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The relation between Foreign Language Enjoyment, subjective well-being, and perceived stress in multilingual students

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ABSTRACT

In the last ten years, positive emotion in foreign language learning has been increasingly investigated in many research areas, including Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE). FLE has been defined as a positive emotion felt when an individual's psychological needs are met. This study investigates the relationship between perceived levels of Subjective Well-Being (SWB) and Stress (PS), as well as the degree of multilingualism (DM) and their effect on FLE when learning an additional language.

The data were collected from 68 students (35 trilingual and 33 bilingual) who were learning an additional language (Italian or French). Statistical analyses showed that SWB and PS were unrelated. The strongest predictors of the FLE was SWB, with PS having a small but significant effect. Trilingual subjects were found to have significantly more FLE, whereas there was no statistically significant difference for SWB and PS. The findings are discussed in light of previous research on FLE, which confirms that SWB and DM, as well as a low level of stress, play an important role in enjoying learning a new language. The implication of this study is discussed both for language teaching and language policy formulation.

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Multilingualism; well-being; perceived stress; foreign language acquisition

Introduction

In the last ten years, research on emotions in foreign language learning has shifted from an exclusive focus on negative emotions, with a prevalence of studies on anxiety, to the study of positive emotions with an approach inspired by Positive Psychology (PP), 'the scientific study of ordinary human strengths and virtues.' (Sheldon and King 2001, 216). The shift of focus from trying to fix problems to maximising what makes human beings thrive, has permeated the field of education in general, also extending to the field of second language acquisition. MacIntyre, and collegues (2019) recently affirmed that PP-inspired work has fuelled a change in the research paradigm, from a deficit perspective of language learning and teaching to focus on the strengths of the learner. Rather than concentrate attention exclusively on what does not work (anxiety, errors, and mistakes), they suggest that 'one capitalizes on what one does especially well, is in direct contrast to a deficiency approach that focuses on detecting and improving weaknesses' (269). Teachers and researchers should concentrate on strengths rather than weaknesses, using the same approach introduced by PP. The authors also provide a reminder that language and identity are closely related and that the ultimate aim of language teaching is not merely to be able to use a new language but 'Well-being, not only in the individuals but within their communities' (269). The holistic research in SLA, which focuses on learners not only inside the classroom

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but also outside, considering them as a whole, is still in its infancy. Some studies on the effect of the usage of the target language outside the classroom have been done; however, to the best of our knowledge, a systematic study to link the level of Perceived Stress (PS), and Subjective Well-Being (SWB), Degree of Multilingualism (DM), and Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) has not yet been conducted.

Although earlier research has not concluded whether there is a circular relationship between FLE and negative emotions such as Foreign Language Anxiety (Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff 2021b, for an extensive review) and whether a bidirectional relationship can be established between FLE and students' Subjective Well-being, it is possible, in principle, to hypotize such a relation based on the findings supporting Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions (1998, 2004, 2013). Positive emotions such as joy, contentment, and interest, according to this theory, promote the development of personal strengths and resources. This can lead to an increase in well-being, which in turn leads to more positive emotions, creating an upward spiral that feeds itself. When researching FLE, the implications of Broaden-and-Build Theory cannot be understated, as language teaching practice can become a powerful tool to improve students' SWB and vice versa. Students' SWB can help them to have more FLE with the well-documented positive implication on the effective learning of the language (Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff 2021b). Another fundamental element has to be brought into the equation; in this increasingly globalised world where human mobility has created the need to master more than one language, we still need to investigate the emotions experienced by multilingual individuals and whether the degree of multilingualism mediates positive emotions. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the overall levels of well-being and stress that impact positive emotions experienced in the classroom. It also needs to be researched whether individual differences such as the degree of multilingualism can have a mediating effect on how learners experience their lives inside and outside the classroom.

Literature review

The present study investigates FLE as a dependent variable in relation to three independent variables: SWB, PS, and DM.

Foreign Language Enjoyment

FLE recently is defined as 'a broad, overarching positive emotional variable that is designed to encapsulate a positive disposition toward the FL learning process, toward peers, and toward teachers' (Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff 2020a, 4). The systematic study of this emotion in the language classroom is still nascent, fuelled by the development and the validation of the FLE scale (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014) that is used worldwide and has been translated into many different languages. The first version of the FLE scale was employed to collect data from 1,742 learners of English from across the world and included 21 items. This pioneering study was inspired by PP and aimed to understand the relation between positive and negative emotions in the language classroom. The analysis of the data revealed that FLE and FLCA were weakly correlated, leading to the conclusion that they could be experienced simultaneously in the same individual with different ratios. Enjoyment was also investigated in relation to socio-biographical variables, and the data revealed a correlation between the level of Enjoyment and the number of languages spoken. The same set of data was further investigated in a subsequent study (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2016) using the Principal Component Analysis: the findings showed that Enjoyment has two dimensions, which the authors term the Social Factor and the Private Factor. The Social Factor was constituted using variables such as the group of peers, a collaborative atmosphere in the classroom, and an encouraging teacher. The Private Factor aggregated variables like lack of boredom, being proud of one's achievements, and

enjoying the class. The same set of data was subsequently analyzed in the work of Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff (2020a), focusing on whether FLE and FLCA could be associated with the level of multilingualism and the self-perception of mastering the foreign language. This new analysis was conducted on a sample of 1622 individuals, with the results confirming that multilingualism was associated with higher levels of enjoyment and lower levels of anxiety in FL learners. The relation between multilingualism and FLE is not yet apparent since other studies such as Dewaele et al. (2018) have revealed no statistical significance. As noted in Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff (2021b), 'As FLE has only been in the applied linguistics research sphere for a mere 6 years, it is not surprising that conclusions about demographic differences cannot yet be made. Considerable future research is therefore needed' (p.6).

Well-being and stress

After nearly two decades of studies on what contributes to a good life, Seligman (2011) captured in the acronymous PERMA (Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning in life, and Accomplishment) the characteristics that make life worth living. The PERMA model has been employed in SLA. Helgesen (2016), for example, developed English language teaching activities that bridged the development of further language skills and Well-Being, such as expressing gratitude, giving compliments, and silver lining activities.

Oxford and Cuéllar (2014) analyzed the personal narratives of five students learning Chinese in Mexico through PERMA, suggesting that language learning can become a source of Well-Being and self-discovery. Oxford (2016, 2018) extended this model of Well-Being to a new model that includes aspects relevant to SLA. She captured the key concepts of well-being for SLA in the acronym EMPHATICS: 'E: emotion and empathy; M: meaning and motivation; P: perseverance, including resilience; A: agency and autonomy; T: time; H: habits of mind; I: intelligence; C: character strengths; and S: self-factors, especially self-efficacy' (Oxford 2018, 27). Although well-being has gained attention in the field, perceived stress and its implication in SLA are still quite obscure. Anxiety in the language classroom has been investigated with growing interest starting from the pioneering study of Horwitz et al. in (1986) and recently investigated together with FLE (Dewaele and Li 2020). Anxiety is often a consequence of stress, a condition of continual arousal and anxiety (Fink 2016), yet the perceived stress level in SLA remains understudied at best. Stress has been found to have a negative effect on well-being (Chatters 1988; Suh, Diener, and Fujita 1996; Zika and Chamberlain 1987), with positive emotions exerting a protective influence on the cardiovascular effects of negative emotions (Fredrickson and Levenson 1998; Fredrickson et al. 2000). Some positive psychology interventions such as mindfulness are useful in decreasing stress and increasing happiness (Compton 2005; King 2001; Lyubomirsky, Sousa, and Dickerhoof 2006), with the effects of PP interventions being examined primarily in terms of the physiological aspects of stress.

The literature review reveals the gaps that we want to address in this study. Firstly, we support the proposal by Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff (2021b) to further investigate FLE in relation to individual differences, specifically multilingualism. Secondly, inspired by Oxford and Cuéllar (2014), we give space to positive and negative affects outside the classroom to see whether they affect FLE in the language classroom and disentangle the way they interweave with multilingualism. Consequently, this study contributes to the field in extending the research of positive emotion in LOTEs.

Research questions

R1: What is the relation between PS, SWB, and FLE in the multilingual learner?
R2: Does the DM (trilingual and bilingual) influence the way they experience SWB, PS, and FLE?

Methods

Participants

The sample consisted of n = 68 university students in Turkey. The average age of the sample was 21.8 years (SD = 3.6). Most participants were female (n = 50). Participants were learning Italian (n = 35) and French (n = 33) at A1 (beginners) level. Turkish is the native language of all the participants; the group learning French had a C1 level of English, and they were enrolled in an EFL teaching degree programme. The group learning Italian had a B2 level in French and in English, and they were enrolled in an interpreting degree programme (Table 1). The data were collected via an online questionnaire. To collect data for this study, the convenience sampling technique (Dörnyei 2007) was employed.

Materials

The study was conducted using an online survey tool (Google form). The questionnaire started with a demographic questionnaire followed by three survey measures to assess Subjective Well-Being, Perceived Stress, and Foreign Language Enjoyment. All the three full scales are presented in the Appendix section.

1. Subjective Well-Being (SWB): To assess levels of Well-Being, participants were asked to complete the validated Turkish version of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (SWEMWBS) (Keldal 2015). The SWEMWBS was developed to identify levels of positive mental health and includes conceptions of well-being such as hedonic and flourishing accounts (living a meaningful and fulfilling life) (Tennant et al. 2007).

Permission to use this scale was granted by email by the copyright owner. The scale measures general levels of perceived well-being with 14 items posed as positive statements, i.e. 'I've been feeling optimistic about the future'. Participants were asked to rate how often they agree with the statement on a 5-points Likert response scale, with 1 indicating 'never' and 5 indicating 'always'. Reliability statistics were satisfactory for the 14 items (see Table 2). Possible scores for this task range from 14 to 70, with higher scores indicating higher positive mental well-being. Participants had a good level of SWB (mean: 52.7; SD: 9.2).

2. Perceived Stress: To measure participants' appraisal of life situations as stressful, the validated Turkish version of the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (Yerlikaya & İnanç, 2007) was employed. The scale consists of 14 items and asks participants to rate how often they experience a certain feeling and thought. Items were posed as questions, i.e. 'In the last months, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?' Participants have to respond on a 5-point Likert response scale, with 1 indicating 'never' and 5 'very often'. In this task, scores ranged from 14 to 70, with higher score associated with a higher level of stress. Participants revealed a moderate level of perceived Stress (Mean: 45,47; SD:4,96). Statistics were satisfactory (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2010) (see Table 2).
3. Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE): To measure Foreign Language Enjoyment, participants were given a translated version of the Short Form of the Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES) developed by Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff (2021a) and based on the original 21 items scale used in Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014). The questionnaire was translated by a professional

Table 1. Demographic Data.

Gender	Female	Male
	50	16
Age	mean	std
	21,9	3,7
Number of LX spoken	2 (Turkish and English)	3 (Turkish, French and English)
	33	35

Table 2. Reliability Statistics for the Variables (Cronbach's Alpha).

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
SWB	0.895	14
PSS	0.655	14
FLE	0,858	9

native speaker Turkish translator and reviewed by two university professors. Participants were asked to rate to what extent they agreed with the statements in the questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating 'strongly disagree' and 5 indicating 'strongly agree'. All items were positively phrased and included sentences such as 'I enjoy it,' and 'I don't get bored'. Scale analyses revealed high internal consistency (see Table 2). In this task, scores ranged from 9 to 45, and the participants revealed a high level of FLE (mean: 35,58; SD: 5,26).

Statistical analysis

Data analysis was carried out in different phases, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 23). The four study variables (DM, FLE, WB, and PS) were subjected to the first exploratory data analysis. Although the sample size required to assess the internal validity of a tool is still being debated, Conroy (2018) suggests that a sample of 30 subjects can be sufficient. However, it should be noted that the tools employed in this study have already been validated for internal consistency in a large number of studies. Thus, we considered our sample size (68 subjects) sufficient to conduct that Cronbach's alfa test that confirmed satisfactory internal consistency (Table 2) (Cortina 1993). Kolmogorov–Smirnov tests with Lilliefors Significance Correction were performed, and the FLE distribution was found to be normal ($KS = 0.094$, $p > .05$). The calculation of the Q– Q plot (Figures 1) indicates that they follow a normal distribution fairly well. Correlation analysis was used to investigate the research questions, followed by multiple regression analysis (enter method). The regression analysis was followed by a t-test to see if there was a significant difference in the degree of multilingualism. Bootstrapped statistics were used to avoid Type I and Type II errors caused by the small sample size (Plonsky and Oswald 2014).

Results

SWB, PS, and FLE in multilingual individuals learning an additional language

To answer the first research question on the relation between PS, SWB and FLE in multilingual learners, a Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted, revealing a significant positive correlation between PS and FLE ($r(68) = 0{,}330$, $p < .006$) and SWB and FLE ($r(68) = 0{,}470$, $p < .001$). The size of this correlation can be described as weak and medium, respectively (Plonsky and Oswald 2014). Bootstrapped confidence intervals (95%) resampling confirmed a positive correlation between PS and FLE and SWB and FLE (Table 1). In other words, the results of the correlations indicated that the more students experience stress, the more they enjoy the FL class (with a very small effect size). The same is seen with SWB: the happier students feel, the more they enjoy their class (with a medium effect size). It is interesting that no correlation, either positive or negative, was found for PS and SWB, as though, for the multilingual individual, they are two distinct affects.

To identify the strongest predictors of FLE, the most suitable analysis was a regression. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggest that the minimum sample size for any regression should be 50 + 8 participants per every explanatory variable; in this study, the minimum size required for 3 explanatory variables was 74. Consequently, our sample was considered a bit small. For this reason, bootstrap analysis was added to this regression.

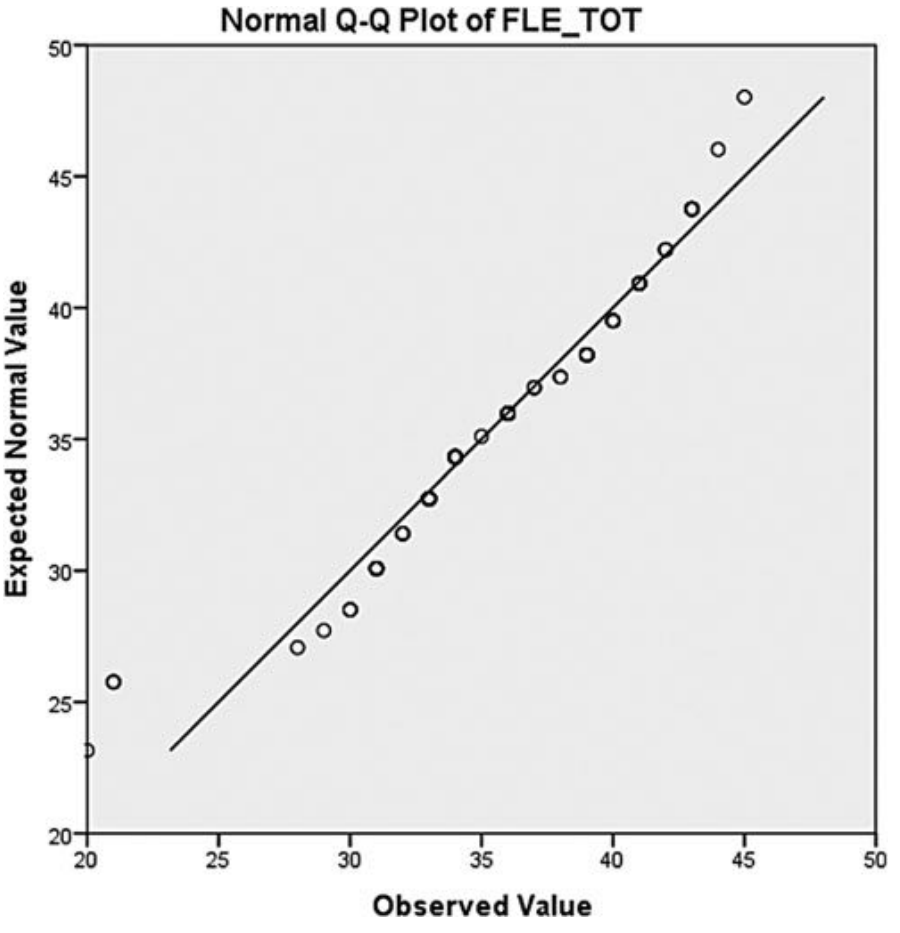


Figure 1. Normal Q-Q Plot of FLE.

Pearson's correlations in Table 3 show significant correlations, yet Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) that the risk of multicollinearity occurs with values as high as or higher than r = 0.70; consequently, we met the assumptions to run a regression analysis.

Multiple regression analysis (enter method) was used (Figure 2). Values for the variance inflation factor (VIF), which quantifies the severity of multi-collinearity, were around 1; Kutner et al. (2004) suggest a value higher than 5 imply multi-collinearity; consequently, the data in this study are assumed to be risk-free. We found a significant regression equation for FLE, indicating that the SWB and PS predicted 26% of the variance (adjusted $R^2 = 0.257$ $F(2, 65) = 12{,}57$ $p = .001$). The bootstrap for coefficient revealed that the strongest predictors were WB ($\beta = .421$, $t = 3.2$ $p < .001$), PS ($\beta = .246$, $t = 2.8$ $p < .044$). SWB explained the 24% of the results, with PS an additional 2%. According to Plonsky and Ghanbar (2018), the results for SWB have to be considered a small to medium effect size, the effect of PS is statistically significant but very small.

To test the second research question, whether the DM (being bilingual or trilingual) influences the way SWB, PS, and FLE are experienced, a bootstrap T-Test was conducted (Table 4). It revealed that the only significant result was for FLE with students who know three languages experiencing significantly more FLE when compared with bilingual students, who were at 95% CI [0.25, 1.13].

Table 3. Correlations' Results.

				CORRELATIONS		
				STRESS	FLE	SWB
STRESS	Pearson's Correlation			1	0,333	0,199
	Sig. (2-tailed)				0,006	0,103
	N			68	68	68
	Bootstrap	Bias		0	−0,004	0,005
		Std. Error		0	0,103	0,134
		95% Confidence Interval				
			Lower	1	0,107	−0,107
			Upper	1	0,516	0,457
FLE	Pearson's Correlation			0,330	1	0,470
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0,006		0
	N			68	68	68
	Bootstrap	Bias		−0,004	0	−0,002
		Std. Error		0,103	0	0,102
		95% Confidence Interval				
			Lower	0,107	1	0,246
			Upper	0,516	1	0,651
SWB	Pearson's Correlation			0,199	0,470	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0,103	0	
	N			68	68	68
	Bootstrap	Bias		−0,005	−0,002	0
		Std. Error		0,134	0,102	0
		95% Confidence Interval				
			Lower	0,071	0,246	1
			Upper	0,457	0,651	1

Bootstrap results are based on 2000 samples

Discussion

This study explains the relationship among WB, PS, DM, and classroom positive emotions. To the best of our knowledge, the present study is the first to investigate the role of a positive emotion in the classroom in relation to the general level of well-being and stress in a multilingual population.

The study confirmed that multilingualism influences the level of FLE in learning a new language while having no effect outside the classroom on WB and on PS. On the other hand, in this particular population of multilingual young adults, the general level of WB and PS do not seem to be correlated, but they both exert an influence on the way FLE is experienced in the classroom. The finding that the level of WB and PS is not correlated may seem unexpected, given the fact that it is a common conception that stress impedes well-being and that a high level of well-being excludes stress. However, research has not yet definitively clarified the nature of the relation between well-being and stress. For instance, Watson and Tellegen (1985) found that stress and well-being are independent and that it is possible for an individual to experience both the states simultaneously;

Table 4. Bootstrap T-Test Results.

			Bootstrap				
		mean difference	Bias	Std. Error	Sig.(2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
SWB	Equal variances assumed	0,404	0,009	−0,235		0,084	−0,843
	Equal variances not assumed	0,404	0,404	−0,235		0,084	−0,843
FLE	Equal variances assumed	0,078	1E-05	0,228	0,003	0,253	1,133
	Equal variances not assumed	0,078	1E-05	0,228	0,003	0,253	−0,843
PS	Equal variances assumed	−0,065	0,001	0,246	0,784	0,566	−0,411
	Equal variances not assumed	−0,065	0,001	0,246	0,783	0,566	−0,411

Bootstrap results are based on 2000 samples

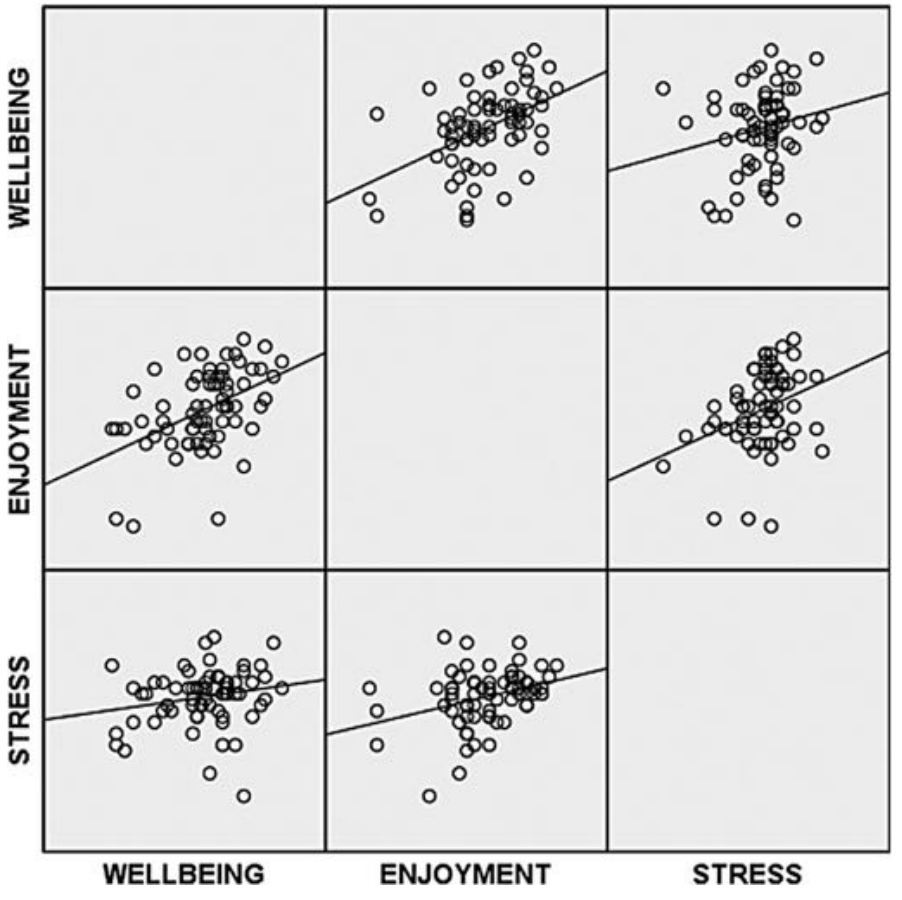


Figure 2. Multiple Regression's Data Distribution.

subsequent studies (Feldman Barrett and Russell 1998; Carroll et al. 1999) have confirmed the independence of positive and negative effects. On the other hand, Schiffrin, Rezendes, and Nelson-Coffey (2009) support an inverse correlation between the two affects: an increase in a positive affect corresponds to a lower level of negative affect. Our results support the claim of Watson and Tellegen (1985); at least in this specific population, a high level of well-being seems to coexist independently with a moderately high level of stress. Recent literature on the buffering effect of positive emotions (Pe and Kuppens 2012; Winterich, Han, and Lerner 2010) has proposed that positive emotions may play a role in mitigating negative affects and boosting positive ones. Our data were collected during the Covid-19 pandemic, in a period of uncertainty, when feeling stressed was common and understandable. In principle, we can advocate that the positive emotions experienced in the FL class (both the groups demonstrated a high level of FLE) may have also served to control the level of stress in everyday life outside the classroom, confirming the finding of Oxford and Cuéllar (2014) that learning a new language improves the subjects' general well-being. In this line of reasoning, we can also propose that FLE may not only have a buffering effect on stress but also boost the level of well-being in a moment in where young adults suffer a high level of stress in Turkey (Metin, Çetinkaya, and Erbiçer 2021) and the rest of the world.

The regression analysis revealed that both SWB and PS influence how students enjoy the language classroom: the effect size of SWB on FLE is moderate, it explains the 24% of FLE, the contribution of PS to FLE is statistically significant but it has a very small effect size (2%). However we still retain the model, as PS significantly contributes to FLE and its role became clearer in reference

to previous studies of Flow (the state of optimal experience, Csikszentmihalyi 2014). In this state, individuals are fully absorbed in their pursuit, and enjoyment, along with a moderate level of stress, appears to play an important role in achieving this optimal state of mind (Peifer and Tan 2021; Peifer et al. 2014; Tozman et al. 2015). The data of this study support findings of Dewale and MacIntyre (2019, 2021) who investigated Flow along with other individual differences, in relation to the degree of multilingualism, in 232 learners of Spanish as an FL from different parts of the world. Their study confirmed that the state of Flow was positively correlated to a higher degree of multilingualism.

Our data confirm previous findings on multilingualism and FLE (Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff 2020a; Dewale and MacIntyre 2019). The level of multilingualism enhances the level of enjoyment experienced in the classroom in a statistically significant way. It is possible that having already successfully learned more than one foreign language makes students confident in their ability to learn a new one or that students enrolled to learn their third foreign language may be those that are *per se* motivated and find pleasure in learning a new language. This study does not univocally lead to a conclusion on the possible bidirectionality or upward spirality proposed by Fredrickson (2004, 2013). However, the particular situation in which those data were collected (the Covid Pandemic) makes us infer that the FLE experienced in the classroom reduced the stress of the pandemic and improved the SWB. On the basis of this investigation, we feel that more studies on the directionality of positive emotions and SWB in the language classroom are not only desirable but necessary; meanwhile some implications can be drawn. Firstly, the students cannot be seen only in the frozen frame of the classroom; what happens in the classroom is influenced by what is going on holistically in the student's life. Further, given the importance of the teacher in fostering positive emotions in the classroom (Dewaele and Li 2020; Dewaele and Li 2020; Dewaele 2019), it is critical that all FL teachers become aware of the moral responsibility they bear while teaching. Second, the United Nations included well-being as one of the sustainable development goals in 2015 (McCowan 2019). The fact that multilingualism, a highly desirable skill in the globalised world, not only directly affects the level of FLE but it may also improve the level of SWB and buffers PS, should prompt policymakers to consider how to encourage the learning of more than one foreign language.

This study is not without flaws. Firstly, the size of the participants was small and may have reduced the robustness of the statistical analysis; we believe that the use of bootstrap analysis contributed to improve the reliability of analysis. Secondly, qualitative data that could have given an insight into the individual dynamics underlying FLE, MWB, and PS and added robustness to the study were lacking. We acknowledge that future studies should use a mixed-method design to capture and disentangle the complexities of the relationship between affects and emotions. We believe that next researches in the field should have a mixed-method design, and collect data more than in one single point in time, this would aid in understanding the nature and direction of the relationship between emotions in the language classroom. Nevertheless, we believe that the results of this study have to be shared because, though embryonic, they suggest that SWB, PS, and numbers of the language spoken fuel positive emotions in the classroom.

Conclusion

Research in the field of positive emotions in the foreign language classroom has blossomed in the last few years thanks to the introduction of positive psychology in SLA that encourages scholars to focus on what is going well in the class. Enjoyment in the FL classroom has received particular attention, thanks to the existence of a validated scale (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014) that allows scholars to collect reliable data on this emotion. The result of this study contributes differently to the field. Firstly, the study confirms that the level of multilingualism positively influences enjoyment (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014; Botes, Dewaele, and Greiff 2020b). Secondly, it confirms that stress and well-being can be found in the same individual at the same time, confirming that those two affects are independent (Watson and Tellegen 1985). Thirdly, it shows, as expected, that SWB has a moderate effect on FLE but also that stress contributes to experience FLE. Finally, this study

has extended the research on FLE to a multilingual population that is learning a language other than English, while most of the research in the field is on EFL. It strongly indicates the need for further studies considering students as a whole, not freezing them in the framework of the classroom but trying to understand the person beyond the class.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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Appendix

SWEMWBS scale

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts.
Please mark the number that best describes your experience of
each over the last 2 weeks
(1= None of the time, 2= Rarely, 3= Some of the time, 4 = often, 5= All of the time)
I've been feeling optimistic about the future
I've been feeling useful
I've been feeling relaxed
I've been dealing with problems well
I've been thinking clearly
I've been feeling close to other people
I've been able to make up my own mind about things

FLE scale

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree)

1. The teacher is encouraging
2. The teacher is friendly
3. The teacher is supportive
4. I enjoy it
5. I've learned interesting things
6. I am proud of my accomplishments
7. We form a tight group
8. We laugh a lot
9. We have common 'legends,' such as running jokes

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

For each question choose from the following alternatives:

(1 = never, 2 =almost never, 3 = sometimes, 4 = fairly often, 5 = very often)
1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?
2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control important things in your life?
3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and 'stressed'?

4. In the last month, how often have you dealt successfully with irritating life hassles?
5. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were effectively coping with important changes that were occurring in your life?
6. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?
7. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?
8. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?
9. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?
10. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?
11. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that happened that were outside of your control?
12. In the last month, how often have you found yourself thinking about things that you have to accomplish?
13. In the last month, how often have you been able to control the way you spend your time?
14. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?