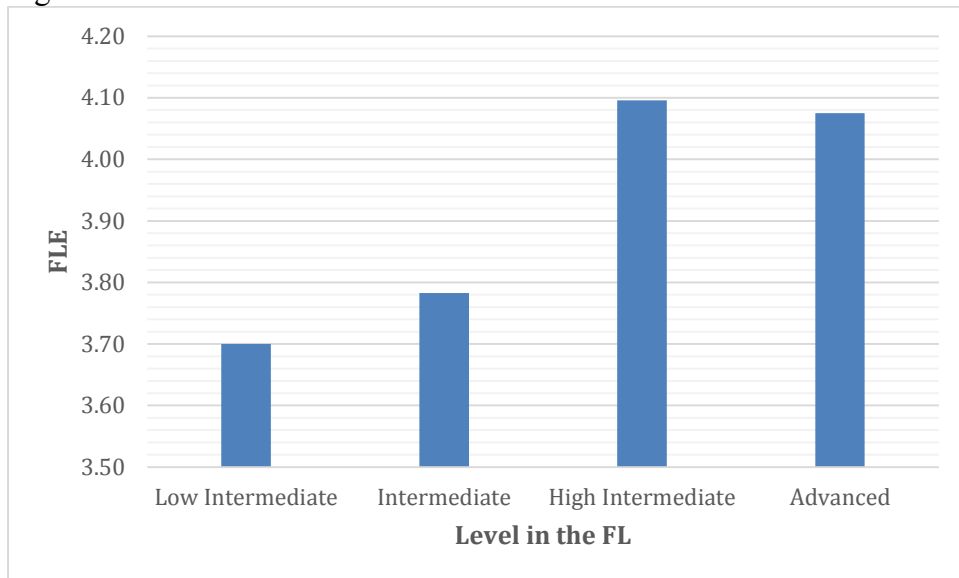


Figure 3: The effect of level in the FL on FLCA

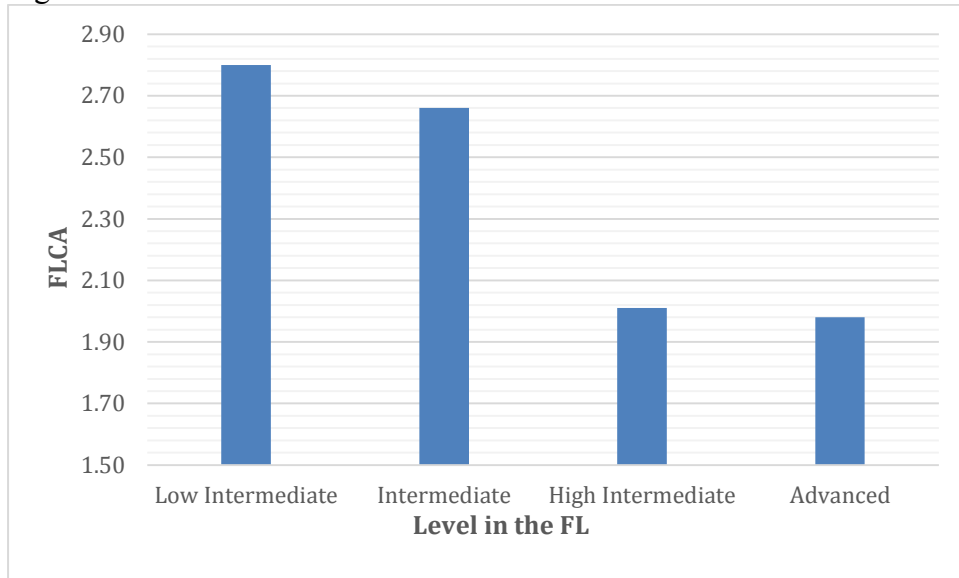


Figure 4: Effect of relative standing in the FL classroom on FLCA

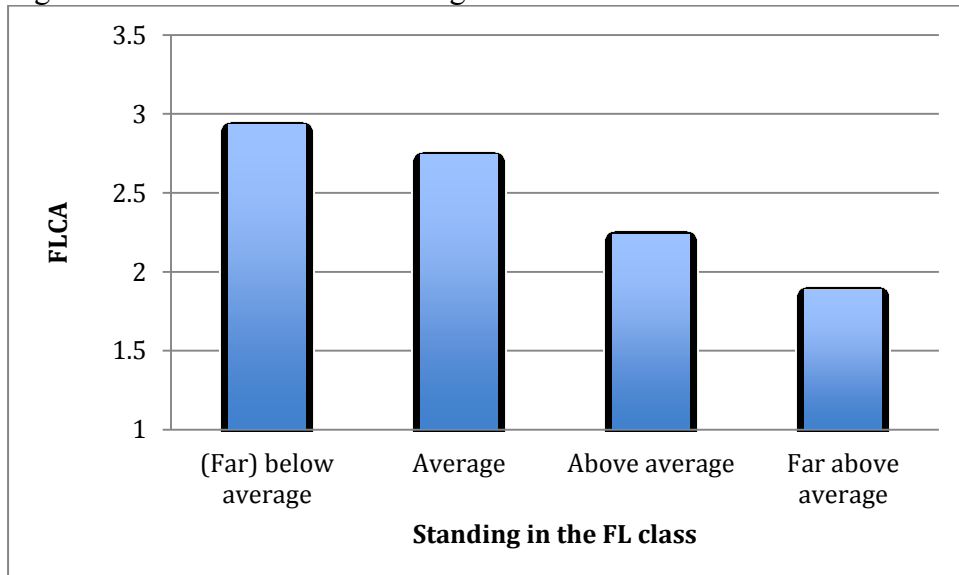


Figure 5: The effect of attitude towards the FL on FLE

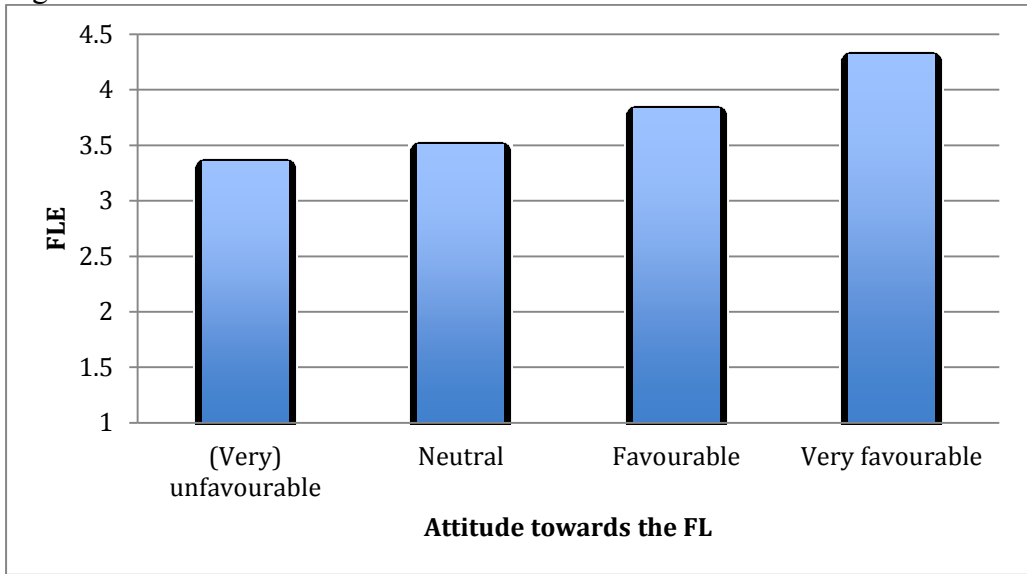


Figure 6: Effect of attitude towards the FL on FLCA

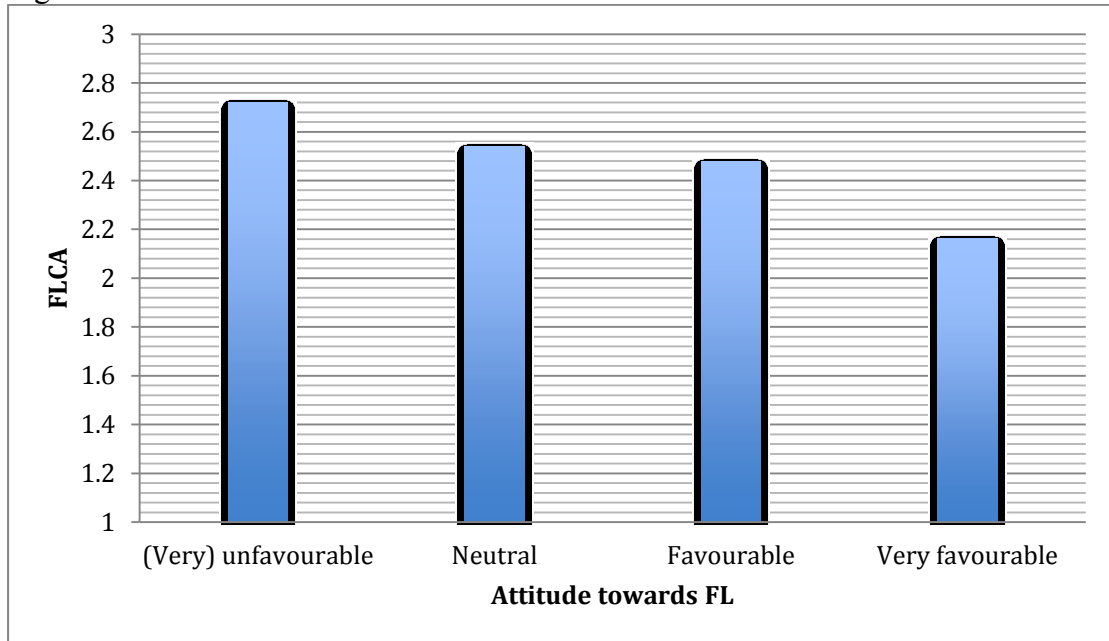


Figure 7: The effect of attitude towards the teacher on FLE

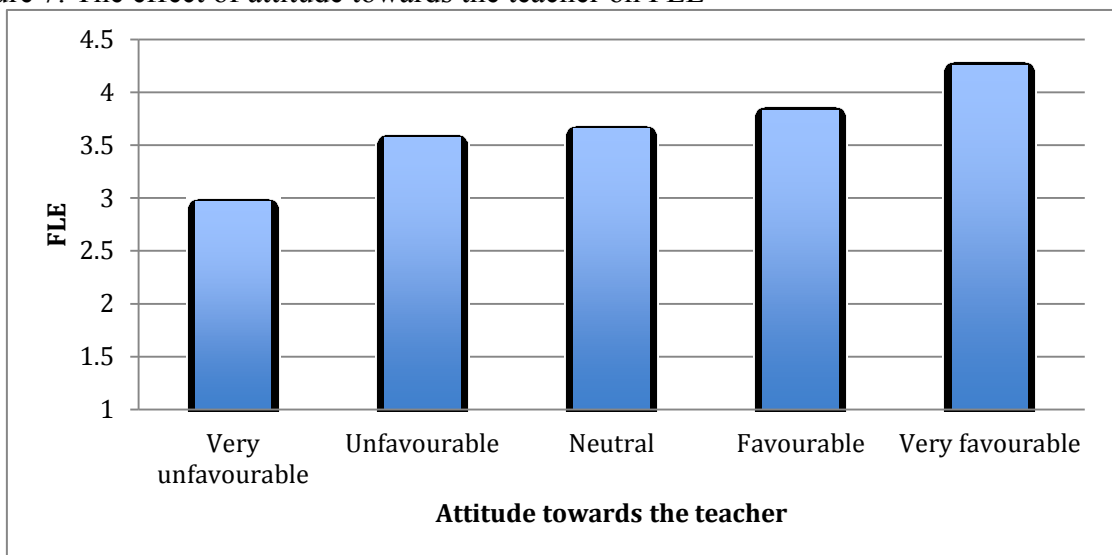


Figure 8: The effect of frequency of teacher's use of the FL on FLE

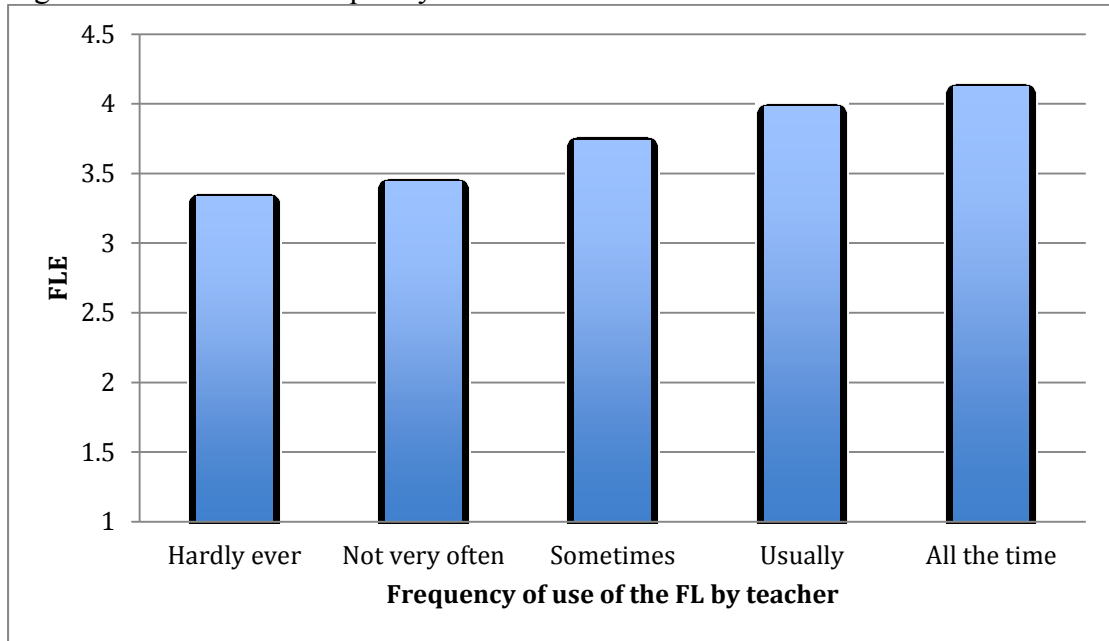


Figure 9: Effect of proportion of time spent on speaking the FL in class on FLE

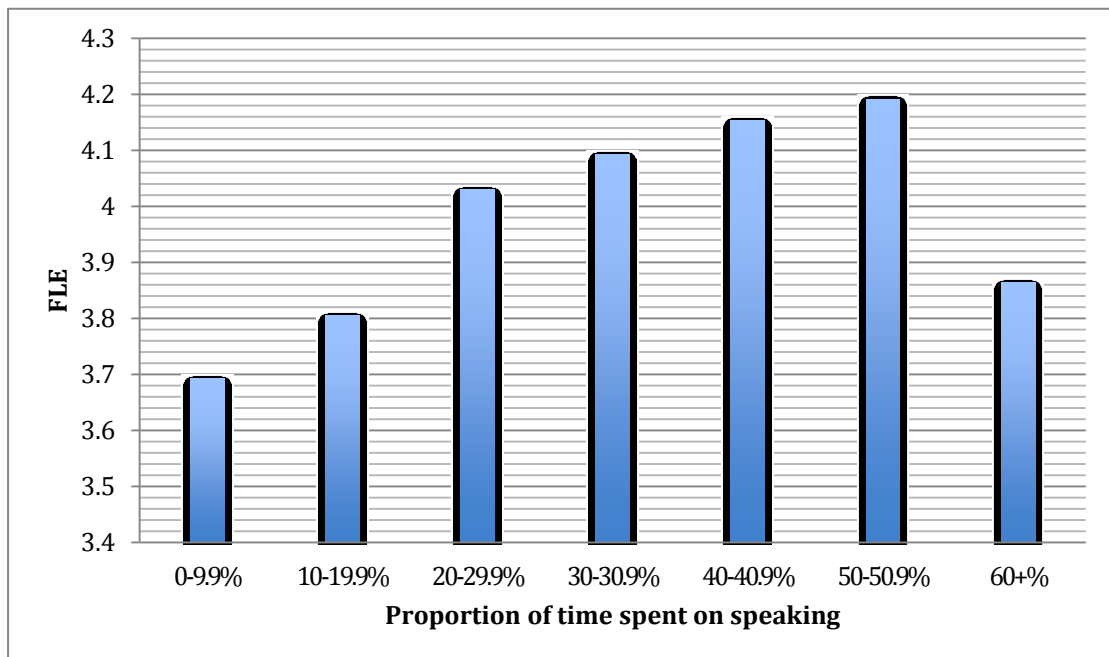
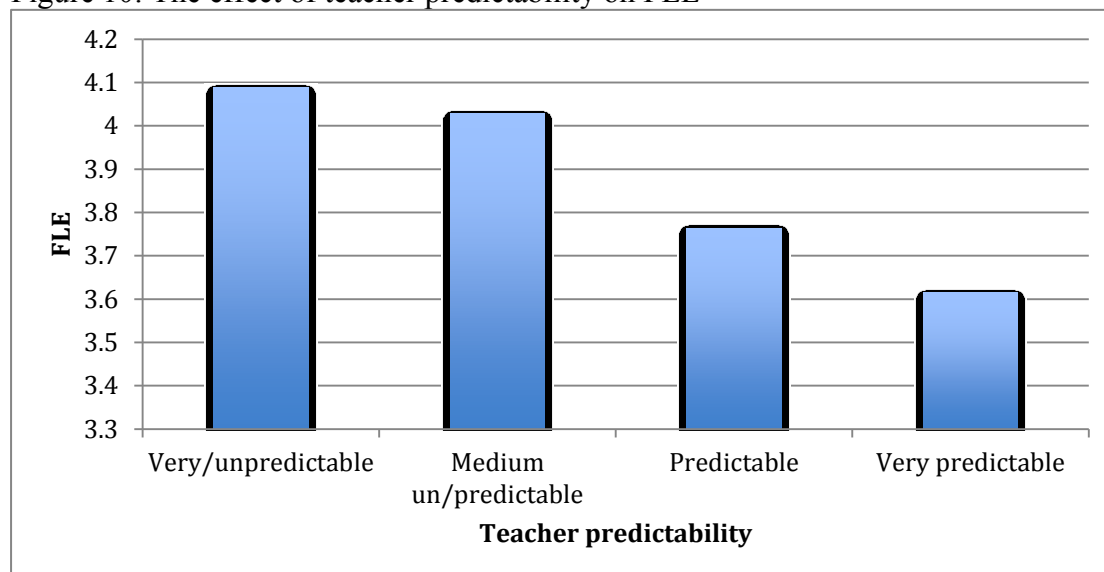


Figure 10: The effect of teacher predictability on FLE



¹ The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) is an English language curriculum offered to students to prepare them for International Baccalaureate, A Level and BTEC Level 3 (which is recommended for higher tier students).

² Dame Alice Owen's School reported that 81% of all grades were awarded A* - B at A-level in 2015 (with 205 students participating in the exams). (http://www.damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk/sixth_form/results.html).

Westminster School reported that 97% of all grades were awarded A* - B at A-level in 2015 (with 583 students participating in the exams).

³ The rank order corresponds to national figures for the 23,031 A-level entries in the UK in 2015, with 45% of students choosing French, followed by Spanish (38%) and German (17%) (<http://www.all-languages.org.uk>).

⁴ Because of the anonymity it is impossible to know how many different teachers participants commented on. Considering that there were sufficient numbers of participants from all year groups in both schools, we assume that our participants provided us with objective reports of actual teacher behaviour of close to 38 teachers.

⁵ The authors suggest the following: "we (...) urge L2 researchers to adopt the new field-specific benchmarks of small ($d = .40$), medium ($d = .70$), and large ($d = 1.00$) in

order to interpret the practical significance of L2 research effects more precisely”
(2014, p. 889).

⁶ Field (2013) recommends the Gabriel post-hoc tests when sample sizes are different because they have greater power.