

**UNIVERSITAT DE VALÈNCIA**

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**FACULTAT DE MAGISTERI**

**DEPARTAMENT DE DIDÀCTICA DE LA LLENGUA I LA LITERATURA**

**PROGRAMA: DIDÀCTICAS ESPECÍFICAS**



**ANXIETY AND SELF-RELATED CONSTRUCTS IN LEARNERS WHO  
STUTTER IN THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

**TESIS DOCTORAL**

**Presentada por:**

**Ronan Miller**

**Dirigida por:**

**Dra. Dña. María Dolores García-Pastor**

**Valencia, Octubre 2019**



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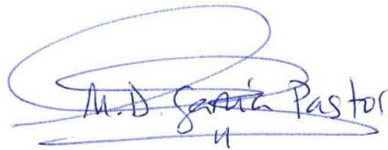
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**CERTIFICA/N:**

Que la presente memoria, titulada "Anxiety and self-related constructs in learners who stutter in English as a foreign language learning", corresponde al trabajo realizado bajo su dirección por Don Ronan Luke Miller, para su presentación como Tesis Doctoral en el Programa de Doctorado en Didácticas específicas de la Universitat de València.

Y para que conste firma/n el presente certificado en Valencia, a 16 de septiembre de 2019.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop at the top, followed by the text "M. D. García Pastor" and a small mark below it.

Fdo. María Dolores García Pastor

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# ANXIETY AND SELF-RELATED CONSTRUCTS IN LEARNERS WHO STUTTER IN THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
FLCAS	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
IWDNS	Individual(s) Who Do Not Stutter
IWS	Individual(s) Who Stutter
L1	First/Native/Primary Language
L2	Second/Foreign/Additional Language
LWDNS	Learner(s) Who Do Not Stutter
LWS	Learner(s) Who Stutter
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SLSAS	Specific Language Skills Anxiety Scale
TEFL	Teaching of English as a Foreign Language
FLCAS	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

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## **Introduction**

All around the world the learning and teaching of foreign languages has become an established part of educational curricula. To delve into this, scholars in language education and second language acquisition have drawn upon various approaches in an attempt to explain factors that can influence the progress of learners as well as the role teachers play in stimulating language acquisition.

Due to a variety of historical, geopolitical, and socio-cultural reasons, English is now established as a language with global influence (Pennycook, 1989; Canagarajah, 2006), becoming a focus of foreign language learning and instruction, and giving place to an important research area within the field of language education known as Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). The theoretical basis of TEFL research is strongly influenced by the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). SLA is a broad and inherently multidisciplinary field, drawing from research conducted within education, psychology, linguistics, and sociology to elucidate the acquisition of second, third, or fourth languages. This may include research into both formal and informal learning in individuals or groups of learners. Equally, scholars in this field also explore why the command of a language may deteriorate. Thus, SLA is concerned with the various facets of the language learning process and the manner in which learners make sense progress, use, and cognise second languages (Doughty & Long, 2005; Gass and Selinker, 2008).

SLA has provided insight into various facets of the language learning process, building upon theories regarding first language (L1) acquisition and psychology to explore how individuals learn additional languages (L2). Research to this end has examined the nature of language produced by learners, the manner in which distinct teaching methods can stimulate learning in students, and the role of social interaction in the development of language knowledge (Gass & Selinker, 2008; Ortega, 2014). The interaction between the learner, the teacher, and the context in which teaching and learning occur is key to account for these issues. From the perspective of the learner, such interaction is influenced by a number of elements, which have been traditionally

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termed “individual differences” (Skehan, 1991). Inquiry into individual differences in language students has attempted to identify factors that may explain why some learners progress while others experience greater difficulty in their language learning journeys (Oxford, 1992). These factors have traditionally been classified as cognitive, which refers to the processing and learning of information; affective, which includes emotions and feelings in language learning and; motivational, which regards the objectives and purpose of students (Ortega, 2014). While this distinction has been made to aid systematic inquiry into each set of factors, they are likely to interact in second language learning (Ellis, 2012).

Within SLA, particular attention has been given to the interaction between so called affective factors and language learners. These factors refer to certain intrinsic and extrinsic processes that are inherent to the foreign language learning experience and may influence emotional or psychological states of students and the manner in which they acquire language (McLaren, Madrid & Bueno, 2005). Work by scholars such as Krashen (1982) and Arnold (1999) has suggested that certain factors, namely motivation, learning styles, empathy, and anxiety can play a key role in influencing the progress of foreign language learners. Research into affective factors in students has become an important pool of knowledge for foreign language teachers, who must contemplate such factors when considering methodological approaches to classroom practice. Within this line of research, anxiety has been recognised as one of the most salient factors affecting the foreign language learning experience. Subsequently, inquiry into the triggers, effects, and management of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) has become a core line of investigation within SLA and language education (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre, 2017; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012).

Over the past forty years studies into FLA have been considered to illustrate three distinct phases, namely, “the confounded phase”, “the specialised approach”, and “the dynamic approach” (Macintyre, 2017). The first of these periods was concerned with defining anxiety in the L2 classroom, the second with measuring its presence in students, while the third has been concerned with “situating anxiety among the multitude of interacting factors that affect language learning and development” (MacIntyre, 2017, p. 23). The



current study is located amongst those conducted during this third period. In this phase, research has moved away from merely describing cause and effect relationships in regard to anxiety and instead has attempted to consider language learners from a more holistic perspective. The focus in this phase has thus been how learner characteristics, contextual factors, and social dynamics may interact with emotional reactions (e.g., anxiety) and influence language learning and teaching. Illuminating our understanding of various facets of language learners' behaviours, scholars working within the dynamic approach period have often drawn on theoretical considerations within the field of psychology in regard to theories which consider, for example, identity (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2011), self-esteem (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017), self-efficacy (Mills, 2014), self-images (Dörnyei, 2009), and self-concept (Mercer, 2011b). In the current thesis, Chapters 1 and 2 in the Theoretical background discuss these issues and the aforementioned phases in more detail. We also offer our own definition of FLA, discuss its various effects, and contemplate contextual factors that may provoke specific types of anxiety in individuals, with a particular focus on social anxiety. Our discussion also touches upon how specific academic, cognitive, and social characteristics of foreign language learning may provoke anxiety in learners.

Subsequently, in Chapter 3, we turn our attention to stuttering, exploring possible explanations regarding its etiology, before defining it as a neurodevelopmental phenomenon that can influence speech production, most commonly in the form of prolongation, blocks, and repetitions (Guitar, 2014). It is present in at least one percent of the adult population and five percent of children (Yairi & Ambrose, 2013). External symptoms of stuttering are often accompanied by disruption to psychosocial functioning, which can influence how individuals behave, communicate, and interact in a variety of social contexts. As a result, Individuals Who Stutter (IWS) may experience difficulties in socially evaluative situations, particularly those which place specific emphasis on speech production (Blumgart, Tran, & Craig, 2010). This can lead to significant levels of anxiety, so that IWS are at greater risk of experiencing social anxiety than Individuals Who Do Not Stutter (IWDNS) (Iverach & Rapee, 2014).

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The presence of anxiety can contribute to narrowing emotions such as shame and helplessness (Corcoran & Stewart, 1998), which can lead to reduced quality of life in IWS (Craig, Blumgart, & Tran, 2009) and limit progress in professional and educational spheres (Butler, 2013b). Thus, stuttering involves a compound of affective factors that may influence individuals in a variety of situations. Additionally, as verbal communication is vital for self-expression and social interaction, both stuttering and anxiety are likely to influence self-related constructs in IWS. These include identity (Hagstrom & Daniels, 2004), self-concept (Plexico, Manning, Levitt, 2009a) self-esteem (Adriaenssens, Beyers, & Struyf, 2015; Blood & Blood, 2016), and self-efficacy (Carter, Breen, Yaruss, & Beilby, 2017). Stuttering research has indicated that IWS may negatively evaluate their communicative capacities as individuals, consider themselves to be unable to communicate satisfactorily in certain situations and ultimately assimilate social stigma regarding disfluency in the form of self-stigma (Boyle, 2015). In this regard, Chapter 3 of this thesis also examines the debate around stuttering and disability and refers to the medical and social models of disability along with reflecting upon their influence on professional intervention with IWS.

Following on from this, we discuss the parallels between stuttering and FLA research in Chapter 4 after offering a critical review of FLA research across the language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking and spoken interaction) in different learning contexts with a focus on studies that propose measures to mitigate its presence in the foreign language classroom. In so doing, we acknowledge the broad insights that these studies offer into how FLA influences neurotypical students. However, we also point out their neglect of learners with other profiles, such as those who stutter. We thus argue that scholars working with both FLA and stuttering share a number of research foci, since researchers in both areas work to identify how individuals may be influenced by anxiety; attempt to establish measures to mitigate it; and consider the relationship between anxiety and self-related constructs. Bearing in mind these similarities, it is surprising then that a lacuna appears to exist in terms of studies that explore the experiences of anxiety in Learners Who Stutter (LWS) in foreign language learning and instruction. Our study attempts to attend to this gap by exploring the interaction between foreign language learning and teaching, FLA,

and stuttering. Therefore, it is located at the crossroads of previous research that has considered these phenomena from separate standpoints.

Addressing such gap in the FLA and stuttering literature may help to: 1) establish how stuttering may interact with emotions (e.g., anxiety) and influence self-related constructs in individuals in L2 language learning and, 2) inform guidance for L2 teachers regarding how to support LWS. Thus, this study has aimed to modestly contribute to FLA and stuttering research by investigating the foreign language anxiety experienced by English foreign language learners who stutter. More specifically, we have aimed to measure levels of FLA across different the different language skills in L2 English learning, while also exploring how anxiety and stuttering can shape a number of self-related constructs in these students. With this in mind, the following research questions have guided our study:

1. Do LWS and Learners Who Do Not Stutter (LWDNS) report differences in anxiety in the EFL classroom?
  - 1.1. If so, what differences exist across specific language domains?
2. How do LWS account for the relationship between stuttering and the learning of EFL?
3. How does FLA arise in LWS in different learning situations within the EFL classroom?
  - 3.1. What form does it take in terms of types, triggers, effects, and coping strategies?
4. How do LWS account for the relationship between stuttering, anxiety, L2 English learning and self-related constructs?

In view of the principal goals of the study and these research questions, we have adopted a mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis, as described in the Methods part of this thesis, i.e., Chapter 5. This was done in an

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attempt to gain a broad understanding of the issues at hand, whilst also providing robust and reliable findings that may help to inform L2 teaching practice (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). The combination of qualitative methods with more traditional quantitative approaches has been highlighted by scholars as an appropriate strategy for researching both foreign language anxiety (Şimşek & Dörnyei, 2017, MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012) and stuttering (Tetnowski & Damico, 2001).

In the Methods chapter of the thesis, we also outline the characteristics of our participant sample. Thus, we present information regarding our participants who stutter ( $n = 17$ ), in addition to those of a comparison group made up of LWDNS ( $n = 17$ ), who were matched in terms of age and sex with the former. We then explain the data collection procedures we followed by describing our decision to use semi-structured interviews with LWS, before explaining and justifying our interview questions. Subsequently, we focus on the two scales we also used for data collection, namely, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986) and the Specific Language Skills Anxiety Scale (SLSAS) (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019a). In addition, we explain how the data collected from both LWS and LWDNS was transcribed and analysed. In so doing, we clarify the transcription system used in the treatment of the interviews before we justify the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) to examine interview data. Similarly, we describe the quantitative analysis that was performed on data collected via the FLCAS and the SLSAS.

The Results and discussion section of the thesis presents the findings of our qualitative and quantitative analyses and addresses each of our research questions over four chapters that it includes. The first of these (Chapter 6) details levels of anxiety in LWS and LWDNS across the four language skill domains. In discussion of these findings, we underline the differences observed between the two groups and describe how any disparities may be influenced by stuttering, thus responding to our first research question. To do so, we largely present the findings of the quantitative analysis conducted on our participants' responses to the FLCAS and the SLSAS. These results indicate that LWS report higher levels of FLA than LWDNS in general. This is most noticeable in

the speaking domain and the subsequent results chapters offer further insight into the nature of these findings.

The following chapters within this section (Chapter 7, 8, and 9) present and discuss the results of the qualitative analysis carried out on the interview data. Chapter 7 builds upon the previous discussion in Chapter 6 in accounting for how stuttering may influence the experiences of LWS in EFL classes and contribute to high levels of FLA. Here, we present results that illustrate how stuttering can lead to a number of limiting factors that have the potential to disrupt L2 learning in these students. Therefore, these results add another layer of detail to the results of the quantitative analysis presented in the first results chapter.

In Chapter 8, we identify specific triggers of FLA in LWS, which are also related to stuttering. Furthermore, we examine the effects of anxiety in these learners within L2 classes and consider intrinsic and extrinsic factors that may mitigate its presence, including the role L2 language teachers play. Results discussed here suggest that FLA in LWS is characterised by an intense fear of negative social evaluation that can provoke attentional biases before, during, and after engagement in L2 tasks. Equally, findings indicate that certain intrinsic strategies employed by LWS in L1 contexts are not always applicable to L2 contexts. Subsequently, we discuss how extrinsic factors may help to attenuate FLA in LWS.

The final chapter in this section (Chapter 9) focuses on findings which elucidate how the presence of FLA and stuttering can influence self-related constructs in LWS. Thus, to interpret these findings we draw on work by Iverach, Rapee, Wong, and Lowe (2017), Rubio-Alcalá (2014), Norton Peirce (1995), Dörnyei (2009), and Mercer (2011a) along with considering how their theoretical approaches may be applied to the experiences of LWS in L2 English learning. As a result, we suggest that stuttering and FLA may complicate the negotiation of healthy learner identity positions and self-related constructs in LWS. Conversely, we also consider how broadening experiences within foreign language learning contexts may aid the development of healthy self-constructs in LWS across both L1 and L2 communication.

Therefore, the findings presented and discussed in each result chapter provide insight into various layers of the affective experiences of LWS in EFL

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classes. Our intention is that each chapter builds upon the previous one in elucidating the interaction between stuttering, FLA and self-related constructs in these learners in L2 English learning. The conclusions, references and cited bibliography are presented, following the sections described above.

Additionally, a summary of this thesis in Spanish is included.

To conclude, this study has aimed to provide insight into the nature of stuttering and its interaction with FLA and self-related constructs in EFL learners in the Spanish context. As far as we are aware, previous research within SLA and language education has not considered this learner population in the study of anxiety and other emotions affecting language learning, despite the connection between stuttering and anxiety in more generalised contexts. Our research aims to address this lacuna in the foreign language anxiety and stuttering literature by shedding light on the language learning experiences of this underrepresented learner population in regard to this negative emotion, their stammer, and the effect of these two phenomena on their selves to clearly identify their educational needs in L2 classes. By investigating these issues, we may gain a greater understanding of how to support these students through the particular challenges they face in learning a foreign language. Therefore, this study has also modestly intended to contribute to an evidence base from which foreign language teachers may inform their pedagogic practices. Equally, it is hoped that this thesis will add to the body of more general research with IWS and help to further promote discussion and future inquiry regarding stuttering.

## **I. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**





## **1. Foreign language learning and teaching**

As mentioned in the introduction, this dissertation research is situated within the fields of SLA and TEFL. This chapter discusses L2 learning and teaching with a focus on the affective factors that influence such processes in the aforementioned fields. To this end, the terms learning, acquisition, L1, L2, and FL are clarified. Subsequently, studies that consider affective factors, and more specifically motivation, anxiety, learner identity and self-concept are discussed.

### **1.1. Foreign language learning**

The human ability to acquire language is inseparable from the human experience: our languages allow us to relate to, and socially construct, the world in which we live. The manner in which we define our lives and shape who we are is marked by how we use language to reflect and create our experiences, hopes, problems, and needs. The learning of a second, third, or fourth language is inherent to this process of social reality construction for billions of people around the world.

The creation and development of knowledge in an additional language, therefore, offers the possibility for individuals to live a key human experience all over again; by enunciating a previously unspoken sequence of words we are able to perform the first act of a brand-new interaction with the world around us, and with ourselves. The complex processes involved in the learning of additional languages is the primary concern of the field of SLA. SLA is necessarily expansive in nature as

it encompasses basic and applied work on the acquisition and loss of second (third, etc.) languages and dialects by children and adults, learning naturalistically and/or with the aid of formal instruction, as individuals or in groups, in foreign, second language, and lingua franca settings. (Doughty & Long, 2005, p. 3)

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When discussing SLA, it is helpful to establish the difference between first, mother or native languages, and second, foreign or learnt languages. The first set of terms can be placed into the broad category of L1, while the second can be grouped under L2. When discussing these terms, we must consider that an individual's relationship with any language, whether L1 or L2, is highly subjective and is amenable to change over time. For instance, an L1 may gradually become usurped by an L2 for a variety of reasons during the course of a lifetime. However, a distinction between the two must be established when referring to L2 language learning and teaching. Therefore, for the purposes of the current study, the term L1 will refer to any language that was learnt from birth or considered by an individual to be his or her dominant language, while L2 will be used to refer to any language that has been acquired in later childhood, adolescence, or adulthood (Stern, 1983).

The term L2 also indicates that an individual already possesses native command of his or her L1, and that any further language learning occurs in addition to this<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, proficiency in an L2 occupies some point on a spectrum. In this sense, an individual's knowledge of an L2 may be rudimentary or extensive. This differs to L1 knowledge which is generally developed during childhood into adolescence and adulthood in a more orderly manner (Ortega, 2014).

L2 proficiency may vary across the key language domains of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and spoken interaction (Council of Europe, 2001), which have currently been substituted for reception, production, interaction, and mediation (Council of Europe, 2018). Individuals who are able to use an L2 with native-like proficiency may be located at one end of this spectrum (i.e. late bilinguals), while those who are able to successfully navigate relatively mundane or straight forward situations in an L2 could be placed at the other (Edwards, 2013).

For the purposes of the current study, it is also necessary to distinguish between "second language" and "foreign language", although both terms have sometimes been used synonymously in the literature. Foreign language is generally considered to refer to a language that does not hold any official

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<sup>1</sup> In children raised bilingually we may expect a more even command of both L1 languages.

recognised status within the particular country in which it is being learnt or taught. Second language is used to denote a language that has been assigned an official role within the context in question. Nevertheless, in our increasingly global world, using these labels may be problematic (Dewey & Long, 2010). Before discussing the theoretical position that the current thesis will take in terms of other issues within the field of SLA, it is necessary to briefly describe three broad theoretical schools of thought regarding language learning which have had considerable influence upon SLA and, subsequently, theories and practices within TEFL.

The first of these, behaviourist theories of learning, explained language acquisition as a process of behavioural imitation, in which an individual attempts to replicate language to which he or she is exposed. Consequently, language which results in favourable responses is repeated, practiced, and acquired. In this sense, language learning is a set of conditioned behaviours (through a process of positive and negative reinforcement), which occurs purely as a response to various stimuli present in the environment. Behaviourist theories of first language acquisition had a considerable influence upon the understanding of second language learning (Ellis, 2001). Scholars believed that a similar process of imitation and negative reinforcement occurred during the learning of additional languages. The behaviourist perspective regarding language learning was complimented by a structuralist approach to the study of language, which viewed language as a sequence of component pieces that combine to form a finite series of linguistics options. Therefore, a structural description of language supplemented the idea that an individual could acquire an L2 through the imitation and repetition of particular language patterns. Thus, structural linguistics served to identify the patterns within language and a behaviourist perspective to learning accounted for the manner in which they could be learnt.

In terms of L2 learning, a behavioural perspective suggested that errors which occurred in L2 production could be rationalised by the interference or transfer of L1 habits. The contrastive hypothesis (Lado, 1957) proposed that potential errors could be foreseen and explained by the degree of difference between the L1 and target language. Despite being applied in informing curriculum design, empirical evidence began to question the contrastive analysis hypothesis, suggesting it could not, in fact, accurately predict learner

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errors (Gass & Selinker, 2008). Similarly, the theoretical backbone of behaviourist theories explaining language learning was discredited by Chomsky (1959), who proposed a cognitivist or innatist approach to learning. This perspective suggested that learning is primarily dependent upon information processing which occurs within the brain. As such, “learning, is ultimately a matter of change in an individual’s internal mental state” (Doughty & Long, 2005, p. 4). Thus, language acquisition is explained by Chomsky as an inherent cognitive capacity within all humans to cognise and produce language based on the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) and Universal Grammar (UG) (Gass & Selinker, 2008). The combination of which could therefore explain how children are able to rapidly acquire language, produce utterances, and demonstrate applications of grammar to which they have never been exposed.

Innatist theories towards L2 learning have been most famously applied by Krashen (1982) who proposed five connected hypotheses (termed the Monitor Theory) to explain successful L2 acquisition. One of the more controversial aspects of Krashen’s work was the establishing of a distinction between learning and acquisition. For Krashen, learning represents formal education, usually within a classroom setting, whereas acquisition refers to unconscious development of language knowledge during spontaneous interaction in natural settings. Further, the two are said to represent different pools of knowledge, with learnt information serving to guide, or “monitor” acquired language during output. Another core aspect of the Monitor Theory was the “input hypothesis”, which proposed that language input, and constructing meaning within interactions, were the driving forces behind truly meaningful acquisition. To this end, comprehensible input (i.e., language that can be understood and correctly interpreted) is essential to language learning. Furthermore, Krashen proposed the  $i+1$  hypothesis, which stated that learners would benefit most from input that was slightly above their current level of linguistic competence. Krashen also outlined the “natural order hypothesis” to account for the acquisition of linguistic elements in a specific order and the “affective filter hypothesis” to explain the effect of factors such as anxiety and motivation in students’ L2 learning process.

From a sociocultural perspective, Swain (1993) reframed Krashen’s input theory and proposed the comprehensible output hypothesis, which suggests

that it was equally, if not more important, for students to exert effort in producing L2 output as well as comprehending L2 input. Further, Swain applied the notion of  $i+1$  to the construction of comprehensible output which obliges learners to “push” themselves to construct meaningful utterances. According to Swain (2000, p. 471), the production of comprehensible output allows students to engage in three significant processes. Firstly, a “noticing/triggering” function that highlights gaps in L2 knowledge. Secondly, a “hypothesis testing function” that allows language to be tentatively offered and evaluated for success in conveying meaning. Thirdly, “metalinguistic reflective” deliberation, which may occur in response to the language use of others, or that of the learners themselves. Thus, the comprehensible output hypothesis proposed the development of comprehensible output not as a by-product of learner development, but as a necessary and primary process which, like comprehensible input, is vital to L2 learning.

However, both comprehensible input and comprehensible output need to take place within an interaction for individuals to progress in their L2 learning. This represents the basis of interactionist theories to language learning (Long, 1983). From this perspective learners must engage in the collaborative exchange of knowledge, rehearse formal elements of language (i.e., grammar, syntax, register), and develop interactional competence. As such, language learners are seen “as neither processors or input, nor producers of output, but as speaker/hearers involved in development processes which are realized in interaction” (Ohta, 2000, p. 51).

Interpersonal interaction takes place in a sociocultural context, as emphasized in social interaction theories on L2 learning. These theories typically follow a Vygotskian perspective on learning and envisage language learning as a social process underpinned by mediation and internalization. Mediation refers to the idea that interaction occurring between people, individuals and their internal thought processes, and among humans and the physical world that involves “activities, artifacts, and concepts” (Lantolf, 2006, p. 69). Thus, the construction of knowledge within an educational context (which represents an activity) is aided by the use of artifacts (i.e., tangible and symbolic “tools” such as textbooks, computers, pens, language, art, and music) within an accepted and understood concept (e.g., a set of constructs which govern the

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organisation of ontological understandings of the mental and physical worlds we inhabit) (Lantolf, 2006). Language plays a crucial role in such knowledge construction both inter- and intra-personally, as well as its organization and communication, since it is the fundamental artefact through which human beings engage in mediation and, thus, internalization.

Internalization occurs when an individual engages with a task in a social setting (i.e., the “social plane”), where he or she is able to benefit from the assistance of more skilled individuals who are also involved in the activity. The student is then expected to assimilate and internalise “the expert’s strategic processes” (Donato, 1994, pg. 37) or other new knowledge to the “psychological plane”, where it becomes a cognitive resource that can be drawn upon in the future.

In the educational context, mutual assistance between language learners themselves, and between language learners and teachers through interaction has been termed scaffolding. This process has been proven to aid learning (Powell & Kalina, 2009), however, a learner’s progress is influenced by the task at hand and the nature of assistance provided. For optimal progress to occur, learning must take place within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), that is, the distance between what a learner can do individually and what he or she can do with the help of a more advanced learner or teacher. Imitation, the relevance of which was questioned by nativist theories, plays a crucial role in this process, serving to aid both mediation and internalization (Gass & Selinker, 2008). In brief, the sociocultural environment within which one engages in L2 learning inevitably influences development in the target language, and vice versa (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014).

It is beyond the range of this section to further discuss these schools of thoughts, nevertheless, it is clear that a number of theoretical positions regarding the nature of language learning have been influential in shaping language teaching. In this sense, a teacher’s view of L2 learning not only influences the way he or she approaches L2 teaching in terms of focusing on certain aspects of the learning process over others, but also the methodological options that he or she decides to embrace on a daily basis during practice.

Consequently, a teacher who embraces behaviourism or structuralism may opt for the so-called audiolingual method, which relies heavily on

conversation and the repetition of patterns to provide learners with an oral base upon which further knowledge can be built (Richards & Rogers, 2014). By contrast, a teacher following nativist or cognitivist approaches to L2 learning may be inclined to plan his or her lessons according to the natural approach (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). This could involve a focus upon providing comprehensible input through both teacher talk and listening comprehension exercises, in addition to affording students a “silent period” in which they are encouraged to understand, rather than produce the language.

Likewise, teachers keen on interactionist and sociocultural perspectives on L2 learning may opt for communicative-oriented approaches to L2 teaching (Littlewood, 2014), such as task-based language teaching and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) amongst others. In this sense, a task-based teaching approach could involve devising a task based around collaborative dialogue that allow students to practice and acquire communicative and problem-solving skills that can be applied to real-world scenarios. While a CLIL approach that uses English to facilitate knowledge would involve cooperation and collaboration with other members of staff to ensure cohesion between language and content in a way that encourages students to engage with tasks that promote cultural understanding and self-awareness (Anghel, Cabrales & Carro, 2016; Coyle, 2001).

As illustrated above, the numerous theoretical perspectives and corresponding methodological approaches dictate the manner in which a teacher engages with the practice of language education. At this point it is necessary to situate the current thesis amongst the various theoretical and methodological viewpoints. While some (most notably Krashen) have established a distinction between learning and acquisition, the current study will not do so. Currently, terminology used within the field does not habitually distinguish between the two. Indeed, the field of SLA makes use of the term acquisition, but it often used synonymously with learning (Ortega, 2014; Gass & Selinker, 2008) and the current study shall do the same. Thus, we consider that “learning is acquisition” (Brown, 2000, p. 19). In other words, the development of knowledge and skills based on cognitive organization, which is boosted by practice and focus and subsequently leads to changes in behaviour.

Therefore, the perspective presented in this thesis is, broadly speaking, a sociocultural approach to language learning. There are two main lines of research within this paradigm, 1) research which focuses upon interaction (Long, 2000), which proposes focus on form and negotiation of meaning and, 2) research that is based upon the theories of Vygotsky, which envisage learning as a socially interaction process (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014). Taking into account that the current thesis is concerned with the way phenomena like anxiety and stuttering effect self-concept beliefs in students, we cannot avoid adopting a sociocultural approach.

### **1.1.2. Foreign language teaching**

L2 learning that takes place in an “instructed environment” (Gass and Selinker, 2008, p. 367), that is to say, within the parameters of a formal classroom setting, differs from real-world learning as specific content is presented and taught in a methodologically informed manner by language instructors. Conversely, naturalistic language learning occurs outside the classroom in an unstructured fashion, where it is mainly guided by contextual necessity rather than prior planning. Although not specifically concerned with language pedagogy, research within SLA can prove the basis for insight and reflection on L2 learning, which may subsequently inform classroom practices within formal teaching environments. However, investigation into how foreign language teaching is organised and imparted to foster L2 learning is the primary concern of researchers within the field of L2 education. Inquiry within this field has informed practical and theoretical developments in L2 pedagogy, especially in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

TEFL is interested in the way English is taught and acquired by students, in addition to practical, social, and individual factors which may influence the learning process. Consequently, TEFL takes its theoretical basis from a number of different fields, one of them being SLA. Others include: linguistics, which has provided an understanding of the underlying structural components of which language is composed; psychology, which has allowed for a better understanding of how individuals learn and interact among themselves and with



learning environments; pedagogy, which offers insight into developments in teaching practices, schools, teachers and formal language teaching; and sociology, which helps cognise how all of the aforementioned processes interact in a social environment such as the foreign language classroom (Madrid & McLaren, 2004).

Insight into aspects of L2 learning related to the language learner and the sociocultural context in which learning occurs have been drawn from psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. Tarone and Allwright (2005) distinguish between teacher “skills”, “education”, and “development”, which represent components of the knowledge base which teachers may call upon when practicing in a classroom context. According to these scholars, skills represent practical abilities necessary for teaching, such as speaking in front of a class or ensuring clear use of didactic material; education depicts the essential knowledge teachers hold regarding the language and their ability to demonstrate and use it to the benefit of students and; development is concerned with the capacity to understand the L2 teaching context and use knowledge and skill in an effective manner as to aid the general development of learners (Tarone & Allwright, 2005). The knowledge base that teachers are expected to acquire is transmitted through teaching training programmes, observation of more experienced professionals, mentoring experiences, and practical exposure to L2 teaching. In this manner, EFL teachers become members of a “community of practice” (Richards, 2008, p. 2) which serves to impart relevant skills and knowledge in combination with directives for practical application. However, teachers must be able to appreciate psychosocial factors associated with L2 learning as part of their knowledge base to ensure effective learning and teaching occurs within the classroom. Consequently, studies within the field that focus on language learners may help inform teaching practices and their findings should, therefore, be considered by educators.

A general lack of research regarding the experiences and needs of students who stutter represents a gap in the knowledge base of L2 teachers. This is concerning when one considers the huge worldwide growth of EFL teaching (Richards, 2008) and the fact that stuttering is a truly global phenomenon, affecting one percent of the world’s population regardless of linguistic background or language level (Yairi & Ambrose, 2013). As such, LWS

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are likely to contribute significantly to the number of potential, or current, EFL students around the world. Thus, the role of research conducted with L2 learners, and particularly underrepresented learner groups such as LWS, can satisfy the call made by Tarone and Allwright for collaboration as a means to development in teacher education: “teachers, researchers, and students need to work together to understand the process of SLA and the way in which all of their beliefs and understandings about language learning affect the learning outcomes of students” (2005, p. 20). Furthermore, due to the social, professional, and economic opportunities which can come with knowledge of English (as also reflected in the Spanish context), EFL teachers are in a position to help empower their students and confront inequality both inside and outside the classroom (Canagarajah, 2006; Hawkins & Norton, 2009).

Therefore, success or failure to learn English can result, *inter alia*, in decisive consequences for future opportunities. In the case of LWS, this situation is even more acute, given that unemployment within the stuttering community is higher than in those with neurotypical speech (Álvarez Ramírez, 2018; McAllister, Collier & Shepstone, 2012). Moreover, members of this learner group typically experience social exclusion or role entrapment as a result of their speech characteristics (Gabel, Blood, Tellis, & Althouse, 2004). According to Recinto (2005, p. 906), “ESL and EFL teachers have a responsibility to consider how their pedagogical practices enable or challenge prevailing social hierarchies”. In this sense, effective L2 teaching and learning with LWS may be more than just an academic endeavour; it may also help these individuals challenge established social expectations of disfluent speech and promote personal agency and growth. Therefore, by considering the needs of LWS and adapting classroom practices accordingly, EFL teachers may be able to assist these learners both in and outside the classroom.

As mentioned above, the current thesis adopts a sociocultural perspective to language teaching and learning. Thus, the manner in which an individual interacts with his or her learning environment can have implications for the acquisition of the target language. The conduct of an individual in L2 contexts is contingent upon a number of personal characteristics, which are commonly referred to in the literature as learner factors or individual differences.

## **1.2. Individual differences in L2 learning**

Research into individual differences in L2 learners originates in the field of SLA in studies interested in establishing characteristics present in the “good” language learner (Ortega, 2014). More recently however, inquiry has turned towards the factors which differentiate individual learners as a means of better understanding why some individuals are more successful than others in the L2 learning process. In this sense, individual differences have been conceived of as “dimensions of enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree” (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 3).

The specific factors identified as learner differences have varied across the literature. In her review of individual differences research, Oxford (1992) discusses age, gender, motivation, anxiety, self-esteem, tolerance of ambiguity and risk-taking ability, cooperation and competition, and language learning strategies and styles. Conversely, Skehan (1991), while stating that other factors also deserve attention, focuses on language aptitude, motivations, learner strategies, and learner styles due to their perceived importance and broader relevance when discussing individual difference research in general. Similarly, Skehan and Dörnyei (2005) consider foreign language aptitude cognitive learning style, learning strategies, and motivations the most influential individual differences for predicting L2 progress in individuals. More specifically, Dörnyei suggests that the “five most important L2 individual difference domains” (2006, p. 42) are personality, aptitude, motivation, learning styles and learning strategies. Later, in a comprehensive overview of studies into individual differences, Ortega (2014) includes personality, extraversion and speaking styles, learner orientation to communication and accuracy, foreign language anxiety, willingness to communicate and L2 contact, cognitive styles, field independence and field sensitivity, learning styles, and learning strategies. In a similarly broad evaluation of previous research, Pawlak (2012) discusses the individual differences of age, intelligence, aptitude, cognitive learning styles, learning strategies, motivation, anxiety, beliefs, and willingness to communicate.

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Thus, it appears that there is a degree of debate regarding the factors that should be considered, or excluded, from the discussion of individual differences. In this manner, it has been argued that age and gender should be contemplated as demographic features that interact extensively with almost all other factors present in the L2 learning process and, as such, should be considered separately from the other individual difference domains (Dörnyei, 2006; Pawlak, 2012). Attention has therefore turned towards factors upon which L2 teachers or students can exercise a degree of control, meaning that greater focus has been afforded to cognitive and affective differences such as learning styles, learning strategies, and affective variables (Ehrman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2003). Although the intricacy of these factors is undeniable, they have often been conceptualised and described as relatively stable characteristics. Yet many are likely to be affected by a “complex interaction between cognition, affect and social influences” (Pawlak, 2012, p. xxii). Thus, a subtler appreciation suggests that individual differences may,

show salient temporal and situational variation, and neither are they distinct and monolithic but involve, instead, complex constellations made up of different parts that interact with each other the environment synchronically and diachronically. (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015, p. 6)

This view of individual differences or learner factors reflects a complex dynamics systems approach to L2 learning (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Ortega, 2014). From this perspective, a dynamic system contains “at least two or more elements that are interlinked with each other, but which also change independently over time” (Dörnyei, 2014, p. 81). The interaction of multiple, independent components may result in chaotic and unpredictable outcomes; however, it may also display a degree of “self-organization” (Urry, 2005, p. 10). Therefore, even within “complex systems that display a great deal of variation and change over time, there are times of seeming stability” (Dastgoshadeh & Ahmadishad, 2015, p. 125). The components of a complex dynamic system not only interact with themselves but also with other elements in the environment, so that the system is also open, adaptive, and nonlinear (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

Therefore, the learner and the language learning process is a complex whole, whose elements or features should be considered within the specific language learning contexts and learner experiences over the passing of time. (cf. Dörnyei, 2014; Mahmoodzadeh & Gkonou, 2015). Such a view of the learner and the L2 learning process has highlighted the significance of affective factors and the current understanding of cognition and emotion as deeply entwined (Swain, 2011). As such, affect and emotion can significantly influence cognitive functioning and potentially impede the emergence of otherwise successful learning practices. With this in mind, it is important that L2 teachers acknowledge and address both cognitive and affective factors as a means of facilitating L2 learners a more balanced and well-founded journey through foreign language learning (Arnold, 1999).

### **1.2.1. Affect**

The term affect has been used to describe intrinsic learner variables that can be differentiated from cognitive processes (Scovel, 1978). However, as argued above, cognition and affect (also referred to as emotion) cannot be separated in such a precise manner. It has become increasingly clear that affective factors and learner emotions strongly influence the nature of cognitive processes (Blanchette & Richards, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to understand affect as describing “aspects of emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behaviour.” (Arnold, 1999, p. 1). In this sense, affect is an umbrella term that encompasses a broad spectrum of factors that interact with intrinsic and extrinsic processes in L2 learning. Affect expands on learning styles, learner personality, and motivation to also include anxiety, inhibition, extroversion-introversion, and self-esteem. Furthermore, affect considers social factors which play a role in an individual’s progress, namely relational factors, empathy, and cross-cultural processes (Arnold, 1999).

Within L2 teaching, attention was drawn to affect by Krashen as a key component of his Monitor Theory (1982). Within this, Krashen proposed the “affective filter hypothesis” to account for the influence of internal reactions and contextual factors a learner’s L2 learning progress. Thus, the hypothesis

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proposed that relaxed, comfortable, and engaged learners would progress more adequately than those who are stressed, anxious, unmotivated, or unable to comprehend language input due to their “affective filters” being raised. In other words, a low “affective filter” would aid progression in L2 learning and be found in individuals who experienced broadly positive emotions. The relationship between learner affect (particularly anxiety and motivation) and language learning has since come to represent one of the core lines of research within SLA.

Affective factors are linked to motivation, personality, and socio-cultural influences in foreign language learning, all of which have been defined as “affective states” (McLaren, Madrid, & Bueno, 2005). One factor that has been found to interact with all of the aforementioned states is anxiety. Anxiety has been deemed one of the most influential affective factors in the acquisition and learning of an L2 within SLA and language education (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). As established by Pawlak, anxiety is “a dynamic factor which interacts with other variables and, depending on a particular learner, can facilitate the learning process, impede it, be the result rather than the cause of learning difficulties, or have no effect on attainment” (2012, p. xxxiii). Therefore, in addition to influencing individual students in distinct ways, anxiety, unlike other factors (e.g., age, intelligence, aptitude), can be approached and addressed directly by L2 teachers. This means its presence and influence can potentially be managed and mitigated, which provides justification for research into its effect on L2 learners.

However, the consequences of anxiety for language teachers has also been investigated. For instance, among non-native speaker teachers and pre-service teachers, anxiety can interfere with the effective use of the target language in the classroom and disrupt teaching (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Rodríguez & Abreu, 2003; Tum, 2015). Therefore, affect and anxiety mediate the way both students and teachers interact with the target language and the social context in which it is being learnt. Consequently, it is vital for teachers to be aware of the influence affective factors can have not only upon themselves, but most importantly upon students’ experiences of L2 learning (Dewaele, 2013).

To this end, quality foreign language teaching must, in addition to transmitting language knowledge, also attend to a complex of affective factors which can influence learner progress. Thus, the responsibility for managing factors such as anxiety in the L2 classroom falls within the remit of foreign language teachers. With this in mind, teacher education programmes should draw upon research into anxiety and language learning to ensure that teachers are afforded a thorough understanding and appreciation of how anxiety may arise, manifest, and be reduced in L2 learning and instruction. More specifically, within the Spanish context professional training for future EFL teachers should include and/or emphasize specific practical training regarding the psychology of L2 learning, how to interact with different language learning contexts, and with students who have special educational needs (Martínez-Agudo, 2017).

In spite of some research into FLA in neurotypical populations in the Spanish context (Martínez-Agudo, 2013a; Muñoz & Ortega-Martín, 2015), it is the contention of the current thesis that further research is necessary, particularly with diverse learner populations. In this way, EFL teachers in Spain will be more likely to receive formal instruction regarding how to interact with such students, deal with their anxiety, and promote practices that ensure inclusive and equal opportunities.

### **1.2.2. Motivation, identity, self-concept, and self-efficacy**

When considering affect in general, and anxiety in particular, it may be helpful to contemplate theories from language learning psychology which offer a more holistic understanding of the “mental experiences, processes, thoughts, feelings, motives, and behaviours of individuals involved in language learning” (Mercer, Ryan, & Williams, 2012, p. 3). These theories have addressed key affective factors such as motivation, as well as core learner constructs like identity and self-concept beliefs. The influence of these theories in individual differences research has been notable. For instance, the role of motivation within L2 learning has been “radically reconceptualised and retheorised in the context of contemporary notions of self and identity” (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009, p. 1). Consequently, this section discusses key notions related to affect and

anxiety that can influence the progress of individuals in L2 learning, namely, motivation, identity, and self-concept with SLA and language education. Language learner identity and investment will be discussed before learner motivation in L2, because investment can be considered a counterpart of motivation, which has also been conceptualised by some authors (e.g., Dörnyei, 2009) as interrelated with self-related constructs.

### **1.2.2.1 Identity**

The concept of identity in language education was brought to prominence by Norton Peirce (1995) in response to perceived shortcomings regarding how SLA theorists considered learners and their relationship with the social context in which the L2 was used. Norton Peirce proposed a view of language learner identity as “multiple, a site of struggle and subject to change” (1995, p. 9), moving away from binary labels that had been used to describe L2 learners. Therefore, she argued that foreign language learners are constantly constructing and negotiating their identities, whilst also being subject to influence from social structures and the relationships of power that exist within specific L2 contexts and in broader society (Morita, 2004; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 1997, 2016). The negotiation of identity in language learners is linked to their degree of investment, which refers to how individuals consider their own connection to the target language, its speakers, and its use. Investment “signals the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it” (Norton & McKinney, 2011, p. 75). Furthermore, “investment is complex, contradictory, and in a state of flux [and] “regards the learner as a social being with a complex identity that changes across time and space and is reproduced in social interaction” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 37).

The study by Norton Peirce (1995) into the experiences of a group of immigrant women learning and using English in Canada illuminated the impact of identity and investment on the experience of L2 learning. According to the author, participants in the study were highly motivated L2 learners, however their level of investment significantly affected their progress. As a result, some



rejected opportunities to use spoken English because they perceived doing so would result in them being attributed negative identities (e.g., as an immigrant rather than native speaker). Conversely, other participants rejected the silencing effect of such ascriptions. Although data in this study was collected from language learners in an immersion context (i.e., those living and working in an anglophone country), it is important to acknowledge that social power relations also exert an influence on the negotiation of identity in students engaged in classroom learning.

Further studies into learner identity have offered findings regarding the nature of L2 English learning in other contexts. For example, LoCastro (2001) investigated the adoption of L2 communicative norms in Japanese EFL students. Participants reported being aware of how certain socio-affective factors, particularly motivation, identity, and L2 culture can influence the L2 learning process. Notably, Lo Castro found that some participants were reluctant to construct an L2 identity as they believed it to be threatening to their established L1 identity. This finding illustrates the potential friction that may emerge between L2 learner and L1 speaker identities within students:

Individual differences, specifically attitudes, motivation, and learner self-identity, may influence and constrain the willingness to adopt native speaker standards for linguistic action. Many favour retaining their own identities as Japanese, suggesting it as inappropriate for them to accommodate to the L2 pragmatic norms. (LoCastro, 2001, p. 83)

Other studies conducted by Morita (2004, 2012) within the same context offer additional insight into how learner identity is negotiated by students. The author establishes that “identities are constructed locally and interactionally in a dynamic fashion rather than simply predetermined by fixed social categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, and age” (2012, p. 37). As a result, students who share comparable backgrounds can develop distinct identities, even when they are learning in the same context. Morita suggests that these distinctions may be related to the specific way in which students are able to adjust to struggles regarding language competence and power relations in the language classroom. Students’ ability to exercise personal agency over these factors has

an effect on the negotiation of positive learner identities, which is likely to increase their investment in their learning of the target language.

#### **1.2.2.2. Motivation**

As previously mentioned, the concept of investment considers the influence of societal factors on construction and negotiation of identity in individuals, and their subsequent engagement with the L2. Other scholars have approached similar issues by embracing and discussing the notion of motivation amongst language learners. Along with anxiety, motivation has become one of the most widely investigated affective factors in SLA (Boo, Dörnyei, & Ryan, 2015). It has been considered to play a central role in learner progress and influence the likelihood of learners to persevere in their efforts to achieve a specific objective (Schunk, 1991). In foreign language learning, this is particularly important as the progression from novice L2 learner through to more competent student is likely to take a significant amount of time and include a number of obstacles.

Factors influencing motivation in language learners have been considered from a dichotomous perspective. Gardner (1985) proposed a model of motivation that identified integrative or instrumental reasons behind a learner's decision to engage in L2 learning. Within this model, integrative motivation refers to the desire of the learner to develop proficiency in the target language as a means of increasing proximity to its native speakers and culture. Conversely, instrumental motivation relates to goals that are set externally and require L2 learning as a means to reach other objectives. In other words, the learner who embarks upon the process of language learning with the intention of securing a new job is instrumentally motivated by factors external to the language itself.

Dörnyei's 1994 three-level model (1994) builds on Gardner's theory but offers a broader perspective in terms of the factors that may influence motivation in L2 learning. This model moves away from integrative and instrumental motivation and instead proposes three distinct levels. The "language level" includes the various incentives experienced by learners

towards different aspects of the L2. The “learner level” contemplates individual factors such as learner self-confidence, anxiety, perceived L2 competence, casual attributions and self-efficacy. These are described as “a complex of affects and cognitions that form fairly stable personality traits” (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 279). Finally, the “language situation level” contains subsections incorporating motivational components considered to be teacher-specific, course-specific, and group-specific. These refer to both extrinsic and intrinsic factors related to the nature of the course being taken, the individual characteristics and teaching style of educators, and the social and motivational dynamic of the learner group as a whole. Dörnyei then outlines a total of 30 guidelines for classroom application to promote motivation in L2 students with the aim of reducing the gap between scientific inquiry and the application of research findings to the foreign language classroom.

Later, Dörnyei (2005, 2009) advances his 1994 model and proposes the so-called L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS), which attempts to combine research into motivation L2 learning with conceptualisations from within the field of personal and motivational psychology. The model centres on the learner and his or her ability to experience and generate motivation based on the construction of positive future self-images. Dörnyei labels this projection the “ideal L2-self”, which is accompanied by the “ought-to self” and the “L2 learning experience”. The three are described thus:

(1) Ideal L2 Self, which is the L2-specific facet of one’s ‘ideal self’: if the person we would like to become speaks an L2, the ‘ideal L2 self’ is a powerful motivator to learn the L2 because of the desire to reduce the discrepancy between our actual and ideal selves. Traditional integrative and internalised instrumental motives would typically belong to this component.

(2) Ought-to L2 Self, which concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes. This dimension corresponds to Higgins’s ought self and thus to the more extrinsic (i.e. less internalised) types of instrumental motives.

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(3) L2 Learning Experience, which concerns situated, 'executive' motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g. the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success). This component is conceptualised at a different level from the two self-guides and future research will hopefully elaborate on the self aspects of this bottom-up process. (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 29)

This framework was heavily influenced by previous work carried out by Higgins (1987), Markus and Nurius (1986), and Carver, Lawrence, and Scheier (1999). The notion of possible selves refers to potential positive and negative representations of oneself that may become manifest at some point in the future, as established by Markus and Nurius' (1986) depiction of self-knowledge pertaining to "how individuals think about their future" (p. 954). These imagined selves mediate future fears and objectives as an individual is motivated to avoid a possible "feared" self and is stimulated to strive for an "ideal" that embodies aspirational qualities (Markus & Nurius, 1986). The dynamic nature of possible selves can, therefore, have a powerful motivational effect, adapting to new challenges and aims.

However, Higgins (1987) suggested that disparity between an individual's various possible selves could provoke affective reactions that may impede motivation. His framework referred to three self domains:

(a) The actual self, which is your representation of the attributes that someone (yourself or another) believes you actually possess;

(b) The ideal self, which is your representation of the attributes that someone (yourself or another) would like you, ideally, to possess (i.e., a representation of someone's hopes, aspirations, or wishes for you);

c) The ought self, which is your representation of the attributes that someone (yourself or another) believes you should or ought to possess (i.e., a representation of someone's sense of your duty, obligations, or responsibilities). (Higgins, 1987, p. 321)

Unlike the L2MSS, this framework includes an additional “actual self” component. Higgins hypothesises that incongruity between the perceived actual-self, the ought-to self, and the ideal-self would provoke specific negative emotions. More specifically, Higgins’ self-discrepancy theory proposed that the absence of positive outcomes would provoke dejection related emotions such as depression, while the presence of negative outcomes would lead to emotions linked to agitation such as anxiety.

Whereas the ideal-self symbolises a desire to move towards a series of hopes or aspirations, the ought-self is governed by a sense of obligation. As a result, the ought-self is influenced by a perceived need to avoid certain negative situations, as well as to conform to a set of established responsibilities. In this sense, anxiety provoked by discrepancy between the actual and ought-to selves is linked to a perceived threat, e.g., negative evaluation from others or from oneself (Carver et al., 1999). In this way, Carver and others added to the notion of the “feared-self” to Higgins’ (1987) framework, which they described as:

The kind of person you fear being or worry about being...defined by the personality traits you think you might become in the future but that you’d rather not become. It’s not necessary that you have these traits, only that you want to avoid having them. (Carver et al., 1999, p. 786)

This study supported Higgins’ (1987) finding that dejection and agitation emotions are provoked by discrepancy between the actual and ideal, and actual and ought selves. And suggested that discrepancies between the feared self were more powerful, in that they pre-empted the character of ought-to self-discrepancies.

The L2MSS therefore, considers the influence of positive future self-images in motivation. However, unlike the models on which it is based, it does not account for the emotions provoked by discrepancies between self-images. Nevertheless, the L2MSS introduced the concept of possible future selves into the discussion regarding L2 motivation and thus offered a more holistic understanding of how learners cognise their position within the L2 learning process. In this respect, learners’ identity and self-concept beliefs are central to motivation and the construction of an “ideal” L2-self. In this respect, L2 teachers

may encourage their students to construct ideal future L2 selves and envisage its benefits, whilst also establishing a series of realistic targets or objectives that could help learners achieve their specific aims. Theoretically, if this is done in a learning context which offers sufficient emotional support to learners and aids them in enacting an ought-to L2 self, then the inspiring influence of an ideal L2-self can result in them being more motivated or invested in the learning process.

### **1.2.2.3. Self-concept**

According to Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976), an individual's self-concept is considered "a person's perception of himself...[which]...may be described as: organized, multifaceted, hierarchical, stable, developmental, evaluative, differentiable" (p. 411). External frames of reference play a significant role in this perception, as they provide criteria against which an individual can compare his or her own characteristics and/or achievements. In addition, critique or appraisal by others is said to have a particularly strong influence on the construction of an individual's self-concept. Success or mastery in a specific domain, as well as the causes for perceived success or failure, also play a role in influencing self-concept beliefs (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003).

Although an individual's self-concept is deemed to be a relatively stable construct, it is also dynamic, as it is constantly influenced by different factors across contexts. Additionally, it is also contingent upon a continual process of evaluation in response to situations and events that the individual experiences (Rubio-Alcalá, 2014). The relative importance of such experiences, the frequency with which they occur, and the perceived performance of the individual in navigating them successfully are therefore also likely to influence self-concept beliefs.

The model proposed by Shavelson et al., (1976, p. 108) illustrates the hierarchical, interconnected nature of the self-concept construct. According to this model, an individual's self-construct is organised according to personal evaluations of behaviour in relation to specific contexts. Perceptions of these behaviours then inform subareas of the self-concept that are situation-specific

and relate to certain tasks, physical surroundings, relationships with others, emotional reactions, and physical characteristics:

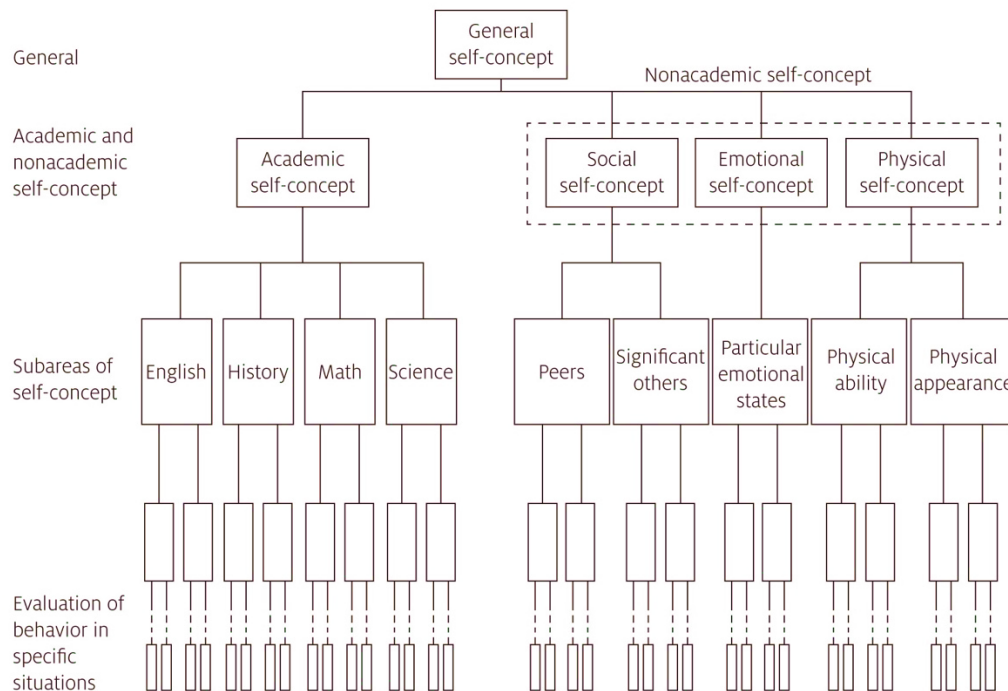


Figure 1. Shavelson and colleagues' model of the self-concept construct

Markus and Wurf build upon the multifaceted aspect of the self-concept in the above model and point to its dynamic nature and its influence on behaviour:

Self-concept does not just reflect on-going behaviour but instead mediates and regulates this behavior. In this sense the self-concept has been viewed as dynamic, as active, forceful, and capable of change. It interprets and organizes self-relevant actions and experiences; it has motivational consequences, providing the incentives, standards, plans, rules, and scripts for behavior; and it adjusts in response to challenges from the social environment. (1987, p. 300)

This definition is in line with Dörnyei's (2009) depiction of motivational selves in his L2MSS model. Therefore, an individual's self-concept consists of a kaleidoscopic collection of self-related representations. In this respect, Markus and Wurf suggest that:

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Not all of the self-representations that comprise the self-concept are alike. Some are more important and more elaborated with behavioral evidence than others. Some are positive, some negative; some refer to the individual's here-and-now experience, while others refer to past or future experiences. Moreover, some are representations of what the self actually is, while others are of what the self would like to be, could be, ought to be, or is afraid of being. Self-representations that can be the subject of conscious reflection are usually termed self-conceptions. (1987, p. 302)

Similarly, Marsh and Shavelson (1985) considered self-concept within an academic context and supported the idea that a learner's self-concept is comprised of evaluations and beliefs in relation to different academic domains:

Students based their academic self-concepts in particular subjects on how their ability in that subject compares with other students (an external comparison) and how their ability in that particular subject compares with their abilities in other subjects (internal comparison). (1985, p. 120)

These studies have relevant implications for understanding the academic progress of some students who may have internalised certain appraisals of their ability to perform in specific areas. Their evaluations are commonly based on subjective perceptions and/or objective assessment and could serve to strengthen self-concept beliefs or promote feelings of inadequacy. As previously mentioned, external frames of reference also influence self-concept beliefs and the academic ability and social behaviour of peers is a yardstick against which a student may measure his or her own capabilities. Therefore, those who are unable to demonstrate academic capacity in comparison with peers or are negatively evaluated during formal assessment may engage in excessive social comparison and struggle to develop healthy self-concept beliefs respectively (Marsh, 1990), which may consequently complicate academic achievement.

Correspondingly, self-concept beliefs can exert an influence on the motivation of individual language learners, in addition to supporting the negotiation of learner identities in various contexts. Mercer clarifies the relationship between the construct of self-concept and that of identity:



Self-concept can be understood as the underlying basis on which an individual constructs their identities in relation to specific contexts. Self-concept is the “mobile” core sense of self that an individual holds and takes with them into a range of different contexts; identity is then constructed on the base of an individual’s self-concept but is concerned primarily with the relationship between the individual’s sense of self and a particular social context or community of practice. (2011b, p. 19)

Therefore, a language learner’s self-concept reflects a complex set of beliefs, which are informed by subjective and objective factors, internal and external comparison, and also incorporate past, present and future ideas regarding an individual’s perceived capacities as a language learner. Consequently, self-concept can be regarded as an intricate, dynamic, adaptive set of interconnected judgements and opinions, subject to influence by different factors across contexts. Furthermore, self-concept is likely to affect the manner in which L2 learners construct and negotiate their identities with others and experience anxiety and motivation within the foreign language classroom (García-Pastor, 2018a, 2018b).

#### **1.2.2.4 Self-efficacy**

A further construct related to self-concept, as well as identity and motivation, is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a “context specific assessment of competence to perform a specific task” (Pajares, 1996, p. 561). Self-efficacy beliefs are influenced by mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, affective indicators, and social and verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1977). Mastery experiences are those regarding an individual’s perceived success in performing a certain task. Vicarious experiences reflect the importance that observed behaviour of others can have on an individual’s self-efficacy. Role models and peers’ experiences can affect how certain challenges and tasks are interpreted, as well as the self-perceived competence an individual may hold in relation to the task. Finally, verbal persuasion refers to the expression of positive or negative judgements made by third parties regarding an individual’s

competence or performance. Perceived negative physiological states (e.g. fatigue, anxiety, and stress) experienced during the completion of a task can inform self-efficacy beliefs negatively, but to a lesser extent than these experiences. By contrast, successful task completion can cause self-efficacy beliefs to strengthen. Nevertheless, an individual's powerful capability to alter their own thinking can generate strong self-efficacy beliefs, which in turn can influence physiological states experiences during specific tasks.

Student's self-efficacy beliefs have been reported to affect motivation, anxiety, attributions for success and failure and educational progress (Mills, 2014; Pappamihiel, 2002; Raoofi, Tan, & Chan, 2012, Schunk, 1991). Therefore, students with strong self-efficacy beliefs regarding academic tasks generally display lower levels of anxiety and are able to overcome obstacles that occur during the learning process more easily. Further, students with strong self-efficacy beliefs also tend to attribute success or failure to factors within their control, while the opposite is true for those with weak self-efficacy beliefs (Hsieh & Schallert, 2008).

### **1.3. Conclusions**

The current chapter has attempted to briefly present a view of L2 teaching and learning considering the main theoretical paradigms that have been distinguished in the second language acquisition literature. Subsequently, we have located the study within the field of TEFL and discussed how L2 learning cannot be divorced of teaching. In this respect, we have discussion research into individual differences in language learning as providing insight into how certain students interact with the L2 learning context. Further to this, we have discussed studies within a specific area of individual differences research, those which deal with affect. Inquiry into affective factors within L2 learning and teaching has become an important line of research. Thus, we have further located our study in terms of research into affective factors. Here, we have referred to affective factors such as anxiety, motivation, and constructs such as identity and self-concept have also been explained in light of their significance for the current study. We have focused on these aspects of affect as motivation

the negotiation of learner identities, and an individual's self-concept are all relevant when considering the presence of anxiety in language learners. The information presented here will be built upon during the following chapters, in which we discuss anxiety and stuttering, before focusing on research into foreign language anxiety.

## **2. Anxiety**

This chapter presents accounts of anxiety from the field of psychology, which have been relevant to the study of anxiety in foreign language learning. Subsequently, Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is defined and described in depth, and a working definition of this phenomenon is proposed. This includes an explanation of the anxiety constructs which are conceptually related to it, namely, communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety. Furthermore, we present a detailed account of its sources based especially on Young's (1991) and MacIntyre's (2017) studies.

### **2.1. Defining anxiety**

Anxiety is recognised as one of the most basic human emotions. It is rooted in an instinct to avoid danger and exists as part of a series of defensive behaviours that serve to protect an individual from harm (Blanchard & Blanchard, 2008). In this sense, anxiety is closely related to fear; both represent emotional responses to threatening stimuli, commonly known as the 'flight-or-fight' response. However, they are conceptually distinguishable: fear is a response to a definite threat and serves to motivate an individual (or animal) to place physical distance between themselves and the source of danger. While anxiety may relate to a perceived or imagined threat.

By illustrating the differences between fear and anxiety we can obtain a better understanding of the particular nature of anxiety and how it can affect individuals. Anxiety, therefore, is an emotional response, which triggers cognitive, physiological and behavioural processes in an individual in reaction to "an uncertain, existential threat" (Lazarus, 1993, p. 13). Other definitions have highlighted these features and anxiety has been described as "an aversive emotional and motivational state occurring in threatening circumstances" (Eysenck, Derakshan, Santos, & Calvo, 2007, p. 336). Equally, because anxiety is experienced in response to a threat that is "uncertain, ambiguous, or unrealistic" (Blanchard & Blanchard, 2008, p. 64), it is a uniquely individual

experience. The responses it can provoke are characterised by a heightened awareness of somatic and cognitive reactions that are a result of activity in the autonomic nervous system (Spielberger, 1972). The autonomic nervous system (ANS) is responsible for instinctual bodily processes (i.e. digestion, blood pressure, heart contractions and sweating) essential for survival (Alm, 2004). Such a complex of processes does not only consist of a series of unconscious cognitive, physiological and behavioural responses to a threat, but also a conscious awareness, which Corr (2011, p. 890) refers to as “phenomenological angst”. That is to say, anxiety as an affective phenomenon is the process by which an individual is aware of his or her feelings of apprehension or insecurity.

### **2.1.1 Anxiety and cognition**

The cognitive component of anxiety has been explained by scholars. One component, cognitive appraisal was described by Lazarus in his influential appraisal theory as “a universal process in which human beings (and other animals) constantly evaluate the significance of what is happening for their personal well-being” (1993, p. 7). In other words, appraisal functions as a subjective judgement made by an individual regarding a perceived threat. According to Lazarus (1993), cognitive appraisal occurs in two main stages. In primary appraisal, the significance of a threat or situation is established, either as hostile, irrelevant, or unrelated to personal safety. Subsequently, the individual assesses the means available to cope with the threat or manage the situation. Therefore, an evaluative judgement made during the appraisal process determines how an individual will react to a threat, both cognitively, and possibly, in terms of their behaviour.

Another cognitive component of anxiety is worry, which refers to numerous negative cognitions that occur in response to either tangible or abstract threats. Worry produces two effects; on one hand, it provokes cognitive interference and thus impedes the functioning of an individual’s working memory by restricting the use of cognitive resources in simultaneous task processing. Additionally, worry affects cognitive processes by urging the individual to reduce the state of anxiety being experienced (Eysenck et al.,

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2007). A fundamental characteristic of anxiety therefore is an intense focus upon a threat. This is referred to as attentional bias and plays a central role in the development and perpetuation of anxiety. Attentional bias occurs when an individual perceives a threat to require focus and demand a response. As a result, the threat is prioritised over other stimuli and a greater degree of cognitive resources are devoted to its appraisal, as well as any action that may be taken in response to it. Consequently, attentional bias can impair performance in an individual, particularly when the task at hand necessitates a high degree of attention and focus (Derakshan & Eysenck, 2009).

The association between anxiety and performance is affected by certain characteristics, or traits, of an individual's personality. This was considered by Spielberger (1966), who conceptualised anxiety as being multifaceted and divisible into trait and state anxiety constructs. Trait anxiety describes a person's predilection to react to a perceived threat, while state anxiety refers to a "transitory emotion characterised by physiological arousal and consciously perceived feelings of apprehension, dread, and tension" (Endler & Kocovski, 2001, p. 232). Spielberger's conceptualisation of anxiety as a stable or transient experience signified an important progression in how anxiety was theorized. While trait and state anxiety are described as distinct constructs, they are understood to interact with each other, to the extent that trait anxiety is considered to moderate levels of state anxiety, which are influenced by the specific requirements of a certain situation (Wieland, 1984). Further, the repeated experience of state anxiety in reference to a particular task or situation may result in it becoming a trait. This form of anxiety has been referred to as "situation-specific anxiety" and occurs when an individual comes to experience a systematic relationship between a certain context and anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a). Examples of situation-specific anxiety include test anxiety, stage fright, and foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, 2010). These experiences can lead to the development of certain behaviours, which develop over time in response to the demands of a specific context. Thus, situation specific-anxieties can be understood to be forms of state anxiety that have become an inherent characteristic of how a specific context is experienced.

### **2.1.2. Anxiety and behaviour**

Repeated exposure to anxiety provoking situations can influence behavioural responses in individuals. The habitual experience of anxiety in a specific context, or due to a specific cause, can result in an individual experiencing anxiety even when they are not in contact with the trigger. This process has been described as fear conditioning (Mowrer, 1939; Wolpe & Plaud, 1997), during which behaviours that are typical to an anxiety-inducing event are provoked by mere thoughts or memories of past experiences. Consequently, specific stimuli that are connected to the experience of anxiety come to be associated with uncomfortable or unpleasant reactions. Individuals come to learn that certain situations, objects, or threats are liable to provoke negative reactions, and thus, anxiety. These learned behaviours are fundamentally self-preservation strategies and are designed to aid an individual to avoid or cope with a specific threat. Most commonly, avoidance is used as a strategy to “minimize or prevent contact with aversive events” (LeDoux, Moscarello, Sears, & Campese, 2017, p. 24).

Broadly speaking, minimising strategies can take the form of passive or active avoidance. The former refers to “freezing” responses such as despondency or apathy, during which reactions are restrained, while the latter describes more overt strategies, which may include avoiding threatening situations or tasks, or making use of comforting objects for reassurance (Salters-Pedneault, Tull, & Roemer, 2004). Thus, anxiety may also be the product of learned responses to a specific set of circumstances that result in the development of certain behaviours. This kind of anxiety may be controlled through mild exposure to a trigger, which may lead to desensitisation and, in turn, the unlearning of the distinct associations that provoked anxiety in the first place.

Perhaps one of the most salient forms of anxiety occurs in relation to social situations, in which cognitive, physiological, and behavioural reactions blend in response to numerous triggers across various contexts. Foreign language learning is a highly social undertaking, hence anxiety experienced in

this context shares a number of constituents with social anxiety, “which is usually the basis of [foreign] language anxiety” (Oxford, 2017, p. 177-8).

### **2.1.3. Social anxiety**

Anxiety experienced in relation to social situations and human interaction is a common phenomenon and is associated with fears and concerns regarding how an individual is perceived and evaluated by others. These fears coalesce around perceived interpretations regarding appearance, behaviour or intelligence (Schultz & Heimberg, 2008). Preoccupations of this kind are particularly pervasive in situations during which an individual’s performance may be judged. As such, social anxiety is closely related to performance anxieties, which include communication apprehension, speaking anxiety and stage fright. The specific pattern of cognitive and behavioural symptoms exhibited by individuals are described thus:

The anxious individual worries about his social performance, is concerned with his public image, perceives inability to cope with social demands, is apprehensive to behave inadequately, permanently monitors and evaluates his actions and is preoccupied with himself as a social being. (Schwarzer, 1984, p. 8)

Social anxiety is characterised by maladaptive cognitive processes, somatic symptoms and avoidance behaviours (Henderson, Gilbert, & Zimbardo, 2014). It is said to exist on a continuum, manifesting itself as shyness in low intensity cases, and progressing through social phobia to avoidant personality disorder in extreme cases (Rapee & Heimberg, 1997; Heiser, Turner, Beidel, Roberson-Nay, 2009). A central feature of social anxiety is fear of negative evaluation, defined as “apprehension about others’ evaluations, distress over their negative evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (Watson & Friend, 1969, p. 449).



The cognitive component of social anxiety includes negative self-imagery and a complex series of attentional biases. Clark and Wells' (1995) influential cognitive model of social anxiety describes a process in which an individual assumes that a particular pattern of damaging events will occur in a specific social situation. These future orientated negative cognitions relate to the presence of a perceived threat, which becomes the focus of attentional biases. As the situation evolves, ambiguous social cues may be interpreted as negative, and any somatic or behavioural symptoms of anxiety provoke further attentional biases. An important part of this process is the construction by the individual of him or herself as a "social object" (Clark, 2001, p. 407). This perception of self as imagined through the eyes of others is composed of assumptions influenced by input taken from intrinsic and extrinsic cues. These include opinions regarding how others assess the individual's behaviour and appearance. The subjective nature of these beliefs means that there may be considerable incongruence between the negative self-image created by an individual and what is actually observed by others (Rapee & Heimberg, 1997; Schultz & Heimberg, 2008). Thus, distorted appraisals of social situations can impact upon notions of self, behaviours, and emotional functioning (Goldin, Manber, Hakimi, Canli, & Gross, 2009).

The aforementioned process is underpinned by intense self-directed focus, which causes an individual to reject potentially positive cues and instead project a subjective negative mental representation of oneself onto the audience. Attentional bias towards the self is problematic as it can lead to a focus upon the somatic symptoms of anxiety, such as tremors or sweating, therefore confirming the presence of anxiety. By devoting cognitive resources to threatening stimuli, individuals undermine their own performance capacities and are caught in a "multiple-task-paradigm" (Rapee & Heimberg, 1997, p. 746). In other words, multiple sources are processed simultaneously which can result in cognitive overload. Consequently, an individual is unable to successfully attend to all data input, and priority is given to data that is considered threatening (McNally, 1995). Preoccupation with evaluation by others is also based around judgements regarding performance standards. Whilst involved in a socially situated task, an anxious individual will gauge their own level of perceived performance against that which they consider to be acceptable in order to

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manage potential negative evaluation. This constant process of self-evaluation is dynamic and adapts to new information and changes in the environment. The perception of any degree of discrepancy between an individual's efficacy and his or her expectations of socially acceptable performance may provoke further anxiety. Therefore, an anxious individual is likely to become highly attentive to both external evaluations and also those of their own "internal" audience (Gibbons, 1990).

In addition to cognitive appraisals of the self and social situations, individuals who experience social anxiety also develop a variety of avoidance behaviours and cognitive strategies with the intention of reducing the potential for negative evaluation by others. Strategies may include limiting the exposure of one's self by "minimizing talking, avoiding eye contact, and low self-disclosure" (Plasencia, Alden, & Taylor, 2011, p. 666). Further to this, individuals may avoid certain situations, over-prepare for social interaction, and feign their degree of interest or friendliness (Schlenker & Leary, 1982). These behaviours are often counterproductive and instead serve to reinforce anxiety (McManus, Sacadura & Clark, 2008). This occurs for a variety of reasons; firstly, by using safety behaviours, individuals eliminate the possibility of refuting the validity of their own distorted assumptions regarding social anxiety (Wells & Clark, 1995). Secondly, the employment of such behaviours requires an individual to direct focus inwards, strengthening attentional biases towards internal processes, and compromising focus upon the task they are involved in (McManus et al., 2008). This process also has the potential to alienate interlocutors who may perceive a lack of interest on behalf of a socially anxious individual, effectively confirming the feared threat (Curtis & Miller, 1986). Ultimately, directing focus towards specific behaviour, or to avoiding a particular outcome can also increase the chance of it occurring.

The degree to which an individual is liable to experience anxiety in a variety of contexts is related to the perceived ability to cope with a potential threat. This evaluative process is mediated by an individual's sense of self-efficacy. As discussed previously, these beliefs "determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave (Bandura, 1994, p. 71). As such, they are inherently linked to cognitive and behavioural processes that underpin anxiety. Individuals who are confident in their ability to perform to a required

level in a certain task are unlikely to be worried, however, “those who believe they cannot manage potential threats experience high levels of anxiety arousal” (Bandura, 1988, p. 78). Self-efficacy beliefs are fundamental to the current study as “they influence the amount of stress and anxiety individuals experience as they engage in a task and the level of accomplishment they realize” (Bandura, 1994, p. 22). In other words, an individual who has a strong sense of self-efficacy is unlikely to experience the debilitating complex of negative cognitions, physiological responses and behavioural changes that occur during anxiety, all of which serve to undermine a sense of personal agency when engaged in a specific task (Mills, 2014).

The relationship between cognitive, behavioural, and physiological components of anxiety as well as self-efficacy beliefs is particularly salient in contexts in which individuals are required to learn new information and perform in front of others, with one such context being the foreign language classroom.

## **2.2. Foreign language anxiety**

Research into Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) has been described as consisting of three distinct periods: the confounded phase, the specialised approach, and the dynamic approach (MacIntyre, 2017). The confounded phase refers to early work that was speculative, since the nature of anxiety and its measurement was unclear (Scovel, 1978). The specialised approach emerged from a concerted effort to identify, describe and measure anxiety rigorously in L2 students, leading to the development of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986). This instrument allowed for the accurate and reliable measurement of anxiety in this context and hence, advances in research. This meant that FLA could now be legitimately described as a form of situation-specific anxiety, conceptually different to other established anxiety constructs such as certain performance anxieties (communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety), which will be briefly discussed below.

Subsequently, inquiry moved to identifying the cause and effects of FLA, more specifically, its impact upon the learning process in terms of the distinct

constructs it can yield across speaking, listening, reading, and writing tasks; how it may interfere with learner performance and proficiency; how it may manifest in students across learner populations with different L1s; and how it interacts with individual learner differences. This body of research corresponds with the dynamic approach to the study of FLA. Insight gained from such a wealth of inquiry is particularly relevant to the current study, since stuttering is a significant learner variable which can influence behavioural and cognitive processes across a multitude of social situations and also interact with anxiety.

### **2.2.1. Definition and features of foreign language anxiety**

Anxiety has been identified as one of the most important affective factors in L2 learning (Macintyre, 2017). Its conceptualisation has varied in line with the three major stages of FLA research described above, and definitions and features have been presented accordingly.

The contradictory results produced by early studies into FLA (Chastain, 1975; Kleinmann, 1977) signified a need for a more sophisticated understanding of anxiety beyond that of a binary construct described as either facilitating or debilitating. Scovel's observations set the tone for subsequent research:

The deeper we delve into the phenomenon of language learning, the more complex the identification of particular variables becomes [...] before we begin to measure anxiety, we must become more cognizant of the intricate hierarchy of learner variables that intervene: the intrinsic extrinsic factors, the affective/cognitive variables, and then the various measures of anxiety and their relationship to these other factors. (1978, p. 140)

This call was heeded by Gardner (1985), who identified anxiety as interacting with motivation. The presence of novel anxiety measures within his socio-educational model of language learning motivation (Gardner, 1983) indicated his belief that FLA was conceptually different to anxiety constructs in other fields, and also that it could impact upon student motivation and progress. The

author explained that "...a construct of anxiety which is not general but instead specific to the language acquisition context is related to second language achievement" (Gardner, 1985, p. 34). Subsequently, Horwitz and colleagues' (1986) ground breaking study provided empirical evidence for the existence of a specific form of anxiety experienced in the L2 classroom.

The authors paid attention to perceived deficiencies in previous investigation, stating "second language research has neither adequately defined foreign language anxiety nor described its specific effects on foreign language learning" (Horwitz et al, 1986, p. 125). The authors provided a theoretical definition of FLA as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning and arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al., 1986 p. 128). This definition was developed from anecdotal evidence accumulated from L2 teaching experience, support groups held with L2 students, and empirical data obtained from 75 language learners. While explaining the conceptual bases of FLA, Horwitz et al. (1986) referred to a triad of established anxiety constructs that are closely related to performance anxiety, namely communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety.

Communication Apprehension (CA) is "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1977, p. 78). CA can cause individuals to shun communicative situations because of the belief that anxiety will be experienced. According to Daly (1991, p. 5), CA may develop due to a genetic predisposition towards anxiety; "one's history of reinforcements and punishments related to the act of communicating"; learned helplessness in response to "unpredictable patterns of rewards and punishments for engaging in the same verbal activity"; inadequacy of an individual's acquisition of early communication skills; and models of communicating. The distinct form of CA that emerges in L2 learning originates from the requirement that learners a) communicate personally meaningful and conversationally appropriate messages through an unfamiliar syntactic, semantic, and phonological system; b) understand other speakers using such system in interaction; and c) cope with the ambiguities of both producing and understanding messages in the L2 within the parameters of an unfamiliar culture (cf. Horwitz, 1995). Learners' awareness of their limited

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competence to attend to all these demands coupled with their fear of failure and miscommunication typically cause communication apprehension (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner 1991a; Szyszka 2017). A general reaction to CA is to avoid any communicative use of the L2/FL (Piechurska-Kuciel 2008; Szyszka 2017).

Fear of negative evaluation represents anxiety experienced in social evaluative situations (i.e., meeting new people, conversing with others, and public speaking), and consists of “apprehension about others’ evaluations, distress of their negative evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (Watson & Friend, 1969, p. 449). Individuals who experience fear of negative evaluation are likely to have weak self-efficacy beliefs, avoid social situations deemed threatening, and adapt behaviours to provoke positive reactions in others. Fear of negative evaluation is also a central feature of social anxiety disorder, which can be seen as its pathological manifestation (Blood & Blood, 2016). Fear of negative evaluation in foreign language learning is based on students’ concern of receiving negative academic and personal evaluations from teachers and peers. Such concerns are understandable as teachers are expected to continuously judge a learner’s performance and provide corrective feedback, whilst imperfect pronunciation or erroneous and inadequate use of words and structures may be met with unfavourable responses from peers (MacIntyre & Gardner 1991b; Martínez-Agudo, 2013b; Price 1991; Szyszka 2017).

Test anxiety refers to the “set of phenomenological, physiological, and behavioural responses that accompany concern about possible negative consequences or failure on an exam or similar evaluative situation” (Zeidner, 1998, p. 18). Therefore, test-anxious individuals experience significant self-preoccupation regarding their ability to successfully navigate an evaluative situation. The prevalence of testing in society, particularly in Western society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, has resulted in test anxiety being identified as a significant feature of negative reactions in students and other social groups (Zeidner, 2007). A student who experiences test anxiety is likely to consider evaluative situations as hostile and threatening, which can result in negative cognitive reactions such as reduced self-efficacy, an anticipation of failure, and strong emotional and physiological reactions (Zeidner, 1998). In L2 contexts, test

anxiety relates to the learner's concern of being negatively graded in the evaluation or assessment of their linguistic competence in the target language. Since evaluation of learners' performance through tests and quizzes is common in this context, and learners tend to make mistakes, even the brightest students are likely to experience test anxiety in L2 classes (Horwitz et al., 1986). Oral tests are particularly anxiety provoking because they have the potential to generate both test anxiety and communication apprehension (Horwitz et al., 1986). Test anxiety has been found to impair performance and negatively impact upon test scores, particularly in the domains of speaking (Phillips, 1992) and writing (Saito, Horwitz & Garza, 1999). However, studies into test anxiety in other skill domains have indicated that performance is largely unaffected by this type of anxiety (In'nami, 2006).

Since Horwitz and colleagues (1986) aligned FLA with communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety, a degree of ambiguity regarding the typology of FLA had existed; it was believed that FLA was formed of the aforementioned anxiety constructs. However, Horwitz (2017) has recently clarified this, stating that FLA is not a combination of other anxiety constructs but is conceptually similar to them.

Following Horwitz and colleagues (1986), a number of authors have defined the characteristics of FLA. Piechurska-Kuciel echoes Horwitz et al. (1986) by emphasising the situational and cognitive demands that L2 learning places upon students. She describes FLA as

the unique feelings of tension and apprehension experienced in the SLA process in the classroom context, arising from the necessity to learn and use a FL that has not been fully mastered. It is characterised by task-irrelevant cognitions and a variety of physiological responses. (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2008, p. 59)

Meanwhile, MacIntyre and Gardner define FLA as "the feelings of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning" (1994a, p. 284). In addition to describing the physiological reactions and future orientated trepidation that can be provoked by L2 classes, the authors draw attention to the language skill domains of

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speaking and listening within L2 learning. In this sense, FLA is described not just in relation to the broad overall challenge of L2 learning, but also in terms of its relationship to these skills. Thus, when considering FLA, we must not only bear in mind the general context of L2 classes, but also the demands specific tasks can place upon learners.

Both Horwitz and colleagues (1986) and MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a), refer to FLA as arising *from* the L2 learning process, but their definitions do not mention the impact anxiety may have *upon* the learning process. The challenging nature of L2 acquisition means that FLA is likely to contribute to ineffective learning in students. Therefore, FLA can impede an individual's capacity to absorb, understand, and use new material. Previous research into anxiety in general educational contexts suggested that anxiety has an effect on different stages of cognitive processing, namely the input stage, the processing stage, and the output stage, all of which are vital to learning (Tobias, 1986). In this sense, FLA can be experienced at any processing stage, and its presence is likely to provoke anxiety in other stages (Bailey, Onweugbuzie, & Daley, 2000; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b, Onweugbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999b). Consequently,

an individual experiencing a high level of language anxiety is prone to facing a form of mental block which affects the way he or she processes L2 information when it is encountered for the first time at the input stage, while making connections between existent and new knowledge at the processing stage, and while demonstrating the acquired material at the output stage. (Szyszka, 2017, p. 79)

The intricate compound of somatic and cognitive reactions provoked by FLA, and subsequent behavioural manifestations are highlighted in the definition provided by MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) who suggest that FLA is an "emergent coordinated emotion, with feeling, arousal, purposive, and expressive phenomena" (p. 195). Therefore, we can establish that foreign language anxiety is experienced as a complex, interrelated series of cognitive, physiological and behavioural processes, characterised by negative cognitions, physiologically disturbing reactions, and evasive behaviours, all of which are



mediated by socially affective factors (MacIntyre, 1995). Accordingly, FLA is likely to underpin a bi-directional and mutually affective relationship between learning and performance, complicating the effectiveness of both. It would also stand that self-evaluative negative cognitions provoked by FLA may influence an individual's self-efficacy judgements, which may in turn confound the negotiation of positive learner identities, self-esteem evaluations, and the development of a competent learner self-concept (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017; Mercer, 2012).

### **2.2.2. Sources of foreign language anxiety**

The complex nature of L2 learning dictates that numerous sources may provoke anxiety in L2 students. Additionally, the large variety of teaching styles, methodologies, and environments which exist within L2 education means levels of FLA will fluctuate from class to class and from student to student. Young (1991) identified six main causes of FLA; personal and interpersonal anxieties; learner beliefs about language learning; instructor beliefs about language teaching; instructor-learner interactions; classroom procedures; and language testing. Personal and interpersonal anxieties were reported to be the most common cause of FLA. These anxieties include “shyness, stage fright, embarrassment, social evaluative anxiety and communicative apprehension” (Young, 1991, p. 427). Additionally, personal and interpersonal anxieties are emphasised by low self-esteem and competitiveness, two significant sources of learner anxiety (Young, 1991, MacIntyre, 2017). If we consider self-esteem as a collection of self-evaluative judgements held by an individual regarding their worth across a number of situations (Habrat, 2013), then we can understand how FLA may be triggered by negative self-evaluation, particularly if these judgements are comparative and competitive in nature.

This may be particularly prominent in L2 learning, as students are often unable to transfer L1 proficiency to L2 tasks. As such, a student may consider him or herself to be underperforming or exhibiting behaviours that fall out of line with their personal expectations. This relationship can be recursive, as “anxiety works in tandem with low self-confidence and low self-efficacy and imposes on

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learners to underestimate their learning capacities and their potential contributions to the classroom community” (Gkonou, 2013, p. 65). Consequently, low self-esteem leads students to underestimate their aptitude when using the target language, while the opposite appears to be true for individuals with high self-esteem (MacIntyre, Noels, & Clément, 1997; Dewaele, Petrides, & Furnham, 2008). It appears that personal anxieties that can provoke FLA are closely related to notions of identity and the self. Rardin (in Young, 1992) states; “if we conceive of learning as a birthing process of a new self, then whenever the new self has something to lose in the process of learning, we generally see some signs of anxiety” (p. 183).

Beliefs and opinions held by learners regarding the nature of language learning, its processes, and their own ability to match expectations may provoke FLA. For example, the student who believes that language learning should be a relatively straightforward process is likely to feel uncomfortable if things go awry. Likewise, an individual who considers that proficiency in reading or writing should occur before being assessed in oral production may experience FLA when she or he discovers that many language courses promote the use of oral language from the outset (Horwitz, 1988; Young, 1991). FLA may also be provoked if a learner perceives a discrepancy to exist between beliefs regarding his or her progress and ability to achieve specific targets or objectives (Skehan, 1991).

Beliefs held by instructors concerning the level and manner of correction (Young, 1992), and the use of L1 or L2 at different times during a class (Levine, 2003), are also liable to influence FLA in students. In many ways, it is the teacher who “sets the tone” in the classroom and this will naturally have an impact upon the general atmosphere in which learning takes place. In this sense, teacher beliefs and practice may influence emotional reactions in students. If these emotional reactions are negative, they are likely to provoke anxiety (Barcelos, 2015). Naturally, teacher beliefs will have an impact upon the nature of instructor-learner interactions, which is another source of FLA identified by Young (1991). One of the most anxiety inducing aspects of teacher-student interaction is error correction (MacIntyre, 2017; Young, 1991). While error correction can be problematic if carried out in a brusque manner, even the most sensitive reference to an error can provoke anxiety in learners

who are concerned about making mistakes (Carrón, 2013; Cebreros, 2003; Gregersen, 2003). Error correction also exposes students to potentially negative social evaluation from peers and may provoke a desire to avoid class participation (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2017; Von Würde, 2003). Conversely, positive corrective feedback has been found to stimulate students' desire to perform in the L2 classroom (MacIntyre, 2007).

In terms of classroom procedures, Young (1991) stated, "anxieties associated with classroom procedures centre primarily on having to speak in the target language in front of a group" (p. 429). Oral performance is associated with performance anxiety, interaction anxiety, and communication apprehension, all of which can impede effective speaking performance (Szyszka, 2017). Anxiety related to public speaking is likely to be most intense in moments immediately prior to performance, when individuals are anticipating the task at hand (Behnke & Sawyer, 1999). In this case, anxiety may be triggered by the potential for negative evaluation from both peers and teachers and associated somatic reactions (such as sweating and queasiness). Oral tasks have been consistently reported as provoking high levels of FLA in students across all proficiency levels (Liu, 2006; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Szyszka, 2017).

Finally, language testing can also provoke significant anxiety in learners (Young, 1991), mainly in the form of test anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; Salehi & Marefat, 2014). This type of anxiety occurs when students develop a fear of committing errors during the assessment process. This may happen because they hold themselves accountable to overly demanding expectations, as they believe failure will react badly upon them as students. As with other anxieties, test anxiety is most intense when components occur concurrently (Cassady & Johnson, 2002). It can also be provoked if materials and methodologies presented in classes vary with what students encounter in assessment (Young, 1991). Additionally, testing offers the opportunity for failure to be quantified. Students understand the importance of passing exams and obtaining good marks (Zeidner, 2007), therefore, failing can be particularly stressful and can provoke further negative consequences (such as having to resit exams or courses, and rejection from future opportunities). Similarly to Young (1991),

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MacIntyre (2017, p. 21) distinguishes between academic, cognitive, and social sources of FLA as follows:

Table 1. Causes of foreign language anxiety (Macintyre, 2017)

Academic causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Errors in pronunciation.</li><li>• Unrealistic learner beliefs.</li><li>• Instructors who intimidate their students with harsh and/or embarrassing error correction in front of other students.</li><li>• Methods of testing.</li></ul>
Cognitive causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fear of losing one's sense of identity.</li><li>• Biased perceptions of proficiency.</li><li>• Personality traits and/or shyness.</li><li>• Low self-esteem.</li></ul>
Social causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fear of being laughed at, being embarrassed and making a fool of oneself.</li><li>• A poor-quality accent.</li><li>• Misunderstanding communication or using incorrect words.</li><li>• Cultural gaffes.</li><li>• Competitiveness.</li><li>• Frequency and quality of contact with native speakers.</li></ul>

Based on the findings presented by Young (1991), which have later been corroborated by MacIntyre (2017), we may conclude that the causes of FLA are broad but clearly identifiable. However, FLA is subject to influence from numerous personal, environmental, and situational variables. Identifying the presence of FLA and understanding why it is provoked represents a significant step. From this point, research in the field has extended to focus on understanding the effects of FLA on achievement in L2 students, and to identifying subtypes of FLA that may exist across the language skill domains in

L2 learning. The final chapter of the Theoretical background section discusses this bulk of research.

### **2.3. Conclusions**

In this chapter, a brief outline of anxiety as a multidimensional phenomenon has been presented. The cognitive, behavioural, and physiological underpinnings of anxiety have been described, and different conceptual perspectives have been considered. These include the trait/state distinction, situation-specific anxiety, performance anxieties, social anxiety, and foreign language anxiety.

Furthermore, theories regarding social anxiety disorder have been used to illustrate how different anxiety components can hinder individuals in situations that require communication and interaction with others. In this sense, we have illustrated how social anxiety disorder is conceptually similar to foreign language anxiety, inasmuch as the two constructs share constituents such as fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension. FLA has been described in this chapter as a complex, interrelated series of processes, characterised by negative cognitions, physiologically disturbing reactions, and evasive behaviours, all of which are mediated by socially affective factors unique to the L2 learning and teaching context.

Finally, a number of sources of FLA have been identified and described. These have principally centred on academic, cognitive, and social factors. The presence of FLA in students has been recognised as one of the most influential affective variables in L2 teaching and learning. Subsequently, current trends in FLA have moved to assess its impact upon learning in the different L2 language skill domains and to identify potential strategies to combat its presence. We discuss this body of research further in the final chapter of this section. Before doing so, we turn our attention to research conducted into stuttering.

### **3. Stuttering**

Inquiry into stuttering has largely taken place from two perspectives; research which primarily attempts to understand the potential genesis of the condition and describe its overt symptoms, and investigation into the impact stuttering can have on individuals' behaviour and psychosocial functioning. Therefore, this chapter presents an overview of studies that have provided insight into the etiology of stuttering, as well as research that has attempted to describe how the condition can influence cognitive and behavioural processes in individuals. To this end, stuttering is to be considered from a medical perspective, as a disorder of speech production, and from a social perspective, as a liminal condition that has been stigmatised and misunderstood. To illustrate these different perspectives, we discuss the medical and social models of disability in relation to stuttering, and corresponding forms of clinical intervention are discussed. Subsequently, the psychosocial impact of stuttering is deliberated, with particular focus given to internal and external factors that can provoke negative affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses in IWS. Studies have indicated that anxiety plays an important role in these responses, and the relationship between the two phenomena is contemplated. Finally, the interaction between stuttering and self-related concepts which mediate affective factors such as anxiety is discussed. Particular focus is given to theories of identity and self-concept as frameworks for understanding how stuttering and anxiety may coalesce within an individual and across different social contexts and functional domains, including foreign language classes.

#### **3.1. Stuttering etiology**

Stammering, stuttering, disfemia, dysfluency, tartamudez, änkytyksestä, tartamudesa, bégaiement, balbuzie, kogelejate, gaguez, stottern, فأفأة, 口吃, заикание, kekemelik, بڑتال. Just as language is an essential part of the human experience, it appears that no language is complete without the presence of stuttering. The existence of stuttered speech has been noted and documented over thousands of years and is said to connect an illustrious group of historical

figures that includes Charles Darwin, Cervantes, Winston Churchill, Demosthenes, Moses, Lewis Carroll, Aristotle, and King George VI (Bobrick, 2011; Beusterien, 2009; Shell, 2006). Whilst stuttering has clearly not stopped some reaching positions of power, influence, or wealth, others have had more difficulty. Stuttering has long been considered “deviant” behaviour (Loriente, 2009, p. 143), represented throughout history as a symptom of timidity and flawed character (Eagle, 2011). Treatments have followed accordingly and have ranged from the medicinal, to the mechanical, to the macabrely surgical (Rieber & Wollock, 1977).

The complicated, multi-faceted nature of stuttering has intrigued professionals across the fields of medicine and psychology and considerable investigation has been carried out on the subject. The specific cause or causes of stuttering have traditionally been a source for intense debate, yet research has recently suggested a genetic basis for the condition (Drayna & Kang, 2011; Frigerio-Domingues & Drayna, 2017). These findings are supported by the observation that a predisposition to stuttering is often observed in members of the same family and in monozygotic twins (Kang, 2015).

Onset of persistent development stuttering<sup>2</sup> most often takes place during the most intense phase of child language development, which occurs between the ages of two and five. Around five percent of all children begin to stutter during period, after otherwise typical neurodevelopment (Bloodstein, 1995; Guitar, 2014). Approximately, 74% of these children will recover without intervention, most of them within two years (Månsson, 2000). As with other neurodevelopmental conditions, stuttering is more common in males than females at a ratio of around four to one, however this is reduced in young children (Yairi & Ambrose, 2013).

Medical definitions have varied over time, however Wingate (1988) provided a thorough overview of previous medical classifications, and stated that the only two symptoms found to be consistent across all were the “tonus, the prolonging of holding of muscular posture or activity, and clonus, the series of rapid repetitive movements involving the speech musculature” (1988, p. 10). These two fundamental elements are referred to by Wingate as the “cardinal

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<sup>2</sup> As opposed to acquired stuttering, which may occur as the result of a traumatic or vascular brain injury (Andrews et al., 1983).

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features” of stuttering and explain the visible tension that often accompanies disfluent speech. More recent definitions have recognised the link between such tension and cognitive processes, stating that stuttering is “a speech motor disorder that interrupts the timing and/or coordination between the respiratory, laryngeal, and vocal tract subsystems of speech” (Beilby, 2014, p. 133). This interference can result in discourse characterised by a high frequency of breakdowns in the smooth forward flow of speech (Guitar, 2014). These may take the form of phoneme, syllable or word repetition (e.g. “p-p-p-pen”), prolongations (e.g. “ddddddad”), or blocks caused by disruptions to the airflow needed to produce speech (Yairi & Ambrose, 2013).

The presence of such breakdowns appears to be grounded in differences in the neural speech pathways between IWS and non-stuttering individuals and the subsequent effect these variations have on brain functioning. Advances in research practices involving neuroimaging techniques have highlighted “widespread functional and structural differences between adults who stammer, children who stammer, and their fluent peers” (Etchell, Civier, Ballard, Sowman, 2017, p. 27). A review of neuroimaging research conducted by Chang has confirmed the presence of “differences in the brain function and anatomy, involving both auditory and motor areas of the brain” (2014 p. 70). These differences are relatively subtle; however, they affect areas that are crucial for the coordination, planning, execution, and sensory feedback required for speech. Alm (2004) suggests that dysfunction in the basal ganglia inhibits the production of timing cues, which may potentially cause stuttered speech to occur. The same author also draws attention to the fact that emotions and stress can have a negative effect on the functioning of the basal ganglia, the implication being that structural differences in the basal ganglia area may be confounded by negative emotions and stress in response to speech demands.

Structural brain differences are identifiable from an early age, Chang, Erickson, Ambrose, Hasegawa-Johnson and Ludlow (2008) identified Children Who Stutter (CWS) and children who had recovered from stuttering as having significant differences in the composition of grey and white brain matter compared to a control group. The same authors suggest that stuttering is connected to deficits in white matter tracts on the left hemisphere of the brain and reduced grey matter growth in Broca’s area, two regions that are



fundamental for speech production. These findings were corroborated by Cykowski, Fox, Ingham, Ingham and Robin (2010) who added that structural brain differences begin in the first few years of post-natal life, possibly suggesting why signs of stuttering coincide with the age of language acquisition.

A deficit in white matter in the brains of IWS has been widely found and investigated (Connally, Ward, Howell, & Watkins, 2014; Neef, Anwander, & Friederici, 2015). Neuroimaging studies with foreign language learners have reported that the process of learning a new language after childhood can have positive effects on the structure of white matter in the brain (Pliatsikas, Moschopoulou, & Saddy, 2015; Schlegal, Rudelson, & Tse, 2012). Further, research with sequential bilinguals who stutter (i.e. those who have learnt a L2 during adolescence or adulthood) has suggested that functional deficits commonly observed in IWS may be compensated through the language learning process (Kornisch, 2015; Kornisch, Robb & Jones, 2017). These findings hint at a potentially beneficial connection between stuttering and foreign language learning at a neurological level. One hopes that future research in this area will offer a greater understanding of the nature of this relationship.

In terms of brain functioning, studies have indicated that speech produced by adults who stutter is coupled with unusual brain activity (Packman, Code, & Onslow, 2007), which includes “consistent over-activation of the frontal motor areas of the right hemisphere” (Neef et al., 2015, p. 9) and under-activation of frontal regions in the left hemisphere, indicating an imbalance between the functional performance of the two hemispheres. It is beyond the scope of the current study to discuss in great depth the underlining neurological processes which may be responsible for stuttering. However, it is worth mentioning broad findings that indicate the functional differences observed in the brain of Individuals Who Stutter (IWS). In line with this, Brown, Ingham, Ingham, Laird and Fox report that IWS exhibit

(1) overactivation of cortical motor areas, such as the motor cortex and supplementary motor area; (2) anomalous lateralization, such that speech-related brain areas that typically have left-hemisphere dominance in fluent speakers are active bilaterally or with right-hemisphere dominance in stutterers; and (3) auditory suppression such that primary and secondary auditory areas

that are normally active during speech production are not activated. (2005, p. 106)

Functional differences may be a cause of stuttering, or may occur as a result of the condition, potentially accounting for the structural distinctions mentioned previously. However, given that the left hemisphere motor cortex is responsible for the planning and execution of speech motor activity. The under-activation of this area could explain a physiological basis for the production of stuttered speech (Neef et al., 2015), which may subsequently influence brain structure. Alternatively, brain imaging research may merely be indicating the neural correlates of visible stuttering behaviours such as muscle tension or jaw blocks.

Although research into brain activity and structure offers promising insights into possible etiologies of stuttering, a preoccupation with the physiological basis of the condition belies the importance of myriad affective factors that can exist for IWS. These include evading words and sounds perceived to be problematic, using language that serves to discourage interaction from an interlocutor, and even complete withdrawal from all communicative situations deemed inessential (Packman & Kuhn, 2009).

Therefore, it is necessary to locate stuttering as a social phenomenon with many symptoms that fall outside of traditional medical definitions discussed previously. When considering this, it is useful to turn to an alternative definition of stuttering provided by Butler (2013a), who states “people who stammer encounter involuntary and intermittent disruptions in their ability to communicate fluently, their speech is inherently erratic throughout the day; and each episode of dysfluency is demonstrated to a differing degree” (2013a, p. 1114). Butler draws attention to the unpredictable nature of stuttering, which can hinder social interaction when coupled with physical disruptions to speech. Equally, stuttering in adults has been defined as a “social communication disturbance which is chronic in nature. One of its major components is the individual’s response to the ‘loss of control’ during the stuttering event” (Blood & Blood, 2015, p. 2). Both of the above definitions speak to the highly idiosyncratic and dynamic nature of stuttering, whilst also referencing the social difficulties that it can provoke. The working definition of stuttering for the purposes of the current study will be that

of Butler (2013a) and Blood and Blood (2015), this we consider stuttering to be an erratic and involuntary interference to spoken language, which is often accompanied by physical tension and psychosocial factors that can significantly impede social interaction.

### **3.2. Stuttering and foreign language learning**

Previous inquiry has failed to investigate the presence of anxiety during L2 learning in IWS. Research into stuttering and language learning has tended to focus upon L1 language development, and stuttering in early bilinguals, rather than L2 learners. In this manner, studies have attempted to approach questions raised primarily from a clinical perspective in an attempt to better inform treatment programmes for multilingual CWS (Shenker, 2011).

Stuttering, whilst interfering with speech fluency, does not affect the ability of a child to develop language or progress in a typical manner (Watts, Eadie, Block, Mensah, & Reilly, 2015, 2017). However, varying conclusions have been drawn regarding the influence bilingualism may have on stuttering; studies have suggested that children who are exposed to two languages from birth may be at greater risk of developing stuttering, whereas others have discredited this view (Van Borsel, Maes, & Foulon, 2001). Two articles demonstrate that disagreement continues within the scientific community regarding this matter. Howell, Davis, and Williams (2009) conducted an empirical study into bilingualism and stuttering incidence and recovery, reporting that bilingual children were more likely to stutter, and less likely to recover, than their monolingual peers. In light of these results, the authors suggest interrupting bilingual exposure, as a means of improving the chances of recovery from stuttering. These findings and conclusions have been contested by Packman, Onslow, Reilly, Attanasio, and Shenker (2009), who have questioned both the methodological approach taken by Howell et al. and their interpretation of indicators of stuttering recovery. Packman et al. (2009) opine that the cohort described by Howell et al. (2009) is unrepresentative of the general stuttering population, resulting in an inconclusive set of results. Furthermore, Packman et al. (2009) state that the serious recommendation to

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curtail bilingual exposure must occur on the basis of sufficiently clear evidence, particularly when considering that “bilingualism is an asset in modern society” (Packman et al., 2009, p. 248).

Other studies have assessed stuttering behaviours in bilinguals as a means of documenting incidences of disfluency across different languages spoken by an individual (Ratner & Benitez, 1985). Again, findings have been contradictory; a number of studies have suggested that IWS stutter less in their dominant language (Hernández-Jaramillo & Velásquez Gomez, 2015; Jankelowitz & Bortz, 1996) suggesting that language proficiency may influence the frequency of stuttering in bilinguals. These findings suggest that greater language proficiency may result in less dysfluency. However, the contrary has also been reported (Van Borsel et al., 2001).

It would appear that the heterogeneous nature of IWS as a community is reflected in the varied nature of results reported by studies into bilingualism and stuttering. Such inconsistencies may be explained by individual differences in IWS, particularly by responses to psychosocial and affective factors. These may include the status of specific languages, individuals’ attitudes towards different languages, their language history, language demands in specific contexts, language dominance, and language proficiency (Coalson, Peña, Byrd, 2013; Nwokah, 1988). It may be the case that increased proficiency or dominance in one language results in an individual feeling more confident in his or her ability to communicate and thus less likely to experience negative affective factors (such as anxiety) that can exacerbate stuttering. Moreover, a greater degree of language proficiency or dominance may mean that an individual is better able to navigate moments of dysfluency through the use of linguistic strategies. Conversely, an individual may find that speaking in a less familiar language may be “comparable to other techniques that require an unusual way of speaking and that can induce fluency such as syllable-timed speech, singing, whispering and speaking in a sing-song way” (Van Borsel et al., 2001, p. 200).

The veracity of studies into stuttering in multilingual IWS has been criticised for methodological shortcomings, particularly in regard to sample sizes and the use of descriptive factors when characterising participants, which complicates meta-analysis of findings (Coalson et al., 2013). It appears that a

definitive answer regarding how stuttering and multilingualism interact is, like with many questions relating to stuttering, difficult to come by.

Despite a relatively broad literature regarding bilingualism and stuttering, the same cannot be said for stuttering and anxiety in foreign language learning. This is curious considering that there appears to be parallels between the two phenomena. Many of the symptoms observed in anxious foreign language learners are similar to those displayed by IWS in L1 situations. These include apprehension; worry bordering on dread; sweating; difficulty maintaining concentration; and avoidance behaviours. Indeed, “stuttering” (meaning stutter-like hesitancy) is referred to as a symptom of FLA (Cohen & Norst, 1989; Horwitz et al., 1986; Price, 1991; Young, 1991). In line with this, Horwitz and colleagues explained that FLA may occur because

adults typically perceive themselves as reasonably intelligent, socially adept individuals, sensitive to different sociocultural mores. These assumptions are rarely challenged when communicating in a native language as it is not usually difficult to understand others or to make oneself understood. However, the situation when learning a foreign language stands in marked contrast. As an individual’s communication attempts will be evaluated according to uncertain or even unknown linguistic and sociocultural standards, L2 communication entails risk-taking and is necessarily problematic. Because complex and nonspontaneous mental operations are required in order to communicate at all, any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual’s self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic. Authentic communication also becomes problematic in the second language because of the immature command of the second language relative to the first. Thus, adult language-learners’ self-perceptions of genuineness in presenting themselves to others may be threatened by the limited range of meaning and affect that can be deliberately communicated. (1986, p. 128)

The above passage outlines how FLA may occur in L2 learners; however, this description could have been written to describe how some IWS struggle with L1 communication on a daily basis. There is no doubt that the vast majority of IWS would perceive themselves as “reasonably intelligent, socially adept

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individuals, sensitive to different sociocultural mores”. However, one imagines that IWS may also feel that when speaking in their native language they *are* “challenged on a regular basis to adhere to such mores and make themselves understood”. As a result, it is also quite possible that L1 performance does become a “challenge [to] an individual’s self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic.” In the only article that the current study has been able to locate that has discussed the issue of stuttering in foreign language learning, Weiss stated that

foreign language learning is a very special problem for the student who stutters. Not only are such students subject to the strains and stresses which the learning process entails, but they also have to cope with the production and acquisition of new sounds and language patterns. The problem is intensified by the fact modern language objectives stress the development of oral communication. This, in turn, has brought in a methodology which is heavily weighted in favour of oral exercises and activities. Dialogues, situation simulations, question-and-answer exercises, and oral drills make up a good part of the instructional process, and all of these can be potentially distressing to a stutterer. (1979, p. 191)

Despite being written 40 years ago, Weiss’ article outlines many worries that are still relevant today. The author goes on to offer some sound recommendations for foreign language teachers but does not state whether these are based on professional intuition or empirical inquiry. Furthermore, Weiss poses a number of questions subsequent research has failed to address: “are unpleasant associations blotted out when a foreign language is used? Does the stutterer experience less stress when he uses a foreign language? Is stuttering reduced in the use of a foreign language?” (1979, p. 125). It seems the relationship between stuttering, anxiety, and foreign language learning raises lingering questions yet to be answered, some of which the current study seeks to address.

### **3.3. Stuttering and disability**

In order to gain greater insight into how stuttering affects individuals on a day-to-day basis, it is necessary to recognise the way in which definitions of stuttering have influenced social attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours towards individuals who experience dysfluency. This can be done by considering stuttering from contrasting disability models. However, the relationship between stuttering and disability is a complicated one that is fraught with issues regarding social beliefs, medical diagnosis, and personal principles. This section will attempt to unpick the knotty relationship between stuttering and the two dominant models of disability: the medical and the social.

Stuttering can have a disabling impact on various areas of an individual's life; however, it is generally not regarded in the same manner as more severe physical or mental impairments that are considered as disabilities (Pierre, 2012). Moreover, discussion exists within the stuttering community regarding the use of the term "disabled". The medical model of disability understands disability as a personal problem that can only be solved through treatment or rehabilitation. Therefore, an individual's disability is his or "her own personal misfortune – devoid of social cause or responsibility" (Areheart, 2008, p. 186). The consequences of framing stuttering (or any other impairment) from this perspective are problematic; an individual cannot help but display the condition that differentiates him or her from others in society and, as such, is constantly reminded of an inability to adhere to socially constructed able norms. This can lead those affected to believe that the only true path to acceptance is by curing or eliminating the condition, thereby provoking a stressful situation in which an individual is compelled to "overcome" their "disorder" through personal effort. This can lead to the fetishized idea of a "cure", which, in the case of stuttering has allowed a multitude of approaches, devices, and techniques to offer distant hope to IWS, despite scant scientific basis.

The medical model therefore considers disability as biological and binary. In other words, the mental and physical characteristics individuals exhibit result in them being labelled as disabled or not. Unfortunately, this perspective continues to influence how many modern societies understand and react to

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disability. This view is reinforced by the typecasting of disabled people either as subjects in need of pity, or inspirational survivors who have overcome hardship (Areheart, 2008). While some individuals may accept these roles, is it understandable why many would find them difficult to embrace.

Diagnosing stuttering solely as a speech fluency problem on an individual level also fails to account for shared social experiences that are common to IWS all around the world. Widely accepted estimations suggest that at least 1% of any population stutters, while that figure may be as high as 10% (Yairi & Ambrose, 2013). A conservative estimation would therefore suggest that roughly 465,600 people in Spain stutter. If all of these individuals were encouraged to see self-directed focus as the only solution to stuttering, then they would be likely to consider themselves at least partly responsible for the continuing presence of the condition. On the other hand, when viewed as a community of nearly half a million, the focus moves away from the individual and instead shifts towards a large group of people whose presence in society requires understanding and acceptance from others. Viewing stuttering from a perspective that allows us to realise why some individuals are unable to fully integrate into certain areas of society provides a more suitable framework from which to better appreciate societal barriers that can affect IWS. The current study considers that the social model of disability allows for this.

Disability politics have been informed by a variety of local, theoretical, and political arguments. The social model of disability, which originated in the United Kingdom, has been incorporated into discussions regarding stuttering (Bailey, Harris, & Simpson, 2015) and was developed in response to the locating of disability as a “personal tragedy” within discussions surrounding social policy (Oliver, 1986). The movement emerged from the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) and was founded to challenge social issues related to disability. The defence of social rights for disabled individuals was based upon the idea that positive engagement in society has been restricted by social attitudes towards physical or mental impairments, rather than the impairments themselves. The social model of disability therefore distinguishes between impairment, which is defined as a biological limitation, and disability, which represents social exclusion as a result of this impairment. In other words, impairment is private and specific to the individual, while



disability is public and embedded within structural elements of society (Shakespeare, 2006).

In spite of the influential presence of the medical model, an increasing shift towards the social model of disability has been observed in approaches to stuttering therapy and within the stuttering community itself, in which a stuttering pride movement has found solidarity with ideas expressed within the social model of disability. This has occurred in response to speech fluency being established as the paragon of spoken communication across many societies and industries (cf. Ward, 2017); which in turn dictates that individuals should work on their speech to reduce dysfluency, while also permitting stuttered speech to be treated as communicative failure. Furthermore, the veneration of fluent speech can create unattainable goals for IWS, which may serve to undermine genuine progress in other areas of their life. Equally, attempting to adhere to the rules of a neurotypical society when disfluency is an inescapable characteristic of the speech of IWS may produce misunderstanding around stuttering, as well as a certain ambiguity that can separate it from more visible and persistent impairments. Stuttering has thus been described as occupying a “liminal” space, in that

when stuttering is brought to the fore, it is often not interpreted as a “severe” disability, that is, society does not discriminate against stuttering as a whole (nor recognize it through funding and support) to the same degree that it does many other forms of physical and mental disabilities. While much of this likely has to do with the stutterer’s wily ability to go incognito, often passing within society, it still causes one to wonder how much discrimination is required to be classified as disabled. In this sense, I am hesitant to place stuttering categorically alongside more visible disabilities. Yet, in the same breath, stuttering comes under distinct social pressures and punishments absent from the experience of clearly defined and visible disabilities. (Pierre, 2012, p. 19)

The social model of disability offers a view of stuttering through which individuals can reclaim a sense of agency over how the impairment is defined and understood. This is reflected by Bailey who states: “I am disabled, sometimes a lot and sometimes a little” (Bailey et al., 2015, p. 15). This

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perspective has allowed for stuttering to be reconceptualized to a certain extent and for demands to be placed upon fluent society to accept disfluent speech and reduce discrimination to it. Further to this, the burgeoning stuttering pride movement has grown out of a desire by some in the stuttering community to advocate for others who stutter and to call for respect and recognition of stuttering as a legitimate form of oral expression, rather than an impairment or disability. This is supported by scholars such as Constantino (2018), who have located stuttering within the neurodiversity movement and promote freedom to stutter as a way of reducing personal struggle and broader societal prejudice. From these perspectives, stuttering is considered a unique and naturally occurring way of speaking. It is openly encouraged and empowered as an act of rebellion against dominant models of verbal expression that have discredited disfluent speech as substandard or inappropriate (Pierre, 2014).

This has led to the questioning of subtly oppressive language widely used in the media or by professionals (who are overwhelmingly neurotypical speakers) that perpetuates the idea of stuttering as something to be overcome, controlled, reduced, battled, or struggled with, rather than celebrated or praised (Campbell, 2016). For some in the stuttering community, such a shift to overt celebration of disfluent speech may be somewhat of a jolt after years of living with considerable shame and embarrassment. However, we may consider that the radical nature of the stuttering pride movement is a necessary advancement, which draws strength from the social model of disability while specifically and actively challenging notions that stuttering is something that should be hidden, fixed, or cured.

A third model, the biopsychosocial, proposes a framework for understanding stuttering which can be seen as bridging the gap between the medical and social models of disability. This framework attempts to encapsulate the biological, physiological and social factors which underpin and interact with a specific condition. In relation to stuttering, the framework considers the multidimensional nature of its genesis and subsequent impact upon an individual. Therefore, stuttering presents

several interacting components: biological factors, which consist of the presumed aetiology or underlying causes of the disorder, as well as the

impairment in body function evident in the observable characteristics of stuttering; psychological factors, which include the speaker's affective, behavioral, and cognitive reactions to stuttering; social factors, which include the effects of the environment on stuttering, such as the reactions of others, and which may be indicated by the difficulty the speaker may have in different speaking situations; and the overall impact of stuttering on the speaker's life, as indicated by the limitations in communication activities and restrictions in participation in daily life. (Beilby, Byrnes & Yaruss, 2012b, p. 52)

The biopsychosocial model, therefore, attends to aspects of disability which have traditionally been incorporated within the medical model (such as a description and understanding of the physical or biological processes which have resulted in impairment), in addition to considering the considerable psychosocial component which can accompany living with an impairment. In this manner, the model may be a useful framework from which professionals (particularly those with a medical background) could approach stuttering from a more inclusive perspective. However, as we have seen, medical explanations of disability can be problematic and, therefore, such an approach may be rejected by some who stutter as a matter of principal.

Whatever one's opinion concerning disability, it is certainly difficult to ignore the fact that stuttering can result in marginalization and suffering. Indeed, as recently as 2005, stuttering was officially regarded as reason enough to reject applications for positions within the civil service and the armed forces in Spain (Álvarez Ramírez, 2018). Such systematic exclusion clearly shows how the impairment of stuttering has led to individuals being disabled by established structures of power. It is also worth pointing out that discrimination exists in more mundane contexts; automated telephone systems struggle to process disfluent speech (Surya & Mariam, 2017) and IWS have been detained at airports due to an association between stuttered speech and deceitful behaviour (Simmons, 2016).

In education, students who stutter are widely judged against a dominant social model of speech production that considers oracy as an essential skill (Daly, 1991). The belief that fluent oral production is a necessity dictates that classroom activities include a number of tasks designed to practice and improve

performance in this domain, especially in foreign language teaching and learning (Criado & Mengual, 2017; Daly, 1991). Students who stutter are placed in these situations with little thought as to possible consequences, and with scant preparatory support. The call for inclusive education is a necessary and demanding one, and there is no reason why IWS should not participate fully in classroom activities. However, for this to take place, it is essential to understand how stuttering is lived with and the manner in which it can provoke specific needs.

The current study, in part, sets out to shed light on these issues. By learning from the lived experiences of IWS we can better inform the discussion on barriers that may exist within certain areas of society.

### **3.3.2. Stuttering and intervention**

The differences between the medical, social and biophysiological models of disability outlined above are also reflected in the divergent perspectives on stuttering intervention and treatment. Approaches to speech therapy are generally tied to two core viewpoints; those which propose working towards eradicating dysfluency, essentially regarding speech fluency as the end goal, and those which aim to help individuals stutter more fluently by reducing secondary factors such as tension and anxiety (Guitar, 2014). One can conceive of these two perspectives as reflecting the medical and social models of disability. Traditional approaches to speech therapy are grounded in behaviourism, and often draw from conditioning behaviours (Onslow, 2019). As such, fluent speech patterns are positively reinforced while stuttered speech is deemed undesirable. Interventions of this kind have been considered useful up to a point; they can help to change certain stuttering behaviours. However, they may also increase avoidance of stuttering whilst neglecting to attend to psychosocial factors. By contrast, more holistic speech therapy programmes highlight the importance of the *person* who stutters, rather than the stutter itself. This perspective may be described as a humanistic, social, or person-centred approach to treatment, and has come to represent the core aspect of many modern therapy techniques.

Pre-empting this, Van Riper (1972) proposed “stuttering modification therapy” which suggested a series of processes that could lead to an individual learning to stutter more easily, the implication being that a reduction in avoidance would pave the way for meaningful change in speech behaviours. Van Riper considered that it was vital for an individual to pass through a process of identification of stuttering behaviours and subsequent desensitization. Consequently, stuttering was to be accepted and reframed in a positive manner, together with the use of a variety of speech fluency shaping techniques (such as adapting breathing patterns, or speaking rhythms), Van Riper believed that greater control over stuttering and its associated emotions would empower individuals. These ideas were shared, and advanced upon, by Sheehan, who practiced a person-centred, humanistic approach to clinical intervention. Sheehan stated that

the acquisition of fluency in stuttering should come about indirectly, through the reduction of avoidance, through being open, through accepting the role of the stutterer. Anything that the stutterer has to do in a special or direct way to ‘achieve fluency’ is probably wrong. (Sheehan, 1970, in Acton & Hird, 2004, p. 449)

Sheehan’s approach considered a profound change in attitudes towards stuttering to be the most effective manner in which to treat individuals. He adopted the iceberg metaphor to illustrate how visible symptoms of stuttering constitute but a small part of the lived experiences of IWS, while drawing attention to the significant affective factors that are present below the surface. Sheehan’s approach has strongly influenced modern practices that increasingly draw upon the social model of disability in proposing a person-centred approach to treatment. These practices, which correspond with humanistic clinical intervention, stress the need for acceptance. From this perspective, acceptance is viewed as a powerful tool for self-growth and as a way of cultivating a mindful approach to an essential part of an individual’s being. Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) proposes a focus upon “valued living” (Beilby, Byrnes, & Yaruss, 2012a), through the development of a flexible self-concept and accompanying set of values and perspectives. In other words, ACT

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promotes an understanding that stuttering is just one of numerous characteristics which may define an individual (Cheasman, Simpson, & Everard, 2015).

Many modern treatment programmes, especially within the past 30 years also involve engaging casual factors (Packman, 2012) within the paradigm of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). CBT addresses negative and dysfunctional emotions, behaviours and cognitive processes, and uses goal-orientated tasks and strategies to implement changes in IWS (Botteril, 2011). Previous studies (Beilby et al., 2012a; Blood, 1995; Plexico, Manning, DiLollo, 2005; St Clare et al., 2009) have indicated that CBT treatment can aid IWS in successfully managing stuttering and associated anxiety, which may lead to lasting and meaningful changes in psychological functioning. That is, not only does CBT improve attitudes and behaviours in the short term but can also provide IWS with a knowledge base which can be used in successful self-management of stuttering, resulting in greater long-term effectiveness when compared to non-CBT orientated forms of therapy (Craig, 2003).

Exposure, behavioural experiments, cognitive restructuring, and attentional training have been highlighted as four components of CBT that may be most useful in this regard. Typically, these complement one another and are arranged to function as a cohesive whole. Exposure and behavioural experiments require IWS to analyse their own beliefs and fears, pinpointing situations that cause most difficulty. Individuals are then encouraged to face these situations, using techniques and strategies learned in therapy sessions to control feelings of anxiety. These kinds of exercises are designed to stimulate objective evaluation of speaking situations and draw attention away from the stutter itself (Menziés et al., 2008). Anxiety provoking situations that are challenged in CBT are commonly arranged in a hierarchy from least severe to most demanding and are tackled from the bottom up. This allows behavioural and attitudinal changes to occur gradually, meaning that new coping techniques and attitudes are assimilated gently (Rodebaugh, Holaway, & Heimberg, 2004). Cognitive restructuring systematically addresses irrational thoughts that relate to anxiety or speaking situations in such a way that IWS are encouraged to “reframe” their everyday environment using modified opinions (Kelman & Wheeler, 2015). This process is aided by attentional training, which focuses

upon maintaining control in difficult situations, often in conjunction with breathing exercises that help to provide composure.

Discussion continues regarding which approaches are most advantageous for treating stuttering (Blomgren, 2013; Ratner, 2005), and debate is further complicated by the fact that many forms of therapy are likely to help at least some IWS some of the time. Moreover, the changeable, dynamic nature of stuttering can result in individuals benefitting from distinct types of intervention at specific points in their lives. Speech therapists are aware of this and there appears to be a general consensus that a one size fits all approach to treatment is counter-productive. Instead, where possible, programmes are tailored towards specific goals or concerns that an individual may present (Botteril, 2011), although treatment programmes that include a combination of cognitive and behavioural components appear to be effective in aiding both children and adults who stutter (Caughter & Dunsmuir, 2017; Menzies et al., 2008; Murphy, Yaruss, & Quesal, 2007; Plexico et al., 2005).

### **3.3.3. Psychosocial impact of stuttering: stereotypes, bullying, and stigma**

It is likely that if you have never been regarded as a stutterer, you can come nowhere near appreciating the uncanny, crushing power of the social disapproval of whatever is regarded as stuttering. It is probably one of the most frightening, perplexing, and demoralizing influences to be found in our culture. (Johnson, 1946, p. 458)

Negative stereotypes, bullying, and stigma have important consequences for many IWS (Boyle & Fearon, 2018). Stuttering has long been associated with neuroticism, weakness, and nervousness (Eagle, 2011). Or, alternatively, as a comedic device (Biran & Steiner, 2001). Negative stereotypes may have developed in responses to social traditions, particularly in contemporary Western societies, which have often considered hesitant speech as a sign of fragility and a cause for ridicule (Petrunik & Shearing, 1983).

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However, more recent research has indicated that stuttering may provoke negative psychophysiological responses in listeners, which could in turn reinforce negative attitudes towards stuttered speech. Guntupalli, Everhart, Kalinowski, Nanjundeswaran, and Saltuklaroglu, (2007) and Guntupalli, Kalinowski, Nanjundeswaran, Saltuklaroglu and Everhart (2006) reported that adults with neurotypical speech experienced increased skin conductance, heart rate changes, and perceived themselves as having negative emotional reactions when observing disfluent speech. Such findings indicate emotional arousal, understood as a response to an unpleasant stimulus, which may contribute to the development of negative stereotypes and stigma surrounding stuttering and stuttered speech. As the authors state, “these stereotypes do not manifest because of what stuttering does to the stutterer. Instead, they appear to arise because of what stuttering does to the listener” (Guntupalli et al., 2006, p. 6). Nevertheless, it is near impossible to state if these reactions are the result of indoctrinated beliefs regarding speech, or the genesis of negative stereotype formation.

Negative stereotypes, social stigma, and bullying are mutually affective factors in the same process. Stigma of stuttering is fuelled by prejudice and can lead to discrimination, which in turn gives rise to bullying and self-stigma; the process by which an individual internalises public stigma and accepts negative stereotypes as true, thus perpetuating the cycle (Boyle, 2013). This is problematic for IWS, as self-stigma is “related to significantly higher levels of anxiety, depression, and self-related speech disruption and significantly lower levels of hope, empowerment, quality of life, and social support” (Boyle, 2015, p. 23). Exposure to pervasive negative social attitudes towards stuttering can result in IWS developing negative beliefs about their own dysfluency from a young age, which may result from being negative evaluated by their peers (Ezrati-Vinacour, Platsky, & Yairi, 2001).

Numerous studies have reported that CWS are more likely to experience bullying than children who do not stutter. Davis, Howell, and Cooke (2002) conducted research into relationships between CWS and their peers in 16 different classes across England. The study employed a sociometric scale to assess 403 children aged between nine and 14 years of age. Participants were asked to nominate three classmates they liked and disliked the most, and to



match eight behavioural descriptions to classmates. The authors reported that CWS were significantly less likely to be assigned positive social status than their non-stuttering peers. In addition, they were matched to categories representing negative social behaviours such as “bully victim” and “seeks help”. Equally, CWS were more likely to be seen as cooperative, perhaps due to a fear of experiencing further bullying. Davis and colleagues (2002) suggested that differences in behaviour between the two groups may occur due to coping strategies used by CWS, such as cooperation as a means to maintain group membership and protect oneself from danger. CWS were also found to be more at risk of bullying by Langevin, Bortnick, Hammer, and Wiebe (1998) who used a novel scale to investigate the nature, frequency and impact of bullying in 28 children between the ages of seven and 15 in Canada. Similarly to Davis et al. (2002), the authors reported that participants who stuttered indicated a higher rate of bullying than children who did not stutter. The study indicated that 59% of CWS were bullied because of their speech, and that participants found this to be more distressing than bullying about physical appearance.

Other studies have indicated that CWS are significantly more likely to experience social anxiety disorders (Blood, Blood, Maloney, Meyer, & Qualls, 2007; Iverach et al., 2016), whilst others have drawn attention to the connection between bullying and personal factors such as self-esteem. Blood et al., (2011) reported a significant difference in victimization experienced between 54 students who did and did not stutter. Furthermore, the study indicated that students who stutter present lower levels of self-esteem and life satisfaction. The short- and long-term impact of childhood bullying was assessed by Hugh-Jones and Smith (1999), who used a closed question self-report questionnaire. The authors obtained data from 276 IWS and found that 83% of participants experienced bullying in their youth. Short-term effects included difficulty making friends, anxiety, depression, and adaptive behaviours such as reduced verbal participation in class. Long-term implications appeared to centre on problems relating to personal relationships. This finding was corroborated by research conducted by Blood and Blood (2016) who reported that childhood bullying has negative psychosocial consequences for IWS in adulthood.

### **3.3.3.1. The affective components of stuttering**

When considering the affective nature of stuttering, it is necessary to contemplate a number of components that interact with one another. First, we must consider the presence of visible symptoms, caused by the physical impairment of stuttering. Second, the affective, behavioural, and cognitive reactions to stuttering that occur within IWS. Third, contextual factors, including the speaking environment and reactions of others to stuttered speech, and finally, the way in which all of these factors influence how IWS interact and behave across various social spheres (Yaruss & Quesal, 2006). Thus, in the same way that external factors such as stereotypes, bullying and stigma may affect IWS, they themselves may also develop negative behaviours, attitudes and feelings towards their stutter and themselves as individuals. These internal components of the stuttering experience can have considerable repercussions for IWS.

Living with stuttering can influence an individual's beliefs and behaviours in relation to communication from an early age and inform them into adulthood (Crichton-Smith, 2002). Research has shown that awareness of stuttering and its effects on communication develop during childhood, with CWS as young as six already displaying negative attitudes to communication (Bernardini, Vanryckeghem, Brutten, Cocco, & Zmarich, 2009; Kawai, Healey, Nagasawa, & Vanryckeghem, 2012). Issues relating to stuttering during childhood and adolescence are often compounded by a lack of knowledge regarding the condition, not only by CWS themselves, but also on the part of teachers, parents, and classmates (Abdalla & St. Louis, 2012). This is important as negative attitudes displayed by authority figures can result in young people feeling isolated and misunderstood (Hearne, Packman, Onslow, & Quine, 2008) and negatively impact upon social interaction (Erickson & Block, 2013).

It also appears that stuttering can affect the educational process and learning outcomes for IWS. Stuttering severity has been found to have a significant negative effect on educational achievement (O'Brian, Jones, Packman, Menzies, & Onslow, 2011), and the pressures of coping with stuttering can also lead IWS to consider that they are unable to reach their

educational potential. However, the opposite may also be true, as individuals display a desire to “overcompensate” for their stutter (Daniels, Gabel & Hughes, 2012). It appears that the educational context presents a number of specific challenges for IWS; these include managing classroom participation (i.e. reading aloud and asking questions), as well as psychological and physiological consequences of stuttering in the school setting (Daniels et al., 2012). These factors, coupled with a perceived lack of understanding on the part of teachers regarding stuttering can lead IWS to disengage with education, and consequentially fail to acquire important academic and social skills (Butler, 2013b).

Thus, the experiences of IWS during childhood and adolescence can influence how opportunities are considered and engaged with in adulthood. Research has indicated that adults who stutter may inaccurately judge their communicative abilities (Watson, 1995) and consider stuttering to have limited their progression in social and professional spheres (Crichton-Smith, 2002). This limitation may be self-imposed to a certain extent, as IWS seek to avoid exhibiting overt symptoms of stuttering, rather than engage in certain communicative situations. As a result, some IWS may pursue careers in professions that they feel place minimal demands upon their speech, rather than those that they truly find appealing (McAllister et al., 2012). This in turn can lead to resentment and feelings of failure and deception, leading some to feel that stuttering determines key life decisions (Klein & Hood, 2004). Furthermore, stuttering can negatively impact upon the quality of life (Koedoot, Bouwmans, Franken, Stolk, 2011) and have particular consequences for social, emotional, and mental functioning, as well as vitality, which can lead to heightened degrees of mental fatigue (Craig et al., 2009). Mental fatigue has implications for an individual’s ability to concentrate and focus on particular tasks (Boksem, Meijman & Lorist, 2005), perhaps explaining perceived underperformance in educational and professional contexts in IWS. The occurrence of mental fatigue is perhaps not surprising when one considers the amount of time and effort IWS dedicate to anticipating moments of stuttering. This is done in an attempt to prevent disfluency and avoid “aversive communicative experiences” (Plexico et al., 2009a, p. 93).

The way in which individuals experience stuttering and the various communicative demands present in educational, professional and social spheres has an important role in determining the manner of their interaction with the world around them, and potentially their futures. One component of the stuttering experience, which influences engagement across these spheres, is anxiety.

### **3.4. Stuttering and anxiety**

Perhaps the most significant affective component of the stuttering experience is anxiety, which has been “included in theories of the etiology of the stuttering disorder, is related causally to the moment of stuttering, and is often described as a reaction to stuttering behaviours than can maintain these behaviours” (Miller & Watson, 1992, p. 790). Despite common misconceptions, stuttering is not believed to be the result of a traumatic or anxiety inducing experience (Andrews et al., 1983; Bloodstein, 1995; Peters & Hulstijn, 1984). Instead, anxiety has been considered to occur as a consequence of stuttering, rather than an explanation for its existence (Andrews et al., 1983). Nevertheless, there has been doubt regarding the nature of the relationship between the two (Bloodstein, 1995; Menzies, Onslow, & Packman, 1999). However, since the turn of the century studies have identified and described strong associations between physiological, cognitive, and behavioural components of anxiety and stuttering (Iverach, Menzies, O’Brian, Packman, Onslow, 2011).

Assessing anxiety in IWS through physiological measures has been considered problematic, primarily because reactions to emotional arousal vary amongst individuals and are influenced by other biological factors (Menzies et al., 1999). However, a relationship between physiological reactions to anxiety and speech production does appear to exist. Emotional responses to anxiety cause somatic reactions, including heightened activity in the autonomic nervous system (Spielberger, 1972). The autonomic nervous system (ANS) is responsible for the control of vital processes that are necessary for survival. Within the ANS are the sympathetic and parasympathetic subsystems, which

work together to regulate and adapt bodily processes to the needs of the individual. The two subsystems account for opposing autonomic functions (i.e. the relaxing or tensing of muscles); the parasympathetic subsystem is associated with rest-digest function, and the sympathetic subsystem with the fight-or-flight responses to potential threats (Doruk et al., 2008). Therefore, the sympathetic subsystem is linked to emotions such as pain, rage, and fear, and its activation accounts for an increase in heart rate and blood pressure to prepare the body for a potentially stressful situation. This would explain why anxiety is associated with such physiological reactions (Kreibig, 2010). However, in some circumstances, coactivation of both subsystems occurs, including during anticipatory anxiety in response to threatening stimuli. This process has been associated with a freezing response found in both humans and animals, defined as a “state of anxiety with varying degrees of inhibition of movement and vocalization” (Alm, 2004, p. 126). Freezing is a defence mechanism prevalent in situations during ambiguous threats, in which an individual (or animal) is unsure of how to behave. In other words, it is a kind of transitory phase in which a decision regarding flight or fight has yet to be made. When freezing occurs, the sympathetic and parasympathetic subsystems coactivate. Causing the heart rate to decrease as the body prepares for a future course of action (Jones et al., 2014).

Studies assessing the physiological reactions to anxiety in IWS and control groups have found significant differences in heart rate. In anticipation of speaking tasks, IWS have been found to demonstrate less increase in heart rate than non-stuttering controls, despite high levels of subjective anxiety (Peters & Hulstijn, 1984; Weber & Smith, 1990). Such results appear to indicate the presence of freezing in IWS as a response to anxiety generated by the anticipation of speaking. This response may have important ramifications for motor processes essential for speech production (Alm, 2004). Anxiety may exacerbate stuttering by “overloading speech motor systems” (Yang, Jia, Siok, & Tan, 2017, p. 223) and “speech fluency may be compromised under conditions of elevated emotional or physiological arousal” (Jones et al., 2014, p. 26). Thus, cognitive stress and physiological responses to anxiety may complicate speech in IWS (Van Lieshout, Ben-David, Lipski, & Namasivayam, 2014) by interfering with motor processes responsible for speech production

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(Scovel, 1978; Syzszka, 2017). However, stuttering itself can also provoke anxiety (Craig & Tran, 2006), suggesting a recursive relationship, meaning that autonomic coactivation may be provoked by negative cognitions in anxious individuals. Physiological responses (within the ANS) have been identified as indicators of speech-related state anxiety in IWS (Bowers, Saltuklaroglu & Kalinowski, 2012), signifying a link between somatic manifestations of anxiety and cognitive processes responsible for speech production.

Research has also attested to a relationship between stuttering and cognitive and behavioural reactions to anxiety. Studies have indicated that trait anxiety is characteristic of IWS (Craig, 1990; Fitzgerald, Djurdjic & Maguin, 1992); however, other research has suggested that levels of trait anxiety in IWS are not significantly different to those of IWDNS (Craig, Hancock, Tran, & Craig, 2003; Davis, Shisca & Howell, 2007). These differences may be explained by the observation that while stuttering is relatively universal in surface symptoms, IWS are heterogeneous in relation to other factors, including trait anxiety. Yet, it does appear that “the majority of adults who stutter have at least moderately elevated trait anxiety” (Craig & Tran, 2014, p. 40). Trait anxiety is not related to stuttering severity, but to fear of negative evaluation (Brundage, Winters, Beilby, 2017), and may develop as a response to high levels of state anxiety (Ezrati-Vinacour & Levin, 2004).

Unlike trait anxiety, significantly higher levels of state anxiety have been observed in IWS compared to non-stuttering controls (Craig & Tran, 2014). Furthermore, state anxiety in IWS has been linked to communicative situations (Davis et al., 2007; Mahr & Torosian, 1999; Miller & Watson, 1992), and has been related to stuttering severity (Ezrati-Vinacour & Levin, 2004). Given that both trait and state anxiety are considered to interact with one another, and are multidimensional in nature (Endler & Kocovski, 2001), it would stand that levels of trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety (such as speech or performance related anxieties) are influenced by a combination of communicative experiences, stuttering severity, social expectations, and reactions in IWS. As speech is “fundamental to interpersonal relationships, occupational success, and quality of life” (Iverach, O’Brian, Jones et al., 2009, p. 928), it is not all together surprising that IWS experience high levels of anxiety in communicative situations (Craig & Tran 2014; Iverach et al., 2011;

Kraaimaat, Vanryckeghem & Dam-Baggen, 2002; Stein, Baird & Walker, 1996). In this sense, stuttering primarily manifests itself as a social condition (see section 3.2.2. above), and related anxiety is most pervasive when it is coupled with social, performative, and evaluative situations. As a result, research into social anxiety in IWS has offered considerable insight into the role of cognitive and behavioural reactions to stuttering and anxiety.

Social anxiety has been described as a “negative mood state” (Craig, Blumgart & Tran, 2015), typified by a “fear or expectancy of negative evaluation in situations that involve social participation” (Lowe et al., 2012, p. 264). When this mood state is experienced in a way that has a detrimental impact upon an individual’s ability to function, it is considered a disorder (Morrison & Heimberg, 2013). In this sense, social anxiety has been defined as “a disorder in which a person experiences extreme and intense anticipatory anxiety related to being embarrassed in social situations which they believe they will be or are being scrutinized by others” (Blumgart et al., p. 687). Similarly, Iverach and Rapee (2014, p. 70) describe social anxiety disorder as being “characterised by a marked or intense fear of social or performance-based situations where scrutiny or evaluation by others may occur”. For Schlenker and Leary (1982), social anxiety is conceptually linked to the fear individuals experience when they believe they will not be able to make a desired impression upon others. According to Stein and Stein, diagnostic criteria for the condition include:

- A notable and persistent fear of one or more social or performance situations with exposure to unfamiliar people or possible scrutiny by others
- The person fears that he or she will act in a way (or show symptoms of anxiety) that will be humiliating or embarrassing
- Exposure to the feared social situation almost invariably provokes anxiety, which can take the form of a panic attack
- The person recognises that the fear is excessive or unreasonable
- The feared social or performance situations are avoided or endured with intense anxiety or distress

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- The condition interferes substantially with the person's normal routine, occupational (or academic) functioning, or social activities or relationships, or they have notable distress about having the phobia. (2008, p. 1116)

Therefore, social anxiety can be defined as a complex phenomenon which represents a conscious, assiduous fear of social situations, fuelled by attentional biases, negative cognitions regarding performance and evaluation by others, and avoidant behaviours (Schultz & Heimberg, 2008). The presence of social anxiety and social anxiety disorder in IWS has been found to exist at a significantly higher rate than in the general population (Iverach & Rapee, 2014; Blumgart et al., 2010; Iverach et al., 2009), including in CWS (Iverach et al., 2016).

Building on previous models detailing interaction between cognitive and behavioural processes in individuals who experience social anxiety (Clark & Wells, 1995; Rapee & Heimberg, 1997), Iverach et al. (2017, p. 543) present a comprehensive model illustrating the relationship that exists between social anxiety and stammering.



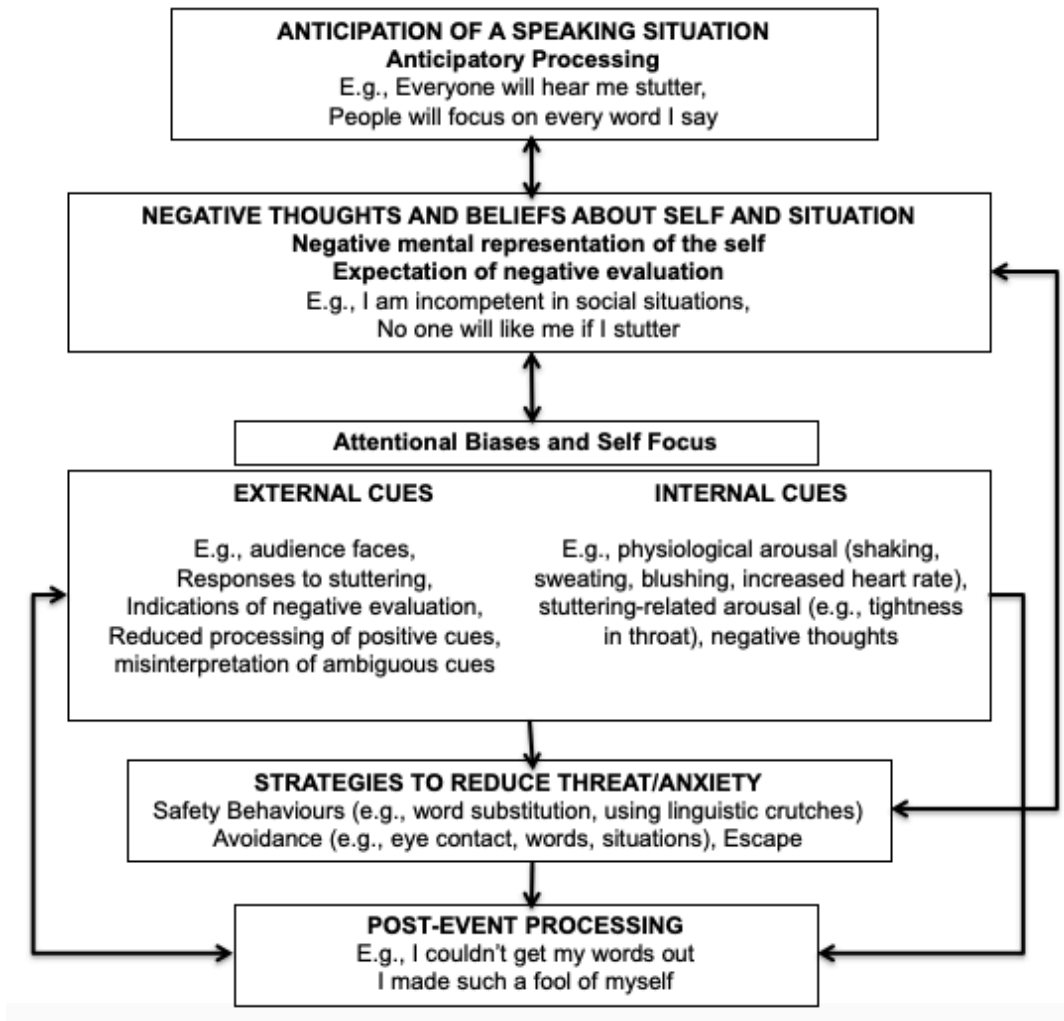


Figure 2. Iverach and colleagues' social anxiety and stuttering model

According to this model, social anxiety in IWS is established through fear of negative evaluation in relation to stuttering. Such fear may be particularly pervasive as negative judgements of stuttered speech can begin during childhood (Ezrati-Vinacour & Levin, 2004), and continue throughout adolescence (Mulcahy, Hennessey, Beilby, & Byrnes, 2008; Smith, Iverach, O'Brian, Kefalianos, & Reilly, 2014). This can result in elevated levels of anxiety in young people who stutter (McAllister, Kelman, & Millard, 2015), before expectation of social harm can become commonplace in adulthood (Craig & Tran, 2006; Messenger, Onslow, Packman, & Menzies, 2004).

Individual's personal experiences foreground anticipatory processes regarding social situations and the way in which they may unfold. These processes are governed by negative cognitions, which may take the form of

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pre-emptive self-evaluation of speech performance, perceived reactions of others, or possible consequences of entering into interactions (St Clare et al., 2009). Once present in a social situation, a series of attentional biases occur within an anxious individual which play a fundamental role in maintaining anxiety (Schultz & Heimberg, 2008). Attentional biases primarily divert focus toward internal cues, which may be somatic symptoms of anxiety such as sweating or trembling, or negative cognitions regarding the situation at hand. Such processes take place as an individual attempts to surmise how they may be evaluated by others (Clark & Wells, 1995). Such self-focus is also likely to centre on speech production in an attempt to anticipate stuttering caused by 'problem' words and phonemes, or environmental factors (Arenas, 2012; García-Barrera & Davidow, 2015). This practice involves considerable cognitive effort, may provoke stuttering rather than reduce it (Arenas, 2012; Brocklehurst, Lickley, & Corley, 2012).

Intense self-focus reduces engagement with the social environment, which is likely to diminish the likelihood of detecting positive reactions from others (Lowe et al., 2012). However, self-focused cognitions may "be modulated by the nature of audience behaviours that are perceived" (Schultz & Heimberg, 2008, p. 1214). In IWS, this may include reacting to ambiguous listener feedback negatively or perceiving neutral social cues as an example of negative evaluation (Iverach et al., 2017). Observation of negative external cues may interact with internal monitoring of speech in a way that can aggravate stuttering in IWS. This process typifies the interplay between external cues, negative cognitions and self-evaluation leading to a "vicious circle" in which stuttering, negatively perceived reactions, and anxiety create a negative feedback loop (Cream, Onslow, Packman, & Llewellyn, 2003, p. 387). Socially anxious IWS may display increased vigilance for undesirable external cues, such as negative facial expressions, as a means of confirming anxious beliefs (McAllister et al., 2015). All in all, the pervasive influence of attentional biases, "may be a defining factor in the experience of social anxiety in stuttering" (Iverach et al., 2017, p. 546).

Identification of perceived threats and negative cues by IWS can lead to the development and practise of strategies designed to lessen anxiety or negate a threat (Rapee & Heimberg, 1997). Such strategies may manifest as

avoidance behaviours before entering into a social situation, or escape behaviours once an individual is involved in interaction (Salkovskis, 1991). These behaviours are problematic, as “they prevent phobic people from experiencing an unambiguous disconfirmation of their unrealistic beliefs” (Wells et al., 1996, p. 154). In other words, strategies serve to reinforce the idea that a feared situation cannot be successfully managed without enacting specific behaviours. In this sense, an IWS who avoids speaking in order not to stutter in front of other eliminates the possibility of positively experiencing the social interaction in a manner that may change his or her negative beliefs and attitudes. Thus, avoidance strategies are considered maladaptive behaviours that aim to conceal or suppress stuttering, but ultimately restrict lifestyle choices (Beilby, Byrnes, Meagher, & Yaruss, 2013; Corcoran & Stewart, 1998; Plexico et al., 2005; Weingarten, 2012) and intensify anxiety (Iverach & Rapee, 2014).

Qualitative inquiry into the lived experiences of IWS has offered particular insight into how such strategies emerge and are used (Beilby et al., 2013; Bricker-Katz, Lincoln, & Cumming, 2010; Daniels et al., 2012; Georges, 2017; McAllister et al., 2012; Watson, 1995). Avoidance appears both as a pre-emptive strategy due to the anticipation of stuttering and also whilst engaged in communicative situations as a means of relief from moments of dysfluency. Prior avoidance of difficult situations is fuelled by a crippling sense of panic regarding stuttering and is characterised by intense frustration and helplessness (Plexico et al., 2009a). Understandably, these kinds of behaviours and the feelings they provoke can seriously and negatively impact social identities and notions of self in IWS (Plexico et al., 2009a). IWS also adopt other strategies when involved in speaking situations, most commonly changing words or phrases in an attempt to sidestep moments of stuttering (Watson, 1995; Klompas & Ross, 2004; Plexico et al., 2009a). The employment of all these strategies can contribute to negative thoughts and beliefs regarding perceived threats in social situations as well as an individual’s personal agency in dealing with them (cf. Bandura, 1988).

The coping mechanisms and responses employed by IWS have been described as “wide-ranging, dynamic and involve any attempt to deal with, adjust to, or overcome both overt and covert stresses associated with stuttering” (Plexico, Manning, & Levitt, 2009b, p. 109). Coping is said to involve two key

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functions: emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The former refers to strategies employed to manage emotional responses when individuals perceive a stressor is out of their control. These strategies often include avoidance, minimizing, and selective attention (Carver & Scheier, 1994). Problem-focused coping refers to responses towards stressors which an individual believes can be influenced by personal agency, i.e., identifying a problem and developing different solutions to tackle it (Plexico et al., 2009b).

The context in which an individual encounters a stressor has great influence upon the form of coping response employed. Typically, an individual assesses his or her environment and then makes a judgement regarding the situation, as well as possible coping options. These processes have been referred to as primary and secondary appraisal (Plexico et al., 2009a). Consequently, coping responses are chosen in line with the degree of perceived agency an individual has over the stressor. In this way, different coping responses can be judged as effective or ineffective based upon the context and the significance it holds for the individual.

Finally, socially anxious IWS divert attention to post-event processing by ruminating on their own performance (Kocovski, MacKenzie, & Rector, 2011), developing “a tendency to selectively remember and brood about negative, self-relevant aspects of social situations” (Rowa, Gavric, Stead, LeMoult, & McCabe, 2016, p. 578). During post-event processing, individuals may recall similar previous situations in which difficulty was experienced. This can result in low self-esteem and self-criticism (Stein & Stein, 2008), and strengthen perceptions of social situations as unmanageable threats (Iverach et al., 2017). Post-event processing closes the circle of cognitive and behavioural processes involved in social anxiety in IWS, informing a negative self-image which is then brought into future social interactions, continuing the negative affective cycle (Chen, Rapee, & Abbott, 2013).

Considering the literature which has been discussed above, there appears to be evidence for believing anxiety to have a powerful role in the presence of specific cognitive processes and behaviours that can complicate the lives of IWS. Furthermore, the interaction between anxiety and these

processes appears to also influence self-related beliefs and identity for many individuals who stutter.

### 3.5. Stuttering and self-related constructs

Given that stuttering affects speech, an essential tool for social interaction and identity construction, it is imperative that we attempt to understand how stuttering may influence the negotiation of identity in IWS. If we consider that “identity relates to desire – the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation, and the desire for security and safety” (Norton, 1997, p. 410), then the relationship between stuttering and identity is an intriguing one. It is widely recognised that certain secondary characteristics of stuttering (i.e. fear, shame, embarrassment, frustration) can create distance between an individual and social elements that foster positive identity construction such as recognition, affiliation, security, and safety. Therefore, stuttering at its core, can be an obstacle to all of these desires, restricting individual agency in social interactions:

The exquisite pain of being able to select a word, to think it, to be able to spell it in your head, to be able to imagine yourself saying it, but *then finding it impossible to actually say it* is exactly the pain of stuttering. The body locks up and the mind races to find an alternative phrase or word to say with a less explosive syllable. It is a bit like driving a car where the gearbox randomly locks up every now and then, locking the wheels and requiring a quick shift of gears to enable forward movement again. It is particularly painful in those moments of one’s life where you know you should say something, within the moment, and can not. Like when you have an awesome one-liner joke to throw into conversation and, even worse, when you are with someone in one of those magic moments where life is perfect and you are in love, but you can not say so... I have had to find so many different ways to say ‘I love you’. (Fuller, 2005)

This quote describes the disruption to the mechanics of speech around which symptoms of stuttering crystalize; however, it is in the account of trouble

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engaging in social situations in which the pain of stuttering is most evident. The depth of feeling expressed by Fuller is impossible to quantify, and it is precisely for this reason why notions of identity and self-concept in IWS have been so difficult to approach from a quantitative-orientated perspective that prevails in the stuttering literature, which has tended to focus on quantifiable aspects of stuttering behaviour (e.g., the number of stuttered syllables). Such a narrow focus has failed to account for constructs such as identity and self-concept within scientific research (Kathard, 2001). However, a shift has occurred in the last 20 years and qualitative inquiry has approached stuttering from a phenomenological perspective, investigating how the experiences of IWS can inform both clinical interventions and notions of identity and self-concept held by IWS (Bricker-Katz et al., 2010; Butler, 2013a; Cream et al., 2003; Daniels & Gabel, 2004; Guendouzi & Williams, 2010; Hagstrom & Wertsch, 2004; Kathard, Norman, & Pillay, 2010; Lindsay & Langevin, 2017).

Pre-empting this shift, the importance of self-concept for IWS was recognised by speech therapists in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both Sheehan (1954) and Shearer (1961) considered that the embedded notion of stuttering as an immovable aspect of one's self-concept hindered the development of a non-stuttering alternative. Meanwhile, Fransella (1968) considered that IWS maintain their stuttering self-concept as it affords certain benefits, such as sympathy or an accommodating scapegoat for other perceived inadequacies. Later, Sheehan (1975) described IWS as experiencing an internal conflict when faced with speaking situations, fuelled by discrepancy between different dimensions of their self-concept. Sheehan used the term "approach-avoidance" to describe the opposing pull of fluent speaker and stuttering speaker self-concepts. It is understandable how this clash could potentially complicate the negotiation of a competent speaker self-concept and subsequent sense of identity in speaking situations. Research with IWS has shed light on this phenomenon and has described the existence of a draining dialogue between two competing identities; the "normal" and the "abnormal" (Kathard et al., 2010, p. 55).

The distinction between self-concept and identity is sometimes a fuzzy one. Broadly speaking, self-concept is considered to be a multidimensional evaluative and descriptive perception of oneself, which is relatively stable,

internal, and considered in relation to different domains (Mercer, 2011b). Whereas identity, conceptualised as “multiple, changing, and a site of struggle” (Norton & Toohey, 2011, p. 414), involves an interaction between self-beliefs and specific social contexts (Kriukow, 2017). Therefore, an individual’s self-concept is likely to influence identity negotiation and vice versa. Consequently, an individual’s self-concept “provides structure, coherence, and meaning to one’s personal existence” (Pajares & Schunk, 2001, p. 241), while identity “reflects the meaning individual’s make for themselves in situations and contexts that are circumscribed by cultural routines and mediated by cultural artefacts, beliefs, and mainstream understandings” (Hagstrom & Daniels, 2004, p. 215).

Closely related to self-concept is self-esteem. Self-esteem has been considered to be the evaluative process by which an individual gradually forms their self-concept (Rubio-Alcalá, 2014); informed by his or her level of success in certain tasks, as well as interaction with the outside world (Habratt, 2013).

Rubio has defined self-esteem as

a psychological and social phenomenon in which an individual evaluates his/her competence and own self according to some values, which may result in different emotional states, and which becomes developmentally stable but is still open to variation depending on personal circumstances. (2007, p.5)

Stuttering has been found to have a negative impact upon self-esteem in adults (Klompas & Ross, 2004) and stuttering severity has been reported to predict self-esteem in adolescents (Adriaensens et al., 2015), particularly in social and communicative domains. Equally, IWS have been found to present weak self-efficacy beliefs in regard to their speaking skills (Bray, Kehle, Lawless, & Theodore, 2003). Moreover, weak self-efficacy beliefs have been found to forecast reduced quality of life in IWS, and contribute to an overall negative self-concept (Carter et al., 2017).

Despite these findings there is a general lack of research into stuttering and self-related constructs. Hagstrom and Daniels (2004) argue that while psychological components relating to stuttering have regularly been considered, researchers and practitioners have generally found it more comfortable to focus

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upon measures of behaviour than to explore the notion of identity. This may be due to standardized practices in the fields of clinical intervention and traditional ideologies regarding how impairment is conceptualised and treated (i.e. the medical model of disability). As previously mentioned, behaviours such as isolation or reluctance to communicate can have a significant impact on how individuals may construct or negotiate their identities. As such, identity negotiation for IWS is subject to the influence of personal, social, and temporal processes (Kathard, 2003). Listener perceptions can play a significant role in this process; the numerous negative stereotypes and social stigmas that surround stuttering behaviours may result in IWS being typecast into identities or subject positions that they feel are misrepresentative. Research has suggested that IWS are often characterised as unconfident, shy, introverted, tense, anxious, withdrawn, and self-conscious by others (Craig, Tran, & Craig, 2003). Negative stereotyping of this kind is worrying; however, it is equally concerning that IWS experience “role entrapment” in line with these social expectations.

Role entrapment arises when dominant social groups prescribe set roles for minority groups. Such typecasting, or attribution of identities may occur in relation to social or occupational positions (Gabel et al., 2004). However, the overlap between the two means that any form of occupational role entrapment is likely to have implications up on social roles, and vice versa. For example, an IWS who is rejected from public-facing jobs may carry over a perceived lack of communicative competence into their social life. Whilst the opposite could be true for IWS who experience trust and support in the workplace. Research has indicated that IWS may be typecast from an early age by authority figures such as primary and secondary school teachers (Irani, Gabel, Hughes, & Palasik, 2012).

Besides attribution of identities from others, IWS also claim identities or identity positions for themselves that are sometimes perceived to be inaccurate. Individuals describe their real identities as being “trapped” and “trying to break free” (Daniels & Gabel, 2004, p. 208). In this sense, there may be a discrepancy between what is considered a “true” identity, and the identity positions presented and enacted by IWS. Such a discrepancy can lead to problems with self-acceptance and the presence of fear and anxiety. Avoidance behaviours



that result from rejection of stuttering further serve to reinforce the negative identities that IWS want to reject, yet often instantiate (Plexico et al., 2009a). Furthermore, societal pressures generally dictate that fluent identities are regarded as more desirable than stuttering ones and even though individuals may experience extended periods of fluency, many are likely to consider their identity as “stutterer” to be a dominant, core construct of their selves (DiLillo, Manning, & Neimeyer, 2003). This may result in IWS considering that a fundamental part of their being is unfavourable and anomalous to a positive self-concept and gratifying identity positions.

In light of the above, we have seen that stuttering may have a significant impact upon how individuals negotiate their identity, evaluate self-beliefs, and make sense of their own self-concept. It is possible that some IWS experience a discrepancy between different domains of the self (Higgins, 1987). For example, IWS may struggle to act out and realise the ought-to self (which represents qualities one feels they should possess, due to personal or societal beliefs) and the ideal-self (the representation of an individual’s hopes) that they are capable of cognitively envisioning. In other words, an individual who stutters may be able to adhere to societal norms regarding spoken interaction in certain situations, but not in others. In terms of identity, IWS may negotiate social interactions in such a way that they present themselves in a positive light to their interlocutor whilst at the same time failing to accurately express their true identities. Equally, such experiences may have ramifications for an individual’s self-concept across a number of different social domains (Mercer, 2012), as the multidimensional nature of an individual’s self-concept means that perceived deficiency in one domain may impact another.

### **3.6. Conclusions**

This chapter has attempted to provide a comprehensive overview of literature that has discussed the etiology, impact, and treatment of stuttering from various perspectives. First, research into possible causes of stuttering has been discussed. This has shown that inquiry has suggested that the condition may be explained by functional and structural differences in the brains of IWS,

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specifically in areas responsible for speech motor planning and production, as well as auditory processing and language. Subsequently, the social and medical models of disability have been described as a means of locating stuttering as a neurological condition that is subject to distinct societal pressures. An understanding of this has informed clinical intervention with IWS, and the current chapter has described a number of approaches used in speech therapy practice.

Following this, studies into social factors that can complicate the stuttering experience have been discussed. This includes investigation that reports stigma, bullying, and stereotyping is frequently experienced by IWS, leading to the development of negative attitudes to communication and maladaptive avoidance strategies. Both of which can result in IWS considering that stuttering limits progress in social, educational, and professional spheres and provokes anxiety and worry. In light of this, inquiry into anxiety and stuttering has been reviewed. Studies have indicated that anxiety is commonplace among IWS, particularly in social situations. This research has shown that anxiety arises due to reactions to disfluent speech, by others and IWS themselves, and can exacerbate negative cognitive and behavioural processes, the presence of which can provoke a negative cyclical relationship between stuttering and anxiety.

Finally, literature regarding stuttering in relation to identity and self-concept has been discussed. This body of work has indicated that anxiety, societal pressures regarding speech, and self-evaluative beliefs held by IWS complicate the negotiation of positive identity positions, and potentially limit self-concept. Identity and self-concept have been considered because they influence the conduct of an individual across challenging contexts, which includes foreign language classes.

Therefore, as indicated by the research discussed previously, it would be fair to conclude that IWS may experience certain difficulties in L2 learning as a result of stuttering and anxiety. This hypothesis provides the basis to a number of research questions that the current study aims to respond to. Negative beliefs held by IWS concerning their communicative abilities and capacity to successfully manage speaking situations could be interpreted as an indicator of perceived weak self-efficacy in such contexts, and negative self-concept beliefs

in communicative domains. Furthermore, research describing high levels of anxiety and the use of avoidance strategies suggests that IWS may struggle with the challenging nature of L2 learning, as it demands constant linguistic performance, evaluation, and exposure to a phonetic structure that is unfamiliar. Similarly, many students' first experience of L2 learning occurs at school, either during childhood or adolescence. As inquiry has demonstrated, this period of time can be particularly testing for IWS due to bullying and stigma, which can in turn lead to social anxiety and maladaptive coping strategies. The fact that many IWS present elevated levels of anxiety in social and communicative contexts also points to the consideration that they may feel overwhelmed in L2 classes. However, previous inquiry has not attended to the possible difficulties experienced by IWS in this context. With this in mind, the current study intends to describe the anxiety reported by EFL learners who stutter (LWS) and shed light upon how such anxiety may impact upon the progress of this learner population.

#### 4. Foreign language anxiety research

The final chapter in this section discusses research that has aimed to identify and document the ways in which FLA may interact with learners and how it influences development, achievement, and performance. To this end, inquiry that describes the cognitive, academic, and social impact of FLA is considered. Subsequently, investigations that focus on the presence of FLA across different language domains in L2 learning is discussed. This research can be considered to constitute the “dynamic approach” to the study of FLA, which corresponds with a specific period in FLA inquiry that has provided insight into this phenomenon across multiple learner populations and contexts.

##### 4.1. Foreign language research: cognitive, academic and social effects

Research has established that FLA can negatively influence academic, cognitive, and social components of the L2 learning process. Table two below summarises these effects (Macintyre, 2017, p. 17).

Table 2. Effects of foreign language anxiety (MacIntyre, 2017)

Academic effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lowered grades and poor academic achievement.</li><li>• Impaired performance on tests.</li><li>• Affected achievement in second languages.</li><li>• Decreased self-perception of second language competence.</li><li>• Lower result scores on measures of actual second language competence.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Overstudying’ - increased effort at learning resulting in lower levels of achievement than expected.</li> </ul>
Cognitive effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased self-related cognition (thoughts of failure, performance worry, self-deprecating thoughts).</li> <li>• Interferes with cognitive performance at any and all three stages of learning: input, processing and output.</li> <li>• At the input stage, anxiety acts like a filter preventing information from getting into the cognitive processing system.</li> <li>• During the processing stage, speed and accuracy of learning can be influenced.</li> <li>• At the output stage, the quality of second language communication can be affected by disrupting the retrieval of information.</li> <li>• Affected time required to recognise words, ability to hold words in short-term memory, memory for grammar rules, ability to translate a paragraph, length of time studying new vocabulary items, memory for new vocabulary items, time required to complete a test of vocabulary, retrieval of vocabulary from long-term memory, ability to repeat items in native language (L1) and second language (L2), ability to speak with an L2 accent, complexity of sentences spoken and fluency of speech.</li> <li>• Students require more time to intake information and more time to achieve</li> </ul>

	<p>the same result as a student not experiencing language anxiety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A nervous student risks performing more poorly than a relaxed one.</li> </ul>
<p>Social effects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced linguistic self-confidence, a motivating influence for the language learner.</li> <li>• In an environment where the second language is predominantly spoken, students experience higher apprehension in their native language.</li> <li>• Anxious learners do not communicate as often as more relaxed learners.</li> </ul>

The majority of the consequences of FLA listed by MacIntyre fall under “cognitive effects”, since, as with other forms of anxiety, cognitive processes play an important role in both the presence and maintenance of FLA. Both academic performance and social functioning are mediated by these processes which can be negatively influenced by the presence of FLA. Therefore, we begin by discussing the impact of FLA on cognition, before moving on to deal with its effects in achievement and performance.

#### **4.1.1. Foreign language anxiety and cognition**

Anxiety provokes a narrowing of attention towards a perceived threat, in turn reducing cognitive resources available for other tasks (Eysenck et al., 2007). In L2 classes, this may cause students to experience cognitive interference that would reduce their capacity to process, understand, learn, and use information related to the target language (Sellers, 2000). As indicated by Tobias (1986), anxiety can interfere with learning at the input, processing, and output stages of cognitive processing. The input stage refers to learners' first experience with a specific stimulus at a specific time. The processing stage is

based on the cognitive operations of organization, storage, and assimilation of the material taken at the input stage. Finally, the output stage involves the production of this material. Consequently, FLA research has attempted to identify its impact on such stages of cognitive functioning, although in an L2 context, emphasis has typically been placed on the influence of FLA in the output stage, as this stage has been deemed to interact most directly with language performance and therefore assessment.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1994b) found FLA to have an influence on cognitive functioning by deliberately provoking anxiety in 72 students learning French at the three aforementioned stages of cognitive processing. The authors used a video camera during vocabulary learning tasks to incite anxiety in the participants. The participants were divided into four groups, with each experiencing anxiety at specific moments. The first group experienced anxiety at the initial learning stage when participants were first introduced to new vocabulary, the second when the meaning of specific vocabulary was being learned, and the third when students were required to produce the target words when prompted. The fourth group served as a control group. Results indicated that interference by anxiety at input and processing stages may create “cognitive deficits that can only be overcome when the individual has the opportunity to recover the missing material” (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b, p. 16). That is to say, that anxious students may fail to acquire certain language content due to anxiety, which can only be rectified through the relearning of material. The same authors (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b), developed scales to assess the impact of FLA on input, processing, and output, namely, the Input Anxiety Scale (IAS), The Processing Anxiety Scale (PAS), and the Output Anxiety Scale (OAS). Participants were assessed during a variety of tasks including translation of written prose, oral self-description, cloze tests, learning paired nouns, multiple choice grammar tests, and short-term memory tests. The authors reported that FLA negatively influenced cognitive functioning by slowing down word categorization at the input stage, increasing effort required to process content, and impairing performance at the output stage. The overall effect of such cognitive interference means that “anxious students have a smaller base of second language knowledge and have more difficulty demonstrating the knowledge that they do possess” (MacIntyre & Gardner,

1994a, p. 301). In addition, the study drew attention to the interdependent nature of the three processes, indicating that anxiety experienced at one stage is likely to complicate successful functioning in other stages.

These findings were corroborated by Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley (1999a), highlighting the need to consider the effect of anxiety at all three stages. The same authors (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2000) validated the scales previously developed and used by MacIntyre and Gardner (1994b). Based on responses obtained from 258 participants across French, German, Spanish and Japanese L2 programmes, the authors reported that the highest levels of anxiety were observed at the output stage, but that anxiety at the input stage was most associated with overall levels of FLA. Building on these findings, Bailey, Onwuegbuzie, and Daley (2000) used the IAS, PAS, and OAS to measure anxiety in 205 students of L2 Spanish, German, and French. Results indicated that processing anxiety was most prevalent, and that high anxiety across all three stages correlated with student age and low expectations regarding achievement in L2 classes.

Therefore, these investigations provide empirical evidence that FLA has a negative influence on cognitive processes responsible for the processing and assimilation of information in L2 learning. Moreover, a lack of L2 knowledge may explain other cognitive symptoms such as an increase in self-directed thoughts, while also explaining reduced achievement and higher levels of anxiety in L2 social situations outside of the classroom. The implications of cognitive interference caused by FLA upon achievement in L2 learning are discussed below.

#### **4.1.2. Foreign language anxiety and achievement**

While early studies into FLA reported conflicting findings in regard to the effect of anxiety on achievement (Chastein, 1975; Kleinmann, 1977), subsequent research has consistently identified anxiety as having a detrimental impact upon L2 achievement (Horwitz, 2001). Due to the influence of anxiety on the different cognitive processes during L2 learning at the input, processing, and output stage, identifying the relationship between anxiety and achievement



has been problematic. Anxiety may interfere with input and processing stages meaning that content is not learnt correctly, and therefore not produced correctly at the output stage. On the other hand, learners may not experience anxiety until they are required to perform in the L2 and experience interference which negatively affects their achievement. In a few cases, it can influence achievement and benefit some higher-level students in a facilitating form (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, Marcos-Llinás & Juan-Garau, 2009).

In spite of these cases, there has been a general consensus regarding the disadvantageous nature of FLA on learning, performance, and therefore achievement, so that it has a debilitating effect as a result. The extent to which anxiety impedes L2 learning, however, has been debated in the literature. In response to Horwitz et al. (1986), Sparks and Ganschow (1991, 1993) proposed that the FLCAS did not assess anxiety in L2 classes, rather L2 aptitude. Additionally, the authors argue that some students' lack of progress in L2 learning was more likely to be the result of L1 linguistic coding difficulties, which also interfere with the L2 learning process. Thus, anxiety could be attributed to language issues that also impacted L1 performance and were not due to the novel nature of SLA, "the affective qualities, then, may only be symptoms – behavioural manifestations – of a deeper problem" (Sparks & Ganschow, 1991, p. 6). This theory was denominated the Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypotheses (LCDH).

The suggestion that FLA is the result of poor achievement contradicts findings presented by scholars in FLA research (Horwitz et al., 1986 MacIntyre & Gardner 1991a). Both Horwitz (2001) and MacIntyre (1995) responded with rebuttals asserting that the negative influence of FLA in L2 performance was indisputable. Additionally, they provide compelling evidence that anxiety can also disrupt effective learning by interfering with cognitive processing ability and provoking maladaptive behaviours in learners. MacIntyre makes this clear when he states the following:

language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can interfere with each of these by creating a divided attention scenario for anxious students. Anxious students are focused on both the task at hand and their reactions to it. For example, when responding

to a question in class, the anxious student is focused on answering the teacher's question and evaluating the social implications of the answer while giving it. To the extent that self-related cognition increases, task-related cognition is restricted, and performance suffers. (1995, p. 96)

Both Horwitz (2001) and Macintyre (1995) draw attention to the fact that FLA has been found to affect students across all proficiency levels and language teachers (Horwitz, 1996). Underlying Horwitz's (2001) riposte is the assertion that discounting the presence and influence of FLA can have serious implications for students' progress and would amount to dereliction of duty on the part of L2 teachers. Although the presence and effects of various forms of anxiety in L2 language learning, including FLA, have been proved beyond doubt, the theory proposed by Sparks and Ganschow (1991) must surely account for the difficulties that *some* L2 students encounter (Horwitz, 2001). It stands to reason that any language deficits present in L1 functioning would also have the potential to influence the L2 acquisition process.

Of particular interest to the current study is the assertion made by Sparks and Ganschow (1991) that "what happens to these students is that their compensatory strategies become unworkable when they are placed in situations where they must learn a totally unfamiliar and new linguistic coding system" (p. 10). While stuttering is not a linguistic coding issue, it can lead to the development of strategies and techniques designed to minimise its impact and visibility, as we have detailed in Chapter 3. Such strategies can become deep-seated forms of behaviour, which often consist of intricate linguistic manoeuvres. As a result, their application to another language may be problematic, impede learning and lead to compromised performance (as well as anxiety), much in the way Sparks and Ganschow (1991) describe. Despite the assertions made by Sparks and Ganschow, studies into FLA have demonstrated the negative impact of FLA upon achievement. In the following section, we discuss its recurrent adverse effects across various languages and levels of proficiency in the domains of speaking (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989), as well as in writing (Saito et al., 1999), reading (Sellers, 2000; Tóth, 2012), and listening (Kim, 2002).

## **4.2. Foreign language anxiety in the different language domains**

Although first described as a general phenomenon, research has established the presence of anxiety to different degrees across the specific skills of foreign language learning in an attempt to provide a more complete picture of FLA and its impact upon student progress and achievement in the assorted tasks commonly found in L2 language classrooms.

### **4.2.1. Foreign language speaking anxiety**

Research into FLA has generally focused upon the speaking domain, and the FLCAS has been noted for its emphasis on spoken tasks (Aida, 1994; Rodríguez & Abreu, 2003; Martínez-Agudo, 2013a). Given that mastery of a foreign language has placed emphasis on the production and control of spoken language (Daly, 1991; García-Pastor, 2018a, 2018b), it is understandable that research into FLA would devote particular attention to this area. Spoken interaction is seen not only as a necessary means to express language knowledge, but also for successful integration into a language community. L2 oral expression is therefore inextricably linked to an individual's social identity (Norton Peirce, 1995) and, in turn, language learner self-concept (Mercer, 2012). This idea is not new, given that Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 28) stated that "probably no other field of study implicates self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does". Thus, one can imagine that anxiety in this language domain may have the most acute effect on how L2 learners experience foreign language learning as a whole. In this way, FLA experienced in relation to spoken interaction may be most closely linked to the social effects of FLA described by MacIntyre (2017), which include reduced participation, higher apprehension, and lower self-confidence.

The 1986 study conducted by Horwitz and colleagues was the first to employ the FLCAS to assess levels of anxiety in the L2 classroom. The authors obtained responses from seventy-five university students studying introductory Spanish in the USA. Results indicated that FLA was an important issue for

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many students, who reported experiencing fear and self-consciousness when speaking in front of others, as well as concern regarding their level of competence and making mistakes in the L2. The authors suggested that methodological changes in L2 teaching and learning may be responsible for participants' high levels of anxiety in the speaking domain:

Since speaking in the target language seems to be the most threatening aspect of foreign language learning, the current emphasis on the development of communicative competence poses particularly great difficulties for the anxious student. (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 132)

Therefore, Horwitz and colleagues' focus on speech related anxiety may be explained by their understanding of how changes towards more communicative styles of teaching could exacerbate anxiety in students who already feel a sense of unease in the foreign language classroom.

The strong reactions to L2 speaking tasks reported by Horwitz et al. (1986) were also found by Cohen and Norst (1989) who reported intense feelings of fear and anxiety in nine monolingual English speakers in L2 classes. The authors analysed diary entries in which Australian postgraduate students described their emotional and somatic reactions to a variety of different L2 classes in particularly strong terms, alluding to their "frightening" and "frustrating" experiences in those classes. The study also reported students experiencing what is termed a "double-bind": a situation in which they perceived a negative punishment to be forthcoming regardless of their action:

If he speaks he risks being publicly wrong and is thus humiliated before teacher and peers. If he remains silent, when asked a question, he also risks embarrassment, gets no practice and possibly earns the disapproval of the teacher. (1989, p. 64)

This observation is particularly notable for the present study. The double-bind situation evokes the theory of learned helplessness (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978) and is reminiscent of the experiences reported by IWS, who describe helplessness due the involuntary, unpredictable nature of stammering

and the negative reactions it can provoke (Corcoran & Stewart, 1998). Cohen and Norst (1989) fail to specify the various languages studied by participants, referring only to Arabic in the case of one learner. Nevertheless, the findings offer insight into how individuals conceptualise FLA and its effects. Furthermore, as the above quote indicates, FLA can interact with social anxieties such as fear of negative evaluation, which may silence and limit students when they attempt to communicate in the L2. The authors recognised this and drew attention to the important link between performance and notions of self, stating that “language and self/identity are so closely bound, if indeed they are not one and the same thing, that a perceived attack on one is an attack on the other” (Cohen & Norst, 1989, p. 76).

Later, Young (1990) used a novel questionnaire to describe anxiety in response to spoken tasks in 135 learners of Spanish in the USA. Participants were asked to indicate the role played by corrective teacher behaviour in increasing or reducing their levels of anxiety. Results suggested that FLA was linked to performance related tasks in L2 classes, and particularly those in the oral domain such as speaking in open class. Correspondingly, negative evaluation by both peers and teachers also contributed to anxiety.

Similarly, a reluctance to practice in classroom contexts may lead to a decline in performance during language assessment. Phillips (1992) drew attention to the disruptive nature of anxiety in oral exams amongst French foreign language learners in the USA. The author used the FLCAS, interviews, and assessed oral exams to establish if a connection existed between anxiety and oral performance. Although statistical analysis reflected “modest” correlations between anxiety and performance, the study indicated that students who experienced higher levels of anxiety obtained lower grades in oral exams. Conversely, students who received higher marks reported lower levels of anxiety and used more complex verbal constructions than their anxious counterparts. Interviews conducted with students confirmed the presence of anxiety regardless of language level and content knowledge in exams.

Research has investigated perfectionism in students as a potential explanation for high levels of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA). Perfectionism as a personality trait has been linked to anxiety and is characterised by a tendency to evaluate oneself in line with unrealistic

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standards of behaviour (Nekanda-Trepka, 1984). This process of evaluation may impact an individual's self-esteem, which can suffer as the result of all-or-nothing perceptions of success. Therefore, perfectionism can generate anxiety by raising self-consciousness and increasing apprehension related to making mistakes (Saboonchi & Lundh, 1997). Consequently, perfectionism has been linked to lower educational achievement, weaker self-efficacy, and procrastination, and a problematic relationship with perceived success. In part because perfectionist students hold unrealistically high standards, which can lead to delays in starting and finishing work that will be assessed or judged by others (Flett, Hewitt, Su, & Flett, 2016).

Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) conducted interviews with pre-service EFL teachers in Chile to assess levels of anxiety in high-level students. The study used the FLCAS to identify anxious and non-anxious participants, four students from each group conducted a short, videotaped interview and were subsequently required to watch themselves speaking English and comment on their performance. These comments were transcribed and analysed by three different "raters", who identified quotations indicative of perfectionism based on symptoms within the literature. These included "student commentary and reactions reflecting personal performance standards, procrastination, emotional responses to evaluation, and error-consciousness" (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002, p. 565). Students from the anxious group digressed from discussing their oral performance, overreacted to mistakes, and made unfavourable comparisons between their own performance and that of their peers. Despite data being collected from a relatively small group of participants, the study suggests that a combination of anxiety and perfectionism in students may result in problematic experiences in the foreign language classroom. This link is particularly relevant in the current study, as research has reported perfectionist characteristics in IWS such as error-consciousness (Brocklehurst, Drake, & Corley, 2015) Furthermore, perfectionist attitudes in IWS towards speech performance may also mediate "the negative influence of stuttering severity on self-esteem" (Adriaensens et al., 2015, p. 52).

Gregersen (2003) used an almost identical procedure to Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), with a different group of eight EFL students in Chile. The study reported that highly anxious students made more errors when speaking and

were less preoccupied with correcting themselves, instead focusing on non-linguistic elements of their performance. A desire to correct errors does not appear to be negative on the surface, but the author reports that by paying more attention to the form of an utterance, an individual can be distracted from the message they are attempting to communicate. Although Gregersen's (2003) study does not reference perfectionism, these behaviours are very similar to those described in Gregersen and Horwitz (2002). The high frequency of L1 use and a failure to recognise errors on the part of learners were also attributed to anxiety by the authors.

A number of studies have assessed FLSA in Asian contexts. Matsuda and Gobel (2004) used the FLCAS to investigate FLSA in 252 EFL students at a Japanese university. The authors reported that students who had spent time abroad in English language contexts demonstrated significantly lower levels of FLSA. This was associated with an increase in self-confidence as a result of the practical experience of language immersion. In another study, Liu (2006) used a combination of teacher observations, reflective journals, interviews and the FLCAS to assess levels of FLA in 548 students of EFL in a Chinese university. The study collected data from participants from different proficiency levels throughout the school year. The author found that 70% of all participants experienced anxiety when speaking English and found that speaking in open class (either during a presentation or answering questions) provoked the highest levels of anxiety in students.

A similar methodological approach was employed by Mak (2011), who conducted research with 313 EFL students in Hong Kong. The author found that FLA experienced during speaking tasks was mediated mainly by general speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. He argues that the two factors "overlap and are not wholly independent of each other [...] they are probably two labels describing one phenomenon" (p. 210). Additionally, Mak found that negative attitudes towards the class and learners self-evaluation contributed to anxiety in speaking tasks. These results were supported by Park and Lee (2014) who reported similar findings with a group of Korean EFL learners.

The presence of high levels of FLA in oral tasks was also reported by Woodrow (2006), who investigated the impact of anxiety on oral performance in 47 undergraduate students from different Asian countries. Participants

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completed a novel questionnaire, the Second Language Speaking Anxiety Scale, designed to assess speaking anxiety when using the target language both inside and outside the classroom. They also completed a semi-structured interview and speaking proficiency was evaluated using an oral assessment similar to those administered by IELTS (International English Language Testing System). Given that this group of learners were studying English before embarking on study stays in Australia, a distinction was made between speaking tasks regularly found inside the classroom, and those involved in out-of-class interactions. The study reported significant correlations between anxiety and oral performance in classroom tasks and real-world interactions.

However, findings indicated a distinction between speaking anxiety experienced in these two contexts. This difference was coupled with an apparent division between anxious students: those who experienced “information retrieval anxiety” and those with “skills deficit type anxiety” (Woodrow, 2006, p. 321). These findings have repercussions for pedagogical approaches to reducing FLA in students. Individuals who experience skill deficit anxiety may profit from “skill scaffolding”, i.e., support from teachers or peers that allow him or her to progress, in line with Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (Kinging, 2002). On the other hand, students who experience anxiety that impedes information retrieval may benefit from desensitization and relaxation techniques (Woodrow, 2006).

In the Spanish context, the FLCAS has also been used to measure levels of anxiety in EFL students. Cebreros (2003) used a translated version of the FLCAS with 33 university students studying English philology and compared results to those obtained by Horwitz et al. (1986). Responses evince higher levels of anxiety in relation to speaking tasks than those in the study carried out by Horwitz and colleagues. However, the opposite was true for speaking tasks that involved native speakers. Cebreros attributed this difference to the experience Spanish EFL learners had with native teachers and time spent overseas in English speaking environments. These results support those reported by Matsuda and Gobel (2004), which found students with experience in target language contexts may report lower levels of anxiety than their peers. One notable conclusion from Cabrerros’ study is that high levels of anxiety were observed in students enrolled in an English philology graduate course, which



supports previous findings on the presence of FLA across all proficiency levels, including high-level students (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Horwitz, 2001, Tum, 2015)

In another study with Spanish EFL learners, Arnaiz-Castro and Guillén (2013) assessed differences in anxiety between 216 university students who studied English as an elective part of their degree course and those for whom it was a requirement. Findings showed that both groups presented average levels of anxiety, however, participants who were voluntarily studying English were described as being more relaxed about using spoken English compared to students who were required to study the language. Overall, communication apprehension was found to typify students' anxiety. The authors consider that a "historically poor level in English" (Arnaiz-Castro & Guillén, 2013, p. 17) characterises the Spanish learning context and that high levels of anxiety in Spanish students may explain slow progress in EFL learning.

Martínez-Agudo (2013a) used the FLCAS to assess FLA in 208 secondary school students in Spain. The author reported high levels of FLA in speaking tasks in this learner population with more than half indicating their agreement with FLCAS items related to feeling anxious or self-conscious when speaking in English. However, the vast majority of students (86%) were most preoccupied with failing the class, whilst approximately half of them (45,74%) missed their English class. Worry of failure may indicate that awareness of the social relevance of English, parental pressures, and concerns about future prospects also play an important role in the development of FLA. A certified B1 or B2 level of linguistic competence in this language is a prerequisite for many higher education and employment opportunities in Spain, and failure to pass exams during Secondary education can have serious implications for students' progress. While a desire to avoid classes may also reflect anxiety and apathy. Additionally, in this context, concern regarding speaking in EFL classes may be related to pressures generated by formal assessment (Zeidner, 2007).

The perceived effect of anxiety on L2 speech production in EFL was investigated by Tóth (2006), who used post-task interviews and a short questionnaire with 16 advanced students in Hungary. Learners were identified as "anxious" or "non-anxious" based on anxiety levels assessed through the FLCAS, and their performance during a 10 to 15-minute-long conversation with

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a native speaker. Tasks during the conversation required them to share information regarding their background and interests, engage in discussion concerning a potential contentious subject and, finally, discuss an ambiguous image. Results indicated that six students from the high-anxiety group considered anxiety to have impacted upon their performance in the oral task, while six of their peers from the low-anxiety group indicated that anxiety had no bearing on their functioning. During interviews, students from both groups stated that anxiety interfered with comprehension of input, generating ideas and retrieving vocabulary. Furthermore, non-anxious students were more positively evaluated by their native interlocutors in terms of their use of English.

Despite the task at hand primarily revolving around spoken interaction, anxiety also affected participants' abilities in listening and reading when they were required to attend to interlocutors' responses or written instructions provided by the researcher. The author identified anxiety as causing a breakdown in cognitive functioning responsible for the decoding of phonological and grammatical structures in language. Likewise, anxiety caused difficulties in reading task prompts as students experienced interference retrieving "lexeme, lemma, and conceptual level information about words" (Tóth, 2006, p. 30). Therefore, anxiety caused students to experience difficulties in retrieving simple vocabulary that would be present in long-term memory. Participants were able to access lemmas, (i.e. the semantic and syntactic information connected to a specific word), and lexemes, but were not able to locate the actual words, despite being adamant they knew them. These findings therefore lend support to the understanding that anxiety can have a negative effect on cognitive functioning responsible for linguistic processing, which may complicate performance and, in turn, reduce learner achievement in L2 oral tasks.

In another European context, Gkonou (2013) reported on the "non-linguistic, socio-psychological constraints of speaking anxiety" (p. 15) and employed a mixed-methods approach to obtain data from 128 adult EFL students in Greece. The study highlighted the influence fear of negative evaluation and learners' self-perceptions can have in speaking anxiety in the classroom in addition to general levels of FLA. Further, the performative nature of speaking in the target language in front of both peers and teachers resulted in self-doubt and social comparison in students. The study reports the presence

of high levels of FLSA in intermediate and advanced students. The author opines that this may be explained by teachers' intolerance of mistakes and learners' elevated personal expectations regarding their L2 speaking performance. Furthermore, speaking anxiety may confound pronunciation in L2 learning. This can occur due to physiological reactions that may provoke tension in musculature which is responsible for speech production. This response may distort pronunciation and complicate the articulation of specific phonemes, or hinder intonation and speech prosody. Equally, perceived poor pronunciation can trigger anxiety in individuals, provoking the somatic reactions which can interfere with oral performance in the first place (Szyszka, 2017). In an EFL context, the non-phonemic nature of English could be responsible for some apprehension regarding pronunciation, and this may be particularly relevant in regard to speaking activities which require students to read aloud.

The results presented in the aforementioned studies suggest that, for many students across various L2 contexts and proficiency levels, FLA tends to emerge in response to spoken production and interaction. This may be due to the interpersonal nature of verbal expression, which holds an inherent risk of negative social evaluation by peers and teachers.

#### **4.3.2. Foreign language writing anxiety**

As we have seen, methodological approaches to L2 teaching encourage L2 students to practice and develop their oral skills, however writing also plays a significant role in many curricula. Tasks in this language domain often encompass distinct challenges, which require students to produce texts in the target language that are sensitive to different genres, registers, and audiences. Thus, research has attempted to shed light on the presence, causes, and effects of Foreign Language Writing Anxiety (FLWA).

FLWA was identified as a separate, but related, construct of FLA by Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert (1999), who measured the phenomenon in 433 EFL students in Taiwan by means of the FLCAS, and an adapted version of the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Test (WAT). Using factor analysis, the authors discovered a significant moderate correlation ( $r = 0.65$ ) between FLA and

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FLWA. The results indicated that similarities exist between the two forms of anxiety, but that anxiety in writing was distinct to general FLA. The authors highlighted the potential link between self, identity and FLA, suggesting that pedagogical changes should occur to ensure students can learn and develop in environments where “a boost to learner's self-confidence is likely to occur” (Cheng et al., 1999, p. 437). Cheng and colleagues (1999) also recommended caution regarding the interpretation of statistical data. In spite of this, however, the study reported that learner beliefs of perceived competency in language tasks was a more accurate predictor of anxiety than actual performance in graded tasks. The authors consider that the connection between low self-confidence and high anxiety in learners could be explained by Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, which links anxiety to a perceived lack of ability and thus sense of agency in specific tasks. Additionally, the study drew attention to the role that past experience and perceived success in specific domain skills can have in mediating future emotional and cognitive reactions to certain tasks.

The study by Cheng et al. (1999) was partially replicated by Gkonou (2011), who measured general FLA and FLWA in 128 EFL students from Greece. Results supported those from the original study, suggesting that FLWA is associated with students' attitudes regarding writing classes, their own writing ability, and fear of negative evaluation. Therefore, both linguistic and non-linguistic factors were found to provoke FLWA. The author affirms that classroom writing “involved an equal amount of self-exposure” (Gkonou, 2011, p. 277) as tasks that involved oral expression. Consequently, FLWA may emanate from lacunas in writing skills or knowledge of how to structure ideas in writing, as well as non-linguistic factors such as negative cognitions regarding writing competence.

In an attempt to better understand factors associated with FLWA, Cheng (2002) investigated the relationship between learner perceptions of this anxiety type and variables such as gender and grade level. The study used a battery of instruments, including the FLCAS, to obtain responses from 165 Taiwanese EFL learners. Findings show that self-confidence in English and erroneous beliefs regarding writing competence are greater indicators of FLWA than actual L2 competence. Additionally, female students reported significantly higher levels of FLWA than their male counterparts; however, no statistically significant

relationship was reported between grade level and FLWA. Nevertheless, Cheng draws attention to a general trend in the data that indicated an incremental increase in FLWA in line with grade level.

To further detail FLWA, the same author (Cheng, 2004) formulated an L2 writing anxiety scale, i.e., The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), which was “explicitly developed from a multidimensional perspective” (p. 313) to assess somatic and cognitive symptoms of anxiety and avoidance behaviours they may provoke in writing tasks. According the author, this scale was also developed in response to doubts regarding the ability of the WAT to accurately measure writing anxiety in L2, since the WAT was initially developed to assess L1 writing apprehension. The SLWAI presented a three-dimensional concept of anxiety based on cognitive, somatic, and behavioural manifestations. Cognitive anxiety was deemed to include negative thought processes such as preoccupation with performance, worry regarding others' evaluations, and negative expectations regarding the task at hand. Somatic anxiety considers the physiological reactions, e.g., tension or unease, to the presence of cognitive anxiety. Finally, behavioural anxiety refers to subsequent actions that occur as a result of an individual experiencing anxiety, with avoidance behaviours being the most common (Cheng, 2004).

Cheng (2004) reported the SLWAI to have good internal consistency and satisfactory test-retest reliability and validity. The scale has subsequently been used in a number of different contexts. For example, two studies into FLWA in prospective EFL teachers in Turkish universities examined how this specific anxiety type may be reduced. Kurt and Atay (2007) examined the role of feedback in FLWA by assessing two groups of participants ( $n = 86$ ). No statistically significant differences were observed between anxiety levels in both groups at pre-test. However, post-test results indicated that participants who received peer feedback experienced significantly less FLWA than those whose feedback was provided by teachers. The authors explain that the social nature of peer feedback improved student attitudes towards writing tasks and, thus, reduced anxiety. These findings support earlier findings obtained by Tsui and Ng (2000), who reported on the use of peer feedback in L2 writing with 27 students in Hong Kong where English was used as a medium of instruction.

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Öztürk and Çeçen (2007) investigated the use of portfolios on levels of FLWA in 15 EFL learners. The study employed the SLWAI in addition to reflective sessions which provided additional qualitative data. The authors used the SLWAI to measure anxiety levels before introducing portfolio use as a classroom practice and reported 40% of participants as experiencing high levels of writing anxiety. Although no post-test was conducted, qualitative data indicated that the practice of using portfolios reduced FLWA in the students and encouraged positive attitudes towards writing. These findings would have been more reliable had a post-test confirmed a reduction in anxiety levels. Nevertheless, it appears logical that through the use of informal writing practice (as promoted by portfolio use) students would become more accustomed to writing in the target language and its requirements. Therefore, familiarity with L2 writing in general is likely to promote greater self-confidence in learners. Results obtained by Jebreil, Azizfar, Gowhary, and Jamalinesari (2014), shed light on the role of writing proficiency and self-related cognitions in the presence of FLWA. The authors employed the SLWAI to measure FLWA in 45 Iranian students majoring in English language teaching. The study found high levels of FLWA in general but highlighted a statistically significant difference between anxiety and proficiency level. Thus, students at lower levels of study experienced higher levels of anxiety, which could provoke disillusionment, avoidance and, therefore, further anxiety. The authors also stated that cognitive anxiety was the main component of FLWA, suggesting that “fear of teachers’ negative feedback, low self-confidence in writing and poor linguistic knowledge” (Jebreil et al., 2014, p. 71) characterised FLWA in some students.

The connection between writing self-efficacy and FLWA in the Spanish context was investigated by Blasco (2016). Six secondary school EFL students were required to “think-aloud” as they completed a text writing exercise, which provided concurrent, online data related to their self-efficacy beliefs, writing strategies and anxiety during this task. The findings of the study indicate that high-achieving students who presented strong self-efficacy beliefs were better able to use metacognitive strategies such as re-reading and revision whilst performing L2 writing tasks, and consequently experienced low levels of anxiety. Conversely, less well achieving students failed to demonstrate the same level of self-awareness when performing tasks, reported higher levels of

anxiety than their peers, and showed little faith in their abilities to successfully manage and complete the task at hand. In addition, time restraints on writing exacerbated the anxiety experienced by low-achievers in a manner that was not found in high proficiency students.

On the surface, writing does not appear to be subject to the same social pressures as spoken performance in L2 classes. However, it remains an expressive language skill that may expose individuals to potentially harmful social evaluation. The findings discussed above demonstrate that FLWA is generally linked to an individual's perceived L1 writing competence, so that writing experience, previous achievement, and self-directed cognitions such as self-efficacy and self-confidence influence levels of FLWA in students.

### **4.3.3. Foreign language listening anxiety**

Listening is an essential language skill that has traditionally been overlooked in L2 language teaching research (Oxford, 1993), despite the fact that L2 learners must be able to comprehend language input to progress (Vogely, 1995). Communicative language teaching promotes speech as opposed to listening and favours an integrated approach to all language skills. Perhaps because of this, the research on Foreign Language Listening Anxiety (FLLA) is comparatively less extensive than research into other forms of FLA. Nevertheless, studies on listening and anxiety in L2 have provided insight into the nature of FLLA and its presence in L2 classes.

Vogely (1998) used a novel instrument, the Listening Comprehension Anxiety Questionnaire to assess FLLA in 140 students of Spanish. Participants were required to indicate whether they had or had not experienced FLLA when engaged in listening tasks and to identify task and contextual factors that provoked anxiety, as well as those which reduced it. Results showed that 91% of participants had experienced FLLA according to four main sources: input factors, processing factors, instructional factors, and personal factors. However, students were primarily concerned with input factors such as velocity of speech, level of difficulty, and lack of clarity. These elements appeared to be highly subjective and would vary significantly depending on the learner's proficiency

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level and exposure to native speaker input. Additionally, students' responses provided suggestions for the reduction of FLLA with regards to language input. These included incorporating a variety of listening sources into classes such as invited speakers, less formal examples of L2, and music. By contrast, learners struggled to identify solutions for FLLA provoked by processing factors such as inappropriate listening strategies and bad time management but believed knowledge of strategies to reduce anxiety would be beneficial. Vogely's (1998) investigation helped to establish some clear pedagogical guidelines to reduce FLLA, yet the qualitative nature of the data collected made it difficult to quantify responses or extrapolate findings to other learner populations.

In an attempt to address some of these issues, Kim (2002) developed the Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS), which was modelled on the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). The scale was demonstrated to be reliable and consistent (Kim, 2005), paving the way for its use in subsequent studies. The FLLAS was reported to measure two key factors relating to this anxiety type, namely "lack of confidence in listening" and "tension and worry over English listening" (Golchi, 2012, p. 116). Subsequent factorial analysis performed by Kimura (2008) identified three key factors, i.e., "emotionality", "worry" and, "anticipatory fear". According to this author, emotionality includes emotional reactions such as annoyance, dislike and alienation, worry represents the cognitive perceptions learners demonstrate towards tasks, while anticipatory fear, indicates future-oriented fears and possible negative outcomes. Kimura explains that students might experience anticipatory anxiety because they have learned that

listeners do not have as much control as do speakers, readers, or writers. Listeners cannot usually stop the aural flow of the incoming language or stop to think, and in this sense their locus of control becomes external rather than internal. (2008, p. 187)

Such lack of control may, therefore, provoke anxiety in L2 listening activities in a manner that is distinct to anxiety experienced in other language domains. Furthermore, the nature of listening also creates the potential for



negative evaluation if an utterance is misheard or misunderstood by an individual, who may subsequently provide an erroneous response.

Kimura (2008) conducted the aforementioned factorial analysis on results obtained during a study in which the FLLAS was employed to measure listening anxiety in 452 Japanese EFL students. Participants' were grouped according to their university major (either maths or social sciences) and gender. Maths students scored significantly higher in items clustered under the factor emotionality than social science students. No significant statistical differences were observed in relation to gender, neither were any observed in terms of the factors of anticipatory fear or worry. The author establishes that different learning approaches or listening strategies employed by maths and social science students might explain differences in emotional reactions. For example, students who are more familiar with mathematics may be less tolerant of ambiguous or erratic material. L2 listening often requires learners to deduce overall meaning from a cluttered and disjointed enunciation, which social science students may potentially be better suited to. In this sense, Kimura's findings also support observations made by Vogely (1998), who suggested FLLA may be explained by the inappropriate use of listening strategies employed by students.

Other studies have investigated the relationship between metacognitive listening strategies and FLLA. Gonen defined metacognitive strategies as "consciously selected processes which are assumed to enhance the learning of a second or foreign language, through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about that language" (2009, p. 45). These include listening for context, inferencing, and predicting as a means of establishing text meaning. The author found that Turkish EFL students who experienced high levels of FLLA were less likely to be aware of, or employ, metacognitive strategies when engaged in listening tasks. A similar study (Golchi, 2012) with 63 Iranian EFL students reported findings that supported those of Gonen (2009). Both authors interpret their results as clear indications that listening strategies should be part of pedagogical strategies in the L2 classroom.

As with other skill specific forms of FLA, research has explored the link between anxiety and performance in L2 listening tasks. Zhang (2013) examined casual relations between FLLA and performance in IELTS listening test tasks.

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Participants were 300 students majoring in English at a Chinese university. The study used Elkhafaifi's (2005) version of the FLLAS translated into English to measure anxiety. Zhang found FLLA to have a significant influence on listening performance, but that listening performance did not influence anxiety. The author suggested that the situation-specific nature of FLLA might account for this result. Such findings could be considered logical, since FLLA is the product of the habitual experience of anxiety when engaged in L2 listening tasks and is not prone to change in relation to a single test.

However, listening performance does appear to be connected with listening proficiency and a number of studies have indicated that FLLA is affected by L2 proficiency. Elkhafaifi (2005) investigated the relationship between FLA and FLLA in 233 students of Arabic in the USA. The study employed the FLCAS in addition to an adapted version of the FLRAS, which the author translated into Arabic and reported to have an acceptable level of reliability. A positive correlation between general FLA and FLLA emerged, suggesting that students who experience higher levels of FLA also report higher levels of FLLA. Additionally, a negative correlation between FLLA and listening grades in this student population was observed, which indicates that FLLA negatively influences listening performance. These findings have been supported by similar studies in other learning contexts (Bekleyen, 2009; Golchi, 2012;). Thus, it appears that general FLA interacts with FLLA to compromise performance, proficiency, and grades. As a result of low grades, students experience greater anxiety in future tasks which then impedes performance, yielding a negative feedback cycle as a result.

This process would presumably also interact with learner beliefs, self-esteem and self-efficacy in regard to listening skills. The relationship between FLLA and self-efficacy beliefs was investigated by Mills, Pajares, and Herron (2006). The authors assessed self-efficacy and reading and listening anxiety in 95 learners of L2 French in the USA. The study employed an adapted version of the mathematics anxiety scale (Betz, 1978, in Mills et al., 2006), which contained 18 items, 15 less than the FLLAS (Kim, 2002). In accordance with other studies (Bekleyen, 2009; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Golchi, 2012), the authors highlight the link between FLLA and L2 proficiency. Results indicated that learners with greater listening proficiency experienced lower levels of anxiety

and held strong self-efficacy beliefs. These findings support the general understanding that self-efficacy beliefs are informed by mastery experiences, and also predict an individual's capacity to deal with anxiety in specific tasks.

Studies into FLLA have also attempted to discern the sources of this form of anxiety. To this end, a revision of the FLLAS was conducted by Yamauchi (2014), who considered it to be an accurate measure of FLLA but criticised its failure to gauge the causes of anxiety within this language skill domain. The author used an adapted version of the FLLAS to obtain responses from 996 learners of English in Japan. Through factorial analysis she identified six factors which may provoke FLLA: real-life listening, listening in the classroom, listeners' lack of knowledge, listeners' bottom up processing (i.e., listening that focuses on basic linguistic forms, rather than units of meaning), and listeners' meta-cognitive strategies. Yamauchi stressed the multidimensional nature of FLLA and established that the previous version of the FLLAS (Kim, 2002) did not assess FLLA provoked by specific triggers, and therefore made it more difficult for teachers to reduce anxiety in their students.

Research conducted with 130 EFL students in Turkey (Kiliç & Uçkun, 2012) examined whether listening text type could have a negative effect on students' anxiety (see Young, 1992). Participants completed the FLLAS, but also self-reported their levels of anxiety while performing listening tasks using an anxiometer, a 10-point scale that allows for a perceived anxiety level to be recorded. Listening tasks were divided into three groups: dialogues from everyday life, lectures, and radio talk shows. Results indicated that in general, lower levels of proficiency correlated with higher levels of anxiety, and that the formal language of lectures and radio shows generated greater levels of anxiety than informal dialogues. Therefore, FLLA appears to revolve primarily around students' language proficiency and their ability to understand different language in different genres; higher-level students are more likely to be able to extract the overall meaning of a text, and as a result, are expected to be less anxious during the task.

The studies on FLLA previously discussed thus indicate that cognitive factors such as self-efficacy beliefs, as well as L2 proficiency, and the employment of listening strategies play a significant role in the presence of FLLA. Furthermore, the specific characteristics of listening across genres,

including the lack of control they afford the students, have been highlighted as sources of FLLA.

#### **4.3.4. Foreign language reading anxiety**

Research into Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) has been less widespread than studies into other forms of FLA, perhaps due to the relatively unthreatening nature of reading compared to the other language skill domains. In this sense, MacIntyre et al. (1997, p. 280) affirmed that reading differed from other L2 tasks in that it “best allows for repetition and clarification with minimal risk of embarrassment”. Thus, reading affords the learner a greater deal of control than listening and lacks the potential for negative social evaluation which oral production presents. However, reading does constitute an important component of both L2 learning and classroom activities, while exams require learners to demonstrate the capacity to interpret written texts, and in some forms of reading such as reading aloud, the ability to reproduce them orally.

Saito et al. (1999) presented the construct of FLRA and suggested that “two aspects of FL reading would seem [...] to have great potential for eliciting anxiety: a) unfamiliar scripts and b) unfamiliar cultural material” (p. 202/203). The same authors used the FLCAS and the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) to measure anxiety in 388 L1 English students who were learning French, Japanese, or Russian. They found that these students experienced most reading anxiety in Japanese, then French, and finally Russian. These results were interpreted as a confirmation that distinct writing systems from the learners’ L1, which require interpretation through reading, could provoke high levels of anxiety. The findings regarding Russian and French were attributed to the fact that although Russian uses a Cyrillic alphabet, its phonetic system is more consistent than French, and can therefore be predicted more easily. Additionally, learners’ anxiety was found to positively correlate with perceived difficulty of reading in the target language.

Saito and colleagues stated that “anxiety would seem to be a mediating variable that intervenes at some point between the decoding of a text and the actual processing of textual meaning” (1999, p. 215). This observation suggests

that FLRA is primarily cognitive in nature and does not present the strong somatic or behavioural components of general FLA or FLSA. As such, strategies to reduce FLRA may be more effective than for FLSA, given that L2 reading does “not seem to pose the inherent threat to self-concept of FL communication” (Saito et al., 1999, p. 216). Of particular interest to the current study is the authors' position on reading aloud in open class, they state: “the practice of required oral reading is also strongly questioned by this study, and we suggest that teachers be extremely careful when using this practice” (Saito et al., 1999, p. 216). No further explanation is given regarding the problematic nature of this form of reading and no reference is made to possible levels of anxiety provoked in students. However, this reflection does indicate concern regarding reading aloud practices in class. One possible reason for such concern may be that by combining public speaking with L2 reading the potential for provoking high levels of anxiety is increased, resulting in negative reactions in students.

Following Saito and colleagues' investigation, Zhang (2000) assessed students' reading anxiety in a study abroad programme using the FLRAS. The study reported on FLRA in 145 Chinese students enrolled in English language tertiary education in Singapore. Participants did not feel anxious about reading aloud in L2 classes in their home environment, but reading anxiety increased when students found themselves in study-abroad programmes. The author attributes such findings to pedagogical factors (i.e. reading materials and degrees of teacher intervention), in addition to social elements such as increased ethnic diversity in teaching staff. Furthermore, Zhang (2000) observed differences in anxiety levels along gender lines. Higher levels of anxiety in male students were related to their habitual use of translation as a strategy to infer meaning from texts, and engrained notions regarding expectations of male superiority in Chinese culture in comparison with their female peers.

The impact of anxiety on cognitive processes related to reading was investigated by Sellers (2000), who looked into the effect of FLRA on the ability of 89 learners of Spanish in the USA to recall passages of information during L2 reading tasks. Sellers observed that those who presented high levels of FLA were also liable to experience high levels of FLRA. Furthermore, the presence

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of FLRA impacted significantly upon students' ability to recall relevant pausal units within a text. The author explains that "highly anxious readers were more distracted by interfering thoughts and were less able to concentrate on the task at hand, which in turn affected their comprehension of the reading passage" (Sellers, 2000, p. 517). As with other examples of FLA, negative thoughts are likely to include worry over performance, negative self-evaluations, and attentional biases towards stimuli that confirm negative cognitions. The findings of the study are thus in line with those presented by Saito and others (1999) and underscores the negative effect of FLRA on cognitive processing in L2 reading tasks. Matsuda and Gobel (2001) used both the FLCAS and the FLRAS to measure anxiety in 252 EFL students in Japan. Their results contradict the findings from Saito et al. (1999) in that no statistically significant correlation between responses obtained from the two scales was observed, which indicates that general FLA does not mediate FLRA. The authors reported that FLRA was more prevalent amongst first year students, suggesting that reading anxiety may occur in response to "limited familiarity with English grammar and vocabulary" (Matsuda & Gobel, 2001, p. 244).

Another study with students of L2 Spanish conducted by Brantmeier (2005), attempted to establish whether FLRA occurs in response to L2 reading tasks or post-reading tasks which require the use of other language skills. The study assessed the anxiety of 92 advanced level students using an adapted version of the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). Findings indicated that reading tasks in themselves were not anxiety provoking, but that anxiety did occur when participants were required to read aloud or answer reading comprehension questions orally. Additionally, participants experienced more anxiety in relation to post-reading writing tasks than the reading task itself. Therefore, reading-related anxiety appeared to occur mostly in speaking, then writing, and lastly in reading tasks. These findings suggest that reading tasks which precede activities involving other language skills may be affected by anxiety generated by the latter, rather than the act of reading itself.

More recently, Zhao, Guo and Dynia (2013) used the FLCAS and the FLRAS to investigate FLRA in 114 learners of Chinese in the USA. The study found similar levels of FLA and FLRA in participants and signalled the difference between English and Chinese writing scripts as a possible cause of

anxiety. Zhao and colleagues also reported on the relationship between FLRA, course level, and performance. Although FLRA appeared to increase with course level, only elementary level students were impeded by its presence. These results clash with Joo and Damron's study (2015), which used the same measures to assess FLRA in 100 university students enrolled in L2 Korean classes in the USA. FLRA in this investigation decreased in higher-level students. The authors pointed to unfamiliarity with the symbols used in the Korean writing system as the cause of FLRA, which supports the findings of Saito et al. (1999).

In view of these studies, it can be concluded that reading provokes relatively low-levels of anxiety in L2 students. Additionally, FLRA is typified by cognitive symptoms, rather than overt physiological or behavioural reactions. The main cause of FLRA appears to be unfamiliarity with certain characteristics of the target language. These include vocabulary, grammar, writing scripts, and phonetic encoding. However, when reading is combined with an oral component, either in the form of reading aloud or responding to questions, anxiety appears to increase.

#### **4.4. Foreign language anxiety and the L2 classroom**

The identification of sub-types of FLA across the different language skills in L2 learning and instruction has shed light on the intricacies of language learners' experiences with FLA. Investigation discussed thus far has identified FLA as a hurdle to positive engagement in L2 learning for many students. Consequently, researchers in language education have attempted to identify measures that contribute to reducing the impact of anxiety in the L2 classroom. This section focuses on a selection of publications that have proposed measures designed to mitigate FLA and foster positive educational environments that can improve the quality of L2 learning and instruction in the classroom setting.

As has been noted previously, anxiety has been deemed the most widely studied emotional reaction in language education. Nevertheless, recent research has looked to situate anxiety in a broader spectrum of emotions that

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may occur within language learning. In this sense, some scholars, have conceptualised positive and negative emotion types existing “along two separate dimensions, positive-broadening and negative-narrowing” (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 198). This theory has been referred to as “broaden and build theory”, which

suggests that positive emotions momentarily broaden attention, cognition, and behavioural repertoires, and that recurrence of these broadened states helps people gradually develop lasting and consequential personal resources. (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2010, p. 355)

The consideration of such theories has boosted discussion into strategies that may reduce FLA. This discussion has looked to work grounded in the fields of traditional and positive psychology (Oxford, 2015, 2017). The former considers clinical interventions that have proved successful with individuals who experience social anxiety or generalised anxiety (trait anxiety). While the latter highlights the role of emotions such as “flow, agency, hope and optimism” (Oxford, 2017, p. 181). Strategies from both fields aim to promote affirmative mindsets, which can aid self-management of negative emotions in students.

In this way, certain parallels can be established between approaches to reducing FLA and those which focus on dealing with the forms of social anxiety that can characterise the lives of individuals who stutter. These include approaches such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which is a popular component in speech therapy programmes and has been employed with anxious language learners (Curry, 2014) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) (Beilby et al., 2012a; Cheasman et al., 2015). Other perspectives, which share similarities with CBT have also been proposed, for example, the modelling of desired behaviours, exposure therapy, and rational-emotive therapy (Oxford, 2017). The end goal in these approaches in both FLA and stuttering contexts is analogous: to encourage individuals to develop positive mind-sets by questioning, discrediting, and adapting irrational or negative cognitions. Consequently, it is hoped that healthier cognitive and behavioural processes can animate individuals to challenge beliefs regarding



their ability to withstand difficult situations, improve emotional intelligence, and promote agency.

Such advances are important in L2 learning because emotions and beliefs are inherently connected to learners' identities and self-concept beliefs. Barcelos (2015) argues that by considering emotions merely as affective factors or individual differences, as is usually understood in SLA and language education research, we undermine their importance. This "is problematic because identity, emotions and beliefs are dynamic and social concepts, and, thus, the relationship to language learning is not one of causality but of interaction and reciprocity" (p. 308).

Pedagogical practices orientated to reduce FLA in students should consider the influence of social and self-related beliefs in the presence of anxiety, in addition to the reciprocal or recursive relationships that exist between them. Previously we have discussed the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), a specific framework that builds upon positive thinking in learners (Dörnyei, 2009). Thus, the L2MSS promotes the adoption of future-oriented possible L2 selves as a means for improving attitudes and emotions towards foreign language learning. This self-system draws on the ability language learners have to imagine a desirable future representation of themselves. This imagined self is referred to as the "ideal-self", which exemplifies the individual as a competent language user – the end result of successful learning. This ideal-self is preceded or offset by an "ought-to self", which serves to motivate individuals away from negative outcomes. Therefore,

the ideal self-guides have a promotion focus, concerned with hopes, aspirations, advancements, growth, and accomplishments; whereas ought self-guides have a prevention focus, regulating the absence or presence of negative outcomes associated with failing to live up to various responsibilities and obligations. (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 18)

In theory, harmonising ought-to and ideal self-guides can have a beneficial effect on language learners, as these guides encourage a "learner's psychological desire to reduce the discrepancy between current and future selves" (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 202). For this to occur, L2 teachers

must be able to stimulate students' capacity to envisage positive future selves, which can be subsequently developed by following an established plan of action (Dörnyei, 2009). This approach may also serve to diminish anxiety through the adoption of positive self-directed imagery, as learners are encouraged to view themselves and their development in an efficacious and capable manner. However, if an individual is unable to envisage potential ought-to or ideal-self guides, perceive him or herself as unable to control behaviour that constitutes part of a future-self, or is incapable of reducing discrepancy between their actual-self and future representations, then negative emotions, including anxiety, may emerge (Carver et al., 1999; Higgins, 1987; Dörnyei, 2009).

According to Dörnyei (2009), the incentive to realise a positive self-image is strengthened by a desire to avoid a "feared" self, as well as the negative consequences of failing to enact the "ought to self". This may be the case in students who have strong self-efficacy beliefs and/or a positive language learner self-concept. However, for those students who struggle to control the outcomes of feared situations and fail to realise ought-to selves then the process may be more difficult. This may be the case for some learners who stutter, as disfluency can have negative implications for individuals' self-efficacy and self-concept beliefs (Carter et al., 2017). Equally, some students may not be aware of how to reduce or cope with FLA, given that they may not experience comparative anxiety in other areas of life. As a result, the responsibility for systematically reducing or managing anxiety in the classroom falls at the feet of language teachers who must be aware of how students' emotional reactions can influence their learning.

Various measures have been suggested to manage anxiety and promote healthy self-related beliefs in students. Rubio-Alcalá (2017) proposes that anxiety is better dealt with via indirect measures such as developing teacher-student rapport and the use of specific methodological approaches that promote healthy self-related beliefs. In this sense, rapport based upon empathy means that "a more sincere and deeper communication can be established in the FL classroom and the correct emotional can be fostered" (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017, p. 209). Equally, Rubio-Alcalá suggests anxiety may be reduced by adopting approaches that include student-centred methodologies that encourage cooperative work, in addition to transparency regarding evaluative practices.

Other studies (Burden, 2004; Alrabai, 2015; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009) have also identified approaches that fall in line with the indirect measures proposed by Rubio-Alcalá (2017). These include:

a) Developing a relationship of trust and respect between teacher and students based on verbal and non-verbal behaviours which encourage proximity.

b) Fostering a compassionate classroom atmosphere by encouraging learners to reflect upon their experiences of anxiety and share them with other students.

c) Addressing the cognitive aspects of FLA through open discussion of anxiety-provoking beliefs and questioning the legitimacy of those beliefs (e.g., the view that L2 learners should aim for native-like pronunciation).

d) Establishing clear, realistic learner goals as a means of strengthening self-efficacy beliefs.

e) Promoting self-confidence in students by emphasising their capacity to learn and responding with appropriate praise to learner achievements.

f) Reducing the fear of negative evaluation by utilizing indirect error correction that avoids highlighting errors made by specific students.

g) Encouraging learners to give importance to the quality of their learning not to the quality of their performance.

h) Minimizing communication apprehension by promoting speaking activities in small groups and providing suitable support for particularly anxiety-inducing tasks such as class presentations.

These recommendations largely attend to reducing personal and interpersonal anxieties, such as fear of negative evaluation, communication

apprehension and unhealthy learner beliefs. Furthermore, they promote the development of healthy self-related beliefs and resilient mindsets in students, which can contribute to broadening emotions and more effective learning (Oxford, 2014, 2017). The importance of establishing a healthy classroom atmosphere means it is imperative that teachers are provided with appropriate knowledge and training informed by rigorous scientific inquiry and evidence-based practice. The current study aims to modestly contribute to this knowledge base by elucidating the experiences of anxiety in LWS.

#### **4.5. Conclusions**

This chapter has discussed previous research into foreign language anxiety across the language skill domains. These studies have been conducted across various contexts and represent the dynamic phase of inquiry into foreign language anxiety (Macintyre, 2017). The characteristics of domain specific sub forms of foreign language anxiety have been discussed and the research presented offers insights into how each form of anxiety can arise and manifest itself within students. As we have seen, studies into foreign language anxiety have overwhelmingly focused upon neurotypical learner populations and, while findings discussed above provide a broad understanding of foreign language anxiety, there is clearly a need for research conducted with other learner groups.

Finally, we have turned our attention to studies which have considered anxiety as part of broader theories regarding the impact of emotions on learners. This has included discussion of practical approaches to reducing foreign language anxiety in students. As we have explained, some of these strategies share common foundations with clinical techniques used to help IWS deal with anxiety and communication issues in L1 situations. Similarities between the two areas are interesting and it may be the case that strategies that aid LWS within L2 learning contexts may be transferable to highly anxious students from other learner populations. In this respect, inquiry with LWS may offer potential insights for wider aspects of language teaching and learning.

This chapter represents the final part of our review of the literature regarding foreign language teaching, anxiety, stuttering, and foreign language anxiety. The following chapters of the thesis detail the methodological approaches employed in an attempt to fill the gaps in research that our discussion has highlighted.



## **II. METHODS**





## **5. Methods**

### **5.1. Pilot study**

The methodological design of the current piece of research has been influenced by the results of a pilot study carried out previously (Miller, 2016). This study assessed levels of FLA in a group of individuals who stutter using an adapted version of the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). Participants were 25 IWS aged between 22 – 68 in the UK, who were students of various foreign languages. The responses they provided were converted to percentages and compared to results obtained by Horwitz et al. (1986) and differences were analysed using descriptive statistics and *t*-tests. Results indicated that LWS experienced higher levels of anxiety than their non-stuttering peers in responses to certain classroom situations and overall. These findings were not statistically significant. Nevertheless, they did suggest that further research was needed to shed light on potential differences between LWS and their non-stuttering peers. This study had a number of shortcomings. For example, the purely quantitative approach is limited when we consider the complexity of emotional reactions (e.g., FLA) experienced by L2 learners. Additionally, the participant sample included individuals of varied ages and backgrounds, with experience in learning different languages. This degree of variation may have impeded gaining an accurate picture of these learner experiences. Consequently, the results and limitations of this pilot study were considered for the methodological design of the current study.

### **5.2. The current study**

In light of the limitations of the pilot study mentioned above, this research combines both qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches to data collection and analysis with an emphasis on the former. This emphasis is due to the fact that research into FLA has primarily been of a quantitative nature, the limitations to which have been identified by scholars in the field, who have

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identified a “need to bring about a greater and more nuanced understanding of this emotion” (Gkonou, Daubney, & Dewaele, 2017, p. 3). Qualitative approaches can achieve this as they “provide illuminating accounts of personal experience, rich, contextualized descriptions and humanistic data” (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012, p. 107). Thus, researchers within the field have turned to such methods as a means of exploring the “phenomenological saliency of anxiety” (Şimşek & Dörnyei, 2017, p. 51).

Qualitative-based research can provide important information regarding the personal experiences of LWS in L2 English learning. This is reflected by research with LWS in other areas, which has moved away from quantitative approaches as methodological limitations can mean that “a significant proportion of the reality of what it is to be a person who stutters has been excluded from investigation” (Corcoran & Stewart, 1998). Furthermore, LWS may present “some qualitatively different experiences in life than people without an ongoing communication difficulty” (Crichton-Smith, 2002, p. 333). Therefore, research that deals with both anxiety and stuttering may benefit from utilizing qualitative methodological approaches. A key factor in this is the collection of data from LWS via semi-structured interviews. The interview “takes on particular relevance in the field of communication disorders where the freedom to answer open-ended questions breaks down the barriers presented by standard questioning” (Crichton-Smith, 2002, p. 335).

Despite our desire to explore the experiences of LWS using qualitative methods, we considered it equally important to combine these with quantitative methodological approaches. We felt that employing a mixed methods design allowed us to incorporate data collection instruments such as the FLCAS, which has been validated and extensively used by FLA researchers, and to provide more robust responses to our research questions. Additionally, adopting a mixed methods approach in this study into stuttering and anxiety was deemed beneficial due to the consideration that “communication and its impairments – including stuttering – require multiple perspectives, methods, and agendas to understand the complexity of the human social process” (Tetnowski & Damico, 2001, p. 36).

### 5.2.1. Research questions

In the previous chapters we have established that LWS may find EFL classes particularly challenging due to the inherent anxiety present in L2 language learning and moments of stuttering. Equally, the pilot study discussed above suggested that differences may exist between LWS and LWDNS in terms of FLA, but that further research was needed to ascertain how it can affect students who stutter.

With this in mind we formulated the following research questions:

1. Do LWS and LWDNS report differences in anxiety in the EFL classroom?
  - 1.1. If so, what differences exist across specific language domains?
2. How do LWS account for the relationship between stuttering and the learning of L2 English?
3. How does FLA arise in LWS in different learning situations within the EFL classroom?
  - 3.1. What form does it take in terms of types, triggers, effects, and coping strategies?
4. How do LWS account for the relationship between stuttering foreign language anxiety, L2 English learning, and self-related constructs?

Therefore, the first research question builds upon the findings of the pilot study in assuming that anxiety may be experienced differently by LWS and LWDNS. However, here we are interested in establishing how these differences arise and to what extent they may vary across specific areas of L2 English learning. The subsequent research questions approach the experience of stuttering within EFL contexts in an attempt to offer insight regarding the influence disfluency can have on L2 English learning, anxiety, and self-concept

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beliefs. Overall, these research questions are designed to provide in-depth objective assessments of anxiety in an underrepresented learner group, as well as accounting for the complex nature of both stuttering and anxiety, while also respecting the distinct lived experiences of each participant. In this way, they reflect our desire to provide EFL teachers with a detailed and systematic overview of how anxiety is experienced by LWS and how it may influence behaviours, self-related constructs and learning needs in EFL classes.

### **5.3. Participants**

#### **5.3.1. Sampling**

In order to answer our research questions, we aimed to recruit between 10 and 20 participants, considering that theoretical saturation is considered to occur within 12 in-depth semi-structured interviews (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). This fact and all the arguments offered above on the qualitative nature of our study account for our participants amounting to a total of 17 individuals, 15 of which took part in semi-structured interviews.

Participants were selected based upon three core criteria: recent experience studying English (within the last three years); availability to participate in a face-to-face interview; and the presence of stuttering. In order to recruit IWS, we contacted the Spanish Stuttering Foundation (SSF) and explained the aims and methodology of the study. These were deemed to be both scientifically and ethically acceptable and the organization agreed to promote the study, aid in the recruitment of participants, and provide opportunities for dissemination of results. Subsequently, we compiled a press release with the help of the vice-president of the SSF that was placed on the official website of the organization. This document included contact details and individuals interested in participating were encouraged to express their willingness to take part through telephone or email contact with myself or the SSF. Similarly, speech therapists endorsed by the SSF also promoted the study, informing their clients of its existence and providing them with relevant information when necessary. Consequently, a number of individuals expressed

their desire to participate in the research. Contact was maintained throughout the period prior to interviews through email, telephone conversations, and the instant messaging application WhatsApp. Two more participants were contacted through mutual friends of the PhD supervisor and were deemed suitable for the study as they matched the inclusion criteria established above. The characteristics of our sample of LWS ( $n = 17$ ) can be found below.

Table 3. Summary of participants showing LWS and LWDNS

LWS				LWDNS		
	Participant	Gender	Age	Participant	Gender	Age
1.	FED	Male	15	A	Male	22
2.	MVF	Male	22	B	Male	22
3.	MCO	Male	23	C	Male	22
4.	RCL	Male	23	D	Male	23
5.	EMP	Male	26	E	Male	23
6.	RMA	Male	28	F	Male	25
7.	JMS	Male	30	G	Male	26
8.	VME	Male	33	H	Male	27
9.	GMS	Male	36	I	Male	28
10.	JAZ	Male	40	J	Male	34
11.	ERA	Female	22	K	Female	23
12.	LIS*	Female	22	L	Female	23
13.	RZM*	Female	25	M	Female	25
14.	PET	Female	27	N	Female	27
15.	VSM	Female	29	O	Female	27
16.	AMB	Female	35	P	Female	30
17.	IMP	Female	36	Q	Female	36
*LWS who only participated in the quantitative component of the study						

The final participant sample of LWS included 10 men and seven women, between the ages of 15 and 40 ( $M=27.8$ ,  $SD=6.6$ ). A total of 15 of these

## *Methods*

participants ( $n = 15$ ) took part in a face-to-face semi-structured interview. In addition to recruiting LWS, we also obtained data from a LWDNS. This was done for two main reasons, firstly, to form a group of L2 English language learners whose anxiety levels could be compared with those of LWS, and secondly, to validate the novel scale we developed for this study.

In regard to the first reason, a partially matched group of LWDNS ( $n = 17$ ) were selected due their likeness in age and sex to the main participant group of LWS. Their responses thus allowed us to answer our first research question which was concerned with establishing if any differences in anxiety levels were present between the two groups of language learners. While, to validate our scale we collected data from 408 participants who were university students between the ages of 18 and 42. The validation process is discussed further in section 5.6. below.

### **5.4. Preliminary considerations**

The research questions established above illustrate the research aims of this study. At first, these aims were relatively simple: to measure foreign language anxiety in a specific learner population, i.e. LWS, while also speaking to members within that community to better understand how they feel and think about EFL classes. Thus, the current study primarily aimed to establish if LWS experience high levels of anxiety in EFL classes in comparison with LWDNS and to find out what LWS say about their experiences in L2 English learning. However, during the development of the research these issues became more nuanced and the following questions emerged: In which EFL tasks do LWS report most anxiety? How do levels of anxiety differ between LWS and LWDNS? How do LWS describe their experiences in EFL classes? What is the nature of the relationship between anxiety, stuttering, and self-related constructs in L2 English classes?

With these questions, the current study had a further objective: to provide insight into the experiences of a marginalized population, whose specific needs had not previously been discussed or considered in foreign language teaching and learning research. As a result, our objectives were also stimulated by our

“quest to conduct research that is emancipatory, anti-discriminatory, participatory, and the like, which focuses squarely on the lives and experiences of marginalized persons or groups” (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 123). Thus, the specific aims of this research became significantly broader: we were concerned with obtaining in-depth, phenomenological data regarding anxiety and its interaction with self-related constructs in a distinctive environment (EFL classes), in an underrepresented learner population (those who stutter), in addition to providing an accurate and objective measurement of foreign language anxiety in these students.

With this in mind, we considered a mixed methods approach was considered to be suitable. Mixed methods research exists on a continuum with purely qualitative inquiry at one end and quantitative at the other, mixed-methods research can be located at any point along this continuum; resulting in investigation that is either qualitative dominant, quantitative dominant, or both, according to the emphasis placed on each approach. The progressive nature of mixed methods inquiry is beneficial to the interdisciplinary character of modern research, which often aims to shed light on complex issues and offer responses to multifaceted research questions. In this sense, a mixed methods approach promotes collaboration, understanding, and communication amongst researchers and across fields of study (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Johnson et al., 2007).

Our research is also close to the critical paradigm. Research conducted within this paradigm conceives “of society as stratified and marked by inequality, with differential structural access to material and symbolic resources, power, opportunity, mobility and education” (Talmy, 2010, p. 154). The common link which runs through all of these social phenomena is language, which has a fundamental role in “producing, sustaining, challenging and transforming power asymmetries, discrimination, inequality, social injustice and hegemony” (Talmy, 2010, p. 155). A critical perspective is thus central to the current study, which is concerned with a group of learners who may be exposed to asymmetrical power relations, discrimination, and inequality due to their unique relationship with language. Additionally, our research also aligns with such a perspective in that it attempts to promote change in language teaching in order to emancipate students like LWS. Critical research into language teaching should attempt to

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provide awareness that is generated not solely through descriptive inquiry, but also considers the subjective perspectives of affected individuals, i.e. “knowers” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108) whose knowledge has the power to initiate “public processes of self-reflection” (Hulstijn et al., 2014, p. 396).

### **5.5. Data and data collection procedures**

The qualitative data collection method favoured in this study was the semi-structured interview (Fontana & Frey, 1994). The interview allows for a researcher “to elicit rich, detailed, and first-person accounts of experiences and phenomena under investigation (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014, p. 10). Furthermore, it encourages rapport and collaboration between the researcher and the respondent. This is important as it can lead to the respondent taking an active role in shaping and directing the conversation, which in turn can lead to richer data. A further benefit of the semi-structured interview is that it allows the researcher greater freedom to respond to the specific areas of interest identified by each participant. Consequently, unexpected responses or comments can be followed up and discussed.

The literature on qualitative research methods (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013) stipulates that semi-structured interviews are based around a series of broad and open-ended questions. From the perspective of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), these questions should reflect specific question types, defined as: narrative; descriptive; structural; comparative: and evaluative (Smith et al., 2009). This is done so that participants have the opportunity to describe past and current experiences related to the phenomenon at hand and to provide any further information they deem to be relevant. In addition to these recommendations, we also took into consideration the content of semi-structured interview questions used in previous research into stuttering that followed an IPA framework (i.e. Beilby et al., 2013; Bricker-Katz et al., 2013).

While the order of questions in semi-structured interviews is flexible, it is considered beneficial to establish an interview schedule that dictates a logical sequence in which the questions can be worked through. This process also



serves as a means to foresee any potential difficulties that may emerge (Smith & Osborn, 2008). To this end, questions in the current study were arranged as to encourage participants to reflect upon their journey through EFL classes in a broadly chronological manner. Moreover, narrative questions were placed towards the beginning of the interview to help ease participants into the conversations. Conversely, questions that required a more introspective, evaluative response were located towards the end, when it was considered that a degree of rapport would have been established and participants would be relatively comfortable.

The specific questions used in the current study were first piloted in three mock interviews. During this stage, questions that were found to be ambiguous or confusing were reformulated accordingly. This mainly referred to certain terms that were found not to be appropriate in conversational Spanish (e.g., the term *ansioso* for *agobiado* or *estresado*). From the outset, participants were aware that the study was concerned with stuttering and foreign language learning, but they were not encouraged to connect the two until the penultimate question in the interview. Before that, we chose to avoid the term *tartamudez* (stuttering), so that participants' own phrasing of their experiences would be more likely to be evoked. Consequently, the term *bloquear* (block) was used, as it is widely employed to refer to difficulties experienced at a cognitive level as well as during moments of disfluency. Therefore, the term was broad enough to refer to both states. Lastly, all questions were subject to a final revision carried out by a senior member of the SSF to ensure questions were ethically sound and appropriate for this specific learner group. The final interview questions, prompts, and sequence can be found in the appendix to this thesis.

We carried out a total of 15 interviews, 14 by the author and one by the thesis supervisor. Interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes with the majority approaching 45 – 60 minutes of duration and were recorded using the Zoom, H4next audio recorder. In addition to the audio recordings, the author kept field notes about the interview process and the participants involved. All interviews were conducted in locations agreed upon with the participants. These included private residences, public places (such as restaurants or cafés), and university premises.

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Participants were informed of the nature of the study and were asked to read and sign a consent form (see appendix), in which they formally agreed to take part and gave permission for the interview to be recorded. Additionally, they were notified that they could remove their content at any time and end the interview. Following this, each participant was informed that the researchers would be posing some questions, but information they considered relevant could be discussed or brought up at any time during the conversation.

We made a decision to conduct all interviews in person, rather than via telephone or internet video call to create the best possible conditions for rapport to be established (Smith et al., 2009). Conversation via telephone and video call can be stressful for IWS as verbal cues are restricted and a greater emphasis is placed upon verbal performance. Equally, problems with internet connections can result in technical difficulties that may disrupt the flow of the interaction and potentially generate misunderstandings. This decision had a considerable impact upon the costs of the study, both in terms of time and finances, as a number of visits to different places across Spain were made to conduct interviews with participants. A lack of financial support unfortunately dictated that interviews with potential participants further afield could not be carried out.

All interviews were transcribed in their entirety, partly following Jefferson's (1984) transcription system as follows:

Table 4. Transcription symbols used by the current study

(.)	Pause less than a second long
(1.2)	Pause over a second long with time indicated in seconds
< >	Slowing down of speaking rhythm
> <	Speeding up on speaking rhythm
:::	Prolongation of the preceding consonant or vowel
CAPITALS	Increase in speaking volume
:hh	Audible inhalation
hhh	Audible exhalation
(( ))	Contextual information

### **5.6. The foreign language classroom anxiety scale and the specific language skills anxiety scale**

To supplement the interview data, we used two scales designed to assess levels of anxiety in relation to specific aspects of the L2 English class, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986) and the Specific Language Skills Anxiety Scale (SLSAS) (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019b), which are described in more detail below.

These instruments allowed for the objective assessment of levels of anxiety in LWS and LWDNS. This was important to establish if any differences existed between the two learner groups according to our first research question. Furthermore, the two scales provided us with the opportunity to make “inferences about larger L2 populations” (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2012, p. 74), an essential consideration given the reduced learner population we were dealing with.

The FLCAS was devised and validated by Horwitz et al. (1986) and Horwitz (1986) and a further validation was carried out by Aida (1994). It has since become widely used across a number of language learning contexts (see Chapter 4) including with L2 English learners in Spain (Arnaiz-Castro & Guillén, 2013; Criado & Mengual, 2017; Martínez-Agudo, 2013a).

The scale consists of 33 items and is scored against a five-point Likert scale. Participants are required to express their level of agreement with statements contained in each item that refer to common L2 classroom situations. We used a Spanish language of the FLCAS (Pérez-Paredes & Martínez-Sánchez, 2000) that was subsequently used by Martínez-Agudo (2013a), illustrated below:

Item 1: I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class. (Horwitz et al., 1986)

Ítem 1: Nunca estoy completamente seguro de mí mismo cuando hablo en la clase de idioma extranjero (Pérez-Paredes & Martínez-Sánchez, 2000)

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Despite being widely used, the FLCAS has been criticized for focusing too heavily on tasks within the speaking domain (Cheng et al., 1999; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Kim, 2002). Additionally, it targets mainstreams students as opposed to learners with other profiles, or special educational needs, such as LWS. With this in mind, we developed a novel scale to assess anxiety across the language domains of speaking, reading, writing, and listening, whilst considering LWS.

The development of the SLSAS was the result of a content analysis performed on three scales: the Overall Assessment of the Speakers Experience of Stuttering scale (OASES) (Yaruss & Quesal, 2006); a scale used by Taguchi, Magid and Papi (2009) to examine motivation in line with Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System; and the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). Furthermore, qualitative studies into the experiences of IWS were contemplated (Corcoran & Stewart, 1998; Crichton-Smith, 2002; Daniels, Hagstrom, & Gabel, 2006). Finally, guidelines for survey design set out by Dörnyei and Csizér (2012) were also considered.

During this content analysis, the theme reflected in different items included in these scales was first identified in order to group them under specific categories. Items within the same theme were further categorized according to the specific topic they dealt with. When formulating questions focusing more directly on foreign language anxiety, the different elements established in Horwitz and colleagues' (1986) definition of this phenomenon, i.e., behaviours, feelings, beliefs, and self-perceptions were considered, as well as the three related performance anxieties that are conceptually related to FLA: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Equally, scaled to assess sub forms of foreign language anxiety such as reading anxiety (Saito et al., 1999), writing anxiety (Cheng, 2004), and listening anxiety (Kim, 2005) were considered later on.

Other variables were also contemplated, such as contextual elements present in tasks performed in the foreign language and include teacher evaluation/self-evaluation; corrective feedback (public or private)/no corrective feedback; test/no-test; in-class/home/virtual/language lab; individual/group; and known/unknown receiver(s). Consequently, the items in the SLSAS reflect these issues. For example, items in the speaking subscale referred to tasks that required prior planning and preparation as well as those of a spontaneous

nature. Similarly, tasks assessed by the teacher in open class were considered distinct to those conducted in small groups. In this manner, the SLSAS attempts to obtain a comprehensive picture of how anxiety may vary not only across different language domains, but also within diverse tasks in each. In addition to items that dealt with anxiety, we decided to include a subsection that contained items related to attitudes and motivation towards L2 English. This reflected our interest in the theory of the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2009) in its relation to stuttering.

Another important consideration was that the SLSAS should be structurally similar to the FLCAS, as a degree of continuity was deemed to be beneficial for participants. As such, our items were also scored against a five-point Likert scale and the two scales were of similar length (33 and 35 items respectively). One difference that the SLSAS presented compared to the FLCAS was that participants were required to indicate the intensity of the anxiety provoked by specific situations, rather than their level of agreement with a statement. This changed slightly within the subscale related to attitudes and motivation, in which participants did indicate their level of agreement with an item (see examples below).

Reading domain:

1. Read silently and answer comprehension questions as an individual assignment in class to be evaluated later by the teacher	Level of anxiety				
	None	A little	More or less	A lot	Very much

Speaking domain:

9. Answer questions asked by the teacher in class.	Level of anxiety				
	None	A little	More or less	A lot	Very much

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Listening domain:

18. Listen to a CD as part of a listening comprehension exam	Level of anxiety				
	None	A little	More or less	A lot	Very much

Writing domain:

26. Write a text about a subject of your choice to be assessed by the teacher.	Level of anxiety				
	None	A little	More or less	A lot	Very much

Attitudes and motivation:

31. Do you think you make the same effort in English classes as you in other classes?					
	No	A little	More or less	Yes, a lot	Yes, very much

The SLSAS contained a total of 35 items and was validated by the supervisor of this thesis using factor analysis with varimax rotation. The scale showed an acceptable level of reliability, with an internal consistency coefficient of  $\alpha = .875$  ( $n = 350$ ), which is high in light of our sample ( $n = 412$ ). The KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) measure of sampling adequacy was also above the commonly recommended value of .6 or .7 (.843), and Bartlett's test was significant ( $\chi^2(350) = 7713.587, p < .05$ ). We found four factors explaining more than 50% of the variance, which supports the number of factors found in the literature, and their type. Our factors are "speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation", "listening apprehension", "writing apprehension" and "positive attitudes towards English" (see Aida, 1994).

A total of 34 participants completed both scales, these were 17 LWS and 17 LWDNS who constituted a comparison group matched in terms of age and sex with LWS. All participants completed the scales either on paper or digitally. Online versions of both scales were hosted via the Google Survey application.

## **5.7. Analysis**

### **5.7.1. Qualitative data analysis: interpretative phenomenological analysis**

With the above considerations in mind, we decided to approach analysis of the interview data using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009). IPA aligns with the specific aims of the study in two ways. Firstly, it provides a clearly defined framework for the in-depth investigation of a specific phenomenon from the perspectives of individuals who are affected. Furthermore, IPA is particularly suited to investigation with reduced numbers of participants who are connected due to a shared characteristic. It focuses upon the detailed analysis of individual accounts, the findings of which can then be compared and contrasted with those of other community members.

Additionally, IPA has been used in previous inquiry into anxiety (Gil, 2015; Williams, McManus, Muse, & Williams, 2011) and into the experiences of IWS. For example, Bricker-Katz et al. (2013), investigated the experiences of IWS in the workplace; Trichon and Tetnowski (2011) assessed the role of self-help conferences in aiding IWS; and Leahy, O'Dwyer, & Ryan, (2012) conducted analysis of one individual's experiences during narrative therapy as a means of "giving voice" to IWS using IPA. From a slightly different perspective, Weingarten (2012) explored the experience of women who stammer, while Kramer (2016) investigated the lived experiences of parents who stammer. Similarly, Tichenor and Yaruss (2018) used a phenomenological methodological approach when elucidating the nature of the stuttering experience.

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When discussing IPA and our reasons for employing it, it is necessary to point out that it is a method that regards the participant as the “experiential expert” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 59) in response to the phenomenon that is being investigated, therefore their subjective perceptions provide the basis for inquiry. This approach aims to establish a sense of truth or significance from the data. In IPA, this is a “double hermeneutic” process, whereby participants ascribe meaning to their life-worlds in regard to a specific social phenomenon and the researcher attempts to make sense of his subjective interpretation. Through a careful analysis of linguistic description provided by participants, the researcher can move towards empathising with their situation and begin to view and understand it from the participant’s perspective. This process occurs through the interrogation of data and by posing critical questions regarding its content. Thus, IPA suggests it is impossible “to remove ourselves, our thoughts and our meaning systems from the world, in order to find out how things ‘really are’ in some definitive sense” (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006, p. 106). Instead, the approach emphasises the contribution made by the researcher to the investigative process, stressing the role they play in both collecting and analysing the data and interpreting the complex links between language and emotion.

IPA also encourages the in-depth study of independent case studies rather than a nomothetic approach, which involves the application of generalised laws to large groups of people (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991). This approach can be restricted to one case or may be taken when dealing with a number of different cases, which are worked through progressively before any differences or similarities are identified and reflected upon. Therefore, “IPA has a theoretical commitment to the person as a cognitive, linguistic, affective and physical being and assumes a chain of connection between people’s talk and their thinking and emotional state” (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 54).

As mentioned previously, the current study is interested in understanding how learners who stutter make sense of their experiences of anxiety and stuttering in EFL learning. Therefore, IPA was considered a highly suitable methodological approach in light of its characteristics and its focus “upon the person-in-context (a *particular* person in a *particular* context), and that person’s *relatedness* to ‘the phenomena at hand’” (Larkin et al., 2006, p. 109).



Additionally, this framework is attuned with investigation conducted from a critical perspective (Langdridge, 2008), as it attempts to unravel the relationships between how people think, feel, speak, and act, while existing in a world influenced by specific social schemas and spheres of power (Eatough & Smith, 2008).

In line with IPA recommendations, we read interviews a number of times to get a “feel” for the participant’s experience and to begin the process of immersion in the data (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). During these first readings, observations, ideas, and thoughts were noted. These included exploratory questioning of the content of the interview data, highlighting of interesting linguistics features (such as specific terminology, metaphor, repetition, or other linguistic devices used), and the identification of content which may be particularly relevant or meaningful for the participant. The qualitative data management software MAXQDA was used to organise our analysis.

Subsequently, initial observations and notes were examined and analysed as a means of identifying emergent themes. This involved identifying conceptual links between certain elements and assigning each theme a label or code. This generally consisted of a short sentence which summed up the interpreted significance of the segment or section. Following this, emergent themes were compared and analysed and relationships between them were noted. This was done as a means to cluster certain conceptually similar emergent themes together and to potentially assimilate certain ideas within one sub-theme, or under one super-ordinate theme. Superordinate themes were identified by a further reading of the transcript and by grouping together subthemes that were interpreted to hold most weight, both for the participant in relation to his or her testimony, and for the researcher when interpreting participants’ contributions. In this sense, the double-hermeneutic process that characterises an IPA approach was present throughout the analytical process.

This process was repeated across all interviews before superordinate and subordinate themes that emerged from analysis were compared and contrasted. This resulted in a number of common themes being identified across the qualitative data corpus as a whole. Consequently, examples which illustrated these themes were gathered together and arranged under overall superordinate and subordinate themes. Toward the beginning of the data

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analysis process, the we compared and discussed the results of individual analysis on numerous occasions in order to fine-tune the categories found until we reached agreement. This process guided the rest of the analytical process and improved its reliability.

To complement this, we carried out a supplementary “layer” of top-down coding. This process involved identifying key theoretical constructs in the stuttering and anxiety literature and distilling them into codes which could then be used to classify instances of such phenomena. An example of this is the identification and coding of specific types of anxiety. This process involved collating terminology and descriptions of anxiety types and symptoms (such as communication apprehension, or cognitive or behavioural responses). Later, each was assigned with a short code, which could be used to classify examples within the corpus. Additionally, factors that either intensified, or mitigated anxiety in participants were identified and coded. This was carried out at the beginning of the data analysis stage and potential codes were discussed and adjusted before being used in further analysis.

### **5.7.2. Quantitative data analysis**

We carried out quantitative data analysis using descriptive statistics (comparison of means, percentages, and standard deviations) and *t*-tests. This was done to establish if the differences found between LWS and LWDNS were statistically significant and in an attempt to identify trends in the data that, with a larger sample, may enable us to make generalizations of the findings to similar learner populations. All data analysis was carried out using Microsoft excel and version 24 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

### **5.8. Conclusions**

In this chapter we have outlined and discussed the methodological considerations of the current study and the final methods that we employed. To this end we have briefly described a pilot study that helped to inform the

manner in which we carried out this piece of research. Following this, we have introduced our research questions, described our participants, and explained our data collection procedures. Lastly, we have illustrated how we went about analysing our data.



### **III. RESULTS & DISCUSSION**



## **6. Foreign language anxiety in learners who stutter and learners who do not stutter: a focus on the language skills**

This chapter is the first of four to present and discuss the results of the qualitative and quantitative analyses conducted in this study. We begin by responding to our first research question, which refers to levels of anxiety in L2 English classes in a group of LWS and a comparison group of LWDNS. To this end, we report on responses to the FLCAS and the SLSAS. We also present the results of the descriptive statistical tests performed on both groups, namely, *t*-tests and percentages. Additionally, we offer examples of qualitative analysis where relevant. We focus on general levels of anxiety and anxiety experienced across the four language skill domains of speaking, reading, writing, and listening. In terms of these findings, quantitative analysis revealed that LWS experience higher levels of anxiety than LWDNS on the whole. In speaking tasks, this difference was significant, but this was not the case in the other skill domains. Nevertheless, further differences were observed between the two groups that affect listening and reading and are commented on in the following sections.

### **6.1. General levels of foreign language anxiety in learners who stutter and learners who do not stutter**

We begin by presenting general results from both LWS and LWDNS. These include overall anxiety scores from all participants, average anxiety scores of both groups, and standard deviations. Subsequently, we discuss our findings regarding anxiety levels in both groups across each language skill domain.

Table 5. Mean anxiety scores and standard deviations for LWS and LWDNS

	FLCAS		SLSAS	
	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
LWS	109	18.2	83.5	10.3
LWDNS	93	16.6	78	15.4

Our analysis of responses to the FLCAS and the SLSAS revealed that, overall, LWS experience higher levels of anxiety than LWDNS in L2 English classes. Standard deviations indicate that a greater variation in scores are present across LWS than LWDNS in responses to the FLCAS, while the opposite was observed in response to the SLSAS. However, differences were found between the two groups in relation to the language skill domains of speaking, writing, reading and listening.

## **6.2. Foreign language speaking anxiety**

In this section we first present results of quantitative analysis that describe overall levels of speaking anxiety in both groups. To gain greater insight into differences between the LWS and LWDNS, we then address specific items within both the FLCAS and the SLSAS.

The FLCAS has been noted for focusing heavily on speaking tasks (Aida, 1994; Rodríguez & Abreu, 2003; Martínez-Agudo, 2013a), however the relatively high number of items that deal with this language domain affords us an insight into potential differences between LWS and LWDNS in terms of speaking anxiety. To this end, we collated items that explicitly referenced spoken interaction or oral performance and assessed anxiety scored of both groups in response to these items, i.e., items 1, 2, 9, 13, 14, 18, 20, 23, 24, 27, 31, 32, and 33.



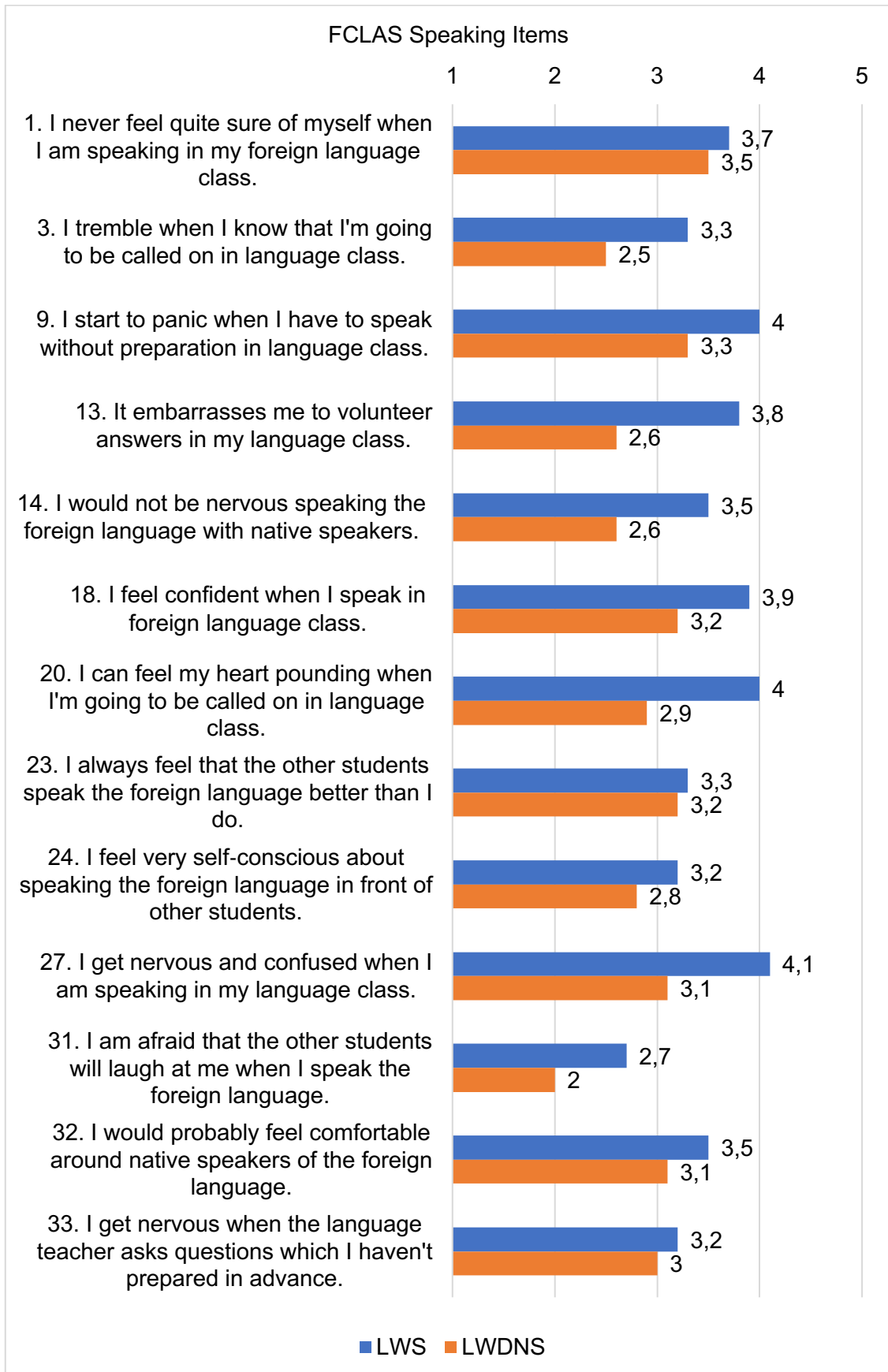


Figure 3. Mean anxiety scores for LWS and LWDNS on speaking items within the FLCAS

As we can observe, LWS consistently reported higher levels of anxiety than LWS in response to items that reference speaking. This was discussed during interviews and participants described EFL oral tasks as provoking high levels of anxiety. In an illustrative example, one participant, (VME, Male, 33) referred to the “panic” that he experienced during speaking tasks: “Te hunde el pánico” [The panic sinks you]. Furthermore, we found the responses to specific items were corroborated during semi-structured interviews. Response to item nine (shown below in Figure 4) indicate that LWS experienced higher levels of anxiety than LWDNS when they were required to engage in speaking tasks without preparation.

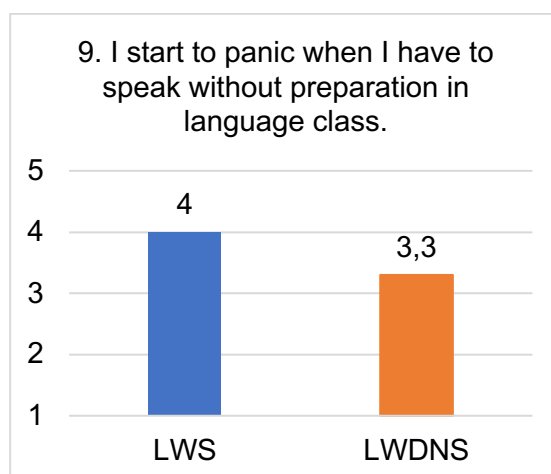


Figure 4. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 9 within the FLCAS

In interviews, one participant (ELE, Female, 36) specifically described the spontaneous element of certain speaking tasks as provoking high levels of anxiety:

(1) ELE, Female, 36

M::: a ver (.) pues eso tener que hablar en una en una conversación improvisada me agobia mucho [Well, having to speak in an improvised conversation stresses me]

Similarly, responses to item 13 within the FLCAS indicated a difference between the two groups regarding embarrassment when volunteering answers in EFL classes.

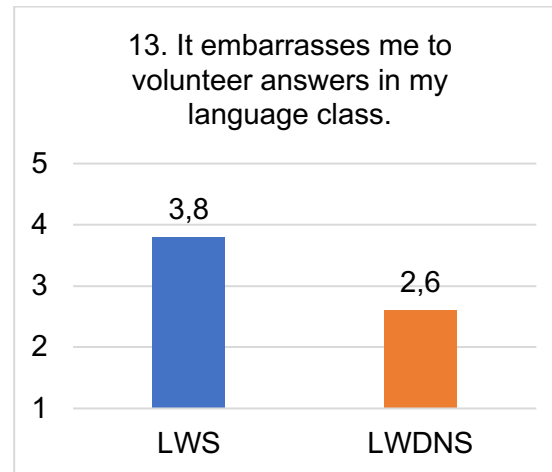


Figure 5. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 13 within the FLCAS

This finding was supported during interviews in which LWS highlighted the embarrassment and shame that can accompany stuttering, while also indicating how these emotions could influence their behaviour. Previous studies with IWS in broader contexts have identified these emotions as commonly arising during communication that is affected by stuttering (Yaruss & Quesal, 2004; Yaruss, 2010). In our study, JAZ reported that shame related to stuttering lead to him employing a number of speech strategies and curtailed his desire to volunteer answers in EFL class:

(2) JAZ, Male, 40

yo en inglés lo que hablo es muy muy despacio (.) muy despacio (.) quizás eso también es otra truquillo para quizá no:: caer ¿no? es es <la muletilla esa de empezar< y hablar muy despacio (.) empezar empezar y así no sé así a lo mejor (.) err:: presiento yo que >a lo mejor se van a reír de mi< o:: es mucha vergüenza la la que tengo ((se ríe)) mucha vergüenza [In English I speak very slowly, very slowly, maybe that's another trick to avoid falling, no? It's that crutch to begin with and start speaking very slowly and I don't maybe, I

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have a feeling that maybe the other will laugh at me, I'm very embarrassed ((he laughs)), very embarrassed]

In another interview, a different participant indicated similar sensations of embarrassment, despite knowing the correct responses to questions posed by the teacher during EFL classes:

(3) RCL, Male, 23

Sabía me daba vergüenza también< (.) a lo mejor si me preguntaba ¿como se dice ocho?' >pues también lo sé< (.) pero tampoco lo iba a decir ¿no? [Knowing (the answer) embarrassed me as well, if they asked me 'how do you say eight??, well I knew it, but I wasn't going to say it, right?]

Similarly, item 20 within the FLCAS referenced physiological reactions to anxiety. Results indicate that high levels of anxiety in speaking tasks in LWS contributed to somatic symptoms of anxiety.

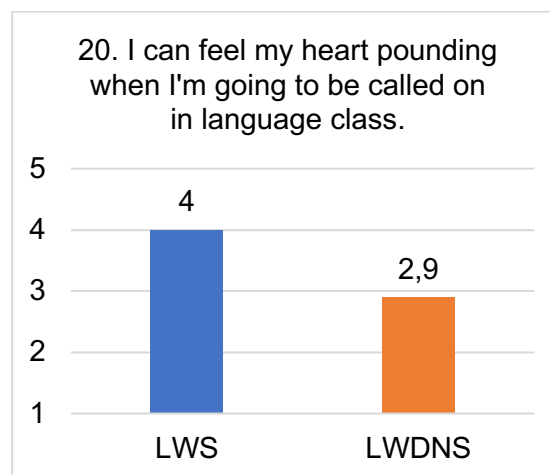


Figure 6. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 20 within the FLCAS

Such symptoms were also emphasized during interviews by participants. For example, one participant referred to an increase in heart rate prior to classroom participation:

(4) VSM, Female, 29

YO SÉ QUE ME VA A TOCAR A MI LA SIGUIENTE (.) ((se pone la mano encima de la corazón)) MI CORAZÓN SE PONE [I know it's going to be my turn next ((she puts her hand on her heart)) my heart starts going]

Similarly, another participant alluded to other physiological reactions experienced during L2 speaking tasks:

(5) GMS, Male, 36

Las veces que he tenido (.) que salir a exponer o::: leer algo en inglés (.) me he sentido muy mal (.) he sudado (.) er::: estaba todo colorado (.) estaba muy mal (.) [The times when I've had to present something, or read something aloud in English I've felt really bad, I've sweated, I've gone all red, I felt really bad]

Therefore, our results suggest that the impact of high levels of anxiety can disrupt efficient classroom behaviour and contribute to strong physiological responses. These findings mirror those of previous studies into FLA (MacIntyre, 2017; Woodrow, 2006) which have identified that “the physical symptoms of anxiety produce changes in the body organs, such as palpitations, sweating, or stomach-ache” (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017, p. 205). As we have seen, LWS experience higher levels of anxiety than LWDNS, which may mean that they are more likely to experience uncomfortable physiological effects of anxiety as well. The differences between the two groups in terms of speaking anxiety are reflected in responses to item 27 on the FLCAS.

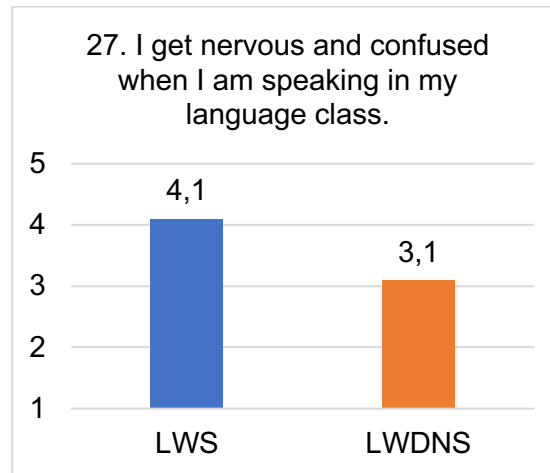


Figure 7. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 27 within the FLCAS

Our quantitative results are supported by findings of our qualitative analysis. During interviews with LWS, speaking tasks were consistently described as provoking intense anxiety. This is discussed in greater depth in the following chapters; however, we present an illustrative example that sums up the feeling expressed by LWS during interviews concerning speaking tasks in L2 English classes:

(6) EMP, Male, 26

Hablar me agobia (.) cuando tengo que hablar en clase me agobia:: bastante [Speaking stresses me, when I have to speak in class I get very stressed]

Thus, results of the qualitative analysis appear to suggest that stuttering may contribute to FLA in LWS and therefore explain some of the differences in the responses from both groups of learners. To establish if these differences were significant, we conducted *t*-tests to compare the mean responses to the above items contained within the FLCAS. The results are illustrated below:

Table 6. Results of *t*-test comparing responses of LWS and LWDNS to speaking items within the FLCAS

FLCAS Speaking Items		
	Mean	SD
LWS	46.29	8.81
LWDNS	37.82	9.128
	$t(32) = 2.727$	$p = 0.01$

In Table 6, we can observe that  $p = 0.01$ , which indicates differences between both groups regarding speech in the EFL classroom were statistically significant. While this is based on a relatively small participant sample, this finding suggests that similar results may be obtained in a broader sample.

Further insight into speaking anxiety was gained from the responses to the speaking subscale of the SLSAS from both groups. Figure six shows the mean scores in response to these items.

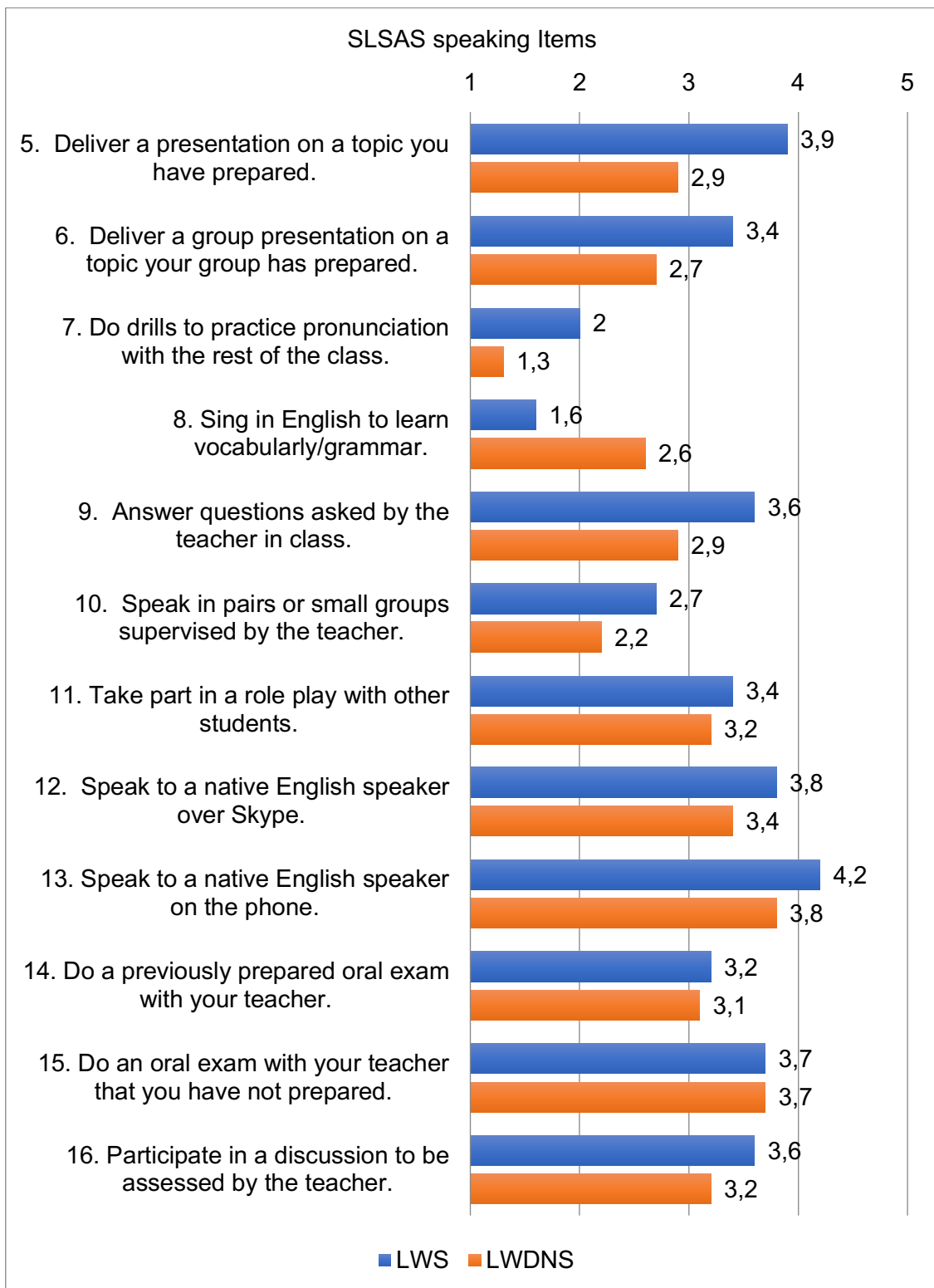


Figure 8. Mean anxiety scores in response to speaking items within the SLSAS

We can observe that responses to items on the SLSAS indicate that LWS experience greater anxiety than LWDNS. This echoes the trend present in



responses to the aforementioned items in the FLCAS. Within the SLSAS, the highest levels of anxiety in both LWS and LWDNS concerned item 13 (“Speak to a native English speaker on the phone”). Telephonic communication is known to be problematic for some IWS in L1 interaction, as it eliminates potentially useful non-verbal cues and places extra demands on verbal expression (Bricker-Katz et al., 2013; Plexico et al., 2009a). Thus, any disruptions to speech can have a significant impact on the success of communication. This can provoke anxiety, as IWS are aware that they may experience disfluency that would further complicate the smooth exchange of information, and ultimately understanding.

It is interesting that LWDNS also indicated that this type of speaking situation would provoke high levels of anxiety in L2 English, perhaps for similar reasons as those explained above in relation to LWS. While telephonic communication does not normally form a part of classroom activities, it is a relatively widespread scenario in real-world interaction. This result suggests that L2 learners who stutter, as well as their non-stuttering peers, may benefit from tasks that attend to anxiety experienced during this specific type of spoken communication.

Other similarities and differences were also found between both groups with regard to other speaking items in the SLSAS. For example, responses to item 15 (“Do an oral exam with your teacher that you have not prepared”), indicate a similar degree of anxiety in both groups within this context. Oral exams based around face-to-face interviews have been identified as provoking anxiety in students due to the combination of test and communication anxieties and the relatively formal nature of the interaction (Rubio-Alcalá 2002).

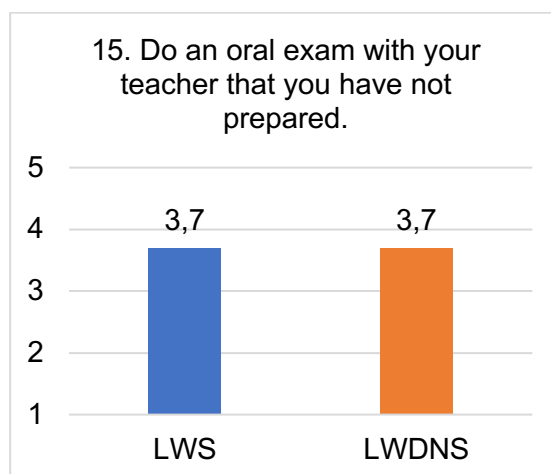


Figure 9. Mean anxiety scores in responses to item 15 within the SLSAS

If we compare this result with responses to item 5 (Deliver a preparation on a topic you have prepared), it appears that one-to-one speaking tasks, including oral exams, provoke less anxiety than open class activities for LWS.

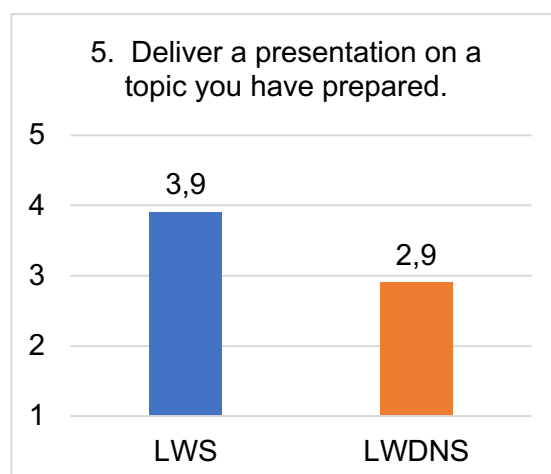


Figure 10. Mean anxiety scores in responses to item 5 within the SLSAS

This result may indicate that LWS experience more anxiety during speaking tasks in open class due to the greater risk of negative social evaluation from peers. Conversely, for LWDNS, it seems that formal evaluation from teachers regarding their L2 language skills provokes greater anxiety than the potential of negative social evaluation of peers.

Furthermore, if we compare the mean scores of LWS and LWDNS to items 5 and 15 we can observe that levels of anxiety in LWS were roughly the same in both contexts, whereas those of LWDNS increased by 1.3 points.

These findings suggest that anxiety in speaking tasks in LWS was relatively stable at a higher level than in LWDNS, who foreign language anxiety was more variable according to the task at hand. Speaking anxiety in LWS may be maintained and experienced more intensely than LWDNS, so that LWS may be more susceptible to fatigue caused by anxiety. This, in turn, may compromise learning (Boksem et al., 2005). We discuss this in more detail in Chapter 8.

Once again, quantitative results were supported by participant responses during interviews. As observed above, responses to item five suggest that LWS experience more anxiety than LWDNS when involved in classroom presentations. During interviews, a number of participants discussed the anxiety caused by these types of speaking activities. For example:

(7) EMP, Male, 26

>Bueno yo por lo menos cuando siento que todo el mundo está pendiente de mi me< (.) pongo muchísimo más nervioso. [Well, at least for me, when I feel that everyone is waiting for me (to speak) I get much more nervous]

This extract is indicative of the general feeling amongst participants regarding such tasks. It appeared that FLA increased when LWS had to take the floor and become the centre of attention, thus increasing the risk of negative social evaluation. Studies with LWDNS have reported these kinds of situations to provoke strong feelings of anxiety (i.e. Von Wörde, 2003). For our participants who stutter, it appears that classroom presentations cause anxiety to increase as well.

This result becomes clearer when we consider situations in which anxiety was reduced. For example, item 10 within the SLSAS referred to speaking activities conducted in small groups. In these circumstances, both groups reported lower levels of anxiety than in speaking tasks in open class.

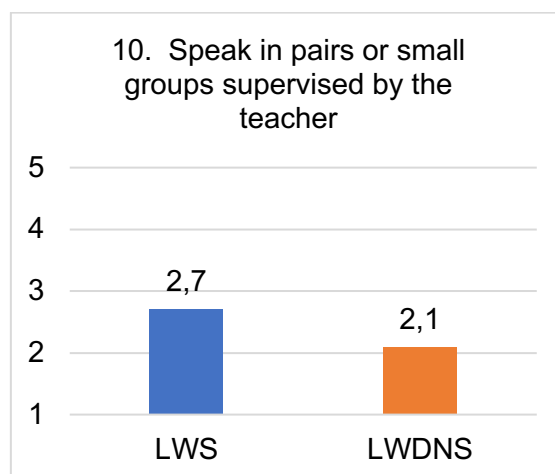


Figure 11. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 10 within the SLSAS

This finding mirrors those presented by other scholars (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017; Von Wörde, 2003; Young, 1990) who have suggested that “group work not only addresses the affective concerns of the students, it also increases the amount of student talk and comprehensible input” (Young, 1991, p. 433). Anxiety in both groups was reduced during speaking tasks in smaller groups, and this decrease was most pronounced in LWS. Our qualitative analysis revealed that these types of speaking activities were favoured by LWS as they aided participation. Thus, one participant said:

(9) JD, Male, 30

Mmm:: (.) a ver (.) >por mis circunstancias en concreto estoy más cómodo en grupos< (.) peq (.) peq (.) pequeños (.) la:: verdad [Mmm, well, because of my circumstances in particular, I’m more comfortable in smaller groups to be honest]

Another participant described how smaller groups could be used by L2 teachers to better assess language skills in LWS, as they helped to offset the anxiety caused by being the centre of attention, meaning that output in small group discussions was more representative of genuine L2 knowledge.

(10) VSM, Female, 29

(Yo haría) actividades un poco más relajadas que no tengan que ver con exponerte a ti ante la clase (.) todos en silencio oírte a ver que dices y *como* lo dices ¿no? [...] o en grupitos *pequeños* o: (.) y tú puedes saber el nivel que tiene como pronunciar. [(I would do) more relaxed activities that don't have to do with exposing yourself in front of the whole class, all of them listening to what you say and how you say it, right? [...] or in smaller groups, you (the teacher) can know what level the student has, how they pronounce]

Therefore, our findings indicate that speaking aloud in open class provoked greater anxiety in LWS than in LWDNS, primarily due to the high risk of negative social evaluation. This may be explained by LWS experiencing fear of negative evaluation from peers in regard to disfluency in addition to their L2 language level. We discuss this finding in more depth in the following chapters.

We can also observe in Figure 8 that on one occasion LWS reported less anxiety than LWDNS in response to speaking items on the SLSAS. This occurred in item 8 (“Sing in class to learn vocabulary/grammar”), in which there was a 1.2-point difference between the two groups.

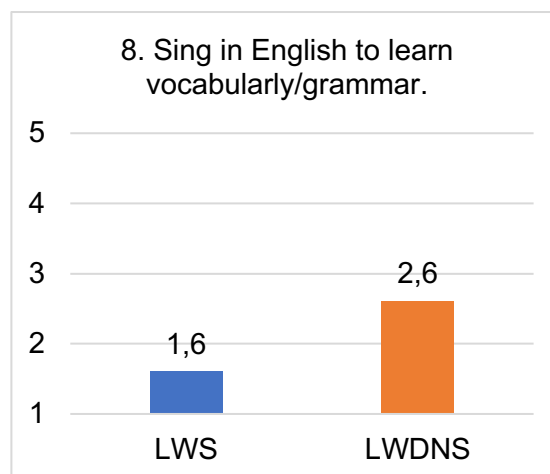


Figure 12. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 8 within the SLSAS

This result may be explained by the fact that IWS often experience complete fluency when they sing (Mawson, Radford & Jacob, 2016). Furthermore, it may be the case that LWS are more used to the kind of

## Results & Discussion

performance anxiety that can occur when singing due to the pressures in their everyday speaking lives. Singing exercises may constitute a low anxiety task that could be incorporated by L2 language teachers for both LWS and LWDNS. Indeed, scholars have suggested that tasks of this kind may aid the verbatim learning of L2 phrases (Ludke, Ferreira, & Overy, 2014).

As with the FLCAS, we used *t*-tests to establish if the aforementioned differences between LWS and LWDNS were statistically significant. The results are displayed below.

Table 7. Results of *t*-test conducted on responses to speaking items within the SLSAS

SLSAS Speaking Items		
	Mean	SD
LWS	47.05	6.46
LWDNS	41.94	7.40
	$t(32) = 2.15$	$p = 0.04$

The results shown in Table 7 support those presented above for the FLCAS, indicating that significant differences exist in levels of speaking anxiety between the two groups. Here we can observe a *p* value of 0.04, which is higher than the *p* value illustrated in Table 6 but still falls within the boundaries of statistical significance.

Therefore, the quantitative analysis performed on both the FLCAS and the SLSAS indicates that LWS experience higher levels of anxiety in speaking tasks than LWDNS, and that these differences are statistically significant. We observed that trends in the responses to these scales were supported by the findings obtained from qualitative analysis of the interviews. As already hinted to in some of the examples provided above, our findings suggest that anxiety experienced during certain tasks in L2 English learning may interact with underlying social anxiety related to stuttering. This connection is explored further in Chapter 7, in which findings of qualitative analysis of interview data regarding stuttering and anxiety are presented and discussed.

### 6.3. Foreign language reading anxiety

Concerning items within the SLSAS related to reading activities in EFL classes, overall, LWS once again reported higher levels of anxiety than LWDNS.

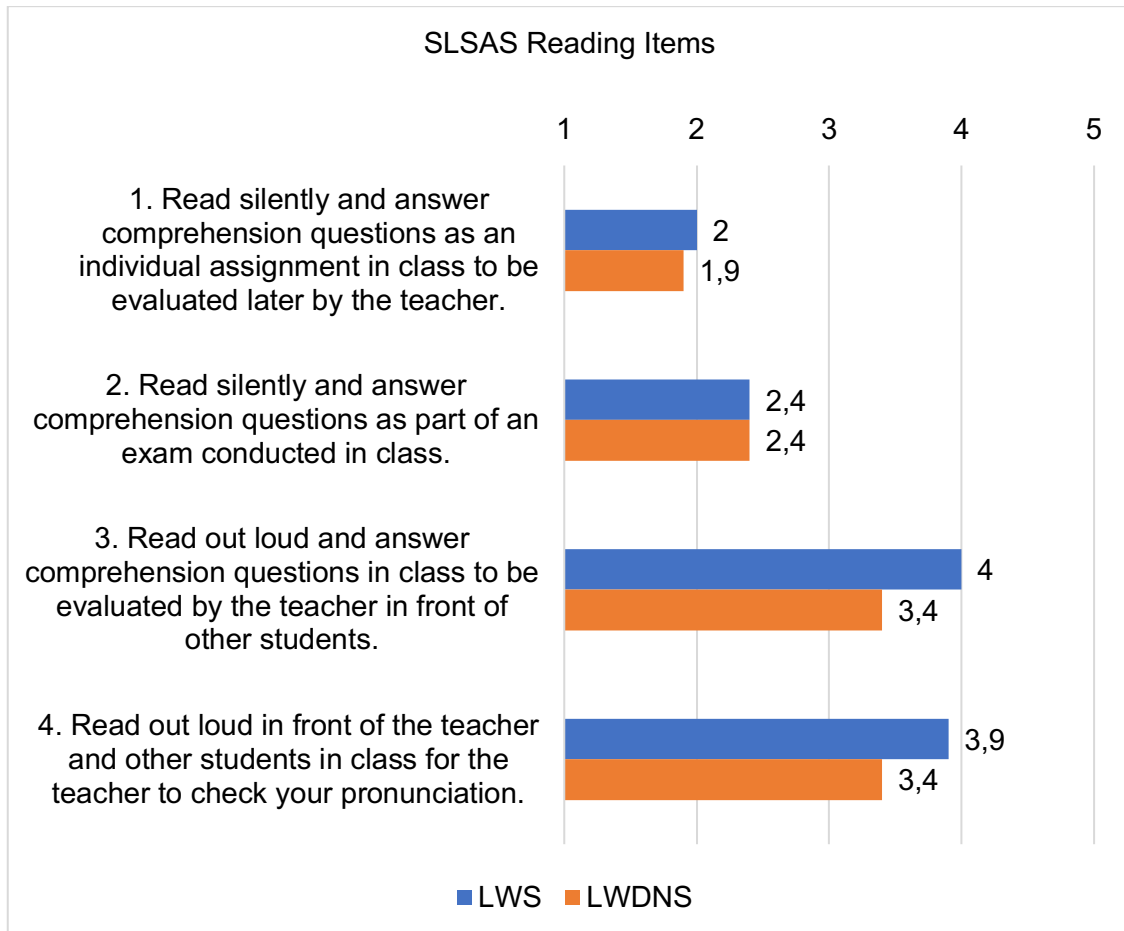


Figure 13. Mean anxiety scores in response to reading items within the SLSAS

If we observe responses from LWS and LWDNS in this graph, we can appreciate that responses to items one and two are practically identical in both groups. This suggests that levels of anxiety are relatively low in tasks which require students to read silently. This finding is not surprising as anxiety in this language domain is often comparatively low. This is largely due to anxiety depending on one's self-related judgements, which tend to be more positive here than in other skill domains (Macintyre et al., 1997) because "repetitions and

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clarifications are silently performed, thus limiting risks of embarrassment” (Matsuda & Gobel, 2001, p. 230). However, responses to items three and four within the SLSAS, which mention reading tasks that also present a speaking component show that anxiety levels increased substantially in both groups. These findings were supported by the results of our qualitative analysis of the interview data, in which LWS indicated that tasks of this kind were particularly challenging due to high levels of anxiety.

### (11) VSM, Female, 29

Un::: err texto o un ejercicio o lo que sea y::: >y al tener que estar leyendo lo tenías que decir las palabras que ponían ahí exactamente< (.) obviamente entonces eso me generaba y me genera a día de (.) hoy muchos nervios y mucha ansiedad.[A text, or a task or whatever, and as you have to read it, you have to say the exact words that they put, obviously, so that made me, and to this day makes me very nervous and very anxious]

Intense anxiety appeared to arise, in part, due to the rigid nature of reading tasks that forced LWS to use lexis they may otherwise avoid. This is alluded to by VSM in extract 11 above, while other participants also highlighted the presence of difficult phonemes. The following extract is illustrative of this:

### (12) AMB, Female, 36

Hablar y el y el leer en clase (me agobia) porqué:: ahí algún fonema que me cuesta más ¿no? [Speaking and reading in class (stresses me) because there are some phonemes that are harder for me, no?]

These extracts add further depth to the findings observed in figure 13 above, suggesting that the characteristics of reading aloud tasks and the manner in which they interact with stuttering may heighten anxiety in LWS. Thus, it appeared that reading tasks with an oral component provoked additional anxiety as they required LWS to articulate specific words, without the freedom to improvise or use different lexical options. This presented a distinct



challenge to some LWS, who were used to employing strategies such as word substitution or circumlocution to manage stuttering and, as a consequence, reduce anxiety related to disfluency. This was a particularly salient finding that emerged during the qualitative analysis of the interview data and is discussed in greater depth in our third Results chapter.

To estimate the statistical significance of the differences found in reading anxiety in the two groups, we employed *t*-tests. Results presented below indicate that these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 8. Results of *t*-test conducted on responses of LWS and LWDNS to reading items within the SLSAS

SLSAS Reading Items		
	Mean	SD
LWS	4.41	1.90
LWDNS	4.35	1.76
	$t(32) = 0.93$	$p = 0.92$

Therefore, reading tasks in general do not provoke particularly high levels of anxiety in LWS nor LWDNS. However, this situation changes during tasks which have a concurrent oral component, at which point anxiety increases in both groups. While differences between LWS and LWDNS are not statistically significant, we have observed that reading aloud tasks provoke high levels of anxiety in LWS, as confirmed by both quantitative and qualitative analyses. This finding supports the results outlined above in section 6.2. for L2 speaking tasks in both groups.

#### 6.4. Foreign language listening anxiety

In this section we consider the responses to SLSAS items related to listening tasks in L2 English. Figure 14 illustrates responses from LWS and LWDNS on these items.

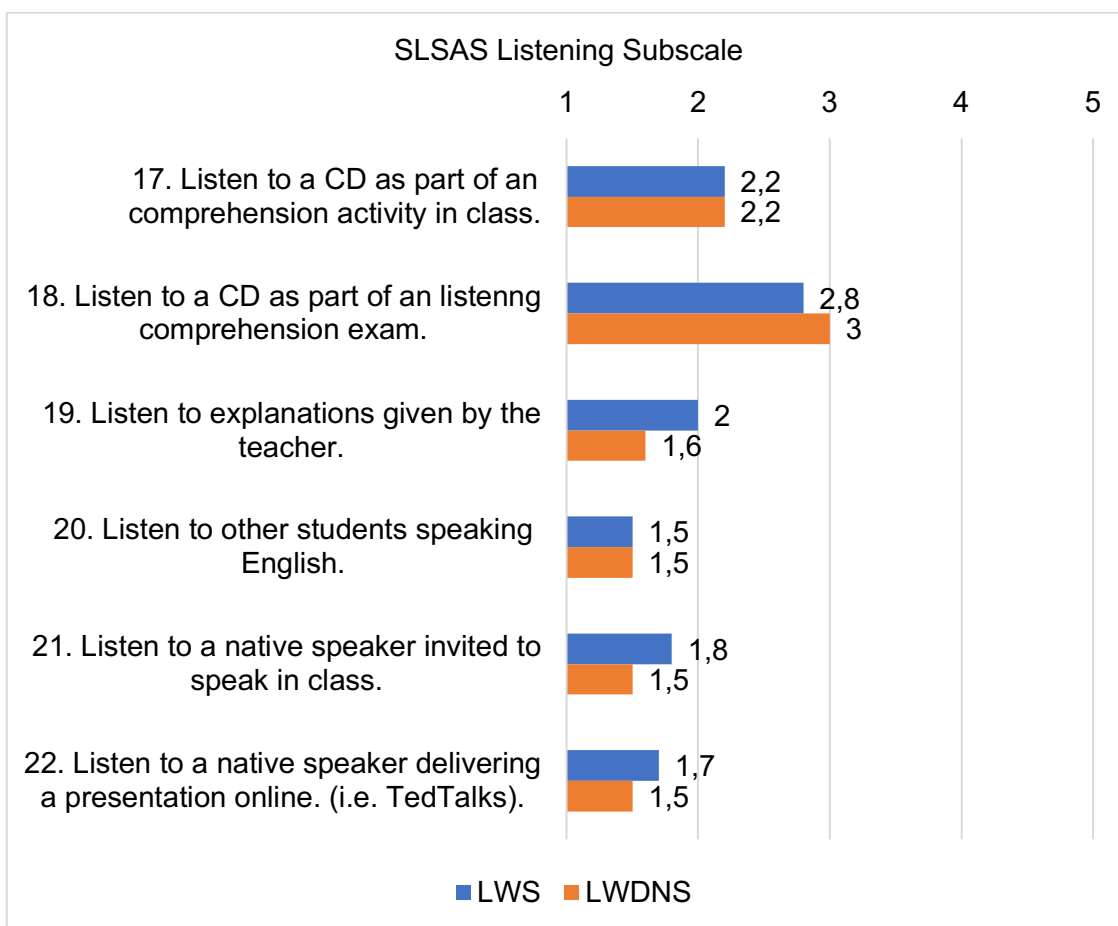


Figure 14. Mean anxiety scores in response to listening items within the SLSAS

As we can observe in Figure 14, both groups indicated comparatively low levels of anxiety when compared with L2 tasks that include an oral component. Generally, LWS report slightly higher levels of anxiety than LWDNS; however, this trend is reversed in responses to item 18, which relates to listening in exams. While this difference is very small, it suggests a distinction between the experiences of anxiety in LWS and LWDNS. These results contravene previous research findings with regards to listening, which has typically been depicted as one of the skills that mainly provoke FLA in students together with speaking (Horwitz, 2017; Price 1990; Von Wörde 2003). Nevertheless, differences in listening anxiety between the two groups were not statistically significant (see Table 9 below).

Table 9. Results of *t*-test conducted on responses of LWS and LWDNS to listening items within the SLSAS

SLSAS Listening Items		
	Mean	SD
LWS	12	5.48
LWDNS	11.4	4.12
	$t(32) = 0.35$	$p = 0.72$

Findings from analysis of interviews suggests that relatively low levels of anxiety in LWS within this domain may be explained by a tendency among these learners to favour listening tasks. A number of participants expressed their enjoyment of listening activities in EFL classes, in part because they did not require oral participation. During interviews, LWS-often reported healthy self-concept beliefs regarding their listening ability, potentially because tasks in this domain provoked low levels of anxiety. For example, one participant reported his attitude towards listening tasks:

(13) EMP, Male, 26

Los de listenings (.) ahora que me recuerdo también me gustaba (.) no sé:: >era simplemente no tenía que:::< (.) es decir simplemente estar así paradito (.) escuchar. [The listening exercises, now that I remember I liked them as well. I don't know, I didn't have to do anything, just sit still and listen]

In a similar manner, another participant described his enjoyment of listening exercises during L2 English classes:

(14) JMS, Male, 29

la verdad es que< (.) una de las cosas que me >encantan de las clases de inglés es que< (.) lo:s profesores están siempre habla:ndo >en inglés< (.) entonces es una cosa (.) que (.) que el el el oído te lo trabaja mu::chísimo y (.) y simplemente por eso ir a una clase de inglés es algo que (.) merece la pena >porque es

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una< inmersión lingüística en si misma [The truth is that one of the things I love about English classes is that the teachers are always speaking in English, so you really practice your listening a lot and because of that simply going to an English class is worth it, because it's a linguistic immersion in itself]

This was echoed by other participants:

(15) RMA, Male, 30

Me gusta bastante lo los listenings [...] ejemplos reales de listening o un video de un programa de tal (.) eso me hace bastante ameno [I like the listenings a lot, real examples of listenings, or a video of a tv programme, that's enjoyable to me]

(16) AMB, Female, 36

el:: listening (.) me gusta también. [Listening I like as well]

Findings of the qualitative study also suggest that the presence of stuttering may have influenced listening behaviours, which in turn reduced anxiety in this domain. For example, some participants recounted feeling more comfortable listening rather than speaking during communicative situations. This finding is discussed in more detail in the fourth chapter of the Results section.

Therefore, LWS and LWDNS both experience low levels of anxiety in L2 listening tasks. For the most part, LWDNS experience slightly lower levels of anxiety than LWS in listening. However, this pattern is reversed in listening exam tasks. Our qualitative analysis indicates that relatively low levels of anxiety in LWS may be explained by them perceiving listening tasks to be more enjoyable than those that include a speaking component.

### **6.5. Foreign language writing anxiety**

Lastly, we turn our attention to anxiety in the domain of writing. Responses from both groups are indicated in Figure 15 below:

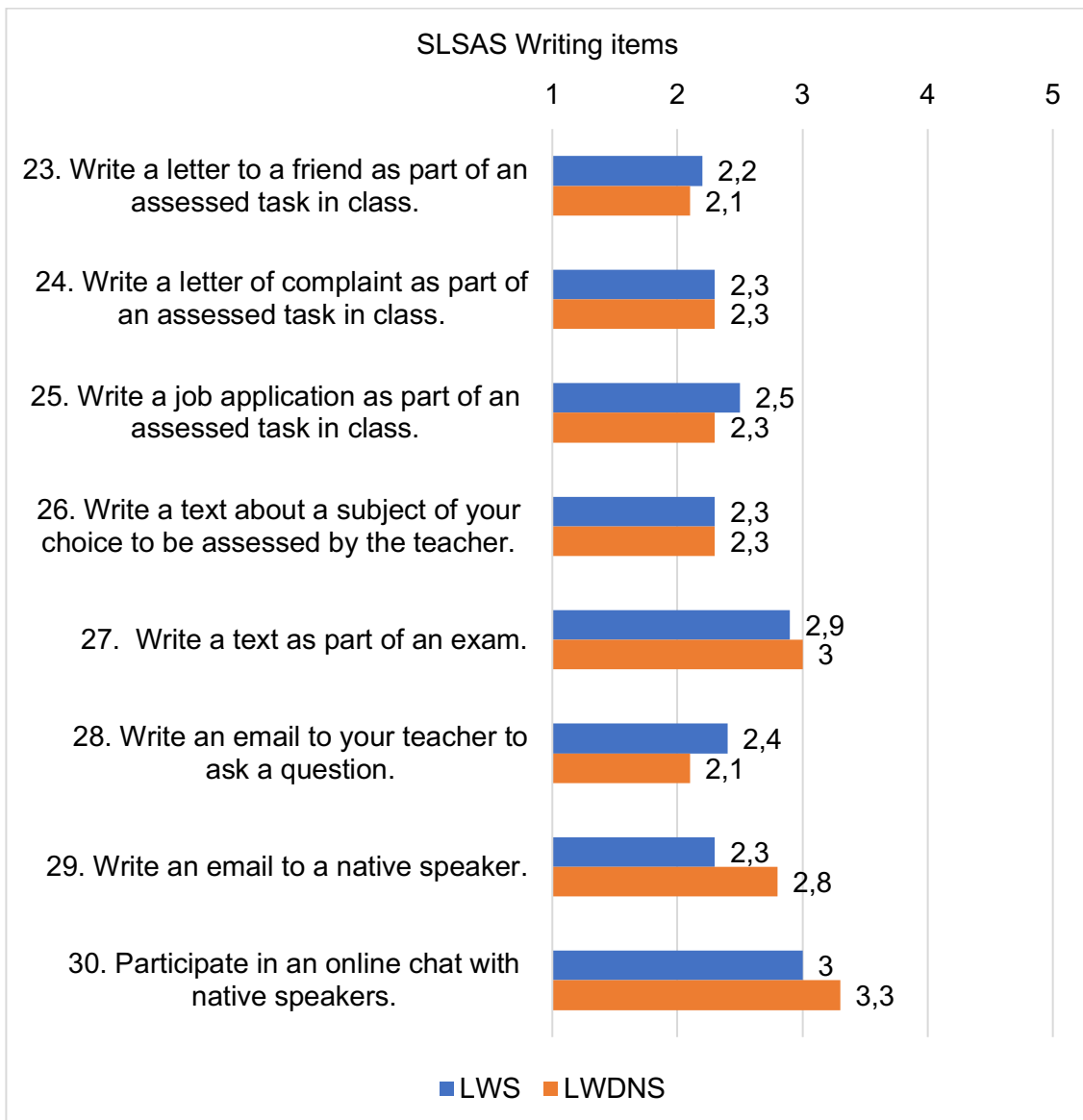


Figure 15. Mean anxiety scores in response to writing items within the SLSAS

Within the domain of writing, LWS and LWDNS experience relatively low levels of anxiety. In general, the responses from participants in both groups were very similar. However, in some cases LWS reported lower levels of anxiety than LWDNS. This was most noticeable in items 29 and 30 that refer to computer-mediated communication with native speakers.

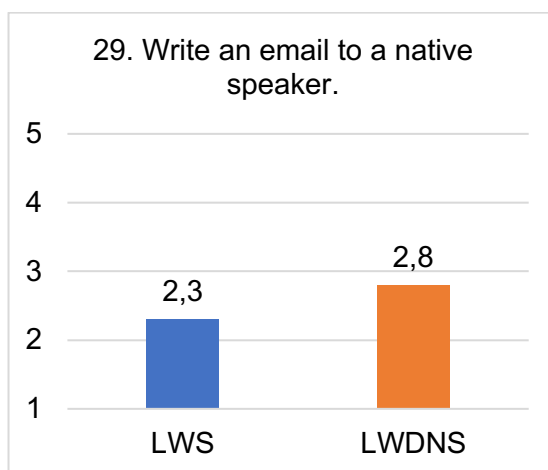


Figure 16. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 29 within the SLSAS

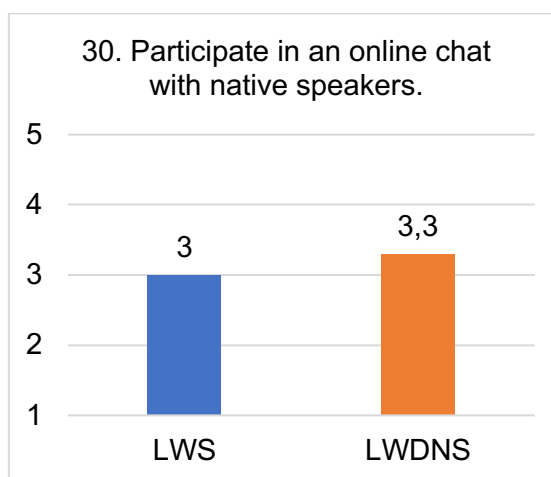


Figure 17. Mean anxiety scores in response to item 30 within the SLSAS

These results imply that despite high levels of anxiety in the other expressive domain of speaking, LWS experienced comparatively lower levels of anxiety when communicating through writing. This is encouraging, as it suggests that participants were reasonably confident in their capacities to communicate in L2 English in this domain. This result also suggests that high levels of anxiety in speaking tasks were related to the specific challenges of oral communication, rather than concern over L2 language competence. In practical terms, we may interpret these findings as an indication that electronic modes of communication could facilitate L2 language expression and participation for some LWS.

FLWA, or the anxiety that takes place before or during the writing process in L2 is mainly based on the learner's low self-confidence about their

competence in the target language, their aversion to writing, and their evaluation apprehension (Cheng 2002; Cheng et al., 1999). Therefore, it is possible that low levels of anxiety in this domain reflected confidence in LWS regarding their writing ability as well as an affinity for writing activities. This was alluded to by our participants in the interviews, for example:

(16) ERA, Female, 22

Sí es que siempre me ha gustado (.) escribir o sea >ya no< (.) >inventar historias y tal sino< (.) redactar el simple hecho de redactar y y y >me gusta hacerlo en inglés también< porque en vez de:: escribirlo (.) en español y luego traducirlo (.) lo hago directamente en inglés (.) entonces no sé (.) me gusta [Yes I have always enjoyed writings, I mean, not making up stories and that but writing, just the simple act of writing and I like doing it in English as well, because instead of writing in Spanish and then translating it, I do it directly in English so, I don't know, I like it]

To establish if these differences between LWS and LWDNS were statistically significant, we performed *t*-tests on responses to writing items within the SLSAS from both groups (see Table 10 below).

Table 10. Results of *t*-test conducted on responses of LWS and LWDNS to reading items within the SLSAS

SLSAS Writing Items		
	Mean	SD
LWS	20.1	6.51
LWDNS	20.4	7.04
	$t(32) = 1.26$	$p = 0.90$

Results show that no statistically significant differences were present between the two groups in terms of writing anxiety in L2 classes.

Therefore, levels of anxiety in L2 English writing exercises were relatively low in both groups. Furthermore, in some specific tasks, LWS reported lower levels of anxiety than LWDNS. This was salient in contexts involving L2

electronic written communication. Our qualitative analysis of the interview data supports these findings and suggests that LWS may find writings exercises to offer a certain degree of relief from the higher levels of anxiety experienced in other domains. This indicates that LWS may be more comfortable engaging in written communication compared to spoken interaction, due to the greater anxiety provoked in the latter.

## **6.6. Conclusions**

In this first results chapter, we have presented and discussed the findings of quantitative analysis of participants' responses to the FLCAS and the SLSAS with examples from the interview data. This has allowed us to describe levels of anxiety across the language domains of speaking, reading, listening, and writing.

Our results indicate that differences between LWS and LWDNS are statistically significant in the speaking domain. These findings indicate that stuttering can increase speaking anxiety in LWS, particularly in tasks which offer the potential for negative social evaluation. Furthermore, levels of anxiety in LWS in this domain remained relatively high across a number of activities, while speaking anxiety in LWDNS was more susceptible to fluctuation according to the task at hand.

In other language skill domains, anxiety in both groups was relatively low. Nevertheless, LWS generally experienced higher anxiety than LWDNS in reading, writing, and listening tasks, although these differences were not statistically significant. A larger sample may therefore be necessary to search for statistical significance in future studies of FLA in LWS and LWDNS. Despite this general trend, our results suggest that in some areas of EFL classes LWS experience less anxiety than their non-stuttering peers. Interestingly, this pattern was observed primarily in regard to listening and writing tasks. During semi-structured interviews, LWS indicated that low levels of anxiety facilitated their enjoyment within the domains of writing and listening.

Consequently, in response to our first research question: Do LWS and LWDNS report differences in anxiety in different learning situations in the EFL



classroom? We can state that differences do occur in levels of anxiety present in LWS and LWDNS, and that these are statistically significant in speaking tasks, especially in classroom presentations and telephonic communication. These findings were supported by results obtained within the reading domain that showed high levels of anxiety of LWS in tasks that also contained an oral component. To gain further insight into the nature of FLA in LWS, the manner in which it may interact with stuttering, and its influence on self-related constructs we turn to the findings of the qualitative analysis of the interviews in the following chapters.

## **7. The relationship between stuttering and L2 English learning**

This chapter attempts to provide an answer to our second research question, namely: how do LWS account for the relationship between stuttering and the learning of EFL? To this end, we present and discuss the results of the analysis of the interview data obtained from LWS. We first outline the superordinate and subordinate themes identified in the analysis, before we discuss each one in detail. In so doing, we have employed key terms and expressions from our participants that convey and illustrate such themes along with brief extracts from their discourses. Additionally, to aid the discussion, longer illustrative passages from these interviews are presented and commented on considering the literature on stuttering and FLA.

Upon analysis, we identified two superordinate themes and six subordinate themes regarding the relationship between stuttering learning English as a foreign language. In the first superordinate theme we explore how stuttering can complicate some of the more formal aspects of L2 learning. To do this, we report on how LWS account for the influence of disfluency on L2 speech production, the role it may have in evaluative contexts, and how it can condition behaviour of LWS and others within the classroom. In the second superordinate theme we expand on these themes and explore how stuttering can result in LWS feeling “trapped” and unable to progress in L2 English learning. Therefore, we consider how the limiting effects discussed in the first superordinate theme, in addition to the inherent unpredictability of stuttering, can provoke certain emotional responses in these students.

### **7.1. *Costar*: L2 English learning as effortful**

The first superordinate theme presented in this chapter encompasses findings that indicate EFL classes and L2 learning in general can constitute an effortful experience for LWS. The superordinate theme and the subordinate themes it contains are displayed below in Table 11:

Table 11. Superordinate theme A and subordinate themes

<b>Superordinate theme A</b>		
<i>Costar</i> L2 English as effortful  “Hacer tantos esfuerzos para hablar que es algo (.) como muy natural muy simple muy básico” [To make so much effort to speak, which is something very natural, very simple, very basic]		
<b>Subordinate themes A</b>		
<i>Distorsión</i> The influence of stuttering on L2 English speech production  “Cuando me atrancaba tanto mi pronunciación se distorsionaba” [When I stutter a lot my pronunciation is distorted]	<i>Un diez viudo</i> The influence of stuttering on the evaluation of L2 English oral production  “Me ponía a hablar y me ponía pues, deficiente siempre” [I would speak and they would always fail me]	<i>Condicionado</i> The influence of stuttering on behaviour in EFL classes  “Sí que me hacían hablar (.) pero lo justito” [They made me speak, but the minimum”

The themes presented above draw together a number of issues related to stuttering than can contribute to L2 English learning becoming particularly effortful for LWS. These illustrate how the influence stuttering can have on spoken communication can disrupt L2 pronunciation, complicate assessment of L2 language level in formal contexts, and effect on the behaviours of both LWS and their teachers. The following excerpt exemplifies the perception amongst participants that stuttering could complicate their learning:

(17) VME, Male, 33

“Yo considero que ser tartamudo (.) es:: (.) un hándicap añadido (.) >al proceso del aprendizaje del inglés< (.) si ya aprender (.) una asignatura (.) >requiere su esfuerzo< (.) >para las personas que tartamudeamos< (.) pues e:::se esfuerzo se ha incrementado bastante (.) >porque además< err (.) la parte de::l del speaking (.) <se nos antoja un *mundo*>” [I consider that being a stutterer is an added handicap to the process of learning English. If studying a subject already requires an effort, for us people who stutter that effort is increased a lot, because on top of everything, the speaking part is a world of difficulty]

Thus, the first superordinate theme, *Costar*, reflects how effortful learning English is or has been for our participants, which in this example is emphasized through the use of the metaphorical phrase "se nos antoja un mundo", which we may understand as indicating the considerable exertion involved for LWS to navigate EFL classes. Throughout interviews, LWS used terms related to the semantic fields of effort, difficulty, and struggle (e.g., *costar*, *ser difícil*, *esfuerzo*). These lexical choices reflect a general belief amongst our participants that L2 English classes demanded more of them than other subjects. This was in part due to the influence of stuttering, which required these learners to exert particular effort in order to navigate L2 English classes, as illustrated in the following examples:

(18) EMP, Male, 26

“Las clases de inglés me cuestan (.) me cuestan más trabajo que las clases normales” [English classes are hard, it's more work for me than normal classes]

(19) VSM, Female, 29

“Pues mira yo err siempre por por la::: tartamudez como que el::: el inglés como que me ha costado mucho” [Well, look, for me,

because of stuttering, it's like English has always been really difficult]

Therefore, this sense of struggle appeared to be connected to their perception that speaking English contributed to an increase in dysfluency. This was one of the issues offered by Weiss (1979) in his discussion of potential difficulties that could face LWS in foreign language classes. In the literature regarding stuttering in bilingual individuals, studies have reported IWS to experience more severe stuttering in one language or another, or for disfluency to be experienced in the same manner across languages (Van Borsel et al., 2001). In our study, many participants reported the difficulties they experienced in L2 English in a very matter of fact way:

(20) JMS, Male, 29

“Yo (.) también por por por >todo el tema de la tartamudez y lo de más< (.) el el hablar es algo >que me ha costado< si::empre bastante...siempre he tendido a atrancarme *mucho mucho* en inglés” [Due to stuttering and all of that, speaking is something that has always been really difficult for me...I've always tended to stutter a lot, a lot, in English]

(21) IPM, Female, 36

“Yo (.) en inglés (.) tartamudeo pero pero pero mu::chísimo más” [I stutter in English, but much much more]

(22) FED, Male, 15

“Yo yo sé como es (.) como los otros (alumnos) (.) >como se dice< (.)> pero es solo que< al al hablar (.) pues me cuesta más esfuerzo hablarlo” [I know it like the others (classmates), how you say it, but it's just that, speaking, well it takes me more effort]

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Consequently, the difficulty provoked by stuttering also interfered with lexical options participants felt were available to them in the target language, as described by one participant:

(23) PET, Female, 26

“En i::nglés (.) >pues haya veces que sí que me cuesta más a lo mejor decir algunas cosas o que< (.) >por la tartamudez y cosas así<” [In English, well there are times that it is harder for me to say some things, because of stuttering and things like that]

Not surprisingly, this complicated participation in the foreign language classroom. In this respect, JAZ stated "Me cuesta más err: me cuesta más el el participar" [It's harder for me to participate]. The effort and struggle connected to speech production in the English class had a negative causal impact upon learning, as discussed by RCL:

(24) RCL, Male, 23

“En inglés lo que me pasa es que::: >que me cuesta a veces aprender un término nuevo si es obligado decirlo< (.) entonces siempre me quedo en el nivel básico (.) >porque no soy capaz de ponerlo en práctica” [In English what happens is that sometimes it's harder for me to learn a new word if I have to say it. So I always end up at the basic level, because I'm not able to put it into practice]

In this case, the negative effect of stuttering on language learning refers to the acquisition of new vocabulary in the target language. This may represent a relevant difference from neurotypical learners. One would expect most students to benefit from the repetition of new vocabulary; however, for RCL the practice appeared to complicate learning. Furthermore, this experience generated a perception that progress in L2 English learning would be hindered. This is observed in RCL's statement “I'm not capable of putting it (the new vocabulary) into practice”. In this sense, the above quote alludes to the ripple effect that stuttering may have on specific areas of L2 English learning.

Participants' references to the effort required of LWS in navigating EFL classes during interviews were also reflected in the responses to items within the SLSAS regarding motivation towards L2 English.

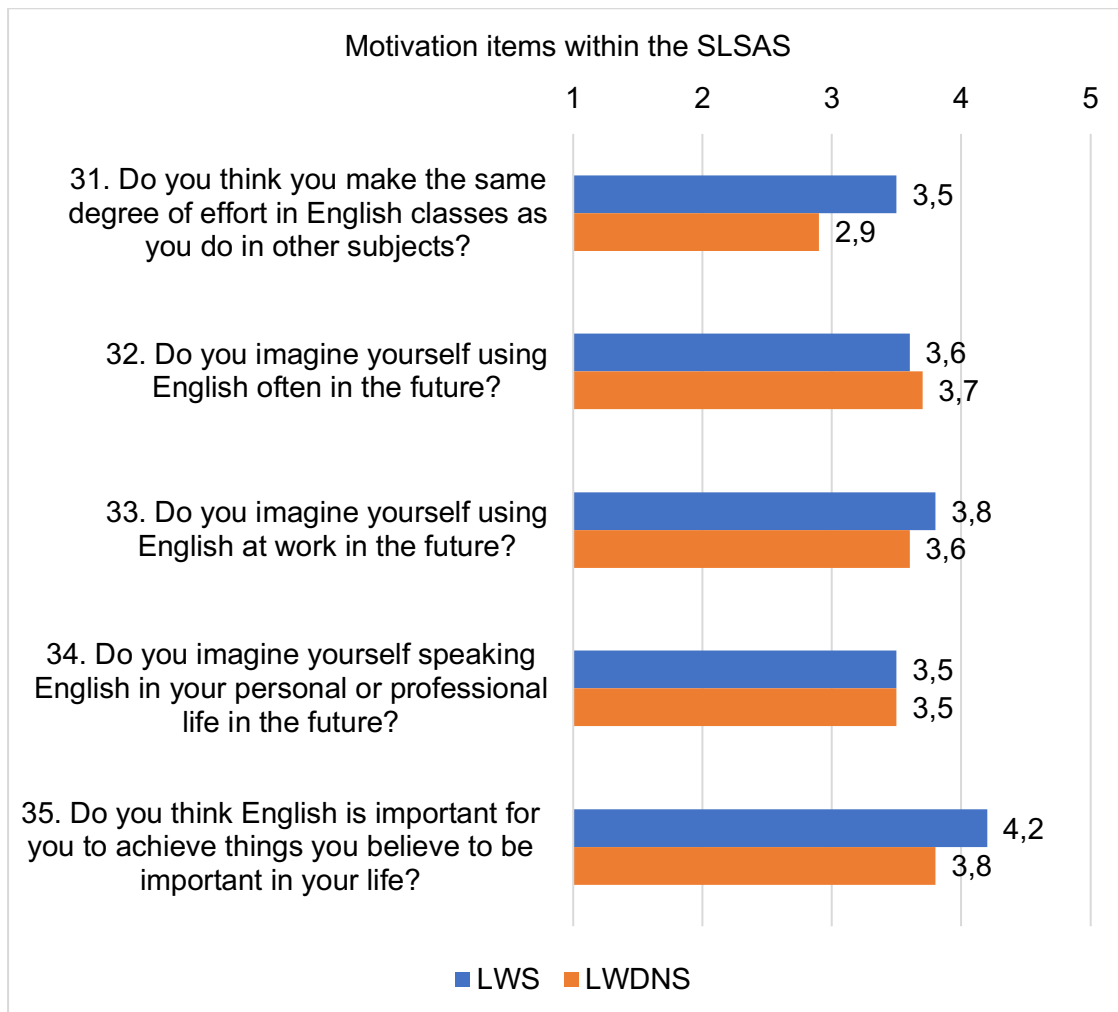


Figure 18. Mean responses to items regarding motivation within the SLSAS

As we can observe in Figure 18, LWS reported higher scores than LWDNS in responses to items 31 and 35, which parallel items in motivation questionnaires amply used in SLA (cf. Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009). However, in response to items 32, 33, and 34, differences between the two groups are not as pronounced. Therefore, these responses suggest that while LWS may make more effort than LWDNS, and consider L2 learning to be of greater importance, they may not envisage themselves using the language in the future. This may be explained by the effortful nature of L2 learning for these students. Thus, it is possible that such responses reflect the inherent struggles that EFL classes

present for LWS, rather than particularly higher levels of motivation. The nature of this effort was observed in and through the three subthemes detailed below.

### **7.1.1. *Distorsión*: the influence of stuttering on L2 English speech production**

The first subordinate theme, *distorsión*, was identified during analysis in response to a concern amongst participants that stuttering could complicate the accuracy of their spoken discourse in EFL contexts, and therefore the ability of LWS to make themselves understood. This broad preoccupation occurred on two main levels: participants described an awareness that stuttering could negatively affect pronunciation and intonation, while also impacting the structural organization of spoken discourse. For example, JMS described English as an “explosive” language and identified plosive consonants as problematic:

(25) JMS, Male, 29

“Yo siempre he tenido problemas <con> las T (.) con las P (.) con estas con estas sílabas tan explosivas, >entonces el inglés me ha costado<” [I’ve always had problems with the T’s, with the P’s, with these, with these really explosive syllables, so English has been hard for me]

Similarly, AMB reported that certain phonemes created difficulties for her:

(26) AMB, Female, 36

“Hay algún fonema que me cuesta más ¿no? >no sé por ejemplo las preguntas que empiezan< por:: “do” la D siempre (.) no sé (.) me cuesta mucho o los fonemas que empiezan er con T por ejemplo >no sé (.) me cuestan mucho<” [There are some phonemes that are more difficult for me, I don’t know, for example questions that start with “do”, the D is always really difficult, or the phonemes that start with T for example, they are a lot of effort]



Another participant, VSM (Female, 29), suggested that words beginning with certain phonemes required her to exert more effort than others ("*Las palabras que empiezan por C por P y por T me cuestan más*" [Words that begin with C, P, and T are harder for me]). Previous research on stuttering has also indicated that IWS are often aware of problematic words or sounds that they find difficult to articulate (Brocklehurst et al., 2012). Our findings suggest this was the case for participants in the current study. The troubles posed by certain phonemes contributed to a sense that they were unable to pronounce words as they wished, so that stuttering "distorted" pronunciation, as reported by JMS: "*Cuando me atrancaba tanto mi pronunciación se distorsionaba*" [when I block so much, my pronunciation is distorted]. This participant's description is indicative of the interference he believed stuttering to have upon his oral production. Thus, we can understand the distorting effect of stuttering for some students, limiting their ability to truly reflect their knowledge of L2 English pronunciation. This issue was discussed by FED:

(27) FED, Male, 15

"Como me:::: paro (.) pues no sale bien (.) la la pronuncia::ción exacta" [As I block, it doesn't come out well, the correct pronunciation]

This excerpt indicates that stuttering contributed to a discrepancy between the phonological awareness of this participant and his pronunciation. He did not expand on this, but we may imagine that such discrepancy between L2 knowledge and performance may contribute to negative emotions experienced during L2 English speaking activities. These findings are reminiscent of those presented by Szyszka (2017, p. 83) who states, "the articulation of phonological features, represented both by segmentals – such as vowels and consonants - and suprasegmentals - for example weak forms, linking, assimilation, stress, rhythm and intonation – may be physically affected by the feeling of apprehension."

Thus, disruption to both segmental and suprasegmental aspects had a number of practical repercussions for participants during L2 English

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communication. Amongst these was a concern that stuttering impeded the ability to make oneself understood. In regard to this issue, RMA stated:

(28) RMA, Male, 30

“Claro y:: tú ibas a empezar de una forma y la boca la cambias para arrancar y no te entienden la misma forma” [Of course, you go to start (speaking) in one way and you change your mouth to get going and they don’t understand you the same]

Similarly, JMS affirmed:

(29) JMS, Male, 29

“>Yo intentaba responder< (.) pe:ro en inglés me atranco >mucho más que en español<, entonces (.) no me entendían mucho” [I tried to respond, but in English I block much more than in Spanish, so they didn’t understand me much]

However, within pronunciation, intonation in L2 English was also compromised by stuttering. VSM discussed this:

(30) VSM, Female, 29

“La entonación >yo a veces que no se la puedo dar< porque la fluidez no me lo permite entonces ·hh no es que tenga que:: hablar como un robot pero solamente sacar las palabras (.) ya es un trabajo ya es difícil entonces ·hh la entonación es un trabajo añadido más la (.) pronunciación es un trabajo añadido más” [Sometimes I can’t give the (the word the) right intonation because the fluency doesn’t allow me to, so it’s not that I have to speak like a robot but just to get the words out is work, so the intonation is an extra job, the pronunciation is extra work]

Therefore, stuttering could restrict progress within the speaking domain:

(31) JMS, Male, 30

“La verdad es que (.) >sí que ha afectado< (.) sobre todo al nivel de la parte (.) o:::ral (.) a nivel de vocabulario (.) de gramática no (.) err:: >sin embargo< (.) me ha costado mucho más (.) so:lta:rme a hablar” [The truth is that yes, it has effected things, most of all in the oral part. In terms of vocabulary, grammar, no. However, it’s been much more difficult for me to loosen up and speak]

While JMS makes clear his belief that his learning of vocabulary and grammar has not been affected, stuttering had limited his self-expression. In this sense, participants described difficulty in articulating discourse which accurately reflected their capacities as competent individuals. This was described by VSM who said:

(32) VSM, Female, 29

“Yo sé lo que quiero decir y >tengo las palabras en mi mente perfectamente estructuradas< es más si te lo puedo escribir lo entenderías perfectamente” [I know what I want to say and I have the words perfectly structured in my mind, what is more if I could write it for you, you would understand perfectly]

Similarly, another participant made reference to the difficulties he had in expressing the discourse he was able to cognitively formulate:

(33) RMA, Male, 30

“La idea que tienes en la cabeza es (.) brillante (.) un montón de cosas y al final acabas con las cuatro palabritas (.) básicas para comunicarte pero en tu cabeza la idea es un::: vamos una retorica buenísima” [The idea that you have in your head is brilliant, loads of things and in the end you end up with the four little basic words to communicate, but in your head the idea was, a brilliant piece of rhetoric]

These passages illustrate how a significant discrepancy can exist between the discourse LWS are able to cognitively organise and that which is

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expressed verbally. Therefore, we can appreciate how a “brilliant rhetoric” can be reduced to “four little basic words”. RMA’s use of a hedge observed in the diminutive form “palabritas” and the adjective “basic” further emphasize his perception that stuttering seriously constrained his ability to express ideas. In an analogous example, RCL described how, even when required to provide relatively short answers, stuttering could curtail his self-expression:

(34) RCL, Male, 23

“>Como las seis primeras palabras siempre son las mas difíciles< que tengas que dar una respuesta muy muy corta (.) y ¿qué vas a decir tres palabras? (.) o que las digas mal (.) y ahí acaba tu intervención ¿no? (.) o sea que te vienes (a clase) solo para decirlo tres veces mal ¿no? tres palabras malamente dichas ¿no?” [As the first six words are always the most difficult, (if) you have to give a really short answer, what are you going to say? Three words? Or you answer badly and that’s the end of your turn, no? Three words said badly, no?]

RCL’s assertion that the “first six words are always the most difficult” suggests that LWS may experience a certain degree of anxiety from the very beginning of classes. Furthermore, in the above extract we get the sense that moments of disfluency towards the beginning of classes can serve to undermine the time and effort made to attend in the first place. Thus, LWS may profit from activities in the initial part of the lesson designed to reduce anxiety and ease students into speaking tasks. Support of this kind combined with an increase in speaking opportunities could help promote positive class engagement in LWS.

Other participants reported stuttering as interfering with the articulation of ideas in other ways. For example, MCO described stuttering as interfering with the structure of his discourse:

(35) MCO, Male, 22

“En el habla tú (.) >en el mismo momento en que lo dices dices< “eh esto no es lo que he querido decir yo” [When you speak, at the

same time that you say something, you say 'eh this isn't what I wanted to say']

MCO elaborated on this and reported how stuttering and anxiety disrupted presentations he had previously memorized and prepared:

(36) MCO, Male, 22

“En la exposiciones orales >que es lo que te he comentado antes< (.) ahí es un poco descontrol porque (.) en verdad aunque te lo enseñes de memoria ( . ) err no sé porque (.) las palabras se te cambian[...]Que:: a ver estas hablando y::: y si no te enganchas súper fluido ( . ) pero en el momento en que te enganchas >como que te ponen nervioso< o:: sin engancharte y te se::: (.) <como que cambias las palabras de orden> (.) y a lo mejor dices el principio al final y al final al principio y caos” [In the oral presentations, it's what I said before, it's a bit of disarray because the words change [...] You're talking and if you don't get stuck, really fluent, but in the moment that you get stuck, as you get more nervous, or without getting stuck, it's like you change the order of the words. Maybe you say the beginning at the end and the end at the beginning and chaos]

MCO uses the hyperbolic term “chaos” to describe what arises during his oral presentations in EFL. We may imagine this as a consequence of his awareness of his disfluency and subsequent panic regarding his discourse and the manner in which his presentation is unfolding. Therefore, present throughout these extracts has been a sense that participants are able to formulate coherent discourse on a cognitive level but unable to articulate this during speaking opportunities. This signals a belief that stuttering, rather than a lack of L2 English knowledge, impeded their capacity for self-expression. This point was explicitly made by another participant who affirmed the following:

(37) VME, Male, 33

“El tema de tartamudear o de no expresarme con fluidez en Inglaterra (.) >no es porque no tenga esa fluidez< DEL IDIOMA >que es por la tartamudez<” [The topic of stuttering or not expressing myself fluently in England, it’s not because I don’t have that fluency in the language, it’s because of stuttering]

Thus, participants experienced reduced agency and limited self-expression in EFL classes as result of stuttering. This contributed to the presence of limiting emotions that are conceptually associated with anxiety (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Oxford, 2017). We discuss these in further detail in the subordinate theme of *Impotencia* within the second superordinate theme *Atrapado*. Accurate and fluent speech production in EFL is a highly valued element of foreign language learning and many formal examinations assess these aspects ability. Thus, the concerns expressed above by LWS were often related to evaluative contexts of this kind. Our second subordinate theme sheds further light on the influence of stuttering in such situations.

### **7.1.2. *Un diez viudo*: the influence of stuttering on the evaluation of L2 English oral production**

The second subordinate theme emerged in response to general apprehension amongst participants that stuttering influenced evaluation in formal L2 speaking contexts. These included oral exams and job interviews, which represented extremely important and highly challenging situations. In such contexts, participants worried that stuttering would be wrongly interpreted as a lack of L2 language proficiency. Frequently, this concern was based upon previous experiences of negative evaluation by others, as discussed by GMS:

(38) GMS, Male, 36

“En el examen escrito (.) me pusieron una nota::: una nota >calificándome con un nueve< (.) y en el speaking me pusieron un cero ((se ríe)) Un cero pero un cero (.) Un cero (.) o un diez viudo

que es lo mismo ((se ríe)) así que (.) entonces (.) pu:::es (.) Nueve y cero (.) nueve entre dos (.) cuatro con cinco (.) no apto” [In the written exam they gave me a nine (out of 10) and in the speaking they gave me a zero. A zero, but a zero, a zero, or a widowed ten, it’s the same. So, a nine and zero, nine divided by two, four point five, fail]

The manner in which GMS recounted this experience suggests he has found some respite through applying a certain sense of humour to the situation. However, his use of the metaphorical and colloquial expression "un diez viudo", which alludes to death and separation makes sense on a deeper level when we consider that his oral grade represented a significant break from the mark he achieved during assessment in the other language skills that were reflected in the written test. This experience created a discord in his own understanding of his language learning capacities, and had a negative emotional impact upon him:

(39) GMS, Male, 36

“Es que la experiencia que tuvo ya te lo he contado< (.) la::: >la del cero ¿sabes?< Eso fue mu:y (.) muy mal para mi (1.3) estuve un tiempo que no quería ir a clase ni nada (.) pero era (.) >porque digo “joder” digo “si voy ahí apruebo y ahora me ponen aquí< un cero (.) ¿qué pasa? ¿qué sentido tiene esto?” [That experience that I had, I already told you about, of the zero you know? That was really really bad for me. I didn’t want to go to class or anything for a while, but it was because I said ‘shit’, I said, ‘f I go and I pass (the writing) and now they give me a zero here, what’s going on? What’s the point in this’]

This passage illustrates how the juxtaposition of a high pass (a nine out of 10) and a mark of zero, leading to a subsequent overall fail resulted in GMS questioning his investment in L2 English learning. Thus, we get a sense of how such experiences lead to unhealthy self-related beliefs and impose a "silencing identity" upon LWS, that is, an identity of incompetent language learners

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(Norton, 2016; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Another participant, JMS, described stuttering as contributing to a “dreadful” exam in which he failed the oral section despite obtaining good marks in the other language domains:

(40) JMS, Male, 29

“Me costaba< (.) ha::cerme entender y (.) en los exámenes (.) orales (.) he tenido >problemas de hecho< antes de (.) entrar en la escuela de idiomas intenté presentarme a un examen (.) por mi cuenta (.) >para obtener el B1< (.) y la parte que suspendí fue la oral (.) >también porque me puse muy nervioso en el examen< y bueno (.) básicamente <casi no pude hablar la verdad> ((se ríe)) fue fue un desastre de examen (.) el resto de partes sí que las aprobé (.) pero esa fue (.) horrorosa la verdad” [It was difficult to make myself understood and in the oral exams I’ve had problems, in fact, before starting at the official language school I tried to sit an exam on my own, to get the B1, and the part I failed was the oral. Also because I got really nervous in the exam and well, basically I could hardly speak to be honest, it was a disaster of exam. I passed the other parts, but that part was dreadful]

Another participant, VSM, expressed similar concerns regarding negative assessment within the EFL classroom due to stuttering:

(41) VSM, Female, 29

“El inglés tiene (.) por un lado la ansiedad que tengo yo >de tartamudear de de no decir las cosas fluidos de que tenga que haber silencios ·hh de lo que piense la persona del efecto que eso tenga en la persona el profesor por ejemplo que diga pues le voy a suspender ésta no sabe> ·hh >esta muy nerviosa o tal o cual entonces me genera una ansiedad< extra” [English has, on one hand the anxiety I’ve got of stuttering, of not being able to say things fluently, of there having to be silences, of what the other person thinks, the effect that it has on them, that the teacher for



example says 'I'm going to fail her, she doesn't know, she really nervous" or whatever. So it generates an extra anxiety]

This worry was also present in other L2 English contexts. The perception that others would interpret stuttering as an indication of a low language level was discussed by PET:

(42) PET, Female, 26

"A mi es lo que más me frustra de todo eso en general (.) ya no:: tanto en clase como fuera >al usar inglés es que muchas veces< (.) puedan pensar que tienes peor >nivel de lo que tienes< (.) >porque vamos a ver< ya me ha pasado y frustra mucho >es de decir 'jolin' ¿sabes?< (.) después va otra que a lo mejor tiene incluso peor nivel pero como es así más abierto (.) >más no sé que no sé cuantos< pues parece que (.) parece más que tú y no se sabe"  
[What frustrates me about all of this in general, not so much in class as outside when using English much of the time they think that you have a worse level than you have, because it's happened to me and it's very frustrating, you say 'shit' you know? After you someone else who maybe has a worse level than you but as they are more open, more whatever, it seems like they know more than you and they don't]

PET describes the frustration that can arise due to stuttering in real world L2 communication. This was also mentioned by other participants. For example, RCL discussed how stuttering could restrict his language level during job interviews:

(43) RCL, Male, 23

"El nivel que yo muestro en entrevista::s (.) >cuando estoy bajo presión es un B2 justito rascado< (.) por la presión esta que te impide pensar con claridad (.) y ser automático"  
[The level that I show in interviews, when I'm under pressure is just scraping a B2,

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because of that pressure that stops you thinking clearly, and being automatic]

As we can see from the extract above, RCL, found that he struggled to exhibit his true English ability during job interviews due to the “pressure” that “impeded” his ability to “think clearly and be automatic”. The extent of this worry was laid bare in the manner in which this participant decided to manage this “pressure”:

(44) RCL, Male, 23

“Es más probable que hable mejor si pongo un B2 (en el curriculum vitae) (.) >y no tengo esa presión que sea un C1< me trabo las dos primeras frases y ya caigo en barrena (.) y ya no puedo (.) ya no no remonto nunca” [It’s more probable that I speak better if I put a B2 (on my CV) and I don’t have that pressure that it’s a C1, I stutter on the first two sentences and then I nosedive and then I can’t ever make it back]

Thus, by downplaying English level on his curriculum vitae, RCL perceived he was better able to overachieve and surprise his interviewers, rather than fail to demonstrate his true level due to stuttering. He describes this strategy as providing him with a greater chance of being able to exhibit an accurate representation of his language level and his true self as a language learner and user. However, one wonders if this approach had also caused him to be rejected from potential opportunities due to employers believing his level of English to be lower than that of other applicants. Furthermore, we get a sense of how moments of stuttering in such contexts can have a lasting impact on verbal expression. RCL describes how he feels unable to *remontar*, or surmount the obstacle caused by stuttering. This final example reveals the extent to which stuttering can influence the behaviour of individuals who are acutely aware of how disfluency may interfere with their ability to communicate in a way which reflects their true language knowledge and self. This facet of stuttering is discussed further in relation to the following subordinate theme.

### 7.1.3. *Condicionado*: The influence of stuttering on behaviour in the EFL classroom

The third subordinate theme presented here reflects trends in the data that pointed to how stuttering influenced the behaviours of LWS and their L2 teachers. In this sense, many participants perceived stuttering to condition behaviours that were detrimental to their learning, particularly during oral tasks. Discussing this issue, AMB said:

(45) AMB, Female, 36:

“Yo quiero que no tiene porqué afectarlo (el aprendizaje de inglés) (.) sí que puede ser que me condicione un poco (.) sobretodo en el speaking” [I want it to not have an effect (on my learning of English), it may be there is conditions me a bit, most of all in the speaking]

Similarly, EMP stated that stuttering had contributed to the presence of avoidance behaviours in the EFL classroom:

(46) EMP, Male, 26

“La actitud (.) que llevo yo con la tartamudez es decir de NO QUERER HABLAR (.) el estar pendiente siempre de::: lo que de las- >bueno de cuando me va a tocar a mi hablar< pues (.) me afecta porque no practico::: el inglés (.) tanto como debería” [The attitude I have with stuttering, I mean, of not wanting to speak, of always being apprehensive about when it’s going to be my turn to speak, well it affects me because I don’t practice English as much as I should]

Furthermore, in the passage above, EMP states that he does not practice English to the extent that he “should” due to stuttering. If we consider this example in terms of the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009) we may interpret stuttering interfering with EMP’s “ought-to” self. As discussed in previous chapters, a discrepancy between actual and ought-to selves can lead to limiting emotional

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reactions (Higgins, 1987). As a result, the presence of such behaviour and associated emotions may have further implications for his self-related beliefs as a language learner and the identity he negotiates in and through interaction with others as a language learner. We explore this further in Chapter 9.

Our findings indicate that stuttering contributed to avoidance behaviours which arose due to an aversion to speaking in the EFL classroom. For example, MVF (Male, 22) described a typical way stuttering could influence behaviours relating to speaking: "La gente pues levanta la mano, pues yo nunca la levanto" [The others put their hand up, I never put mine up]. This participant also conveys the idea that such behaviours are not temporary, but recurrent, as emphasized through the upgrader "never". It is easy to see then how such behaviour could contribute to a lack of speaking opportunities and thus, a reduction in speaking practice in the target language. This was discussed further by MVF:

(47) MVF, Male, 22

"Sí pues (.) a la hora de (.) hablar el idioma sí sí que (.) no (.) pues como no lo suelo practicar (.) no lo suelo hablar (.) sí que me afecta (la tartamudez) (.) de que si no lo practicas hablándolo no sé" [Yes well, when it comes to speaking, yes, well, as I don't normally practice, I don't normally speak it, it (stuttering) does affect me, if you don't practice it speaking it, I don't know]

Thus, we see how communication apprehension had negative implications for language learning in participants, limiting opportunities to practice and develop their speaking skills. This in turn may lead to unhealthy self-related beliefs and emotions feeding avoidance, in the way we have described above. The emotions behind such behaviours appeared to be shame linked to stuttering, which subsequently drove feelings of frustration. This was described by JAZ:

(48) JAZ, Male, 40

"Al no preguntar a lo mejor mis dudas pues a lo mejor las dejo un poco ahí (.) pues en el aire y eso:: eso sí que me frustra mucho (.)

el no:: el no preguntar tanto (.) por a lo mejor caer pero es que (.)  
es que más que nada es es vergüenza la la que tengo (.) no >no  
son bloqueos< es más bien vergüenza (.) vergüenza por por por  
porque vean las (.) bueno los demás compañeros (.) que a lo  
mejor::: hablan mejor (yo hablo) más raro” [Maybe by not asking my  
doubts, maybe I leave them in the air and that does frustrate me a  
lot, not asking much because of maybe falling, more than anything  
it’s embarrassment that I have, it’s not blocks, it’s more  
embarrassment, embarrassment that they, the other classmates will  
see, maybe that they speak better, (I speak) weirder]

Consequently, we may observe how shame contributed to JAZ avoiding participation for fear of exposing his peers to his stuttered speech. This, in turn, lead to frustration at not clarifying his doubts. Interestingly, JAZ also refers to wanting to avoid “falling”. His use of this verb is curious and the fall he describes may be interpreted in relation to stuttering, or to the fear of negative social evaluation he experiences in this situation. In terms of stuttering, we can see how the sensation of falling may be analogous to moments of stuttering, which are often characterised by a loss of control and panic. Equally, this “fall” may also refer to social factors related to others' perception as "better" than oneself, so that others are situated in a position of power in comparison to self. This is also related to the idea that IWS also tend to downplay their interventions and focus on their mistakes and imperfections, whilst praising others' (Watson, 1995).

Therefore, our findings indicate that stuttering had the capacity to condition behavioural and emotional reactions to L2 English learning. Our identification of shame experienced by LWS echoes previous findings which have identified this emotion as one of a number of emotions associated with stuttering (e.g., Corcoran & Stewart, 1988; Iverach & Rapee, 2014). As implicitly stated in the previous example by JAZ, who could not clarify his doubts, behavioural responses driven by shame related to stuttering could be detrimental to learning. This was made explicit by GMS:

(49) GMS, Male, 36

“Quizás alguna vez (.) >me había quedado con dudas< (.) >por no preguntar< (.) con dudas de (.) dudas gramaticales por no: decirle (.) >“me puedes explicar esto chica con no lo entiendo”< [...]por los efectos de la tartamudez (.) Po::r >la vergüenza por la timidez de< (.) de:: bloquearme al:: hablar etc (.) Y eso >me pasaba en el cole me pasaba en el instituto me pasaba en todos lados< (.) ¿sabes?”  
[Maybe at some times I have been left with doubts, because I didn't ask, grammatical doubts because I didn't say 'can you please explain this I don't understand` [...] because of the effects of stuttering, because of the embarrassment, because of the shyness, of blocking when I speak etc and that happened to me at primary school, it happened at secondary school, it happened everywhere you know?]

This passage illustrates how shame and avoidance behaviours have a cyclical effect in LWS, who may refrain from asking questions and clearing up doubts, only to find that they feel insecure in their language level as a consequence. Evidence of this process is present in the following extract:

(50) AMB, Female, 36

“Siempre me daba más vergüenza más corte (1.4) hablar en clase (.) imagino que: por:: pues por inseguridad ¿no? por no:: >pues eso< conocer bien el idioma (.) y por la vergüenza de: que me pudiera::: err pt err pues trabar ¿no? por la tartamudez ¿no?” [It was always more embarrassing for me, more awkward speaking in class. I imagine because of insecurity no? Because of not knowing the language well and because of the embarrassment that I could block, no? Because of stuttering]

The conditioning effect of stuttering appeared to stifle progress in LWS in spoken language skills in the L2, which in turn reinforced a sense of shame fuelled by a perception that oral contributions in the classroom would be negatively evaluated. Therefore, we can see how emotions such as shame

could contribute to behaviours that may provoke anxiety related to L2 English level, leading to unhealthy feedback cycles that can have a negative impact upon language learning in LWS. Our findings evoke those of other scholars (Blumgart et al., 2010; Blood & Blood, 2016; Iverach et al., 2017) who have described how social anxiety can be provoked and maintained in IWS.

Our analysis of the interview data also suggested that, in addition to conditioning learner behaviours, stuttering could influence the manner in which L2 teachers interacted with LWS in the classroom setting. This occurred in response to two specific classroom practices: speaking aloud in open class, and corrective feedback provided by teachers. One participant, JMS, discussed his perceptions regarding the influence of stuttering on teacher behaviour:

(51) JMS, Male, 29

“Cuando hablaba en clase me ponía< mu::y nervioso >entonces< (.) la::s veces >que el profesor< me decía de (.) >hablar en clase< creo que estadísticamente (.) e::ran inferior a >las veces que lo hacía con< (.) otros compañeros >la verdad<” [When I spoke in class I got really nervous, so the times that the teacher told me to speak in class I think was statistically fewer to the times they asked the other classmates to be honest]

This extract illustrates a perception amongst participants that stuttering conditioned silencing behaviours on the part of teachers (see Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2011). JMS attributed this to the “nervousness” he transmitted during oral tasks, however a reduction in participation is clearly not a beneficial strategy in the long run; avoidance generally exacerbates anxiety in individuals (Schultz & Heimberg, 2008). The inference that L2 teachers would be compliant in propagating avoidance strategies is worrying. Moreover, overlooking students rather than offering them support and inclusion is equally troubling (see García-Pastor & Miller, 2019b). In addition to JMS, other participants had experienced a similar conduct from their teachers.

(52) MCO, Male, 22

“Sí que me hacían (.) sí que me hacían hablar (.) >pero lo justito para cuando tenían tiempo< (.) porque quieras o no (.) >es tiempo de clase y si tienes una hora o una hora y media< (.) tu no puedes perder tanto tiempo (.) con una persona (.) y más que un ejercicio que:: son (.) son treinta segundos para otra persona” [Yes, they got me to speak, they got me to speak, but just enough when they had time, because if you want or not, it’s class time and you have an hour, or an hour and a half, you can’t waste so much time with one more, and more so when it’s an exercise that is thirty seconds for someone else]

In this passage we can observe how MCO perceived his level of participation to be influenced by the time available in classes. His observation reflects an awareness that he may require more time than other students. Equally, he appears to suggest that his stuttering may place a strain on classroom dynamics. In effect, he is dismissing his own right to classroom participation because he perceives his contributions to be undesirable due to the potential for disfluency. We can imagine that these kinds of reflections would do little to stimulate a healthy learner self-concept.

Our analysis suggests that teacher behaviours influenced by stuttering could also have a limiting effect on the opportunities LWS were offered to participate in oral tasks in EFL classes. Additionally, our participants perceived that L2 teachers were less willing to provide them with corrective feedback than other learners. This is suggested by RMA, who believed teachers neglected to correct him for fear of causing offence:

(53) RMA, Male, 30

“Es un poco de que la la >o sea< tartamudez (.) hace que el oral no te corrija (.) casi nunca [...] a los profesores muchas veces les da reparo con el tema del del del de corregirte (.) me imagino (.) no lo sé un poco de miedo a ofenderte o que lo sientes mal [...] me falta un poco (.) algo que me corrijan más” [It’s a little that, stuttering means that they hardly ever correct your oral [...] the teachers often



feel awkward with the topic of correcting you, I imagine, I don't know, a little bit scared to offend you or make you feel bad [...] I need them to correct me more]

This kind of situation has ramifications for LWS who are thus deprived of a greater degree of correction in EFL classes and its benefits. Another participant, MVF, described a similar situation in which he received no corrective feedback, despite being aware of the mistakes he had made during oral presentations:

(54) MVF, Male, 22

“Noto >que a otras personas< (.) pues (.) >les corrige ‘esta frase no es así’< (.) y como a mi me cuesta mucho hablar (.) entonces como que (.) pues que (.) pues que igual no sigo la estructura que tenía preparada:: y lo hago de manera que >sé que esta mal y tampoco me lo corrige no sé<” [I note that other people, the teacher corrects them, ‘that sentence isn’t like that’ and as it’s really difficult for me to speak it’s like, sometimes I don’t follow the structure I had prepared and I do it in a way that I know is wrong and they still don’t correct me]

MVF posited an explanation for such behaviour, which again pointed to a reluctance on the part of the teacher to engage with him:

(55) MVF, Male, 22

“Supongo que sabe que:: (.) que me da vergüenza exponer (.) y que tampoco quiere que:: no sé (.) que este tanto tiempo (.) corrigiendo esto y volviéndolo a decir” [I guess the teacher knows that I’m embarrassed about presenting and I don’t know, they don’t want to spend so much time correcting and repeating themselves either]

As we alluded to earlier, these extracts suggest that LWS feel that they are somehow to blame for these types of behaviour in teachers. MVF appears to justify the fact that he is asked to participate and corrected less than other

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students, while suggesting that his requirement of more time is problematic. These comments indicate that EFL teachers may fail to support LWS in a manner which is conducive to effective learning. Further, one imagines that the perception of stuttering as conditioning teacher behaviour and disrupting classroom dynamics would do little to assist positive engagement of LWS within EFL classes, instead, contributing to these learners feeling a sense of alienation toward a subject that already presents a number of distinct challenges. The cumulation of such factors was referred to by EMP, who described stuttering as conditioning the apathetic relationship between himself and his teacher:

(56) EMP, Male, 26

“Yo intentaba hablar lo menos posible el:: profesor >que también pasaba de mi por lo general< (.) entonces era yo (.) intentaba es decir hacer lo mínimo posible vamos” [I tried to speak as little as possible, the teacher ignore me as well in general, so it was, I tried to do as little as possible”]

Therefore, our findings indicate that stuttering has the potential to condition the behaviours of both LWS and their teachers, often leading to patterns of conduct that are detrimental to the learning process. This suggests that more information about stuttering, its negative effects in the daily life of IWS, and more teacher education regarding how to approach these learners in an inclusive manner could facilitate classroom support for LWS and potentially reduce the degree to which stuttering can impede progress in these students. Previous research has found that teacher beliefs regarding stuttering are analogous to those in the general population (Arnold, Li, & Golti, 2015). As with broader social contexts, normalising stuttering as a naturally occurring form of speech production and raising awareness of how standardised practices can discriminate against LWS may be the first step in changing negative social beliefs about this phenomenon in L2 learning contexts.

The findings presented and discussed within the first superordinate theme of *Costar* illustrate how stuttering can affect specific aspects of L2 learning. In particular, oral production; assessment of L2 knowledge in a number of contexts; and behavioural processes in both LWS and their L2

teachers. Consequently, the themes discussed describe the distinct ways in which stuttering can influence some of the more fundamental aspects of EFL learning and teaching, complicating the learning process for LWS. We have already touched upon certain behavioural and emotional reactions produced by stuttering which can impede progress in EFL classes. In the following section, we build upon these issues and discuss how they can contribute to LWS feeling trapped and restricted by stuttering.

## 7.2. *Atrapado*: stuttering contributing to limiting emotions in L2 English learning

In the first superordinate theme we discussed how stuttering can interfere with a variety of aspects of L2 learning. This discussion has focused upon more formal elements of the L2 learning experience. In the current section, we build upon the themes presented above and consider how emotional responses that arise due to the presence of stuttering may influence the L2 learning process.

Table 12. Superordinate theme B and subordinate themes

<b>Superordinate theme B</b>	
<i>Atrapado</i>	
Stuttering contributing to limiting emotions in L2 English learning	
“Pensar que por mucho que estudias...vas a quedar ahí ¿no?” [To think that as much as you study, you’re going to stay there]	
<b>Subordinate themes B</b>	
<i>Impotencia</i>	<i>Días de luz y días nublados</i>
Helplessness in response to stuttering	The changeable nature of stuttering contributing to limiting emotions
“Si lo sé, ¿por qué no lo puedo decir”	“Tú sabes que esto va por días”
[If I know, why can’t I say it?]	[You know that this has its days]

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Therefore, whereas the first superordinate theme focused on difficulties in L2 English learning experienced by LWS as a result of stuttering, the superordinate theme *Atrapado* refers to the broader social and emotional disruption that may occur as a result of disfluency. After establishing that stuttering can make L2 learning more effortful for LWS, here we attempt to elucidate why these difficulties occur and how they may lead to the presence of anxiety and other limiting emotions. The emotional nature of this theme is reflected by the arresting language used by participants and we begin with a quote that reflects this:

(57) RCL, Male, 23:

“Básicamente nosotros (.) la persona que por tartamudeo no se comunica< (.) esta esta condenada (.) hay que comunicarse”  
[Basically, us, the person who because of stuttering doesn't communicate, is condemned, you have to communicate]

As illustrated by this example, notions of being trapped or “condemned” reflect a broad concern that stuttering would result in LWS being unable to express their true self in L2 and, therefore, their knowledge and control of English. This contributed to narrowing emotional reactions in LWS (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012) The following quote offers further insight into how these emotions may arise in response to disfluency in L2 contexts:

(58) RCL, Male, 23:

“Si no he podido< (.) hablar fluidamente:: (.) >si no he podido hablar< (.) sobretodo si no he podido hablar que yo sé que en mi cabeza puedo hablarlo (inglés) >pensar que quiero pasarlo bien (.) y hacerlo también<¿no? y pensar que por mucho que estudias y tal tu vas a quedar ahí ¿no? (.) en un nivel por debajo de lo que realmente sabes” [If I haven't been able to speak fluently, if I haven't been able to speak, mostly if I haven't been able to speak as I know in my head that I can, you think that you want to have a good time, and do well no? And you think that as much as you

study and that, you are going to stay there no? At a lower level than what you actually know]

This extract reflects a concern that, even when LWS were able to obtain L2 language knowledge, they would still be held back due their perception of being unable to use this knowledge in a manner that is socially acceptable. The experiences of one participant (PET) illustrate the manner in which these emotional and social factors can combine to limit the progress of LWS in L2 learning. PET recounts how a combination of ignorance, indifference, and “bad luck” led to her becoming “trapped”.

(60) PET, Female, 26

“Yo tuve un poco de mala suerte ((se rie)) >en ese caso porque me saque el first< (.) yo me lo saque muy pronto (.) me lo saque en segundo de la ESO (.) eso con 14 años o 15 no sé (.) lo que pasa >es que vamos a ver< (.) el director no (.) el jefe de::l inglés del colegio (.) >o jefe del departamento del inglés o como se llame no sé< (.) no sé (.) él pensaba yo que era subnormal ¿no? Entonces ((se rie)) literalmente >en serio< pensaba que (.) yo era un poquito cortita >no sé porque pero< (.) entonces quien aprobaba el first (.) a ver había como dos niveles de inglés en el colegio en la ESO (.) había como:: había como un nivel más bajo y otro más alto (.) entonces los que aprobaban el first >como que van al otro para prepararse el advanced< (.) Y yo aprobé el first y nunca me pasó al otro nivel (.) porque pensaba que no estaba preparada (.) >yo creo que era por la tartamudez cien< por cien (.) [...] CLARO YO ME SAQUE EL FIRST (.) y nunca me pasaron al siguiente nivel (.) >con lo cual estuve hasta acabar el colegio< en un nivel que ya lo tenía (.) y nunca hice nada más porque estuve siempre atrapada ahí” [I had a little bit of bad luck in that case because I got the First certificate, I got it really early, I got it in the second year of ESO, I was fourteen or fifteen I don't know. The thing is that the director, or the head of the English department or whatever it's called, he thought I was retarded no? So, literally, seriously, he thought I was

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a little dim I don't know why but, so whoever passed the First, there were like two levels of English at school, there was like a lower level and another one that was higher. So those that past the First they went to the other level to prepare for the Advanced. I passed the First and they never moved me up to the next level. I think it was one hundred percent due to stuttering [...] Of course I passed the First and they never moved me up, so until I finish school I was at a level that I had already passed and I never did anything more because I was always trapped there]

This passage illustrates the manner in which thoughts and beliefs surrounding stuttering, both in LWS and others, can hinder progress in L2 English learning. Moreover, we can see how disabling attitudes of others, in this case L2 teachers can lead to damaging experiences that may serve to reinforce perceptions of stuttering as an obstacle to effective language learning and, by extension, a barrier to any social activity that involves oral communication (see Álvarez Ramírez, 2018). Therefore, PET's stutter was not understood by the head of the English department, who therefore penalized her by obliging her to stay in an English course that did not match her proficiency level in this language. As a result, she was ascribed a "silencing identity" that it was difficult for her to reject (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2011). PET went on to reflect upon the effect this experience had had on her long-term EFL learning:

(60) PET, Female, 26

"Tuve esa mala experiencia con el profesor ese >pero bueno ¿qué se le va a hacer< Y a mi me jode porque (.) y si me hubieran puesto en otro nivel (.) hubiera podido aprender más (.) y no (.) >estuve ahí en montón de años atrapada en un nivel que ya tenía< (.) >y gente que se estaba preparando el first cuando yo ya lo tenía<" [I had that bad experience with that teacher, but what can you do? It screwed me up because if they had moved me up to the other level I would have been able to learn more, and no, I was trapped for ages at a level that I already had and people were preparing for the First when I already had it]

We see how PET's development in EFL was restricted, despite her passing a B2 level exam, by the damaging beliefs held by others regarding stuttering and its influence on learning. Consequently, LWS may come to think that stuttering is a constraining phenomenon in language learning in spite of experiential evidence to the contrary. The subordinate themes discussed below shed further light upon the manner in which stuttering may serve to limit students and generate narrowing emotions in L2 learning.

### **7.2.1. *Impotencia*: Helplessness in response to stuttering**

The “trapping” effect of stuttering in participants mainly results in the emergence of limiting (as opposed to broadening) emotions associated with learning L2 English. A particularly salient limiting emotion connected to stuttering and learning English was that of helplessness, which has previously been linked to anxiety (Bandura, 1998; Corcoran & Stewart, 1998; Klompas & Ross, 2004). Similarly, helplessness has been identified as an emotional reaction to discrepancy between self-concept beliefs and future ideal self-images (Higgins, 1987). In this sense, we can understand how LWS may struggle to view themselves as competent L2 language learners due to the restrictive nature of stuttering. Therefore, the first subordinate theme reflects the emotional component of stuttering's limiting nature in general, and in the learning of L2 English in particular.

Within this theme we identified patterns in the data that suggested stuttering could constitute a glass ceiling that limited participants' perception of development and progress, despite their L2 capacities. The following passage illustrates this complex of emotional reactions:

(61) VSM, Female, 29

“Pues muchas veces me sentía mal y triste y sentía que por la tartamudez (.) y a día de hoy incluso también lo siento ¿no? no tan agudo a lo mejor ·hh pero sí siento que para mi es mucho más difícil porque yo la parte de use of english, writing, reading, listening, no tengo:: problema ninguno (.) pero el speaking ·hhhhh

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nunca voy a poder hablar fluido aunque tenga un advanced (.) un C1 (.) un C2 (.) nunca voy a poder hablar fluido pero ya no porque no sepa inglés sino porque en mi mm en mi idioma materno tampoco puedo y le domino le domino porque es mi idioma materno” [Many times I felt bad and sad and I felt because of stuttering, and even up until now I feel it, not as deeply maybe, but I do feel that for me it’s much harder, because in the parts of use of English, writing, reading, listening I don’t have a problem at all, but the speaking, I’m never going to be able to speak fluently, even if I have an advanced, a C1, a C2. I am never going to speak fluently, but not because I don’t know English, but because in my first language I can’t either and I have complete command of it because it’s my native language]

This extract highlights emotional reactions provoked by the struggle associated with stuttering in L2 learning. Most noticeably we get a sense of the pervasive idea that language level is undermined by stuttering disfluency. This leads to a sense of helplessness, as VSM believes she will “never” be able to speak “fluently”, regardless of her L2 level. In addition to the sadness and malaise VSM describes, this passage also highlights the problematic notion of “fluency” as an indicator of language knowledge for LWS. As alluded to by VSM, fluent speech is often conflated with language knowledge. For LWS a shift away from dominant social models regarding the nature of “good” speech may help to ease the kinds of additional pressures described in the interview extract above. The influence of social norms has been considered in regard to stuttering as a form of disabilism, which can affect

how we stammer: the avoidance strategies, fillers, pulling away from the stammer etc. but it also affects us internally, leaving a damaged sense of self, self-belief and self-worth, restrictions on my activity and my decision making. For many of us who stammer, maintaining a fluent façade also weighs heavily in our lives. (Bailey et al., 2015, p. 19)



Consequently, within L2 teaching and learning, as well as other social contexts, stuttered speech must be defended as a legitimate form of verbal expression (Constantino, 2018). When dominant social models of acceptable (i.e., fluent) speech are emphasised, interiorized notions of inferiority regarding spoken language can lead to helplessness and unhealthy self-efficacy beliefs in LWS. The presence of helplessness amongst participants in our study is consistent with the findings of previous inquiry which has identified helplessness as a negative emotion connected to stuttering and anxiety (Boyle & Fearon, 2018; Plexico et al., 2005). Equally, it is possible that ideal-self visions of LWS also reflect the notion that satisfactory and fluent speech are one and the same. Thus, feelings of helplessness may arise due to a perceived discrepancy between the actual and ideal self-images (Higgins, 1987). The relationship between stuttering and self-images is explored further in Chapter 9.

Upon analysis, stuttering was found to contribute to a sense of helplessness in other ways. Such feelings also arose due to participants behaving in ways they considered incongruent with their perceived capacities. For example, IMP highlighted feelings of malaise and helplessness arising from a conflicted desire to avoid reading in class.

(62) IMP, Female, 36

“(Yo recuerdo) el tener que leer delante de de de la clase ·hh y no querer y decir que no leía (.) y no leía y no (.) no leía (eso me hacía sentir) MAL porque porque yo me lo sabía >entonces digo ‘a ver si yo me lo sé ¿porqué no lo puedo decir?< ¿Porqué no puedo ser como cualquier otro?’ Entonces pues eso me:: hacía sentir mal ·hh me hacía sentir impotente (.) de decir ‘a ver si si si yo puedo y me lo sé ¿por qué no lo hago?’” [(I remember) having to read in front of the class and not wanting to and saying that I wouldn’t read and I not reading, (that made me feel) bad because because I knew (how to), so I said to myself ‘If I know, why can’t I say it? Why can’t I be like anyone else? So that made me feel bad, it made me feel helplessness, to say ‘wait, if I can do it, and I know, why don’t I do it?’]

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In this example, feelings of helplessness may be accompanied by a striking degree of rumination and self-interrogation in LWS. We can observe that the influence of stuttering on IMP has resulted in her feeling unable to exercise agency over her own comportment. She begins recounting these experiences in the past tense; however, she subsequently poses a series of self-directed rhetorical questions using the present tense. Her linguistic choices indicate that these questions may still be relevant to her, and they speak to profound aspects of her self-concept. She interrogates her difference to others, as well as her own behaviour, leaving us with an almost tangible sense of her helplessness. This is epitomised by her final question, “if I can do it, and I know how to do it, why don’t I do it?”.

Other participants also drew attention to other aspects of the interrelation between stuttering and helplessness during EFL classes. In this sense, one participant, MCO referred to his feelings of impotence, whilst describing what he termed the “absurdity” of moments of stuttering:

(63) MCO, Male, 22

“Cuando tú no puedes hablar er:: te sientes (.) claro te sientes un poco impotente porque (.) en ese momento estás er:: trabándote >y a lo mejor estás< ‘cacacacacaca’ que es muy absurdo sinceramente ((se ríe)) entonces claro (.) en ese momento ¿qué haces? (.) Y te pones un poco nervioso (.) te relajas te vuelves a poner un poco nervioso (.) y es así un poco una bola” [When you can’t speak of course you feel a bit helpless because in the moment that your stuttering, maybe you going ‘cacacacaca’, it’s absurd really, so of course in that moment, what can you do? You get a bit nervous, you relax, you get a bit nervous again, and it’s a bit like a ball]

In this extract, we can observe the circular nature of the emotions that accompany a moment of stuttering, described here as a “*bola*” or ball. The use of this simile by MCO hints at the cyclical and recurrent presence of emotional reactions such as helplessness and anxiety during the L2 English class, as is reflected in Iverach et al.’s (2017) model describing social anxiety in IWS.

Another participant, AMB, expressed feelings of helplessness regarding her ability to manage her own learning process:

(64) AMB, Female, 36

“Sé que un:: idioma >no sé aprende< con dos clases de:: inglés sino con el día día ¿no? err >pues eso< escuchar mucho hablar mucho (1.4) pero eso pues que me siento a veces como que uff err:: pues pues pues que complicado: ¿sabes? Que:: pt >quiero decir< que no sé qué hacer para conseguir un buen nivel (.) pt pero bueno son los pensamientos esos que en fin tenemos a veces” [I know that you don't learn a language in two English classes, but with the day-to-day (learning) right? A lot of listening, a lot of speaking, but I feel that sometimes, like uff, how complicated, you know? I mean, I don't know what to do to reach a good level. But well at the end of the day, they are thought that we have sometimes]

AMB acknowledges that language learning is not a short-term process and points to the dedication and consistency that is required to progress. However, she highlights the difficulty that comes with the demands of L2 classes and her discourse implies that this had sapped her sense of agency over the learning process.

In view of the above, the "trapping" effect of stuttering produced feelings of *impotencia* in LWS. More specifically, a struggle to conform to dominant social models of speech fluency and the limiting effect of stuttering on communicative behaviour contributed to LWS experiencing helplessness. These results suggest that stuttering impedes agency in these students and complicates the development of healthy learner self-concept beliefs. This may have implications for their progress through L2 learning as well as positive classroom engagement.

Closely related to the presence and maintenance of emotions such as helplessness in LWS was the inherently unpredictable nature of stuttering intensity. This aspect of the stuttering experience is explored further in the following subtheme.

### **7.2.2. *Días de luz y días nublados*: the variable nature of stuttering contributing to limiting emotions**

The second subordinate theme contained in this section deals with one of the primary characteristics of stuttering: its intermittent nature and changeable intensity (Butler, 2013a). This was highlighted by participants as a key aspect in the stuttering experience that could affect their L2 learning. The degree of instability this facet of stuttering could provoke is illustrated in the following extract from the interview with RCL:

(65) RCL, Male, 23

“¿Por qué unos días como ahora puedo hablar bien (.) y la mitad de tiempo a lo mejor no puedo? ¿O cuando estoy con amigos o con tres personas ·hhh que a lo mejor tengo mucha confianza:::?. Voy muy muy a tirones (.) >y si tengo que conocer una persona nueva o preguntar la hora< ¿porqué no lo puedo hacer bien?” [Why can I speak well some days like today? And maybe half of the time I can't? Or when I'm with friends or three people who I trust a lot? I'm really up and down, and if I have to meet someone new or ask they time, why can't I do it well?]

As we have seen previously in relation to other aspects of stuttering, RCL expresses frustration with the changeable nature of his speech behaviour. Furthermore, he questions why such differences occur, echoing the kind of interrogating discourse observed above in relation to helplessness. His final question “why can't I do it well?”, again alludes to the belief that good speech is that which is characterised by fluency. RCL goes on to describe periods of “good and “bad” speaking periods, using the metaphor of sunny and overcast days to depict them. In line with this, RCL describes “días de luz” as characterised by a sense of cognitive autonomy, which promoted effortless speech: “Ahora mismo tengo mi día de luz y no pienso la frase (.) me sale solo”

[Right now I have a sunny day and I don't think about the sentence, it just happens]. This contrasts markedly with days in which he affirms feeling *nublado* or overcast:

(66) RCL, Male, 23

“Tener esos días que estas nublado y::: (.) y tengo que exponer algo (.) eso es complicado y (1.1) razonar mucho (.) hablar mucho”  
[To have one of those overcast days and have to present something, that's difficult, and to think a lot and speak a lot]

This type of unpredictability in terms of stuttering has been highlighted in the stuttering literature (Constantino, Leslie, Quesal, & Scott, 2016). Studies have also commented on a connection to helplessness (Corcoran & Stewart, 1995), while Bricker-Katz and others reported that for IWS, “their sense of self-efficacy was mediated by how fluent they were on a particular day” (2013 p. 351). Other scholars have suggested variability in stuttering is linked to social cognitions, rather than social anxiety (Alm, 2014). However, due to the influence of affect on cognition, social anxiety may feed and maintain negative social cognitions (Blanchette & Richards, 2010; Iverach et al., 2017). Furthermore, in educational contexts, teachers have been encouraged to be aware of the “good” and “bad” speech days experienced by students who stutter (Weiss, 1979).

In our study, RCL draws comparisons between these changes and the weather. By doing so, he established a metaphor that serves a number of purposes. Not only does it speak to day-to-day fluctuations in speech fluency, but also to the perceived lack of control individuals can exert over such variations. Furthermore, there are established correlations within western society (including Spain) regarding sunny and overcast days and their links to different emotions. In this sense, the implication within the metaphor used by RCL is that such days can condition an individual's emotional state, influencing how they are likely to engage with the environment and, in turn, L2 English learning.

This was expounded upon by VSM, who described the impact different days had on her frame of mind and her capacity to engage with EFL classes.

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She effusively explained the positive and broadening emotional state which accompanies her during *días de luz*:

(67) VSM, Female, 29

“Que los días que los días que tartamudeo menos porque >tú sabes que esto va por días< ·hh los días que estoy más relajado tartamudeo menos o errrr me siento emocionalmente mejor esos días tartamudeo (.) menos pues:: mmmm como que puedo hablar fluidamente inglés y puedo:: hablar del tema que sea con las con los fonemas que sean me da igual entonces eso aún me genera sentirme mejor y me hace hablar aún mejor todavía ¿sabes?  
MEMORIZAR PALABRAS ESTRUCTURAS ver:: mm ver::bales”  
[Those days that I stutter less, because you know that this is a day-to-day thing, the days that I’m more relaxed I stutter less, or the days that I feel emotionally better, those days I stutter less, as I can speak English fluently and speak about whatever topic and with whatever phonemes I don’t care, so that makes me feel even better and it makes me speak better still, right? Memorize words, verbal structures]

Here we can see that, for VSM, good days are related to high levels of speech fluency and a lack of anxiety. She reports that this facilitates her enjoyment of English classes as well as her learning. This finding supports the notion that broadening emotions (Cohn & Frederickson, 2010) may serve to facilitate certain processes within L2 language learning, whilst also reducing the negative impact of affect (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Oxford, 2017) In contrast to her description of good days, VSM’s depiction of overcast days is fittingly curt: “Si he tenido un día de estos que he tenido bloqueos y tal me siento mal” [If I’ve had one of those that I’ve had blocks and that I feel bad].

In a similar manner, JMS indicated that he was more likely to experience anxiety in EFL classes on his “bad days”, which we may interpret as a variation of *días nublados*. He described how classroom participation on such days was challenging:

(68) JMS, Male, 30

“Si tenía uno de esos días (.) malos y aún encima (.) >te preguntaba en clase< y ·hhh eso la verdad que me agobia” [If I had one of those bad days and then on top of that they asked you something in class, that stressed me out honestly]

Another participant highlighted the contradictory nature of variations in speech fluency:

(69) MCO, Male, 22

“>A lo mejor un día< (.) estás bien (.) y puedes hablar (.) y lees perfectamente todo (.) y otro día no puedes ni gesticular [...] es algo (.) es muy difícil de explicar (.) porque hay muchas contradicciones en cuanto a días en cuanto porque porque no hay no hay ni un porqué exacto” [Maybe one day you're ok and you can, and you read everything perfectly and another day you can't even gesticulate [...] it's something very difficult to explain, because there are many contradictions in terms of days, in terms of why, because there isn't a why exactly]

Testimony to this end suggests that variability in stuttering intensity may hold sway over the emotions experienced by LWS and potentially influence the quality of L2 English learning. These findings corroborate the results of previous inquiry with IWS that has identified day-to-day variations in stuttering severity (Constantino et al., 2016; Yairi & Ambrose, 2013). Therefore, participants in this study were sometimes left exasperated by the unpredictable nature of their speech fluency and that this could contribute to feelings of helplessness. Furthermore, this served to drive the patterns of avoidance behaviours that had the potential to hinder participation and, thus, L2 learning. Equally, it appeared that during “cloudy days” stuttering took centre stage for LWS, superseding progress or achievements in other areas. As a consequence, L2 teachers should be aware of how stuttering severity can vacillate over time and the impact this may have on students (Weiss, 1979). Oral participation can be

particularly challenging on certain days and an understanding of this may help teachers adapt pedagogical practices to meet the needs of LWS.

### **7.3. Conclusions**

In this second results chapter we have presented and discussed broad themes regarding stuttering and L2 English learning which result from the analysis of our interview data. Discussion of the first superordinate theme, *Costar*, illustrated how EFL contexts may exacerbate stuttering and thus contribute to L2 English learning as an effortful process that presents a number of specific challenges for LWS. Our findings indicate that these include the influence stuttering could have on oral expression in terms of discourse articulation and organization and the minutiae of pronunciation, the views of others during formal speaking situations, and the behaviours of both LWS and their teachers.

Discussion of results presented in relation to the second superordinate theme, *Atrapado* has described the manner in which stuttering can provoke feelings of helplessness and question the speaker's language learner self-concept. The sporadic, unpredictable nature of stuttering has been shown to influence emotional states which can negatively impact upon learning. Therefore, in this chapter our intention has been to provide a broad insight into how certain facets of stuttering may influence foreign language learning. Consequently, we have only briefly touched upon the presence of anxiety in LWS in EFL.

In the first result chapter in this section we discussed the results of quantitative data that indicated high levels of anxiety in LWS in speaking tasks. Results of qualitative analysis presented above suggest that anxiety may interact with stuttering and complicate certain facets of oral production in LWS. In the following chapter, we build upon these results and move to the discussion of findings that offer further insight into how anxiety and stuttering can influence individuals in L2 English learning.



## **8. Foreign language anxiety in learners who stutter**

In the two previous chapters we have presented results that suggest LWS experience higher levels of FLA than their non-stuttering peers in certain areas of L2 English learning. Additionally, we have explored the relationship between stuttering and the learning of this language in LWS. To build upon these findings we now turn our attention to the relationship between FLA and stuttering in EFL classes. Therefore, the findings we report and discuss here attempt to provide an answer to our third research question, namely, how does anxiety arise in learners who stutter in different learning situations within the English classroom? That is, what form does it take in terms of types, triggers, and effects? And what strategies do LWS employ to manage anxiety in this context?

Our findings indicate that anxiety for these students is primarily focused upon tasks within the speaking domain, with reading aloud tasks presenting particular challenges. In response to this, we have found that LWS employ a number of intrinsic strategies to manage their anxiety and speech fluency within EFL contexts. These strategies include circumlocution and deep breathing and are widely used in L1 spoken communication. However, their use in L2 English is complicated by the degree of L2 knowledge held by LWS, as well as formal aspects of the target language. As a consequence of this, participants reported experiencing intense physiological and cognitive symptoms of anxiety, characterised by fear of negative evaluation. This concern related to reactions of others in response to both stuttering and L2 English level. This set of circumstances resulted in LWS describing how extrinsic factors such as teacher-student relationship enabling trust and patience could reduce anxiety and promote learner investment.

### 8.1.1. The wolves and the waves of anxiety: stuttering and anxiety in L2 English learning

Our analysis lead to the identification of one superordinate theme, which contained 4 subordinate themes on the interrelation between stuttering and FLA in L2 English learning. These themes highlighted a) specific factors that served to trigger and intensify FLA in LWS, and b) intrinsic and extrinsic mitigating strategies that could aid participation in L2 classes. Additionally, specific constituents of anxiety experienced in this context were identified and the effects reported by participants are described. These are displayed below in Table 13.

Table 13. Superordinate theme C and subordinate themes

<b>Superordinate theme C</b>			
The wolves and the waves of anxiety Stuttering and anxiety in L2 English learning “Sigo sintiendo la ansiedad (.) sigo sintiéndome miedos” [I still feel anxious, I still feel fear]			
<b>Subordinate themes C</b>			
<i>Que viene el lobo</i>	<i>La palabra maldita</i>	The waves of anxiety	<i>Confianza</i>
Factors that trigger FLA in LWS	Intrinsic strategies used to manage anxiety	The effects of anxiety on LWS	Extrinsic factors that can mitigate anxiety in LWS
“Imagínate tú leyendo en inglés” [Imagine reading in English]	“Cualquier estrategia me sirve con tal esquivar la palabra maldita” [Whatever	“Lo siento en la cabeza y mi garganta en mi corazón” [I feel it in my head, in	“Si estas con alguien que te inspire confianza es distinto” [If you are with someone

	strategy works for evading the damned word]	my throat, in my heart]	who inspires trust it's different]
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The four subordinate themes observed in Table 13 underscore factors that provoked and enhanced anxiety in the EFL classroom for our participants. These were overwhelmingly related to tasks within the language domain of speaking. As discussed in the first results chapter, LWS reported high levels of anxiety in this domain, and the results related to our third research question corroborate those findings. Such a singular focus on this language domain as a source of anxiety is not an entirely surprising result given that stuttering primarily manifests itself in spoken interaction. However, the findings presented here offer an insight into the complicated relationship that appears to exist between the causes of anxiety, its various effects on LWS, and the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that may mitigate its impact. Furthermore, despite all participants being familiar with sensations of anxiety experienced in regard to speaking, many also reported that participation in tasks within this domain could be incredibly rewarding. Accordingly, it may be argued that the relationship between stuttering, anxiety, and the demands of L2 English classes is a complex one.

As indicated in previous chapters, both L2 learning and stuttering have been found to increase anxiety in individuals (Gkonou et al., 2017; Iverach et al., 2017). Thus, the overlap between the two factors in LWS meant that it was unclear at which point they provoked anxiety independently of one another. Similarly, it is difficult to separate coping strategies used to relieve anxiety, and those which serve to provoke further apprehension in the long term, as some of

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the strategies used by participants to mitigate anxiety display certain aspects of avoidance.

As we explain below, our findings indicate that the experience of stuttering and its relationship to anxiety can provoke intensely narrowing emotions, as we already observed when explaining the interrelation between stuttering and EFL learning in the previous chapter. However, our results also suggested that certain activities that provoked the strongest sensations of anxiety in participants were also those with most potential for personal reward. In this sense, anxiety and stuttering often contributed to conflicting emotional responses from participants within L2 English classes (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014).

In the majority of cases, it appeared that certain situations within the EFL classroom augmented pre-existing anxieties connected to stuttering, which were then aggravated by the additional factor of having to speak in the target language. This was observed in participants' responses during semi-structured interviews to the question "¿hay algo que te agobia de las clases de inglés? (Is there anything that stresses you out in English classes?)". LWS commonly referred to tasks within the domain of speaking. The following quote is indicative of this:

(70) GMS, Male, 36

"Lo que más me agobia es tener que hablar (.) >es lo que más me agobia< (.) LO: DE MÁS NO (.) >HACER EJERCICIOS NO< (.) NI:: REDACTAR TAMPOCO (.) PERO HABLAR SÍ (.) hablar sí" [What most stresses me is having to speak, it's what most stresses me. Nothing else does, not doing exercises, not writing either, but speaking does, speaking does]

An example of this feeling amongst participants was made clear by VSM who discussed how anxiety in L2 English learning centred on the speaking domain:

(71) VMS, Female, 29

"A mi no me genera nerviosos ninguno dar inglés hacer ejercicios en inglés (.) no me genera >ni mal estar ni nerviosos ni inseguridad

ninguno< es solamente exclusivamente ·hh cuando tengo que hablar en voz alta o leer” [I don’t get nervous learning English, doing exercises in English doesn’t make me feel bad, nor nervous, nor insecure at all, it’s only, exclusively, when I have to speak or read aloud]

These results suggest that while LWS may find language learning a challenge in much the same way as LWDNS, the anxiety they experience may be strongly influenced by the presence of stuttering. Therefore, it is not surprising that within this domain, anxiety in LWS was found to be strongly connected to social anxiety (Blumgart et al., 2010; Craig & Tran, 2014; Iverach & Rapee, 2014). Participants expressed apprehension in response to engaging in speaking tasks due to their potential for negative social evaluation from others in response to stuttering and their L2 English level. Thus, the EFL classroom provided a unique and highly face-threatening context for LWS, who were more likely to be negatively evaluated by their peers and the teacher according to these two factors. Participants were aware of these issues within EFL classes. The following extract is illustrative of this:

(72) GSM, Male, 36

“Tener que hacer una conferencia ante (.) ante un montón de:: personas (.) y: >sabiendo que te están< (.) evaluando (.) porque ese es el:: (.) >yo creo que el matíz que te::< (.) sabiendo que (.) que vas a::: fracasar o que vas a::: sentirte en ridículo (.) >yo creo que ese< es:: (.) el matíz más importante” [Having to do a presentation in front of loads of people and knowing that they are judging you, because that’s the aspect, knowing that you are going to fail and that you are going to feel stupid, I think that’s the most important aspect]

Throughout this passage we can appreciate the fear of negative evaluation experienced by GSM in L2 speaking tasks. As a consequence, his testimony indicates a sense of helplessness (as discussed in the previous chapter) regarding how the situation will unfold. This is illustrated by his assertion that he

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enters such situations “knowing that you are going to fail”. He does not elaborate on the nature of this perceived failure, yet it may refer to social expectations regarding acceptable speech (Daly, 1991) or L2 language level. It is possible that LWS experience anxiety in relation to both of these issues when engaged in L2 speaking tasks. This may differ from the experiences of LWDNS, who could well experience anxiety in such situations, but need not worry about the added factor of stuttering. These differences were touched upon by RCL:

(73) RCL, Male, 23

Les he visto::: sufrir (.) y mucha timide::z >y tal< pero no tienen no tienen ese bloqueo (.) pueden soportar mucho más ansiedad y frustración que nosotros (.) sin bloquearse (.) y a su vez como no se van a bloquear (.) > sufren menos< (.) errr ansiedad (.) >pero es que aunque sufrieran la misma que nosotros< (.) no: no se bloquearían ( . ) >o sea< a lo mejor de una a diez hasta un nivel ocho no no no se bloquean (.) >nosotros con un tres o un cuatro ya estamos bloqueados< (.) y sobretodo que (.) >como sabemos que nos pasa esto< sufrimos más ansiedad (.) ante la misma situación >a lo mejor tenemos nosotros un seis de ansiedad< y ellos un uno o un dos” [I’ve seen them (LWDNS) suffer and be very shy and that, but they don’t have that block, they can put up with much more anxiety and frustration than we can without getting blocked and at the same time, as they aren’t going to block they suffer less anxiety. But even if they did suffer the same as us, they wouldn’t block, I mean, maybe from one to ten, until an eight they wouldn’t block. Us with a three or a four we are already blocked, and above all as we know that this happens to us, we suffer more anxiety. Faced with the same situation maybe we have a six and they have a one or two in anxiety]

This passage illustrates an awareness amongst participants that stuttering may make LWS more sensitive to anxiety than neurotypical students in EFL contexts, who he describes having seen “suffer”, but also able to “withstand a greater degree of anxiety and frustration than us”. Therefore, increased levels

of trait and state anxiety in LWS (Craig & Tran, 2014) and an understanding that speech blocks can arise in EFL contexts, may explain higher levels of speech anxiety in LWS than in LWDNS.

Superordinate theme C, regarding stuttering and anxiety in L2 English learning, illustrates that anxiety in LWS mainly crystalizes around tasks within the language domain of speaking. This finding is also supported by the results from the quantitative analysis conducted in this thesis (see Chapter 6) and offered elsewhere on these learners (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019a, 2019b). The subordinate themes discussed below offer further insights into how LWS experience and react to anxiety in speech. In this sense, we intend to shed light on the interaction between stuttering and L2 speaking activities, the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches that can be adopted to mitigate anxiety, and the various effects of FLA on LWS. More specifically, the first subtheme *Que viene el lobo* alludes to the most salient triggers of anxiety in LWS; the second *La palabra maldita* involves the communication strategies employed by these learners in response to FLA; the third subtheme, *The waves of anxiety* describes the effects of FLA on LWS; while the final subtheme, *Confianza* refers to practical elements of EFL teaching that can help to alleviate anxiety in LWS.

### **8.1.2. *Que viene el lobo*: factors that trigger anxiety in learners who stutter in L2 English learning**

Previously we have discussed anxiety in LWS regarding general speaking tasks. In this section we focus on specific aspects of some activities that seem to provoke considerable foreign language speaking anxiety. This anxiety type was found to be characterized by intense apprehension prior to participation as well as attentional biases both before and during the performance of a task. More specifically, our findings indicate that anxiety in LWS was particularly salient in reading aloud tasks, and that it was exacerbated by the breakdown of communication strategies these learners habitually employ to manage speech and mitigate the severity of their disfluency.

In Chapter 6, we provided evidence that reading aloud tasks provoke high levels of anxiety in LWS. The qualitative analysis of the interview data

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further supports these results through participants' description of the strong emotional and physical reactions caused by the interaction between stuttering and such tasks:

(74) VSM, Female, 29

“Hablar en público:: o sea hablar delante de todos que:: ESTAR LEYENDO LO TÍPICO QUE (.) VAMOS LEYENDO Y YO SÉ QUE ME VA A TOCAR A MI LA SIGUIENTE (.) ((se pone la mano encima de la corazón)) MI CORAZÓN SE PONE SU::DO O SEA YO SE QUE SON REACCIONES DESMESURADAS (.) DESMESURADAS PORQUE (.) VOY A ESTAR LEYENDO NO VIENE UN LOBO A COMERME ¿ME ENTIENDES? ES UNA REACCIÓN EXAGERADA ES DESMESURADO pero pt pero ya no es desmesura o sea yo no (.) a ver (.) yo no yo no reacciono así solo porque tenga que estar leyendo (.) y no pueda decir lo que ·hhhh sino por las consecuencias que eso puede tener (.) pues a lo mejor que los demás compañeros ha::blen o::: chismorreen sobre que >te está pasando porque no puedes o te has quedado bloqueado o se rían el profesor piensa que tú no te lo sabes”  
[Speaking in public, I mean speaking in front of everyone, to be reading, the typical that we are reading and I know that it's my turn next (she puts her hand on her heart) my heart starts going, I sweat, I mean I know they are exaggerated reactions, exaggerated because I'm going to be reading, a wolf isn't coming to eat me, do you understand? It's a reaction, its disproportionate, but it's not disproportionate, I mean I don't react like that just because I have to read and I can't say what...it's because of the consequences that this can have, maybe your classmates talk or gossip about what's wrong with you because you can't (read) or that you have blocked, or they laugh at you, the teacher thinks that you don't know (how to read)]

This example illustrates the intense physical symptoms of anxiety (e.g., accelerated heart rate and perspiration) that reading aloud can provoke in LWS.



The presence of physiological symptoms of this kind parallel those reported by previous studies with highly anxious non-stuttering students (Gregersen, Macintyre, & Olson, 2017; Horwitz et al., 1986; Şimşek & Dörnyei, 2017). Additionally, in the extract above, VSM suggests that the physiological reactions she experiences are linked to attentional biases regarding negative social evaluation (Clark & Wells, 1995; Iverach et al., 2017; Rowa et al., 2016). She acknowledges her reactions could be judged as “exaggerated”, however, she perceives them to be logical when the potential social penalties that may arise from stuttering are taken into consideration. In order to describe the intensity of this anxiety, she likens her feelings to those which may be provoked when stalked by a wolf. This analogy alludes to a primitive form of anxiety that evokes the fight or flight response (Blanchard & Blanchard, 2008). Furthermore, it refers to the potential harm that may result from negative social evaluation. In this sense, it reflects an awareness amongst LWS that the lines of a text can ultimately damage their self-concept. Interestingly, scholars in SLA have also drawn on metaphors referring to wolves as a means of illustrating emotional states in L2 learners (Gregersen et al., 2017).

VSM also refers to the presence of anticipatory anxiety experienced in the build-up to a speaking turn. This was also highlighted by other participants as a notable component of their experiences in EFL classes:

(75) RMA, Male, 30

“Lo de la lectura lo llevo también bastante mal >o sea< pregunta ‘a ver (.) el primer párrafo segundo párrafo’ ahí (.) me lo paso mal de:: de la espera [...] Es de los quince segundos de antes de la pregunta (.) >o sea< (.) vas tú luego tú luego tú y ahí es >donde vas notando ahí< la clase de tensión y dices (.) ‘ya me tocará a mi joder joder joder’ [The reading thing I have a tough time with, I mean, the teacher asks “ok, the first paragraph? The second paragraph? I have a bad time there with the wait [...] it’s the fifteen seconds before the question, I mean, ‘it’s your turn, then you, then you’, and there is where you notice that kind of tension and you say ‘it’s going to be my turn, shit, shit, shit’]

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RMA refers to a sense of malaise during the “the wait”, provoked by his teacher calling on students to read. Thus, anticipatory anxiety triggered by the expectation of speaking turns can lead to intense physiological reactions and attentional biases in LWS. While the above examples have referred to anticipatory anxiety experienced immediately prior to speaking turns in reading or open class activities, participants also described experiencing anticipatory anxiety well before classes had begun. The following extract illustrates this point:

(77) IMP, Female, 36

“Tienes mucho:: mucho:: ay (1.2) erm:: (.) mucha:: ansiedad anticipatoria [...] pues estar todo el día nerviosa: con ansiedad con miedos >o sea< (.) no queriendo que llegara la hora” [You have a lot of anticipatory anxiety [...] being nervous all day, anxious, scared, not wanting the time to come]

In this example, IMP uses the term *ansiedad anticipatoria* to describe how she experiences nerves, anxiety, and fear throughout the day because of her L2 class, which culminates in her desire for class time never to come.

In addition to the anticipatory anxiety related to reading aloud and open class speaking tasks as well as the L2 class in general, participants in the current study reported that their anxiety was aggravated by the rigidity of the text to read, which left little room for them to employ common strategies that enabled them to circumvent words or expressions they knew they could block on. The following examples illustrate these issues:

(78) RMA, Male, 30

“La lectura es la (.) rigidez de la palabra está ahí y esa palabra tienes (.) que decirla por cojones” [Reading is the rigidity of the word, it’s there, and that word you have to say, whether you like it or not]

(79) VSM, Female, 29

“Leyendo aún yo tartamudeo más aún lo hago peor y aún tengo más bloqueos porque (.) no no puedes pt errr (1.2) usar sinónimos y no puedes::: ¿sabes? Tienes que decir exactamente lo que pone en (.) el texto” [I stutter even more when reading, I do it even worse, and I have even more blocks because you can't use synonyms and you can't you know, you have to say exactly what they put in the text]

Therefore, lack of room for linguistic improvisation aggravated stuttering for many participants. Equally, an increase in speech blocks during reading served to a) further intensify anxiety, as they became acutely aware of disruption, and b) worsen their performance in the target language (e.g., I do it even worse).

Anxiety provoked by during reading aloud tasks was further complicated by the presence of “phoneme anxiety”, which triggered more general anticipatory anxiety and influenced attentional biases related to stuttering:

(80) VSM, Female, 29

“Sé que es ridículo vale yo soy consciente pero (.) ·hh como que he cogido miedo a la fonema mmm C y T y P ¿sabes? >O sea lo he cogido como no fobia pero como miedo entonces cada vez que la palabra empieza por una de esas letras automáticamente< (.) >YO ME PONGO MAS NERVIOSA< (.) >PERO no por nada sino porque sé que me va a costar mucho más decirlo [...] Es algo tan simple y tan curioso como que tenemos que estar leyendo un texto tenemos que decir algo ·hh y yo automáticamente miro el texto la frase y (.) veo las palabras que empiezan por C y por P y por T (.) eso para empezar (.) sobre todo las que empiezan por C” [I know it's ridiculous ok, I'm aware, but it's like I've developed a fear of the phoneme C, T, and P, you know? I mean I've not developed a phobia but like a fear, so every time a word begins with one of those letters, I automatically get more nervous, but not for no reason, but because I know it's going to be much harder for me to say it [...] it's as simple and as curious as if we have to be reading a

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text, we have to say something, and I automatically look at the text, the sentence and I see the words that start with C and with P and T, that's to start with, most of all those that start with C]

Phoneme anxiety as described by VSM and the behaviours it triggers, namely, scanning the text for potential pitfalls, may be specific to LWS, who are often aware that certain sounds or words can be problematic (Watson, 1995).

The identification of the subtheme *Que viene el lobo* and examples of data presented here offer an insight into the character of anxiety experienced by LWS during speaking tasks. Findings indicate that anxiety was particularly salient in the speaking domain and was characterised by intense anticipatory anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, which contributed to attentional biases that could disrupt concentration. Moreover, the presence of phoneme anxiety and a lack of opportunity for linguistic improvisation exacerbated both stuttering and anxiety during reading aloud tasks. In addition to discussing causes of anxiety, we have touched upon certain strategies used by participants to manage their involvement in L2 English classes and this is examined at greater length in the second subtheme, *La palabra maldita*.

In sum, the characteristics of reading aloud tasks in the EFL classroom were found to trigger intense anticipatory anxiety and fear of negative evaluation in LWS as well as attentional biases that hindered efficient task performance. Therefore, for these learners reading aloud tasks can contribute to classrooms becoming “emotional danger zones where speaking up brings with it the risk of negative evaluation, the potential to cause shame and embarrassment and, ultimately, the possibility of rejection by peers” (King & Smith, 2017, p. 100). Moreover, the presence of phoneme anxiety and a lack of opportunity for linguistic improvisation exacerbated both stuttering and anxiety during such tasks. In this regard, it is easy to imagine LWS finding themselves in the kind of “double-bind” described by Cohen and Norst (1989, p. 64), in which they struggle to participate and, at the same time, surrender opportunities to practice and develop their L2 English speaking skills.

### 8.1.3. *La palabra maldita*: intrinsic strategies used by learners who stutter to mitigate anxiety

The second subordinate theme found in the data is concerned with intrinsic strategies used by LWS to manage speech fluency and anxiety in EFL contexts. Participants used such strategies to avoid moments of disfluency which they perceived would be negatively received by other interlocutors either in the form of social evaluation or L2 assessment. Broadly speaking, LWS adopted these strategies to aid participation in EFL contexts rather than avoid speaking all together. In this respect, our findings suggest that that their use represent a resilient desire in these learners to confront anxiety and engage in spoken interaction within EFL contexts, despite high levels of anxiety.

As opposed to the rigid nature of reading aloud for LWS, other activities within the speaking domain afforded participants greater freedom to cope with stuttering and related anxiety:

(81) AMB, Female, 36

“Cuando::: percibe (.) siento que me puedo bloquear en::: por ejemplo una palabra que empiece por T (.) tengo por ejemplo me cuesta mucho decirlo (.) er pues pues mi mi mente empieza a trabajar para buscar una palabra err que no contenga el fonema ese (.) ¿sabes? Para evitar el bloqueo” [When I perceive, feel, that I can block on, for example, a word that starts with T, tengo is really difficult for me to say for example, well, my brain starts working to find another word that doesn't have that phoneme, you know? To avoid the block]

In this example, AMB describes the strategy of word substitution she uses to cope with phoneme anxiety and disfluency. Thus, her perception of impending speech blocks triggers processes of word retrieval and lexical planning, which are common in LWS (García-Barrera & Davidow, 2015; Jackson, Yaruss, Quesal, Terranova, & Whalen, 2015). In addition to word substitution, our participants recounted employing circumlocution to navigate speech blocks

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caused by troublesome words or sounds. Strategies of this kind enable LWS to vary the content of their utterances in response to online monitoring of disfluency. However, participants identified a series of obstacles that hinder such strategies being used in L2 English, for example, the inflexibility of English syntax:

(82) RMA, Male, 30

“Las estructuras (en inglés) son >bastante más rígidas< empiezan los sujetos (.) siempre empieza tal y para mí por lo menos castellano es mucho más sencillo el orden lo cambias o eso (.) el inglés no” [Structures in English are rather more rigid, you always start with the subjects and that, and for me, Spanish is much simpler at least, you change the order and that, (but) not in English]

Other problems referred to the use of linguistic crutches or fillers that were normally employed to help sidestep moments of disfluency:

(83) EMP, Male, 26

“En español pues sí tengo::: otras palabras tengo (.) digamos (.) como como palabras err comodines o que repito mucho que no tienen ningún sentido (.) en::: inglés no las tengo (.) entonces como que (.) no sé qué decir me quedo más bloqueado más bloqueado de lo normal” [In Spanish I’ve got other words, I’ve got, we could say, like comfort words or ones that I repeat a lot that don’t have any meaning, in English I haven’t got them, so it’s like, I don’t know what to say, I get more blocked, more blocked than usual]

A scarcity of fillers in the target language reveals participants’ lack of L2 knowledge and resources therein, which they highlighted as the main obstacle for their use of strategies to mitigate their disfluency and the anxiety that derived from stuttering. This deficiency in L2 resources also includes reduced vocabulary in the target language, which undermined the effectiveness of linguistic strategies. This is illustrated in the following quote:

(84) EMP, Male, 26

“En español suelo buscar otra palabra (cuando me bloqueeo) o:: en inglés (.) pues también pero como mi nivel de inglés es bastante malo pues (.) me cuesta mucho más encontrar una palabra:: es decir (2.7) normalmente me quedo::: totalmente bloqueado porque vamos no::: (.) no sé cambiarlo por ninguna otra palabra” [In Spanish I normally look for another word (when I block) or in English as well but as my level of English is pretty bad, well, it’s really hard for me to find a word, I mean, I normally end up totally blocked, because I don’t know how to change it (the word) for any other word]

This example shows that for LWS broad vocabularies play an important role in the management of their speech fluency. EMP describes becoming “totally blocked” due to his inability in locating a synonym in order to navigate a moment of disfluency. He recounts being silenced by this and engaging in self-denigration, typified by his assessment of his level of English as “pretty bad”. However, this judgement appears to be related to his difficulties finding a synonym for a troublesome word rather than more general L2 competence. In this sense, EMP is demanding more of himself than other students, who would not have to concern themselves with expanding their vocabularies in similar interactional circumstances.

Consequently, in order to better cope with stuttering in English, many participants acknowledged to have actively sought out synonyms of words perceived to provoke blocks in spoken communication in L2:

(85) GMS, Male, 36

“Yo (.) >en determinadas palabras inglesa me bloqueo< (.) más que en otras (.) >pero claro yo me he preocupado< (.) personalmente de buscar:: la solución (.) >o sea de buscar< un sinónimo (.) de una palabra (.) QUE MUCHAS VECES EN INGLÉS EL SINÓNIMO NO VALE (.) porque ya sabes que hay palabras (.) que no se utilizan (.) O sea (.) hay palabras que no (.) >que aunque signifiquen lo

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mismo< (.) no valen por la construcción (.) >gramatical que sea<” [I block on certain words in English more than others, but of course I’ve concerned myself with looking for the solution, I mean looking for a synonym of a word. But a lot of the time in English the synonym doesn’t work, because you already know there are words that aren’t used, I mean there are word that even though they mean the same, they don’t work in the grammatical structure]

When considering this passage, we are reminded of the contradictory nature of stuttering that has been highlighted in previous chapters: GMS recounts searching for synonyms whilst also suggesting that word substitution can be counterproductive. A similar conflict is discussed by RCL:

(86) RCL, Male, 23

“Es que todo lo lo lo >todo frena a no poder decir lo que quieres decir< un sinónimo nunca va a ser igual que la palabra original (.) usas un sinónimo para no repetir palabras y que no sea la conversación monótona (.) >en este caso positivo< pero si tú quieres usar un término (.) tienes que usar ese término” [The thing is that not being able to say what you want to say puts the breaks on everything. A synonym is never going to be the same as the original word, you use a synonym, so that you don’t repeat words and so that the conversation isn’t monotonous, in that case it’s positive, but if you want to use a term, you have to use that term]

The frustration that can accompany stuttering and the use of the word substitution strategy is observed in this example through RCL’s statements “not being able to say what you want to say limits everything”, and a “synonym is never going to be the same as the original word”. Therefore, when he states, “if you want to use a term, you must use that term”, he appears to be reminding himself as much as anyone else that his avoidance can be counterproductive. This simultaneous use and rejection of strategies by participants is thus an example of the struggle that can emerge due to stuttering in L2 learning: on the one hand, it is quite understandable that LWS would utilize strategies to



navigate challenging situations and avoid moments of stuttering that could result in harmful social evaluation; however, it is just comprehensible that individuals would feel an equally intense desire to articulate words that reflect their true “voice” (cf. Norton & Toohey, 2011).

Nevertheless, participants attempted to offset the potential failure of their use of the word substitution strategy by engaging in other behaviours, often combining various strategies in resourceful ways:

(87) VSM, Female, 29

“Sí (uso) los sinónimos o decir ‘how do you say? Wait I mean...’ entonces mientras he dicho eso he tenido un tiempo para relajarme para pensar un sinónimo si lo sé y sino pues intentar decir lo que quiero decir aunque sea con pausas o con bloqueos o::: (1.3) ¿sabes?” [Yes, I use synonyms or say ‘how do you say? Wait I mean...’ so while I say that I’ve had a moment to relax myself, to think of a synonym if I know one and if not, well, try to say what I want to say, even if it’s with pauses or block, you know?]

In this extract, VSM describes directly asking her interlocutor (“how do you say?”), thereby feigning ignorance, and using circumlocution (“wait I mean”) to buy herself time to calm down and search for potential synonyms for troublesome words. Her testimony also indicates that it is not until she has exhausted all possibilities that she attempts to express herself without using any strategies at all. Therefore, we can observe the considerable effort LWS make when employing a combination of communication strategies to deal with their stutter and anxiety in spontaneous spoken interaction, and by extension how effortful learning English is for these learners (see Chapter 7). Although some of these strategies parallel those neurotypical learners use when communicating in the foreign language (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991), their function in the case of LWS goes beyond making oneself understood. Furthermore, their use is not just restricted to interactions with native speakers and has been highly automatized by these learners.

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(88) RMA, Male, 30

“Yo lo hago continuamente< (5.3) a lo mejor no es en cada frase  
·hh pero en un:: ochenta por cien” [I do it all the time. Maybe not in  
every sentence, but in eighty percent]

LWS appeared to employ communication strategies in an attempt to engage in speaking tasks, rather than to flee from them in spite of the intense anxiety they felt, which did result in a desire amongst some to avoid speaking on occasion. Consequently, we found that speaking tasks were the most feared classroom activity, yet also the most rewarding, since classroom participation along these lines was perceived as key to L2 development. This was discussed by IMP:

(89) IMP, Female, 36

“A lo mejor me gusta más (las tareas de hablar) porque es:: que es  
lo que porque es lo que más me cuesta (.) entonces es como:: yo  
es que mm: ·hhhh (.) >me voy poniendo retos< y cada vez  
ma:::más difíciles” [Maybe I like (speaking tasks) more because it’s  
what I find most difficult, so it’s like I give myself challenges, and  
they get harder and harder]

This extract illustrates the broad inclination amongst participants to engage with speaking situations regardless of the challenges they presented, which suggests the potential for broadening emotions offered by participation in activities within the speaking domain (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Thus, JMS described the satisfaction he experienced at being able to “come out of his shell” and speak more, despite the “stress” he experienced:

(90) JSM, Male, 29

“Fue algo que me generó (.) >bastante estrés< pero >el irme  
solta:ndo< con el idioma también fue bastante gratificante” [It was  
something that caused me a lot of stress, but coming out of my  
shell with the language was really gratifying]

Equally, another participant found the act of speaking English “fluently” as increasing his awareness of his own capacities as an L2 learner, thereby contributing to the development of healthy self-concept beliefs (see Chapter 9) and the reinforcement of his L2 identity (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Rubio-Alcalá, 2017):

(91) RCL, Male, 23

“Cuando puedo hablar en inglés fluidamente (.) bwa eso es genial (.) el el::: el saber que sé o sea >el saber que puedo hacerlo eso es genial” [When I can speak English fluently, bwa, that’s great, knowing that I know, I mean knowing that I can do it is great]

Overall, our results indicate that speaking opportunities were approached with good intentions by LWS and in the knowledge that participation was an essential part of the learning process. To this end, a degree of resilience appeared to be essential to withstanding the emotional pressures provoked by EFL classes. In this regard, IMP stated the following:

(92) IMP, Female, 36

“Ahora quiero eso (.) superarme y quiero::: a ver (.) y quiero aprender (.) y quiero eso superarme (.) y quiero vencer el miedo” [I want to get over things now and I want to learn and I want to surpass myself and I want to overcome the fear]

By engaging with speaking tasks and disarming anxiety, participants were able to experience healthy emotional reactions during L2 English learning. The resilience they exhibited appeared to be an important factor in their ability to cope with the emotional stress which is inherent to both stuttering and L2 learning. This finding mirrors those of other studies (Oxford, 2014, 2015; Williams & Andrade, 2008) that have identified resilience as a “key factor that determines whether an individual will pass any traumatic situation successfully” (Sadeghi & Abolfazli Khonbi, 2018, p. 2).

In line with this resilient attitude and behaviour, participants also reported using non-linguistic strategies such as breathing techniques and positive self-talk

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to reduce anxiety. Combining communication strategies with these non-linguistic behaviours seemed to help LWS better confront speaking tasks and related anxiety:

(93) VME, Male, 33

“>Pues me suelo callar< (.) >dependiendo del bloqueo< (.) si es un bloqueo repetitivo (.) >que me quede ahí< (.) repitiendo ahí unas mismas sílabas (.) me paro (.) respiro un poco (.) intento habla::r más despacio” [Well I normally stay quiet, depending on the block. If it’s a repetitive block that I get stuck there with repeating the same syllables I stop, breathe a little, and try to speak slower]

Similarly, ERA discussed how she employed breathing strategies in conjunction with easy onsets<sup>3</sup> to reduce the severity of speech blocks:

(94) ERA, Female, 22

“Respiro ho:ndo (.) y ya continuo (.) >o sea< (.) intento tranquilizarme como sea (.) [...] me preparo como la primer parte (.) que es donde más me suelo trabar (.) y::: y suelo repetir las silabas (.) en plan p:::oorr ejemplo ¿sabes? así (.) enlace enlace un poquito >con la palabra< siguiente y no hago el parón (.) que propicio el parón” [I breathe deeply, and then continue, I mean, I try to calm down however I can. I get ready for the first part (of the word) which is where I normally get stuck and I normally repeat the syllables, like “ffffooooor example”, you know? So I connect with the next word and don’t make the pause that leads to the (next) pause]

Another participant, RCL, incorporated “positive” self-directed talk and imagery alongside deep breathing:

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<sup>3</sup> Easy onsets are an example of fluency shaping techniques that are commonly learnt in speech therapy sessions for people who stutter. They involve individuals learning to replace stuttering blocks and tension with smoother articulation that facilitates more fluent speech (Murphy et al., 2007)

(95) RCL, Male, 23

“Respirar hondo::: (.) reforzarme con mensajes positivos recordar eso (.) recordar cuando lo cuando sí que supe hacerlo (.) flashbacks (.) de momentos cuando yo he hecho bien” [I breathe deeply, reinforce myself with positive messages, remember that, remember when I was able to do it, flashbacks of moments when I have done well]

These non-linguistic strategies have much in common with those used during speech therapy programmes and it is not surprising that participants who had benefitted from professional intervention applied such techniques in the EFL classroom.

The findings discussed above in relation to the subtheme *La palabra maldita* complement those of previous studies (i.e. Plexico et al, 2009a; 2009b) that have identified coping strategies employed by IWS in other contexts. While some scholars in the stuttering literature have viewed the use of communication strategies as avoidance (Iverach et al., 2017a; Watson, 1995), we align with the views of Constantino et al. (2016) who have described the use of such strategies as active attempts by IWS to participate in speaking situations that are governed by dominant social expectations regarding speech fluency. Likewise, the coping strategies employed by LWS aided their L2 journeys that, at times, presented extremely challenging social communicative situations.

Therefore, in discussion of these findings, we have described how LWS use intrinsic strategies to manage speech fluency and mitigate anxiety in EFL contexts. Our results show that LWS adapt and combine linguistic strategies with non-verbal techniques such as deep-breathing. Furthermore, an inability to transfer some L1 strategies to EFL contexts may contribute to LWS confronting their anxiety and reducing avoidance. Such behaviours represent resilience and determination on the part of these students to engage with classes in spite of anxiety.

#### **8.1.4. The waves of anxiety: the effects of anxiety in learners who stutter**

The third subordinate theme draws together results of the qualitative analysis regarding the effects of anxiety in LWS in EFL contexts. As indicated in the excerpt below, anxiety associated with stuttering and L2 English had the potential to affect the “head”, the “throat”, and the “heart”, which are three areas of the body that may represent the cognitive, physiological, emotional, and behavioural effects of anxiety in LWS.

(96) VMS, Female, 29

“Lo siento en la cabeza y mi garganta en mi corazón” [I feel it in my head and in my throat, in my heart]

Another participant (RCL) further elaborates on such description of anxiety and its effects:

(97) RCL, Male, 23

“(Ansiedad es) como tensión por todo el cuerpo< (.) se te cierra la la la:: garganta (.) andas más rápido (1.1) estas como más nervioso (.) más inquieto (.) piensas muchas cosas al mismo tiempo:: (.) se te anula un poco la mente ¿no? (.) y te dan pensamientos negativos” [(Anxiety is) like tension all over your body. Your throat closes, you walk quicker, you’re like more nervous, more fidgety, you think lots of things at the same time, you mind goes cloudy, right? And you get negative thoughts]

RCL describes, in the first place, the physical tension that anxiety provokes, which affects his “whole body”, especially his throat that “closes”. As stuttering contributes to tension in the speech apparatus it is understandable that LWS perceive anxiety as increasing the tension in such areas of the body (cf. Szyszka, 2017).

RCL also depicts how the physical tension produced by anxiety can contribute to behavioural changes such as a quickening of walking pace in conjunction with cognitive interference. Such cognitive effects appear to happen on two levels: “nullifying” the brain, which would restrict the capacity to process, organize, and produce L2 language; and “negative thoughts”. RLC may be referring to attentional biases, which can lead to self-directed focus, possibly towards the perceived shortcomings of his own language abilities and the potential for negative social evaluation that may ensue as a result.

Other participants also described their views and experiences on the effect of anxiety on cognitive functioning:

(98) IMP, Female, 36

“Cuando me pongo muy nerviosa err: >lo que iba a decir es que se< se me me olvida (.) tanto en español (.) como que:: en en en inglés (.) en inglés más porque estoy más (.) más insegura (.) entonces más” [When I get really nervous, what I was going to say is that I forget, both in Spanish and in English. In English more because I am more insecure, so more (often)]

In this example, IMP suggests that an awareness of potential cognitive disruption like “forgetting what she was going to say” can lead to the presence of additional anxiety or “insecurity”. A similar effect was discussed by EMP, who recounted how anticipatory anxiety could influence cognitive processes in EFL classes:

(99) EMP, Male, 26

“Yo me acuerdo que me ponía muy nervioso CUANDO (.) CUANDO ME IBA A TOCAR A MI ALGO (.) ES DECIR YO ME OLVIDABA DEL RESTO DE LA CLASE (1.1) Y ESTABA PENDIENTE DE LO QUE TENIA QUE DECIR (1.3) E IBA IBA CONTANDO ‘BUENO DENTRO DE CINCO PREGUNTAS ME VA A TOCAR A MI’ ·hhh (1.3) Y ME OLVIDABA DEL RESTO DE LA CLASE” [I remember that I got really nervous when it was going to be my turn (to answer), I mean I forgot about the rest of the class

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and I was focused on what I had to say, and I was counting ‘ok, in five questions it’s going to be my turn’, and I forgot about the rest of the class]

EMP recounts focusing so strongly on what he was required to say that he would “forget about the rest of the class”. Furthermore, the extent of attentional biases provoked by anxiety is evinced by EMP counting down to his speaking turn. This finding is reminiscent of those reported by Gkonou (2017) and Von Wörde (2003), who found similar interference in studies with highly anxious L2 learners. As described by EMP in the passage above, anticipatory anxiety of this kind has the potential to complicate the effectiveness of learning.

Other participants, e.g., VSM, expanded on the cognitive interference that can result from stuttering and anxiety, describing moments of “shock”:

(100) VSM, Female, 29

“(La tartamudez me afecta) >porque al yo sentirme tan mal< eso bloquea mi cerebro o sea eso a mí me bloquea y hay veces que es ·hh >que me explican algo sencillísimo por ejemplo dos y dos son cuatro< y si he acabado de tener un bloqueo gordo me explicas dos y dos son cuatro y no lo entiendo (.) pero no lo entiendo no no porque (.) no sea inteligente porque tenga algún retraso porque tenga algún problema a nivel intelectual madurativo tal no (.) sino porque he tenido un bloqueo tan gordo (.) tengo tantísima ansiedad que estoy como en shock ·hh no es un shock (.) shock propiamente dicho ¿no? Pero es como una especie de shock (.) muy::: suave (.) pero entonces eso en ese momento no estoy pensando que por ejemplo que dos y dos son cuatro sino ‘madre mía que bloqueo he tenido que consecuencias va a tener esto’ (.) lo mal que me siento (.) ¿para la auto-estima? Eso es un golpe tremendo” [Stuttering affects me because as I feel so bad, that blocks my brain, I mean it blocks me and there are times they explain something really simple to me, for example, two plus two is four and I don’t understand. But it’s not that I don’t understand because I’m not intelligent or because I’ve got a learning difficulty, no. It’s because I’ve had such



a big block, I've got so much anxiety that it's like I'm in shock. Not shock strictly speaking right? But like a form of really soft shock, but in that moment, I'm not thinking that two plus two is four for example, but 'My god what a block I've had, what consequences this is going to have', how bad I'm feeling. For your self-esteem? It's a tremendous blow]

This account illustrates the dramatic effect anxiety provoked by stuttering can have on cognitive functioning in LWS. VSM describes in detail her inability to deal with even the simplest of tasks after experiencing a speech block. She exemplifies this sensation through a childlike mathematical equation. Interestingly, she appears at pains to distance such cognitive breakdowns from any social stigmas associated with stuttering (Boyle, 2013), and attributes her inability to cognise simple tasks to an intense focus on the potential negative social consequences of stuttering (Messenger et al., 2004; Iverach & Rapee, 2014).

Another participant, JSM, offered a detailed description of the effects of anxiety, which encapsulates what the participants above described. JSM used the phrase "negative emotional baggage" to refer to the complex, interrelated series of behavioural responses, cognitive reactions, and self-related introspection that he experiences in response to anxiety and stuttering in EFL:

(101) JSM, Male, 29

"Ese bagaje emocional negativo conlleva >que en el momento en el momento en que estás hablando< estas estas súper súper súper >nervioso además es como< si (.) es una sensación de >agobio total además en mi caso también tengo conductas evitas< al al hablar (.) aparto la mirada a la gente (.) hago muchos bloqueos >explosivos< (.) entonces (.) a ver (.) ni el emisor ni el receptor están cómodos en la situación (.) me agobio muchísimo (.) lo cual también hace que (.) que me: (.) que esté más pendiente de (.) >cómo estoy diciendo las cosas de lo que estoy diciendo lo cual< (.) también empeora mi gramática y mi vocabulario (.) no se me ocurren >tantas cosas ni uso las< estructuras tan bien como

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cuando estoy (.) totalmente cómodo (.) Y también lo peor viene después cuando acabas (.) te sientas y te sientes fatal por el ridículo entre comillas (.) >porque bueno< (.) >soy así y no puedo evitarlo pero< después >cuando acaba< llega (.) esa segunda ola (.) que hace que este distraído de la clase durante <unos minutos>” [That negative emotional baggage entails that in the moment that you are speaking, you are really really really nervous. Furthermore, it’s like a completely overwhelming sensation, moreover in my case I have avoidance behaviours when speaking, I look away from people, I have lots of explosive blocks, so neither the speaker nor the listener are comfortable in the situation. I get really stressed, which also means that I am more alert to how I am saying things, not what I am saying, which makes my grammar and vocabulary worse, I can’t think of as many things nor use structures as well as I can when I am totally comfortable. And also, the worst comes after when you finish you feel awful for looking “ridiculous” because, well, I’m like that and I can’t avoid it. But after, when you finish, the second wave comes, which means your distracted from the class for a few minutes]

Firstly, JSM depicts the anxiety experienced during speaking tasks as leading to a sensation of “*agobio total*” – an overwhelming sensation. Such feeling provokes avoidance behaviours (e.g., losing eye contact) and increased physical tension in the form of “explosive blocks”. As a consequence, JSM describes feeling uncomfortable, whilst also perceiving his interlocutor to be uneasy. This social dynamic then contributes to a further escalation of anxiety, which retrains JSM’s focus on speech production. At this point, he recounts cognitive disruption complicating word retrieval and grammatical planning, so that he is unable to formulate utterances that correlate with his L2 knowledge. Following this, JSM reports that the “worst” occurs when his speaking turn comes to an end and he is hit by the “second wave” of anxiety, which leads to rumination. He describes this situation as embarrassing due to negative self-assessment which causes further attentional bias, leading him to be distracted for the next few minutes.

The various effects of anxiety described here point to an intense sequence of reactions provoked by stuttering and speaking tasks in L2 English. Such strong reactions compressed into a short period of time may lead to mental and physical fatigue that can further compromise learning (Boksem et al., 2005). Indeed, one of our participants, VSM, described the draining effects of coping with anxiety and stuttering in L2 classes as follows:

(102) VSM, Female, 29

“Yo intentaba ocultarlo o taparlo y eso es una-o sea es TAPARLO (.) HABLAR INGLÉS BIEN (.) >PRONUNCIARLO BIEN< QUE LA PROFESORA NO TE INTERRUMPA (.) QUE TIENES QUE ESTAR LEYENDO Y DIGAS TODAS LAS PALABRAS ((se ríe)) entonces salía sudando o sea salía (h) exhausted salía terriblemente cansada (.) agotada a nivel mental ¿sabes? YA NO POR ESTUDIAR O PORQUE PARECIERA DIFÍCIL sino por todo lo que conllevaba” [I tried to hide it (stuttering) or cover it up and that, I mean, cover it up, speak English well, pronounce well so that the teacher doesn’t interrupt you, you have to be reading and say all the words ((she laughs)) so I’d leave sweating, I mean I’d leave exhausted, I’d leave terribly tired, mentally drained, you know? Not because of studying or because I thought it was difficult, but because of everything else it entailed]

The examples above suggest that, for some LWS, the management of anxiety and stuttering in EFL contexts constitutes a greater challenge than L2 English learning itself. These findings highlight the importance of helping these learners to cope with anxiety and reduce concern over negative social evaluation during potential moments of disfluency. With this in mind, the following subtheme builds upon the information discussed up to this point by examining extrinsic factors that may aid healthy engagement of LWS in EFL contexts.

### **8.1.5. *Confianza*: extrinsic factors that can mitigate anxiety in learners who stutter**

The fourth subordinate theme identified in the interview data was *Confianza*. This subtheme contemplates some of the extrinsic factors and practical considerations that can help to reduce anxiety and promote engagement in LWS within the EFL classroom. This subordinate theme generally reflected a desire amongst participants to perceive a sense of emotional support in their interactions with EFL teachers. The term *confianza* may be translated into English as “confidence” in some circumstances and “trust” in others. In Spanish, García-Pastor (1999) found the term to mostly indicate “trust” among individuals of a specific Hispanic community in the US, so that “*confianza*” relationships typically involved close relationships among community members, whom one could be completely sincere with, ask for favours, self-disclose important personal and intimate information, ask for their true opinion, and even plan someone’s life. Nevertheless, both of these terms hold significance in this context in light of these learners’ desire for confidence and trust in teachers, particularly given the fear of negative evaluation and struggle that can be caused by stuttering. Such encouragement from teachers could in turn help LWS to establish a sense of confidence and trust in themselves, especially with regard to their own language abilities.

Our findings indicate that confidence could be mainly established through private conversations between EFL teachers and these learners regarding stuttering. A broad feeling existed among participants that interactions of this kind could significantly reduce anxiety experienced during L2 English classes. Disclosure of stuttering and the recognition of its presence can allow individuals who stutter to take back a sense of control that is often lost due to stuttering. This finding not only reflects one of the features of “*confianza*” relations observed by García-Pastor (1999) in her ethnographic study and mentioned above (self-disclosure of relevant personal information), but it is also supported by studies in other contexts that have identified disclosure as a strategy that can help to reduce tension in LWS and improve quality of life (Boyle, Milewski, & Beita-Eil, 2018). Moreover, our data suggests that self-disclosure engendered

other processes that also served to reduce anxiety in participants. For example, they provided a space in which LWS could relay their fears to teachers and in turn receive one-to-one support. This led to an understanding among participants that difficulties that might emerge due to stuttering would be taken into consideration by teachers. The following extract is illustrative of this perception amongst participants of self-disclosure in one-to-one teacher-student conversations:

(103) EMP, Male, 26

“Yo creo que sí eso el::: sentarte con la otra persona y hablar con él (.) un poco (1.6) para conoceros un poco más ya hace que el (.) quizás que (2.3) que cueste menos::: err trabajo cuando tienes confianza con la otra persona (.) no te preocupa que tanto por lo que::: por la tartamudez o::: o este tipo de cosas” [I think that, yes, that to sit down with the other person and speak with them a little, to get to know each other better, means maybe that, it's not as difficult for them when they have confidence in the other person. You don't worry as much about stuttering or those kind of things]

As expressed by EMP in this extract, he believes that such conversations would reduce the amount of struggle and apprehension individuals like him experience in relation to stuttering. The notion of *confianza* was discussed by another participant who also perceived one-to-one conversations as providing an opportunity for teachers to become aware of specific difficulties for LWS:

(104) PET, Female, 26

“Entonces (.) >lo primero que hay que hacer es ir a hablar con él< a solas (.) en plan > ‘¿Cómo te sientes? ¿Qué problemas hay en clase?’< (.) Saber un poco cómo uno lo vive (.) qué es lo que más le cuesta (.) que le cuesta menos (.) el que él sepa que puede confiar en ti (.) y te puede contar cualquier cosa:.” [So the first thing that you have to do is go and talk to the student in private, like ‘how do you feel?’ ‘What problems are there in the class’. Know a little how they live it, what it is that is most difficult for them]

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Here, PET highlights the importance of teachers understanding the lived experiences of LWS in the EFL classroom regarding different tasks. This finding is important as the changeable nature of stuttering means that LWS may find certain activities more challenging than others depending on the nature of their relationship with stuttering at that specific point in time. This was elaborated on by JSM who stated the following:

(105) JSM, Male, 29

“Con respeto al alumno con disfemia (.) entonces claro >aquí la clave sería< hablar con el alumno y ver qué es lo que necesita >ese alumno en concreto< (.) porque en función del punto psicológico (.) >que al fin y al cabo es lo más importante en el que esté< va a tener unas necesidades (.) u otras.” [In regard to the student who stutters, of course here the key would be to speak to the student and see what it is they need, that student in particular, because based on their psychological point of view, which at the end of the day is the most important, they will have certain needs or others]

Thus, our findings indicate that participants considered conversations with teachers central to the successful management of the effects of anxiety in EFL contexts, while also reducing the desire to hide their stutter:

(106) IMP, Female, 36

“Yo err al haber a ver err hablado con él pues (.) a ver (.) ya lo sabe ya me quito esa ansiedad pues de querer ocultarlo o de o de que piensa yo que sé (.) que le pasa esto o ((se ríe)) no lo sé (.) entonces al haber hablado pues ya ha quedado todo claro” [Having spoken with him (the teacher) now he knows, it’s taken away the anxiety of wanting to hide it (stuttering) or that he thinks, I don’t know, ‘what’s wrong with her’ ((she laughs)), I don’t know. As we have spoken well now it’s all clear]

Participants also perceived private conversations with teachers as having a beneficial impact upon classroom dynamics so that their anxiety was mitigated. VSM thus describes how the *confianza* attained through prior teacher-student conversations contributed to a healthier classroom atmosphere, which helped reduce her anxiety:

(107) VSM, Female, 29

“Lo que suele hacer mi profesora es que cuando me pregunta y yo tengo que responder algo errrrrr SI TARDO EN DECIRLO ella no me dice “parece que no lo sabes o:: dudas o:: tal” no (.) jamás ·hhh AL REVÉS (.) SI TARDO ASIENTE CON LA CABEZA COMO DICIENDO ‘SÉ LO QUE TE PASA SÉ QUE LO QUIERES DECIR PERO SÉ QUE AHORA NO PUEDES’ ¿no? Entonces ·hh SON DÉCIMAS DE SEGUNDO QUE SU MIRADA Y LA MÍA (.) ES::: DE COMPLICIDAD ES DE DECIR ‘NO TE PREOCUPES YO SÉ LO QUE TE PASA TE VOY A DAR EL TIEMPO y no pasa nada’ ENTONCES EN LA MEDIDA EN LA QUE (.) LA PROFESORA VE QUE NO PASA NADA LOS DEMÁS ALUMNOS SE RELAJAN (.) PORQUE VEN QUE AUNQUE NO SEA ALGO NORMAL LA PROFESORA NO TE HA DETECTADO” [What my teacher normally does is that when she asks me something and I have to answer, if I don’t answer straight away she doesn’t say ‘it seems like you don’t know, or you’re not sure’, no, never, the opposite, if I take my time she nods her head as if to say ‘I know what’s wrong, I know what you want to say, but I know that right now you can’t’, right? So they are tenths of a second that her eyes and mine (meet), it’s understanding, it’s saying ‘don’t worry, I know what’s wrong and I’m going to give you time and don’t worry’. So as the teacher sees that nothing is wrong, the rest of the class relax, because they see that even though it may not be normal, the teacher hasn’t picked up on it]

This extract illustrates how private conversations can generate a sense of trust and understanding between LWS and teachers that is essential to alleviating

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anxiety caused by moments of stuttering. Additionally, this participant perceived her teacher behaviours as having a positive influence in how other students in class responded to stuttering. Thus, teacher behaviour could help to mitigate fear of negative social evaluation experienced by LWS. Equally, patience is another behaviour VSM alludes to here. The theme of patience was particularly salient when participants discussed extrinsic factors that can alleviate anxiety. For example, AMB highlighted the importance of patience in response to students who experience moments of disfluency in L2 English:

(108) AMB, Female, 36

“Paciencia sobre todo a la hora de hablar de bueno expresarnos porque (.) err no es fácil expresarse en inglés y y bueno para las personas que tartamudeamos pues (.) menos ¿no? >no sé< paciencia” [Patience most of all when it comes to speaking, to expressing ourselves because it’s not easy to express yourself in English, and well, for us people who stutter, well less, right? I don’t know, patience]

Patience emerged as a fundamental aspect of teacher behaviour and participants repeatedly made reference to the importance of affording LWS time to express themselves without interruption. Consequently, interviewees highlighted the value of both teachers and classmates respecting speaking turns:

(109) GMS, Male, 36

“Dejarlo (el alumno con tartamudez) que se exprese libremente (.) sin coacción (.) sin coacciones ninguna (.) sin interrupciones (.) y sin nada” [Let them (the student who stutters) express themselves freely, without coercion, without any pressure, without interruptions and without anything]

(110) PET, Female, 26

“Evitar:: >por todos los medios< que haya burlas (.) >eso hay que evitarlo desde el principio< (.) y decirle que se le va a dar el tiempo



que necesite para::: decir lo que sea (.) que no no va a haber burlas en clase que a todo el mundo se le va a respetar.” [Avoid in every way that there are taunts, that has to be avoided from the beginning, and tell them (the student who stutters) that they will have the time they need to say whatever, that there will be no taunting in the class and that everyone is going to respect them]

Statements of this kind from participants further reinforced their enthusiasm to engage in speaking tasks in EFL, rather than be left behind or treated differently to other students. This was stated explicitly by some participants:

(111) VME, Male, 33

“Yo creo que lo mejor que se puede hacer es tratarlos (estudiantes con tartamudez) como iguales (1.8) Si te toca preguntarte a ti (.) >si te tengo que preguntarte igual que he preguntado a Peter< (.) o a Richard (.) no:: no me voy a mostrar más benevolente (.) ni te voy a saltar (.) >te voy a pedir lo mismo que a los demás< (.) mostraré (.) ese poquito más de tiempo (.) >que necesitas para expresarte< (.) y ya está >pero< (.) sobre todo no tratarlo como:: (.) como diferente (.) >dale la misma oportunidad que a los demás< (.) y si el chava::l una cosa que se puede decir en un minuto (.) la dice en cinco (.) pues nada (.) no pasa nada” [I think the best that can be done is to treat them (students who stutter) as equals. If it’s your turn to answer a question, then I’ve got to ask you the same as I’ve asked Peter or Richard. I’m not going to be more benevolent with you, nor am I going to leave you out, I’m going to ask the same of you as everyone else. I will show you that little bit more time that you need to express yourself and that’s it. But most of all not treat them (students who stutter) as different, give them the same chances as everyone else, if the lad takes five minutes to say something that can be said in one, well, no problem]

The sentiment expressed in the above passage is illustrative of general attitudes among participants in the current study. They rejected the idea of any

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preferable treatment on the part of teachers and, instead, wanted to be able to demonstrate their language knowledge in the same way as other students. This is not surprising if we consider that while stuttering may inhibit interaction, it can also make individuals feel as if they stand out from the crowd for being different (Murphy et al., 2007). Therefore, a desire to be accepted and integrated into classroom activities with a minimum of commotion is quite logical. All in all, what interviewees seemed to be demanding was not just inclusion, but also subtle changes to teaching practices that would aid their integration and participation. Along these lines, LWS in this study demanded greater opportunities to engage in oral activities from teachers. In particular, they repeatedly emphasised the benefits of smaller speaking groups, which allowed them to participate more freely and reduce fear of negative evaluation that can aggravate stuttering behaviours:

(112) VSM, Female, 29

“Nosotros cuando hablamos entre nosotros en en en pequeños grupos como que no >tartamudeas tanto porque te están oyendo dos o tres personas ¿no?<” [Us, when we talk between ourselves, in smaller groups, it’s like we don’t stutter as much, because two or three people are listening to you, right?]

A further explanation of the benefits of such groups was described by EMP, who returned to the notion of *confianza*:

(113) EMP, Male, 26

“Si (la tarea) está en un grupo más reducido (.) siento más confianza con la gente con la que estoy:: con la que estoy: (.) h:::ab con la gente que estoy ha:::blando” [If (the task) is in a smaller group, I feel more confidence in the people I’m with, with the people that I’m talking to]

Therefore, *confianza* between LWS and their classmates was also key to reducing anxiety and enabling oral participation. These findings echo those of other studies that have indicated the importance of language teachers

establishing rapport with their students to minimise unhealthy emotional responses during L2 learning (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017) as well as the relevance of small group activities to reduce FLA (Young, 1991). Thus, this extract and the examples above are illustrative of the broad desire amongst participants to be able to participate in classes in a variety of situations that place them away from the centre of attention, which provokes fear of negative evaluation (Bricker-Katz et al., 2013).

## **8.2. Conclusions**

The results we have presented and discussed in this chapter in relation to the first superordinate theme shed light on the interaction between stuttering and anxiety in EFL contexts. Anxiety appeared to be concentrated within the domain of speaking, particularly within reading aloud tasks. In such activities, FLA and anxiety associated with stuttering blended together, galvanizing one another. The end result was an intense compound of anxiety that impeded cognitive functioning and linguistic performance in a manner that differs from the anxiety experienced by neurotypical students, whilst resembling the social anxiety commonly felt by IWS (Iverach et al., 2017). Consequently, our interviewees indicated that they experienced a self-replenishing feedback cycle that intensified as stuttering and anxiety increased. We have referred to such cycles as “the waves of anxiety”, which can be set in motion on a number of occasions during L2 classes. Anticipatory anxiety and post-task anxiety were observed to represent two significant reservoirs that influenced the overall flow of anxiety experienced by LWS during specific tasks. Anticipatory anxiety appeared to be based on strong fears of negative social evaluation amongst these learners, whilst post-task anxiety seemed to emerge from rumination regarding negative self-assessment and the general destabilising effect that can come from prolonged moments of public stuttering.

Nevertheless, participants endeavoured to manage disfluency and anxiety whilst engaged in EFL speaking tasks by combining linguistic strategies with other intrinsic techniques. Many of these strategies required online monitoring of language output, as well as lexical planning in anticipation of

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speech blocks. These behaviours represent a conterminous drive in LWS to avoid potentially damaging moments of stuttering without shunning opportunities to participate in speaking tasks. However, such strategies require extensive language knowledge and, therefore, are not always applicable in L2 spoken communication. In response to this, our findings showed that LWS adapt and combine linguistic strategies with non-verbal techniques such as deep breathing and self-directed positive talk.

In response to a breakdown in intrinsic coping strategies, our analysis revealed that certain extrinsic factors played a more meaningful role in reducing these learners' anxiety. Key amongst these were the trust, support, and patience of EFL teachers. We found that one-to-one conversations between LWS and L2 teachers were central in developing teacher-student relationships that can engender assurance for LWS and aid their integration into classes. Thus, L2 teachers have an important role to play in facilitating situations in which LWS can participate without experiencing debilitating levels of anxiety. In this sense, L2 teachers must take responsibility for reducing the presence and influence of anxiety amongst all students, but particularly those who present characteristics such as stuttering.

Ultimately, the results discussed within this chapter show that stuttering has the potential to contribute to a multifaceted experience of anxiety that can have far reaching effects on how LWS experience EFL learning. In discussing these findings, we have touched upon how anxiety and stuttering may influence self-related constructs in LWS. In the following chapter we focus on these issues in more detail.

## **9. Foreign language anxiety and self-related constructs in learners who stutter**

In this chapter we respond to our final research question, which enquires about how LWS account for the relationship between stuttering, anxiety, L2 English learning and their self-concept beliefs. In the previous result chapters, we have discussed how stuttering and anxiety can influence emotional reactions in LWS in L2 English learning. Thus, feelings of helplessness, shame, and failure have been highlighted by interviewees. Equally, we have discussed how fear of negative evaluation related to stuttering can contribute to anxiety that may impede positive classroom participation. More specifically we have seen that LWS experience high levels of anxiety which appeared to augment the influence of stuttering. This is particularly salient in speaking tasks, such as those which required students to read aloud. This was confounded by a breakdown in coping strategies habitually used by LWS. Consequently, extrinsic factors such as supportive teacher-student relationships were key to LWS positively experiencing EFL classes. These findings should be kept in mind as we move to a more in-depth discussion of the results in this chapter regarding self-related constructs in participants.

### **9.1. Papeles distintos: self-related beliefs in learners who stutter in L2 English**

Upon analysis we identified one superordinate theme and two subordinate themes regarding the relationship between anxiety, stuttering and self-related beliefs in EFL in LWS. These are presented below in Table 14.

Table 14. Superordinate theme D and subordinate themes

<b>Superordinate theme D</b>	
<i>Papeles distintos</i> Self-related beliefs of LWS in L2 English “Igual que los otros no eres” [You are not the same as the others]	
<b>Subordinate themes D</b>	
<i>No puedo dar la talla</i>  Stuttering and anxiety contributing to unhealthy self-related beliefs in LWS  “Madre mía voy a hacer el ridículo” [My goodness I’m going to make a fool of myself]	Synonym experts and positive cycles  L2 English contexts offering LWS opportunities for positive engagement  “Creo que aprender inglés me ayuda con mi superación” [I think learning English helps me with my self-improvement]

The superordinate theme, *Papeles distintos* reflects how different self-related beliefs could influence the relationship between anxiety and stuttering in LWS. In this sense, participants alluded to the manner in which stuttering, and anxiety, influenced the negotiation of learner identities and broader self-concept beliefs related to L2 learning. Our results suggest that anxiety and stuttering could complicate the perceived expression of “true” selves in LWS (Butler, 2013a; Cream et al., 2003; Horwitz, 1995). This contributed to an awareness amongst participants that they were “different” from other students, which appeared to have both healthy and harmful consequences for learners’ self-related beliefs. As we have seen in previous chapters, a degree of conflict and contradiction has been evident in the nature of participants’ experiences in EFL and this duality was most keenly felt in terms of their self-related beliefs. This dichotomy is reflected in the two subordinate themes contained within *Papeles distintos*.

The first subtheme delves into the limiting effect of stuttering and anxiety on self-related constructs in LWS in EFL. Patterns in the data showed that social stigma and a lack of awareness surrounding stuttering in the general

public could result in participants internalising beliefs in the form of self-stigma. This contributed to unhealthy beliefs regarding the self and, in some cases, rejection of stuttering as a flawed characteristic of speech. As a result, our interviewees struggled to conceive of themselves as capable language learners and their awareness of negative social attitudes towards stuttering fuelled internal monologues characterised by self-doubt and self-derogation.

The following example illustrates the degree of discrepancy between participants' L2 English classroom behaviour and their perceptions of a "true" self, provoked by the silencing effects of stuttering and anxiety.

(114) EMP, Male, 26

">Si me preguntaba:::< que por algo ·hhh yo directamente decía (.) no lo sé por::: por no tener que HABLAR y::: ese tipo de cosas le decía 'no lo sé' pero (.) >aunque realmente sí que sabía lo que me estaba::: que preguntando< (eso me hacía sentir) mal no sé decir (.) lo que hay veces que (.) QUIERES CONTAR ALGO Y::: te sientes mal y no pue-bueno (.) no sé es una sensación de (3.0) >de que no estás diciendo lo que quieres decir (.) como no sé me esto:::y (2.7) que no estoy siendo quien realmente soy" [If the teacher asked me something, I'd say directly that I didn't know, to not have to speak and that kind of thing, I said 'I don't know', even though I did know what they were asking, (that made me feel) bad, I don't know what to say, there are times that you want to say something and you feel bad and, well, it's a sensation of not saying what you want to say, like I don't know, I'm not being who I really am]

In this extract, EMP describes a "sensation of not saying what you want you want to say", which leads him to believe that he is "not being" who he really is. This conflict suggests that LWS may struggle to construct and express their identities discursively in a manner that reflects their true selves. Thus, participants were aware of the negative impact of anxiety and stuttering-on their ability to exercise behaviour that correlated with their self-images as learners. This was discussed by JAZ, who reported the following:

(115) JAZ, Male, 40

“Me cuesta más el ser yo (.) quizá el el estar rodeado de gente a-  
de gente fluida (.) y que no sepan ellos que yo soy tartamudo (.) me  
crea una ansiedad >más ansiedad todavía< y quizá no participo  
todo lo que querría participar en la clase” [It’s harder to be me,  
maybe being surrounded by fluent people and that they don’t know  
that I’m a stutterer makes me more anxious, more anxiety still, and  
maybe I don’t participant all that I want to in the class]

Thus, anxiety can be exacerbated, and class participation hindered, by our interviewees’ awareness of differences between themselves and neurotypical speakers. In this regard, participants were not only mindful of how their conduct differed from their own expectations, but also from the example set by classmates. Although this can also happen among mainstream L2 learners, it appears for LWS, disfluency played a role. This was reflected on by MCO:

(116) MCO, Male, 22

“Si te enganchas (.) >tú tienes que saber que no eres igual que el  
otro< (.) porque porque muchas >veces tú tienes el ejemplo del  
compañero< (.) y tú tienes el referente del otro compañero (.) pero  
si:: >en la clase el único que te enganchas eres tú< tú igual que los  
otros no eres” [If you stutter, you have to know that you’re not the  
same as the others, because many times you have the example of  
your classmate, you have them as a reference, but if in the class  
the only one who stutters is you, you’re not the same as the others]

Therefore, it appears that both intrinsic expectations of behaviour, and social pressures regarding disfluency could contribute to difficulties building positive identity positions and the development of healthy self-concept beliefs. Nevertheless, our findings also show that participants displayed a pragmatic and resilient attitude, which helped to offset such difficulties arising from anxiety and stuttering in EFL learning. The following quote reflects this duality:



(117) MCO, Male, 22

“Tú (.) >tienes que ser consciente de que eres diferente< (.) y:: ello no implica que sea: >bueno o malo si los sabes< (.) llevar bien”  
[You have to be aware that you are different, and that doesn't have to good or bad if you know how to cope with it]

The above extract suggests that the development of healthy self-related beliefs is contingent upon an acceptance of stuttering as a neutral trait that need not necessarily influence learner progress negatively (Beilby et al., 2012a; Cheasman et al., 2015; Kathard et al., 2010). The commonly harmful effects of stuttering and anxiety within EFL contexts indicates that this is not an easy judgement to arrive at. As established by MCO, awareness and acceptance of stuttering can benefit LWS in such settings. This is emphasised by the role self-related constructs can play in influencing learner behaviour. JAZ discusses this idea by narrating how a healthier self-esteem evaluation had contributed to his acceptance of stuttering in EFL classes:

(118) JAZ, Male, 40

“Al estar más seguro conmigo mismo al tener más auto-estima también al al joder si (.) si no pasa nada (.) >si yo soy así no pasa nada< pues no sé quizá tenga otra:: bueno otra forma de: actuar (.) en clase” [Being more secure with myself, having more self-esteem as well, shit it's no problem, I'm like that no problem, I don't know, maybe I act in a different way in class (now)]

Consequently, an ability to view stuttering as potentially beneficial appeared to be particularly influential in how our participants judged their classroom behaviour. For example, RMA reflected on the positive effect of stuttering on some of his speech behaviours:

(119) RMA, Male, 30

“Precisamente como a ti te cuesta más >o sea< lo afinas mejor (.) y observas más antes que:: de otra cosa antes de decir las cosas”

[Precisely because it's harder for you, I mean you refine it better and you observe more before anything, before saying anything]

What RMA seems to be referring to is the idea that LWS may be 'heavy monitor' users following Krashen's (1982) model of L2 learning, as their condition makes them edit their production carefully before it actually turns into real output. Other participants established a connection between stuttering and how they excelled in listening tasks in the target language, as discussed further in the second subtheme within this chapter.

### **9.1.1. *No puedo dar la talla*: stuttering and anxiety contributing to unhealthy self-related beliefs in learners who stutter**

The first subordinate theme *No puedo dar la talla* within the superordinate theme *Papeles distintos* collates results of qualitative analysis conducted on the interview data that reflect a pervasive concern among participants that they would be unable to "make the grade" as L2 English learners due to the influence of stuttering and anxiety. In previous chapters we have discussed how participants perceived the combination of anxiety and stuttering as restrictive, impeding expression of their true language level and complicating formal assessment. Here, we take those considerations a step further and discuss the implications of these experiences for self-related beliefs held by LWS.

Our findings suggest that the nature of social reactions to stuttered speech had a negative effect on the construction of healthy learner identities in LWS. Participants' awareness of stigma and misunderstanding in broader society (Boyle, 2013, 2015) appeared to contribute to evaluations of stuttering as a limiting factor in L2 English learning. The following excerpt illustrates these issues:

(120) VSM, Female, 29

“Cuando uno: mmm e mm es niño el contar a tus amiguitos cuando ellos son unos niños que los niños no saben a lo mejor el daño que pueden hacer con con ciertos comentarios o mirados o risas ·hh el contarles que tú errr tienes tartamudez pues no es algo fácil y y uno se piensa como en muchas ocasiones es (.) que va a ser objeto de burla o de risa ¿no? ·hh entonces me generaba un estrés (.) increíble por intentar ocultarlo >o sea es como que si el que es< ciego o manco o cojo eso ya se sabe y se respeta en la sociedad y jamás hay una (.) una burla pero porque siempre es ciego o manco o cojo ·hhh pero >la tartamudez es a veces sí a veces no unas veces más unas veces menos es< súper variable entonces la gente incluso piensa (.) que a lo mejor lo estés haciendo a posta o lo estés fingiendo o simplemente te pase porque es un examen y estás nerviosa ·hh entonces como es algo que que no hay información que la gente no sabe y tal ·h pues la gente como que se ríe más porque le porque le resulta::: err extraño” [When one is a child, telling your friends, when they are children, children don’t know sometimes the damage they can do with certain comments or looks or laughs, telling them that you have a stutter, well, it’s not easy and one thinks, as in many cases, that you will be a target for taunts or laughs, right? So it generated an incredible stress for me trying to hide it, I mean it’s like those that are blind, or are missing a limb or have a limp, people know and society respects that and there is never taunts but because those people are always blind, or missing a limb or have a limp, but with stuttering it’s sometimes yes, sometimes no, sometimes more, sometimes less, it’s really variable, so people think that maybe you’re doing it on purpose, or you’re faking it, or it’s happening simply because you’ve got an exam and you’re nervous. So it’s like it’s something that there’s no information, that people don’t know, so it’s like they laugh even more because they think it’s strange]

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This extract touches on many aspects of the stuttering experience, including those that can complicate learning for LWS, namely, bullying (Blood et al., 2011; Blood & Blood, 2016; Hugh-Jones & Smith, 1999), a stress-inducing desire to hide disfluency (Adriasens et al., 2014; Iverach et al., 2009a; Pierre, 2012) and a concern about misunderstandings on a societal level regarding stuttered speech (Bailey et al., 2015; Boyle & Blood, 2015). Furthermore, we see how these issues can influence LWS from a young age. This social dynamic can contribute to unhealthy self-related beliefs in LWS. A particularly invasive perception which fuelled anxiety among participants was a belief that society considered disfluency to be an indicator of low intellectual capacity:

(121) VSM, Female, 29

“La gente piensa que a lo mejor a nivel intelectual como que no eres tan o tienes no a ver no te va a decir que tengas un pequeño retraso a nivel mental o madurativo ·hh pe::::ro la tartamudez en muchas personas está considerado como pt como que VA ASOCIADO A OTRAS COSAS ¿no? Como que:::: >a nivel intelectual pues no seas tan inteligente o tengas algún retraso o tal”  
[People think that maybe on a mental level that you are not so, or that you have, look, they aren’t going to say to you that you have a little delay on a mental level, but stuttering in a lot of people is considered, like it’s associated with other things, right? Like at a mental level, that you’re not so intelligent or that you’ve got an intellectual disability]

This finding mirrors those of other scholars (Bricker-Katz et al., 2013) and such a preoccupation amongst LWS is potentially problematic, since the internalisation of social stigmas, in the form of self-stigma (Boyle, 2013, 2015), could contribute to unhealthy learner self-concept beliefs. The presence of self-stigma in our participants supports the findings from other studies that have proved that stigmatized beliefs on a societal level can influence how IWS envisage themselves (Boyle & Blood, 2015; Boyle & Fearon, 2018).

Our analysis identified the presence of disruptive thought patterns in LWS during EFL classes. These self-directed negative cognitions were described by one participant in the following terms:

(122) PET, Female, 26

“Entonces dices (.) ‘madre mía voy a hacer el ridículo o:: seguro que la gente tiene mucho más nivel y yo soy aquí la tonta de la clase’ (.) y luego no es así >más o menos todo el mundo estamos más o menos igual< PERO BUENO (.) SON LAS COSAS QUE NOS DECIMOS ERRÓNEAMENTE (.) pero es que es muy complicado de controlar” [So you say, ‘bloody hell I’m going to make a fool of myself’ or ‘I’m sure everyone has a higher level than me and I’m the stupid one in the class’. And then it isn’t like that, everyone has more or less the same level, but well, they’re the things we mistakenly tell ourselves, but it’s very difficult to control]

PET narrates the difficulties she has in controlling such thoughts and alludes to their influence on her cognitions during L2 classes. She expresses a concern that she will “make a fool” of herself and become the “idiot of the class”, suggesting that she feels stuttering contributes to the imposition of a silencing identity (cf. Norton & Toohey, 2011). However, in this passage we can observe how she actually exerts her agency by rejecting such negative identity and granting herself the power to decide which identity positions she can associate with. Therefore, PET’s words here allude to the idea of identity as “a site of struggle” (Norton Peirce, 1995), which in LWS is not just based on an acceptance or rejection of identity positions ascribed by others, but mainly by themselves. Unhealthy self-efficacy beliefs about oneself regarding classroom participation may subsequently contribute to cognitive and behavioural processes that can perpetuate anxiety and impede progress in L2 learning (Carter et al., 2017; Iverach et al., 2017), as also discussed by PET:

(123) PET, Female, 26

“A ver directamente >la tartamudez como tal no< (me afecta el aprendizaje del inglés) (.) pero sí las consecuencias de la

tartamudez (.) y me refiero >como ya te he dicho antes< (.)  
solemos ser personas con muy baja autoestima:: muchas  
insegurida:des (.) entonces sí que es verdad que a lo mejor  
piensa:s ‘que mira esto lo voy a hacer mal’ (.) o ‘esto yo no lo sé  
hacer’ (.) o sí que es verdad que eso hace que a lo mejor puedas ir  
más despacio:: que si no lo tuvieras (.) pero ya no es tanto por el  
bloqueo en sí porque esto en el fondo (.) para aprender inglés no  
me supone ningún problema (.) pero sí que a lo mejor a la hora de  
ponerte (.) yo que sé (.) a hacer a lo mejor yo que sé un escrito  
>muchas veces tienes el “rumrum” de ‘lo voy a hacer ma::l< no va  
a ser lo suficientemente bueno::’ (.) y eso sí que:: (.) a lo mejor  
hace que >yo que sé< incluso te puedas llegar a desmotivar un  
poco >en plan ‘para qué< si no voy a::’ (.) entonces en ese sentido  
sí pero es más por las consecuencias que acarrea la tartamudez”  
[Ok, stuttering in itself hasn’t directly (affected my learning of  
English) but the consequences of stuttering have and I refer to, as I  
said earlier, that we are usually people with very low self-esteem,  
lots of insecurities, so yeah is true that maybe you think ‘look I’m  
going to do this badly’, or ‘I don’t know how to do this’. Or yes it’s  
true that this (stuttering) maybe makes you go a bit slower than if  
you didn’t have it. But it’s not because of the block itself, because  
ultimately, to learn English it doesn’t mean any problem, but it does  
when it comes to, I don’t know, doing a writing exercise, often you  
have the ‘rumrumrumrum’ of the ‘I’m going to do this badly, I’m not  
going to be good enough’ and that does mean maybe that, I don’t  
know, that you can even end becoming unmotivated a bit, like  
‘what’s the point’. So in that sense, yes, but it’s more because of the  
consequences that come with stuttering]

This extract is illustrative of a general theme that emerged in the interview data. Firstly, PET provides an insight into the disruptive internal monologues that can emerge as a result of beliefs relating to stuttering. The nature of this intrapersonal communication is highlighted when PET refers to the “rumrum” of her thought process. We may interpret the association of rumination with the

sound of a car engine as an indication of the continuous ticking over of her self-directed musings. The “low self-esteem and many insecurities” she describes as characteristic of IWS appear to fuel this process and contribute to unhealthy self-directed thoughts (Bricker-Katz et al., 2013; Iverach et al., 2017) which are carried into EFL learning and contribute to her disengagement. Thus, the extract illustrates how behaviours within the L2 classroom can be influenced by the pervasiveness of certain self-related thoughts and beliefs, which are difficult to eradicate and may contribute to defining who you are over time. Such beliefs may consist of pre-existing societal ideas regarding how IWS should behave and to which some participants acquiesced. For example, EMP stated the following:

(124) EMP, Male, 26

“Yo creo que eso nos afecta mucho eso lo del rol que hemos cogido durante toda nuestra vida (.) no sé (1.1) yo siempre he sido el tímido que no habla mucho:: y tal y es lo que la gente espera de tí también” [I think that we are affected a lot by the role that we’ve had throughout our lives, I don’t know, I’ve always been the shy one that doesn’t talk much and that, and it’s what people expect from you as well]

Here, EMP refers to the reification of certain identities that are influenced by societal expectations regarding IWS and are imposed upon them over time. Consequently, these identities are difficult to reject and end up becoming part of their self-related beliefs. This finding is reminiscent of the “role entrapment” referred to by Gabel and colleagues (2004) with regard to professional contexts. Moreover, we can see evidence in EMP’s testimony that “roles” attributed to, and adopted by, IWS correlate with certain speech behaviours. This participant alludes to an internalisation of social expectations regarding traits and behaviours associated with identities connected to stuttering. This may explain some of the conflict LWS experience when they perceive they exhibit behaviours that inaccurately reflect their “selves”.

The internalisation of disfluency as a negative character trait became problematic in some cases, as individuals rejected stuttering as a legitimate and

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acceptable aspect of their identity. This was described in a particularly arresting passage from one interview:

(125) RMA, Male, 30

“Yo en mi caso >o sea> además que no tengo mucho contacto con otros::: con otros tartamudos no estoy en contacto con ellos (.) nunca he querido meterme en asociaciones ni en tal (.) que es poco a lo mejor por lo (.) que te dice un poco lo de Freud los defectos tuyos en otras personas como más difícil de:: (.) aceptarlos ¿no? un poco eso entonces” [In my case, I don’t have much contact with other stutterers, I’m not in contact with them. I’ve never wanted to join an association or anything, maybe it’s a bit because of like what Freud said, that it’s harder to accept you own defects in others, right? A bit like that then]

This excerpt therefore shows how a societal view of stuttering as a problem to be fixed can result in individuals considering themselves to possess a “defect”, and how internalisation of stigmas regarding stuttered speech can be damaging to their self-concept. As discussed in Chapter 4, the medical model of disability (and some forms of intervention that have emerged as a result of it) contributes to perpetuating the idea that disfluency is a disorder that must be corrected (see also García-Pastor & Miller, 2019b). Therefore, it accentuates the struggle of IWS to ascribe themselves healthy identity positions in L2 English learning contexts.

Despite these difficulties, we also found some participants holding deep-seated self-related beliefs that served to offset these. Consequently, some interviewees were able to identify ways in which stuttering and EFL learning could interact positively, despite anxiety and problematic social and self-stigmas associated with disfluent speech:

(126) RCL, Male, 23

“Como:: otra gente no se ha acostumbrado a que::: a:: hacerlo mal (.) >y ese sentimiento de no poder hablar bien y tal< y nosotros tenemos que (inteligible) todos los días” [As other people are not



used to doing it badly (speaking) and that feeling of not being able to speak well and that, and we have that (intelligible) every day]

However, the advantages that stuttering may have in L2 learning as described by RCL and other participants in the interviews may be limited, as they only apply to L2 lower level classes. At more advanced levels, social pressures returned:

(127) RCL, Male, 23

“Entonces no es tan grave (.) siempre y cuando (.) siempre y cuando estés en las fases iniciales del aprendizaje (.) >cuando ya se supone que tienes que tener un nivel< se vuelve en contra (.) porque se junta el factor de que es el inglés (.) y se junta el factor de que:: de la presión normal que sientes por hacerlo bien ¿no? Por eso cuanto más sé entre comillas casi peor lo hago (.) más presión tengo más nervioso me pongo (.) pero sobretodo la presión social” [So it’s not that serious, provided you are in the early stages of learning. When you are supposed to have a certain level, it turns against you. Because you combine the fact that it’s English with the normal pressure that you feel about speaking well, right? So the more you know, “the worse I do it”, the more pressure I have, the more nervous I get, but most of all the social pressure]

Consequently, progress in L2 English learning is bittersweet for some LWS: “the more I know, the worse I do: the more pressure I have, the more nervous I get, the social pressure most of all”. Therefore, once these learners reach higher levels of L2 language knowledge they may be more likely to experience anxiety relating to social expectations of acceptable speech. Lower levels of L2 English thus offer certain freedom for these learners, as referred to by AMB, who describes how classroom dynamics at this level allowed her to pay more attention to intrinsic strategies she used to manage speech fluency:

(128) AMB, Female, 36

“Yo creo que lo:: llevé mejor (.) incluso recuerdo (.) que los primeros años err ·hh (.) hablando en inglés apenas tartamudeaba (.) pero yo creo que era porque (.) al hacer más pausas ¿no? para pensar ¿no? lo que:: lo que se iba a decir ¿no? en:: inglés (2.3) pues me permitía no sé llevar a lo mejor el control de:: la respiración mejor (1.3) no sé >quiero decir que por lo general< err casi siempre me:: he sentido cómoda hablando en inglés” [I think I got on well (previously), I even remember that in the first years speaking English I hardly stuttered, but I think it was because by pausing more to think about what I was going to say in English, it let me, I don’t know, maybe control my breathing better. I mean, in general, I’ve always felt comfortable speaking in English]

A similar situation was described by ERA, who actually felt less “pressure” to speak fluently in EFL contexts than L1 Spanish on the whole:

(129) ERA, Female, 22

“El tema:: (.) de hablar siempre me causa un poco de nerviosismo y tal (.) pero (.) es que (.) me pasa que en inglés me cuesta menos hablar (.) >no sé por que< ((se rie)) [...] mmmm igual igual (.) es porque (.) como errrrm no se espera de mi (.) errrm que hable perfectamente el inglés (.) y fluidamente me siento con menos presión >o algo de eso< >al hablar inglés que hablar español< (.) entonces como que sale todo mejor no sé eso es mi eso (.) [...] y me relaja más entonces (.) pues no sé >eso es mi teoría< ((se rie))” [The issue of speaking always causes me a bit of nervousness and that, but the thing is that in English it’s easier for me to speak, I don’t know why (she laughs) maybe it’s because, as people don’t expect me to speak perfectly and fluently in English, I feel less pressure when I speak English compared to Spanish, or something like that. So, it’s like everything goes well, [...] I relax more, so, I don’t know, that’s my theory (she laughs)]

While we have provided evidence of how L2 oral expression can be particularly effortful for some LWS, these examples show that, in some cases, they may perceive EFL classes as suspending some of the demanding social expectations for spoken interaction present in L1 contexts. These findings are encouraging as they suggest that in the right circumstances, for example, offering LWS the possibility of pausing and taking their time to speak, L2 English contexts may help to develop healthy self-concept beliefs and be particularly beneficial for LWS.

Another potentially favourable aspect of L2 English learning was highlighted by VSM, who perceived stuttered speech to be better received in EFL contexts due to a historical awareness of disfluency amongst British people:

(130) VSM, Female, 29

“PIENSO QUE NOSOTROS mmmm los tartamudos lo que TENEMOS DE BUENO A LA HORA DE mm a la hora de aprender inglés ·hh es que los in los in los ingleses AL TENER (.) O MEJOR dicho al haber tenido un (.) rey tartamudo ellos saben mejor CLARO O SEA TÚ LES EXPLICAS (.) mmm que tengo tartamudez “stammer a little bit” y::: >a lo mejor no saben o no entienden< pero tú les dices “THE SAME AS THE KING THAT YOU HAD BEFORE BLAH BLAH” Y ENTONCES YA AUTOMÁTICAMENTE SABEN (.) IDENTIFICAN ahhh ya ya ya ya entiendo tal el problema entonces AUNQUE SEA UN IDIOMA QUE NOS DE MIEDO APRENDER >QUE TE GENERE ANSIEDAD< EL PROPIO REY QUE SABE SU IDIOMA PORQUE ES SU IDIOMA MATERNO Y ES EL REY O SEA QUE (.) QUE NADIE MÁS IMPORTANTE” [I think that for us, the stutterers, what’s good for us when it comes to learning English is that the English, having, or better said, having had a stuttering king they know better, I mean if you explain to them “I stutter, I stammer a little bit”, maybe they don’t understand, but if you say “the same as the king that you had before blah blah” then they automatically know, they identify “ahh yeah yeah yeah I understand the problem”. So even though it’s a language that we are scared to

learn, that causes you anxiety, the king himself, who knows his language because it's his native tongue and he's the king, I mean, there's no one more important]

Therefore, certain factors associated with the target culture could help LWS engage with L2 English learning in positive ways. More specifically, representations of stuttering in the foreign culture<sup>4</sup> can influence social attitudes towards disfluency. Such depictions can be negative, but others can help to promote progressive attitudes in both IWS and neurotypical learners (Miller, 2015), as established by VSM here.

### **9.1.2. Synonym experts and positive cycles: L2 English contexts offering learners who stutter opportunities for positive engagement**

As argued above, EFL learning had the potential to provide respite from certain social pressures, allowing participants to positively experience spoken interaction in L2 contexts and broaden their emotions. This second subordinate: "Synonym experts and positive cycles" refers to the way in which LWS were able to identify facets of their own behaviours and language capacities that contributed to positive broadening experiences in EFL contexts, sometimes giving place to positivity cycles:

(131) EMO, Male, 26

"Entras en un ciclo que que cada vez te sientes mejor ((se ríe)) con lo que dices" [You get into a cycle where you feel better and better (he laughs) with what you say]

Thus, some participants were able to identify facets of stuttering that enabled them to approach EFL learning from a position of empowerment. As such, LWS could challenge some of their own unhealthy self-related beliefs

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<sup>4</sup> Such as "The King's Speech", an Oscar nominated film released in 2010, which dramatized King George VI's relationship with his stutter.

and, in some cases, claim for themselves healthy learner identities. The growth experienced during these moments also appeared to contribute to the development of a healthier self-concept in situations outside the EFL context. These are encouraging findings, particularly after the identification of intense anxiety and problematic thoughts linked to stuttering highlighted previously.

LWS sometimes recognised healthy aspects of their stuttering identities that could aid progress in L2 learning. In some cases, this occurred in reference to specific skills that could be applied to language learning in general. For example, one participant discussed her perception that IWS were “synonym experts”:

(132) VSM, Female, 29

“Me dices una palabra >y los tartamudos somos expertos en saber sinónimos te podemos decir en dos segundos veinte sinónimos<”  
[You say one word to me, and us stutterers are experts in synonyms, we can tell you twenty synonyms in two seconds]

In previous chapters we have identified synonym use as a strategy LWS employ to mitigate their stutter and the anxiety it provoked. While this type of approach can sometimes represent avoidance behaviours, such linguistic dexterity could also be put to good use in language learning contexts. We may therefore surmise that IWS possess a distinctive perspective towards language and communication than that of neurotypical students.

Another healthy aspect of stuttering acknowledged by our interviewees referred to the development of listening skills in L2:

(133) JSM, Male, 29

“Justamente por eso (la tartamudez) puede ser que (.) la parte de comprensión la lleve >tan bien porque< (.) estoy mucho más acostumbrado a escuchar que hablar (.) entonces (.) la parte de comprensión y de escuchar en inglés es una cosa que siempre me he llevado muy muy bien >y también puede ser porque< (.) en mi vida estoy mucho más >o sea es una parte que tengo muy muy entrenada entonces< (.) >por ese lado puede ser que la tartamudez

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me ha dado< esa pequeña (.) >ventaja en ese campo<” [Precisely because of this (stuttering) it’s possible that I do so well in the listening comprehension because I am more much used to listening than to speaking, so the listening comprehension part of English is something I’ve always been really good at, and maybe it’s also possible because in my life I’m much more, I mean, it’s something I very well drilled in, so in that sense, it’s possible that stuttering has given me a little advantage in that area]

This passage shows that listening tasks, and also activities within the writing domain, not only produced comparatively low levels of anxiety (as discussed in Chapter 6) but also offered participants the opportunity to ascribe themselves identities of competence (Norton & Toohey, 2011) and capitalize on healthy learner self-concept beliefs. These results support the findings of Morita (2004), who found that students marginalized during group speaking activities were able to express themselves in other tasks (e.g., during writing exercises). This helped them locate themselves positively within the learning environment and in regard to their learner identities, in spite of perceived shortcomings in some areas.

The broadening experiences described above were essential for LWS, as they provided relief from the limiting emotions of helplessness, shame, and anxiety linked to stuttering (see Chapter 7). As a consequence, participants could acquaint themselves with different sensations that potentially facilitated growth. For many, experiences in real-world EFL contexts had been beneficial in this sense:

(134) VSM, Female, 29

“Después de (.) haber estado viviendo en Inglaterra he cogido mucha más se:: mm seguridad ·hh cuando tengo que hablar o tengo que responder o tengo que decir algo en en en:: broma entonces la gente que no ha viajado fuera que no fue al al país nativo pues yo:: siento que::: les cuesta mucho más hablar entender gastar una broma no no saben o no::: entonces es como que yo ahí llevo ventaja a pesar de mi tartamudez o:: problema lo

que sea ·hh pues yo ahí siento una seguridad extra ¿sabes?” [After having lived in England, I’ve become much more confident when I have to speak or answer, or when I have to joke about something. I feel that those that haven’t travelled to the country find it much more difficult to speak, understand, tell a joke, they don’t know, so there it’s like I’ve got an advantage in spite of my stutter, or problem or whatever, so there I feel an extra assurance, you know?]

VSM describes how living in England had provided her with a greater sense of “security” in her L2 English ability. Further, she perceived this to set her apart from other neurotypical students, who did not have the same degree of “real-world” knowledge. This enabled her to invert the conventional (and often limited) learner identity positions she felt available to her and progress “in spite of” stuttering, thereby breaching the status quo of being hindered by disfluency. Additionally, for some participants, L2 English learning allowed them to engage with certain situations and emotions in new ways. This was epitomized in a passage in which IMP described a shift in her perspective on anxiety, stuttering, and self-related beliefs in both L1 and L2 spoken interaction:

(135) IMP, Female, 36

“Creo que aprender inglés me ayuda con mi superación err:: no que me ayude con mi tartamudez me ayuda (.) a a err (.) a superarme con respeto a mi tartamudez no así gano fluidez o no sino a (.) es que no sé cómo explicarlo (.) [...] porque yo me lo tomo como un reto entonces (.) como veo que lo voy eso (.) superando pues eso hace que me sienta muy bien claro también (.) [...] hace que me sienta mm:: >a ver a ver< muy bien (.) con conmigo misma (.) porque era er: algo que antes no::: (.) a ver no es que no pudiera hacer (.) si podía pero >yo no me lo permitía hacer (.) entonces pues:: eso el:: el el pensar (.) que ahora que:: que: que puedo y >que cada vez me resulta> m:: pt >a ver< ·hh más fácil y que cada vez (.) er:: pues eso que lo hago más y:: >y no ya eso sino en cualquier cosa<” [...] y ahora aunque salgo nerviosa pero:: salgo:: bien y salgo:: (.) mmm salgo mm salgo: pues:: (3.2) salgo (.) pues a

veces (.) hasta hasta eufórica” [I think learning English helps me with my self-improvement, not with my stuttering. It helps me to improve in regard to my stuttering, I don’t gain fluency but, I don’t know how to explain it [...] I take it as a challenge, so as I see that I am improving, that makes me feel really good of course, as well it makes me feel good with myself, because before it was something that, not that I couldn’t do, I could, but I didn’t allow myself to do it. So now, thinking that I can, and that it gets easier every time, I do it more. And now not just this (English), but in whatever [...] and now, even if I come out of class nervous, I come out good and sometimes I even come out feeling euphoric]

IMP recounts how she has been able to leave behind some of the restrictive and conditioning effects of stuttering and anxiety, which led to a sensation of progress that at times left her “euphoric”. This emotional reaction represents a radical shift from the narrowing emotions described in previous chapters. These findings recall those of Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), who suggested that anxiety and enjoyment within L2 contexts could occur concurrently and are not necessarily opposite ends of the same emotional spectrum. Thus, broadening experiences in some of our participants were engendered by engaging with challenging emotions (i.e., anxiety) and confronting unhealthy personal beliefs and behaviours. Such experiences in L2 learning benefitted IMP in “other things too”, possibly meaning that challenging speaking situations in L1 contexts were less intimidating. Therefore, in the right circumstances, L2 English learning may foster enjoyment and growth in LWS during L2 classes, despite the presence of anxiety.

To finish the discussion of the second subordinate theme, we offer an extended extract from the interview with EMP (a male participant), in which he describes his experiences during a week-long L2 English immersion course. This passage draws together the various phenomena and factors discussed across the Results section of this thesis. For ease of reading, we discuss it in various parts. EMP narrates his anxiety and willingness to go home and drop out of the course at the beginning of his experience, due to the amount of spoken interaction involved with other students he did not know. However, he



remained in the course, demonstrating the kind of resilient behaviour that we have previously discussed:

(136) EMP, Male, 26

">Había que hablar< mucho más inglés que lo normal (1.5) errr no sé era como (1.8) como que actuaba bueno yo es decir >me convertí en una persona< bueno sí a una persona como >como totalmente diferente< a como soy::: normalmente y::: >me acuerdo bueno< que::: recuerdo que tartamudeaba errr muchísimo menos (.) no sé y por ESA ULT- ESA ULTIMA CLASE FUE PRÁCTICAMENTE DIFERENTE AL RESTO DE LAS CLASES QUE HE TENIDO (1.8) en el instituto y tal y::: no sé. A ver bueno realmente era que veía como al resto de las personas que era::: (1.8) >es decir< (.) >que incluso< yo notaba que incluso les costaba (.) errr más trabajo que a mí (.) Entonces era un poco (2.7) >es decir< al ver que a ellos les costaba más trabajo que a mí yo me sentía como::: vamos super suelto es decir me ENCONTRABA::: super suelto y::: (1.6) no sé era como de (.) no sé no sé qué explicarte (.) que se sentían incluso peor que yo a la hora de hablar inglés" [I had to speak much more English than usual, I don't know it was like, like I acted, I mean, I became a person, well yeah, like a totally different person to how I am normally. And I remember that I stuttered much much less. I don't know, and in reality, that class was different to the rest of the classes I've had, at school and that. So, well, really it was that I saw the rest of the people, I mean, I saw that it took them even more effort than me and I felt, like, really at ease, I mean I felt really at ease and I don't know, it was like, I don't know how to explain, that they felt even worse than I did when they were speaking English]

The need to speak "much more English than normal" contributed to EMP becoming "a completely different person to the one I am normally". Therefore, he benefitted from greater opportunities to speak in L2 classes, not only as a means of practicing language production, but also as a way of reducing high

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levels of speaking anxiety. An additional factor that EMP highlights is his awareness of other people on the course who found speaking English more effortful than he did. This was a new experience for him, and he contrasts this with the classes he had during his Secondary education. Consequently, he reports his transformation as leaving him feeling “super *suelto*”, which may be translated into English variously as “loose”, “at ease”, or “fluent”. This positive emotion led to a healthier self-perception and opened up the possibility of ascribing himself identities of competence during the course.

(137) EMP, Male, 26

“Que tenía un par de compañeros que se ponían pero super mal es decir cuando se ponían cuando les tocaba::: hablar en inglés >se notaba que les costaba<::: muchísimo más trabajo (1.1) que a mí (.) y fue un poco eso me hizo sentir (.) no sé diferente y:: (.) no sé que tomé como el un::: papel diferente dentro de la clase (.) es decir ya no era yo que se sentía mal sino era otra persona< Y tomé que el papel de vamos (.) del del de hecho era el que más hablaba en::: en::: clase (.) que el profesor me tenía que decir de vez en cuando que me callara porque (.) Porque hablaba demasiado (.) la verdad es que me lo pasé bastante bien en esa clase” [I had a couple of classmates who got really bad, I mean, when they had to talk in English, you could tell it was really much harder for them than for me. And it made me feel a bit, I don’t know, different and I don’t know I took on like a different roll within the class. I mean, it was no longer me that felt bad, but someone else and I took on the role of, you know, in fact I was the one that spoke the most in the class, at times the teacher had to tell me to shut up because I spoke too much, the truth is I had a pretty good time in that class]

EMP attributed himself a new and more powerful identity position in the EFL class, which correlated with a significant change in his speech behaviour. He recounts that he “took on the role of the who one spoke the most in the class”. This represents a complete departure from the behaviour he exhibited at the start of the course. This change is accentuated by the charming detail of

him speaking so much that he was told to be quiet by the teacher. Accordingly, he expresses his enjoyment of the class, before reflecting upon the factors that lead to this change in “role”:

(138) EMP, Male, 26

“Si yo soy tímido ellos eran (.) muchísimo más tímidos (.) que yo [...] en la clase cuando les cuando les tocaba hablar inglés (.) se ponían (.) muy mal [...] como que lo veía como que les costaba muchísimo y< a mí me costaba pero me notaba que (.) me costaba menos que a ellos (.) y no sé me hizo:: (1.1) >es decir (.) el hecho de que ellos se han (.) de que ellos hubieran cogido el papel de< de los que les costaba más trabajo era como que yo cogí directamente otro papel (.) entonces pues no sé empecé a hablar más de lo normal (.) parte en inglés parte en en español [...] me ayudó:: bueno (.) también cogí el papel como del gracioso de la clase entonces no sé como que decía alguna::: cosa graciosa y::: no sé me hacía sentir mejor ((se ríe)) y::: entonces bueno entras en un en un en un ciclo que que cada vez te sientes mejor ((se ríe)) con lo que dices” [If I’m shy, they were much much shier than me. In class when they had to speak English they had a really hard time and it was hard for me, but I saw that it wasn’t as hard as it was for them and I don’t know, it made me feel, I mean, the fact that they had taken on the role of those who found it the hardest, it was like I took on a different role directly. So I don’t know, I started to speak more than usual, partly in English, partly in Spanish [...] it helped me, well also I took on the role of like the funny one in class, so I don’t know, it was like I’d say something funny and it made me feel better ((he laughs)) and so, well, you get into a cycle where you feel better and better ((he laughs)) with what you say]

The inversion of customary learner identity positions aided EMP in claiming for himself a healthier role that had previously been out of reach. In other words, he found that he was no longer the person in the room who found speaking most difficult. Furthermore, as mentioned in discussion of previous examples, it is

possible that EMP found himself better able to deal with the anxiety provoked by such a situation precisely because of his previous experiences of disfluency. Consequently, he describes how this new role had a broadening effect on general speech behaviours in both L2 English and his L1 Spanish (Macintyre & Gregersen, 2012; Dewaele & Macintyre, 2014). This led to a feedback “cycle” in which EMP experienced increasingly broadening emotional reactions to his own speech. The passage continues with further description of this new role:

(139) EMP, Male, 26

“Sí no sé me notaba como que::: (3.2) no sé (2.3) sí::: raro (.) es raro porque sientes que cuando ya había cogido ese papel ( . ) me sentía mucho mejor y es decir hablaba mucho mejor (.) hablaba mucho más y me expresaba mucho mejor y cuando volvía a mi casa::: AL PAPEL QUE YO TENÍA DE TODA LA VIDA, No sé era como::: (2.1) ME SEN-ME SENTÍA COMO EN/ EN/ ENCASILLADO EN ESE PAPEL VALE (.) y es como::: (.) >joder si hace una semana (.) era un persona totalmente diferente< no (podía trasladar ese papel a mi vida diaria) la verdad es que tampoco lo (1.5) que no sé es como (.) que también bueno CUANDO YO (.) HABLO EN ESPAÑOL CON OTRA GENTE >no me siento< (2.9) como que a ellos les cuesta ellos hablan (.) normal fluidos (.) >y yo me siento como no sé como en inferioridad< (.) me cuesta más no quiero hablar (.) en cambio cuando la cuando los papeles eran totalmente diferentes que a ellos también les costaba muchísimo (1.2) no sé era como que me::: (1.1) como que me ayudaba eso no sé” [Yeah, I don’t know, I noticed that I was like, strange, it’s strange because you feel that when you had taken on that role, I felt much better, and I mean I spoke much better, I spoke much more and I expressed myself much better, and when I went back home, to the role I’d had all my life, I don’t know, it was like, I felt trapped in the role, ok? And like, shit but a week ago I was a totally different person. I couldn’t (transfer that role to my everyday life), the truth that no, I don’t know, it’s like, well, when I speak in Spanish with others, I don’t feel like it’s difficult for them, as they speak normally,

fluently, and I feel like, I don't know, like in inferiority. It's more difficult for me, I don't want to speak, whereas when the roles were totally different and it was really difficult for them too, I don't know, it was like that helped me, I don't know]

This section of the passage begins with further confirmation of the broadening emotions he was able to experience regarding his speech. However, the optimistic tone then dissipates, and we can observe a sense of frustration, as he describes this new identity fading away upon his return to his regular life. At this point, the inversion that had previously favoured him was rescinded and the negative aspects of his identity as a person who stutters were reconfirmed (O'Dwyer, Walsh, & Leahy, 2018). In this sense, EMP's testimony alludes to "role entrapment" (Gabel et al., 2004), and he highlights the sense of inferiority that accompanies his experiences when interacting with "normal, fluent" people. Thus, we once again see how social evaluation and expectations regarding "good" speech (cf. Daly, 1991), can play a role in the perpetuation of unhealthy self-related beliefs in IWS.

Throughout this passage, EMP makes use of the term "papel" and it is worth reflecting upon this lexical choice. *Papel* may be translated as "role" in English and is often used to refer to theatrical contexts in which individuals interpret the part of others. In this sense, the term describes a temporary change which necessarily involves reversion to type at some point. This is reminiscent of Goffman's (1967) theatrical model of social interaction, whereby "role" in his theory is based on different "faces" the speaker can claim for themselves in interaction or may be attributed by other conversational participants. Therefore, the positive cycles EMP describes when alluding to a change in "role" are of a transient nature. As such, it is not surprising that he expresses frustration and disappointment upon experiencing the potentially healthy identity position of a fluent speaker slip through his fingers. Additionally, this extract highlights the idea that learners cannot be separated from the learning and teaching context in which they are embedded, which includes "a range of external variables that are likely to influence individual differences or learner-internal variables, such as language anxiety" (Gkonou, 2017, p. 136). The specific characteristics of the L2 learning context described above meant

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that EMP was able to experience broadening emotions that were previously inaccessible.

This extract also illustrates the contradictory nature of identity and the idea that it is a site of struggle, which has distinct implications for self-related beliefs in LWS. For example, if we consider different self domains that form the basis of Dörnyei's L2MSS (2009) then we can imagine that the negotiation of healthy learner identity positions may facilitate the harmonising of actual and ought-to selves, in addition to stimulating future ideal-self projections. However, the fleeting nature of such positive experience in addition to the erratic nature of stuttering may complicate this process for these learners. As we have seen, moments of disfluency can be particularly affective and provoke intense anxiety and rumination (Craig & Tran, 2014; Iverach et al., 2017; Kraaimaat et al., 2002). However, LWS also experience moments of fluent speech, while intrapersonal communication exists on a cognitive plane far above any notion of disfluency (Constantino, 2018). In this sense, stuttering can contribute to the development of an "anxious-self" (Şimşek & Dörnyei, 2017) that clashes with cognitively fluent self-images. LWS may experience relatively greater moments of self-discrepancy than neurotypical students, which could complicate the construction of healthy identity positions and the formulation of ideal future-self guides.

In light of these findings, the challenge for L2 teachers is in maintaining these disruptive factors at the margins of the L2 learning experience for as long as possible, so that LWS can enjoy extended periods of healthy engagement with the target language. In doing so, these students may be able to claim learner identity positions and broadening emotions that aid learning (Norton, 2013). The presence of which may help to stimulate a healthy and robust set of self-concept beliefs.

Therefore, the self-concept beliefs held by LWS in relation to language learning, speaking in general, and stuttering, are subject to influence by the identity positions they are able to claim for themselves and negotiate in various contexts, including L2 English classes. These self-concept beliefs are also affected by self-efficacy and self-esteem beliefs, which mediate the influence of extrinsic contextual factors upon the former as well as the construction and negotiation of identity positions that constitute discursive and social

representations of all these beliefs. Therefore, a reciprocal relationship exists between these various self-related constructs, so that healthy, broadening beliefs in one area are likely to contribute to similar growth in others. Our findings indicate that anxiety and stuttering have the capacity to influence such relationships, disrupting potentially broadening experiences and contributing to unhealthy self-related beliefs, yet fostering positive emotions and a healthy self-concept at times.

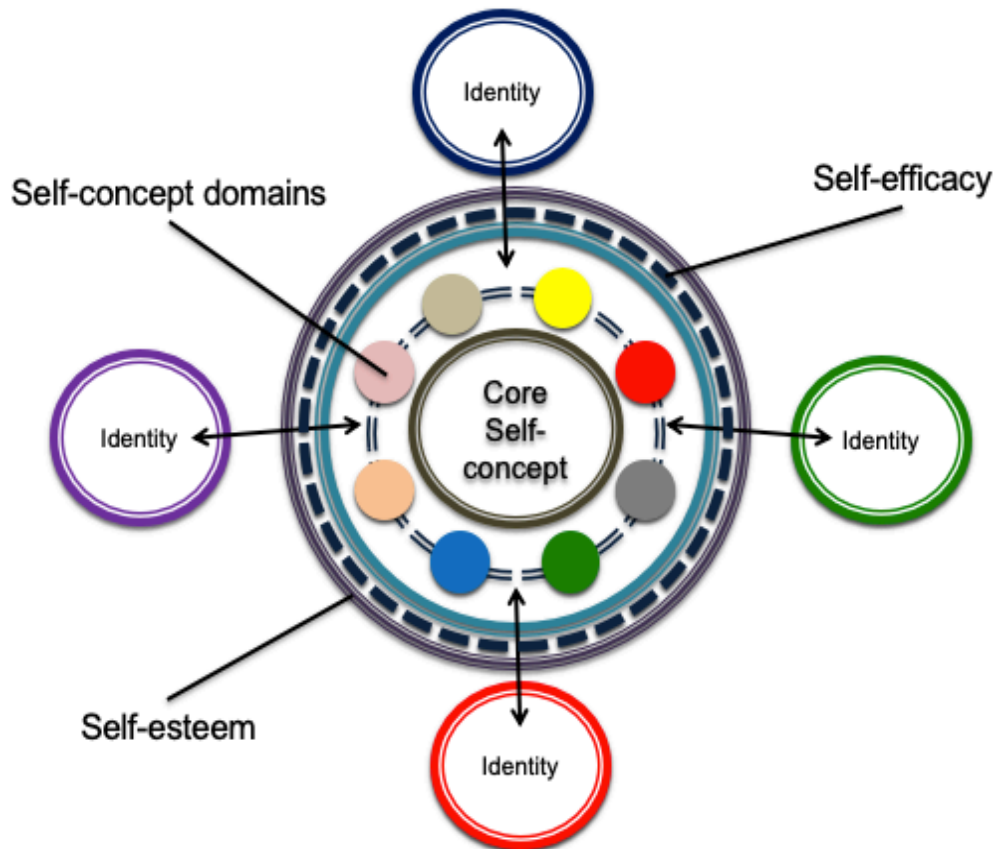


Figure 19. Relationship between self-related constructs in LWS in L2 English learning.

## 9.2. Conclusions

The findings discussed in this chapter respond to our final research question, namely, “how do LWS account for the relationship between stuttering, anxiety, L2 English learning and their self-concept beliefs?” We have presented results contained within the superordinate theme *Papeles distintos* and two subordinate themes, *No doy la talla* and *Synonym experts and positive cycles*. Within these themes we have discussed how the presence of anxiety and

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stuttering can impede self-attribution of healthy identity positions and negatively influence the nature of self-related constructs in LWS. Furthermore, we have suggested that these processes may be disrupted by the presence of social and self-stigma surrounding stuttering.

LWS can experience significantly limiting emotions and thoughts that can impede their ability to view themselves as capable learners. However, they can also draw on deep-seated resilience, enabling them to recognise positive traits that contribute to their progress in L2 learning. Importantly, some of these traits were directly linked to stuttering. This appeared to offset negative associations commonly attributed to disfluency and its limiting effect in L2 classes.

In terms of learner identity, LWS may experience reduced agency due to asymmetrical power relationships *vis-à-vis* other classmates, who are more able to exhibit dominant fluent speech patterns, which are deemed to reflect acceptable examples of spoken communication. Furthermore, anxiety may emerge in LWS as a result of concerns regarding negative reactions in others provoked by stuttering. This can lead to a range of avoidance behaviours that may ultimately lead to LWS rejecting opportunities to communicate due to a fear of being assigned negative social identities (Norton Peirce, 1995).

Similarly, findings indicate that the development of healthy self-concept beliefs in LWS is also influenced by the dynamic nature of stuttering, as well as interactions between anxiety, disfluency, and L2 English learning. In this respect, our results suggest that the negative impact of stuttering and anxiety on LWS over sustained periods of time led some students to struggle to develop healthy self-concept beliefs regarding their abilities in L2 English learning. Consequently, some LWS found their progress to have been hindered

not because they were incapable of performing successfully but because they were incapable of believing they could perform successfully – they have learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic work or to see the work as irrelevant to their life. (Pajares & Schunk, 2001, p. 248)

Yet, the participants in this study also reported changes in self-concept beliefs over time and in response to specific contexts and language domains. For example, we have seen how student-teacher relationships and classroom



dynamics aided LWS to positively experience EFL classes. The opportunities to engage in lower anxiety activities such as listening and reading activities, or speaking tasks in smaller groups, proved beneficial. This meant that they were able to exercise resilience and agency in navigating paths through L2 English learning despite the difficulties mentioned above. These findings have practical implications for L2 teachers. Educators can help to reduce struggle and anxiety in LWS by understanding how stuttering can impact upon learners' self-concept beliefs and helping to counteract these when they arise. Our findings suggest this should be done from a position of trust born from reciprocal collaboration and support. We have seen that some LWS are capable of developing strategies and ways of thinking that can offset the troublesome impact of anxiety and stuttering in their learning of English. However, the burden should not be theirs alone to bare.

A further finding that is particularly relevant in this regard is that L2 English classes may serve to galvanize healthy self-concept beliefs in LWS in other contexts. L2 English contexts have the potential to suspend or invert established power relations and social expectations regarding spoken interaction. As a consequence, disfluency becomes commonplace and speech anxiety the norm, rather than the exception. We found evidence that in these circumstances, some LWS were able to negotiate, and enjoy learner identities that were sometimes elusive in L1 settings. Equally, some LWS found that by embracing the particular challenges present in L2 English learning, they were able to experience positive effects in other contexts. Therefore, constructive experiences within EFL contexts appeared to have a broadening effect not only on L2 progress, but also on L1 behaviours. All in all, EFL teachers may be in a position to aid LWS in ways that extend beyond the traditional advantages of bilingual or plurilingual education.

The findings discussed here have illuminated our understanding of the influence of stuttering and anxiety on self-related constructs in LWS. Our results indicate that LWS may exhibit behaviours they feel are at odds with their "true" selves, while also internalising social stigmas related to IWS and stuttered speech. As a result, some learners may struggle to ascribe themselves healthy learner identity positions, which may compromise their degree of investment in their language learning process. Equally, we have seen that EFL contexts may

## *Results & Discussion*

have the capacity to offset some of these difficulties in the right circumstances, so that individuals can re-evaluate their relationship with spoken language and experience positive broadening emotions.

## **IV. CONCLUSIONS**



## **Conclusions**

In this doctoral thesis, we have explored the foreign language anxiety and self-related constructs of a group of LWS studying English as a foreign language in the Spanish context, as already announced in its Introduction. The influence of FLA upon learning has been widely established (Horwitz et al., 1986; Macintyre, 2017), while its effect in influencing the self-related constructs of language learners in general has been sufficiently documented by scholars in second language acquisition (e.g., Şimşek & Dörnyei, 2017). However, these issues have not been explored in LWS as a learner population. Our study has attempted to explore how these phenomena overlap in LWS within the foreign language classroom (Weiss, 1979). Thus, our theoretical framework is based upon inquiry within SLA, TEFL, and stuttering research.

In terms of language education and SLA, we have referred to work by scholars who have investigated the influence of affective factors and their interactions with the teaching and learning context. We have also considered Horwitz et al.'s (1986) seminal study of foreign language anxiety as a starting point to discuss contemporary FLA research. To complement this, we have considered studies from within mainstream psychology that have provided relevant conceptualisations of anxiety types similar to FLA (Clark & Wells, 1995; Eysenck et al., 2007), before offering our own definition of anxiety in the foreign language context. We have also included investigation that has considered anxiety as part of broader frameworks and issues that describe how affective factors can interact with self-related constructs in foreign language learning. For instance, those proposed by Norton Peirce (1995), Norton, (2013); Dörnyei (2009); Mercer (2012), and Rubio-Alcalá (2017), which have allowed us to describe and conceptualise a range of self-related constructs in LWS that are related to FLA and other emotions.

The third fundamental pillar of our theoretical framework has been stuttering. Here we have discussed its etiology, its prevalence, and its relationship with the medical and social models of disability. Definitions provided by Butler (2013a) and Blood and Blood (2016) have been presented and we have subsequently offered our own, which views this phenomenon as

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producing changes to speech fluency and contributing to disruptions in psychosocial functioning that are related to intense negative emotions like FLA in the foreign language classroom. In this regard, we have also attended to the considerable literature on anxiety, more specifically, social anxiety in individuals who stutter, and we have identified conceptual similarities between this anxiety type and FLA in LWS. This has led us to discuss theoretical frameworks such as that of Iverach et al. (2017) in an attempt to elucidate the interrelation between stuttering and FLA. As with affective factors in L2 learning, we have contemplated investigation within the stuttering literature that has explored self-related constructs such as identity (Butler, 2013a; Daniels & Gabel, 2004), self-concept (Fransella, 1968; Plexico et al., 2009a), and self-esteem (Blood & Blood, 2016) in IWS.

We have therefore intended to develop Horwitz et al's (1986) conception of FLA by describing its features in LWS with a focus on the differences in how it manifests itself in these students compared to neurotypical learners. Subsequently, we have considered how the relationship between FLA and stuttering may shape the nature of L2 self-images (Dörnyei, 2009), learner identities (Norton Peirce, 1995), learner self-esteem (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017) and self-concept (Mercer, 2012) in LWS. As a limiting emotion, anxiety can impede the development of healthy self-related constructs individuals. Thus, we have centred on the role of anxiety in provoking and maintaining a number of cognitive-behavioural processes in IWS (Iverach et al., 2017) that can hinder positive engagement with socially interactive situations, including those within L2 contexts, thereby impeding progress in these learners.

Therefore, main aim of this thesis has been to investigate how FLA is triggered in LWS, its effects on these learners, and how they cope with it in the L2 classroom in order to a) find an explanation for differences emerging between LWS and LWDNS, and most importantly, b) offer language teachers empirically based information and suggestions regarding how they may better support these learners. In sum, by exploring the experiences of LWS in foreign language learning with regard to anxiety, we have modestly attempted to attend to a gap in both the FLA and the stuttering literature.

These considerations led to the formulation of the four research questions guiding this doctoral research. The first has focused on measuring

levels of anxiety in LWS and LWDNS across the four language skill domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In this sense, our intention was to describe differences in anxiety between the two groups in regard to specific tasks or situations common to the L2 classroom. The following three research questions delved further into these differences by concentrating on the lived experiences of LWS in L2 English learning in order to account for these differences and provide insight into why disparities in anxiety between LWS and LWDNS may occur. Furthermore, we attempted to observe if anxiety and stuttering could have an influence in the formation of certain self-related constructs that have been considered central to the L2 learning process.

In order to provide an answer to these research questions, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach to data collection and analysis. Two scales, the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986) and the SLSAS (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019a) were used with LWS and LWDNS for quantitative analysis. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with LWS and were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith et al., 2009). Our decision to employ a mixed-methods approach is justified by the multidisciplinary scope of the study and its aims in intending to shed light on the experiences of LWS in the L2 learning context regarding anxiety (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tetnowski & Damico, 2001).

Our findings indicate that LWS experience higher levels of FLA than LWDNS in general. Quantitative analysis of the data, including *t*-tests, revealed that in the domains of reading, writing, and listening, differences between the two groups were not statistically significant. However, in the domain of speaking, LWS experienced significantly higher levels of anxiety than LWDNS. This result, whilst not all together surprising given that stuttering can contribute to anxiety in social situations, is relevant due to the lack of previous evidence on an increasing presence of FLA in this student group. Thus, we can now state with more certainty that LWS experience greater anxiety than their non-stuttering peers in general, and in L2 speaking tasks in particular.

These findings were corroborated by the results of the qualitative analysis of the interviews with LWS. We found that stuttering could complicate the process of L2 learning in a number of ways. This was discussed in our second results chapter, in which we identified two superordinate themes

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reflecting a) the effortful nature of L2 learning for LWS and, b) the limiting effect of stuttering in this context. Within the former, we have presented evidence illustrating how stuttering can disrupt aspects of speech production such as pronunciation and intonation, influence evaluation of L2 knowledge in formal situations, and condition the behaviour of LWS and their teachers, all of which can lead LWS to believe that stuttering complicates progress and achievement in the target language. The second superordinate theme illustrates how stuttering can restrict self-expression and result in narrowing emotional responses such as helplessness and shame. We found that these emotional reactions were affected by the inherently changeable nature of stuttering severity, which could vary from day to day and in response to various contextual factors.

These findings enabled us to better understand the nature of anxiety experienced by LWS in L2 learning, since these superordinate themes appeared related to the manner in which anxiety arose, its effects, and how it was coped with by these learners. Thus, we found that anxiety was triggered mostly by tasks within the domain of speaking, particularly reading aloud. This type of reading provoked intense anticipatory anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, which led LWS to experience significant cognitive, behavioural, and physiological symptoms of anxiety. These included attentional bias before, during, and after speaking turns; avoidance of speaking opportunities; increased bodily tension, particularly in the throat; and negative self-evaluation and self-denigration. Therefore, as established elsewhere (García & Miller 2019b), although this particular type of reading did not yield statistically significant differences between LWS and LWDNS, we believe that quantitative analyses with a larger stuttering sample may confirm these findings.

In response to these experiences of anxiety, LWS described employing mitigating strategies. These were generally based around minimizing moments of stuttering and protecting the self from harm that could emerge as a result of anxiety and disfluency. Participants reported to use these strategies in L1 situations and attempt to transfer them to L2 English contexts. However, such strategies were difficult to employ in L2 English due to their linguistic complexity, so that LWS were forced to engage in L2 speaking tasks without these coping measures. In some respects, this was beneficial given that the



aforementioned strategies were often based on avoidance behaviours that could serve to maintain anxiety. Thus, by reducing avoidance and participating in spite high levels of anxiety, LWS demonstrated resilience and determination, which in turn contributed to broadening emotional reactions. This process was aided by extrinsic factors which served to reduce anxiety and a fear of disfluency in these learners. These extrinsic factors revolved around three pillars of L2 teacher practice, as described by these learners, namely, patience, collaboration, and understanding, which could be enacted in and through one-to-one conversations between LWS and their L2 teachers, in which stuttering could be acknowledged and discussed openly. These conversations served to diffuse associated fears regarding negative evaluation of stuttered speech and allowed LWS to clarify how anxiety and stuttering influenced their behaviour in class, as well as measures they believed could be taken to facilitate classroom participation. Therefore, we found that FLA was most effectively mitigated when LWS were able to experience a sense of trust and confidence in their language teachers as well as in their classmates, and in themselves in terms of their own ability to cope with the stressors present in L2 learning. Consequently, our participants indicated a desire for integration and inclusion within L2 classes, through increased awareness and support when faced with challenging speaking situations.

Finally, in our fourth results chapter, we have discussed the relationship between the aforementioned issues and the development of self-concept in LWS. Here we found that a dichotomy existed in LWS regarding their self-image in L2 learning. In one sense, it appeared that intense anxiety, negative reactions to disfluency, and a lack of progress could complicate the construction of healthy learner identity positions in interaction and contribute to an unhealthy self-concept. Such negative self-image is the result of the accumulation of other factors, beginning with anxiety experienced in relation to stuttering, which was augmented by a perception that broader society considered disfluency to represent an unacceptable form of verbal expression. As such, LWS carried unhealthy self-concept beliefs regarding their capacities as communicators in L2 English learning contexts. These beliefs appeared to be further tested by the challenging nature of L2 communication and the presence of FLA.

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Consequently, stuttering could limit the possibilities for adopting and negotiating powerful identity positions in LWS and lead to role entrapment for some of these learners, who found it difficult to shake off identities of shy or introverted individuals, partly because they were considered more socially desirable than that of “stutterer”. Moreover, in these circumstances, LWS struggled to envisage themselves as competent language learners and stuttering restricted the formulation of a positive ought-to and ideal future self-image. This also interacted with learners’ sense of self-efficacy, thus resulting in the development of an unhealthy language learner self-concept.

Conversely, our results also suggest that when LWS experience external support and are able to recognise certain strengths in their own language behaviours, they can develop a healthy learner self-concept, experience personal growth, and participate actively in classes, in spite of anxiety. Importantly, when LWS are able to identify ways in which stuttering could benefit skills essential to L2 learning, they are more likely to envisage themselves as capable learners. Our findings indicate that this was particularly noticeable in the domain of listening, in which LWS felt able to build upon skills they had developed as a result of finding spoken communication challenging due to their stutter.

Therefore, for some LWS, L2 learning was a suitable situation from which to engage with and challenge not only anxiety but also a negative self-image which provoked powerful broadening emotions. Participation in L2 classes for some of these learners thus contributed to the strengthening of healthy self-concept beliefs, as they were able to confront situations that they had previously felt unable to, primarily due to their high levels of anxiety. This progress represented considerable personal accomplishment and we have argued such experiences could be used as a springboard to broader growth, fuelling the development of positive self-images and healthy self-concept beliefs in both L1 and L2 language contexts. Thus, we may consider that L2 learning contexts have the potential to benefit LWS in ways that fall outside of the traditional advantages of learning different languages.

Therefore, foreign language learning, in addition to granting more cultural, educational, and employment opportunities, may be reimagined as being presenting a therapeutic aspect for some LWS. Language teachers

should be aware of such benefits and also possess knowledge of the specific challenges that this learner population can face. Equally, LWS should be encouraged to see themselves as capable learners who can progress in spite of the challenges and pitfalls that stuttering can present. While we strongly advocate a social perspective of stuttering that considers disfluency as a naturally occurring characteristic of oral expression, we also understand the pressures that cause many IWS to yearn for a sense of control over their speech. Stuttering should not be considered a disorder, nor a problem that individuals are required to fix in order to adhere to dominant social norms, rather another form of verbal expression in its own right. However, we must also recognise that IWS do experience discrimination because of their speech and anything that may reduce struggle and promote agency in these individuals in social situations deserves to be considered. In this sense, we believe IWS may view L2 language learning not only as a professional or educational endeavour, but also as a potential way of fomenting a healthy self-concept regarding spoken interaction.

In view of the above, and as with any other group of learners, the effectiveness of L2 learning and teaching for LWS can therefore be influenced by the individual learner, the learner group, the classroom context, and the language teacher. Our findings illustrate the complex and dynamic nature of “the communicative process in terms of what goes on within the person and the way this relates to and interacts with the communicative environment” (Packman & Luhn, 2009, p. 78). We have presented evidence that the communicative behaviours of LWS during L2 learning are influenced by a complex interaction between anxiety, stuttering, and self-related constructs. Anxiety in LWS:

can raise physiological arousal, thus lowering the threshold for the triggering of stuttering. Hence, the self-organization and interactions of the complex systems within and outside the person can increase not only the negative thinking and avoidance but also even the stuttering itself. (Packman & Luhn, 2009, p. 79)

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This has implications for the network of interrelated beliefs underlying a learner's self-concept, which maintain certain patterns whilst also adapting to the influence of contextual factors over time (Mercer, 2011a). This is evinced in the manner in which our participants' beliefs are strongly influenced by the presence of stuttering, but also subject to change in response to the L2 learning context and their past experiences. By considering the relationships between stuttering, anxiety, and self-related constructs our intention has been to reach a more nuanced understanding of how stuttering influences emotions in LWS in the foreign language classroom.

Thus, on a theoretical level, this study contributes to the literature by researching into the interplay between stuttering, anxiety, L2, and self-related constructs, whilst attending to a gap in previous research by focusing on an underrepresented learner population, i.e., LWS. In this way, our study also highlights the need for further inquiry on diverse L2 learner groups.

On a methodological level, our study has demonstrated the benefits of employing a mixed-methods approach to the study of anxiety, and by extension, emotions in L2 learning, in that it can lead to a more holistic and complete understanding of learners' emotional reactions during language learning. This is particularly relevant in the case of students with special educational needs like LWS in light of the scarcity of studies on these learners in SLA, which may justify their depiction as a non- WEIRD sample, that is a non-Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic groups (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010).

Additionally, our findings also have implications for pedagogy regarding LWS in the language classroom:

1) Language teachers should understand the limiting emotions that can be provoked by stuttering and the negative impact this can have on classroom behaviours. This not only refers to anxiety, but also shame, helplessness, and frustration, all of which can lead LWS to consider themselves out of place in the L2 classroom.

2) Educators should have the confidence to approach LWS and engage them in conversation regarding their needs and preferred means of support. These

interactions are key to establishing the patience, collaboration, and understanding key to helping these learners progress in L2 learning.

3) LWS are not generally considered students with special educational needs in mainstream L2 classes and in the curriculum. This explains that some questions still remain over the level of inclusiveness of some classroom practices for LWS. Building on the previous point, supportive teacher-student relationships and interaction appear to provide-inclusive measures for these learners. Nevertheless, spoken interaction and reading aloud can be specially challenging for these students. To offset this, L2 teachers could consider: establishing clear assessment criteria with all students; emphasising a focus on content, rather than fluency in speech; promoting group work that allows LWS to engage with speaking tasks in a less intimidating atmosphere; substituting class presentations for technology-mediated tasks in which students can record oral language instead of performing in front of a “live” audience.

4) Language teachers should be aware of certain negative societal views regarding stuttered speech, which may be the root causes of limiting emotions and avoidance of speaking in LWS. These views have often contributed to negative experiences that these learners carry into future social interactions. L2 teachers can help to assuage concerns held by LWS in this regard by making it clear that all individual differences (including stuttering) are welcome inside the L2 classroom and that no one will be negatively evaluated as a consequence.

5) Additionally, L2 teachers may encourage LWS to view stuttering as an individual characteristic that brings with it a distinctive relationship with language, rather than a negative trait. In this way, educators may help to stimulate these learners into considering experiences of stuttering as providing vital skills that can be positively transferred to the learning of different languages.

These pedagogical considerations require teachers to possess knowledge of stuttering and how it can condition behaviours. Due to the many misconceptions regarding stuttering, we believe that it would be appropriate that any teacher

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who is required to work with LWS familiarise themselves with some literature on these learners based on rigorous scientific inquiry. We consider this essential, so that teachers do not enter misinformed into any interaction with LWS. We thus hope that our research can aid L2 teachers in this regard.

Finally, we must comment on some of the limitations of the present study and offer directions for future research. Firstly, our participant sample was satisfactory in terms of accepted numbers required for qualitative inquiry in order to reach saturation (Guest et al., 2006). Nonetheless, a larger sample of LWS will certainly provide greater insight in terms of quantitative measures of anxiety. Therefore, future studies may consider recruiting a wider range of participants who stutter. In line with this, further research may also consider learners from distinct language backgrounds, age groups, or learning contexts. By so doing, researchers would be able to search for and establish commonalities across the experiences of LWS in foreign language classes.

In terms of our methodological choices, the SLSAS would surely benefit from revisions and re-testing to ensure that it can accurately assess anxiety across the different language skill domains and in different learners. Some of these revisions may consist of each item accurately reflecting the type of tasks, methodologies and activities used by L2 teachers in the different L2 teaching environments on which future studies can be conducted. Similarly, the FLCAS has been criticised for its excessive focus on speech and its disregard of ESL as opposed to EFL contexts (see Woodrow, 2006), thus the suitability of its exclusive use to measure FLA as opposed to including other measures and procedures may be considered. Future studies may also attempt to include other emotions in addition to anxiety, in line with some SLA scholars who have highlighted the dynamic, complex and complementary nature of emotional responses in L2 learning (Dewaele & Macintyre, 2014; Dörnyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Macintyre & Gregersen, 2012).

The use of semi-structured interviews in this study enabled us to collect rich and detailed data regarding the experiences of LWS. However, future studies may consider posing new interview questions or reformulating the ones used in this research depending on the specific focus of each study, e.g., - related constructs and beliefs, the potential benefits of L2 learning on stuttering

behaviours, positive and negative emotions in L2 learning, etc. A further observation that must be made is that, in some cases, time restrictions and novice experience conducting interviews might reduce the quality of the interview process. More malleable interview contexts and greater practice with the techniques of interviewing may therefore favour the collection of richer data.

Any further research may also attempt to assess pedagogical measures that aid the integration and progress of LWS in L2 learning, so that it identifies and establishes the kinds of classroom practices that are most beneficial for LWS. This may be done by using pre- or post-test measures to assess the emotional reactions of students during certain instructional treatments or tasks, in addition to conducting interviews and/or focus groups with learners on these, which are subject to qualitative analysis. Similarly, further exploration of the impact of L2 learning on attitudes and beliefs of LWS towards interaction and communication across social arenas could offer insights into the distinct benefits L2 learning and research of this kind may develop some of the findings of this study that could inform future practice with LWS. For example, to what extent can L2 learning be used as a tool to promote healthy self-related constructs in LWS? Can L2 learning assist these learners in confronting challenging speaking situations? Can L2 classes tailored to the specific needs of LWS also benefit them in speaking situations in L1 contexts? Our findings suggest that L2 learning may be beneficial for some LWS in broader social contexts, but more research would be necessary to find out how. Thus, future inquiry may choose to focus on these broadening emotional reactions rather than those which can limit progress in L2 learning, which have been the primary focus of with the current study.

In sum, this PhD research has principally aimed to explore the FLA and self-related constructs of LWS in EFL learning in the Spanish context. By doing so, it is hoped that the study has modestly contributed to the literature on affect in SLA and emotions, as well as previous inquiry into the experiences of individuals who stutter in various contexts. Our conclusions show that LWS can experience higher levels of FLA than neurotypical students, and that stuttering can have a significant impact on the shape of this anxiety type. In this way, our findings suggest that the form of FLA experienced by LWS may differ from their non-stuttering peers, due to various cognitive, affective, and behavioural factors

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inherent to both stuttering and foreign language learning. Therefore, L2 teachers must be aware of the specific challenges these learners face and draw from knowledge gleaned from reliable scientific inquiry in order to assist them as best as possible. We have thus humbly offered our findings as a contribution to this knowledge base.

Similarly, our results show that with the correct support, LWS can benefit from positive engagement in L2 learning beyond the traditional advantages of learning different languages. By experiencing broadening emotions in L2 contexts, LWS may be able to develop healthier self-related beliefs and a positive self-concept across different communicative situations. This may be helpful in the management of anxieties such as communication apprehension and fear of negative social evaluation. Therefore, LWS should be encouraged to engage in L2 learning not only because of the social, cultural, and professional benefits it may offer, but also due to its capacity to stimulate personal development and psychological well-being. Positive psychology as formulated by scholars like MacIntyre, Gregersen, and Mercer, among others, in the language education literature, and a social perspective on stuttering as opposed to a medical approach in the stuttering literature may be helpful in this regard.



## **Epilogue**



## **A practical application of the current study**

One of the objectives that we established when beginning this study was a desire to improve L2 English learning and teaching for LWS and to use findings to inform practice if possible. As we neared the completion of this project, we began to consider how this could be done. Therefore, we started to explore the possibility of offering practical English workshops specifically targeted at LWS. In this way, we wanted to build upon our own results after exploring the experiences of LWS in EFL classes, whilst also integrating practical guidance from other scholars who have looked into how to reduce anxiety in L2 classes.

As a tentative first step in this process, we organized a focus group with members of the Spanish Stuttering Foundation. It included 10 participants between the ages of 19 and 40 and was held in Madrid. The focus group lasted approximately an hour and we offered participants the opportunity to discuss the benefits of English language workshops focused on LWS and the kind of activities that may be most useful for them. A transcript of this focus group can be found at the end of this thesis (Appendix 4).

Participants overwhelmingly manifested themselves in favour of attending an L2 English workshop that was tailored to LWS. Thus, after further consultation with the Spanish Stuttering Foundation, plans were made to offer a one-day EFL workshop for LWS in central Madrid. The workshop was attended by seven LWS between the ages of 19 and 40 and was led by the author of this thesis. The pedagogical decisions we made regarding the activities were informed by a number of sources. Firstly, we considered the findings of the current study. For example, we found that our participants were keen for more and more varied opportunities to speak in L2 classes and that they wanted to be afforded patience and support in doing so.

Equally, one of our main findings was that speaking tasks such as reading aloud were particularly anxiety inducing for LWS. This was also corroborated by the data obtained during the focus group and we took these findings into account when planning the workshop. In the focus group, participants confirmed that their main interest lay in engaging with speaking

tasks that allowed them to practice aspects of L2 English that could be applied to their everyday lives. Examples of this included job interviews, presentations, and informal interpersonal communication. Further, we considered recommendations for low anxiety classroom practices from the SLA literature (Burden, 2005; Alrabi, 2015; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009; Oxford, 2017) and included certain classroom activities advanced by scholars such as Dewaele (2013) and Rubio-Alcalá (2017). These recommendations referred to speaking openly about anxiety and other limiting emotions (such as embarrassment or shame), establishing clear objectives, and promoting an atmosphere of trust and respect between participants and the workshop leader. Additionally, participants were encouraged to dedicate attention towards the manner in which their unique relationship with language, because of stuttering, could potentially benefit their L2 learning process.

Thus, the workshop was based around a number of activities involving challenging speaking situations. These included presenting one's classroom partner, discussing the potential difficulties and advantages generated by stuttering, and preparing and role-playing job interviews. This final task was the culmination of the workshop and required participants to engage with a situation that can provoke high levels of anxiety. The participants had the opportunity to take the role of interviewer and interviewee, while the questions dealt with relevant areas of employment for each individual. An additional component to this activity involved a debate regarding how and when to self-disclose stuttering in this context. To this end, attendees were provided with examples of how to approach the issue of stuttering and specific vocabulary and grammatical constructions they could use to speak about it in the target language.

During the focus group that was held prior to the workshop, participants expressed a desire for English language music to be included within the activities. With this in mind, we built upon an idea originally proposed by a member of the British Stammering Association at the national conference organised in Manchester in 2016. This involved collecting together a number of songs related to stuttering in some way. For example, songs with references to stuttering in the title or lyrics, or songs that used stuttering-like repetition for rhythmic effect. A broad number and style of songs were considered; however,

care was taken not to include those which played on tired tropes regarding disfluency (such as stuttering as a result of nervousness). The idea behind this was to stimulate participants to contemplate stuttering from a different perspective and to reflect on why neurotypical speakers would choose to use stuttering-like repetition as a way of making their songs distinctive and memorable from a different and more positive perspective. Consequently, a playlist of eleven songs was compiled and, with the agreement of participants, left to play throughout the day. The lyrics to all songs were made available to read during the lunch hour or in breaks, and we discussed the content and titles of songs at various points. The playlist was deliberately kept short, so that participants would hear the songs various times. In this manner, it was hoped that they would become somewhat familiar with the lyrics and also be able to relax while learning English.

The use of music was viewed favourably by participants, who made numerous comments regarding the songs and the novel experience of hearing music during an English class. Another aspect of the music, which was not commented on by participants, but we feel is worth noting, is that it filled in some of the silences which occurred as the result of extended speech blocks. We believe it may have had an influence on levels of anxiety. In interview data, our interviewees commented on the uncomfortable nature of this silence. The implication being that it contributed to the pressure and anxiety provoked by speaking since it heightened the awareness of a block. The music that played at a low volume in the background during the workshop compensated for this and, thus, may have reduced anxiety.

Another aspect of the workshop that may have lowered anxiety was that all participants were IWS, including the workshop leader. This dynamic helped foster a sense of camaraderie and rapport that may not be present in mainstream L2 classes. Furthermore, the majority had already made each other's acquaintance and, as such, could experience the kind of *confianza* that we have discussed in the results chapters of this thesis. Participants' feedback provided by participants suggested that the workshop was a success, but that there was also room for improvement and adaption. For example, it was not possible to introduce all the tasks planned during the allotted time of 6 hours. Additionally, towards the end of the workshop learners tired noticeably. Based

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on these observations, it is likely that a greater number of workshop hours spread over two days would allow for the inclusion of more content, while students would find it easier to remain attentive and focused.

Building upon this first workshop, another two workshops were offered at the national annual event held by the Spanish Stuttering Foundation. In keeping with the broad theme of the event, which was aimed at developing skills that could be used in professional contexts, we decided to focus mainly on the job interview activity. This was also done due to time restraints, as the workshop was required to be 45 minutes in length. These workshops were comparatively unsuccessful. Firstly, each included approximately 30 participants, which dictated that they had to work in small groups and could not be supervised at all times. Secondly, the L2 English knowledge of participants varied greatly. We had anticipated this and attempted to adapt the task accordingly and in a way that could prove beneficial to both elementary and more advanced learners. However, some students found it difficult to engage with the task and the discrepancy in language levels, in addition to the large numbers of participants, was detrimental to the success of the workshop. Furthermore, because of issues that were out of our control, that workshops that were 45 minutes had to be reduced to 30. This had serious implications for their quality as activities had to be shortened and participants were forced to complete tasks quicker than expected. Longer sessions such as the six-hour workshop described above may be more appropriate. However, a total of 10 hours divided over two days could be preferable. Equally, the number of participants should be controlled where possible. A maximum of 12 students would enable them to engage in group work so that their progress could be adequately supervised.

All in all, based on these experiences it does appear that an interest exists in such workshops amongst the stuttering community and we hope to be able to offer more in the future. Nonetheless, further evaluation and adaptations must take place after each session to ensure that all content and activities are relevant and benefit the L2 learning and engagement of LWS. It is our intention that such workshops serve to supplement, not replace, mainstream learning experiences. In this regard, we may provide LWS with an opportunity to develop language skills that can strengthen their self-concept as language learning that they can subsequently take into more traditional L2 contexts.

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## **VI. Resumen**





## 1. Introducción

En todo el mundo el aprendizaje y la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras se ha convertido en una parte establecida de los programas educativos. Los académicos en educación de idiomas y adquisición de segundas lenguas han recurrido a varios enfoques con el fin de explicar los factores que pueden influir en el progreso de los alumnos y el papel que desempeñan los profesores para estimular la adquisición del lenguaje.

Debido a una variedad de razones históricas, geopolíticas y socioculturales, el inglés se ha establecido como un idioma con influencia global (Pennycook, 1989; Canagarajah, 2006). Esto se refleja en el grado de investigación realizada en el campo de la enseñanza del inglés como Lengua Extranjera (ILE). La base teórica de ILE está fuertemente influenciada por los estudios en el campo de la Adquisición de Segundas Lenguas (ASL). ASL es un campo amplio e inherentemente multidisciplinario, que se basa en investigaciones realizadas en educación, psicología, lingüística y sociología para dilucidar la adquisición de un segundo, tercer o cuarto idioma. Esto puede incluir la investigación tanto del aprendizaje formal como informal en individuos o grupos de estudiantes. Los investigadores en este campo también exploran por qué el dominio de un idioma puede deteriorarse. Por lo tanto, el ASL se preocupa por las diversas facetas del proceso de aprendizaje de idiomas y la manera en que los alumnos tienen sentido para progresar, usar y conocer los segundos idiomas (Doughty & Long, 2005; Gass y Selinker, 2008).

La investigación con este fin ha examinado la naturaleza del lenguaje producido por los alumnos, la forma en que los distintos métodos de enseñanza pueden estimular el aprendizaje en los estudiantes y el papel de la interacción social en el desarrollo del conocimiento del lenguaje (Gass y Selinker, 2008; Ortega, 2014). La interacción entre el alumno, el maestro y el contexto en el que se produce la enseñanza y el aprendizaje es clave para dar cuenta de estos problemas. Desde la perspectiva del alumno, dicha interacción está influenciada por una serie de elementos, que tradicionalmente se han denominado "diferencias individuales" (Skehan, 1991). Estos factores se han

clasificado tradicionalmente como cognitivos, lo que se refiere al procesamiento y aprendizaje de la información; afectivo, que incluye emociones y sentimientos en el aprendizaje de idiomas y; motivacional, que se refiere a los objetivos y propósitos de los estudiantes (Ortega, 2014).

Dentro del ASL, se ha prestado especial atención a la interacción entre los llamados factores afectivos y los estudiantes de idiomas. Estos factores se refieren a ciertos procesos intrínsecos y extrínsecos que son inherentes a la experiencia de aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros y pueden influir en los estados emocionales o psicológicos de los estudiantes y la forma en que adquieren el lenguaje (McLaren, Madrid y Bueno, 2005). El trabajo de académicos como Krashen (1981) y Arnold (1999) ha sugerido que ciertos factores, como por ejemplo, la motivación, los estilos de aprendizaje, la empatía y la ansiedad pueden desempeñar un papel clave para influir en el progreso de los estudiantes de idiomas extranjeros.

La ansiedad en el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras se ha considerado un factor particularmente importante para determinar resultados de aprendizaje exitosos. Posteriormente, la investigación sobre los desencadenantes, los efectos y el manejo de la Ansiedad por la Lengua Extranjera (ALE) se ha convertido en una línea central de investigación dentro del ASL y la educación en idiomas (Horwitz, Horwitz y Cope, 1986; MacIntyre, 2017; MacIntyre y Gregersen, 2012). El estudio actual se sitúa dentro de la "fase dinámica" de la investigación sobre ALE, en la que se considera junto con otros factores como las características del alumno, los elementos contextuales y la dinámica social en un intento por comprender mejor el comportamiento de los estudiantes. Con lo cual, los investigadores que trabajan en esta área han considerado teorías sobre la identidad (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Toohey), autoestima (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017), autoeficacia (Mills, 2014), autoimágenes (Dörnyei, 2009) y autoconcepto (Mercer, 2011a).

En esta tesis, los capítulos 1 y 2 en la sección de antecedentes teóricos discuten las áreas antes mencionadas con más detalle. También ofrecemos nuestra propia definición de ALE y discutimos sus diversos efectos. También tocamos discusiones más amplias sobre la ansiedad, incluida la ansiedad social, que es conceptualmente similar a la ALE. Después de esto, dirigimos nuestra atención a la tartamudez, donde exploramos posibles explicaciones

sobre su etiología, antes de ofrecer una definición y discutir su potencial para interrumpir el funcionamiento psicosocial que puede influir en el comportamiento y la comunicación. Más adelante, destacamos la relación entre la ansiedad y la tartamudez, lo que sugiere que el aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros puede presentar dificultades para los estudiantes que tartamudean.

A continuación de esto, en el Capítulo 4, ofrecemos una revisión crítica de la investigación de ALE incluyendo estudios sobre las diversas habilidades lingüísticas y en diferentes contextos de aprendizaje. Al hacerlo, reconocemos los amplios conocimientos que ofrecen estos estudios sobre cómo la ALE influye en los estudiantes neurotípicos. Sin embargo, también señalamos su desentendimiento de alumnos con otros perfiles, como los que tartamudean. Por lo tanto, sostenemos que los investigadores que trabajan tanto con ALE como con la tartamudez comparten varios focos de investigación, dado que en ambas áreas se trabaja para identificar cómo las personas pueden verse influenciadas por la ansiedad; intentar establecer medidas para mitigarlo; y considerar la relación entre ansiedad y construcciones auto-relacionadas. Teniendo en cuenta estas similitudes, es sorprendente que parece que existe una laguna en términos de estudios que exploran las experiencias de ansiedad en los alumnos con tartamudez (ACT) en el aprendizaje y la enseñanza de idiomas extranjeros. Nuestro estudio intenta atender esta brecha explorando la interacción entre el aprendizaje y la enseñanza de idiomas extranjeros, ALE y la tartamudez. Por lo tanto, se encuentra en la encrucijada de investigaciones anteriores que han considerado estos fenómenos desde puntos de vista separados.

Con esto en mente, las siguientes preguntas de investigación han guiado nuestro estudio:

1. ¿Los ACT y los alumnos sin tartamudez (AST) informan diferencias en la ansiedad en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera?
  - 1.1. Si es así, ¿qué diferencias existen entre las destrezas lingüísticas?
2. ¿Cómo explica los ACT la relación entre la tartamudez y el aprendizaje de inglés?

3. ¿Cómo surge la ALE en los ACT en diferentes situaciones de aprendizaje dentro del aula de inglés?

3.1. ¿Qué forma toma la ALE en términos de tipos, factores desencadenantes, efectos y estrategias de afrontamiento?

4. ¿Cómo explica los ACT la relación entre la tartamudez, la ansiedad, el aprendizaje del inglés y las construcciones relacionadas con uno mismo?

En vista de estos objetivos principales del estudio y estas preguntas de investigación, hemos adoptado un enfoque de métodos mixtos para la recopilación y el análisis de datos. Este enfoque se describe en detalle en el Capítulo 5 de la tesis. En este capítulo también describimos nuestra muestra de participantes, explicamos nuestros procedimientos de recopilación de datos y justificamos nuestras preguntas de entrevista y el uso de dos escalas de cuestionarios.

La sección de Resultados y discusión de la tesis consiste en los Capítulos 6, 7, 8 y 9. Aquí, respondemos a cada una de nuestras preguntas de investigación, ofreciendo los resultados de nuestros análisis cuantitativos y cualitativos. Por lo tanto, el primer capítulo detalla los niveles de ansiedad en los estudiantes que tartamudean y los que no tartamudean en las habilidades del lenguaje. Los siguientes capítulos exploran con más detalle los efectos de la ALE en los ACT, cómo hacer frente a la ansiedad, y la influencia que esta junto con la tartamudez pueden tener en el aprendizaje de inglés. También discutimos los hallazgos con respecto a la influencia de la ansiedad y la tartamudez en las construcciones relacionadas con los ACT. Para interpretar estos hallazgos, recurrimos al trabajo de Iverach, Rapee, Wong y Lowe (2017), Rubio-Alcalá (2014), Norton Peirce (1995), Dörnyei (2009) y Mercer (2011a) y consideramos cómo sus enfoques teóricos pueden aplicarse a las experiencias de ACT en el aprendizaje de inglés.

Como resultado, sugerimos que la tartamudez y la ALE pueden complicar la negociación de posiciones de identidad de aprendices saludables y construcciones auto-relacionadas en los ACT. Por el contrario, también consideramos cómo la ampliación de experiencias en contextos de aprendizaje

de idiomas extranjeros puede ayudar al desarrollo de autoconstrucciones saludables en los ACT a través de la comunicación L1 y L2.

Por lo tanto, los hallazgos presentados y discutidos en cada capítulo de resultados proporcionan información sobre varias capas de las experiencias afectivas de los ACT en las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera. Nuestra intención es que cada capítulo se base en el anterior para dilucidar la interacción entre la tartamudez, la ALE y las construcciones auto-relacionadas en estos estudiantes en el aprendizaje de inglés.

## **2. Marco teórico**

Esta sección se compone de cuatro capítulos que describen y analizan la investigación sobre la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras, la ansiedad, la tartamudez y la ansiedad de las lenguas extranjeras.

El primero analiza el trabajo realizado en el campo de la adquisición de un segundo idioma (SLA) que tiene perspectivas informadas con la educación del idioma, incluida la enseñanza del inglés como idioma extranjero (TEFL). Para ello, resumimos teorías conductistas, innatistas e interaccionistas sociales y su aplicación al aprendizaje y la enseñanza de L2. Esto nos permite ubicar esta tesis dentro de una perspectiva social interaccionista que considera el contexto cultural en el que tiene lugar el aprendizaje y las interacciones sociales que sustentan la enseñanza desde una perspectiva comunicativa. La investigación realizada desde esta perspectiva ha contribuido con la base de conocimiento utilizada por educadores que enseñan inglés como lengua extranjera (TEFL). Esta base de conocimiento se refiere a habilidades prácticas, la capacidad de comprender el contexto de enseñanza L2 y la capacidad de ayudar al desarrollo de los alumnos (Tarone y Allright, 2005).

Un campo de investigación particularmente dinámico que puede ayudar a proporcionar información para la práctica docente es el de las diferencias individuales. La investigación dentro de esta área ha intentado identificar factores específicos que pueden influir en el progreso de los estudiantes L2,

incluyendo edad, género, aptitud, motivación, ansiedad, estilos de aprendizaje, estrategias de aprendizaje y creencias (Dörnyei, 2006; Pawlak, 2012; Skehan, 1991) Algunos de estos factores intrínsecos y extrínsecos han sido agrupados bajo el término genérico “afecto”, que considera factores emocionales y sociales que pueden influir en estudiantes de L2 (Arnold 1999; Krashen, 1982). Se ha descubierto que la ansiedad interactúa con el aprendizaje y se ha investigado como un factor afectivo clave que puede poner en dificultad a los alumnos (MacIntyre y Gregersen, 2012). A diferencia de otros factores afectivos, los maestros de L2 pueden abordar la ansiedad directamente a través de la práctica en el aula. Por lo tanto, los maestros deben ser conscientes de cómo la ansiedad influye en los estudiantes y las medidas que pueden tomar para reducir su impacto en el proceso de aprendizaje. Esto es particularmente cierto en el caso de diversos grupos de estudiantes, como los que tartamudean. Para ayudar a ofrecer una comprensión más amplia de la ansiedad y su influencia en los alumnos que tenemos también considera teorías sobre la motivación (Dörnyei, 2009), la identidad (Peirce Norton, 1995), la autoestima (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017), autoeficacia (Mills, 2014) y el autoconcepto (Mercer, 2011b) .

El segundo capítulo de nuestros antecedentes teóricos analiza investigaciones sobre la ansiedad en general. Esto incluye una descripción de cómo la ansiedad puede influir procesos cognitivos y conductuales y provocar reacciones fisiológicas en los individuos. Los efectos cognitivos de ansiedad incluyen la presencia de sesgos atencionales que pueden socavar el centro de atención en otras acciones o procesos, incluyendo los que están implicados en el aprendizaje de nueva información. El alcance de esta interferencia se ve afectado por la propensión de un individuo a experimentar ansiedad en general (rasgo de ansiedad) y en varios contextos (ansiedad de estado) (Spielberger, 1966). Esto ha llevado a la identificación de diferentes tipos de ansiedad, incluida la ansiedad por el idioma extranjero (ALE), que se ha considerado una forma de ansiedad específica de la situación (Horwitz, 2010).

En términos de comportamientos, hemos descrito cómo la ansiedad puede llevar a las personas a evitar los estímulos relacionados con experiencias negativas. Una forma de ansiedad, la ansiedad social, es particularmente relevante para el estudio actual, ya que es conceptualmente

similar a ALE, definida como "un complejo distinto de autopercepciones, creencias, sentimientos y comportamientos relacionados con el aprendizaje de idiomas en el aula y que surgen de la particularidad del proceso de aprendizaje de idiomas" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Por lo tanto, ALE es provocado por las exigencias del proceso de aprendizaje de L2 y también por factores sociales afectivos como las ansiedades interpersonales, la aprehensión de comunicación, y el temor de una evaluación negativa, además de las pruebas de idiomas y las interacciones profesor-alumno (Young, 1991; MacIntyre, 2017; Von Wörde, 2003).

El tercer capítulo de esta sección se ocupa de la literatura sobre la tartamudez. La tartamudez se ha considerado como un trastorno del desarrollo neurológico de la producción del habla (Guitar, 2014) que implica la interrupción de los procesos motores del habla que controlan los movimientos musculares necesarios para el habla (Beilby, 2014). La presencia de la tartamudez se ha explicado por factores genéticos (Frigerio-Domingues y Drayna, 2017; Kang, 2015) y por diferencias estructurales y funcionales en los cerebros de las personas que tartamudean (Etchell et al., 2017; Connally et al., 2014; Neef et al., 2015). Alrededor del uno por cien de la población adulta tartamudea, y en los niños es alrededor de un cinco por ciento mayor (Yairi y Ambrose, 2013). Sin embargo, muchos de estos niños se recuperarán sin intervención (Månsson, 2000). El inicio en los niños generalmente ocurre durante la fase más intensa del desarrollo del lenguaje infantil, entre las edades de dos y cinco (Guitar, 2014). Los síntomas físicos de la tartamudez son a menudo acompañados de complicaciones psicosociales significativas. Esto significa que, además de las definiciones médicas, también debemos considerar que la tartamudez ocurre de manera impredecible y errática, generando una pérdida de control en el individuo que puede dificultar la interacción social y condicionar comportamientos (Blood y Blood, 2015; Butler, 2013a).

Las experiencias de los estudiantes que tartamudean en el contexto de aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros no se han investigado ampliamente (García-Pastor & Miller, 2019b) y la investigación ha tendido a centrarse en el aprendizaje del L1 y la tartamudez en nuevos bilingües. Esto ha incluido una discusión sobre la influencia del bilingüismo temprano en la

prevalencia de la tartamudez (Howell et al., 2009, sin embargo, ninguna evidencia clara ha relacionado el bilingüismo con un aumento de la tartamudez (Packman et al., 2009). Igualmente, estudios con las personas multilingües que tartamudean han encontrado resultados contradictorios con respecto al grado de fluidez del habla experimentado en un idioma en comparación con otro (Coalson et al., 2013). En el contexto de L2, los estudios previos con individuos que tartamudean son escasos; parece que existe una brecha en la literatura sobre cómo la tartamudez puede condicionar el aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros y las medidas que los educadores pueden tomar para ayudar a los estudiantes (Weiss, 1979).

La falta de investigación sobre las experiencias de los estudiantes que tartamudean en este contexto puede ser el resultado de la naturaleza liminal de la tartamudez, que a menudo está oculta por las personas y no se considera una discapacidad. Sin embargo, los Individuos Con Tartamudez (ICT) experimentan discriminación y presiones sociales particulares con respecto a su forma de hablar (Pierre, 2012). Esto puede estar relacionado con el dominio de un modelo médico de discapacidad, que considera que la superación de cualquier discapacidad es responsabilidad del individuo, disminuyendo el papel que juegan los factores sociales que pueden impedir el progreso (Areheart, 2008). En contraste, el modelo social de discapacidad separa el impedimento (por ejemplo, la tartamudez) y el efecto incapacitante que las normas sociales tienen en los individuos (Oliver, 1986; Bailey et al., 2015). Por lo tanto, la tartamudez solo se convierte en una discapacidad cuando la sociedad no tiene en cuenta las necesidades de los individuos y promueve la noción de que la disfemia representa una forma indeseable y estigmatizada de expresión verbal. Las reacciones de la sociedad a la tartamudez pueden tener un impacto sobre la forma en que las personas viven y manejan los momentos de tartamudeo y la investigación ha encontrado que los ICT experimentan estereotipos negativos, acoso y estigma social (Boyle y Fearon, 2018). Esto puede significar que los ICT desarrollen actitudes negativas hacia su propia habla desde una edad temprana (Ezrati-Vinacour et al., 2001), así como que interioricen los puntos de vista de la sociedad respecto a la tartamudez y muestren autoestigma (Boyle, 2013).



En consecuencia, los ICT tienen más probabilidades de experimentar ansiedad que los hablantes neurotípicos como resultado de vivir con un tartamudeo (Craig y Tran, 2014; Iverach et al., 2011). Esta ansiedad tiende a converger en torno a contextos sociales, provocando procesos cognitivos y conductuales que pueden dar lugar a un ciclo de retroalimentación intenso y autorrepetitivo (Iverach et al., 2017). Esto, a su vez, puede tener un impacto perjudicial en las creencias relacionadas con los ICT, incluidas la autoestima (Adriaensens et al., 2015), la autoeficacia (Bray et al., 2003), la identidad (Daniels y Gabel, 2004), y dar lugar a la incorporación de roles (Gabel et al., 2004). Estos hallazgos sugieren que los ICT pueden estar en riesgo de experimentar altos niveles de ansiedad en contextos comunicativos exigentes, como en clases de idiomas extranjeros.

El capítulo final de la sección teórica de esta tesis detalla la investigación llevada a cabo en sobre la Ansiedad de Lengua Extranjera (ALE) durante el período de “dinámico” como describe MacIntyre (2017). Esto incluye los diversos efectos de ALE, que pueden influir negativamente en factores académicos, provocar interferencia cognitiva que impide el aprendizaje y la producción del lenguaje, y efectos sociales que interrumpen la interacción y las creencias relacionadas con uno mismo. Estos afectos pueden reducir el rendimiento de los estudiantes en las destrezas comunes en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera: el habla (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001) (Saito et al, 1999), la escritura, la lectura (Sellers, 2000; Tóth, 2012) y la comprensión auditiva (Kim, 2002).

En respuesta a la presencia de ansiedad, estudios han indicado que los educadores deben fomentar la ampliación de las emociones positivas en los estudiantes (Cohn y Fredrickson, 2010; MacIntyre y Gregersen, 2012). Esto puede ayudar al desarrollo de creencias saludables relacionadas con uno mismo en los alumnos (Oxford, 2017) y contribuir a la formulación de futuras imágenes propias que puedan tener un efecto motivador (Dörnyei, 2009). El papel de los profesores de idiomas es clave para esto; la relación con los estudiantes puede fomentar una comunicación saludable y empatía, lo que puede promover reacciones emocionales saludables en los estudiantes (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017).

### **3. Metodología**

En base al objetivo principal de este trabajo, es decir, medir niveles de ALE en Alumnos Con Tartamudez (ACT), explorar cómo se manifiesta esta ansiedad, sus efectos en ACT, y cómo interactúa con la tartamudez y las creencias relacionadas de estos alumnos, formulamos las siguientes preguntas de investigación:

Pregunta de investigación 1:

Para medir la presencia de ansiedad en ACT, así como establecer si existen diferencias entre los niveles de ALE en estos estudiantes y alumnos sin tartamudez (AST) en las diferentes habilidades lingüísticas, establecimos la primera de nuestras preguntas de investigación:

1. ¿Los ACT y AST muestran diferencias en la ansiedad en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera?

1.1. Si es así, ¿qué diferencias existen entre las destrezas lingüísticas?

Pregunta de investigación 2:

Para establecer cómo la tartamudez puede influir en la experiencia del aprendizaje del inglés, nuestra segunda pregunta de investigación se presentó así:

2. ¿Cómo explican los ACT la relación entre la tartamudez y el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera?

Pregunta de investigación 3:

Para investigar más a fondo la presencia de ALE en ACT, nuestra tercera pregunta de investigación se centra más de cerca en cómo los ACT describen la presencia de ansiedad en sus experiencias de aprendizaje:

3. ¿Cómo surge FLA en los ACT en diferentes situaciones de aprendizaje en aulas de inglés como lengua extranjera?

3.1. ¿Qué forma toma la ALE en términos de tipos, factores desencadenantes, efectos y estrategias de afrontamiento?

Pregunta de investigación 4:

Finalmente, queríamos establecer cómo las experiencias de ansiedad y tartamudeo en el aprendizaje de idiomas extranjeros pueden influir en las construcciones relacionadas con uno mismo. Por lo tanto, formulamos la pregunta final de investigación:

4. ¿Cómo explican los ACT la relación entre la tartamudez, la ansiedad, el aprendizaje del inglés y las construcciones relacionadas con uno mismo?

Las cuatro preguntas de investigación que hemos establecido están diseñadas para proporcionar una evaluación objetiva de la ansiedad, así como la contabilización de la compleja naturaleza de la tartamudez y la ansiedad, y las relaciones entre ambas, mientras se abordan las distintas experiencias de vida de cada participante.

Para responder a estas preguntas, recopilamos datos de 17 ACT. La muestra final de participantes de ACT incluyó 10 hombres y siete mujeres, con edades de entre 15 y 40 ( $M = 27.8$ ,  $SD = 6.6$ ). Los participantes fueron identificados con la ayuda de la Fundación Española de la Tartamudez, la cual acordó promover el estudio y brindar oportunidades para difundir sus resultados. También hemos recopilado datos de otro grupo de participantes ( $n = 17$ ) que formaron un grupo de comparación de los AST. Estos participantes fueron emparejados en términos de edad y sexo con nuestro ACT.

Nuestros datos fueron recolectados de ambos grupos a través de la FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986), una escala de 33 ítems diseñada para medir la ansiedad por el idioma extranjero que ha sido validada y ampliamente utilizada en investigaciones previas. También desarrollamos una novedosa escala, la SLSAS, para las necesidades específicas de esta tesis que tenía como objetivo medir la ansiedad en los dominios de habilidades lingüísticas como hablar, leer, escribir y escuchar. En el proceso de desarrollo de esta escala, consideramos la FLCAS y una serie de otras escalas utilizadas previamente en la investigación de ALE (Cheng et al., 1999; Kim, 2002), motivación (Taguchi et al., 2009), y tartamudeo (Yaruss y Quesal, 2006). Por lo tanto, formulamos una escala de 35 ítems que fue estilísticamente similar a la FLCAS y también con una escala Likert de cinco puntos. Nuestra escala se validó mediante un análisis factorial con rotación varimax. La escala mostró un nivel aceptable de fiabilidad, con un coeficiente de consistencia interna de .875 ( $n = 350$ ), que es alto a la luz de nuestra muestra ( $n = 412$ ). La medida KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) de la adecuación del muestreo también estuvo por encima del valor comúnmente recomendado de .6 o .7 (.843), y la prueba de Bartlett fue significativa ( $\chi^2(350) = 7713.587, p < .05$ ). Encontramos cuatro factores que explican más del 50% de la varianza, lo que respalda el número de factores encontrados en la literatura y su tipo. Nuestros factores son "ansiedad del habla y miedo a la evaluación negativa", "aprensión auditiva", "aprensión por escrito" y "actitudes positivas hacia el inglés" (ver Aida, 1994).

Además de recopilar datos a través de la FLCAS y la SLSAS, llevamos a cabo entrevistas semiestructuradas con ACT. Estas entrevistas se basaron en preguntas formuladas de acuerdo con varios tipos indicados por un marco de Análisis Interpretativo Fenomenológico (IPA, por sus siglas en inglés) (Smith et al., 2009). Realizamos un total de 15 entrevistas, 14 del doctorando y una del supervisor de tesis. Las entrevistas duraron entre 30 y 90 minutos, con una mayoría de 45 a 60 minutos de duración y se grabaron utilizando la grabadora de audio "Zoom H4next". Además de las grabaciones de audio, el entrevistador mantuvo notas de campo sobre el proceso de la entrevista y los participantes involucrados. Todas las entrevistas se realizaron en lugares acordados con los participantes. Estos incluyeron residencias privadas, lugares públicos (como restaurantes o cafeterías) y locales universitarios.

El análisis cuantitativo de los datos recopilados a través de la FLCAS y la SLSAS se realizó utilizando estadísticas descriptivas (comparación de medias, porcentajes y desviaciones estándar) y pruebas *t*. Todos los análisis de datos se llevaron a cabo utilizando Microsoft Excel y la versión 24 del Paquete Estadístico para las Ciencias Sociales (SPSS). El análisis cualitativo de los datos recopilados a través de entrevistas se llevó a cabo utilizando un marco de IPA. Esto se hizo porque IPA proporciona un marco claramente definido para la investigación en profundidad de un fenómeno específico desde la perspectiva de las personas afectadas. Además, IPA es particularmente adecuado para la investigación con un número reducido de participantes que están conectados debido a una característica compartida (Smith et al., 2009). Se enfoca en el análisis detallado de cuentas individuales, cuyos hallazgos se pueden comparar y contrastar con los de otros miembros de la comunidad. Además, este marco está en sintonía con la investigación realizada desde una perspectiva crítica (Langdridge, 2008), ya que trata de desentrañar las relaciones entre cómo las personas piensan, sienten, hablan y actúan, mientras existen en un mundo influenciado por esquemas y esferas sociales específicos de poder (Eatough y Smith, 2008).

El proceso de análisis cualitativo implicó la transcripción de entrevistas completas antes de leerlas varias veces. Durante este proceso, se apuntaron observaciones iniciales y preguntas sobre el contenido de la entrevista. Estas observaciones fueron desarrolladas en enlaces conceptuales entre elementos y asignándoles un código o etiqueta. Después de esto, los temas emergentes se compararon y analizaron, antes de que se notaran las relaciones entre ellos. Esto condujo a la identificación de temas subordinados y temas superiores presentes en cada entrevista. Luego se compararon todas las entrevistas para identificar temas comunes a todo el cuerpo de entrevistas. Para gestionar nuestro análisis, utilizamos el programa de software MAXQDA.

#### 4. Resultados y discusión

En la sección de resultados y discusión de esta tesis, presentamos cuatro capítulos que responden a nuestras cuatro preguntas de investigación descritas anteriormente. El primero de estos capítulos presenta y describe los niveles de ansiedad en las clases L2 en los ACT y los AST. En general, encontramos que los ACT indicaron niveles más altos de ALE que los AST. Esto se refleja en las puntuaciones medias de ansiedad de ambos grupos para la FLCAS y la SLSAS.

	FLCAS		SLSAS	
	Puntuación media	Desviación estándar	Puntuación media	Desviación estándar
ACT	109	18,2	83,5	10,3
AST	93	16,6	78	15,4

En cuanto los distintos dominios del lenguaje, encontramos que existían diferencias significativas en los niveles de ansiedad entre los ACT y los AST en el dominio del habla. Estas diferencias se reflejaron en las respuestas a los ítems relacionados con las tareas de habla en ambas escalas, así como en los resultados de las pruebas *t* realizadas en las secciones de oratoria de la FLCAS y la SLSAS.

Artículos para hablar de FLCAS		
	Puntuación media	Desviación estándar
ACT	46,29	8.81
AST	37. 82	9.128
	$t(32) = 2.727$	$p = 0.01$

Artículos para hablar de SLSAS		
	Puntuación media	Desviación estándar
ACT	47.05	6.46
AST	41,94	7.40
	$t(32) = 2.15$	$p = 0.04$

En los otros dominios, las diferencias en los niveles de ansiedad no fueron estadísticamente significativas. Sin embargo, ofrecieron más información sobre las diferencias entre los dos grupos. Por ejemplo, los ACT informó altos niveles de ansiedad en respuesta a las tareas de lectura en voz alta, pero niveles más bajos de ansiedad que los AST en las tareas de examen escritos. A la par, los ACT encontraron que la comunicación electrónica con hablantes nativos induce menos ansiedad que los AST. Estos resultados sugieren que la ansiedad en el dominio del habla puede ser problemática para los ACT, particularmente dado que metodologías de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras están basadas en la comunicación oral. Sin embargo, los niveles más inferiores de ansiedad en los otros dominios de habilidades lingüísticas pueden indicar que los ACT se sienten relativamente cómodos en situaciones de aprendizaje L2 que no implican hablar. La observación de que los ACT experimentan una ansiedad menor que los AST en algunas tareas de comprensión auditiva, escritura y lectura también sugiere que sus niveles de ansiedad en las tareas habladas están relacionadas con las demandas que se imponen a la producción del habla en lugar del conocimiento del lenguaje.

El segundo capítulo en la sección de resultados y discusión profundiza en la relación entre la tartamudez y el aprendizaje de inglés L2. Para hacer esto, recurrimos al análisis cualitativo de los datos de las entrevistas en el que ACT describen cómo la tartamudez ha complicado su progreso en el aula de idiomas extranjeros. Nuestro análisis condujo a la identificación de dos temas superordinados, que contienen tres y dos temas subordinados respectivamente, lo que refleja el esfuerzo en el aprendizaje L2 para estos estudiantes:

Tema superordinado A		
Costar Inglés como esfuerzo  “Hacer tantos esfuerzos para hablar que es algo (.) Como muy natural muy simple muy básico”		
Temas subordinados A		
Distorsión La influencia de la tartamudez en la producción del habla inglesa  “Cuando me atrancaba tanto mi pronunciación se distorsionaba”	Un diez viudo La influencia de la tartamudez en la evaluación de la producción oral en inglés  "Me ponía a hablar y me ponía pues, deficiente siempre"	Condicionado La influencia de la tartamudez en el comportamiento en las clases de inglés  “Sí, me hacían hablar (.) Pero lo justito”

El primer tema subordinado agrupa una serie de cuestiones relacionadas con la tartamudez que pueden complicar el aprendizaje de inglés L2, convirtiéndose en una tarea que requiere un esfuerzo particular para los ACT. Estos temas subordinados ilustran la influencia que puede tener la tartamudez en la pronunciación en L2, complicar la evaluación del nivel de lenguaje L2 en contextos formales y afectar los comportamientos tanto de ACT como de sus profesores. Todo ello se vio ilustrado en los testimonios de los participantes, donde indicaron cómo la interrupción de la pronunciación podría afectar negativamente la evaluación de su dominio del inglés. Esto ocurrió durante los exámenes orales, pero también en otros contextos formales como las entrevistas de trabajo. La forma en que los ACT y otros entendieron la tartamudez también fue un problema. Los participantes eran conscientes de que el tartamudeo podría conducir a evitar las oportunidades de participar que eran cruciales para el progreso en el aprendizaje del inglés. Esto también condujo a una percepción entre los ACT que los profesores de idiomas no



estaban seguros de cómo interactuar con estos estudiantes y promover participación positiva. Nuestros hallazgos indicaron que esto podría resultar en que los educadores se volvieran más conformes con la propagación de estrategias de evasión. Esto ocurrió principalmente cuando los profesores llamaban con menos frecuencia a los ACT para hablar en clase, pero también a través de una renuencia a corregir las contribuciones orales que contenían disfluencias. Los ACT relataron que esta fue una razón para preocuparse ya que eran conscientes de la consecuencia negativa de tales comportamientos en su progreso en las clases de inglés.

En el segundo tema superordinado, exploramos la presencia de emociones limitantes en ACT como resultado de las experiencias descritas anteriormente.

Tema superordinado B	
Atrapado	
La tartamudez contribuye a limitar las emociones en el aprendizaje de inglés	
"Pensar que por mucho que estudias ... vas a quedar ahí ¿no?"	
Temas subordinados B	
Impotencia Impotencia en respuesta a la tartamudez	Días de luz y días nublados La carácter cambiante de la tartamudez contribuye a limitar las emociones.
"Si lo sé, ¿por qué no lo puedo decir"	"Tú sabes que esto va por días"

Este tema superordinado, por lo tanto, se ocupó de la interrupción social y emocional que puede ocurrir como resultado de la tartamudez. Esto se reflejó en el lenguaje utilizado por los participantes, quienes describieron cómo los sentimientos de impotencia y la percibida falta de control sobre su discurso, y las reacciones al mismo, los hicieron sentirse "atrapados". Esto tuvo implicaciones para su progreso; algunos tuvieron problemas para demostrar el

verdadero alcance de su conocimiento de la L2, lo que significa que fueron retenidos por profesores que creían que la tartamudez era un indicador de baja competencia. Por lo tanto, la tartamudez podría constituir un techo de cristal que limitaría la percepción de los participantes sobre su desarrollo y progreso, a pesar de sus capacidades en la L2. Igualmente, esto podría afectar el desarrollo de creencias saludables de autoconcepto (Mercer, 2011a, 2011b) y futuras imágenes de uno mismo (Dörnyei, 2009). Adicionalmente, el carácter cambiante de la tartamudez contribuyó a limitar las emociones en los ACT; una incapacidad percibida para predecir o influir en la severidad de la tartamudez comprometió el sentido de autonomía de los alumnos, influyendo en su participación en las clases de inglés.

En el tercer capítulo de resultados, discutimos cómo las experiencias de los ACT mencionadas anteriormente pueden contribuir a la ansiedad experimentada en el aula de inglés. Por lo tanto, presentamos un tema superordinado que contiene cuatro temas subordinados que examinan la interrelación entre la tartamudez y la ALE en el aprendizaje del inglés. Estos temas pusieron de relieve factores específicos que sirvieron para desencadenar e intensificar la ALE en los ACT, los efectos de esta ansiedad y las estrategias de mitigación intrínsecas y extrínsecas que podrían ayudar a la participación en las clases de inglés.

Tema superordinado C			
Los lobos y las olas de la ansiedad La tartamudez y ansiedad en el aprendizaje de inglés “Sigo sintiendo la ansiedad (.) sigo sintiendo miedo”			
Temas subordinados C			
Que viene el lobo	La palabra maldita	Las olas de ansiedad	Confianza
Factores que desencadenan ALE en ACT	Estrategias Intrínsecas utilizadas para controlar la ansiedad.	Los efectos de la ansiedad en ACT	Factores extrínsecos que pueden mitigar la ansiedad en ACT
“Imagínate tú leyendo en inglés”	"Cualquier estrategia me sirve con tal esquivar la palabra maldita"	“Lo siento en la cabeza y mi garganta en mi corazón”	“Si estas con alguien que te inspira confianza es distinto”

Nuestros resultados mostraron que las situaciones de habla, particularmente aquellas que implican tareas de lectura en voz alta fueron las que provocaron más ansiedad en los ACT. La ansiedad en estas actividades se caracterizó por el miedo a la evaluación negativa tanto por la tartamudez como por el nivel de inglés L2. Por lo tanto, el aula de EFL proporcionó un contexto altamente amenazante para los ACT, donde podrían ser evaluados negativamente por sus compañeros y profesores de acuerdo con estos dos factores. Los resultados aquí indicaron que los ACT sabían que eran más sensibles a la ansiedad que los estudiantes neurotípicos. Esta observación, junto con la conciencia de que el aprendizaje de L2 podría provocar una mayor incidencia de bloqueos en el habla, significaba que los contextos de lenguas extranjeras estaban vinculados con experiencias de ansiedad. En este sentido, los ACT experimentaron una forma compuesta de ansiedad que fue provocada simultáneamente por factores relacionados con la tartamudez y el aprendizaje del lenguaje L2.

La expectativa de daño lleva a los ACT a emplear estrategias intrínsecas diseñadas para limitar la disfluencia y así mitigar la ansiedad. Sin embargo, estas estrategias a menudo se basaban en un alto grado de control lingüístico que permitía la sustitución de palabras o parafrasear, lo que complicaba su aplicación a la L2. Esto también provocó ansiedad en los ACT, ya que los comportamientos habituales de afrontamiento no estaban disponibles. Nuestros hallazgos indicaron que esto contribuyó a la presencia de intensos efectos cognitivos, fisiológicos y conductuales de la ansiedad. Por lo tanto, la tartamudez y la ansiedad en el aprendizaje L2 podrían interrumpir el aprendizaje al provocar sesgos atencionales, complicar la participación en las clases de la L2 a través de la presencia de conductas de evitación, empeorar la producción del lenguaje en la L2 debido a la complicación de los procesos cognitivos, como la recuperación léxica y la planificación gramatical, y causar una negativa cogniciones que conducen a creencias poco saludables relacionadas con uno mismo.

Para combatir esto, los factores extrínsecos fueron clave para reducir la ansiedad y promover la participación en los ACT dentro del aula del inglés. Nuestros hallazgos muestran que los participantes creían que una relación positiva profesor-alumno basada en la confianza y el apoyo podría compensar muchos de los problemas causados por la ansiedad y la tartamudez. Dichas relaciones permitieron la divulgación de la tartamudez, lo que condujo a medidas de colaboración que podrían promover la participación en las clases. Estas conversaciones ayudaron a los ACT experimentar paciencia y comprensión en el aula, lo que les permitió sentirse incluidos en las actividades y que sus necesidades específicas se habían tenido en cuenta. Esto fue importante ya que los participantes informaron un deseo de ser aceptados e integrados a través de cambios sutiles en las prácticas de enseñanza. Por ejemplo, los ACT en este estudio exigieron mayores oportunidades para participar en actividades orales. En particular, enfatizaron repetidamente los beneficios de los grupos de habla más pequeños, lo que les permitió participar más libremente y reducir el miedo a la evaluación negativa que puede agravar los comportamientos asociados con la tartamudez. Por lo tanto, los participantes destacaron el papel de los maestros en facilitar una

participación positiva. La importancia de esto se reflejó en la influencia que la participación en el aula L2 podría tener en las auto creencias de los ACT.

Nuestro ultimo capítulo de los resultados explora la naturaleza de estas creencias con más detalle. Identificamos un tema superordinado que contiene dos temas subordinados que describen la manera en que diferentes creencias autorelacionadas podrían interactuar con la ansiedad y la tartamudez en los ACT.

Tema superior D	
Papeles distintos Creencias relacionadas con ACT en inglés "Igual que los otros no eres"	
Temas subordinados D	
No puedo dar la talla  La tartamudez y la ansiedad contribuyen a creencias poco saludables relacionadas con uno mismo en los ACT  "Madre mía voy a hacer el ridículo"	Expertos de los sinónimos y ciclos positivos  El aprendizaje del inglés ofrece oportunidades para la participación positiva  "Creo que aprender inglés me ayuda con mi superación"

Nuestros resultados indican que la ansiedad y la tartamudez podrían complicar la expresión percibida de su "verdaderos" yo en los ACT (Butler, 2013a; Cream et al., 2003; Horwitz et al., 1986; Horwitz, 1995). Esto contribuyó a la visión entre los participantes de que eran "diferentes" de otros estudiantes, lo que parecía tener consecuencias tanto saludables como perjudiciales para las auto creencias de los ACT. Los patrones en los datos mostraron que el estigma social y la falta de conciencia sobre la tartamudez en el público en general podrían resultar en que los ACT interiorizaran sus creencias en forma de autoestigma. Esto contribuyó a creencias poco saludables con respecto al yo y, en algunos casos, al rechazo de la tartamudez como una característica defectuosa del habla. Como resultado, nuestros entrevistados lucharon por

concebirse a sí mismos como aprendices capaces. Además, su conciencia sobre las actitudes sociales negativas hacia la tartamudez alimentó sus monólogos internos caracterizados por la duda y el desconcierto. Sin embargo, nuestros hallazgos también muestran que los participantes mostraron una actitud pragmática y resistente, lo que ayudó a compensar esas dificultades derivadas de la ansiedad y la tartamudez en el aprendizaje del inglés. El desarrollo de creencias saludables relacionadas con uno mismo se ve favorecido por la aceptación de la tartamudez como un rasgo neutral que no necesita influir negativamente en el progreso del alumno (Beilby et al., 2012a; Cheasman et al., 2015; Kathard et al., 2010). Igualmente, la capacidad de ver la tartamudez como un factor potencialmente beneficioso parecía ser particularmente influyente en la forma en que nuestros participantes juzgaban su comportamiento en el aula. En este sentido, los ACT pudo reconocer rasgos beneficiosos derivados de la tartamudez que podrían ayudarlos durante el aprendizaje de inglés. Esto incluía fortalezas en el dominio de la escucha, además de una familiaridad con la variación de sintaxis y el vocabulario. Igualmente, las similitudes entre ALE y la ansiedad relacionada con la tartamudez significaron que los ACT estaban de alguna manera preparados para algunas de las presiones encontradas en el aula de la L2. Como tal, los ACT podrían desafiar algunas de sus propias creencias poco saludables relacionadas con sí mismas y, en algunos casos, reclamar identidades de aprendices saludables. El crecimiento experimentado durante estos momentos también pareció contribuir al desarrollo de un autoconcepto más saludable en situaciones fuera del contexto del aprendizaje del inglés. Estos son hallazgos alentadores, particularmente después de la identificación de ansiedad intensa y pensamientos problemáticos relacionados con la tartamudez resaltada anteriormente. Estos hallazgos recuerdan los de Dewaele y MacIntyre (2014), quienes sugirieron que la ansiedad y el disfrute dentro de los contextos L2 podrían ocurrir simultáneamente y no son necesariamente extremos opuestos del mismo espectro emocional. Por lo tanto, la ampliación de experiencias en algunos de nuestros participantes se engendró al involucrarse con emociones desafiantes (es decir, ansiedad) y confrontar creencias y comportamientos personales poco saludables.

## **5. Conclusiones**

Para concluir, este estudio ha tenido como objetivo proporcionar una idea de la naturaleza de la tartamudez y su interacción con la ALE y las construcciones autorelacionadas en los estudiantes de inglés en el contexto español. Hasta donde sabemos, la investigación previa dentro del ASL y la educación en idiomas no ha considerado a esta población de estudiantes en el estudio de la ansiedad y otras emociones que afectan el aprendizaje del idioma, a pesar de la conexión entre la tartamudez y la ansiedad en contextos más generalizados. Nuestra investigación tiene como objetivo abordar esta laguna en la literatura de ansiedad y tartamudeo de idiomas extranjeros al arrojar luz sobre las experiencias de aprendizaje de idiomas de esta población de estudiantes subrepresentada con respecto a esta emoción negativa, su tartamudez y el efecto de estos dos fenómenos para claramente identificar sus necesidades educativas en las clases de inglés.

Al investigar estos problemas, podemos obtener una mejor comprensión de cómo apoyar a estos estudiantes a través de los desafíos particulares que enfrentan al aprender un idioma extranjero. Por lo tanto, este estudio también tuvo la modesta intención de contribuir a una base de evidencia a partir de la cual los profesores de lenguas extranjeras puedan informar sus prácticas pedagógicas. Igualmente, se espera que esta tesis se agregue al cuerpo de investigación más general con personas con tartamudez y ayude a promover aún más la discusión y la investigación futura sobre la tartamudez.





## **Appendix**



## Appendix

### A. Letter to potential participants

#### La tartamudez y el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera

Estimado/a (name of addressee),

Me llamo Ronan Miller y soy miembro de la Comisión Organizativa de la Fundación Española de la Tartamudez y representante de la misma en Valencia. Soy profesor de inglés y estudiante de español, y también soy una persona tartamuda.

Estoy empezando una tesis doctoral sobre las experiencias de personas que tartamudean en el aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera, en este caso, el inglés. Basándome en mis propias vivencias, estoy convencido de que la ansiedad puede tener un efecto importante en el aprendizaje de lenguas y que el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua o lengua extranjera puede ayudar a una persona a tener mayor fluidez en el habla, ya sea en su lengua materna o en la lengua segunda o extranjera.

Sin duda, saber hablar otro idioma puede aportar mucho en la vida; nos brinda la posibilidad de vivir y trabajar en sitios distintos, conociendo diferentes culturas, lugares y personas. Para asegurarnos de que todos los alumnos puedan tener la oportunidad de desarrollar todo su potencial, es vital saber entender las necesidades de cada uno usando metodologías apropiadas, de modo que puedan aprender con éxito.

Así pues, en esta investigación espero poder descubrir qué partes del aprendizaje causan dificultades para alumnos que tartamudean y cuáles resultan más cómodas. Desde mi humilde opinión, la mejor manera de llevar a cabo dicha tarea es hablar con alumnos de inglés que también son personas con tartamudez. Es por ello que me gustaría poder hacer una entrevista a cada uno donde podamos hablar tranquilamente de las clases de inglés y las experiencias que uno tiene en ellas: si nos gustan o no, qué tareas nos resultan más fáciles o más divertidas y cuales nos cuestan más, etc.

## Appendix

Entiendo que participar en un proyecto como el mío y ser entrevistado puede resultar abrumador; sin embargo, me gustaría que el proceso fuera lo más ameno posible. La entrevista se puede realizar en un sitio elegido por el entrevistado, un lugar tranquilo donde se sienta cómodo (en el instituto o universidad donde esté estudiando, en su casa, etc.). Para transcribir y analizar la entrevista es necesario grabarla en video y audio, siempre con el consentimiento previo de la persona entrevistada y asegurando su anonimato. El contenido de la misma sólo será utilizado para esta investigación y solo será conocido por mí y la profesora que supervisa este proyecto de tesis doctoral, la Dra. María Dolores García de la Facultad de Magisterio de la Universidad de Valencia.

Esperando que te animes a participar en esta investigación, te agradezco de antemano tu tiempo y atención. Solo llevando a cabo proyectos de este tipo podemos contribuir a mejorar la enseñanza de lenguas para personas con tartamudez y solo con su ayuda podemos dar pautas y consejos a los maestros y profesores para que sus clases sean más eficaces y puedan atender mejor las necesidades de cada alumno. Si deseas participar en este estudio puedes contactar conmigo por email o Facebook ([ronanlmiller@gmail.com](mailto:ronanlmiller@gmail.com)). ¡Muchísimas gracias de nuevo!,

Atentamente, Ronan

### **B. Final interview questions and prompts**

1. Para empezar me puedes comentar algo sobre tu trayectoria con el inglés?

- ¿Cuándo empezaste a estudiarlo?
- ¿Dónde lo has estudiado? ¿Colegio? ¿Instituto? ¿Academia? ¿Clases particulares?
- ¿Has ido al extranjero para practicar o mejorar el inglés?
- ¿Cuál es tu nivel de inglés actualmente? ¿Y si no lo sabes cuál crees que es? (A1-C2)

- ¿Tienes algún certificado oficial de inglés?
2. ¿Me puedes hablar sobre tus primeros recuerdos de las clases de inglés?
    - ¿A qué edad empezaste a recibir clases de inglés?
    - ¿Cuántas horas a la semana diste inglés?
    - ¿Te gustaron? ¿Eran divertidas las clases?
    - ¿Cuántos alumnos había?
    - ¿Como era el profesor?
  3. ¿Cómo te sentiste en esas clases de inglés entonces? ¿Por qué?
  4. ¿Cómo te sientes en tus clases de inglés ahora?
  5. ¿Cómo te sientes antes de entrar en tu clase de inglés? Por ejemplo ¿El día que te toca inglés?
  5. ¿Cómo te sientes cuándo sales?
  6. En general, ¿qué te gusta de las clases de inglés?
  - 7 ¿Hay algo que te agobia en las clases de inglés?
  8. ¿Si te sientes agobiado en las clases de inglés que haces?
  9. ¿Si estás hablando en inglés en clase y te bloqueas qué sueles hacer?
  10. ¿Piensas que hay alguna diferencia en cómo te sientes en clase de inglés comparado con otras asignaturas?
  11. Háblame de tu comportamiento en la clase de inglés, ¿actúas igual que en otras clases?
    - Por ejemplo, ¿participas más o menos?

## Appendix

- ¿Tienes más o menos ganas de ir o no ir a clase?
- ¿Tienes más o menos ganas de hacer los deberes?
- ¿Notas algún tipo de alteración física? Por ejemplo, ¿sudas más? ¿te comes más las uñas?

12. ¿Piensas que tu proceso de aprendizaje es diferente en tus clases de inglés comparado con otras asignaturas?

- Por ejemplo ¿Te resulta más fácil seguir las explicaciones del profesor, centrarte, participar, prestar atención...?

13. ¿Crees que la tartamudez afecta tu proceso de aprendizaje de alguna manera buena o mala?

- ¿Buscas sinónimos que significan lo mismo? ¿Cambias el orden de las palabras?

14. ¿Qué recomendarías a los profesores de inglés para que sus alumnos se sintieran más cómodo en clase? ¿Si les podrías aconsejar que les dirías?

### C. Specific Language Skills Anxiety Scale

#### **SPECIFIC LANGUAGE SKILLS ANXIETY SCALE ESCALA DE ANSIEDAD EN DESTREZAS LINGÜÍSTICAS ESPECÍFICAS**

Las siguientes afirmaciones se refieren a diversas situaciones frecuentes en el aprendizaje de un idioma. Tu tarea consiste en valorar el nivel de ansiedad que te provoca cada situación.

Edad:

Genero:

**Cuando lees (*reading*) en inglés, ¿qué actividades te ponen más nervioso?**

1. Leer para ti y luego contestar preguntas de comprensión lectora en clase para entregárselas luego al profesor.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

2. Leer para ti y contestar preguntas de comprensión lectora en clase como parte de un examen.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

3. Leer en voz alta y contestar preguntas de comprensión lectora en clase para que el profesor las corrija delante de todos.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

4. Leer en voz alta delante de los compañeros de clase para que el profesor evalué tu pronunciación.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

**Cuando hablas (*speaking*) en inglés, ¿qué actividades te ponen más nervioso?**

5. Exponer un tema en clase elegido por ti que hayas preparado anteriormente (con notas, fichas, powerpoint, etc).

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

6. Exponer un tema en clase en grupo que hayáis preparado anteriormente (con apuntes, fichas, powerpoint, etc).

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

7. Hacer ejercicios de repetición de palabras o frases con el resto de la clase para practicar la pronunciación siguiendo al profesor.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

## Appendix

8. Cantar en inglés con el resto de la clase para aprender vocabulario, gramática etc.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

9. Responder a preguntas en clase que te hace el profesor.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

10. Hablar en grupos pequeños en clase mientras el profesor supervisa los grupos.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

11. Escenificar una conversación (*role play*) en clase con otros alumnos.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

12. Hablar con un hablante nativo de inglés por skype u otra plataforma de *videochat*.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

13. Hablar por teléfono en inglés con un hablante nativo.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

14. Hacer un examen oral con tu profesor sobre un tema que hayas preparado anteriormente.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

15. Hacer un examen oral con tu profesor sobre un tema que no hayas preparado anteriormente.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
------	----------	-------------	-------	-----------



1	2	3	4	5
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16. Participar en una discusión en grupo que el profesor evalúa en clase.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

**Cuando escuchas (*listening*) en inglés ¿qué actividades te ponen más nervioso?**

17. Escuchar un CD para luego contestar preguntas escritas en clase.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

18. Escuchar un CD para contestar preguntas escritas en clase que sean parte de un examen.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

19. Escuchar al profesor cuando explica cómo hacer ciertas actividades, tareas, los deberes, etc., en clase.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

20. Escuchar a otros compañeros de clase hablando en inglés

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

21. Escuchar a un hablante nativo invitado en clase.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

22. Escuchar a un hablante nativo en un video o en internet en clase (ej. Ted Talks, Youtube, etc.).

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

**Quando escribes (*writing*) en inglés ¿Qué actividades te ponen más nervioso?**

23. Escribir una carta a un amigo en clase que será evaluada por el profesor.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

24. Escribir una queja en clase que será evaluada por el profesor.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

25. Escribir una solicitud para un puesto de trabajo en clase que luego será evaluada por el profesor.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

26. Escribir un texto sobre un tema elegido por ti en clase que luego será evaluado por el profesor.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

27. Escribir un texto en clase como parte de un examen.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

28. Escribir un correo electrónico en inglés a tu profesor para preguntarle algo.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

29. Escribir un correo electrónico a un hablante nativo.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

30. Participar en un chat online en inglés con hablantes nativos.

Nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Mucho	Muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

**En cuanto a tu opinión sobre el inglés:**

31. ¿Crees que haces el mismo esfuerzo en las clases de inglés que en otras asignaturas?

No, nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Si, mucho	Si, muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

32. ¿Te imaginas usando inglés a menudo en el futuro?

No, nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Si, mucho	Si, muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

33. ¿Te imaginas usando inglés en un trabajo en el futuro?

No, nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Si, mucho	Si, muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

34. ¿Te imaginas hablando inglés en tu vida personal o profesional en el futuro?

No, nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Si, mucho	Si, muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

35. ¿Crees que el inglés es importante para que logres cosas que consideras importantes en la vida?

No, nada	No mucho	Más o menos	Si, mucho	Si, muchísimo
1	2	3	4	5

**D. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz et al., 1986).**

Instrucciones: Las siguientes afirmaciones se refieren a diversas situaciones frecuentes en el aprendizaje de un idioma. Tu tarea consiste en valorar tu

## Appendix

grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo con cada una de las siguientes afirmaciones, utilizando para ello la siguiente escala:

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

1. Nunca estoy completamente seguro de mí mismo cuando hablo en la clase de inglés.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

2. No me preocupa cometer errores en clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

3. Tiemblo cuando sé que me van a preguntar en clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

4. Me asusta no entender lo que el profesor está diciendo en inglés.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

5. No me molestaría en absoluto asistir a más clases de inglés.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

6. Durante la clase, me doy cuenta que pienso en cosas que no tienen nada que ver con la clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

7. Pienso que a los otros compañeros se les dan mejor el inglés que a mí.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

8. Normalmente estoy a gusto cuando hago exámenes en clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

9. Me pongo muy nervioso cuando tengo que hablar en clase y no me he preparado bien.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

10. Me preocupa las consecuencias que pueda traer el suspender.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

11. No entiendo por qué alguna gente se siente tan mal por las clases de inglés.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

12. En clase, me pongo tan nervioso que se me olvidan algunas cosas que sé.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

13. Me da corte salir voluntario en clase.

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Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

14. Creo que no me pondría nervioso si hablara en inglés con una persona nativa.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

15. Me irrita no entender lo que el profesor está corrigiendo.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

16. Aunque vaya con la clase preparada, me siento nervioso.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

17. A menudo no me apetece ir a clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

18. Me siento seguro a la hora de hablar en la clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

19. Me da miedo que mi profesor corrija cada fallo que cometo.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

20. Siento como mi corazón palpita cuando sé que me van a pedir que intervenga en clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

21. Cuanto más estudio, más me lío.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

22. No tengo ninguna presión ni preocupaciones para prepararme bien las clases.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

23. Tengo la sensación de que mis compañeros hablan el inglés mejor que yo.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

24. Me da mucho corte hablar en la lengua extranjera delante de mis compañeros.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

25. Las clases transcurren con tal rapidez que me preocupa quedarme atrasado.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

26. Comparativamente, estoy más tenso y me siento más nervioso en la clase de inglés que en otras clases o que en mi propio trabajo.

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Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

27. Me pongo nervioso mientras hablo en clase.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

28. Antes de entrar a clase, me siento seguro y relajado.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

29. Me pongo nervioso cuando no entiendo cada una de las palabras que mi profesor dice.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

30. Me abruma la cantidad de cosas que hay que aprender para poder hablar inglés.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

31. Temo que mis compañeros de clase se ríen de mí cuando hablo en inglés.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

32. Creo que me sentiría a gusto hablando entre nativos que hablan inglés.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5



33. Me pongo nervioso cuando el profesor pregunta cosas que no me he podido preparar.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo	Estoy de acuerdo	No sé	No estoy de acuerdo	Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo
1	2	3	4	5

### E. Examples of letters of consent

Hoja de Consentimiento

Por la presente, declaro que estoy de acuerdo en participar en este proyecto por voluntad propia. Entiendo que como participante voluntario siempre puedo negarme a responder a las preguntas planteadas y a retirarme en cualquier momento que considere oportuno.

Añado además que he sido previamente informado de la grabación de la conversación, y se me ha asegurado el anonimato de mi persona y de mis repuestas, las cuales van a ser utilizadas únicamente para la investigación.

Firma del Investigador Firma del participante

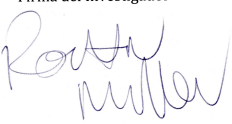

*Rosario Müller* *[Handwritten Signature]*

Hoja de Consentimiento

Por la presente, declaro que estoy de acuerdo en participar en este proyecto por voluntad propia. Entiendo que como participante voluntario siempre puedo negarme a responder a las preguntas planteadas y a retirarme en cualquier momento que considere oportuno.

Añado además que he sido previamente informado de la grabación de la conversación, y se me ha asegurado el anonimato de mi persona y de mis respuestas, las cuales van a ser utilizadas únicamente para la investigación.

Firma del Investigador Firma del participante

## F. Focus group transcript

R: Vale para empezar quiero preguntar ¿si soléis sentir ansiedad en vuestro día a día?

Todos: sí sí

Participant A: mucha

Participant B: ¿hablas solo de inglés dices? ¿o en general?

R: No no ahora estamos hablando en general

Todos: sí sí

Participant C: En determinadas situaciones, sobre todo

Participant D: Cuando suena el teléfono en la empresa

R: OK ¿alguna situación concreta más?

Participant E: A mi me ha llegado a dar ataques de ansiedad

Participant F: cuando tienes que pelarte con alguien

Participant C: Yo en mi caso cuando tengo que llamar por teléfono más que recibir una llamada cuando yo tengo que llamar e iniciar una conversación ahí es cuando se me crea una ansiedad sobre todo estoy un tiempo pensando “hola buenos días soy speaker C no sé que no sé cuantos” hasta consigo llamar ahí sí que me crea ansiedad

Participant G: en mi caso también cuando tengo ya que hablar en público cuando hay más gente pienso que me escuchan que me observan que me analizan entonces yo me siento ansiedad anticipatoria yo ya me anticipo algo que no ha pasado pero me lo meto yo en la cabeza

Participant D: Lo peor es que tengo que responder cuando no hay una persona cuando suena el teléfono y claro tengo que responder con CESMA que la empresa donde estoy y esa palabrita me cuesta un huevo y a veces que no soy capaz de decirlo el bloqueo es tan fuerte que no me sale y me jode

R: Vale y la ansiedad para vosotros ¿Qué es? ¿Si tuvierais que describirla?

Participant C: Pues yo creo que es un estado emocional que te crea muchos nervios tanto físico como interiores por ejemplo empiezas a sudar las manos no sé que y es un estado de agobio que tienes aquí como un nudo, una vez que

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por ejemplo llamas por teléfono y lo sueltas cuando cuelgas dices BWAH, o sea ha soltado mucha adrenalina, para mi es eso es un estado de tensión de, de pues de que lo quieres pasar cuanto antes que te cuesta iniciarlo y que cuando lo pasas es una relajación tremenda

Participant D: te quedas muy débil

Alguien: Sí

Participant D: Sí física y psicológicamente porque dices “joder sería una tontería, pero una tontería pero como me he puesto por esa tontería

Participant D: Yo el corazón se me dispara, las pulsaciones pumpumpumpumpum bastante

Participant H: Que ha dicho él, que esto de corazón y tal que las pulsaciones suben a menudo cuando te vas a hablar si claro, si en publico y tal a mi me pasa mucho en las exposiciones de la universidad cuando yo las hice, que al principio esta un poco tenso y tal pero ya de medida que va pasando la conversación y la exposición ya va relajando un poco pero es que al principio, al principio cuesta un montón

Participant G: La entrada es lo peor

Participant H: Si las entradas, sobre todo eso la entrada ya después cuando coges confianza un poco entre la gente y tal bien pero al principio buf, las pulsaciones suben y suben y se siente como que va a explotar el corazón pero bueno

Participant I: Para mi es descontrol, para mi descontrol el no poder controlarlo, es algo que se te va de las manos realmente, entonces al no poder controlarlo te pasa pues eso, ansiedad, porque sabes que no vas a poder hacerlo, o por lo menos lo piensas, que igual lo puedes pero lo piensas y es algo que ya te condiciona y te impide realizar lo que realmente quieres

Participant F: Yo también para mí en mi caso es como un miedo que irracional, de que tú mismo te estás poniendo, te imaginas la peor situación posible y ya te pones súper nerviosa y al final llegas y has hecho justo lo que te has imaginado porque tú mismo te has pre condicionado a ello

R: Claro

Participant J: Yo para mí lo que también siento es eso, es el no control o sea yo la última vez que he ido a pedir a una carnicería había mucha gente, entonces el hecho de que haya mucha gente, y de que me escuchen, o sea si yo pido a la dependienta y estoy cerca tengo más seguridad, si hay mucha gente y me toca levantar la voz, ya eso me da calor

All: sí sí ((se ríen)) sí sí

Participant J: Entonces quiero no ponerme muy nervioso y lo estoy trabajando, yo la verdad estoy trabajando eso lo que todavía no me da paz y lo que no controlo digo "Participant J no pasa nada" y eso, y es porque a mí lo que me pasa, supongo que a alguien más es que visualizo ya que me voy a trancar

All: Sí sí claro sí sí claro

Participant J: Como visualice me cuesta luego mucho de decir a mi pensamiento que no va a pasar eso, entonces me cuesta mucho romper esa, ese futuro próximo que mi mente ya me le ha escrito, y me cuesta no escribirle, eso es lo que estoy trabajando de los dos, controlar y decir "no hay ningún tigre no me come nadie" pero bueno

All: ((Sé ríen))

Participant K: Pues es, no sé estar en una tensión ahí que no puedes hacer otra cosa, no sé estas así

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R: Os explico que en el ámbito de académico la ansiedad esta visto un poco como un factor importante porque si estas ansioso no aprendes ¿sabes? Estas como bloqueado y es muy difícil aceptar nueva información procesarla y usarla, con eso dicho ahora pensando en contextos de enseñanza y aprendizaje y eso ¿hay alguna asignatura o clase en especial donde hayáis sentido más ansiedad que en otras?

Participant K: En las que hablas más, unas se dan más de hablar las de lenguas, las en que más hablas más ansiedad, o leer

Participant C: O leer o leer o leer

Participant F: O la media hora de lectura a la semana

Participant F: ¡Que alegría!

Participant D: Sabes que como fuese en orden

All: Bwaaaa ¡¡en orden!!

R: ¡Vale eso es importante esperad! Explicadme lo del orden y eso que es importante

Participant D: Había que leer un párrafo (ininteligible) y desde el principio ya estas pensando, entonces la ansiedad va a más no va a menos, “tengo aquí tiempo para relajarme” que va, tengo tiempo para ponerme más nervioso, ahora empezas por mi

Participant G: Me paso eso yo hace poco hace tres semanas en el examen de maniobra de camión, por ejemplo yo no quería ser el primero, claro yo me dejaron casi casi el ultimo de todos, claro entonces el problema, que cada vez que se acercaba

Participant D: ¡Peor!

Participant G: Claro estaba más nervioso con más ansiedad, joder cuando pillé el camión, voy a suspender en nada, a ver por 5 segundos lo suspendí ¿Por qué? Pues porque claro no estaba, estaba pero estaba muy nervioso, sabes por eso

Participant L: Y antes la aleatoriedad o sea cuando estas con un profesor que tu sabes que de, porque de repente dice “un ejemplo tú”

((Se ríen todos))

Participant L: “No sé que no sé cuantos” y entonces pues estas siempre como diciendo no voy a hacer contacto visual porque entonces

R: Entonces ¿es mejor que sea así o que sea en orden?

Participant C: ¡Mejor que no sea!

Participant M: Cuando haya aleatoriedad hay una ansiedad pero más baja, y cuando hay un turno sabes que el turno llega llega llega ya la ansiedad sube sube sube pero sea turno para leer un turno en la tienda o sea todo lo que sea turnos que sabes que se va acercando el “tigre” y cuando llega dices joder

Participant F: Yo creo que eso depende de cada persona, porque cuando cuando es algo aleatorio, cuando es algo que va en orden

((Someone enters and the conversation is disrupted))

Participant F: Cuando es en orden la ansiedad va gradual pero cuando es aleatorio a mi en mi caso me da un pico de ansiedad que de ahí no salgo, porque tenia un profesor que decía “bueno hoy es cinco de diciembre de mes de doce, doces menos cinco es tanto más dos el numero ocho, ¡TÚ!” entonces cuando me tocaba a mi era como hostia vale ahhhh

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Participant G: Que no lo esperabas

Participant F: Era un bloqueo tremendo, entonces era pues casi no sé que prefiero

Participant C: Claro

R: Vale ok

Participant F: Entonces yo creo que es mejor hablarlo con los alumnos

R: Sí

Participant F: O pasar de leer los textos que ya esta muy anticuado

((Sé ríen todos))

R: Vale ahora por favor si habéis estado en una clase de inglés u otro idioma recién podéis levantar la mano, en los últimos cinco años por ejemplo vale uno, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis, siete, ocho, nueve, muy bien, vale

Participant G: No te refieres solamente al inglés ¿no? Cualquier idioma

R: Sí en general

Participant G: Vale

Participant J: ¿Estar con más gente que no conozcas en una clase de algo?

R: No de un idioma

Participant G: Un idioma que no sea el español, lo que sea el francés el chino, bueno tú ¿el inglés no que la practicas aunque un poco?



R: Entonces ahora pensando en idiomas y en inglés si es aplicable ¿Cómo os sentís en la clase? ¿Qué es la sensación en la clase de inglés o de otro idioma?

Participant N: Yo me siento alegre que me gusta, es una cosa que, me gusta como si fuera un jugar, y por eso

R: Genial

((Another person enters))

R: Seguimos un ratico más y ya esta ¿vale?

Participant C: Yo cuando estudiaba y estaba en clase de inglés. Y francés para mi no había diferencia en esa clase que lengua o matemáticas o sea para mi era lo mismo

R: Vale

Participant C: Si me hacían hablar era la misma tensión que en cualquier otra clase o sea no había diferencia

R: Ok

Participant D: Yo para mi no ( . ) era mucho más tranquilo el inglés esto como no tengo porque hacerlo bien como no sé inglés lo voy a hacer mal pues me quitaba mucha tensión ( . ) yo la verdad lo hacia bien entre comillas porque creo que nadie lo esperaba que lo hiciese bien entonces no me atascaba como en castellano sí

R: Ok

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Participant L: En general bueno no sé si alguien lo ha comentado antes pero en general cuando se habla un idioma que no es el español en general ¿uno se bloquea más? ¿Digamos esta incrementándose la tartamudez?

Participant A: Depende mucho

R: Claro hay de todo ( . ) lo que si que hay en el aprendizaje de lenguas en el aula han visto que hay mucha gente experimenta ansiedad que sean disfemios o no se sienten ansiedad ( . ) y las personas con disfemia también en otros estudios han visto que lo más habitual es que tenemos una ansiedad más elevada que la población en general

Participant L: ¿En general en cualquier ámbito?

R: Claro, entonces estoy mirando yo si los alumnos con tartamudez también tienen la misma ansiedad que los sin disfemia

Participant A: Por ejemplo yo en cuanto los idiomas y eso creo que me costaba más en clase de idiomas porque te hacen leer más, me refiero tu estas en un curso de otra cosa y no estas continuamente “a ver leer el enunciado esto, contesta esto” es todo leer leer leer que a mi es lo que más me cuesta, a mi hablar me da igual pero a mi leer si que me cuesta más por ejemplo yo ahora mismo voy a clases de inglés y “a ver leer esto” pffff

R: Y explícame porque eso es complicado, leer específicamente

Participant A: Porque a mi me cuesta mucho leer

R: Pero explícame porque

Participant D: No puedes cambiar una palabra

Participant A: No no no sé yo, yo creo que es algo porque es algo que no suelo hacer en mi vida normal, ponerme a leer cosa en voz alta

R: Vale claro

Participant A: Es algo que no voy haciendo por la calle, voy a hablar un momento voy a sacar esto, y porque yo creo que ya es algo que tengo interiorizada como que es algo que me cuesta porque siempre era algo que yo evitaba, porque no me gustaba hacerlo es algo que no me gusta hacer, pero yo creo que es un poco por el pasado y mis experiencias en relación a clase, porque yo hablar en clase habla, la que más si hace falta y levanto la mano pero cuando hay que leer ya me cree una tensión y aunque lo hago y no pasa nada pero si que noto más presión cuando leo que cuando hablo

R: Vale

Participant C: Yo creo que es un poco lo que han dicho por ahí que con la lectura tienes que decir lo que hay sin embargo cuando hablas, antes de hablar va tu propia cabeza y dice “esta palabra no, ésta”

Participant A: No no no pero quiero decir que en mi caso yo no evito nada, yo no evito nada yo hablo y punto, antes sí pero ahora yo no estoy diciendo “voy a evitar esta palabra” pero yo creo que es por el pasado y mis experiencias pasadas como tampoco me acentúa mucha leer que no hace falta en mi día a día yo pienso que por eso me cuesta más

Participant E: Sí que entiendo que a mi antes me costaba más leer, pero ahora me ocurre el contrario me cuesta más hablar que leer, por una razón porque al leer me obliga llevar un ritmo

Participant D: Sí eso es interesante

R: ¿Y eso ayuda? Vale

Participant I: A mi yo creo que es al contrario en inglés a lo mejor o en otro idioma como que estoy, o sea me da menos ansiedad porque si fallo puede ser

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que falle porque no sé la palabra no porque, o también estas más concentrado entonces como que en español o sea que te sale más natural sino que estas más concentrado vas más despacio entonces como que vas más, yo por lo menos voy más fluida

R: Vale

Participant F: Yo en mi caso creo que es problema de la metodología, tanto en la escuela como para los idiomas porque yo creo que para aprender un idioma no te tienes que sentar en un mesa con un libro, entonces las dos experiencias he estado en dos academias de inglés sentada en la mesa con el libro y lo que me recordaba era los traumas de las clase de la lengua castellana y de conocimiento, todo el mundo leyendo el enunciado y entonces era una presión horrorosa y luego fui para aprender inglés a una clase que nos ponían videos cantábamos música nos movíamos como mucho leamos un texto porque todos interactuamos y ahí es realmente cuando yo he aprendido inglés y cuando ya no me ponía tan nerviosa

R: Vale muy bien

Participant F: Entonces es la metodología que hay que cambiar desde mi punto de vista

Participant J: A mi lo que me cuesta es cuando yo leo a mucha gente como a lo mejor aquí o en clase me cuesta más

R: Vale

Participant J: Pero yo cuando leo en mi habitación leo impec, o sea leo super bien, entonces cuando leo en mi habitación leo muy bien pero ya cuando hay mucha gente que me escucha, es cuando ya no controlo, digamos que ya me pongo yo más nervioso porque hay mucha gente y en clase me pasaba igual cuando me iba a tocar ya fuera inglés o fuera normal lengua o lo que fuera

super nervioso ya estaba yo fatal pero en mi habitación o un sitio donde este solo yo leo también a veces para mi y muy bien

Participant A: A mi por ejemplo en relación a lo que han dicho ellos me pasa al revés, como yo he ido a exámenes en inglés en los que me han valorado peor la parte oral por la tartamudez hasta que empecé a decirlo luego me di cuenta y dices antes de empezar “mira yo tartamudeo entonces no me valores mis bloqueos como que el manejo por el idioma” entonces como yo no quiero que piensen que manejo peor el idioma eso me crea una presión, es justo lo contrario como “no no como no sé el idioma” no, es que yo no quiero que me valoren como que sé peor el idioma por la tartamudez entonces ahí me crea más presión en plan quiero hacerlo bien porque no quiero que me digan ((ininteligible)) entonces desde que lo digo es verdad que te valoran diferente pero cuando no lo dices no ponen peor nota

Participant E: Es una lástima es una lástima

Participant N: Pienso igual que Participant F, aprender no es ir a clase en general aprender un idioma no es ir a clase y libro libro libro libro es hablar o sea vivir el idioma no es solamente estudiarlo, o sea la metodología la clásica digamos esa no conmigo no funciona pero vamos ni de, no funciona

R: Vale

Participant N: Hay que vivirlo o sea si vas a clase pues en la clase, según lo que he visto yo si en la clase te hacen vivir el idioma ahí en cuando aprendes si no te hacen vivirla pues no

Participant F: Que lo peor es que te pongan un tiempo que yo me acuerdo de una situación, que dijeron, “bueno quedan cinco minutos para acabar la clase ah! Pero se nos ha olvidado leer este texto ¿quien lo va a leer Speaker F?” y tú como “AH gracias” entonces ya ves que estas por la mitad de texto y la gente esta diciendo “hmmm me quiero ir” y tú estas ahí hasta que acabas y después es una vergüenza o no sé con los exámenes “tienes dos minutos y cincuenta y

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siete segundos para comentarme lo que hay en esta imagen” y tú como “vale vale”

Participant G: Otro puntillo u otro ejemplo que ha comentado antes Participant F, por ejemplo mucha gente cuando va a aprender un idioma a no saberlo y la gente que no lo sabe se anula un poquito más la tartamudez por el tema de los bloqueos la gente puede pensar que es por la pronunciación, entonces nos sentimos un poquito más, o por lo menos yo en mi caso, que fui yo a aprender francés que estuve un par de semanas hasta que me lo dejé ((se ríe))

((se ríen todos))

Bueno por ejemplo lo malo que tiene yo por lo menos en mi caso que el desconocimiento por ejemplo del idioma me crea más miedo ¿Por qué? Porque me siento más desnudo por que por ejemplo cuando conoces el idioma te puedes más o menos ¿sabes? Alguna muletilla te puedes cambiarla por otra si no te sale cuando vas al idioma entonces tienes que decir lo que tiene ahí no lo puedes jugar ¿sabes? Por lo menos yo me bloqueo más y me cuesta más tengo más ansiedad

Participant L: Pues mira ahora que lo dice yo es justo al revés

((se ríen todos))

Participant L: Cuando más sé en inglés, porque yo sé inglés tengo un inglés no sé de proficiency bueno la verdad es que no sé pero más o menos, pero me provoca como una fobia y una mal estar que piensen que no sé o que soy más gilipollas porque no sé decir como si no supiera como hablar, que me crea una ansiedad que me pues que me bloqueo mucho más lo cual es un refuerzo para que la próxima vez aún este más y aunque lo he intentado racionalizar y sé que no tiene lógica y que no tiene que ser así pero sigue pasando, o sea a mi lo que me gustaría es el poder decir “coño pues voy a hablar inglés porque lo sé porque lo puedo decir” pero me cuesta un montón, entonces pues es eso como

una fobia ya adquirida porque piensen que no sé o que sí entonces pfff me crea ansiedad

Participant A: Es que creo en relación con todo esto de los idiomas creo que cuando tienes peor nivel te relaja “no no como no lo sé” pero creo que cuando tienes más nivel pasa al revés en plan “es que no quiero que piensen que se me note”, entonces creo que depende un poco de nivel del idioma

Participant G: Por ejemplo otro puntillo yo me acuerdo cuando venia a España que tenia yo nueve años y no sabia nada de idioma, lo que pasa cuando yo era pequeño no tenia yo ningún miedo o sea por ejemplo ningún miedo a nada o sea iba a clase y me daba igual todo entonces que yo tartamudeaba o no tartamudeaba entonces por ejemplo yo tenia la mochila vacía claro entonces a los años que van pasando pues vas echándole a la mochila miedos por ejemplo fracasos por ejemplo burlas, entonces con los años yo me he ido notando que cada vez me cuesta más, por ejemplo yo creo que tiene más así, sería la mochila que nosotros mismos vamos ya llenándola

Participant M: Yo creo que cuando estas empezando cuando tienes un nivel bajo yo creo que te sientes más libre porque como que no te sientes tan evaluado sabes que puedes bloquearte sabes que puedes quedarte eso porque la gente piensa que estas pensando como salir, pero cuando ya alcanzas un nivel alto y sueltas una parrafada bien y la gente se da cuenta que hablas bien y de repente te cortas pues se dan cuenta que hay un tartamudeo, y yo cuando tenia un nivel bajo me sentía muy libre y cuando ya tenia un nivel bueno y tal pues era cuando me pasaba lo mismo que en español o sea yo los hablo bien ambos, bueno a veces los hablo mal ¿no? ((se ríe)) porque se dan cuenta o sea que si me para es porque pasa algo, porque si suelto una parrafada bien y de repente “ba” pues ya se dan cuenta y que no sea por falta de dominio de la lengua si me paro es porque pasa algo ¿no? Y eso me da más ansiedad como cuando estoy hablando en español, cuando tienes un nivel alto pasa lo mismo en las dos lenguas, dos o tres o

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R: Vale, vale ahora voy a ir cerrando, vale una pregunta un poco abierta, ¿Qué significa para vosotros tartamudear o ser una persona que tartamudea en ese contexto en una clase de un idioma?

Participant F: Pues lo mismo en el resto de las situaciones

Others: Sí claro sí sí ((se ríen))

R: ¿Es igual?

Some: Sí sí

Participant H: bueno o un poco más

Participant L: Bueno o más incluso como no lo puedes decir aunque se supone porque estas en la clase en la que estas que bueno ahora claro

Participant A: A mi me crea más presión en clase por lo que te he dicho antes, a veces parece que la gente te mira en plan “¿por qué esta aquí si no tiene nivel? No sé, yo me siento más evaluada en inglés porque creo, a lo mejor es una cosa falsa, y no parece el nivel que tenga por la tartamudez me crea presión

Participant C: Pero eso en general, o por lo menos yo lo he visto que a mi me ha pasado o sea simplemente por tartamudear y por no poder responder aunque yo lo supiese, por una pregunta en historia por no poder responder en el momento

Others: claro claro

Participant C: A mi siempre me han tratado de nivel bajo y eso, aunque luego en los exámenes decía “mira toma” ¿sabes? Pero a mi en todas las clases siempre me han tratado de eso porque yo no contestaba rápido porque no



podía, y a lo mejor ni siquiera la profesora me preguntaba a mi, intentaba evitar eso entonces

Participant A: Me refiero a día de hoy, en otras asignaturas como son en tu idioma pues no siento esa presión que siento por ejemplo con el inglés

R: Vale y ahora como he explicado antes un poco las actividades que podría hacer en un taller con la fundación, ¿si la fundación montara algo conmigo también que contenido o actividades sería útil para vosotros?

Participant K: Speaking

Participant M: ¿Para qué?

R: Si fuera un taller enfocado a vosotros ¿qué podríamos hacer para que fuera útil?

Participant B: Para mi lo que más me interesaría sería conversación

Participant K: ¿Ves? Speaking

Participant B: O sea hablar, uno a uno sí, no tanto saber no sé el verbo la gramática porque al final usamos los mismos verbos

Other: Exacto

Participant B: Un poco te puedes manejar con pocos verbos, pero tener un poco de conversación

R: Ok ¿y eso sería lo mismo en una clase normal digamos? ¿O habrá algo que cambiar? Porque estamos bueno antes ¿sería útil un taller o una clase donde somos todos tartamudos? Tanto los estudiantes como el profesor

All: Sí sí

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Participant C: Yo creo que sí porque además de practicar inglés también te serviría para tu tartamudez

Participant A: Sí

R: Vale

Participant C: Yo creo que ahí matas dos pájaros de un tiro

Participant L: Se me ocurre que a lo mejor hay gente extranjeros que están estudiando filología español por la razón que sea y quieran venir con pues con nosotros para practicar y así digamos que es una clase de inglés con conversación y cada uno digamos que esta con gente de su nivel, o sea los que saben menos juntos y los que saben más

R: ¿Y eso es gente fluida o gente con tartamudez?

Participant L: No sé eso como

R: Porque mi pregunta es ¿es útil hacer una cosa cerrada solo en familia para luego sentirse cómodo?

Participant C: Sí sí

Participant A: Sí sí

Participant D: Hasta un punto sí, luego ya no

R: Vale explícame eso

Participant D: Cuando yo ya acepto a la gente ya dentro de mi circulo digamos más de confianza err mi tensión baja y ya no sufro tanto, si son nuevos si hay gente nueva cada vez yo creo que es más reto que si ya les conozco

R: Claro

Participant D: Sí son muy conocidos al final van a ser amigos y con amigos normalmente lo haces mejor, sin embargo con uno de fuera y tal la tensión, en mi caso, aumenta, entonces al principio sí serviría en el momento que ya nos conocemos mucho

Participant E: Es que el problema no es de puertas para dentro que nos conocemos todos el problema es de puertas por fuera

R: Claro claro había pensado yo hacer eso por ejemplo una vez o dos para sentir un poco más de fuerza para luego ir a las clases con otra gente o estar en el trabajo y eso y a lo mejor te sientes con un poco más de fuerza

Participant C: Algo complementario

R: Claro

Participant C: Algo para reforzar

R: Eso he pensado yo, a lo mejor estoy equivocado, por eso estamos aquí y por eso hacemos esto

Participant D: Mal no va a venir eso seguro

Participant N: Eso iba a decir para empezar por ejemplo para empezar una o dos veces lo que has dicho y luego ya la tercera con más, con gente que no tartamudea para arrancar y luego ya ir

Participant E: Un equilibrio para que no sea algo tan fuerte salir fuera

Participant N: Lo que dijiste al principio que una idea como hacer la clase pues yo creo que una quedada como esta pero no se habla español, claro inglés

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Participant C: ¡Hasta luego que vaya bien!

((se ríen todos))

R: Y en ese sentido ¿hay alguna actividad o algo así que sería útil?

Participant F: Yo metería canciones, porque normalmente con la música la tartamudez disminuye, en inglés pues pasa un poco lo mismo, y luego metería cosas que fuesen interesantes por ejemplo si hay que leer un texto pues que sea sobre un tema interesante y no sobre yo que sé la economía

Participant H: ¡Es muy interesante eso eh!

Participant F: Pero me refiero buscar algo que al final el aprender inglés te digas “hostia pues sé inglés y puede entender una canción de Ed Sheeran” por ejemplo, pues mira eso es lo que me llevo

R: Ok

Participant F: Porque si leo un texto sobre la inversión monetaria de los Estados Unidos y la política comercial con China pues bien, pero no me he enterado de nada

Participant A: Yo creo que se podría hacer, y tratar cosas más actuales me refiero cosas que vas a usar si sales fuera en tu día a día, la gente que hace un viaje, sobre temas que se suelen hablar generalmente creo que eso es útil a lo mejor, bueno si alguien va a hacer economía sí pero a lo mejor yo que sé la típica escena que se puede hablar con alguien de fuera

Participant F: Sí temas útiles

Participant A: Y si te vas fuera al extranjero pues la cosas que se puede hablar de día a día yo que sé

Participant I: Entrevistas de trabajo creo que sería muy útil, ahora que esta tan de moda para todo saber inglés esto estaría muy bien, o por ejemplo como hacer una reserva de hotel o cosas así, o coger un avión o algo de eso, o simplemente ir a pedir un café a un bar de tú a tú

R: Vale ok

Participant B: Sí cosas así eso es útil

Participant N: Quería decir que hay una cosa que hacía yo siempre cuando quería aprender un idioma, pues por ejemplo si voy por la calle yo sé como ir de aquí a Atocha pero me hacia el tonto y preguntaba “oye como hago para ir a Atocha” por ejemplo y me indicaba pues cuando me indicaba me hacia el tonto otra vez como si no entendiera para hablar más y así pues

R: ¿Interacciones no? Interacciones reales

Participant N: Sí

Participant L: O ya digamos lo máximo máximo que sería hacer una reserva por teléfono

((Se ríen todos)) nooo

R: Eso había pensado, en hacer algo así

Participant B: ¡Y luego llamar para cancelarlo!

((se ríen todos))

R: Entonces ¿eso sería útil?

All: Sí

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Participant M: Sí practicas

Participant F: O para no montar la faena yo que sé, llamar a un restaurante y preguntar que oferta

R: Muy bien sí esas cosas

Participant A: Podría ser hacer un rol play por ejemplo, imaginar que estamos en un bar pues tu haces de camarero y yo no sé que y hacer como un rol play y cosas así

Participant C: Yo la verdad que, lo que pasa es que hace diez años y por eso tengo ganas de hablar en inglés que tengo de inglés lo tengo oxidado pero si que es verdad que yo por ejemplo a mi me enseñaron mucho con canciones, con canciones el estar viendo el videoclip con el subtítulo a bajo y todo y ahí yo aprendí mucho, y taraceando lo hacían mucho pues entrevistan, lo que pasa es que eso hacia diez o doce años y se me ha oxidado completamente pero

Participant E: El ver cine en versión original

Others: Sí

R: Sí pero eso en un taller o una clase a lo mejor no es tan útil, claro si son 5 minutos o algo, solo una cosa más entonces con la mano ¿sería útil? ¿Sería algo que harías? Sí hiciéramos un taller con la fundación en Madrid free

All: ((se ríen)) Sííí

R: Con la mano para sabe

Participant D: Sí pero yo lo veo complicado

R: ¿Por qué?

Participant D: Porque no todo el mundo sabe lo mismo entonces meter mucha gente con diferentes niveles y organizarte y va a ser complicado, hay gente que se puede sentir o decir “no me estoy enterando de nada” creo que es complicado

Participant C: Yo por ejemplo, por ejemplo yo que además ya lo he dejado claro que aquí soy yo el que menos nivel tiene

Other: No no Participant, C yo no sé nada!

Participant C: A mi si que me interesaría simplemente por medir los dientes simplemente por eso, si yo muchas veces con mis hijos y todo simplemente por oír ahí simplemente aprendo, a lo mejor mucho menos que vosotros que lo estáis entendiendo perfectamente, ¿Qué me he quedado con cinco palabras ese día? Pues perfecto ya he ganado algo

Participant A: Sí

Participant D: No digo que no se puede hacer pero digo que

Participant C: Yo entiendo que

Participant D: Hay que pensar

Participant A: Puede que haya gente que se siente un poco intimidada delante de otra gente y que no hablen porque le de como corte “uf que voy a hablar si no sé nada esta gente sabe mucho”, o sea se podría intentar hacer como dos grupos o yo que sé

Participant L: Claro uno por ejemplo de conversación que sea solo en inglés y otro grupo en que por ejemplo haya una persona que quiera enseñar a los otros pues en inglés pero que siempre sea por la conversación, por lo que tu has explicado es un poco de la tartamudez y el inglés o sea uno solo para conversar o solo para eso y otro para enseñar conversando

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R: Claro

Participant L: Y así es como dos, o bueno dos o cuatro

R: Vale vale muy bien

Participant D: Podría estar bien pero para aprender en un día o dos días

R: Ah claro el tema no es aprender

Participant B: No es para subir el nivel de inglés sino de sentirte más cómodo hablando en inglés

All: sí ahí ahí

Participant B: Porque para la mayoría te crea una ansiedad no más en otro idioma si reduces esa ansiedad y además aprender un poco más de inglés yo creo que ganas mucho

R: Participant D mi objetivo sería animarte a ti a venir y luego ir a una clase e ir feliz aprovechar ahí

Participant D: Sí yo entraría

R: Y ya esta pero enseñar inglés en un día o dos es imposible ¿sabes?

Participant G: Sí sí si

R: Vale antes de acabar esto ¿algún comentario más?

Participant G: Pues yo lo veo eso muy bien de verdad porque mucha gente por ejemplo cuando se va a apuntar a una academia por ejemplo una escuela de inglés sin saber nada encima con la tartamudez pues ya le cuesta ya muchísimo más porque claro, se vas a sentarte con veinte personas ahí,



encima que no sabe nada encima que por ejemplo tartamudeando entonces ya es como tener ahí una pared de hormigón, por ejemplo haciendo esto ya con la gente de la fundación pues ya uno se puede sentir más confort más relajado ya puede venir para practicar el inglés

Participant M: Yo creo que ese caso no se puede dar porque todo el mundo desde los 9 años ¿no?

Participant G: Sí pero yo me refiero por ejemplo a los adultos, claro yo el inglés ahora mismo yo no sé nada bueno sé tres o cuatro palabras, entonces yo para irme a una escuela o a una academia de inglés pues ya me veo yo ahora mismo yo imposible, bueno imposible no es ¿sabes? Pero bueno por ejemplo con lo que ha propuesto ahora mismo Ronan me parece a mi interesante

Participant D: ¿Sería entre semana o como?

R: Pues yo había pensado un sábado por ejemplo de nueve a cinco y hacemos inglés a tope

Participant A: A tope madre mía

R: Ocho ahora ocho ahora a ver con descanso y con tiempo para comer etc

((se ríen))

R: Pero estar ahí en familia pero en inglés claro yo tampoco soy de solo en inglés porque si que veo que a veces útil usar la lengua materna pero si en inglés la mayoría, había pensado yo, y si hace falta un sábado y un domingo ¿sabes?

Participant D: ¿Solo gente de la fundación o también podía ir gente de fuera amigos parejas tal? Quiero decir, creo que sería bueno que entrase gente no como nosotros

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R: Claro eso es una de las preguntas ¿sabes? Porque yo tampoco sé si es mejor solo estar nosotros o con gente de fuera

Participant A: Yo creo que es bueno empezar con nosotros y luego

R: A ver el tema no es inglés para todo el mundo es algo especificado para la fundación porque

Other: Hombre claro

Participant D: Lo digo para mejorar para mejorar, cuando alto sea el reto digamos a lo que de enfrentes sea mejor

Participant A: Si, pero a veces es mejor empezar a bajo e ir subiendo

Participant K: Es mejor eso

R: Claro había pensado yo que el reto será fuera del taller y el taller esta hecho para ayudaros a seguir el reto pero fuera el trabajo o en la calle o en un viaje o tal ¿sabes? ¿alguna cosa más?

Participant F: No

R: Pues gracias gente

All: ¡A ti!