

ENJOYMENT, BOREDOM, AND ANXIETY IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE

CLASSROOM IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

A Dissertation

by

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## ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the nature and links between enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety in the Spanish language classroom at the university level. The students participating in the study were enrolled in courses of Spanish for heritage speakers and Spanish as a foreign language (heritage and non-heritage students). Qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously, analyzed separately (articles 1 and 2 respectively), and combined (article 3). A survey with Likert scale questions was used to collect the quantitative data. Enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety were the dependent variables, and the independent variables were heritage speakers in heritage and regular Spanish courses and non-heritage speakers in regular Spanish courses. Article 1 found that there was a negative correlation between FLE and FLB, and FLCA and FLE. Article 2 discovered the causes of enjoyment in the Spanish language class were instructor's teaching style as well as interesting, relatable, and engaging material. For boredom for HLLs and FLLs in FLCs the causes were both lecture heavy classes with no interaction and dislike of course materials. Being called on to participate was the primary cause of anxiety for FLLs. Oral presentations and tests were the primary causes for HLLs in HLCs, while feeling judged was the cause for HLLs in FLCs. Article 3 found that sociobiographical factors, such as socialization with Hispanic/Latinx, society's expectations, language spoken (English), and gender (male) were predictors for enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in both groups.

## DEDICATION

To Adriana and Nuria, my heritage speakers.

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The data and the analyses depicted in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 were completed by the student independently.

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## NOMENCLATURE

HL	Heritage language
SHL	Spanish heritage language
HLL	Heritage language learner
SLA	Second language acquisition
L1	Any language acquired before age 3
FL	Foreign language
FLL	Foreign language learner
FLE	Foreign language enjoyment
FLB	Foreign language boredom
FLCA	Foreign language anxiety
FLC	Foreign language course
HLC	Heritage language course

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT .....	ii
DEDICATION .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iv
CONTRIBUTORS AND FUNDING SOURCES.....	v
NOMENCLATURE.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Spanish in the USA .....	2
1.2. Emotions.....	4
1.3. Emotions and Language Acquisition .....	10
1.4. Purpose of the Study .....	14
1.4.1. Research Questions .....	15
Each one of the research questions written below belongs to each one of the articles in this dissertation as follows:.....	15
1.5. References .....	17
2. ENJOYMENT, ANXIETY, AND BOREDOM IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY .....	26
2.1. Introduction .....	26
2.2. Literature review .....	27
2.2.1. Anxiety .....	29
2.2.2. Boredom .....	32
2.2.3. Enjoyment .....	37
2.3. Methodology .....	44
2.3.1. Research questions .....	44
2.3.2. Participants and demographics.....	45

2.3.3. Data collection.....	46
2.4. Results .....	47
2.4.1. Quantitative Data.....	47
2.5. Discussion .....	49
2.6. Limitations .....	52
2.7. Conclusion.....	53
2.8. References .....	54
3. ENJOYMENT, ANXIETY, AND BOREDOM IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS.....	63
3.1. Introduction .....	63
3.2. Literature review .....	64
3.2.1. Anxiety .....	65
3.2.2. Boredom .....	68
3.2.3. Enjoyment .....	71
3.3. Methodology .....	77
3.3.1. Research questions .....	78
3.3.2. Participants and demographics .....	78
3.3.3. Data collection.....	79
3.4. Results .....	80
3.4.1. Anxiety .....	80
3.4.2. Enjoyment .....	90
3.4.3. Boredom .....	98
3.5. Discussion .....	105
3.6. Limitations and pedagogical implications for future research .....	109
3.7. Conclusion.....	110
3.8. References .....	112
4. A MIXED-METHODS APPROACH ON THE EFFECTS OF SOCIOBIOGRAPHICAL FACTORS ON ENJOYMENT, ANXIETY, AND BOREDOM IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM.....	118
4.1. Introduction .....	118
4.2. Literature review .....	119
4.3. Methodology .....	129
4.3.1. Research question.....	129
4.3.2. Participants and demographics .....	130
4.3.3. Data collection.....	131
4.4. Results .....	132
4.4.1. Quantitative Data.....	132
4.4.2. Qualitative Data.....	139
<i>Themes from the interview questions to FLLs on importance of Spanish.....</i>	144
<i>Themes from the interview questions to HLLs on importance of Spanish .....</i>	147



Some of the participants related these themes to the importance of being bilingual not only professionally but within the family: .....	148
4.5. Discussion .....	148
4.6. Limitations .....	153
4.7. Conclusion.....	153
4.8. References .....	155
5. CONCLUSIONS.....	163
APPENDIX A FLE, FLB, FLCA SURVEY.....	167
APPENDIX B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.....	180

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 2.1 Courses and course delivery .....	44
Figure 3.1 Courses and course delivery .....	79
Figure 4.1 Courses and course delivery .....	131

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 3.1 Anxiety of FLLs in FLC. Survey open-ended questions .....	81
Table 3.2 Anxiety of HLLs in HLC. Survey open-ended questions .....	84
Table 3.3 Anxiety of HLLs in FLC. Survey open-ended questions.....	86
Table 3.4 Anxiety of HLLs in HLCs. Interview questions .....	87
Table 3.5 Anxiety of FLLs in FLCs. Interview questions .....	87
Table 3.6 Enjoyment of FLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions .....	90
Table 3.7 Enjoyment of HLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions .....	92
Table 3.8 Enjoyment of HLLs in HLCs. Survey open-ended questions.....	94
Table 3.9 Enjoyment of HLLs in HLCs. Interview questions .....	96
Table 3.10 Enjoyment of FLLs in FLCs. Interview questions.....	97
Table 3.11 Boredom of HLLs in HLCs. Survey open-ended questions.....	99
Table 3.12 Boredom of HLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions .....	100
Table 3.13 Boredom of FLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions.....	101
Table 3.14 Boredom of HLLs in HLCs. Interview questions .....	103
Table 3.15 Boredom of FLLs in FLCs. Interview questions .....	105
Table 4.1 Coefficient Table for HLLs Predictors for Anxiety .....	133
Table 4.2 Coefficient Table for HLLs Predictors for Enjoyment .....	134
Table 4.3 Coefficient Table for HLLs Predictors for Boredom.....	135
Table 4.4 Coefficient Table for FLLs Predictors for Anxiety.....	136
Table 4.5 Coefficient Table for FLLs Predictors for Enjoyment .....	137

Table 4.6 Coefficient Table for FLLs Predictors for Boredom.....	138
Table 4.7 Themes from the interview questions to FLLs on studying Spanish .....	139
Table 4.8 Themes from the interview questions to HLLs on studying Spanish .....	141
Table 4.9 Themes from the interview questions to FLLs on importance of Spanish ....	144
Table 4.10 Themes from the interview questions to HLLs on importance of Spanish..	147

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to a recent report by the Instituto Cervantes (2021) and the US Census Bureau (2016), Spanish is the second language most spoken in the USA, and it is by far the most widely studied language at all levels of education in this country. Thanks to the growing Hispanic/Latinx population in the USA, the interest in the study of Spanish has increased, becoming the most widely studied language at all levels of education in this country (Potowski, 2016). A plethora of studies in Spanish as a foreign language (SFL) have investigated multiple aspects of language acquisition in the classroom in this context, going from the use of different pedagogy approaches and methods, grammar, and vocabulary teaching, to students' attitudes towards the language (see Lacorte & Reyes-Torres, 2021; Lantolf & Phoener, 2007; Montrul, 2003, 2011; Muñoz-Basols et al., 2018). Accordingly, much of the research in the field of Spanish as a heritage language (SHL) has focused on the study of several grammatical aspects like heritage language morphosyntax, proficiency, literacy, writing, pedagogy, US Spanish varieties, and societal perceptions and attitudes toward the heritage language, among others (e.g., Beaudry, Ducar, & Potowski, 2014; Carreira & Kagan, 2018; Fairclough & Beaudrie, 2016; Montrul, 2012; Rothman & Pascual y Cabo, 2012; Valdés, 2001). However, despite the growing interest and research in emotions in the field of SLA thanks to the blooming of Positive Psychology (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Li, 2019), not enough studies exist to date in SFL and in SHL in the US context when compared to studies on English

as a foreign language, research that could have important pedagogical implications benefitting instruction, teaching approaches, and ultimately, students.

In order to situate the three articles that constitute this dissertation investigating the role of emotions in the Spanish language classroom at the postsecondary level, the aim of this chapter is to give a brief overview of the current situation of Spanish in the USA, a summary of the different views on the definition and categorization of emotion, and the evolution of the study of emotion in SLA.

### **1.1. Spanish in the USA**

In the USA minoritized<sup>1</sup> languages are referred to as heritage languages and they include indigenous, colonial, and immigrant languages (Fishman, 2001), as is the case of Spanish. Scholars have adopted the term heritage language (HL) due to its neutrality and inclusivity that is not attached to the stigma of the terms *ethnic*, *second* or *foreign* languages, and *immigrant* (Fairclough & Beaudrie, 2016, p. 2; Hornberger, 2005, p. 102). The field of heritage language acquisition, accordingly, focuses on heritage languages and heritage speakers and language learners (Montrul, 2007; Polinsky & Kagan, 2007). A heritage language learner (HLL), therefore, is an individual “who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken. The student may speak or merely understand the heritage language and be, to some degree, bilingual in English and the heritage language” (Valdés 2000, p. 1). This term was “born” as a proficiency-

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<sup>1</sup> In this dissertation I will use the term *minoritized* instead of *minority* as it represents people who endure mistreatment, and/or have to experience prejudices imposed upon them, as used in recent literature in the fields of bilingual and heritage language education (i.e., Heiman & Yanes, 2018; Palmer, 2018; Palmer, Cervantes-Soon, Dorner, & Heiman, 2019).

based definition to differentiate this group from foreign language learners (FLLs) since a certain degree of proficiency in the HL is linguistically necessary (Fairclough & Beaudrie, 2016, p. 2).

Thanks to the diversity of the HLL, in recent years universities have begun to create more programs for HL teaching based on innovative pedagogies that cater to the increasing number of HLLs that pursue an advancement of their HL (Fairclough, 2016). Most HLLs acknowledge their heritage language as an integral part of their cultural and ethnic identity, and research has shown its influence in language maintenance (e.g., Sánchez-Muñoz, 2016; Sevinç, 2016, 2022). Nonetheless, many of them enroll in regular Spanish courses to further linguistic competence formally in their HL instead of enrolling in courses specific for their language needs, challenging traditional Spanish as a Foreign Language programs and how they are taught (e.g., Beaudrie, Ducar, & Potowski, 2014; Belpoliti & Bermejo, 2020; Montrul, 2012; Torres, Pascual y Cabo, & Beusterien, 2017). In addition, there is still a belief that professionals trained to teach a foreign language, like Spanish, can teach an HL (Potowski, 2016). In fact, the affective and linguistic differences are significant between FL and HL learners, and thus scholars and educators are asking for proper training to teach heritage languages (p. 129). Despite this reality, researchers in the field are working to understand better the difficulties associated with the teaching of Spanish as a heritage language as well as the administration of HL programs (p. 130).

Nonetheless, to offer programs at the university level that can adapt to the needs of HLLs, teaching methodologies and pedagogies need to consider their diverse

multilingual repertoire of meaning-making, as well as their identities and emotions in the classroom (Douglas Fir Group, 2016; Pascual y Cabo & Prada, 2018). The difficulty in shaping these programs increases when HLLs often present low linguistic self-esteem in the classroom, which attached to the feeling of Spanish being a language of low prestige, has a negative impact on language maintenance (Sánchez-Muñoz, 2016, p. 206).

Therefore, the study of emotions, positive and negative, becomes a staple in the research of heritage language acquisition in the classroom.

## **1.2. Emotions**

Defining and categorizing emotions has always been an arduous task. Emotions are essential in everyday life. Yet, emotion and the nature of emotion are still being debated regardless of over a century of empirical research (Barrett et al., 2015). Some scholars, in an attempt to clarify the inconclusiveness of the definition of emotion, have referred to it as “the elephant in the room” (e.g., DFG, 2016; Prior, 2019; Swain, 2013). Studied from philosophical, anthropological, linguistic, sociological, and psychological perspectives through the centuries, emotion has been defined and explained through several contradictory approaches. The term “emotion”, however, is somewhat new, beginning to be used by English-speaking authors only after the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, leaving a semantic field that had been nurtured since antiquity (Frevert, 2016, p. 49).

The Oxford dictionary defines emotion as “a strong feeling such as love, fear or anger; the part of a person’s character that consists of feelings”. The Merriam-Webster dictionary gives a more complete definition as “a state of feeling”, or “the affective aspect of consciousness : feeling”, or “a conscious mental reaction (such as anger or



fear) subjectively experienced as strong feeling usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body.”

Therefore, emotion could be defined as a conscious experience referred to as an affective state that arises from sensory stimulation (Sieb, 2013). Following these definitions, the common usage appears to result in a circular definition in which emotions are described as feelings and feelings are characterized as emotional states (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 194). Reeve (2005), for example, defined emotion as short-lived, arousal-purposeful-expressive phenomena that assist us in adapting to the opportunities and difficulties we confront throughout significant life events. The feeling component reflects the subjective experience we so often equate with emotion: the first is arousal, the second is physical, the third is purposive (reflecting the goal-directedness of emotion), and the fourth is the expressive component (p. 294).

When attempting to define and categorize basic emotions, Tracy and Randles (2011) compared the definitions of emotion given by eminent researchers in psychology: Ekman and Cordaro (2011); Izard (2011); Levenson (2011); and Panksepp and Watt (2011). ). All of them agreed that a basic emotion should have a defined set of neural and physiologically expressed components, be discrete, and include a defined feeling or motivational component that has been chosen for abiding interactions with ecologically appropriate stimuli (p. 398). Therefore, evidence of discreteness in either of these areas could be used to differentiate between basic emotions (p. 401). They were also in agreement that basic emotions are primitive; however, the definition each of them gave of primitive was interpreted differently. On the one hand, Izard, Levenson, Panksepp and

Watt are in agreement that individual and cultural learning can alter the settings and intensity with which basic emotions are aroused, and new basic emotions cannot be created from scratch if not already genetically encoded in the brain. They also concur that basic emotions are crucial for early development, but that through learning and cognitive reflection, they eventually develop into the more complex emotional states that adults regularly experience. More primitive, basic emotions are rarely experienced in adulthood in their original state (pp. 398-399). On the other hand, only Ekman and Cordaro contend that emotional experiences that appear to need cultural learning, – for example, *Schadenfreude*—may ultimately be regarded as basic (p. 399).

Izard (2011) identified first-order emotions as happiness, sadness, fear, anger, disgust, interest, and contempt/enjoyment. At the same time, he affirms that higher-level emotions schemas can be basic or complex mixtures of emotions combined with cognitive and self-regulation features allowing for interpretation and ongoing engagement with the environment. Panksepp and Watt (2011) distinguished among play, panic/grief, fear, rage, seeking, lust, and care as basic emotions, where the intensity of activation determines the output of a basic emotion neurological circuit. Only after complex interactions with higher cognitive processing can emotional and behavioral repercussions emerge. They distinguish between primary-process core affect, secondary-process elaborations, and tertiary-process emotions, suggesting that “basic emotions” would belong to the primary-process levels. They note that during times of extreme loss, suffering, or danger, emotions may override higher cognition in the production of behavior. On the other hand, Levenson (2011) proposed enjoyment, sadness, fear, anger,

disgust, interest, love and relief as basic emotions, suggesting that basic emotions are most predictable when onset is abrupt and powerful, and when their elicitors closely resemble evolutionarily viable prototypes. Finally, Ekman and Cordaro (2011) suggested the basic emotions of happiness, sadness, fear, anger, disgust, contempt, and surprise. They argued that a mental process without a clear antecedent event should not be called a basic emotion.

Despite these definitions and categorization, other notable researchers and recent research on emotions from a cultural perspective in psychology have produced abundant evidence suggesting emotion is socially constructed (e.g., Barret, 2017a; Barrett et al., 2015; Mesquita, Boiger, & De Leersnyder, 2016). In Barrett's theory of constructed emotion (2006, 2017a, 2017b), she suggested that emotions are experiences constructed with a conceptual act, arguing that the way people learn about emotion categories and use conceptual knowledge determines how they feel. Barrett argues as well that the context, language use, differences in previous experiences, and culture will produce variation in what emotion is experienced and how an emotion is felt (Barrett, 2006, p. 37). In other words, the brain uses past experience organized as concepts to guide a person's actions and give meaning to sensations (Barrett, 2017b, p. 31). According to her, emotions arise as a combination of the physical properties of the body with a flexible brain that wires itself to any environment it develops in, helped by the person's upbringing and culture (Barrett, 2015). This theory also incorporates ideas and empirical results from neuroconstruction, psychological construction, rational constructivism, social construction, and descriptive appraisal theories (Barrett, 2017a, p. 12). In Barrett's

own words, “The theory of constructed emotion proposes that emotions should be modeled holistically, as whole brain-body phenomena in context...Emotions are constructions of the world, not reactions to it” (p. 16).

The theory of constructed emotion stands in contrast to psychological essentialism. Although still dominating the fields of psychology and neuroscience, essentialism alleges that each emotion is an internal force that produces behavior, where to control behavior many of these forces must battle against each other (Barrett, 2015, p. 450). Even more, essentialism searches for areas of the human brain that are specific to each emotion, tied to classical-view concepts such as for example emotion circuits in the brain, facial expression, or emotional reaction (Barrett, 2017b, p. 150). On the contrary, in the theory of constructed emotion, the brain’s core systems merge in different ways as a person’s feelings, thoughts, experiences and memories (p. 153). Learning experiences help develop the brain, hardwiring itself from the social world by creating mental concepts from a person’s culture--that is, constructions of a person’s conceptual system. Culture helps to wire the brain, and the brain becomes a carrier of culture (Barrett, 2017b, p. 144).

According to Russell (2015) and supporting the theory of constructed emotion, outside of their social context many emotional episodes are difficult to understand or cannot be understood (p. 444). Every culture has its own emotional climate that depends on underlying emotional culture (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2013). Several scholars (e.g., Mesquita & Frida, 1992; Mesquita, De Leersnyder, & Boiger, 2015; Barrett, 2017a) have shown that the strongest emotions and most frequent emotions also differ by

cultural context. In each one, central emotions also differ based on what helps an individual be a good person and act in the acceptable ways established for that specific context (Mesquita et al., 2016, p. 31). Likewise, the contents and connotations of individual emotions match cultural contexts and help accomplish cultural goals. Individual reporting of cultural patterns of emotion appears to be culturally normative since these patterns correspond to the average pattern of their own culture, adding to the fact that these situations are given across cultures (p. 31). Culturally normative emotions, experienced by individuals in a wide range of cultures, are also associated with higher well-being. A possible reason for this benefit could be that these emotions help achieve ‘collective intentionality’ guiding individuals through their social environments (Schweikard & Schmid, 2021). Another way of promoting normative emotional states is by stressing the cultural products that individuals become involved in, including constructing and selecting the ones that provide culturally valued emotions in other people (Mesquita et al., 2016, p.32). The avoidance or promotion of specific emotional states, such as anger or shame, happens in social interactions.

To conclude, through the centuries emotion has been studied from different psychological perspectives, among other disciplines, being defined and explained through several contradictory approaches. On the one hand (universalists) the evolutionary roots of emotions have been considered biologically supplied and invariant, and on the other hand (social constructionists) emotions are nurtured, centered on the cultural processes that influence them, with the belief that emotions differ between cultures.

### **1.3. Emotions and Language Acquisition**

Until recently, languages and emotions were theorized as separate phenomena. In the last two decades, however, the study of emotions in the fields of foreign and heritage language acquisition has seen a significant growth (e.g., Dewaele & Li, 2020; Li, 2019; Prada et al., 2020). Some scholars, while acknowledging the growing interest in the study of emotion in language learning and teaching, questioned whether the emotional turn in the field of applied linguistics is indeed happening or if it is a mere “affective bandwagon” (Prior, 2019, p. 517). However, the affective turn that the SLA and multilingualism fields had taken within the early 2000s had already been observed and talked about, which had resulted in the expansion and transformation of the research range (e.g., Pavlenko, 2013). The “affective factors” paradigm between LX and language affect had exhausted its limited explanatory capacity, proposing the linguistic category of LX learning of affect, and suggesting that “to enter a new emotional world one needs to learn new emotion categories and new means of emotional expression” (p. 12). Despite the recognition of some interest in research on the role of emotion in SLA, scholars in the fast-evolving field of emotion and learning in psychology and education reported that research in SLA and emotions was falling behind, suggesting that implementation of advanced statistical methods and up-to-date information on emotion research should be prioritized (Shao et al., 2021).

Nonetheless, the connection between SLA and learning and emotion, and the question of whether certain emotions can trigger or obstruct the progress in SLA, had

already been proposed by Krashen's theory of the Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982). According to this theory, language learners are equipped with the affective filter that will increase or decrease the intake of comprehensible input. According to this hypothesis, he suggested that certain negative emotional variables could obstruct the comprehensible input from getting to the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition. In consonance with this theory, when a language learner experiences negative emotions while in the FL classroom or FL activity, their affective filter is up, meaning that it impedes language acquisition due to the comprehension of language input being prevented. High levels of anxiety or stress can produce this situation (Mierzwa, 2019). On the contrary, when a language learner experiences positive emotions in the FL classroom, their affective filter is down, and they are psychologically prone to accept the language input they have been exposed to (p. 108). Despite the origins of the connection between SLA and emotion in modern times, recently it has been found that positive emotions may strengthen the awareness of language input in language learners, ability to perceive changes in the environment, resiliency, and dissipation of the effects of negative emotions (Dewaele et al., 2016).

To examine better the different stages through which research on emotion in SLA has gone, Dewaele and Li (2020) discussed in a recent critical review how research has grown exponentially in the last decade, with a substantial increase in the number of studies in emotion in SLA. This research has moved from being focused mainly on anxiety to the study of a wider range of emotions, including positive emotions. Within the body of literature of research on SLA and emotion, they have identified three

research phases. The first phase, the Emotion Avoidance Phase, happened between the early 1960s through the mid-1980s. In this phase, although not denied, emotion was considered an unreasonable factor in language learning at a time when the "scientific" cognitive factors were clearly favored. In this phase, cognitive factors were the ones considered the engine of SLA, while the affective factors in general were having only a small impact (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Prior, 2019). This approach expanded to FL teaching and learning, where little attention was given to the affective dimension, and covered under terms like "affect" since the word "emotion" was not present in this phase. During this phase, characterized by puzzling studies on foreign language anxiety, confusion emerged around the contrast of the "anxiety" construct and its assessment, which were not inherently or reliably related to FL learning.

Dewaele and Li have called the second phase the Anxiety-Prevailing Phase, which happened between the mid-1980s and the early 2010s. During this phase, the link between emotion and cognition was increasingly accepted, emphasizing the role of emotion in language learning. This phase is characterized by Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985), moving then to the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety research by Horwitz et al. (1986). Although the field remained dominated by cognitive approaches, this phase brought importance to the affective dimension that emotion plays in SLA. Nonetheless, the study of anxiety prevailed as the only focus during this phase (Dewaele & Li, 2020).

For the third phase, the name Positive and Negative Emotions Phase was suggested; it emerged in the early 2010s. During this phase, research interest has been



focused on the psychology of language learning. More specifically, researchers have grown interested in the positive and negative emotions in language learning and teaching. The interest in positive emotions has been influenced by Positive Psychology (PP), introduced by MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) in SLA. PP is driven by strong empirical work using a wide range of methodological and epistemological methods. Among its goals, PP looks to strengthen teachers' and learners' experiences of hope, optimism, well-being, happiness, emotional creativity, courage, and flow, aiming to enhance their linguistic progress (Dewaele, Chen, Padilla, & Lake, 2019). Dewaele and Li (2020) concluded that PP has strengthened and shaped the "emotional turn" ("affective turn" for Prior, 2019) in SLA research. Amidst recently published articles, MacIntyre et al. (2019b) described the ways that PP can be useful and a good addition to SLA teaching and learning. Under the rubric of PP in SLA, they proposed an agenda with theory, practice, and research. They recommended looking at the strengths and opportunities of teachers and learners, pointing out that language teaching and learning are intercultural experiences (p. 269). MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer (2019) also encourage the use of qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method research in favor of theoretical and empirical plurality.

Despite the growing research in enjoyment in SLA thanks to the application of the tenets of Positive Psychology (Botes et al., 2021), the emotions of heritage speakers taking courses for Spanish heritage and foreign language have not been studied extensively, nor has it been studied whether differences exist between heritage and non-heritage speakers enrolled in the same Spanish courses. This research study could lead to

a more detailed understanding of the nature and connection of anxiety, enjoyment, and boredom in the classroom not only for heritage speakers, but for FL learners of Spanish in the USA as well. Therefore, the study of not only negative but positive emotions in the classroom through a quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods design becomes necessary since the results of the study could help shape heritage and foreign language pedagogies and how these courses might be taught in the future.

A quantitative (article 1/chapter 2), qualitative (article 2/chapter 3), and a convergent mixed methods study (article 3/chapter 4), are appropriate for the analysis of the different research questions addressed in this dissertation based on the trends of recent research in the fields of FL and HL. The qualitative analysis will give a deeper understanding of the roots of enjoyment, anxiety and boredom in the classroom through a reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006, 2019), and quantitative and qualitative data are integrated and/or compared and discussed in the mixed methods analysis (Cresswell & Creswell, 2020).

#### **1.4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to analyze the nature and links between enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety in the Spanish classroom at the university level. The students participating in the study were taking courses of Spanish for heritage speakers and Spanish as a foreign language (heritage and non-heritage students). A convergent parallel mixed methods design is used as the overall method for this study. In this type of design, qualitative and quantitative data are collected roughly simultaneously, analyzed separately (articles 1 and 2 respectively), and then combined (article 3). In this study, a

survey with Likert scale questions is used to collect the quantitative data. Enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety are the dependent variables, and the independent variables are heritage speakers in heritage and regular Spanish courses and non-heritage speakers in regular Spanish courses. The qualitative data consists of open-ended questions in the survey and an interview (see appendices A and B) that will explore in more detail enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety for heritage and non-heritage students in the Spanish classroom as well as sociobiographical factors. The reason for collecting the two types of data, qualitative and quantitative, is to combine both forms of data to bring greater understanding of these emotions in the classroom than would be obtained if collected separately (Creswell & Creswell, 2020).

#### **1.4.1. Research Questions**

Each one of the research questions written below belongs to each one of the articles in this dissertation as follows:

**Research Question 1 (Article 1):** Are there differences between heritage language learners in heritage language courses and foreign language learners in foreign language courses with respect to enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom?

Sub questions to RQ1:

- RQ1a: Are there significant differences between HLLs and FLLs with respect to enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in Spanish as a foreign language courses?

**Research Question 2 (Article 2):** What are the reasons why HLLs feel enjoyment, anxiety and boredom in HLCs?

- RQ2a: How is it different for HLLs in FLCs?

- RQ2b: How is it different for FLLs in FLCs?

**Research Question 3 (Article 3):** To what extent do sociobiographical factors (such as age, gender, languages spoken, age of onset of acquisition, self-perceived proficiency, self-identity, socialization, self and society's expectations about language learning) affect enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in HLLS in the language classroom?

Sub questions to RQ3:

- How is it different for FLLs?

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## 2. ENJOYMENT, ANXIETY, AND BOREDOM IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY

### 2.1. Introduction

The study of emotions in the classroom has boomed in the last two decades in the fields of foreign language (FL) and heritage language (HL) (see Dewaele & Li, 2020; Prado et al., 2020). Anxiety had been the most studied emotion in these fields (e.g., MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), but under the influence of Positive Psychology, applied linguists have started to include positive emotions in their research designs (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p.207). While the experience of negative emotions hinders progress in learning an FL, the experience of positive emotions facilitates learning and performance (Botes et al., 2020). While a large number of studies have focused on FL Enjoyment and FLCA and the relationship between them in Foreign Language (FL), the study of boredom in FL learning is only just starting (Mariusz et al., 2021; Nakamura et al., 2021; Li et al., 2020; Pawlak et al., 2020). Moreover, very little work has dealt with HL learning (see, however, Prada et al., 2020). Considering that the linguistic characteristics of FLs and HLs are different, we wondered whether the classroom emotions of both groups might also be different.

The recent social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic all around the world are also affecting emotions in the classroom (Resnik & Dewaele, 2021). The term emergency remote instruction (ERT) emerged as a result of the new teaching environment and has been defined as “a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an

alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances” (Hodges et al., 2020). However, what was supposed to be temporary was extended over several semesters, creating a hodgepodge of courses where students could attend face-to-face, remotely, or face-to-face and remotely at the same time with the capability to switch from one to the other at any given time, creating a new concept of “hybrid” courses.

A mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design was used for this study, collecting quantitative and qualitative data at the same time (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The intent of this study, conducted at a southern university in the United States, is to advance our understanding of the relationship among enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in the Spanish language classrooms, in regular Spanish as a FL courses and in courses of Spanish geared to HLLs. I will analyze and contrast the relationship of these variables between two groups of students (HLLs and FLLs) enrolled in two different courses (Spanish for HL speakers and Spanish as a FL) and seek to understand the causes by looking at the qualitative material.

## **2.2. Literature review**

The study of emotion remained in the shadows for discussion and research in the foreign language classroom and in the field of applied linguistics in general—as well as in cognitive science—, where the focus had always been on the linguistic development of the new language (e.g., Garret and Young, 2009). In the last decade, however, the interest on the study of emotions in second language acquisition (SLA) has experienced an exponential increase thanks to the rapid expansion and growing influence of Positive Psychology (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Li, 2019). The field of heritage language is

experiencing the same interest in emotions as the field of SLA as seen in recent literature. The main focus in HL, as it was for SLA, has been the study of anxiety in the classroom, although mainly tied to sociocultural aspects including perceptions and attitudes, motivation, and cultural identity as an affective factor (e.g., Beaudrie & Ducar, 2005; Qin, 2006; Tallon, 2006, 2009). Work on bilingualism and emotions had been performed in a separatist paradigm for several years, in which languages and emotions were theorized as separate phenomena, resulting in researchers usually questioning how bi- and multilingual people's languages differed in their emotional impact (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 47). Outside of the studies on bilingualism and multilingualism, only a few studies, however, exist in Spanish as a HL that have examined the role of emotions in or outside the classroom. Even fewer studies exist that compare their emotions to the regular FL classrooms. Such work can shed light on the pedagogical development of courses of Spanish for heritage HLLs as well as for mixed (heritage and FL) and FL courses in the context of the USA.

Since the only studies for SHL on emotion are solely in anxiety and heritage language classroom anxiety (HLCA), the literature review on boredom will look at the studies conducted in other languages as a FL. The section on enjoyment will include the studies that combine research on foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) since the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship of said emotions with boredom.



### **2.2.1. Anxiety**

Anxiety has been researched extensively in SLA (Dewaele & Li, 2018), as have constructs like motivation and attitudes toward foreign languages (Dewaele, Chen, Padilla, & Lake, 2019). Anxiety has been defined as an emergent, coordinated emotion that includes feelings, arousal, intentional and expressive events (Reeve, 2005). Language anxiety feelings are usually preceded by feelings of avoidance or escape. According to MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012), anxiety represents a voluntary or involuntary call for help from the language learner (p. 195).

With most of the research on foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA from now on) being on English as a FL (EFL), Marcos Llinás and Juan Garau (2009) conducted a study on the effects of language anxiety on course achievement in three proficiency-level courses of Spanish with 134 students who were enrolled in beginner, intermediate and advanced courses of Spanish as a FL. The results show different FLCA levels, with the beginner levels showing the lowest and advanced levels the highest.

Tallon (2006) was the first to study language anxiety in Spanish HLLs. The participants were 209 HLLs and 204 non-HLLs at university in the US. He studied specifically whether these students suffered foreign language anxiety as well as levels and types of anxiety. Tallon compared the results to other heritage languages. Data were collected through mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative). The results showed a strong negative correlation between the students' self-evaluation of language proficiency and the levels of reported anxiety. An interesting fact about his study is the comparison of four different anxiety scales, resulting in a positive correlation of measurements, as

well as his modification for HLLs of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). This scale has been used since then in research on HL anxiety in different languages (i.e., Xiao-Desai, 2019).

In the same vein, a qualitative study on HLLs' perceptions of acquiring and maintaining Spanish was conducted by Moore Torres and Turner (2017). The study included 11 participants in a public university in Florida. The method of the study was based on a series of semi-structured interviews about their experiences with language learning. Based on the notion that university students in the US, including HLLs, are required to take "FL" courses to meet degree requirements (and this requirement is becoming a source of anxiety), they discuss how HLLs experience higher anxiety due to their low levels of proficiency in the heritage language and how they are expected to know the language based on their heritage alone. Considering that participants' proficiency levels in the HL were diverse, the interview answers showed a unified response in blaming their lack of formal education in Spanish as the foremost issue in their capacity to attain superior stages of Spanish language skills.

Illustrating the thought of experiencing anxiety due to low proficiency in the HL, although not in a classroom setting, Tseng (2020) conducted a qualitative case study through a series of interviews of first and second generation HLLs of Spanish in a nonclassroom setting. The number of participants was 22, and the analysis was based on sociolinguistic and discourse analysis. Tseng studied the stigmatization and confusion suffered by these generations based on imposed deficit identities drawn from ideologies of individual agency, proficiency, and language purity resulting in language insecurity,

avoidance, and erosion of their bilingual competencies amid overtly positive attitudes towards language maintenance. The results emerging from the data showed the tensions inherent between the resilience of language purity attitudes and the HLLs' actual bilingualism, demonstrating the power of such ideologies of identity and language. The results are similar to Xiao-Desai's study on ethnic identity and language (2017) and to Sevinç's 2016 study on language maintenance by the Turkish immigrant community in the Netherlands.

Also, in the field of SHL, a recent study by Prada, Guerrero-Rodriguez, and Pascual y Cabo (2020) studied heritage language anxiety (HLA) in two different classroom settings. The 30 participants were enrolled in either a Spanish as a FL course, which functioned as the control group (N=14), or in a Spanish for HLLs course, which functioned as the experimental group (N=16), at a university in the US Southwest. Through a mixed-methods approach, each participant completed three forms of data elicitation: the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS21), a version adapted from Horwitz et al. (1986)'s FLCA based on Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), and individual semi-structured interviews. The data were collected at the end of the semester, conducting a descriptive analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The results indicate significantly lower levels of FLCA among the experimental group participants than among the control group participants. Furthermore, the study's results revealed that students had more fun in the HL classroom than in the FL classroom.

### **2.2.2. Boredom**

Research on boredom has been increasing in the field of educational psychology, especially in terms of defining what boredom is (Goetz & Hall, 2014). Given that boredom is not an archetypal or basic emotional experience, it is difficult to define what it is and if it can be described as an emotion at all (p. 311). Boredom is viewed as a distinct emotional experience in the current component process model of emotion, which posits that experiences are best understood in terms of underlying constituent processes (Pekrun et al., 2010). In this line, academic boredom is a multidimensional emotion characterized by an unpleasant feeling (affective), low arousal (physiological), a desire to leave the boring circumstance (motivational), and a perception of time slowness (cognitive) (Pekrun, 2006), seen as a distinct emotion different from a lack of interest (Pekrun et al., 2010). Academic boredom has been found to be a weary emotion that has a detrimental effect on a student's educational growth (Daniels et al., 2015; Pekrun et al. 2010). It is most encountered in academic settings during learning activities, such as while doing homework or participating in classroom-based learning exercises (Goetz & Hall, 2014, p. 312).

The study of boredom has bloomed in the last few years (e.g., Derakhshan et al., 2021; Li, 2021; Li et al., 2021; Nakamura et al., 2021). Studies on classroom boredom have been mostly performed with students of English as an FL or English majors in a variety of countries (but see Chapman's [2013] study on German FLLs). Unsurprisingly, no study on boredom has been published to date in the field of Spanish HL learning.

Chapman's (2013) dissertation was the pioneer study of boredom in the classroom among FLLs of German in the USA, followed by the first studies of boredom in the English FL classroom conducted by Kruk (2016) and Kruk and Zawodniak (2017, 2018) in the Polish educational context. Most of the consecutive studies of boredom focused on English and German classes as L2 and L3. Chapman's mixed-methods study, with 57 students of German as a FL, analyzed the causes of boredom, students' beliefs about the emotion in the FL classroom, and if boredom was a unique phenomenon of German language courses. Through quantitative analysis through several questionnaires, and qualitative analysis of students' interviews, Chapman concluded that the antecedents of boredom were the sentiments towards the teacher, textbook-based activities, lack of engagement from peers, and a sense of being under-challenged.

In the studies conducted in Poland, Kurk (2016a) examined boredom in the English FL classroom in a high school setting and its antecedents with a series of questionnaires before and after the study, with a qualitative analysis of teacher's notes and observations. The results showed boredom being in a perpetual state of change in certain classes and more stable in others. Kurk's (2016b) following study consisted of a mixed-methods longitudinal study of changes in motivation, boredom and language anxiety of 16 English philology students learning the language in a virtual world through a questionnaire and session logs. The findings revealed a high level of motivation and low levels of anxiety and boredom.

Kruk and Zawodniak have carried out a number of joint studies. In their first pioneering investigation (2017), they conducted a mixed-methods study in 174 English

major students examining boredom susceptibility and boredom in the classroom. The results of this investigation showed a significant positive correlation between proneness of boredom and the level of boredom in English major students, with increasing boredom intensity over time. Their second study (2018), with participants from the previous study, focused on boredom in the English FL classroom compared to other academic subjects, including the manners in which this emotion tends to appear and how its students deal with it.

Other Polish members of the team Pawlak et al. (2020) started researching boredom in university students majoring in English as well. The researchers investigated if there were differences in levels of boredom between second- and third-year students. This paper presented a review of prior research on boredom in FL learning, as well as the findings of a study that intended to discover variables causing boredom in the FL classroom, including the mediating effects of general boredom proneness and achievement. The results showed two underlying factors of boredom: lack of satisfaction and challenge as the first factor and disengagement, monotony and repetitiveness as the second factor. Pawlak et al. (2020) used the Boredom in Practical English Language Classes Questionnaire (BPELC) developed by Kruk and Zawodniak (2017), the first instrument to measure boredom in FL learning. However, the instrument has been criticized by Li et al. (2020) due to 1) its small sample size making the validation of an instrument harder, 2) the fact that other statistical analyses should have been performed to ensure a solid psychometric basis of the instrument, 3) the sources of the items, and the minimal information available about the process of the generation of the item pool,

4) the different types of boredom that occur in the FL classroom (trait boredom or/and state boredom, classroom boredom and out-of-class boredom), and 5) the fact that the instrument was designed for a fairly particular demographic (English majors in Polish university) without having applied it to non-English majors (p. 5).

Li et al. (2020) conducted an exploratory sequential study with a two-step investigation on FL boredom in university students who were non-English majors and English teachers in China. In the first step, 659 students participated in the open questionnaire describing their experiences of boredom in English class, and they interviewed 22 students and 11 teachers. The results allowed a multidimensional conceptualization of Foreign Language Learning Boredom (FLLB) providing empirical support for educational psychology's control-value theory (p. 11). In study 2, they developed the Foreign Language Learning Boredom Scale (FLLBS). With 808 participants in the pilot, and 2223 in the main study, a 7-factor scale with 32 items was validated through confirmatory and exploratory analysis (pp. 15-19). It is believed that FLLB is an important addition to the blooming field of emotion research in foreign language learning.

Li (2021) researched the origins of boredom inducement through a mixed-methods study examining control-value appraisals of English as a FL in Chinese university students based on control-value theory. With 2002 participants in the quantitative study, Pearson correlation and regression studies supported CVT assumptions by demonstrating that distinct control–value appraisals predicted boredom either singularly or interactively. Qualitative data from 11 students and 11 English

instructors supplemented the quantitative findings by adding further nuances to the relationships between control-value evaluations and boredom. These findings lend support to the CVT and help explain the initiation of boredom in the context of FL learning, suggesting that language classes with minimal anxiety and boredom and more enjoyment are likely to help students overcome challenges in the FL language (p. 331).

Derakhshan et al. (2021) conducted research on boredom in online classes of English language in the Iranian context prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. With 208 English majors from different academic levels, data were collected through a written open-ended questionnaire and a semi-structured interview in this exploratory study. All the data were thematically analyzed by two authors and later audited by an outside researcher for accuracy. However, the areas of disagreement were resolved by discussion and compromise (p. 6). The results showed teacher lectures (monologues), logistical problems, lack of peer participation, and repetitive tasks as the antecedents of boredom. The solutions presented by the students included the use of authentic materials, making the class more alive, using novel teaching strategies and avoiding boring instruction (p. 11). The results on the last research question suggested that boredom usually reaches its pinnacle near the conclusion. This study, however, covered a wide range of academic levels, from undergraduate to PhD students, making it difficult to generalize the results.



### **2.2.3. Enjoyment**

Although the study of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) has increased thanks to the Positive Psychology movement in the last few years (Botes et al., 2021), not many studies have compared the effect of this emotion with its counterpart, boredom, combined with anxiety (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, 2016; MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2016), or even by itself in the field of HL (Prada et al., 2020). The study of FLE was introduced in 2014 by Dewaele and MacIntyre as a complex positive emotion experienced by language learners in foreign language classrooms (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, 2016; MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2016). Foreign language enjoyment, according to Boudreau, MacIntyre, and Dewaele (2018), is a rather stable emotion linked to the ability to face challenges; as such it is distinct from the shallower emotion of pleasure. Many studies on enjoyment and anxiety have shown a weak negative correlation between the two, which means they are basically two distinct emotions operating along separate routes, the trends of which can converge or diverge occasionally (p. 153).

Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) designed a scale to measure foreign language enjoyment (FLE) in the FL language classroom. The scale included 21 items and was supplemented with eight FLCA-related elements derived from Horwitz et al. (1986). With 1746 FL learners from around the globe completing an online questionnaire, the results showing FLE and FLCA having a weak negative correlation were viewed as evidence that these are two distinct emotion dimensions that are not in a seesaw relationship. Male participants showed lower FLE and FLCA levels than female

participants, and more advanced students reported higher FLE and lower levels of FLCA. The qualitative analysis revealed that specific classroom activities were most highlighted as sources of FLE, according to an examination of the themes arising from comments on the most pleasurable episodes in the FL class. Students' FLE was increased by good professors who were well-organized, joyful, optimistic and encouraging, who utilized humor and were respectful of their students. In a subsequent study using the data from the previous study, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2016) used Principal Components Analysis to identify two dimensions of FLE: social FLE and private FLE. The former was linked to the relationship with the instructor and classmates, classroom laughter and shared readings. The latter referred to having fun and pride in achieving difficult tasks.

Dewaele and Alfawzan (2018) investigated the effect of FLE in foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) on performance in two groups of FL secondary students in London. They examined the relationship between emotions and test results of 189 secondary school pupils from Dewaele et al. (2018) and 152 Saudi EFL university students and the link between FLE, FLCA, and their performance. The positive effect of FLE on performance was larger than the negative effect of FLCA for the Saudi participants, according to correlation analyses. The qualitative data gathered from the Saudi participants shed light on the causes of FLCA and FLE, as well as how they influenced individuals' decisions to pursue or discontinue studying the FL.

Dewaele et al. (2018) studied the causes of variation in FLE and FLCA and if they are connected to a variety of learner internal characteristics as well as teacher/classroom-specific variables within a single educational setting. One hundred

and eighty-nine British high school pupils studying German, Spanish or French as a FL took part in the study. Higher levels of FLE were associated with better attitudes regarding the FL, the FL instructor, target language use in class, amount of time speaking the FL, and developmental stage. Higher levels of FLCA were associated with less positive attitudes about the FL and being less advanced, while lower levels of FLCA were linked to higher ratings towards the FL and developmental stage. Positive attitudes about the FL, the instructor, frequent use of the FL by the instructor, greater time spent speaking during class time, being more advanced in the FL, and a higher standing in the group hierarchy were all major predictors of FLE. As a result, FLCA appears to be less tied to instructors and their methods than FLE.

Li et al. (2018), through a mixed-methods exploratory sequential design, used psychometrics to develop and validate a Chinese version of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale, adapted for a Chinese EFL environment. With more than 2000 second-year high school students in Stages 1 and 2, the researchers developed and validated a new 11-item and 3-factor model: FLE-Private, FLE-Teacher, and FLE-Atmosphere (p. 20). The resulting three-factor model depicted high school students in China as enjoying the fun, successes, and fascinating things in their EFL learning, as well as instructors' encouraging and supporting attitudes toward them, pedagogical approaches, and the favorable environment for EFL learning. The examination of qualitative data gathered from 64 participants revealed that, in addition to generic aspects related to the instructor and peers, the individual experience of FLE is impacted

by a wide variety of learner-internal and learner-external factors, as happens anywhere in the world.

A subsequent study by the same authors looked at the association between EFL achievement and emotions in 1307 Chinese EFL students at different levels of achievement (Li et al., 2019) combining principles from Positive Psychology and Complex Dynamic Systems Theory. The statistical analysis found negative correlations between FLE and FLCA in three groups with varying degrees of English achievement. FLE was positively related, while FLCA related negatively to self-reported proficiency at all achievement levels. The main sources of FLE were high social standing, public recognition from the instructor, and good performance on tests, whereas for FLCA they were fear of instructor criticism and weak performance on tests.

Jiang and Dewaele (2019) studied FLE and FLCA in 564 Chinese English FL undergraduate students. In this mix-methods study they explored if these emotions are different in students of EFL outside of China. Although FLE and FLCA levels differed, most of the correlations between both emotions and a variety of learner-internal and teacher-related factors were consistent with the results in previous research. The main difference found was the Chinese students' aversion to the instructor's unpredictable behavior. With similar results to Dewaele and MacIntyre's 2014 study, participants showed higher levels of FLCA, and that (according to the researchers) could be due to the Chinese educational system. The qualitative analysis indicated that FLE was triggered by the instructor; however, FLCA was more likely to be caused by the learners.

The pedagogical implications suggested for the instructors to be supportive and humorous, with the help of interesting classroom activities.

A study on foreign language enjoyment and classroom anxiety in learners of Turkish as a FL in Kazakhstan conducted by Dewaele et al. (2019) found that the mean levels of both were similar to earlier research conducted in various situations and with various target languages. The participants were 592 secondary and undergraduate students of Suleyman Demirel University. Unlike in previous studies, a small positive correlation was found between FLCA and FLE, suggesting that Kazakh learners with greater FLE had somewhat higher FLCA, which might be viewed as a heightened emotional state that is advantageous to learning. However, given the small effect size, the researchers suggested not to over-interpret this result but to interpret it instead as more proof that both dimensions are independent (p. 14). Another unexpected finding revealed that while there was no gender difference in FLE, there was a substantial difference in FLCA, with male participants reporting greater FLCA. Multiple regression analyses indicated that learners' attitudes toward Turkish and teacher-related variables predicted FLE and FLCA more strongly than learner-internal variables, supporting earlier research outside Kazakhstan.

Resnik and Dewaele (2020) conducted the first mixed-methods study that examined FLE and FLCA in the students FL and L1. The participants were 768 L1 German secondary and tertiary students who were studying English as their FL. The statistical analyses showed higher means of enjoyment and anxiety in the FL classes although both emotions were negatively correlated in both courses. According to

participant comments in the qualitative analysis, increasing FLE and FLCA may be related to a more engaging instructional approach in English classrooms than in their L1 classrooms. The authors hypothesized that the FL class would probably be seen as more thrilling and challenging than the L1 class.

Other recent research includes a study of the effect of the teacher on learners' emotions (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020). The participants were 40 secondary school students in London. They were mainly enrolled in FL courses of French, Spanish, and German, although a few participants were enrolled in small numbers in other languages. The participants were all multilinguals. The main goal of the study was to test whether FL learners experience the same foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) in the same language but with two different teachers. Data were collected through an anonymous online questionnaire. A series of paired t-tests were run to analyze the data. The results showed that variation in FLE is strongly related to the teacher, while FLCA is predicted strongly by learner-internal variables. The researchers concluded that the findings have important pedagogical implications, and that to create an optimal emotional environment for classroom enjoyment, teachers have to work hard, although not all of them can accomplish this goal.

Dewaele and Proietti Ergün (2020) examined the implicit assumption that the causes of individual variability in FL extend to all other FLs of that learner. In this study, they investigated whether the values and links were identical between the same learners' classroom emotions, attitudes, and motivation in two distinct FLs, Italian and English,

and if they had a comparable influence on course grades in both languages. Participants were 110 Turkish students in an Italian immersion school in Istanbul, Turkey. A positive relationship was discovered between FL Enjoyment (FLE) and attitudes/motivation in both FLs, but no relationship was discovered between levels of FL Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) and attitudes/motivation in either FL. While the correlations between emotions, attitudes/motivation, and course grades in the two FLs were broadly comparable, it was unclear why the influence of attitudes/motivation on course marks for the weaker FL was considerably stronger, while for the stronger FL, FLCA was also stronger. Differences might be attributed to meso- and macro-level differences between the FLs, as well as the influence of non-observable mediating variables such as teaching style or assessment.

Resnik and Dewaele (2021) studied the impact of COVID-19 in university courses, comparing in-person and emergency remote instruction. Within a European context of 519 participants who studied English as a FL, the researchers analyzed classroom emotions and probable links to learner autonomy and their trait emotional intelligence. The quantitative results showed more enjoyment and more anxiety for in-person classes, with a positive correlation between FLE and FLCA in both contexts. Interestingly, the negative correlation between both emotions observed in the first case disappeared with emergency remote courses. However, the researchers pointed out that the reason for the drop in FLCA could be due to the students not having to use the FL orally as much as in in-person classes and the anonymity and lesser participation in online courses (p. 21). TEA and learner autonomy positively related to FLE and

negatively related to FLCA, meaning that more emotionally intelligent and independent students tend to enjoy the FL class more. The researchers concluded that attending the class in-person weakens all emotions.

### **2.3. Methodology**

The quantitative results obtained in the survey of this study were analyzed through descriptive statistics: one-way ANOVA and Pearson's R to look at possible correlations among the three emotions.

#### **2.3.1. Research questions**

The present study aimed to analyze the relationship among enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom for students of Spanish in heritage language courses and in Spanish as a FL courses. The following research questions were addressed:

**RQ1:** Are there differences between HL learners in heritage language courses and foreign language learners in foreign language courses with respect to enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom?

Sub questions to RQ1:

- **RQ1a:** Are there significant differences between HLLs and FLLs with respect to enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in Spanish as a FL courses?
- **RQ1b:** Are there differences between heritage language learners in HL courses and heritage language learners in FL courses with respect to enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom?

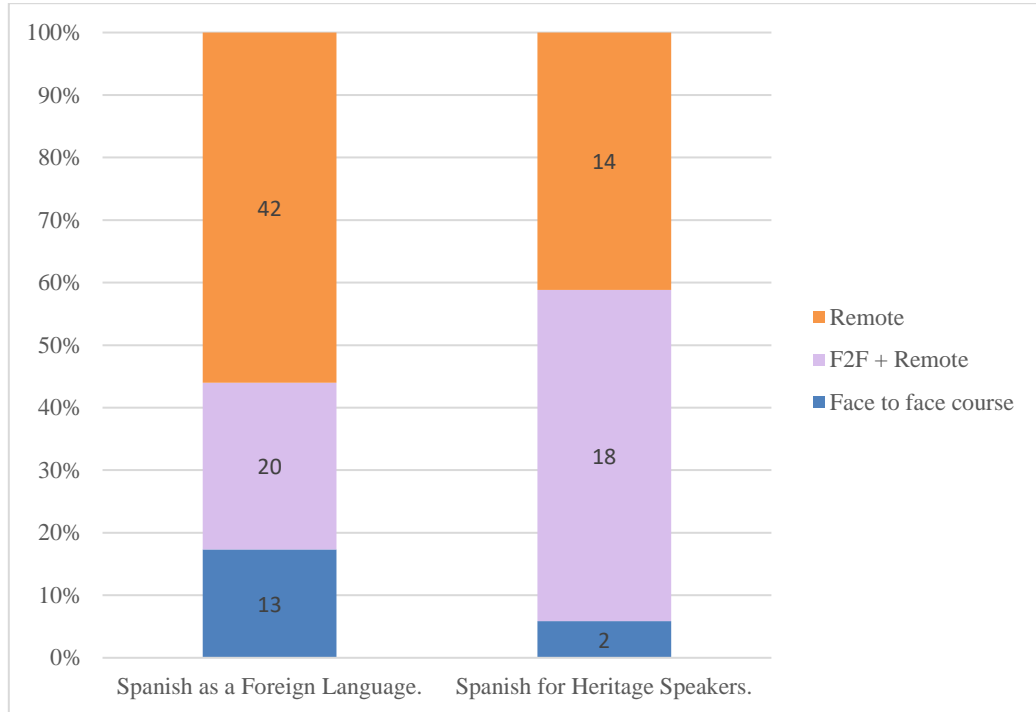


### **2.3.2. Participants and demographics**

The participants for this study were HLLs in a Spanish as a heritage language course, intermediate level ( $n = 34$ ); FLLs in a Spanish as a FL course, intermediate level as well ( $n = 64$ ); and HLLs in an intermediate level Spanish as a FL course ( $n = 11$ ). All the participants belonged to the same university in the Southwest of the United States. The mean of age was 20.9 years old ( $SD = 2.8$ ) with a range of 18-27, with 78 females (71.6%) and 31 males (28.4%). 7 of the students in the heritage courses were born outside the United States (Puerto Rico = 2, Argentina = 2, Colombia = 2, Mexico = 1). Their latest important grade was A ( $n = 95$ ), B ( $n = 12$ ), and C ( $n = 1$ ). Some of the courses were remote synchronous only, some were face to face with a remote option at any time (some students attended remotely via Zoom, some students attended in person, and they were able to switch between the two options daily), and some face to face. Some classes met daily for 1 hour and 35 minutes (Summer semester only), some met two times a week for 1 hour and 15 minutes, and some met 3 times a week for 50 minutes. Out of the 109 participants in the survey, 25 of them agreed to participate in an interview. 6 were FLLs in FLCs, while 19 of them were HLLs in HLCs. None of the HLLs in FLCs participated in the interview.

**Figure 2.1**

*Courses and course delivery*



**2.3.3. Data collection**

Ethics approval was obtained from the researcher’s institution. Data were collected in 3 different semesters: Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021. All the data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. An electronic semi-structured questionnaire with Likert scale items was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data via Google Forms. Some of the questions in this questionnaire have been adapted from: Bilingual Language Profile: An Easy-to-Use Instrument to Assess Bilingualism (Birdsong, D et al., 2012); adaptation of Horwitz et al.’s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014); Tallon’s

adaptation for Spanish as a heritage language (2006) Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale also developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014); and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment [Council of Europe] (2018) for self-proficiency. The questionnaire consisted of four parts: demographics, self-proficiency in Spanish, questions about emotions in the classroom, and open-ended questions. The reliability Cronbach Alpha analyses of the different scales in the survey revealed remarkably high internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha = 0.9301,  $n = 34$ ), indicating that the items in the survey could be used in further analysis. A follow up interview was also conducted. Twenty-five students participated in the interview.

## **2.4. Results**

### **2.4.1. Quantitative Data**

For the analysis of quantitative data, SPSS 28.0 was used to obtain a series of descriptive statistics, variance, and differences to answer the research question and sub questions.

#### **RQ 1**

A one-way ANOVA was performed to examine if there were significant differences between HLLs in heritage courses and FLLs taking Spanish as a FL course by enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom. Examination of the test of homogeneity of variance revealed that the assumption was met ( $p > .05$ ), and thus the ANOVA could be performed. ANOVAs showed that there was a significant difference between HLL/HSC and FLL/FLC for anxiety, enjoyment and boredom. FLL/FLC had higher anxiety ( $M =$

3.33,  $SD = .994$ ) compared to HLL/HSC ( $M = 2.64$ ,  $SD = 1.189$ ). For enjoyment, HLL/HSC had the higher mean ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = .431$ ) compared to FLL/FLC ( $M = 3.52$ ,  $SD = .508$ ). Lastly, HLL/HSC had a higher mean for boredom ( $M = 3.31$ ,  $SD = .680$ ) compared to FLL/FLC ( $M = 2.95$ ,  $SD = .462$ ).

### **RQ 1a.**

A one-way ANOVA was performed to examine if there were significant differences between HLLs in foreign language courses and FLLs taking Spanish as a FL course by enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom. Examination of the test of homogeneity of variance revealed that the assumption was met ( $p > .05$ ). HLL/FLC were found to have a higher level of enjoyment ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = .523$ ) compared to FLL/FLC ( $M = 3.52$ ,  $SD = .508$ ).

For the HLL/HLC group, a Pearson correlation revealed a strong negative correlation between FLE and FLB ( $r = -.732$ ). It thus seems that participants with higher scores on FLE tended to have lower scores on FLB. The Pearson correlation was moderately significant, but it is positive between FLB and FLCA ( $r = .418$ ). The positive correlation indicates that participants with higher scores on FLB tended to have higher scores on FLCA.

As for the FLL/FLC group, a Pearson correlation revealed a strong negative correlation between FLE and FLB ( $r = -.728$ ) It thus seems that participants with higher scores on FLE tended to have lower scores on FLB. The Pearson correlation revealed a significant, negative correlation between FLE and FLCA ( $r = -.536$ ). The negative correlation indicates participants with higher scores on FLE tended to have lower scores

on FLCA. The correlation between FLCA and FLB was a positive correlation ( $r = .569$ ). The positive correlation indicates that participants with higher FLCA scores tended to have higher FLB scores.

### **RQ 1b.**

A one-way ANOVA was performed to examine if there were significant differences between HLLs in heritage language courses and HLLs taking Spanish as a FL course in terms of enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom. Descriptive statistics can be found in Table 5. Examination of the test of homogeneity of variance revealed that the assumption was met ( $p > .05$ ). No significant differences emerged between HLL/HSC and HLL/FLC for anxiety, enjoyment, or boredom.

For the HLL/FLC group, a Pearson correlation revealed a significant negative correlation between FLE and FLB ( $r = -.609$ ). It thus seems that participants with higher scores on FLE tended to have lower scores on FLB.

For all the questions, a Pearson  $r$  Correlation was performed to determine the relationships among FLCA, FLE and FLB for the entire group. Moderate correlations were found between FLCA and FLE ( $r = -.474$ ) and FLB ( $r = .493$ ). In addition, FLB and FLE had a strong negative correlation ( $r = -.749$ ). All these relationships were found to be statistically significant with  $p < .01$ .

## **2.5. Discussion**

The quantitative analysis of the three emotions through the survey produced interesting and surprising results. Starting with anxiety and answering the first research question and sub questions RQ1a and RQ1b about the differences between HLLs and

FLLs with respect to enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in both courses, where the anxiety level was higher than for HLLs in HLCs, a significant negative correlation was found between FLLs' FLE and FLCA, suggesting that SFLs in the USA who experience higher levels of FLE may experience lower levels of FLCA.

However, enjoyment was higher for HLLs in HLCs and FLCs than for FLLs in FLCs. These results unexpectedly reflect the findings of previous research across the world on EFL and FLE/FLCA when it comes to the HLLs group with FLCA/HLCA (e.g., Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018, *Mean* = 2.6; Dewaele et al., 2018, *Mean* = 2.4; Resnik & Dewaele, 2021, *Mean* = 2.53/2.62), considering that affective and linguistic differences between them and FLLs are significant (Potowski, 2016) and the motives for taking the courses differ.

As for the FLLs' mean for FLCA (*Mean* = 3.33), it is not only higher than for HLLs in both courses (HLC *Mean* = 2.64; FLC *Mean* = 3.31), but it is also higher than the means in the previous international studies as well as the ones mentioned in the literature review (e.g., Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Jiang & Dewaele, 2019; Dewaele et al., 2019).

As mentioned, the means for the HL group in HLCs for FLCA/HLCA coincide with previous studies, while the means for HL and FL in FLCs are higher. According to Marcos-Llinás and Juan Garau (2009) in their study about three different levels of Spanish as a FL, the beginner levels show lower levels of FLCA due to the course just being a degree requirement, while the advanced levels experience higher levels of FLCA because they take Spanish as their minor or major. In the case of this study, intermediate

level Spanish at this university falls under the graduation requirement for degrees in liberal arts. Even though it is not supposed to create major anxiety, somewhere in between the beginner and advanced levels, being a more difficult level than the beginner courses may raise the anxiety level due to not understanding well the language at this point (some students are placed in this level after a placement test by the university but years could have passed since the last time they took a course in the target language), or even fear of not being able to graduate if they do not pass these courses. As Dewaele et al. (2019a) had observed with target languages other than English such as Spanish or French, the attitudes toward the FL had a different effect on FLE and FLCA than the attitudes in EFL courses, and these attitudes could be a factor contributing to the high levels of FLCA for this group of students. Also, the larger societal context helps shape attitudes towards the foreign language being taught (Dewaele et al. 2018). In the case of this study taking place in the southern region of the United States, Spanish is not considered a language of prestige (e.g., Sánchez-Muñoz, 2016; Sánchez-Muñoz & Amezcua, 2019), which could potentially compromise enjoyment in the classroom.

As mentioned, enjoyment for HLLs in HLCs is significantly higher than for the other two groups and than in previous studies. HLLs and FLLs in FLCs resemble the results in previous studies, while boredom is also higher for HLLs in HLCs. Pearson correlations for all groups showed a significant negative correlation between FLE and FLB where students with higher FLE scores tend to have lower FLB scores matching the ANOVA results. Not surprisingly, and in accordance with previous studies (e.g., Dewaele et al., 2019), the instructor's way of teaching was one of the main reasons for

all the groups' enjoyment since a well-liked instructor can increase students' excitement in class (Dewaele et al., 2018, p. 16).

When it comes to boredom for FLLs, their level of FLB is the lowest with a mean of 2.95. Pearson's correlation indicated that the higher the enjoyment in the classroom, the less boredom the students will feel. Li (2021) concluded that a reduction in boredom and an increase in enjoyment could improve L2 achievement and better mental health for the students when looking at the theory of positive psychology and the need to reduce the effect of disruption of negative emotions (p. 331).

Anxiety, however, correlates in the quantitative results for HLLs being lower when the other two emotions have higher means, and it is higher in the case of FLLs when the means of the FLE and FLB are lower. The Pearson's correlation confirmed these results, revealing a significant negative correlation for the FLL group, thus indicating that participants with higher scores on FLE tend to have lower scores on FLCA. The Pearson's correlations for the other two groups were also negative.

## **2.6. Limitations**

The present study has limitations, and the results should be taken with caution. Sample size is probably the biggest limitation since the number of participants is low (total of 109, but only 11 of them were HLLs in FLC), thus the causes and relationships in enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom should be interpreted thoughtfully since the sample might not represent the wide variety of SHLLs in the USA and their unique characteristics. The results might not extrapolate to heritage speakers of other languages according to their sociocultural background (e.g., Xiao & Wong, 2014; Xiao-Desai,



2017 and 2019). Replication of the study for other heritage languages and other L2's in the USA and other countries is needed.

Another limitation is the fact that the study only included intermediate level students of Spanish as a FL or as a heritage language. The emotion levels of FLE, FLCA, and FLB of beginners of SFL probably differ from this sample since the participants in this study are not new to the language as seen in the study by Marcos-Llinás and Juan Garau (2009) where the lower-level students had less anxiety than the intermediate and upper-level students. However, for many of the SHL students, this was their first time receiving formal education in their heritage language since they were put in these courses thanks to the university's placement exam. Thus, a longitudinal study to appreciate the change on their emotions in the classroom is needed.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

The current study looked at FLE, FLCA, and FLB of HLLs and FLLs of Spanish in HLCs and FLCs on self-reported findings in the southern region of the United States during the Covid-19 pandemic to analyze how different they are and how they affect each group. The study adopted a quantitative approach with a survey with Likert style questions. Correlation analyses revealed that FLE and FLB were negatively correlated in the three groups, indicating that when there is more enjoyment, students feel less boredom. The group that experienced higher FLCA was the FLLs group, while the group that experienced more enjoyment was the HLLs group. A strong negative correlation was found between FLCA and FLE in all groups. Overall, when students feel more enjoyment, the anxiety and boredom levels go down.

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### 3. ENJOYMENT, ANXIETY, AND BOREDOM IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS

#### 3.1. Introduction

In the last two decades, the study of emotions in the classroom has exploded in the domains of foreign language and heritage language (e.g., Dewaele & Li, 2020; Prado et al., 2020). Positive Psychology is focusing on the impacts of other positive emotions such as enjoyment to explore their effects and link with language learning (McIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p.207). While negative emotions impede progress in learning a foreign language, positive emotions increase learning and performance (Botes et al., 2020). Even though an increase in research has focused on foreign language enjoyment (FLE), foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA), and their relationships, the study of boredom in language classes has been overlooked from the study of emotions until recently (Pawlak et al., 2020). Furthermore, relatively little research has been conducted on HL learning (see, however, Prada et al., 2020).

Despite these gains in research, the current social and economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic all over the world are impacting emotions in the classroom, such as anxiety, enjoyment, and boredom, as a result of the changing conditions (Resnik & Dewaele, 2021). Because of the changing teaching environment, the term emergency remote instruction (ERT) originated (Hodges et al., 2020). However, what was meant to be a temporary arrangement was prolonged across multiple semesters, resulting in a jumble of courses in which students may attend face-to-face, remotely, or both face-to-

face and remotely at the same time, with the flexibility to move from one to the other at any moment, creating a new concept of “hybrid” courses.

This article will focus on the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended questions of the survey and the interviews conducted in this study. The responses will be analyzed and coded through thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006, 2019) to investigate the causes of student boredom, anxiety, and enjoyment in the Spanish classroom. This type of analysis provides in-depth understanding that cannot be obtained through quantitative analysis alone (Creswell & Creswell, 2020). The goal of this study, which was done at a southern institution in the United States, is to improve our understanding of the causes of enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in Spanish language classrooms, both in standard Spanish as a FL courses and Spanish courses oriented to HLLs. We will compare the association of these characteristics between two groups of students (HLLs and FLLs) enrolled in two distinct courses (Spanish for HL speakers and Spanish as a FL).

### **3.2. Literature review**

Because of the fast development and expanding impact of Positive Psychology, interest in the study of emotions in second language acquisition (SLA) has expanded tremendously over the last decade (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Li, 2019). As seen in recent literature, the discipline of heritage language is experiencing the same interest in emotions as the field of SLA. The primary focus in HL has been the study of anxiety in the classroom, albeit this has been primarily connected to sociocultural characteristics such as perceptions and attitudes, motivation, and cultural identity as an emotional

component (e.g., Beaudrie & Ducar, 2005; Qin, 2006; Tallon, 2006, 2009). However, just a few studies in Spanish as an HL have explored the influence of emotions in or outside the classroom, and even fewer studies compare their emotions to conventional FL courses. This research can shed light on the pedagogical development of Spanish courses for heritage HL learners, as well as mixed (heritage and FL) and FL courses in the United States.

### **3.2.1. Anxiety**

Anxiety has been widely investigated in SLA (Dewaele & Li, 2018; Dewaele, Chen, Padilla, & Lake, 2019). Characterized as an emerging, coordinated emotion composed of feelings, arousal, expressive and intentional events (Reeve, 2005), language anxiety is generally accompanied by sentiments of avoidance (MacIntyre and Gregersen, 2012).

With the majority of FLCA research focusing on English as a foreign language (EFL), Marcos Llinás and Juan Garau (2009) undertook a study on the impact of language anxiety on course achievement in three proficiency-level Spanish courses. The participants were 134 students registered in Spanish as a foreign language beginner, intermediate, and advanced courses. The results reflected various FLCA levels, with beginner being the lowest and advanced being the highest.

Tallon (2006) investigated anxiety in Spanish HLLs. The participants included 209 HLLs and 204 non-HLLs from universities in the United States. He especially investigated whether these students had foreign language anxiety, as well as the amounts and types of anxiety. Tallon matched the findings to those of other heritage languages.

Data were gathered using a variety of approaches (quantitative and qualitative). The findings revealed a strong negative correlation between students' self-evaluation of language competency and levels of reported anxiety. A fascinating aspect of his research is the comparison of four different anxiety scales, which resulted in a favorable correlation of measurements, as well as his adaptation of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) for HLLs (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

Moore Torres and Turner conducted a qualitative study on HLLs' perspectives of acquiring and retaining Spanish (2017). Eleven people took part in the study at a public institution in Florida. The study's methodology was based on a series of semi-structured interviews with participants regarding their experiences with language acquisition.

Premised on the notion that university students in the United States, including HLLs, are required to take "FL" courses to meet degree requirements, and that this requirement is becoming a source of anxiety, they discuss how HLLs experience increased anxiety as a result of their low levels of proficiency in the heritage language and how they are expected to know the language based solely on their heritage. Despite the fact that participants' proficiency levels in the HL varied, the interview responses revealed a uniform reaction in criticizing their lack of formal education in Spanish as the primary barrier to attaining superior levels of Spanish language skills.

Tseng (2020) undertook a qualitative case study using a series of interviews of first and second generation HLLs of Spanish in a non-classroom context to illustrate the notion of experiencing worry owing to inadequate competency in the HL. The analysis included 22 individuals and was based on sociolinguistic and discourse analysis. Tseng

investigated the stigmatization and confusion experienced by these generations because of imposed deficit identities based on ideologies of individual agency, proficiency, and language purity, which resulted in language insecurity, avoidance, and erosion of their bilingual competencies despite outwardly positive attitudes toward language maintenance. The data revealed contradictions between the persistence of language purity beliefs and the HLLs' actual bilingualism, highlighting the strength of such identity and language ideologies.

A recent study by Prada, Guerrero-Rodriguez, and Pascual y Cabo (2020) investigated heritage language anxiety (HLA) in two distinct classroom contexts. The 30 individuals were enrolled at a university in the US Southwest in either a Spanish as a FL course or a Spanish for HLLs course. Each participant completed three kinds of data elicitation in a mixed-methods approach and individual semi-structured interviews. The data were gathered at the conclusion of the semester, and a descriptive analysis of quantitative and qualitative data was performed. The results show that the experimental group individuals had considerably lower levels of FLCA than the control group participants. The qualitative data highlighted five themes: 1) the role of the teacher's personality, suggesting teachers may be a factor that triggers anxiety in the classroom; 2) the nature of topics discussed in the materials and discussions, where HL courses include conversations and readings about the US Latinx experience, the community, and political issues as opposed to FL courses; 3) the linguistic policy in the classroom, where a more flexible approach to the students' linguistic repertoires may encourage open conversations; 4) the sense of belonging linguistically and culturally, versus a sense of

standing out among classroom members; 5) monolingual behavior and explicit focus on grammar as a characterization of the FL classroom environment. Moreover, the study's data showed more enjoyment in the HL classroom than in the FL classroom, an area which, according to the researchers, is still fully unexplored in the field.

### **3.2.2. Boredom**

Boredom research has increased in recent years in the field of educational psychology, particularly in terms of defining what boredom is (Goetz & Hall, 2014). Given that boredom is not an archetypal or fundamental emotional experience, defining it and determining if it can be defined as an emotion at all is challenging (p. 311). Academic boredom has been identified as a weary emotion that has a negative impact on students' educational advancement (Daniels et al., 2015; Pekrun et al. 2010). It is most typically observed in academic contexts during learning activities such as doing homework or engaging in classroom-based learning exercises (Goetz & Hall, 2014, p. 312).

Although boredom had received minimal attention in the area of SLA, independent of target language (Li, 2021; Li & Dewaele, 2020; Pawlak et al., 2020), there has been a surge in research on this emotion in the last two years in the FL classroom setting (e.g., Derakhshan et al., 2021; Li, 2021; Li et al., 2021; Nakamura et al., 2021). Studies on classroom boredom have largely been conducted with students of English as a foreign language or English majors from other nations (but see also Chapman's [2013] study on German FLLs). Interestingly, no research on boredom has been published in the field of Spanish HL learning so far.



Chapman's (2013) dissertation was the first research on boredom in the classroom among German FLLs in the United States, followed by the first studies of boredom in the English FL classroom in the Polish educational setting by Kruk (2016) and Kruk and Zawodniak (2017, 2018). The majority of the boredom studies that followed focused on English and German courses as L2 and L3. Chapman's mixed-methods study with 57 German as a Foreign Language students investigated the causes of boredom, students' opinions about the emotion in the FL classroom, and whether boredom was an occurrence particular to German language courses. Chapman determined that the antecedents of boredom were negative feelings toward the instructor, textbook-based activities, a lack of participation from peers, and a sense of being under-challenged, based on quantitative analyses of numerous surveys and qualitative study of student interviews.

Kruk (2016a) investigated boredom in the English FL classroom in a high school setting and its causes using a series of surveys before and after the study, as well as a qualitative analysis of teacher's notes and observations. Boredom was shown to be in a constant state of flux in certain courses while being steady in others. Kruk's (2016b) subsequent study used a questionnaire and session logs to conduct a mixed-methods longitudinal assessment of changes in motivation, boredom, and language anxiety of 16 English philology students studying the language in a virtual world. The results demonstrated a high degree of motivation as well as low levels of worry and boredom.

Kruk and Zawodniak have collaborated on a number of investigations. They performed a mixed-methods study in 174 English major students in their first pioneering

study (2017), exploring boredom susceptibility and boredom in the classroom. The findings of this study revealed a substantial positive correlation between boredom proneness and boredom level in English major students, with boredom intensity rising with time. Their second study (2018), which included participants from the prior study, focused on boredom in the English FL classroom versus other academic disciplines, including how this emotion manifests itself and how students deal with it.

Pawlak et al. (2020) studied boredom in university students majoring in English. The researchers investigated if there were differences in levels of boredom between second- and third-year students. The results showed two underlying factors of boredom: lack of satisfaction and challenge as the first factor, and disengagement, monotony and repetitiveness as the second factor.

Li et al. (2020) undertook an exploratory sequential study with a two-step examination of FL boredom on non-English majors and English teachers at a Chinese institution. In the first stage, 659 students completed an open questionnaire on their experiences with boredom in English class, and 22 students and 11 teachers were interviewed. The findings enabled a multidimensional characterization of Foreign Language Learning Boredom (FLLB), providing empirical support for control-value theory in educational psychology (p. 11). They created the Foreign Language Learning Boredom Scale in Study 2 (FLLBS). A 7-factor scale with 32 items was validated by confirmatory and exploratory analysis with 808 people in the pilot and 2223 participants in the full study (pp. 15-19).

Li (2021) investigated the causes of boredom inducement in Chinese university students using a mixed-methods study that examined control-value evaluations of English as a foreign language in Chinese university students using control-value theory. Pearson correlation and regression experiments with 2002 individuals in the quantitative investigation validated CVT assumptions by revealing that different control–value appraisals predicted boredom either alone or interactively. Qualitative data from 11 students and 11 English teachers supported the quantitative findings by elaborating on the connections between control–value judgments and boredom. These findings offer support to the CVT and help explain the onset of boredom in the context of FL acquisition, implying that language sessions with less anxiety and boredom and more enjoyment are more likely to help students overcome FL language obstacles (p. 331).

Derakhshan et al. (2021) investigated boredom in online English language education in the Iranian setting, which was driven by the COVID-19 epidemic. In this exploratory study, data were obtained from 208 English majors at various academic levels using a written open-ended questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Two writers thematically examined all of the data, which was then reviewed for correctness by an outside researcher. The results showed teacher lectures, lack of peer participation and repetitive tasks as antecedents of boredom. The solutions presented by the students included the use of authentic materials and novel teaching strategies.

### **3.2.3. Enjoyment**

The study of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) has increased in recent years as a result of the Positive Psychology movement (Botes et al., 2021). Nonetheless, it has not

been studied by itself in the field of HL (Prada et al., 2020). Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) proposed the research of FLE as a complicated pleasant emotion experienced by language learners in foreign language schools. Foreign language enjoyment (Boudreau et al., 2018) is a rather stable emotion linked to the ability to face challenges. The majority of research on enjoyment and anxiety has found a weak negative correlation between the two, implying that they are essentially two independent emotions functioning along separate paths, the trends of which can occasionally converge or diverge (p. 153).

Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) developed a scale to measure foreign language enjoyment (FLE) in the FL classroom. The scale consisted of 21 components, with eight FLCA-related factors obtained from Horwitz et al. (1986). With 1746 FL learners from across the world completing an online questionnaire, the results revealing a weak negative correlation between FLE and FLCA were interpreted as evidence that these are two independent emotion dimensions that are not in a seesaw connection. Male participants had lower levels of FLE and FLCA than female participants, while advanced students had greater levels of FLE and lower levels of FLCA. According to an analysis of the themes emerging from comments on the most enjoyable moments in the FL class, the qualitative analysis indicated that certain classroom activities were most highlighted as sources of FLE. Good teachers who were well-organized, cheerful, positive, encouraging, used humor, and were respectful of their students boosted students' FLE. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2016) employed Principal Components Analysis in a second investigation utilizing data from the prior study to discover two aspects of FLE: social FLE and private FLE. The former was associated with the instructor's and classmates'

relationships, classroom laughing, and shared readings, while the latter was associated with having fun and pride in completing challenging tasks.

Dewaele and Alfawzan (2018) studied the effect of FLE on performance in two groups of FL secondary students in London. They investigated the association between emotions and test scores in 189 secondary school students from Dewaele et al. (2018) and 152 Saudi EFL university students, as well as the relationship between FLE, FLCA, and performance. According to correlation analyses, the positive effect of FLE on performance was greater than the negative effect of FLCA for Saudi participants. The qualitative data acquired from the Saudi participants shed light on the reasons for FLCA and FLE, as well as how they affected people's decisions to pursue or cease FL studies.

Dewaele et al. (2018) investigated the sources of variance in FLE and FLCA, as well as whether they are related to a variety of learner internal factors as well as teacher/classroom-specific variables within a single educational context. The study included 189 British high school students learning German, Spanish, or French as a FL. Higher levels of FLE were linked with more positive attitudes about the FL, the FL instructor, target language usage in class, time spent speaking the FL, and developmental stage. Higher levels of FLCA were linked with negative attitudes about the FL and being less advanced, whereas lower levels of FLCA were associated with favorable attitudes toward the FL and being more advanced. Positive attitudes about the FL, the teacher, frequent use of the FL by the teacher, more time spent speaking during class time, being more advanced in the FL, and having a higher status in the group hierarchy were all

significant predictors of FLE. As a result, FLCA appears to be less dependent on teachers and their teaching approaches than FLE.

Li et al. (2018) employed psychometrics to construct and evaluate a Chinese version of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale tailored for a Chinese EFL context using a mixed-methods exploratory sequential design. The researchers created and validated a novel 11-item and three-component model, FLE-Private, FLE-Teacher, and FLE-Atmosphere, using over 2000 second-year high school students in Stages 1 and 2. (p. 20). The resultant three-factor model showed high school students in China as having fun, achieving success, and discovering new things in their EFL learning, as well as instructors' encouraging and supportive attitudes toward them, pedagogical techniques, and a good environment for EFL learning. The analysis of qualitative data collected from 64 participants demonstrated that, in addition to general characteristics relating to the teacher and classmates, the individual experience of FLE is influenced by a wide range of learner-internal and learner-external factors, just as it is elsewhere in the world.

A later study by the same authors examined the relationship between EFL achievement and emotions in 1307 Chinese EFL students at various levels of achievement (Li et al., 2019), using Positive Psychology and Complex Dynamic Systems Theory concepts. In three groups with various levels of English achievement, the statistical analysis discovered negative correlations between FLE and FLCA. FLE was shown to be favorably correlated to self-reported proficiency across all achievement groups, but FLCA was found to be negatively related. The major sources of FLE were high social status, public acknowledgment from the instructor, and good test

performance, whereas the main sources of FLCA were fear of teacher criticism and poor test performance.

Jiang and Dewaele (2019) investigated FLE and FLCA in 564 Chinese English FL undergraduates. In this mixed-methods study, they looked to see if these feelings differed across Chinese and non-Chinese EFL students. Even though FLE and FLCA levels differed, the majority of the relationships between both emotions and a number of learner-internal and teacher-related characteristics were consistent with prior study findings. The biggest difference discovered was the Chinese pupils' dislike of the instructor's unpredictable conduct. Participants in this study had greater levels of FLCA than in Dewaele and MacIntyre's 2014 study, which the researchers believe is attributable to the Chinese school system. The qualitative study revealed that FLE was caused by the instructor, whereas FLCA was more likely to be created by the students.

Dewaele et al. (2019) discovered that the mean levels of both foreign language pleasure and classroom anxiety in learners of Turkish as a FL in Kazakhstan were similar to previous studies performed in diverse circumstances and with various target languages. 592 Suleyman Demirel University secondary and undergraduate students took part. Unlike prior research, a small positive correlation between FLCA and FLE was discovered, implying that Kazakh learners with higher FLE had slightly higher FLCA, which may be interpreted as a heightened emotional state that is beneficial to learning. However, given the small effect size, the researchers cautioned against misinterpreting this and interpret it instead as more proof that both dimensions are independent (p. 14). Another surprising finding was that, while there was no gender

difference in FLE, there was a significant difference in FLCA, with male individuals reporting higher FLCA. Multiple regression analyses revealed that learners' views toward Turkish and teacher-related variables predicted FLE and FLCA more strongly than learner-internal variables, correlating with previous research conducted outside of Kazakhstan.

Resnik and Dewaele (2020) conducted the first mixed-methods study on FLE and FLCA in FL and L1 students. Seven-hundred and sixty-eight L1 German secondary and tertiary students learning English as their FL took part in the study. The statistical studies revealed that the FL classes had higher levels of enjoyment and anxiety, even though these emotions were negatively correlated in both courses. According to qualitative study participant remarks, increased FLE and FLCA may be associated with a more engaging teaching approach in English courses than in their L1 classrooms. The authors hypothesized that the FL class would be seen as more exciting and difficult than the L1 class.

Other recent studies involve the influence of the instructor on the emotions of students (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020). The participants were 40 London secondary school pupils. They were primarily enrolled in FL classes in French, Spanish, and German, with a few people registered in other languages in small numbers. All the participants were multilingual. The study's main purpose was to see if FL learners had the same levels of FLE and FLCA in the same language but with two different teachers. An anonymous online questionnaire was used to collect data. To examine the data, a series of paired t-tests were performed. The findings revealed that variance in FLE is



substantially associated with the instructor, whereas FLCA is strongly predicted by learner-internal variables.

Resnik and Dewaele (2021) investigated the influence of COVID-19 in university courses by comparing in-person instruction to emergency remote instruction. The researchers examined classroom emotions and their linkages to learner autonomy and trait emotional intelligence in a European environment with 519 individuals who studied English as a foreign language. The quantitative findings revealed that in-person classes were more enjoyable and more stressful, with a positive correlation for FLE and FLCA in both contexts. Surprisingly, with emergency remote courses, the unfavorable association between both emotions shown in the first example vanished. However, the researchers pointed out that the decline in FLCA might be due to students not needing to use the FL as much verbally as in in-person classrooms, as well as the anonymity and lower involvement of online courses (p. 21). TEA and learner autonomy are positively related to FLE and negatively related to FLCA, implying that students who are more emotionally intelligent and self-sufficient like the FL class more. According to the researchers, attending the session in person weakens all emotions.

### **3.3. Methodology**

A reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019) was performed on the qualitative data of this study to identify the causes of students' enjoyment, anxiety and boredom in their Spanish courses.

### 3.3.1. Research questions

The present study aimed to analyze the relationship among enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom for students of Spanish in heritage language courses and in Spanish as a FL courses. The following research questions were addressed:

**Research Question 1:** What are the reasons why HLLs feel enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in HLCs?

- **RQ1a:** How is it different for HLLs in FLCs?
- **RQ1b:** How is it different for FLLs in FLCs?

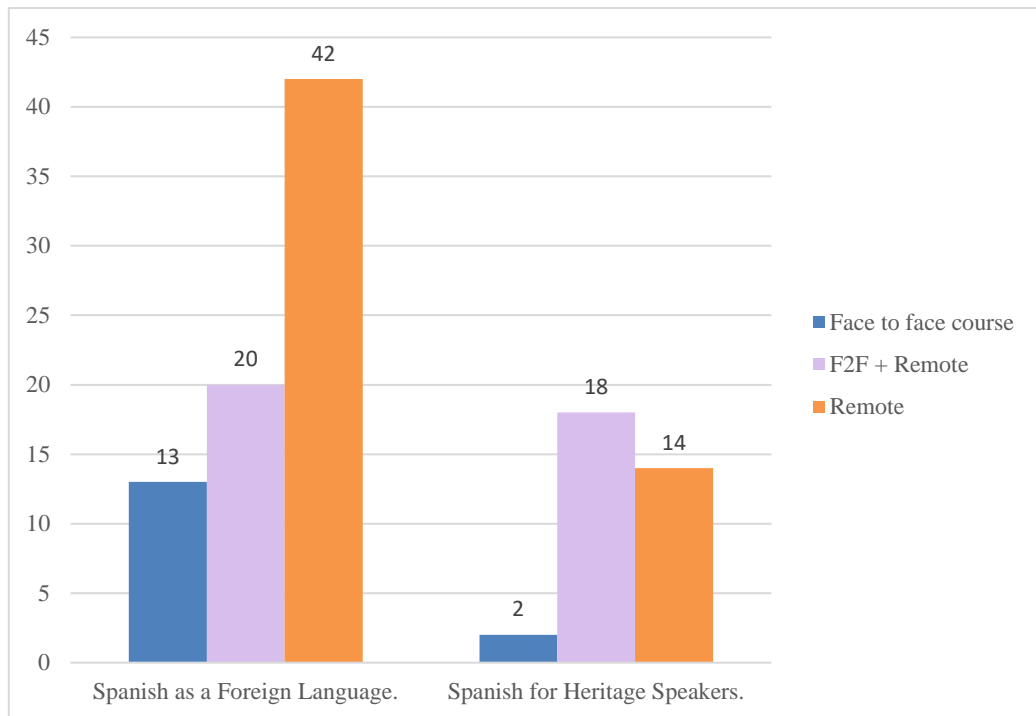
### 3.3.2. Participants and demographics

The participants for this study were HLLs in a Spanish as a heritage language course, intermediate level ( $n = 34$ ); FLLs in a Spanish as a FL course, intermediate level as well ( $n = 64$ ); and HLLs in an intermediate level Spanish as a FL course ( $n = 11$ ). All the participants belonged to the same university in the Southwest of the United States. The mean age was 20.9 years old ( $SD = 2.8$ ) with a range of 18-27, with 78 females (71.6%) and 31 males (28.4%). Seven of the students in the heritage courses were born outside the United States (Puerto Rico = 2, Argentina = 2, Colombia = 2, Mexico = 1). Some of the courses were remote synchronous only, some were face to face with a remote option at any time (some students attended remotely via Zoom, some students attended in person, and they were able to switch between the two options daily), and some face to face. Some classes met daily for 1 hour and 35 minutes (Summer semester only), some met two times a week for 1 hour and 15 minutes, and some met 3 times a week for 50 minutes. Out of the 109 participants in the survey, 25 of them agreed to

participate in an interview. Six of them were FLLs in FLCs, while 19 of them were HLLs in HLCs. None of the HLLs in FLCs participated in the interview.

**Figure 3.1**

*Courses and course delivery*



### 3.3.3. Data collection

Ethics approval was obtained from the researcher's institution. Data were collected in 3 different semesters: Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021. All the data were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic. An electronic semi-structured

survey with Likert scale items and open-ended questions was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data via Google Forms. Some of the questions in this survey have been adapted from: Bilingual Language Profile: An Easy-to-Use Instrument to Assess Bilingualism (Birdsong, D et al., 2012); adaptation of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014); Tallon's adaptation for Spanish as a heritage language (2006) Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale, also developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014); and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment [Council of Europe] (2018) for self-proficiency. The open-ended questions asked students to describe specific instances where the participants felt enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in the classroom. A follow up interview was also conducted. Twenty-five students participated in the interview.

### **3.4. Results**

To analyze the results from the qualitative data to answer RQ1 and its sub questions, the data have been divided by emotion as portrayed in the open-ended questions in the survey and the questions in the interview. MAXQDA 2020 software was used for the thematic analysis. The most representative data extracts from the open-ended questions in the survey were chosen to illustrate the different themes in each emotion. The same criteria were chosen for the interview extracts.

#### **3.4.1. Anxiety**

The thematic analysis of the qualitative data of anxiety in the open-ended questions in the survey showed a wide variety of reasons why students feel this emotion

about their Spanish course (see Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3). The participants were asked to describe an event where they felt anxiety in the classroom. The theme that appeared most frequently was being called on to participate, whether that entailed speaking or reading aloud. Oral exams and oral presentations appeared to be another cause for students to feel anxiety among the groups, as well as lack of preparedness, not knowing how to answer questions, or feeling embarrassed for a variety of reasons. The theme frequency table for FLLs in FLC can be found in Table 3.1:

**Table 3.1**

*Anxiety of FLLs in FLC. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Being called to participate/participation/speaking	28	29
Not knowing how to answer in Spanish	15	15
Answering questions unprepared	12	12
Oral exams/presentations	12	12
Not understanding what's asked/being said	10	10
Too much work/intensive/assignments	6	6
Exams/quizzes	5	5
Virtual environment	3	3
Lack of confidence/shy/feeling embarrassed/judged	3	3
Nothing	2	2
The instructor	2	2

Examples from the survey open-ended answers show with more detail why the participants feel anxious. In the following excerpt, the participant, a FLL in a FLC, shows a feeling of overall anxiety before and throughout each class:

I feel anxious every single day in class starting about half an hour before class time, and I'm usually anxious throughout the entire class time. I'm embarrassed to speak, I stress when there is dead air, I worry over assignments, and I get frustrated when I don't understand what is being said.

Some participants have complained about the online/remote modality of the course as one of the sources for their anxiety along with testing:

When we take the reader quizzes or when we are supposed to be talking in Spanish and I mess up. Also trying to participate in a virtual environment is difficult and not an effective way of learning Spanish in my opinion.

In many cases, the source of their anxiety is linked to being shy and/or fear of public speaking or speaking simultaneously like in the following samples: “Anytime I have to speak, but that’s just me being shy.” “When I went to class in person it was intimidating to answer questions on the first day in front of everyone.” “Whenever I know the answer, but I get shy about presenting it out loud makes me anxious.” “I am not the best at speaking, so I have the most anxiety when I am required to speak spontaneously.” Another source of anxiety is not knowing the materials or how to answer simple questions because of self-doubts and insecurities towards knowing the grammar:

There are some points whenever the professor will ask a question that I do not know the answer to and no one else in the class will answer the question either. He usually asks the question several times until someone answers. This sometimes makes me feel anxious because I wish that someone would just answer the question. If I don't feel confident in an answer, it is difficult for me to give an answer without feeling anxious.

For HLLs in classes of SHL, their number one theme was oral presentations and exams, as observed in Table 3.2. This theme was followed by lack of confidence, feeling shy, or feeling embarrassed or judged.

**Table 3.2***Anxiety of HLLs in HLC. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Oral exams/presentations	13	28
Lack of confidence/shy/feeling embarrassed/judged	9	20
Being called to participate/participation/speaking	6	13
Not knowing how to answer in Spanish	5	11
Nothing	3	7
New unit/material	2	4
First day of class	2	4
Not understanding concepts	2	4
Not understanding what's asked/being said	2	4
Too much work/intensive/assignments	1	2
Instructor	1	2

In the responses it can be observed that the source of anxiety, although similar in some instances, originates in a sentiment of not wanting to feel ridiculed for not knowing how to speak the language as expected by their community's sociocultural standards:

An instance where I have felt anxious in my Spanish class is whenever I am expected to speak or wish to speak. I get a little nervous because I do not want to make mistakes when I speak. Or when I do not know some words, so I speak in



Spanglish. I get anxious because I also do not want to get made fun of for making mistakes or not knowing enough words in Spanish.

In another example on the feeling of embarrassment, the participant emphasized: “I felt anxious before each Spanish class for the first 3 weeks. Every single day before class. This is because I did not want to embarrass myself for saying things incorrectly.”

Other HL participants expressed similar thoughts about societal expectations:

I often feel anxious during class when the professor is waiting for someone to answer a question, but no one is answering because I feel as though I should speak up but I either do not know the answer or do not know how to say it in Spanish. This happens at least once every class because the instructor always wants the class to participate, which is a very good way to keep us engaged, but it makes me anxious when I cannot answer her question. I get nervous that my Spanish is not at the level that it should be or that people will judge my Spanish when I speak in class.

Along the same lines, HLLs also feel embarrassment about their own variety of Spanish for being different than the other students’ varieties:

In the beginning of the semester, I felt anxious to speak because I do have a Puerto Rican accent and I feel shy about it. Also, there is [*sic*] different words that we use that other countries do not use but now I do not get anxious because we [*sic*] all different.

For HLLs in FLC (Table 3.3), the most frequent theme was on par with the most frequent theme for HLLs in HLC:

**Table 3.3**

*Anxiety of HLLs in FLC. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Lack of confidence/shy/feeling embarrassed/judged	5	39
Nothing	4	30
Missing class (coming back)	2	15
Not knowing how to answer in Spanish	1	8
No participation of peers	1	8

Some of the participants mentioned: “Whenever I know the answer, but I get shy about presenting it out loud makes me anxious,” or accepting anxiety is part of learning: “When I’m not sure how to do something and it’s my turn to do a problem in class. It’s uncomfortable but it’s part of the learning process in my opinion.”

The analysis of the answers in the interview showed the themes portrayed in Table 3.4. Ten of the HL interviewees stressed not experiencing anxiety in their course.

**Table 3.4***Anxiety of HLLs in HLCs. Interview questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No anxiety	10	30
Being called to participate/participation/speaking	7	21
Not proficient in Spanish/feeling judged	5	15
Oral presentations	4	12
Anxious person in general	3	9
Afraid of making mistakes	2	6
No peer participation	1	3
Sharing personal information/feeling vulnerable	1	3

The samples in the interviews for HLLs coincide and further explain the samples in the survey. One of the interviewees, when asked about how anxious they were in Spanish class and why, explained how they did not feel anxious in class at all, but they did when surrounded by family and friends:

In class, not at all, I feel like class is my safe space, where I can make mistakes, where I get corrected feedback whether it is from my classmates or my professor, it depends. But in general, I think my highest level of anxiety is when I'm actually communicating with my actual people, you know, my real family and friends. When I make mistakes, I know they are not as likely to give you

feedback. Or if they don't understand they're not asking for clarification and I feel that the stakes are always higher with these people whereas in class, that's the place to make mistakes. So not being anxious in Spanish class at all.

Another participant in the interview expressed why they were not feeling anxious either due to the environment created by the professor or being around similar people:

As a Spanish class I believe that we have created an environment that allows us all to feel comfortable and accepted during our short 50 minutes. We all feel comfortable to voice our opinions, speak freely and ask questions. Our professor also does a good job of allowing us all to speak, creating a very inclusive environment. I have never felt anxious in Spanish class because I know that it is an opening class full of likeminded individuals with very similar life experiences and anecdotes about what it is like to grow up as a Hispanic American individual and be in college too.

The interviews with FLLs (Table 3.5) show speaking in front of others or being shy, along with being afraid of making mistakes, as the themes with the highest frequencies. The rest of the themes had the same frequencies.

**Table 3.5**

*Anxiety of FLLs in FLCs. Interview questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Lack of confidence/shy/feeling embarrassed/judged	2	25
Afraid of making mistakes	2	25
Being called to participate/participation/speaking	1	13
Grammar overwhelming	1	13
Not encouraging and learning environment	1	13
No anxiety	1	13

The results in the interview from FLLs bring to light the fact that other HLLs, but from other HLs, are enrolled in these courses:

Normally I am not anxious in class, however, when it comes to studying the tenses for verbs, I get nervous as there are so many different tenses I am afraid I will never learn them. Most of our class this semester has consisted of online homework or assignments. But I know from in-person classes in the past that speaking in front of people causes me to feel anxious as I'm scared, I'll mess up or accidentally transition into Urdu, a language I grew up speaking.

Just as shown in the survey, anxiety due to having a shy personality was also mentioned:

I am not very anxious in Spanish class except when we have to read an excerpt from a text or present something. However, that is the only time I feel this way because I am very introverted and do not like to speak in front of many people.

### 3.4.2. Enjoyment

Participants were asked to describe an instance where they felt enjoyment in the classroom. The qualitative analysis of the survey showed a high frequency in the themes pertaining to interesting and engaging material, the instructor’s way of teaching as well as the passion shown by the teacher, and peer collaboration. The themes that originated from the FLLs in FLC can be observed in Table 3.6:

**Table 3.6**

*Enjoyment of FLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Instructor's way of teaching and personality	34	31
Peer collaboration/encouragement	26	23
Interesting/engaging material	22	20
Interactive environment	10	9
Amount of homework and assignments	7	6
Love for languages/getting better at Spanish	6	5
Everything	2	2
Learning Spanish online	2	2
Relaxed environment	2	2

The theme related to engaging and interesting material, along with the instructor's way of teaching, stood out in both courses as important elements in the enjoyment of their respective course. The students in the FLCs said:

I really like that the prof [*sic*] is chill, so it feels less pressure. If we speak up in class it's not because we feel like we have to get participation points or whatever, it's because we're actually following the lesson and wanting to participate/answer his questions. We join breakout rooms at least twice, and during one of the groups, we do an assignment all together that we turn in for attendance. It's also relatively low pressure and the topics are usually interesting enough.

Other participants related the importance of the material to their professional future using the language and why they enjoy it:

I enjoy my Spanish class because the whole class is engaged with every topic and their different opinions that I like to hear. Also, the topics that we learn are very interesting that I think no other class would touch on this. The activities we do are very useful for our future such as making conversations formal and informal. These activities will help me for my future since I really want to use my Spanish in my career.

Some students linked their enjoyment to the interactivity of their course when compared to other courses they are taking at the university:

The class is much more interactive than my other STEM courses and it is the only time I am able to be creative. I also think it is a lifelong skill that I have already been able to use to connect with other people. It is one of my most

valuable classes in regard to long term. I like the compositions and group projects because it is easy to stay involved and allows me to learn more.

On the other hand, some students connected the content of the subject to worthwhile learning:

I enjoy learning about historical contexts and cultural discourse in addition to normal language lessons. I love learning about every aspect of a culture, and Hispanic culture has always been interesting to me. The class often includes lectures revolving around culture and history, which makes me feel like I am learning something worthwhile.

The results from the survey for the HLLs in the FLCs group for enjoyment can be observed in Table 3.7:

**Table 3.7**

*Enjoyment of HLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Interesting/engaging material	7	29
Instructor's way of teaching and personality	7	29
Interactive environment	6	25
Peer collaboration	3	13
Love for languages/getting better at Spanish	1	4



The theme that had a higher frequency for HLLs in FLC was also engaging and interesting materials: “Really just the material teaches me interesting things about other Hispanic countries.”

HLLs in FLCs expressed the feeling of freedom for being able to use their L1 when compared to previous experiences in their educational career:

Since a very young age I have been speaking Spanish, but I have always been in American schools that have not let me speak or express myself in Spanish as much as I would like to. So having this class helps me improve my Spanish in a more professional way.

Regarding the instructor and their way of teaching, HL students in the FLCs highlighted the following:

I enjoy this class so much because my professor is so great. He is the best Spanish teacher I have ever had throughout my whole educational career. It is not too easy to where I do not learn anything, but it is not too hard where I can't understand. He always speaks in Spanish and always makes sure we understand what he is talking about. He does not make his students feel bad for making mistakes but will happily correct them if they say something wrong.

Instructor’s way of teaching, along with relatable or relevant materials and peer collaboration had a high frequency as well in the FLCs. The themes that had more frequency can be seen in Table 3.8:

**Table 3.8***Enjoyment of HLLs in HLCs. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Interesting/engaging material	18	19
Instructor's way of teaching/passionate	17	18
Relatable/relevant materials	15	16
Peer collaboration/interaction	15	16
Interactive environment	12	13
Spanish speaking environment	8	9
Love for languages/getting better at Spanish	4	4
Learning Spanish online	3	3
Relaxed and safe environment	2	2

HLLs in the HLCs commented about the importance of the instructor's attitude and enthusiasm that could be reflected as well in the students:

I enjoy this class due to the assignments assigned by our professor and the attitude that she takes when teaching this class. Our prof [*sic*] is not only eager to start the class but maintains this eagerness during the entire class. This enthusiasm as students makes us want to participate more and more in class and makes it so easy to retain the information and continue to want to learn more.

When it comes to the second highest frequency theme, peer collaboration played a role in the participants' answers for enjoyment. HLLs linked peer collaboration and peer interaction to identity and cultural shock within the university:

We are also given lots of opportunities to interact with our fellow classmates and it is truly nice to talk to someone who understands exactly how you are feeling. Coming to A&M has been hard because I went to a high school that was predominately Hispanic and to then come to a mostly white school was truly a culture shock.

HLLs also reflected on the importance of peer collaboration when it comes to class participation:

I have greatly enjoyed the integration of daily group projects. while initially i [sic] didn't enjoy this forced participation, it has allowed me to get to know my classmates better and grow as a Spanish speaker.

In the interview analysis, the most prevalent theme aligns with the one in the open-ended questions of the survey for HLLs and for FLLs shown in Tables 3.9 and 3.10: interesting/engaging materials.

**Table 3.9***Enjoyment of HLLs in HLCs. Interview questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Interesting/engaging material	10	24
Love for the language	7	17
Personal interest in learning the language	7	17
Identify with the language	5	12
It is fun	4	10
Comfortable with professor and peers	4	10
Being able to practice the language	2	5
Encouragement from professor	1	2
Nothing	1	2
Challenging	1	2

**Table 3.10**

*Enjoyment of FLLs in FLCs. Interview questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Interesting/engaging material	4	33
Love for the language	3	25
Personal interest in learning the language	2	17
Being able to practice	1	8
It is fun	1	8
Challenging	1	8

Some of the FLLs interviewed mentioned the importance of cultural content beyond grammar teaching:

I really enjoy studying Spanish because I have a personal interest in learning about world cultures and languages. I think Spanish classes that aren't solely focused on learning the language and incorporate history lessons or real-life application allow me to have a better handle on concepts. It isn't pure memorization like a lot of classes and pushes students to rely on their intuition as the courses increase in difficulty.

HLLs, on the other hand, remarked on the importance for them of learning the grammar and how to write the language without spelling mistakes:

I love it! I studied French for a year, and I was struggling but I had my Spanish help me along the way since they both come from Latin. Towards the end of that year, I gave up and decided to officially take a course of my mother's tongue. I enjoyed it so much and got comfortable with the professor and my peers.

Learning about the origins of each word or why there's an H in the alphabet even though it makes no sound. We covered everything I wanted to enhance, from the accents to even imperfect and preterit, which I learned and was confused, but not anymore.

### **3.4.3. Boredom**

The qualitative analysis of boredom in the open response question in the survey showed different themes of why students get bored in class depending on the type of student and the class they were enrolled in. The participants were asked to describe an instance where they felt bored. Starting with HLLs in HLCs, and despite being a survey that tries to discover what makes students get bored in the classroom, the theme with the highest frequency for them was “nothing is boring” as seen in Table 3.11.

**Table 3.11***Boredom of HLLs in HLCs. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Nothing is boring	12	32
Lack of peer participation	7	18
Getting overwhelmed trying to comprehend/insecure/anxiety	4	11
Dislike of class materials (topic, content, grammar)	4	11
Online course	3	8
Lecture heavy/no interaction or participation	3	8
Materials already known/easy/distraction	2	5
Homework	2	5
Lost/not understanding concepts	1	3

Some of the participants stressed that: “I am usually always participating in class therefore it is never boring, it is always exciting”, or “Nothing is boring in the class! Class is very fun and exciting to learn new Spanish things.” Participants also mentioned their dislike of the remote course format: “The only thing I didn't like was that it was all online, however that is due to COVID” or “Being online makes this class really boring. Also, the fact that the class is at 8 AM is hard”, “I think it's just the online format (because of COVID) that makes it easier for me to get bored and distracted with other things sometimes.”

The results for the foreign language class for HLLs in Table 3.12 present the theme lecture heavy/no interaction or participation as the one with the highest frequency:

**Table 3.12**

*Boredom of HLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Lecture heavy/no interaction or participation	6	27
Dislike of class materials (topic, content, grammar)	5	23
Nothing is boring	4	18
Materials already known/easy/distraction	2	9
Lack of peer participation	1	5
Lost/no understanding concepts	1	5
Too many assignments/too much class work	1	5
Anxiety	1	5
Instructor getting off subject	1	5

One of the HL participants in the FLC emphasized about becoming bored that: "I have trouble learning lessons and become bored when instructors tend to be more lecture heavy instead of a focus on interaction and participation."



**Table 3.13***Boredom of FLLs in FLCs. Survey open-ended questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Dislike of class materials (topic, content, grammar)	21	22
Lecture heavy/no interaction or participation	15	16
Online course	14	15
Instructor's way of teaching and motivation	14	15
Materials already known/easy/distraction	7	7
Lack of peer participation	7	7
Getting overwhelmed trying to comprehend/insecure/anxiety	6	6
Nothing is boring	5	5
Lost/not understanding concepts	5	5

The themes for FLLs can be seen in Table 3.13. A FL participant talked about the trouble of staying on task: “I have a hard time paying attention in general to the lectures as I barely know any Spanish at all so zoning out is pretty easy.” Another FLL shared about their feelings of dislike of content centered on grammar and the role of the instructor:

The things that make me most bored in this class more has to do with the content rather than how the professor presents it. I find the grammar parts of Spanish a

lot more difficult to pay attention to and engage in than the sections on vocabulary or culture. This content is especially boring though whenever the lesson is just a lecture and then filling in the blanks on sentences for the correct verb conjugation. I also find it boring whenever the instructor is reading through a long passage without much interaction with the students.

Materials being already known, easy, or a distraction, followed by lecture heavy format without interaction or participation, were the themes with the highest frequency: “What makes me get bored is simple stuff that I already know in Spanish like how to write and how to pronounce certain words” or “The same thing over and over again. The need for constant participation. I want to learn things not just talk.” In some respects, this theme overlapped with the repetition of material over time theme: “The material and activities used are always the same and often cause either stress to do them and then boredom after because the class is completely routined and expected.”

Two more themes with a high frequency were the instructor’s way of teaching and the dislike of the class materials. Some of the participants have also linked their opinion about the class, instructor, and the materials to the repetition of the class format:

The class that I'm currently in has a very repetitive structure, so while I have always held a passion for language courses, it has felt very stagnant this semester. Group work is incredibly frustrating because a large majority of the students only want to pass the class to fulfill their language credit. The instructor himself is okay but does not seem to be very passionate about the material. It's hard to stay engaged when you don't feel motivated by the professor or your

peers, and I have had to remind myself frequently of my own motivations and reasons.

For many of them, the course format (remote) was linked to the lack of peer interaction and participation, tied to the instructor’s way of teaching:

The fact that it is in the morning, because everything is online because of covid, I join class in bed sometimes, which makes it difficult to focus. it would have helped more I think if the professor's camera was on. Since his camera (and everyone else camera) is off, there is less encouragement to stay on task.

The qualitative analysis of boredom in the interview showed interesting results (see Table 3.14). The themes for HLLs aligned with the themes in the survey.

**Table 3. 14**

*Boredom of HLLs in HLCs. Interview questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Nothing is boring	12	50
Dislike of class materials (topic, content, grammar)	5	21
Not knowing the answer/not understanding	3	13
Lack of peer participation	1	4
Homework	1	4
Person is easily distracted	1	4
Online course	1	4

Twelve of the students interviewed not only stressed they do not get bored, as happened with the open-ended questions, but also gave answers as to why they do not get bored in their Spanish course: “0 because it’s fun,” “Not at all (because it’s mainly speaking),” “Not really bored because the topics and the material are so interesting” or:

I am not bored in my Spanish class I really enjoy learning and being able to learn more in Spanish. It makes me feel already more confident in my Spanish. My class is engaging and is always different, either watching videos are doing activities I really enjoy it.

The second theme with the highest frequency was the dislike of class materials, specifically grammar for many of them. All the themes belonging to HLLs in the HLCs coincide with the quantitative results of this group in article 1, having more boredom in class than FLLs. The participants highlighted that:

The only time that I get bored is while we are learning grammar, but even then, I try to answer questions to the best of my ability, so I do not start to think about other things besides Spanish class.

Another participant pointed out that “I get bored sometimes when the activity is grammar or reading just because I don't like grammar or reading. Although sometimes the text is interesting”.

For FLLs in FLCs (see Table 3.15), the theme with the highest frequency was also “nothing is boring”. However, none of the 6 participants mentioned grammar as a theme, unlike the other group.

**Table 3.15***Boredom of FLLs in FLCs. Interview questions*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Nothing is boring	4	36.5
Repetition of courses' structure	2	18.5
Constant cycle of exams quizzes, no time to apply skills	1	9
Early in the morning	1	9
Online course	1	9
Lectures	1	9
Listening to others	1	9

### **3.5. Discussion**

The qualitative results on FLLs, both in the survey and in the interview, match and better explain the descriptive statistic results in article 1 of this dissertation. As shown in the qualitative samples of both, survey and interview, HLLs and FLLs experience anxiety in class when it is time to answer questions out loud, but the reasons appear to be different. In the case of FLLs and as seen in the thematic analysis, the insecurities of the students due to not knowing the language well play a big role. In the case of HLLs, although it is in the same instance a feeling of insecurity, this emotion is triggered due to societal expectations along with the feeling of embarrassment about not

knowing the language according to those standards of language purity. These results match Tseng's (2020) results in her study on heritage language insecurity related to monolingual norms. As observed in the interview samples, these findings are consistent with those reported by Prada et al. (2020), where HLLs experienced less anxiety than the control group. Looking at the results of the thematic analysis of responses for HLLs in the FLCs, the source of their anxiety is not wanting to speak in class for fear of being judged because of their self-perceived proficiency or lack thereof, aligning one more time with the results of Prada et al. (2020). These answers shed light on the possibility that these insecurities could be the reason why regardless of the existence of courses in Spanish for heritage speakers, they keep enrolling in courses of Spanish as a FL (Potowski, 2016). An example of this phenomenon can be seen in this reply to the open-ended question in the survey by HL participants: "I like learning new concepts in Spanish and being able to practice with people that are at a similar skill level." Or "He does not make his students feel bad for making mistakes but will happily correct them if they say something wrong."

On the other hand, the anxiety showed in both groups due to being called on in class or oral presentations, supports the findings of Gregersen, MacIntyre, and Meza's (2014) experiment in which six pre-service teachers wore a heart rate monitor throughout individual presentations given in Spanish by L1 English speakers, and then performed follow-up interviews on their performance. Their findings revealed that anxiety was not uniform across all six individuals, and that it rose when people fumbled for words, or the flow of their presentations broke down, bringing to light that emotional,

cognitive, bodily, and behavioral levels interact during anxiety arousal episodes. The results in the present study suggest that feeling anxiety when doing an oral presentation or being called on in class is not unique to HLLs or FLLs of any language, but it is more a personal trait that will differ from individual to individual.

When it comes to the analysis of enjoyment and in accordance with previous studies (e.g., Dewaele et al., 2019), the instructor's way of teaching was one of the main reasons for all the groups' enjoyment since a well-liked instructor can increase students' excitement in class (Dewaele et al., 2018, p. 16). Notwithstanding, the role of the instructor is of uttermost importance since enjoyment in the SHLC and the SFLC is dependent on them, as seen in the analysis of the qualitative data and in previous studies (e.g., Dewaele et al., 2018; Dewaele et al., 2019; Jiang & Dewaele, 2019), where enthusiasm, passion, and an engaging way of teaching are the characteristics praised by the students of all groups. In agreement with Dewaele and Dewaele (2020), instructors need to work hard to create an environment where enjoyment reigns.

For the causes observed in boredom, several studies (e.g., Li, 2021; Li et al., 2021) have shown that both very high and low control were predictors of boredom, meaning that boredom arises when the students feel over-challenged or under-challenged. Nevertheless, the qualitative analysis for HLLs in HLCs has exhibited that either they are not bored at all, or that the reason for their boredom is the materials used, and to be precise, grammar activities. It is possible that these grammar activities present a big challenge for HLLs since many of them have not received formal education in Spanish (e.g., Moore Torres & Turner, 2017; Potowski, 2016; Rothman et al., 2016), but

also it could be that they find the topic boring when compared to other more engaging activities, thereby tuning out of the lesson. The format of the course being online for some of them (because of the pandemic) brought boredom as well due to the lack of peer interaction:

What makes me bored in the course is the online learning, I wish I was in class in person to talk to my classmates but due to corona I know it can be difficult.

Honestly I think if I were in class in person I would retain more information than I do online.

When it comes to boredom for FLLs, the themes that emerged in the open-ended questions and in the interview of students' opinions on disliking the materials, lack of peer participation and connection to the instructor and their way of teaching the subject, align with Chapman's (2013) results, whose participants perceived boredom as an unavoidable learning experience. Not surprisingly, it can be observed that the instructor's way of teaching affects both enjoyment and boredom, coinciding once more with the results in Jiang and Dewaele (2019), Dewaele et al. (2019) and Li et al. (2020), where the consensus was that the instructor's personality and passion for teaching greatly influences enjoyment levels. For enjoyment to happen, instructors also need to use engaging and challenging activities (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014).

The online environment, on the other hand, has been mentioned by all groups as something negative, keeping students disengaged, missing the teacher and peer interaction of the face-to-face courses, bringing distraction, under stimulation, and hence, boredom, as observed by Yazdanmehr et al.'s (2021) study about teaching



German online. Some participants emphasized liking the online format, as in the results in Resnik & Dewaele (2021) where some of them appreciated the course being remote but agreeing on the dislike of remote classroom dynamic. Participants in the present study have observed and complained about participation challenges in an online environment: “Also trying to participate in a virtual environment is difficult and not an effective way of learning Spanish in my opinion.”

Finally, as suggested in Yazdanmehr et al.’s (2021) study, the instructor should be knowledgeable about the use of technology and help students with issues that may arise with online teaching to avoid boredom. Nevertheless, participation without a technology savvy instructor has its repercussions in the classroom environment, as one FLL commented in the survey:

The fact that it is in the morning. Because everything is online bc [*sic*] of covid, i [*sic*] join class in bed sometimes, which makes it difficult to focus. It would have helped more i [*sic*] think if the professor's camera was on. Since his camera (and everyone else [*sic*] camera) is off, there is less encouragement to stay on task.

### **3.6. Limitations and pedagogical implications for future research**

The current study contains limitations, and the findings should be interpreted with care. The sample size is probably the most significant limitation because the number of participants is small (total of 109, but only 11 of them were HLLs in FLC), so the causes and relationships among enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom should be interpreted carefully because the sample may not represent the wide variety of SHLLs in the United States and their unique characteristics. According to their sociocultural

background, the results may not generalize to heritage speakers of other languages (e.g., Xiao & Wong, 2014; Xiao-Desai, 2017 and 2019). The study must be replicated for additional heritage languages and for Spanish as an L2 in the United States and other countries.

### **3.7. Conclusion**

The present study has examined the causes of FLE, FLCA, and FLB of HLLs and FLLs of Spanish in HLCs and FLCs on self-reported results in the southern region of the USA during the Covid-19 pandemic with the aim of establishing how different they are among them. Qualitative material collected in the open-ended questions in the survey and the interview showed that being called on to participate was the major reason for having anxiety for FLLs, while oral presentations and exams were for HLLs in HLCs, although feeling judged was the reason for HLLs in FLCs. As for boredom, “nothing is boring,” along with lack of peer participation were the main reasons for HLLs being bored (or not). Lecture heavy with no interaction and dislike of class materials were both the top reasons for boredom for HLLs and FLLs in FLCs, a fact that appears to be related to the heavy use of textbooks and lack of challenging activities and materials. Instructor’s way of teaching as well as interesting, relatable, and engaging material were the main themes that produced enjoyment among the three groups.

To conclude, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have not only affected course delivery format but have altered classroom dynamics and classroom interactions between instructors and peers. While some underlying issues like language purity and feeling judged by the instructor or classmates remain constant for HLLs, instructors’

passion and teaching techniques along with engaging materials seem to be, perhaps, more necessary for students to enjoy their language class. Further longitudinal research on HLLs could explore these emotions and compare them with HLLs of other languages, and more research in emotions is needed for other regions in the world studying Spanish as a foreign language.

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#### 4. A MIXED-METHODS APPROACH ON THE EFFECTS OF SOCIOBIOGRAPHICAL FACTORS ON ENJOYMENT, ANXIETY, AND BOREDOM IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

##### **4.1. Introduction**

Second language acquisition (SLA) is concerned with the acquisition of any "extra language, including second, foreign, indigenous, minority, or heritage languages" (Douglas Fir Group, 2016, p. 19). However, the study of languages other than English (LOTEs) has been eclipsed by global English's unchallenged predominance, raising concerns about their applicability to other languages (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). In the United States, these consequences can be observed in the disciplines of SLA and HL when it comes to the study of emotions in the classroom despite its growing interest and research over the world thanks to the blossoming of Positive Psychology (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Li, 2019). Even though Spanish is the most studied FL in the country at all levels of education (Potowski, 2016), there are few studies on Spanish as a FL or HL in this context in contrast with studies on English as a FL (see Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Ushioda, 2017).

Nevertheless, research on emotion is characterized by arguments over the extent of which emotion is influenced by culture, language, or both (Zhou et al., 2021), while acculturation is defined as an interaction between people or groups from different cultural origins, including the adaptation (or lack thereof) that occurs because of such interaction (Berry, 2003). Because earlier research on bilinguals and biculturals has

offered the most persuasive evidence for the roles of language and culture in emotional experience, current research in psychology focuses on bilinguals with varied degrees of cultural exposure. Mirroring this type of research, studies in applied linguistics have shown how changes in people's language knowledge and use influence their emotional lives (Zhou et al., 2021). However, few studies have incorporated the study of sociobiographical factors and how they could influence people's emotional patterns in the majority population (FLLs) and the minoritized population (HLLs).

A convergent mixed methods study will be used to compare, contrast, and discuss the differences of quantitative and qualitative data between HLLs and FLLs in the language classroom. Survey data will be used to analyze and measure the relationship between sociobiographical factors (self-perceived proficiency, gender, socialization with Latinx/Hispanic, socialization with non-Latinx/non-Hispanic, and/or society's expectations about language learning) and the emotions of anxiety, boredom, and enjoyment in each group through multiple regression analyses.

#### **4.2. Literature review**

Global English's unchallenged predominance has eclipsed the study of languages other than English in (LOTEs) in the field of SLA (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). As mentioned above, those repercussions can be observed in the fields of SLA and HL in the USA regardless of Spanish being the most studied language and therefore, the easiest to study (Qin, 2006), or the rising interest in emotions thanks to the influence of Positive Psychology research in the classroom. In the case of SFL, a plethora of studies have investigated various aspects of language acquisition in the classroom, ranging from the

use of various pedagogy approaches and methods, grammar and vocabulary teaching, and students' attitudes toward the language (see Lacorte & Reyes-Torres, 2021; Lantolf & Phoener, 2007; Montrul, 2011; Muñoz-Basols et al., 2018). Yet, very few studies exist on Spanish as a FL or as a HL in the emotional context.

The studies on SHL are similar to the ones in SFL, where most of the research has focused on several grammatical aspects like heritage language morphosyntax, proficiency, literacy, writing, pedagogy, US Spanish varieties, or societal perceptions and attitudes toward the heritage language (see Beaudry, Ducar, & Potowski, 2014; Carreira & Kagan, 2018; Fairclough & Beaudrie, 2016; Montrul, 2012; Rothman & Pascual y Cabo, 2012; Valdés, 2001). When it comes to the study of HLLs, the role of learner attitudes and the connections between Hispanic/Latinx identity and the Spanish language are of utter importance (Potowski, 2016). Most HLLs acknowledge their heritage language as an integral part of their ethnic and cultural identity; however, when they arrive to the classroom, some of them may show low linguistic self-esteem, exhibiting internalized deficit discourses in Spanish, English, or both (Sánchez-Muñoz, 2016). Moore Torres and Turner (2017) proposed that ethnic background is a crucial component in self-construction of identity, based on similarities to the person's social, historical, and cultural background. The person's commitment to an ethnic group has an impact on their ethnic identity as well. This sense of belonging has an influence on how a person acts and behaves in social circumstances, such as conversing with family members, food choice, or speaking a certain language to persons of a similar background. The language that a person uses or considers important constitutes an

essential factor of ethnic identity (p. 840). Ethnic identity is associated with an improvement in psychological well-being and is also recognized to be a protective factor against familial distress and prejudice (Zaretsky & Clark, 2019).

According to research, minoritized students who keep their language and culture are proud of their heritage and ethnic background (e.g., Gonzalez 2010, 2013; Kondo-Brown, 2003). Gonzalez (2010) suggested that culture and family influences might affect how an HLL identifies ethnically. He noticed that individuals who lived in large Hispanic communities and had families who produced a significant effect on their identity formation were able to preserve their heritage identities more easily than those who lived in predominantly Caucasian communities. Individuals may also be more inclined to keep their HL if they recognize it as a significant part of their ethnic identity (Kang & Kim, 2012).

The usage and preservation of the Spanish language is one cultural component that many SHL families in the United States have attempted to maintain (e.g., Moore Torres & Turner, 2017). However, HLLs may find themselves assimilating into the majority society and losing touch with their heritage background (Kondo-Brown, 2001). Even more, the HLL can also experience marginalization by the majority society and even from their own heritage community, making them feel restrained from using their heritage language in public (Moore Torres & Turner, 2017; Sánchez-Muñoz & Amezcua, 2019; Sevinç & Dewaele, 2018).

## **Emotional acculturation**

Cultural and emotional research have progressed beyond the dichotomous issue of whether emotions are nature or nurture and have begun to address more complex and comprehensive questions (Mesquita, Vissers, & De Leersnyder, 2015). The theory of constructed emotion (Barret, 2006, 2017) proposes that emotion is socially constructed. In socio-cultural constructionist theories (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012; Mesquita et al. 2015) culture is supposed to offer access to specific modes of meaning-making that are required to transform changes in the environment into occurrences that drive a person to take a particular position and produce an emotion. Studies on emotional interface and multilingualism provide new insights into the relationship between languages, culture and identity. Considering the relevance of emotions in daily life, the most important challenge to FL learners is possibly transmitting emotions in an FL (Panicacci, 2019). Emotional acculturation finds its bases in Schumann's Acculturation Model (1978a, 1978b). The central principle is that second language acquisition, the FL, is a process of acculturation, and second language acquisition is determined by the degree of learner acculturation to the target language community. In effect, acculturation is influenced by the degree of social and psychological distance between the learner and the language culture that is the target. Variables affecting distance include whether the FL and the L1 groups perceive each other as socially equal; whether the FL culture and L1 culture agree with each other; whether both cultures have good attitudes towards each other; learner motivation; and ego boundaries (Schumann 1978b). This model considers social and psychological distance as important but static and constant and does not recognize

the role of the language learner's relationship with the language speaker (He, 2006, p. 12).

Studies in applied linguistics have revealed how changes in people's language knowledge and use influence their emotional lives (Zhou et al., 2021). Along the lines of the effects that social factors have in shaping personality and creating emotions, Pavlenko (2002) conducted a study on Russian-English bilinguals who learned English post puberty. She examined the way they negotiated differences in narratives in both languages to investigate discursive construction of emotions in narratives. The study included 31 adult participants. The method she used to elicit emotion was the showing of two 3-minute-long films with a soundtrack but without dialogue, followed by an audio recording from the participants speaking about how they felt after watching them. Analyzing the results, she concluded that when migrants change speech communities, they also change interpretive communities, having to adjust to their semiotic environment and thereby transforming their emotional discourses (p. 72). She suggests that this process of second language socialization can result in a conceptual restructuring of the emotional categories of adult language learners, as is evident in FL influence on L1 performance in this study.

As part of the research between SLA and emotional acculturation, in 2005 Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven conducted a study in London on the effect of multilingualism/multiculturalism on personality. The participants were 79 adolescents, half of whom had been born abroad and moved to London in their childhood, referred to as Third Culture Kids. They investigated the link between

multilingualism/multiculturalism acculturation and personality profile through a Multicultural Personality Questionnaire. The statistical analyses showed that the Third Culture Group scored higher in Cultural Empathy and Openmindedness but lower on Emotional Stability. The scores of the multidominant group were higher in Openmindedness and much lower in Cultural Empathy. The results show that the number of languages used by participants is linked to their personality profiles where multilinguals scored higher than bilinguals. According to Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven, acculturation is a stressful situation, and being in contact with three languages and cultures reinforces Openmindedness and Cultural Empathy. In agreement with the researchers, and on the basis of emotional acculturation, the findings show and confirm that personality is shaped by social and biographical factors.

Guo et al. (2009) empirically examine a multidimensional model of acculturation. Baseline data from four preventative studies were utilized to evaluate the component structure of BIQ-S scores, which included 893 adolescent and 880 guardian participants of Hispanic descent. The findings of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses backed up a four-component answer. The criteria were classified as follows: (a) Comfort with Spanish Language Use, (b) Comfort with English Language Use, (c) Enjoyment of Hispanic Cultural Activities, and (d) Enjoyment of American Cultural Activities. The findings support an extension of the theoretical definition of biculturalism and imply that comfort with language and enjoyment of other cultural elements are separate characteristics within both the heritage and receiving cultures.



Measurement invariance analysis found that the factor structure was stable; however, there were some measurement variations between adolescents and their guardians.

Xiao-Desai (2017) discussed how the link between HL and ethnic identity with language anxiety had been studied extensively in the field of foreign language, but they are in fact two separate things. In her study, she analyzed the correlation between the two (ethnic identity and HL anxiety), as well as ethnic group differences between a group with Mandarin background and another with Cantonese background. The study incorporated a total of 114 participants. She included the study of one more variables between first and second generation HLUs. The results of the study showed significant negative correlation between reading and writing anxiety and ethnic identity in the HL. With differences between dialects, the study found a stronger sense of ethnic identity within the Cantonese background group directly related to higher listening and speaking anxiety, with the opposite result for the Mandarin background group. The reflection given in the conclusion suggests that the language inherited from grandparents carries deep and complex emotions which influence speakers' understanding and identification of themselves as members of society and nation. She concludes that it is in this subtle interaction of emotions and identities that traditional language education is situated, promoting individual health through language preservation and cultural pluralism (p. 52).

Moore, Torres, and Turner performed a qualitative study on HLLs' attitudes on acquiring and maintaining Spanish (2017). Eleven participants took part in the study at a public university in Florida. The methodology of the study was based on a series of

semi-structured interviews with participants on their language learning experiences. Based on the idea that university students in the United States, including HLLs, are required to take "FL" courses to meet degree requirements, and that this requirement is causing anxiety, they discuss how HLLs experience enhanced anxiety as a result of their low levels of proficiency in the heritage language and how they are presumed to know the language solely based on their heritage. Even though participants' HL proficiency levels varied, the interview answers demonstrated a consistent reaction in condemning their lack of formal Spanish education as the principal obstacle to achieving superior levels of Spanish language skills.

For Turkish as a HL in the Netherlands, although not in a classroom setting (but still of significant relevance), a few studies on anxiety among migrant Turkish populations were conducted from psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics perspectives. Sevinç and Dewaele (2018) examined the anxiety felt by Turkish migrants when speaking the HL (Turkish) and the majority language (Dutch) in three different social contexts and across generations with a Likert scale-based questionnaire. The results of the statistical analyses indicated a prevalence of anxiety among migrants, but with a generational difference and in different situations of daily life. Among these differences, first and second generation felt anxious when speaking the majority language, and third generation felt anxious when speaking the HL. The significance of these results lines up with Fishman's intergenerational model (1964) about language maintenance, where the first generation of migrants is monolingual in the HL and the third generation is monolingual in the societal language. This fact has also been observed by Sevinç's

previous study (2016) which stated that language shift causes socioemotional pressure on HLLs to maintain their HL, which also triggers intergenerational tension. Sevinç and Dewaele (2018) proposed the term “majority language anxiety” following Tallon’s “heritage language anxiety” (2006), emphasizing that this type of anxiety is not foreign language anxiety but instead a specific type suffered by migrants.

Sevinç’s latest article on language anxiety and monolingual mindsets (2022) studies how these two variables relate to family language use, as well as to divergent cultural, social, and emotional aspects of family language policy decisions. The investigation interviewed two Turkish families in the Netherlands with high levels on language anxiety. The results showed that parental anxiety over monolingual language norms influences children’s language use and development among first- and second-generation immigrants. Furthermore, because of ‘fixed monolingual attitudes,’ anxiety can be passed down through generations in multilingual, transcultural families, negatively impacting multilingual language practices both within and outside the family.

Tseng (2020) undertook a qualitative case study using a series of interviews of first and second generation HLLs of Spanish in a non-classroom context to illustrate the notion of experiencing worry owing to inadequate competency in the HL. The analysis included 22 individuals and was based on sociolinguistic and discourse analysis. Tseng investigated the stigmatization and confusion experienced by these generations because of imposed deficit identities based on ideologies of individual agency, proficiency, and language purity, which resulted in language insecurity, avoidance, and erosion of their bilingual competencies despite outwardly positive attitudes toward language

maintenance. The data revealed contradictions between the persistence of language purity beliefs and the HLLs' actual bilingualism, highlighting the strength of such identity and language ideologies.

Zhou, Dewaele, Ochs, and De Leersnyder (2021) investigated the extent to which culture and language shape emotional experience. The study looked at 178 Chinese English bilinguals who were randomly allocated to report on emotional circumstances, cultural exposure, involvement, and language proficiency in either English as a foreign language or Chinese after verifying their fit with usual emotional patterns among British and Chinese monolinguals and predicting these fit indices from cultural exposure, survey language, and engagement. While monolinguals matched the emotional patterns of their own culture best, bilinguals fit both the normal FL and L1 patterns equally. Although the survey language had an effect on bilinguals' emotional fit, there was no indication of actual 'cultural frame switching.' Instead, bilinguals with limited exposure to English-speaking environments had a decrease in emotional fit while using English. However, the detrimental effect of survey language was mitigated when bilinguals had higher quality interactions, which are expected to promote conceptual rearrangement in the FL.

The current study sought to address these constraints by studying the extent to which language and culture impact people's emotional experience of boredom, anxiety, and enjoyment in the HL and FL classroom, as well as the reasons for which they do so.

### **4.3. Methodology**

In this study, a mixed-methods approach with a convergent design was used, collecting and analyzing two separate databases (quantitative and qualitative) at the same time, with the purpose of comparing and combining the results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The intent of a convergent design is to collect different but complementary data on the same matter, merging the results in order to fully comprehend the research by combining the strengths and shortcomings of quantitative and qualitative methods, allowing us to gain a more detailed insight into the problem at hand than either of them could provide on their own (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). In the discussion section, the results from the two forms of data are merged and combined.

#### **4.3.1. Research question**

The aim of this study was to analyze if sociobiographical factors affect students of Spanish in terms of enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in the classroom. The research questions are as follows:

**RQ:** To what extent do sociobiographical factors (such as age, sex, languages spoken, age of onset of acquisition, self-perceived proficiency, self-identity, socialization, self and society's expectations about language learning) affect enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom in HLLs in the language classroom?

Sub questions to RQ:

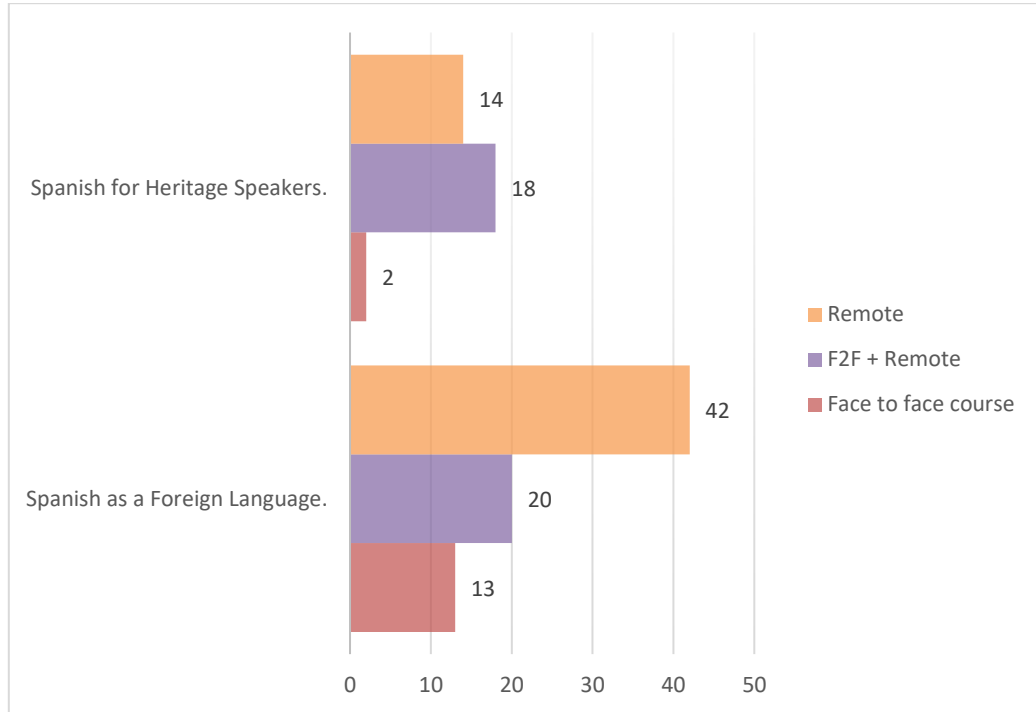
- **RQa:** How is it different for FLLs?

### **4.3.2. Participants and demographics**

Participants in this study included HLLs in an intermediate level Spanish as a heritage language course (n = 34), FLLs in an intermediate level Spanish as a foreign language course (n = 64), and HLLs in an intermediate level Spanish as a foreign language course (n = 11). All of the contestants were from the same institution in the United States' Southwest. The average age was 20.9 years (standard deviation = 2.8), with a range of 18-27, including 78 girls (71.6 percent) and 31 men (28.4 percent ). Seven of the students in the heritage classes were born outside of the United States (two from Puerto Rico, two from Argentina, two from Colombia, and one from Mexico). Their most recent significant grade was A (n = 95), B (n = 12), and C (n = 12). Some of the courses were remote synchronous exclusively, while others were face to face with a remote option at any time (some students attended remotely through Zoom, while others attended in person, and they could switch between the two choices on a daily basis), while still others were face to face. Some classes met daily for 1 hour and 35 minutes (only during the summer semester), some twice a week for 1 hour and 15 minutes, and some three times a week for 50 minutes. Twenty-five of the 109 survey respondents consented to participate in an interview. Six were FLLs in FLCs, while the remaining 19 were HLLs in HLCs. None of the HLLs in FLCs took part in the interview.

**Figure 4.1**

*Courses and course delivery*



### **4.3.3. Data collection**

Ethics approval was granted from the researcher’s institution. Data were collected in 3 different semesters: Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021. A semi-structured survey with Likert scale items and open-ended questions was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data via Google Forms. A follow up interview was also conducted with 25 students participating. Some of the questions in this questionnaire have been adapted from: Bilingual Language Profile: An Easy-to-Use Instrument to Assess Bilingualism (Birdsong, D. et al., 2012); Common European Framework of

Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Council of Europe (2018) for self-proficiency; adaptation of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), and Tallon's adaptation for Spanish as a heritage language (2006) Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale, also developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014). The questionnaire was divided into four sections: demographics, self-proficiency in Spanish, classroom emotions questions, and open-ended questions. The Cronbach Alpha examination of the survey's dependability indicated exceptionally good internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha = 0.9301,  $n = 34$ ), indicating that the survey's items might be employed in future investigation. A follow-up interview was also held. 25 students completed the interview.

#### **4.4. Results**

##### **4.4.1. Quantitative Data**

A multiple regression was conducted to examine what were predictors of HLLs' anxiety. Examination of the model summary revealed that the  $R^2$  was .672 or 67.2% of the variance was accounted for. Thus, the model was a good fit. Examination of the coefficients table revealed that gender (male) was significant ( $p = .004$ ), as well as self-perceived proficiency ( $p = .000$ ).



**Table 4.1***Coefficient Table for HLLs Predictors for Anxiety*

Model		Unstandardized		Standardize		
		Coefficients		d		
		<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig.
1	(Constant)	7.511	1.153		6.512	.000
	Gender (male)	-.733	.239	-.303	-3.071	.004*
	Language spoken	.107	.357	.040	.299	.767
	English Other					
	Self-Perceived	-.179	.030	-.735	-5.872	.000*
	Proficiency					
	Socialization	-.045	.189	-.029	-.236	.815
	Latinx/Hispanic					
	Socialization non-	-.154	.218	-.070	-.706	.484
	Latinx/non-Hispanic					
	Society's	-.031	.152	-.024	-.207	.837
	Expectation about					
	LL					

\* $p < .05$ 

a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety

Next predictor variables for HLLs were examined for enjoyment. The model summary for the analysis was ( $R^2 = .533$ ) or 53.3% of the variance in the model was accounted for. Thus, the model was a good fit for the data. Based on this the coefficient table was examined. Self-perceived proficiency ( $p = .018$ ) and society's expectations about LL ( $p = .006$ ) were both significant predictors of enjoyment.

**Table 4.2***Coefficient Table for HLLs' Predictors for Enjoyment*

Model		Unstandardized		Standardize		
		<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.922	.557		5.247	.000
	Gender (male)	-.093	.115	-.095	-.810	.423
	Language spoken	-.002	.173	-.002	-.011	.991
	English Other					
	Self-Perceived	.036	.015	.368	2.469	.018*
	Proficiency					
	Socialization	.046	.091	.075	.510	.613
	Latinx/Hispanic					
	Socialization non-	-.084	.105	-.094	-.797	.430
	Latinx/non-Hispanic					
	Society's	.215	.073	.410	2.940	.006*
	Expectation about					
	LL					

\* $p < .05$ 

## a. Dependent Variable: Enjoyment

Finally, predictors were examined for HLLs for boredom. The model summary showed an  $R^2$  of .337 or 33.7% of the variance in the model was accounted for. Thus, the model was appropriate for the data and further examination of the coefficients table was warranted. Here Language spoken (English) ( $p = .055$ ), socialization Latinx/Hispanic ( $p = .017$ ) and society's expectation about LL ( $p = .011$ ) were all significant predictors.

**Table 4.3***Coefficient Table for HLLs Predictors for Boredom*

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		Sig.
		Coefficients		Beta	<i>t</i>	
		<i>B</i>	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.931	.873		3.358	.002
	Gender (male)	-.076	.181	-.059	-.421	.676
	Language spoken English Other	-.536	.271	-.379	-1.981	.055*
	Self-Perceived Proficiency	.019	.023	.145	.816	.420
	Socialization Latinx/Hispanic	-.355	.143	-.437	-2.487	.017*
	Socialization non- Latinx/non-Hispanic	.136	.165	.116	.821	.417
	Society's Expectation about LL	.306	.115	.442	2.664	.011*

\* $p < .05$ 

a. Dependent Variable: Boredom

A multiple regression was run for FLLs to see what predictors were significant for anxiety. Examination of the model summary revealed that the  $R^2$  was .455 or that the model was able to account for 45.5% of the variance. This showed that the data were a good fit for the model and examination of the coefficients table was warranted. Only one variable, self-perceived proficiency, was found to be a significant predictor for anxiety for FLLs.

**Table 4.4***Coefficient Table for FLLs' Predictors for Anxiety*

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig.
		<i>B</i>	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	3.826	1.295		2.955	.005
	Gender (male)	-.217	.223	-.097	-.970	.336
	Language spoken	.778	.408	.191	1.909	.061
	English Other					
	Self-Perceived	-.176	.032	-.618	-5.436	.000*
	Proficiency					
	Socialization	-.044	.183	-.028	-.241	.810
	Latinx/Hispanic					
	Socialization non-	.289	.222	.132	1.301	.199
	Latinx/non-Hispanic					
	Society's	-.032	.121	-.033	-.267	.790
	Expectation about					
	LL					

\* $p < .05$ 

a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety

A multiple regression was run for FLLs to see what predictors were significant for enjoyment. Examination of the model summary revealed that the  $R^2$  was .556 or that the model was able to account for 55.6% of the variance. This showed that the data were a good fit for the model and examination of the coefficients table was warranted. Gender (male) ( $p = .023$ ), Language Spoken (English) ( $p = .049$ ), proficiency ( $p = .032$ ),

socialization Latinx/Hispanic ( $p = .048$ ), and society's expectation about LL ( $p = .000$ ) were all found to be significant predictors of FLLs' enjoyment.

**Table 4.5**

*Coefficient Table for FLLs' Predictors for Enjoyment*

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		Sig.
		Coefficients		Beta	<i>t</i>	
		<i>B</i>	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.983	.598		4.989	.000
	Gender	.241	.103	.211	2.335	.023*
	Language spoken English	-.379	.188	-.182	-2.013	.049*
	Self-Perceived Proficiency	.033	.015	.226	2.200	.032*
	Socialization Latinx/Hispanic	.171	.084	.209	2.025	.048*
	Socialization non-Latinx/non-Hispanic	-.179	.103	-.160	-1.739	.087
	Society's Expectation about LL	.215	.056	.429	3.836	.000*

\* $p < .05$

a. Dependent Variable: enjoyment

Finally, a multiple regression was run for FLLs to see what predictors were significant for boredom. Examination of the model summary revealed that the  $R^2$  was .166 or that the model was able to account for 16.6% of the variance. This showed that

the data were an acceptable fit for the model and examination of the coefficients table was warranted. Only one variable, socialization Latinx/Hispanic, was significant for predicting boredom ( $p = .013$ ).

**Table 4.6**

*Coefficient Table for FLLs' Predictors for Boredom*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized		
		<i>B</i>	Std. Error	Beta	<i>t</i>	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.613	.744		6.202	.000
	Gender (male)	-.187	.128	-.180	-1.456	.151
	Language spoken English	-.172	.234	-.091	-.735	.465
	Self-Perceived Proficiency	-.026	.019	-.195	-1.384	.172
	Socialization Latinx/Hispanic	.147	.105	.198	1.397	.168
	Socialization non-Latinx/non-Hispanic	-.329	.128	-.324	-2.575	.013*
	Society's Expectation about LL	.030	.070	.065	.424	.673

\* $p < .05$

a. Dependent Variable: boredom

#### 4.4.2. Qualitative Data

The quantitative data include two questions in the interview. A thematic analysis of the responses using MAXQDA 2020 software was conducted to analyze both groups, HLLs and FLLs. The most representative interview snippets were chosen to show the various themes which emerged under these questions.

##### *Results of Question 1*

The first question in the interview asked: “Why are you studying Spanish?”. The themes found in the responses of the FLLS group are shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7**

*Themes from the interview questions to FLLs on studying Spanish*

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
To communicate with others	6	40
Enthusiastic about the language	3	20
Degree requirement	3	20
Career goals	3	20

The theme with the highest frequency for FLLs was to communicate with others. The 6 participants in this group agreed on the importance of learning the language to communicate in professional and personal settings and the desire of some of them to

explore different countries and cultures within Latin America. At the same time, all of them agreed on the course being a degree requirement. An interviewee mentioned “I’ve always wanted to be fluent in Spanish. I love understanding random conversations in public.” Other participants shared excitement about applying their learned skills in everyday interactions and the desire to have conversations beyond the basics:

The most important reason is because my family speaks Spanish. Family by marriage. So, it's really important to me that I'm able to communicate with them in different topics beyond just conversation and daily topics. And secondly, it is part of my program, it's a requirement for my degree.

The themes for HLLs as shown in Table 4.8 included the same themes found in the FLLs’ data. However, the frequency was different, and more themes were found in their responses:



**Table 4.8**

*Themes from the interview questions to HLLs on studying Spanish*

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Hispanic/Latinx background	11	22
Passionate about the language	6	12
Language improvement	6	12
Become fluent/regain fluency	6	12
Degree requirement	6	12
Career goals	5	10
To avoid ridicule/embarrassment	3	6
Communicate with others	3	6
To meet people with similar backgrounds	2	4
Opportunity	2	4

The theme with the highest frequency found about why they are taking Spanish was Hispanic/Latinx background. Many of them mentioned as a reason the fact that they grew up speaking the language or because “reflects one’s own identity”, as one of the participants asserted. Another participant stressed the importance of language maintenance for future career: “It is very important to me that I take care and cultivate the knowledge of Spanish that I have in order to have greater success in the future.”

Interestingly, one participant expressed their wish for identifying more with the Hispanic/Latinx background: “I still identify as Hispanic and much of my extended family primarily speaks Spanish. I hope to learn the language so I can identify more with them.”

Many of them also expressed wanting to improve their language skills, including grammar: “I am also taking to improve on Spanish speaking, reading, and understanding skills” or “I am studying Spanish to pursue my love and further my knowledge in the language.” Interviewees highlighted the importance of achieving fluency in the language for several reasons:

First, half of my family is Mexican but because I grew up in the United States and in an area where not a lot of Spanish was spoken, I lost a lot of my Spanish skills. I am hoping to become fluent again and confident in my Spanish.

Interesting responses emerged under the theme of avoiding ridicule and/or embarrassment as a reason for studying Spanish. One of the interviewees emphasized this need due to not being able to communicate with their own families, a response that overlaps with other important themes shown in Table 4.8:

My family speaks Spanish, but my brothers and I do not, so we find it hard to communicate with my grandparents and aunts and uncles. I also find it embarrassing when people come up to me and start speaking Spanish and I have to tell them I can’t understand them. I want to one day be able to be fluent in Spanish, even if I will never 100% get the accent correct.

The next participant highlighted that “it is kind of embarrassing being Hispanic and not knowing Spanish at all.” The last participant also mentioned the lack of opportunities to learn the language as a cause:

I am studying Spanish because I want to improve it grammatically and fluently.

There's [*sic*] minor mistakes I make while speaking Spanish and I often get made fun of for it. So, I decided to take on an actual Spanish course, because although it was my first language it was taught by my parents and some school. I see now how my mom didn't get a chance to learn how to properly write in Spanish and I feel that Spanish was available for me, so I took the opportunity.

Two of the participants highlighted the need to interact with other Spanish speakers for language maintenance purposes and interactions:

I am studying Spanish because I think it's a great way to get to know people for similar backgrounds and learn things about the language I didn't know about before. I wanted to dedicate more time to Spanish especially since college station seems to have a majority of white students.

The second student pinpointed the need to speak the language not just for language maintenance but also for comradery:

As a native Spanish speaker, I am well-versed in the contents of the language however, since I have come to college, I am surrounded by peers who do not know the language at all for the most part, and since I am not home anymore for the most part, I have felt a sense of wavering due to not being around people of

heritage so much. I am taking native Spanish to have an outlet to speak Spanish in college.

### ***Results of Question 2***

The second question was “How important is your knowledge of Spanish for yourself, your friends, your family, your community?”. As Tables 4.9 and 4.10 will show, community interaction was the theme with more frequency for both groups:

**Table 4.9**

*Themes from the interview questions to FLLs on importance of Spanish*

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Community interaction	4	27
Communication	3	20
Desire to learn a new language	2	13
Career opportunities	2	13
Brain stimulation	2	13
Importance of being bilingual	1	7
Self-identity	1	7

For FLLs, community interaction was key to broaden perspectives and awareness of life in the community. The theme in this participant’s response overlaps with the other themes:

I chose to pursue Spanish because of my own desire to learn a new language and broaden my knowledge of other cultures and communities. It is important to me that I am able to learn as much as I can about the world and its people, because being able to communicate and collaborate on a global scale is something that I believe to be crucial towards future advancements. As a Houston native, being well versed in Spanish is a useful skill and allows me to communicate with a large number of people in my area. Introducing new languages and cultural values to my community and close circle allows us to expand our perspectives and become better informed of what happens outside of our lives.

Another participant highlighted the importance of knowing the language linked to future career opportunities and global communication: “Learning to speak a language to connect with more people in my community is very appealing to me. I want to connect more with the people around me and people in Latin American countries that I plan to visit.” Another example of community interaction also emphasized the importance of exploring other cultures:

My knowledge of Spanish is primarily important to me as I think it will help me better interact with my community. My parents come from Pakistan and most of my friends are Pakistani Americans, so there's no one who is really pushing me to learn the language. For me, I think it's important for me to diversify my knowledge and explore different cultures to be a more understanding person as a whole.

The theme of becoming bilingual tied to brain development was well represented in the following response from another participant:

Not too necessary for my family, community, or friends. It is more a personal development thing. and I want my kids to be tri or multilingual as well. I think it's really important for people to know lots of languages because it stimulates your brain in new ways that are otherwise not unlocked.

Lastly, self-identity was important for the following participant due to family ties:

So important. I identify myself as a cisgender heterosexual, female. I'm white, I'm not of Latino or Hispanic descent but so much of my communication with my family is really in Spanglish or in Spanish. So, for me, I'm very aware of my own positionality in that role so it's also very important for me to communicate, so it ties into a lot of different aspects of my identity.

**Table 4.10**

*Themes from the interview questions to HLLs on importance of Spanish*

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Community interaction	10	37
Career opportunities	7	26
Importance of being bilingual	4	15
Communication	3	11
Self-identity	3	11

For the interviewees of the HLL group, community interaction was also a theme with higher frequency. This theme overlapped in many cases with career opportunities and communication: “I have people around me who speak it and I like to help people in my community,” “It’s important to me because I want to help people that do not speak English that well and I want to be able to perfect it to communicate with my family,” or “I have to be able to speak to my extended family in which some are in other countries and do not know how to speak English,” or:

The ability for me to speak Spanish will also be majorly important to my future since I want to be a bilingual lawyer that can speak to clients that only speak Spanish. I plan to do this to create more diversity in my clientele base and to aid minorities which are largely under protected or represented in the legal field.

Some of the participants related these themes to the importance of being bilingual not only professionally but within the family:

Spanish is important to me because it is something I want to learn and pass on to my kids. I see all the benefits of being bilingual and I want to be able to take advantage of those when looking for a job. Wanting to be a journalist and news reporter it is important to develop relationships with people in the community and being able to speak Spanish will be able to help reach out in ways many people cannot. Also, Spanish is my grandma's first language, and she has spent most of her life learning English to help better communicate with her Grandkids. I think it's time I return the favor.

Still under the theme of bilingualism and its importance, another participant spoke about helping family as well:

Without Spanish I wouldn't be able to communicate with my family at all. I would feel like an outsider who would be left out with all the rich stories told by my grandparents. As for my community, I will be available in my career to provide service to those who speak only Spanish. Being bilingual is a gift for me that I appreciate infinitely. I am able to not only help my mother translate a few documents for her but to a whole community and helping in any way I can.

#### **4.5. Discussion**

The first research question addressed the relationship between sociobiographical factors and FLE, FLCA, and FLB in HLLs. The quantitative analysis in anxiety revealed that gender and self-perceived proficiency were indicators of anxiety, meaning that when



participants' self-perceived proficiency arises, they experience more anxiety. The results on gender are interesting though since the predictor for anxiety was male, unlike in previous research where it has been suggested that female students tend to experience this emotion more than males and it also was a predictor for FLE (Tallon, 2006). However, the findings align with Dewaele et al.'s (2019) in their study on FLE and FLCA on Kazakh learners of Turkish, where male gender was a predictor for FLCA. The findings on self-perceived proficiency align with Marcos Llinás and Juan Garau's (2009) study on FLCA in three different proficiency levels of Spanish as a FL, where the more advanced the course level, the higher FLCA was. The findings also reflect Sevinç and Dewaele's (2018) analysis of anxiety prevalence among migrants where third generation HLLs felt anxiety when speaking the HL, and according to the demographic data in the survey, some of the participants are third generation HLLs. Another possible cause, as seen in Sevinç's (2022) investigation, is that in multilingual, transcultural families, anxiety can be handed down through generations, impacting negatively multilingual language practices both within and beyond the family. The themes shown in the qualitative data analysis, however, give light to the relationship between self-perceived proficiency and anxiety. According to the responses, many of them are studying Spanish to be able to communicate with their families and communities, since as they explained, they would like to avoid embarrassment due to some of them not being fluent in the language, as it happens with third generation HLLs: "it is embarrassing when people come up to me and start speaking Spanish and I have to tell them I can't understand them," or "it is kind of embarrassing being Hispanic and not

knowing Spanish at all.” This fact could be another explanation for why their anxiety increases as they want to perform better in the language, as well as in their personal expectations, since many of them want to improve for their future careers.

On the other hand, self-perceived proficiency and society’s expectations about language learning were both significant predictors of enjoyment. Therefore, students with a higher level of self-proficiency experience more enjoyment, as it happens with societal expectations. Although the findings seem contradictory between FLE and FLCA, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) had already observed the argument of these two emotions not representing opposite extremes in the emotional continuum in a classroom, and therefore, coexisting (Dewaele et al., 2019).

When it comes to boredom for HLLs, language spoken (English), socialization Latinx/Hispanic and society’s expectation about language learning were all significant predictors. This means that the more English was spoken in the classroom the more boredom was experienced, and the same occurs for the other two variables. The explanation about socialization Latinx/Hispanic is not clear since in the interview responses many of them are happy to be surrounded by likeminded peers: “it’s a great way to get to know people from similar backgrounds.”

The second question addressed the same relationship but for FLLs. For this group, only self-perceived proficiency was found to be a significant predictor for anxiety, indicating again that as the level of self-perceived proficiency increases, the experience of anxiety increases as well, as it happened for HLLs, in agreement with Marcos Llinás and Juan Garau’s (2009) results.

For FLE, however, five variables were found to be significant predictors of enjoyment: gender (male), language spoken (English), self-perceived proficiency, socialization Latinx/Hispanic, and society's expectation about language learning. The results on gender concur with the results of previous research for FLE (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Dewaele et al., 2018); however, the difference is once again that in the present study male students are the ones experiencing enjoyment over female students. The results on socialization and enjoyment agree with Dewaele et al.'s (2019) view, which is the notion that target languages connected with a certain nation and/or culture (such as French, German, or Spanish) are more appealing to learners than English, possibly due to English being a global language. Interestingly for the results on society's expectation about language learning resulted in the experience of enjoyment. The language spoken (English) related to experiencing enjoyment is not surprising as the previous result on self-proficiency indicated FLCA. It is interesting, though not unexpected, that the variable of language spoken being English increases enjoyment for FLLs but increases boredom for HLLs.

In the case of boredom for FLLs, only one variable, socialization Latinx/Hispanic, was significant for predicting boredom. The results about this variable seem contradictory for FLLs, as happens with the variable of society's expectation for HLLs, since an increase in both predicts boredom and enjoyment at the same time. For FLLs, the reason why they take Spanish at the university level, as seen in the survey results in Article 1 of this dissertation, and as shown in the interviews, is because it is a degree requirement, a factor that could indicate boredom since it could be a course the

students would not be interested in, and therefore, they are not invested in it.

Considering that only 6 FLL participants agreed to take part in the interview and that their views about the language are positive overall, the quantitative results suggest that some of the students get more bored when socialization with Latinx/Hispanic increases, contradicting Dewaele et al.'s (2019) view on language attraction other than English. Another reason, as seen from a sociocultural construction of emotion view, is that Spanish is not considered a language of prestige in the USA (Moore Torres & Turner, 2017; Sánchez-Muñoz & Amezcua, 2019), and for some FLLs this language could not be of importance. Yet, more information is needed to investigate the specific causes of socialization before making assumptions.

As for HLLs, the qualitative data indicated their wish to improve their language skills and become fluent for different reasons, including communication with their extended families, because of their identity as Hispanic/Latinx, and their appreciation for the opportunity to study their families' heritage language. While all these themes could indicate the feeling of enjoyment based on society's expectations, when it comes to boredom it is possible that some of them lose interest in the language, finding themselves underchallenged in the classroom, because they dislike the activities and materials being presented, or the fact that they probably have acculturated to American society. Many of them took the course remotely or in hybrid format, as seen in articles 1 and 2 of this dissertation, and this variable could factor into the experience of boredom since classroom dynamics are challenged thereby, as observed in Resnik & Dewaele (2021), and as observed in article 2.

#### **4.6. Limitations**

The present study presents limitations, and the findings should be interpreted with caution. Since there are no other studies that investigate the relation among these three variables with sociobiographical factors, more research is needed. The sample size is small, so the results might not be representative of all FLLs of Spanish in the USA, nor for HLLs of Spanish. The results may not be generalizable to heritage speakers of other languages due to their sociocultural background (e.g., Xiao & Wong, 2014; Xiao-Desai, 2017 and 2019). A larger study that includes interview questions about socialization with Hispanic/Latinx is needed to identify specific causes of boredom in FLLs as well as for HLLs.

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

The present study has examined FLE, FLCA, and FLB in FLLs and HLLs of Spanish in the USA in relationship with sociobiographical factors. It turns out that FLLs experience more anxiety when their self-perceived proficiency is higher. Enjoyment is dependent on gender (male), language spoken (English), proficiency, socialization Latinx/Hispanic, and society's expectation about LL. As for boredom, only socialization Latinx/Hispanic was significant for predicting boredom, but the small sample size of the interview could not explain in depth the causes. However, the qualitative results showed how FLLs thought that it was important to learn Spanish to socialize in day-to-day interactions with their community and for their future careers in terms of enjoyment, converging with the quantitative results.

On the other hand, HLLs' experience of anxiety is tied to gender and self-perceived proficiency, which was also a predictor for enjoyment along with society's expectations on LL. Boredom was experienced when English was spoken, socialization was Latinx/Hispanic, and society's expectation about LL was caused for different reasons including possible acculturation of HLLs. Male gender predictors for FLE in FLLs and for FLCA in HLLs present novel results since they have not been observed before for these groups. These findings could indicate that these occurrences only happen for SFL and SHL in the USA; thus, more research is needed since the sample size is small. In sum, sociobiographical factors can shape people's emotional responses and experiences in the Spanish language classroom.

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## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this research was to examine the nature and relationships among enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety in the Spanish classroom at the university level. The students taking part in the study were enrolled in Spanish for Heritage Speakers and Spanish as a Foreign Language classes (heritage and non-heritage students). A convergent parallel mixed methods design was used as the overall method for this study, where a qualitative and quantitative data are collected roughly simultaneously, analyzed separately (articles 1 and 2 respectively), and then combined (article 3). To obtain quantitative data for this study, a survey containing Likert scale questions was employed. The dependent variables were enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety, whereas the independent variables were heritage speakers in heritage and regular Spanish courses, and non-heritage speakers in regular Spanish courses. The qualitative data consisted of open-ended survey questions and an interview (see appendices A and B) that delved further into the enjoyment, boredom, and anxiety experienced by heritage and non-heritage students in the Spanish classroom, as well as sociobiographical aspects. The purpose of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data was to combine both types of data in order to gain a better understanding of these emotions in the classroom than would be acquired if they were gathered individually.

The quantitative analysis in Article 1 examined FLE, FLCA, and FLB of HLLs and FLLs of Spanish in HLCs and HLCs on self-reported results in the southern part of the United States during the Covid-19 epidemic to see how they differed and how they

affected each group. The survey used a quantitative method with Likert-style questions. Correlation studies found that in the three groups, FLE and FLB were negatively correlated, showing that when there is more enjoyment, students feel less bored. The FLLs group had the highest FLCA, whereas the HLLs group had the highest level of enjoyment. In all groups, there was a substantial negative connection between FLCA and FLE. Overall, when students feel more enjoyment, boredom and classroom anxiety levels go down.

The qualitative analysis in Article 2 looked at the causes of FLE, FLCA, and FLB of HLLs and FLLs of Spanish in HLCs and FLCs on self-reported results in the same institution and geographical context. The qualitative data gathered from the survey's open-ended questions and the interview revealed that being called on to participate was the primary cause of anxiety for FLLs. Oral presentations and tests were the primary causes for HLLs in HLCs, while feeling judged was the cause for HLLs in FLCs. As for boredom, the main reason was lack of peer participation. However, in the highest frequency theme students reported that nothing was boring. The main causes for boredom for HLLs and FLLs in FLCs were both lecture heavy format with no interaction and dislike of class materials, which appears to be connected to the heavy use of textbooks and lack of challenging activities and resources. The instructor's teaching style, as well as interesting, relatable, and engaging material, were all major themes that generated enjoyment across the three groups.

The mixed-methods analysis in Article 3 examined FLE, FLCA, and FLB in FLLs and HLLs of Spanish in the USA in relationship with sociobiographical factors. It



turns out that while FLLs' self-perceived proficiency is higher, they suffer more anxiety. Gender (male), language spoken (English), proficiency, socialization Latinx/Hispanic, and society's expectations regarding LL all affect enjoyment. Only socializing Latinx/Hispanic was significant for predicting boredom, but due to the small sample size of the interview, the causes could not be explained in depth. The qualitative results, on the other hand, revealed how FLLs considered it was vital to learn Spanish to socialize in day-to-day contacts with their community and for their future employment in terms of enjoyment, which corresponded with the quantitative results. HLLs' anxiety, on the other hand, is related to gender and self-perceived proficiency, which was also a predictor of enjoyment, as well as society's expectations of LL. Boredom was experienced when English was spoken, socialization Latinx/Hispanic, and society's expectations regarding LL were caused for several reasons, including possible acculturation of HLL. Male gender predictors for FLE in FLLs and FLCA in HLLs provide novel results that have not previously been reported for these groups. These data might indicate that these occurrences only arise for SFL and SHL in the United States, implying that additional research is required due to the limited sample size. Therefore, sociobiographical elements can influence people's emotional reactions and experiences in the Spanish language classroom.

To conclude, the impacts of the Covid-19 epidemic have transformed not just course delivery structure in order to adapt to the demands, but also classroom dynamics and relationships between instructors and classmates. While certain underlying difficulties, such as language purity and feeling evaluated by the teacher or classmates,

remain constant for HLLs, instructors' enthusiasm and teaching approaches, as well as appealing materials, appear to be more important for students to enjoy their language lesson. Sociobiographical factors have also shown their influence on enjoyment, anxiety, and boredom for both groups, with male students experiencing more FLE (FLLs) and FLCA (HLLs) than their female counterparts. Acculturation has also been suggested as a possible cause for HLLs to feel boredom in the classroom, possibly tied to remote instruction as observed in the second article. Additional longitudinal research on HLLs might investigate these feelings and compare them to HLLs from other languages, and more emotion research is required for other parts of the globe studying Spanish as a foreign language.

## APPENDIX A

### FLE, FLB, FLCA SURVEY

**Project Title: Language learners' emotions in the Spanish language classroom**

**<sup>2</sup> (This questionnaire will be administered via Google Forms)**

**The study aims to measure Spanish language students' emotions in the language class.**

**We are looking for participants who are studying Spanish as a foreign language or as a heritage language course at the university level in the United States.**

**The study has received ethical approval from Texas A&M University Research Ethics Committee to conduct the study.**

**Please note that you may only participate in this survey if you are 18 years of age or over.**

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the questions in this questionnaire have been adapted from:

- Birdsong, D., Gertken, L.M., & Amengual, M. (2012) Bilingual Language Profile: An Easy-to-Use Instrument to Assess Bilingualism. COERLL, University of Texas at Austin.
- Adaptation of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety scale, developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), and Tallon's adaptation for Spanish as a heritage language (2006).
- Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale also developed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014).
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Council of Europe (2018).

I certify that I am 18 years of age or over.

If you have read the information above and agree to participate with the understanding that the data (including any personal data) you submit will be processed accordingly, please check the relevant box below to get started.

Yes, I agree to take part

**Unique Identifier:**

**What are the first two letters of your mother's maiden name?**

**What is the date of your birthday (day and month)?**

### **SECTION I: Biographical information**

1. What is your age?
2. With which gender identity do you identify the most?
  - a. Female
  - b. Male
  - c. Transgender female
  - d. Transgender male
  - e. Gender Variant/Non-Conforming
  - f. Other:

3. Where are you from? (State, country of birth; if you grew up in a different country than the one you were born in, please specify as well)
4. What university do you attend?
5. What is your mother's highest level of education?
  - a. Elementary school
  - b. High school graduate or GED
  - c. Some college
  - d. College graduate and above
  - e. Other
6. What is your father's highest education level of education?
  - a. Elementary school
  - b. High school graduate or GED
  - c. Some college
  - d. College graduate and above
  - e. Other
7. What is the primary language spoken at home with your family?
  - a. English
  - b. Spanish
  - c. An equal mix of both
  - d. Other language(s) not listed above:
8. Are you a Heritage Speaker? (A person who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken; you may not even speak the heritage language but might understand it). If so, please specify your Heritage Language(s) (Spanish, Korean, Navajo, etc.) even if you do not speak it but grew up around it. Specify too what generation you are (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>) if you are US-born.
9. At what age did you start learning the following languages?
 

English:

Since birth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

Spanish:

Since birth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

Other:

Since birth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

**10.** What type of Spanish course are you taking?

- a. Spanish for Heritage Speakers.
- b. Spanish as a Foreign Language.
- c. Other (i.e., Spanish for Health Science, Spanish for Business, etc.).

Please, specify:

**11.** What is the format of the course?

- a. Face to face course (all lectures are done in class even if homework/assignments are online).
- b. Hybrid course (~50% class and 50% online).
- c. Online course.

**12.** What are the teaching materials used in this course?

- a. Purchased textbook (paper or online format).
- b. Open Educational Resources (provided and modified by the instructor from a free source).
- c. Other:

**13.** Why are you taking this course? Rate from 1 to 5 considering absolutely not = 1 and absolutely yes = 5.

- a. It is a requirement for my degree.
- b. For pleasure. I like to learn languages.
- c. To better communicate with my family.
- d. To talk to my friends.
- e. To watch TV and movies in Spanish.
- f. To improve my bilingual skills for my current or future job(s).
- g. Other:

**14.** How frequently does your teacher use Spanish during class?

- a. Hardly ever.

- b. Not very often.
- c. Sometimes.
- d. Usually.
- e. All the time.

**15.** What is your attitude towards Spanish?

- a. Very unfavorable.
- b. Unfavorable.
- c. Neutral,
- d. Favorable.
- e. Very favorable.

**16.** How would you describe your Spanish language performance compared to the rest of the group?

- a. Far below average.
- b. Below average.
- c. Average.
- d. Above average.
- e. Far above average.

**17.** What was your last important score in this course (quiz, major exam, or essay)?

- a. A
- b. B
- c. C
- d. D
- e. F

## **SECTION II**

### Proficiency

**18.** What is your proficiency **understanding** Spanish? Check the descriptor that matches your level.

- a. I can recognize familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.
- b. I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.
- c. I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programs on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.
- d. I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programs. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.
- e. I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signaled explicitly. I can understand television programs and films without too much effort.
- f. I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.

**19.** What is your proficiency **reading** Spanish? Check the descriptor that matches your level.

- a. I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.
- b. I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements,



prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.

- c. I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency every day or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.
- d. I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.
- e. I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialized articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.
- f. I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialized articles and literary works.

**20.** What is your proficiency **speaking** Spanish? Check the descriptor that matches your level.

- a. I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.
- b. I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.
- c. I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes & ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.
- d. I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

- e. I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating subthemes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.
- f. I can present a clear, smoothly flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.

**21.** What is your proficiency **writing** Spanish? Check the descriptor that matches your level.

- a. I can write simple isolated phrases and sentences.
- b. I can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like “and”, “but” and “because”.
- c. I can write straightforward connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.
- d. I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view.
- e. I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write detailed expositions of complex subjects in an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can write different kinds of texts in a style appropriate to the reader in mind.
- f. I can write clear, smoothly flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

### SECTION III

#### Culture

22. To what extent do you dis/agree with the following items?: (5) Almost Always/Extremely Often; (4) Much/Very Often; (3) Moderately; (2) Very Little/Not very Much; (1) Not at all

I associate with Latinx and/or Hispanic people

I associate with non-Latinx and/or non-Hispanic people

I enjoy listening to music in Spanish

I enjoy listening to music in English

I enjoy watching TV in Spanish

I enjoy watching TV in English

I enjoy English language movies

I enjoy Spanish language movies

I enjoy reading books in Spanish

I enjoy reading books in English

My friends while I was growing up were of Latinx and/or Hispanic origin

My friends while I was growing up were of non-Latinx and/or non-Hispanic origin

My family cooks Latinx and/or Hispanic foods

My friends now are of non-Latinx and/or non-Hispanic origin

My friends now are of Latinx and/or Hispanic origin

I like to identify myself as a non-Latinx and/or non-Hispanic

I like to identify myself as Latinx and/or Hispanic

## SECTION IV

As you respond to these items, think about your Spanish class (if you are taking more than one Spanish class, think of your favourite class for all of the items below):

**23.** To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

**Strongly disagree/ Disagree /Undecided/ Agree /Strongly agree**

1. Even if I am well prepared for Spanish class, I feel anxious about it
2. I always feel that the other students speak Spanish better than I do
3. I can be creative
4. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in Spanish class
5. I can laugh off embarrassing mistakes in Spanish
6. I don't worry about making mistakes in Spanish class
7. I don't get bored
8. I enjoy it
9. I feel as though I'm a different person during Spanish class
10. I feel confident when I speak in Spanish class
11. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my Spanish class
12. I learned to express myself better in Spanish
13. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in Spanish class
14. I'm a worthy member of the Spanish class
15. I've learned interesting things
16. In class, I feel proud of my accomplishments
17. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my Spanish class

18. It's a positive environment
19. It's cool to know another language other than English
20. It's fun
21. Making errors is part of the learning process
22. The peers are nice
23. The teacher is encouraging
24. The teacher is friendly
25. The teacher is supportive
26. There is a good atmosphere
27. We form a tight group
28. We have common "legends", such as running jokes
29. We laugh a lot
30. Time goes by quickly when I am in Spanish class
31. The lessons are exciting
32. The activities and materials presented are varied
33. The homework load in class is average
34. The course is very interactive
35. The teacher makes learning Spanish easy
36. My mind never wanders off when I am in my Spanish class
37. I am a person that gets distracted easily
38. I spend a lot of time in class checking my phone or other devices for purposes that are not related to class

39. My peers' attitudes towards the class influence my own attitude
40. I enjoy working collaboratively with my peers
41. I feel guilty about not knowing Spanish better
42. I feel happy about my progress in Spanish
43. I can imagine myself studying in a university where all my courses are taught in Spanish
44. Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using Spanish
45. I can imagine myself speaking Spanish fluently with neighbours or colleagues
46. I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak Spanish
47. I can imagine myself writing Spanish e-mails/letters fluently
48. The things I want to do in the future require me to use Spanish
49. Learning Spanish is necessary because people surrounding me expect me to do so
50. Studying Spanish is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teachers/family/boss
51. I have to study Spanish, because, if I do not study it, I think my parents will be disappointed with me
52. My parents believe that I must study Spanish to be an educated person
53. I never miss class
54. The teacher's motivation influences my own motivation

- 24.** Describe in as much detail as possible what makes you enjoy this course (e.g., materials used, type of activities done in class, the way the instructor presents the material, the way the instructor teaches the class, collaboration with classmates, etc.).
- 25.** Describe in as much detail as possible what makes you get bored in this course (e.g., materials used, type of activities done in class, the way the instructor presents the material, the way the instructor teaches the class, collaboration with classmates, etc.).
- 26.** Describe an instance where you have felt anxious in your Spanish class.
- 27.** If you would like to help us in our study by completing a follow-up short interview, please write your email address below. Your information will be kept confidential.

APPENDIX B  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**Interview Questions**

1. Why are you studying Spanish?
2. How much do you enjoy studying Spanish? Why?
3. How anxious are you in Spanish class? Why?
4. How bored are you in Spanish class? Why?
5. How would you describe the classroom environment?
6. How important is your knowledge of Spanish for yourself, your friends, your family, your community?



