Foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and classroom anxiety among Chinese non-English majors

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Abstract

China has risen to prominence in the global corporate world. Hence, the need for its competitive edge has expanded dramatically over the past decade to maintain its position in the worldwide realm. With such a dynamic playing field, keeping up with the strong and flexible communication channels that may ensure a transparent transmission of information between transacting parties remains a key priority. With that, this study intended to establish the relationships between foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and classroom anxiety among Chinese non-English majors. It aimed to propose a language learning program to help improve the Chinese non-English Majors' EFL learning. The study used 385 Chinese non-English majors from selected university of China. It employed a descriptive research design specifically the correlation and comparative approaches in which the survey questionnaire was the main instrument of the study. The statistical tools applied to data analysis were frequency, percentage, rank, weighted mean, composite mean, Spearman rho and ANOVA. The study revealed that the majority of students were males, with freshmen and juniors evenly distributed. Arts was the most common major. Respondents indicated engagement in private, teacher, and atmospheric aspects of foreign language learning, with teacher engagement ranking the highest and private engagement the lowest. Participants generally agreed on beliefs related to language aptitude, motivation, learning difficulty, communication strategies, and the nature of language learning. They confirmed experiencing foreign classroom language anxiety, particularly negative evaluation, communication, test, and overall language anxiety. Based on the results, the study recommends that language teachers should create a positive classroom environment, emphasizing student engagement and embracing errors as opportunities for growth. Also, learning institutions may foster a multilingual culture by endorsing the use of multiple languages within the academic community, supporting interactions between students and staff from diverse linguistic backgrounds, and offering language exchange initiatives, web-based learning platforms, and cultural activities to encourage students' engagement with the target language beyond the classroom.

Keywords: foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, classroom anxiety, Chinese non-English major

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1. Introduction

As China positions itself as a global economic and political player, the emphasis on English proficiency for competitive advantage adds complexity to the language acquisition process. Understanding the emotional and belief-based facets of language learning is paramount in tailoring effective language programs that align with the unique needs and experiences of this demographic. The investigation of foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and anxiety among Chinese college non-English majors provides a nuanced lens through which to translate the multifaceted nature of language acquisition in a globalized and competitive world.

In the realm of language acquisition, the significance of positive emotions, captured by the concept of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE), cannot be overstated. Defined as positive affective states emerging from overcoming linguistic challenges and achieving unforeseen outcomes, FLE plays a pivotal role in predicting the performance and well-being of foreign language learners. Drawing on psychological theories like the broaden-and-build theory, FLE expands individuals' thought-action repertoires and cultivates long-lasting personal resources, contributing to physical, intellectual, social, and psychological well-being (Fredrickson, 2004). The importance of FLE is further underscored by its role in creating a positive classroom atmosphere, influencing factors such as motivation and overall proficiency. Cultivating FLE involves considering affective variables such as Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) and employing pedagogical strategies that foster a positive emotional climate in the language learning environment (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2019).

In addition, regarding beliefs about foreign language learning, they play a significant role in shaping students' attitudes and connections to the new language. Based on Horwitz's conceptualization, these beliefs, which are influenced by students' upbringing and relationships, greatly influence their journey in learning a foreign language. The belief model differentiates between enabling beliefs, held by successful language learners, and detrimental beliefs, strongly held by struggling learners. Shifting these beliefs is a process that demands time and effort. Ren and Bai's (2016) study reinforce the significant impact of English learning beliefs on students' achievements in the language. This variable emphasizes the importance of understanding and addressing the underlying beliefs that students bring to their language learning experiences, as these beliefs can significantly shape their attitudes, motivation, and ultimately, their language proficiency outcomes.

Meanwhile, the third critical variable in this study is Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), a comprehensive set of self-perceptions, beliefs, emotions, and actions associated with the process of learning a language in a classroom setting. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a significant emotional factor that can impact students' language learning. College students are still in the process of developing their foreign/second language skills. When individuals are obligated to communicate in this language, they often experience a sense of unease. Despite their limited language proficiency, their communication efforts will be assessed based on uncertain or unfamiliar linguistic and sociocultural norms. Communicating in a second language involves taking risks and can be challenging (Yan & Liang, 2022). Studies, such as those by Fang and Tang (2021) and Tao and He (2021), have delved into the levels of foreign language anxiety among Chinese students, highlighting its potential impact on language acquisition. FLA becomes particularly relevant when considering linguistic divergence, as learners with a greater linguistic distance may experience heightened cognitive decoding efforts. The understanding of FLA is critical for creating an optimal learning environment, addressing emotional factors, and ensuring that language learning experiences are positive and conducive to effective acquisition (Fattahi Marnani & Cuocci, 2022).

Given the context of China's strategic focus on English proficiency for global competitiveness, and the identified importance of these variables, this study aimed to delve into the interplay between foreign language

enjoyment, beliefs in foreign language learning, and foreign language anxiety among college non-English majors in China. The strong background for this research lies in the critical role language plays in effective communication, especially in a globalized economy. China's rise to prominence in the global corporate world has intensified the need for a competitive edge, driving a significant expansion in efforts to maintain its position in the worldwide realm over the past decade. The motivation of Chinese international students to improve their oral English skills increased due to the newfound importance of spoken English in their academic acculturation. However, they faced significant psychological stress during their academic journey due to their limited oral English skills. In addition, as participants became more accustomed to academic culture, their motivation to learn oral English decreased due to a decrease in their perceived expectancy of success (Xing & Bolden, 2019).

Recognizing the importance of language proficiency in business transactions, it is crucial for professionals to have a strong command of foreign languages in order to stay ahead in the market. Recent research has indicated that Chinese students who are not studying English as their major tend to have lower proficiency in the English language compared to their peers who are majoring in English. In addition, the study of language learning involves not only cognitive processes, but also emotional and psychological factors. These factors include the enjoyment of learning a foreign language, beliefs about language acquisition, and anxiety related to learning a new language.

Although there have been some studies on these variables in literature, there is still a need for a more comprehensive understanding of how they interact among Chinese college non-English majors. This gap highlights the importance of conducting a comprehensive study that explores the interplay between foreign language enjoyment, beliefs in foreign language learning, and foreign language anxiety within this particular demographic. Conducting a thorough investigation is essential in order to develop targeted language learning interventions. Through a thorough exploration of these dynamics, the study seeks to offer detailed insights that can guide the creation of specialized language learning programs for Chinese college students who are not majoring in English. This comprehensive approach will provide insights into the complex relationships between emotional states, beliefs, and anxiety in the language learning context, thus providing valuable guidance for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers. In addition, considering the distinct linguistic and cultural background of Chinese non-English majors, the study's results can provide culturally aware suggestions for enhancing language learning experiences and results. In the end, the objective was to not only improve one's language skills, but also to support China's broader goals of global competitiveness by effectively communicating on the international stage.

Objectives of the study - This study intended to establish the relationships between foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and classroom anxiety among Chinese college non-English majors and to propose a plan for improving College Non-English Majors' EFL learning. Specifically, the researcher aimed to determine the degree of the students' foreign language enjoyment in terms of FLE-Private, FLE-Teacher and FLE-Atmosphere; identify the extent of their beliefs in language learning in terms of foreign language aptitude, nature of language learning, difficulty in language learning, motivation and expectations and learning and communication strategies; assess the level of their foreign language classroom anxiety in terms of communication anxiety, negative evaluation anxiety, test the relationships among foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and classroom anxiety; propose an EFL learning program for Chinese non-English majors.

2. Methods

The study utilized the descriptive method of research. This design was the best method for seeking answers concerning relationships and difference analyses regarding the variables. This method was suitable for analyzing the responses of the non-English majors in the research instrument to determine the significant relationships between the variables, such as foreign language enjoyment, beliefs in language learning, and foreign language classroom anxiety. On the other hand, it was deemed effective in analyzing the significant differences in the respondents' responses to the variables under investigation when profiles were considered. In this technique, data were usually collected through a survey questionnaire.

This research delved primarily into assessing the foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and classroom anxiety of college non-English majors. With this goal in mind, the researcher used the college students at one university in China who were non-English majors as the respondents to the study. These students were very qualified to be the main source of information regarding the variables investigated. They were the ones who had direct and at-hand experiences regarding this matter since the study aimed specifically to determine the English learning status of those students who did not take English as their field of specialization. In particular, the researcher used the Raosoft Online Sampling Calculator to determine the sample size of the respondents. Considering the total population of 5643, the number of target respondents was 385 based on the Raosoft calculator, choosing the level of confidence (95%) and margin of error (5%). However, the study used above the minimum samples which was 385. These 385-sample populations were stratified according to college level using proportional allocation sampling. This sampling approach was particularly beneficial when distinct strata had variable sizes and features that had to be correctly captured in the sample. The researcher could be assured that each stratum was appropriately represented in the final sample, reflecting its population percentage.

This investigation relied primarily on a survey questionnaire as its core tool. The findings were further supported and validated through relevant literature. Questionnaires were constructed drawing from various resource as well as statements designed specifically for this study that aimed to determine the enjoyment of foreign languages, beliefs, and classroom anxiety among non-English majors. The questionnaires were formulated based on how the items in the statement of the problem were structured. Consulted with the researcher's professor and faculty experts to strengthen and improve the questions in the questionnaire. The questionnaire's first part was used to measure the respondents' enjoyment of foreign language. It adapted Botes, et al. (2021), Short Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (S-FLES). This scale was composed of three factors, namely, FLE-Private, FLE-Teacher, and FLE-Atmosphere. The scale response was a four-point Likert scale, with 1 being strongly disagree and 4 being strongly agree.

On the other hand, the second part measured the respondents' beliefs about language learning. The researcher used Abdi & Asadi's Beliefs in Language Learning (2015). This was a five-factor model composed of foreign language aptitude, difficulty of language learning, nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivation and expectations. The scale response was a four-point Likert scale, with 1 = strongly disagree and 4 = strongly agree. The last part of the instrument measured the respondents' language classroom anxiety. For this, the researcher adapted and modified Wang, (2010), and Botes, et al. (2020) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was a psychometric instrument designed to measure the level of anxiety experienced by individuals in foreign language learning environments. It had four subparts: communication anxiety, negative evaluation anxiety, test anxiety, and foreign language anxiety. The scale response was a four-point Likert scale, with 1 = strongly disagree and 4 = strongly agree. Furthermore, the above instruments, which were utilized to collect data to answer the objectives of the study, were quite modified to capture the specific situations or activities that triggered enjoyment, beliefs, and anxiety in the context of foreign language learning. Also, other instrument psychometric validation measures were not available in the current literature. Thus, all these instruments underwent pilot testing with 30 non-respondent college students for internal consistency by computing a Cronbach's alpha coefficient, based upon which data were collected from the 30 non-respondents.

Initially, the researcher drafted a letter to the University's ethics board committee to ensure that the implementation of the research undertaking adhered to the ethical practices imposed by the University. Once approved, the researcher sent letters to the target universities for the dissemination or distribution of questionnaires. Once approved, an online survey was conducted through the Wen Juanxing link. The link was sent to the personal email of the respondents known by the researchers. There were two sets of dissemination, one for the pilot testing and the other for the final data gathering. During the pilot testing, the researcher collected data from a sample of not less than 30. Once data were completed, the researcher analyzed it using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to determine the acceptability of the instruments to be used, following the 3-factor loading for foreign language enjoyment, 5-factor loading for language learning beliefs, and 3-factor loading

for self-monitoring. For its convergent validation, the researcher analyzed correlation coefficients between factor loadings. For its reliability testing, the researcher analyzed it using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency reliability. Once the instrument achieved high reliability measures and acceptable CFA and correlation measures for its validation, the final data gathering was pursued. After collecting the data, analysis and interpretation took place with the help of a professional statistician.

Table 1

Reliability Results

Indicators	Cronbach Alpha	Remarks
FLE-Private	0.949	Excellent
FLE-Teacher	0.966	Excellent
FLE-Atmosphere	0.925	Excellent
Foreign Language Aptitude	0.859	Good
Nature of Language Learning	0.734	Acceptable
Difficulty in Language Learning	0.803	Good
Motivations and Expectations	0.886	Good
Learning and Communications Strategies	0.913	Excellent
Communication anxiety	0.937	Excellent
Negative evaluation anxiety	0.904	Excellent
Test anxiety	0.978	Excellent
Foreign language anxiety	0.921	Excellent

George and Mallery (2003) provide the following rules of thumb: "_ > .9 – Excellent, _ > .8 – Good, _ > .7 – Acceptable, _ > .6 – Questionable, _ > .5– Poor, and _ < .5 – Unacceptable"

To generate reliable and valid results, the following statistical treatments were used in this study: mean and composite mean were used to determine the extent of respondents' foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and classroom anxiety. Also, the Spearman rho was used in the study. It was used to test the significant correlations between the respondents' level of foreign language enjoyment, beliefs, and classroom anxiety. The ethical considerations that this study rigorously observed involved voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, safety from harm, and results communication. Voluntary participation allowed the samples to autonomously participate without coercion or manipulation. They were instructed that withdrawal from participating might be permitted anytime during the process of their engagement if they perceived risks. The questionnaire had a portion for informed consent from the participants. Anonymity was observed using numerical representation instead of names. Confidentiality was assured using password-protected data files. There were no known risks associated with their participation, as these questionnaires were distributed online using the Wen Juanxing link.

3. Results and discussion

Table 2

Summary Table on Foreign Language Engagement

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
FLE – Private	2.75	Agree	3
FLE – Teacher	3.12	Agree	1
FLE – Atmosphere	3.04	Agree	2
Composite Mean	2.97	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

As reflected in Table 2, the highest composite mean of 3.12 was received by FLE- Teacher. It was followed by 3.04 composite mean of FLE- Atmosphere. Finally, FLE-Private had the lowest composite mean of 2.75. All these foreign language engagement indicators were assessed by the respondents as agree with a composite mean of 2.97. In total, the level of foreign language engagement of the non-English major Chinese students was high with an average composite mean of 2.97. The findings indicate that the participants have a general inclination towards motivation in acquiring proficiency in a foreign language. This behavior may have originated from their recognition of the positive impact that English language skill can have on their professional possibilities, educational advancement, and ability to engage in international discourse. The acknowledgment of their

achievements serves as a driving force for their active participation in the process of learning English. Moreover, the continuous exposure to the English language during their formative years could have fostered a favorable disposition towards the language and motivated them to engage in Foreign Language Education (FLE). In addition, the level of English instruction in Chinese universities has improved substantially. This may have resulted in a cohort of Chinese students who possess a high level of readiness to acquire the English language. In connection, in Shaanxi Province of China, FLE was discovered to have significantly influenced the English proficiency and motivation of university students. In other words, proficient students tend to experience enjoyment in EFL learning more than those who are less proficient. Concurrently, their experience of enjoyment increases their motivation to upgrade their competence (Zhang, et al., 2021).

Table 3

Summary Table on Beliefs in Language Learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Foreign Language Aptitude	3.10	Agree	1
Nature of Language Learning	3.00	Agree	5
Difficulty in Language Learning	3.04	Agree	3
Motivation and Expectation	3.05	Agree	2
Learning and Communication Strategies	3.02	Agree	4
Composite Mean	3.04	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

As shown in Table 3, the highest composite mean of 3.10 was received by Foreign Language Aptitude. It was followed by 3.05 composite mean of Motivation and Expectation. Further, Difficulty in Language Learning had a composite mean of 3.04 and Learning and Communication Strategies garnered a composite mean of 3.02. Nature of Language Learning had the lowest composite mean of 3.00. All these beliefs in Language Learning indicators were assessed by the respondents as agree.

In total, the language learning beliefs of the Chinese non-English major students was high with an average composite mean of 3.04. The results indicate that, on the whole, the participants maintain optimistic perspectives regarding their capacity to acquire English language skills and considered it a significant and valuable undertaking. This was probably attributable to a number of factors, including the growing recognition of the advantages of bilingualism for personal and professional development and the increasing significance of English in China's globalized economy. Further, it suggests that Chinese non-English major students were likely to be motivated to learn English and were more likely to succeed in ELT programs. It also implies that ELT teachers should focus on fostering positive beliefs about language learning in their students. This can be done by creating a supportive and encouraging classroom environment, by providing students with opportunities to use English in meaningful contexts, and by helping students to develop realistic and achievable goals for their English learning. Similarly, the findings are supported by the graduate thesis pursued by Fu (2015) which determined the beliefs of Chinese students on second language acquisition like English. Using a qualitative research design to explore their beliefs, these are the findings they have gathered: A) A second language learner usually learns autonomously. B) A second language learner needs resources to learn English. C) A second language learner experiences negative emotions while learning. D) A second language learner has the desire to be proficient. Following these postulations, the study confirmed that Chinese students hold firm beliefs that are inherent and reflective of their personal and experiential conformation.

Table 4

Summary table on Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Communication Anxiety	2.68	Agree	2
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	2.69	Agree	1
Test Anxiety	2.58	Agree	3
Foreign Language Anxiety	2.57	Agree	4
Composite Mean	2.63	Agree	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50 – 3.49 = Agree; 1.50 – 2.49 = Disagree; 1.00 - 1.49 = Strongly Disagree

As illustrated in Table 4, the highest composite mean of 2.69 was received by Negative Evaluation Anxiety. It was followed by 2.68 composite mean of Communication Anxiety. Further, Test Anxiety had a composite mean of 2.58, ranking 3rd. Finally, Foreign Language Anxiety gained the lowest composite mean of 2.57. All these Foreign Classroom Language Anxiety indicators were assessed by the respondents as agree garnering a composite mean of 2.63. In general, the results imply that the respondents had significant experiences which they deemed as hurdles or challenges in language learning in all the four types of FLCA. These resulted to feeling feelings of discomfort, frustration, self-doubt, anxiety, and worry. Their primary source of foreign language classroom anxiety stems from the sensation of unease experienced by language learners due to their limited linguistic abilities, which hinder their ability to authentically express themselves.

They lack confidence which can lead to self-doubt and negative thoughts, further aggravating anxiety and hindering their progress. Linguistic deficiency is also present which can lead to a feeling of failure and self-consciousness, hindering their ability to communicate effectively and genuinely. They are also burdened by expectations to accomplish high grades, demonstrate fluency, or match with their peers which can further heighten their discomfort and anxiety. They have limited exposure to English outside of the classroom, making it difficult for them to develop the ease and confidence needed to communicate effectively. Their lack of exposure can also lead to feelings of seclusion and a sense of being separate from their English-speaking peers. Undeniably, the acquisition of English as a second language is influenced by a multitude of psychological and linguistic factors, some of which language instructors must appropriately address in order to provide non-English majors with a more supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Similarly, in a study conducted by Rohliah, et al. (2023), it was found that Indonesian students encountered all four categories of foreign language apprehension. They experienced feelings of anxiety, panic, and lack of confidence whenever they were required to communicate in English; dreaded negative evaluations, particularly those from the instructor; felt uneasy during English class exams; and, in certain situations, encountered classroom anxiety. Additionally, it was discovered that while the students did not fear negative judgment from their peers, they harbored animosity toward their instructors. The students feared they would fall behind due to the rapid pace at which the English class proceeded. The students subsequently encountered test anxiety as they lacked confidence in their ability to perform well on English exams and were concerned that they would be failing the course. Nonetheless, they would feel at ease taking the examination if they had adequate prepared.

Table 5
Relationship Between Foreign Language Enjoyment and Beliefs in Language Learning

FLE – Private	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Foreign Language Aptitude	.619**	0.000	Highly Significant
Nature of Language Learning	.573**	0.000	Highly Significant
Difficulty in Language Learning	.431**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivation and Expectation	.650**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learning and Communication Strategies	.609**	0.000	Highly Significant
FLE - Teacher			
Foreign Language Aptitude	.777**	0.000	Highly Significant
Nature of Language Learning	.663**	0.000	Highly Significant
Difficulty in Language Learning	.611**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivation and Expectation	.702**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learning and Communication Strategies	.705**	0.000	Highly Significant
FLE – Atmosphere			
Foreign Language Aptitude	.842**	0.000	Highly Significant
Nature of Language Learning	.758**	0.000	Highly Significant
Difficulty in Language Learning	.654**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivation and Expectation	.743**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learning and Communication Strategies	.739**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 5 illustrates the association between Foreign Language Enjoyment and Beliefs in Language Learning. The calculated R-values manifest an exceedingly strong linear association, and the derived p-values fell below the predetermined alpha level. Result showed that there was significant relationship exists and revealed that the more

that they engaged on foreign language, the better was the beliefs in language learning. The result implies that the positive emotional experiences associated with language learning enjoyment can significantly influence students' beliefs in their language-learning abilities. When students find joy, interest, and satisfaction in the process of acquiring a foreign language, it creates a positive reinforcement loop. This positive affective state is likely to enhance their self-efficacy beliefs, fostering the confidence that they can master the language successfully. As a result, students who enjoy the learning process are more likely to hold optimistic beliefs about their language-learning capabilities. Fredrickson's (2004) vindicated the current results when he claimed that pleasant emotions have the capacity to expand and diversify an individual's range of thoughts and actions in the present instant. The expanded cognitive perspectives resulting from these positive emotions are juxtaposed with the restricted cognitive perspectives triggered by various negative emotions (e.g., certain behavioral inclinations like aggression or avoidance). Consequently, this process contributes to the development of the individual's personal resources, encompassing physical, intellectual, social, and psychological aspects which also includes language learning and acquisition.

Also, teaching methods that prioritize engagement, interaction, and meaningful communication can contribute to students' enjoyment of foreign language learning. When instructors create a supportive and dynamic learning environment, students are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward the language acquisition process. This enjoyment can translate into favorable beliefs about the efficacy of the chosen teaching methods and the overall feasibility of language mastery. More so, positive interactions with peers, teachers, and native speakers can enhance the overall enjoyment of the learning experience. When students feel a sense of community and support in their language-learning endeavors, it positively influences their beliefs in their own capabilities to learn and use the language effectively. This was reinforced by the findings of Bai (2023) that from the perspective of teachers, they think teachers play an important role in relieving students' language anxiety and develop foreign language enjoyment. To facilitate peer interaction and enhance English speaking practice, they intentionally allocate extra time for collaborative pair activities and design more captivating exercises. In their initial session, they introduced dialogic abilities to the class and proposed study techniques. Furthermore, while students encountered mistakes, they aimed to alleviate any potential humiliation by approaching them with warmth and support. They consistently offer encouragement to pupils when they engage in answering queries. The students are found to have greater enjoyment and beliefs in learning the language when they have supporting and motivating environment.

Table 6
Relationship Between Foreign Language Enjoyment and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

FLE – Private	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Communication Anxiety	0.043	0.399	Not Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	0.055	0.281	Not Significant
Test Anxiety	-0.091	0.076	Not Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	-0.031	0.550	Not Significant
FLE - Teacher			
Communication Anxiety	.223**	0.000	Highly Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	.266**	0.000	Highly Significant
Test Anxiety	.119*	0.020	Highly Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	.166**	0.001	Highly Significant
FLE – Atmosphere			
Communication Anxiety	.247**	0.000	Highly Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	.300**	0.000	Highly Significant
Test Anxiety	.139**	0.006	Highly Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	.183**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 6 displays the association between Foreign Language Enjoyment and Foreign Classroom Language Anxiety. The computed R-values indicates a moderate direct correlation and the resulted p-values were less than the alpha level except on FLE - Private. Result showed that there was significant relationship existed and revealed that the more that they engaged on foreign language, the higher the level of anxiety on classroom language. This reveals that the role of the teacher is pivotal in shaping students' language learning experiences. A positive and supportive teacher-student relationship can contribute to a sense of trust, encouragement, and enjoyment in the

learning process. When teachers create a warm and inclusive atmosphere, students are more likely to feel comfortable and motivated, thereby reducing anxiety. Conversely, a negative or unsupportive teacher-student dynamic can contribute to heightened anxiety levels as students may fear judgment, criticism, or a lack of understanding. The classroom atmosphere and environment also play a crucial role. A positive and stimulating learning environment can enhance students' overall enjoyment of the learning process. Factors such as a collaborative atmosphere, interactive teaching methods, and a supportive peer community contribute to a more positive language learning experience. On the contrary, a stressful or unwelcoming classroom environment can exacerbate anxiety, hindering students' ability to enjoy the learning process.

As supported by the affective filter hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1981) as cited in Cherry (2021) suggests that anxiety can act as a filter that impedes language acquisition. When anxiety is high, particularly in the language learning context, it can create a mental block that hinders the natural process of acquiring new linguistic skills. Conversely, a positive and enjoyable language learning experience can lower this affective filter, allowing for a more efficient and less anxiety-inducing language acquisition process. Furthermore, the importance of authority figures, such as teachers, in the Chinese educational context can amplify the impact of teacher-student relationships and classroom atmosphere on language learning enjoyment and anxiety. Students may be more susceptible to the influence of their teachers, and the classroom environment can significantly shape their emotional experiences. The finding was parallel with that of Liu et al. (2022) that educators may construct tasks that marginally exceed students' English proficiency levels, thus provoking a healthy sense of anxiety that can stimulate greater effort. Concurrently, learners should undertake efforts within their capacity, such as adequate preparation, increased practice, and maintaining concentration during classes, to optimize their learning experience. However, this was in contrast in the findings of Dewaele et al. (2018) when he revealed that most causes for both language classroom anxiety and enjoyment were learner-related, meaning that teachers were not the main source of students' anxiety and enjoyment in class.

Table 7
Relationship Between Beliefs in Language Learning and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

Foreign Language Aptitude	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Communication Anxiety	.309**	0.000	Highly Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	.342**	0.000	Highly Significant
Test Anxiety	.176**	0.001	Highly Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	.209**	0.000	Highly Significant
Nature of Language Learning			
Communication Anxiety	.377**	0.000	Highly Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	.414**	0.000	Highly Significant
Test Anxiety	.246**	0.000	Highly Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	.274**	0.000	Highly Significant
Difficulty in Language Learning			
Communication Anxiety	.479**	0.000	Highly Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	.496**	0.000	Highly Significant
Test Anxiety	.357**	0.000	Highly Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	.348**	0.000	Highly Significant
Motivation and Expectation			
Communication Anxiety	.314**	0.000	Highly Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	.335**	0.000	Highly Significant
Test Anxiety	.166**	0.001	Highly Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	.194**	0.000	Highly Significant
Learning and Communication Strategies			
Communication Anxiety	.363**	0.000	Highly Significant
Negative Evaluation Anxiety	.400**	0.000	Highly Significant
Test Anxiety	.216**	0.000	Highly Significant
Foreign Language Anxiety	.269**	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: Significant at p-value < 0.01

Table 7 depicts the connection between convictions regarding Language Acquisition and Anxiety in Foreign Classroom Settings. The calculated r-coefficients suggest a moderate, direct link, while the derived p-values fell below the alpha threshold. Consequently, a substantial association is evident, suggesting that stronger beliefs in

language learning correspond to heightened anxiety levels in classroom linguistic environments.

This may mean that the students' beliefs in their language learning abilities, encompassing self-efficacy and attributions for success or failure, deeply impact their anxiety levels. Positive beliefs can act as a buffer against anxiety, fostering confidence and resilience, while negative beliefs may contribute to heightened stress and apprehension. In addition, the high value placed on education in Chinese society, coupled with the pressure to excel in language learning, creates a context where beliefs about language proficiency are closely tied to personal and societal expectations. The fear of not meeting these expectations, rooted in a face-saving culture, adds a layer of complexity to the relationship between beliefs and anxiety.

On the other hand, the alignment of teaching methods with students' beliefs plays a pivotal role. Effective teaching methods that resonate with students' preferred learning styles can mitigate anxiety, whereas a mismatch may exacerbate stress. Additionally, the perceived stakes of assessments and the constant scrutiny of performance contribute to students' anxiety levels. Social comparison with peers can impact how students perceive their own language abilities, influencing their anxiety levels. Creating a supportive peer community and fostering collaboration rather than competition could potentially alleviate anxiety. To address foreign language classroom anxiety among Chinese non-English major college students, it is essential to consider and address their beliefs, fostering a positive and supportive learning environment that acknowledges and accommodates the diverse influences at play in their language learning journey. Abu-Rabia et al. (2014) discovered a negative link between linguistic abilities and language anxiety, indicating that students with linguistic deficiencies experience communication anxiety. Taken together, social and interpersonal factors such as psychological separation and a psychological safety environment, as well as individual characteristics, are assumed to be integrally associated to communication apprehension.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The respondents affirmed that they possessed foreign language engagement in terms of private, teacher, and atmosphere. Among these, teacher ascribed engagement was reported as the highest, while private or personal engagement was reported as the lowest. The participants confirmed their overall agreement on the given beliefs regarding foreign language aptitude, nature of language learning, difficulty in language learning, motivations and expectations, and learning and communication strategies. Based on these indications, aptitude was determined to be the highest and the nature of language acquisition to be the lowest. The participants verified that they experienced foreign language classroom anxiety. They agreed to experience communication anxiety, negative evaluation anxiety, test anxiety, and foreign language anxiety. Additionally, they recognized that the primary factor contributing to their Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) was the fear of poor evaluation, while foreign language anxiety had the least impact. There were positive correlations among the evaluated factors. The study unveiled a significant relationship between students' level of engagement in foreign language learning and their beliefs about language acquisition. Furthermore, the greater their involvement in a foreign language, the more elevated their anxiety levels become in the language classroom. Ultimately, the stronger the beliefs regarding language acquisition, the greater the level of anxiety experienced in the language classroom.

Language teachers may cultivate a positive and supportive classroom environment, encouraging students to actively participate and viewing errors as opportunities for growth rather than setbacks, employing positive reinforcement, setting clear goals, offering low-risk opportunities for language practice, and fostering peer collaboration. Non-English major students may challenge negative perceptions, such as the belief that learning English is inherently difficult, seeking support to develop a growth mindset in language acquisition, emphasizing the importance of effort, persistence, and effective learning strategies; establishing achievable goals and providing accurate information about the pace and challenges associated with language learning can prevent discouragement. Teachers may aid non-English major students in overcoming language classroom anxiety by providing feedback, helping them understand their strengths and limitations, and thereby enhancing language proficiency; assisting students in developing effective coping mechanisms to manage anxiety and minimize its impact on language

acquisition is crucial. Learning institutions may contribute to a culture of multilingualism by actively supporting the use of multiple languages within the academic community, facilitating interactions between individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds, and providing resources for language acquisition beyond formal education, such as language exchange initiatives, online language learning platforms, and cultural activities that encourage students to engage fully with the target language outside the classroom. Future researchers may enhance the scope of this study by exploring additional variables that have not been examined in the current research, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

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