



Frequent English Use and Higher Proficiency: Do They Promote Enhanced Verbal Participation and Positive Emotions in University EFL Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

In modern multilingual classrooms, students' foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and their willingness to communicate (WTC) are shaped not only by classroom dynamics but also by their language background and prior achievement. This study analyzes data from 123 university students (engineering, humanities, medicine) who completed a questionnaire measuring demographics (gender, age, study programme), self-reported FLE, WTC, English use outside the classroom, and performance on the state matura exam in English language. The study proposes the following research questions: (1) How significantly are everyday English use and English-language matura performance related to WTC and FLE? (2) Are there any differences in WTC and FLE in gender or across study programmes? (3) To what extent do everyday English use and English-language matura performance predict WTC and FLE? Hypotheses posit the following: Everyday English use and English-language matura performance will be positively related to WTC and FLE (H1); There will be significant differences in WTC and FLE in gender and across study programmes (H2); More frequent everyday English use and better English-language matura performance will predict greater WTC and FLE among students. Analyses include descriptive statistics, correlational analyses, t-test and one-way ANOVA with post-hoc tests and hierarchical multiple regression. The results point to practical strategies for teachers, including designing authentic, low-anxiety contextualized speaking tasks, integrating frequent English-use opportunities across curricula, and providing formative feedback tailored to students' language-background and achievement level. Such actions aim to raise WTC and classroom enjoyment.

Keywords: foreign language enjoyment; individual differences; prior English experience; university programmes; willingness to communicate.