



Foreign language boredom: Examining the effects of Learner and Instructor Variables among EFL Students

الملل من تعلم اللغة الأجنبية: دراسة آثار متغيرات المتعلم والمعلم لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

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الملخص:

في السنوات الأخيرة، كانت هناك زيادة ملحوظة في الاهتمام العلمي تجاه استكشاف المشاعر المختلفة التي يواجهها الأفراد الذين يتعلمون لغة أجنبية أو لغة ثانية (L2) ومع ذلك، فإن الأبحاث المتعلقة بالملل من اللغة الأجنبية (FLLB) لا تزال في مراحلها الأولى. تركز هذه الدراسة على دراسة الشعور بالملل من اللغة الأجنبية وارتباطه بالعوامل الداخلية المختلفة للمتعلم والعوامل التي تركز على المعلم. شمل المشاركون 411 خريجاً سعودياً من خريجي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) المسجلين في إحدى الجامعات العامة في المملكة العربية السعودية. أظهرت النتائج أن الشعور تجاه اللغة الثانية كان أهم دليل لمعرفة الشعور بالملل تجاه اللغة الأجنبية، أيضاً، كانت ودية المعلمين وقدرتهم على التنبؤ كانت من الأدلة لمعرفة الشعور بالملل. عند فحص التأثير المتزامن لكل من المتغيرات الداخلية للمتعلم والمعلم، أظهرت النتائج أن أكبر العوامل التي تنبئ بالملل كانت ودية المعلم ومواقفه تجاه اللغة المستهدفة، تليها قدرة المعلم على التنبؤ. كما كان أحد أهداف الدراسة هو مناقشة الآثار المترتبة على تدريس اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المتعة، الملل، تعلم اللغة الأجنبية

Abstract:

In recent years, there has been a notable increase in scholarly attention towards exploring various emotions encountered by individuals learning a foreign or second language (L2). Nevertheless, investigations of foreign language learning boredom (FLLB) are still in their early stages. The present investigation centers on the construct of FLLB and its correlation with various learner-internal factors and instructor-centered factors. Participants included 411 Saudi undergraduate graduates of English as a foreign language (EFL) enrolled in a public university in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The findings showed that attitude towards the target language was the only predictor of FLLB, while instructors' friendliness and predictability were the predictors of FLLB. When examining the simultaneous impact of learner internal and teacher variables, results showed that the most significant predictors of FLLB were instructor friendliness and attitudes towards the target language, followed by instructor predictability. Implications for language teaching are discussed.

Keywords: Foreign language learning boredom, enjoyment

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Introduction

In recent years, there has been an increasing acknowledgement of the significance of considering learners' emotions in the process of acquiring a foreign language, which was previously neglected⁽¹⁾. Students have diverse emotional experiences while acquiring a new language, similar to their experiences in other domains of education⁽²⁾. The effects of these emotional experiences can be substantial affecting both educational process and overall achievement. Despite being the prevailing and powerful emotion frequently encountered in educational environments⁽³⁾, boredom has garnered relatively limited scholarly scrutiny^(4&5). However, due to its extensive examination in the field of educational psychology and its demonstrated impact on learning, as shown by studies carried out by Li and Han⁽⁶⁾ and Putwain and Pescod⁽⁷⁾, it is crucial to pay more attention to boredom as an emotion in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). According to Tvedt et al. (2019), students who experience boredom in a language classroom may show several behaviours, such as distraction, lack of engagement, reluctance to participate in instructor-led activities, avoidance of interaction with instructors and classmates and diminished motivation to complete learning tasks. High levels of boredom proved to impede students' willingness to communicate in the target language, hence impeding their language learning progress⁽⁸⁾.

Despite the growing number of empirical investigations into boredom, many studies focused on the relationship between boredom and other variables, namely anxiety and enjoyment. However, a limited number of studies have examined the different factors underlying boredom. In addition, most of the studies were carried out mainly in the Polish, Chinese, and Iranian contexts. Research provided evidence of the pervasive presence of boredom within various educational environments^(9 & 6). To fill out this gap, the current study aims at examining the correlation between boredom and various learner-internal factors and instructor-centered factors in the underexplored context of Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

Foreign Language Boredom

The phenomenon of boredom was initially identified in Chapman's (2013) groundbreaking research on German language learners⁽¹⁰⁾. Subsequently, scholars from Poland^(11 & 12), as well as Asian researchers^(1 & 4), have conducted extensive investigations into the experience of boredom within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education.

FLLB is described as a state of disengagement resulting from a lack of interest in and involvement

in language learning⁽¹³⁾. This state is characterized by a combination of negative emotions, including dissatisfaction, disappointment, annoyance, inattention, a lack of motivation to pursue previously set goals, and a diminished sense of vitality⁽¹⁴⁾. Boredom is a detrimental academic emotion arising from a continuous foreign language learning activity or task perceived as lacking significance, purpose, relevance, excessive difficulty, or insufficient challenge⁽⁵⁾. FLLB is a common problem in schools, and it significantly impacts student motivation, engagement, and academic performance⁽²⁾.

FLLB can be classified into two categories: trait boredom and state boredom. A stable disposition or frequent experience of boredom during language learning activities or class attendance is referred to as 'trait boredom'⁽²⁾. 'State boredom,' on the other hand, is a transient experience triggered by a specific circumstance⁽¹⁵⁾. FLLB can be categorized in terms of situational and personal factors, as it is a subjective experience that varies depending on the individual and their context.

The control-value theory (CVT) of achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2006) provides a theoretical framework for investigating emotions in SLA^(4&16). According to CVT, FLLB may arise when students lack control over classroom tasks or perceive them to be of little value. Other models and theories suggest that the CE is a primary source of boredom. For instance, the understimulation model proposes that FLLB results from a lack of engaging and challenging student learning activities⁽¹⁷⁾. Similarly, the Menton theory posits that FLLB is caused by either too complex or too easy tasks, leading to a deficiency or surplus of mental energy units or mentons⁽¹⁸⁾. Most of the research on FLLB was conducted in Polish, Chinese, and Iranian contexts, as demonstrated in previous studies^(19; 20; 21; 22 & 12). For example, Kruk and Zawodniak (2018) conducted interviews with Polish students to investigate the factors contributing to FLLB in language learning⁽¹⁴⁾. FLLB resulted from many factors, including boring and repetitive tasks, instructor control that reduced interest in and relevance of the task, instructor personality and teaching strategies. These tasks were either too easy or too difficult and insufficient instructor feedback. The authors strongly emphasised the substantial influence that unfavourable instructor traits played in FLLB, which ultimately resulted in a lack of engagement and avoidance participation. In a study conducted by Pawlak et al. (2020), the experiences of FLLB in English language learning among three Polish students were examined⁽¹²⁾. The researchers found that boredom levels varied over time and identified several factors that contributed to these changes, including the instructor, the topics taught, repetitive activities, the way tasks were implemented, and a discrepancy between the difficulty level and the student's language proficiency.

In the Iranian context, Pawlak et al. (2021) found that the leading causes of FLLB among students were long and monotonous lectures by teachers, a lack of involvement on the part of students, difficulties with logistics, and unstimulating repetitive assignments⁽²³⁾. In the same educational context, Derakhshan et al. (2021) investigated the impact of monotony on instructors and students participating in online English instruction during the COVID-19 epidemic. The study found that most participants reported feeling more bored during online classes than in-person classes, based on a survey of teachers and students from Iranian colleges. The researchers reported that most participants experienced more incredible boredom during online classes than in in-person classes. Additionally, students found content-based online courses more tedious, while teachers rated content-based and skills-based courses equally dull. Notably, the investigation showed that, while teachers used various coping strategies to combat boredom, many students lacked effective coping strategies, resorting to negative behaviours such as playing games.

In the Chinese context, Li (2022) applied the CVT framework to establish the definition of FLLB in second-language learning and investigated its correlation with control and value appraisals in a group of non-English major students⁽⁴⁾. He found that FLLB was prevalent during L2 learning tasks that were either too simple, too complex or lacked interest or value. In a later investigation with a sizeable sample of students who were not majoring in English, Li et al. (2021) discovered that FLLB in L2 learning can be influenced by both internal factors, such as trait FLLB, and external factors, namely the difficulty of the task, the performance of peers, and opinions of aspects of a teacher, such as their personality, the enthusiasm they bring to the classroom, and the strategies they use⁽²⁴⁾. Furthermore, the investigation showed that learners were disinterested in instructors who were not attractive, unlikable, or unmotivated. In more recent research, Li (2022) discovered that FLLB was negatively associated with foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA)⁽⁴⁾. Furthermore, classroom-related factors such as enthusiasm, predictability, and friendliness significantly predict students' FLLB.

Factors associated with FLLB

Boredom is associated with various learner-internal factors and teacher-centered factors.

Learner-internal factors of FLLB

In a seminal study that involved 868 EFL university students in China, Li (2022) found that age was positively correlated with the experience of boredom⁽⁴⁾. This suggests that younger individuals may exhibit reduced levels of boredom, whereas older individuals may

exhibit heightened levels of FLLB (foreign language boredom). This suggests that as learners mature, there is a potential for an increase in boredom. Gender, however, did not have any statistically significant impacts on the experience of boredom. In other words, both male and female students reported comparable levels of boredom.

The year of study is another variable that could affect students' levels of boredom. In a study involving Polish students of English, Pawlak et al. (2020) found that second-year students experienced more boredom during practical English classes than third-year students⁽²⁵⁾. The researchers argue that such differences suggest a potential trend in which the sense of boredom is expected to diminish as students progress towards their final year in the Bachelor of Arts degree. As the students' awareness of the importance of completing the program grows, their incentive to maximize their class engagement increases. Consequently, this heightened motivation may result in a decrease in overall levels of boredom. These findings, however, were not aligned with Kruk and Zawodniak's⁽⁷⁾ research, which demonstrated that English majors experience an increasing sense of boredom as they progress through their studies.

Foreign language proficiency is a variable that is connected to boredom. In a recent study involving Chinese students, proficiency was revealed to be a negative predictor of boredom⁽⁴⁾. According to the control-value theory, FL proficiency may lead to self-assessments of the target FL's controllability, which is then linked to feelings of future achievement⁽²⁶⁾. More specifically, higher FL proficiency is associated with higher self-perceived controllability, which is thought to predict positive achievement emotions like enjoyment. In contrast, lower FL proficiency is associated with lower self-perceived controllability, which is thought to predict negative achievement emotions like boredom and anxiety.

Finally, boredom is associated with attitudes toward the target language. Individuals who exhibited more favourable attitudes towards the English language and English-related culture demonstrated reduced levels of boredom (Li, 2022). Extensive research has investigated the relationship between persons' propensity to acquire and employ a foreign language and their attitudes towards the foreign language and its associated society⁽²⁷⁾. When engaging in a discourse about the fundamental nature or attributes of interest, it is imperative to consider its affective aspect. This dimension encompasses positive affective states that elicit stimulation in humans, including but not limited to enjoyment, enthusiasm, and excitement⁽²⁸⁾. These emotions demonstrate that the experience of curiosity can serve as a protective factor against the deactivation of individuals caused by negative emotions, such as boredom.

Instructor factors of FLLB

The instructor's use of the target language proved to have a negative correlation with feelings of boredom⁽⁴⁾. This phenomenon can be elucidated by examining the views held by learners on the utilization of their first language (L1) and second language (L2) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. According to the research conducted by Macaro et al. (2023) at a Chinese university, it was shown that students expressed a desire for increased exposure to the second language⁽²⁹⁾. Specifically, they preferred their classes to be primarily conducted in L2, with their first language (L1) limited to situations when communication breakdowns or lack of comprehension occurred. According to Levine (2003), some learners preferred an L2-only classroom environment, considering using their native language as a deficiency or a hindrance to their progress in the second language⁽³⁰⁾. Therefore, it is conceivable that negative emotions, such as boredom or anger, may arise when teachers' language practices do not align with students' beliefs, while positive emotions, such as delight, may be experienced when students' linguistic expectations are met. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that the utilization of the first language (L1) in second language (L2) classrooms should not be entirely disregarded (Rose et al., 2023). Incorporating occasional utilization of the first language (L1) is deemed essential and advantageous for second language (L2) acquisition, as shown by research conducted by Dewaele et al.⁽³¹⁾. This practice is particularly beneficial when learners encounter challenging tasks that may elicit negative emotions, such as boredom, due to a perceived lack of control⁽¹⁾.

Instructor predictability is one variable that may impact students' emotions, including boredom. Instructors who exhibited a higher degree of predictability in their instructional approach tended to evoke lower levels of boredom among students. Li (2021) reported a negative correlation between instructor predictability and boredom⁽¹⁾. Similarly, instructor friendliness proved to impact students' emotions.

Instructor friendliness was positively linked to FLE and negatively linked to FLLB⁽⁴⁾. It is widely acknowledged that teachers who exhibit friendliness towards their pupils are more inclined to cultivate friendly and harmonious relationships with them, thereby fostering a positive and conducive classroom environment⁽³²⁾. In this particular context, pupils have a heightened sense of psychological security, fostering the cultivation of pleasant emotions while providing a protective barrier against the impact of negative sentiments. In contrast, it was determined that the level of strictness exhibited by instructors did not have any statistically significant impact on the experience of boredom. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the outcomes and the prevailing notion that educators enforce discipline for valid justifications,

it is imperative to acknowledge that excessive strictness can potentially render the classroom monotonous⁽³³⁾.

Drawing on previous research, the following research questions will be addressed:

RQ 1: Do learner-internal variables (i.e., age, gender, year of study, English self-proficiency level, and attitudes towards the target language) predict Saudi EFL students' FLLB?

RQ 2: Do instructor variables (i.e., use of the target language, instructor predictability, and instructor friendliness) predict Saudi EFL students' FLLB?

Method

Participants

A total of 411 EFL students at various campuses of a public university in Saudi Arabia participated in the study. Females constituting most of the sample (79.6%), with males accounting for the remaining 20.4%. Students' majors are English constituting (57.7%) and medicine constituting (42.3%). Medicine students take English courses designed and taught by the same teaching staff as the English major courses. The students ranged in age from 18 to 27. Most of the participants (40.1%) were in their first year of college, while 32.4% were in their second. The remaining students in the study were in their third (15.6%) or fourth (11.9%) year of their BA degree. None of the participants have studied English course abroad.

Instruments

The self-report questionnaire consists of boredom scale and learner and instructor variables.

Learner and instructor variables

The first part of the questionnaire was designed to elicit participants' background information related to their age, gender, and year of study. It included self-ratings of proficiency in four skills of the English language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Participants were instructed to rate their proficiency in English on a scale from 1 to 10 for each skill. A similar scale was used in previous studies^(34 & 35). In addition, students' attitudes towards their FL teachers and the target language. The questionnaire also measures instructors' language command, instructor predictability, and instructor friendliness.

Boredom scale

FLLB was measured using a set of eight items from the Achievement Emotions Questionnaire created by Pekrun

et al. (2011)⁽³⁶⁾. The questionnaire items were adjusted to suit the EFL learning context. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statements on a five-point scale that ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” To ensure the accuracy of the Arabic version of the questionnaire, proficient Arabic users employed translation and back-translation procedures. The survey was translated into Arabic by one professor of translation, and then a second professor performed a reverse translation of the Arabic version into English. A language expert examined the back translation to ensure the preservation of the original English meaning for each survey item. The survey measure underwent a pilot testing phase before the beginning of the study, involving a select sample of students who shared the same characteristics as the study participants. The objective of the pilot study was to assess the clarity of all survey items. In terms of internal consistency, Cronbach’s alpha for the FLLB scale is .91 suggesting a high internal consistency.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics and normality tests were conducted first. Multiple regression analysis was carried out to assess the effect of the learners’ learner-internal variables (i.e., age, gender, year of study, English self-proficiency level, attitudes towards their FL instructors, and attitudes towards the target language). In addition, another round of multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the effect of instructor variables (i.e., use of the target language, instructor predictability, and instructor friendliness) and their relative contribution and their relative prediction of students’ FLLB.

Procedure

The data was obtained using a questionnaire disseminated online via Google Docs platform. Adhering to research ethics, individuals who consented to participate in the study are provided with a comprehensive overview of the study’s objectives. The participants are allowed to select either Arabic or English for the survey. The inclusion of an Arabic version was motivated by the preference of certain participants to respond to surveys in Arabic and the expectation that offering a language choice would enhance the participation rate. The survey duration ranged from 15 to 20 minutes, and participants could remain anonymous.

Results

The data were first screened for normality and outliers. The data’s normality was evaluated using skewness and kurtosis values that were within the acceptable range of -2 and +2, indicating normality⁽³⁷⁾. In addition, the reliability of each scale was calculated using coefficient alphas for the scales. The values are more significant

than 0.70, showing an acceptable level of internal consistency. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics and normality.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics (means and SDs) and normality of observed variables (N = 411)

Variables	Mean	SD	Skewness (SE)	Kurtosis (SE)
FLLB	2.63	.93	.17	.22
English proficiency	6.16	2.10	-.23	-.31
Attitude towards the target language	3.90	1.19	-.89	-.04
Predictability	3.74	1.26	-.63	-.65
Friendliness	3.99	1.22	-.96	-.11
Use of the target language	4.32	1.05	-1.64	1.99

Predictors of FLLB

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to investigate whether learner-internal variables (i.e., age, gender, year of study, English self-proficiency level, and attitudes towards the target language) and instructor variables (i.e., use of the target language, instructor predictability, and instructor friendliness) were predictors of FLLB. There was a significant relationship between the learner-internal variables (i.e., age, gender, year of study, English self-proficiency level, and attitudes towards the target language) and FLLB ($p = .001$; $R^2 = .166$; $R = .408$). About 41% of the variance in FLLB was accounted for by the learner-internal variables. Attitudes towards the target language are the only predictor of FLLB, with a t value of -6.307. The remaining variables, namely age, gender, year of study, and English self-proficiency level were not predictors of FLLB (see Table 2).

Table 2: Regression Model for Predictive Effects of learner-internal Variables on FLLB

Variable	B	Beta	t	p
Age	.177	.099	1.689	.092
Gender	.125	.054	1.171	.242
Year of Study	.030	.033	.546	.585
Proficiency in English	-.044	-.099	-1.894	.059
Attitudes towards the target language	-.256	-.328	-6.307	.000

Model $R = .408$; $R^2 = .166$; Adjusted $R^2 = .156$; Std. Error = .855; $F = 16.162$; $p < .01$

Regression analysis results demonstrate a significant relationship between the instructor variables (i.e., use of the target language, instructor predictability, and instructor friendliness) and FLLB ($p = .001$; $R^2 = .253$; $R = .503$). The instructor variables accounted for about .51% of the variance in FLLB. Instructor friendliness and instructor predictability were predictors of FLLB with

t values of -4.915 and -3.288, respectively. Instructor enthusiasm was not a predictor of FLLB.

Table 3: Regression Model for predictive effects of instructor variables on FLLB

Variable	B	Beta	t	p
Instructor friendliness	-.244	-.319	-5.389	.000
Instructor use of target language	-.050	-.057	-1.033	.302
Instructor predictability	-.145	-.197	-3.493	.001

Model $R = .503$; $R^2 = .253$; Adjusted $R^2 = .248$; *Std. Error* = .807; $F = 46.066$; $p < .01$

The significant predictors of FLLB (attitudes towards the target language, instructor friendliness and instructor predictability) identified in the previous analyses were further entered into a regression model to test how they co-predicted boredom. As shown in Table 4, the proposed model fits the data well ($R = .537$, adjusted $R^2 = .288$, $F = 54.840$, $p < .001$). The most significant predictors of FLLB were instructor friendliness ($\beta = -.292$) and attitudes towards the target language ($\beta = -.208$), followed by instructor predictability ($\beta = .169$).

Table 4: Regression Model for predictive effects of combined learner-internal and instructor variables on FLLB

Variable	B	Beta	t	p
Attitudes towards the target language	-.163	-.208	-4.557	.000
Instructor friendliness	-.223	-.292	-5.372	.000
Instructor predictability	-.125	-.169	-3.136	.002

Model $R = .537$; $R^2 = .288$; Adjusted $R^2 = .283$; *Std. Error* = .788; $F = 54.840$; $p < .01$

Discussion

The first research question addressed whether learner-internal variables, namely age, gender, year of study, English self-proficiency level, and attitudes towards the target language, predict FLLB among Saudi EFL students. The learner-internal variables accounted for about 41% of the variance in FLLB. Attitudes towards the target language proved to be the only predictor of FLLB, indicating that students who hold a favorable opinion of English may experience reduced levels of boredom. Such a finding corroborates the results obtained by Li (2022), who reported attitudes toward English as a negative predictor of FLLB. Contrary to the current study's findings, Li (2022) found that age, gender, year of study, and English self-proficiency level were predictors of FLLB⁽⁴⁾. This could be explained by the differences in the educational context of the two studies. Many studies reported that the classroom environment

neutralized the impact of internal learner variables. In other words, it seems that all students, regardless of their age, gender, year of study, and level of proficiency, are not essential variables compared to factors related to the classroom and how they feel about the target language. More specifically, this indicates that younger and older learners, regardless of their gender, may experience the same levels of FLLB. In addition, students with low and high levels of proficiency experience boredom, indicating that boredom is prevalent among students with different proficiency levels. Only positive attitudes towards English help undermine feelings of boredom. In this regard, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) contend that learners' excitement for studying and utilizing a foreign language is closely associated with their perceptions of the foreign language⁽²⁷⁾. Positive emotions such as enthusiasm and enjoyment make up the affective side of interest, often the main point of discussion when discussing its nature⁽²⁸⁾. It has been discovered that these feelings provide protection against negative feelings such as an overwhelming sense of boredom⁽⁴⁾.

The second research question examined whether instructor variables, namely the use of the target language, instructor predictability, and instructor friendliness, predict FLLB among Saudi EFL students. The results showed a significant relationship between the instructor variables and boredom. Instructor-related variables accounted for more than 50% of the variance in FLLB. The results revealed a negative correlation between instructor predictability and FLLB. Li (2022) discovered an identical pattern. Saudi and Chinese students have similar expectations and ideas about instructor practices and styles in the foreign language classroom⁽⁴⁾. Saudis seem to prefer certainty over ambiguity, as the former gives them a sense of being on the right path. At the same time, the latter tends to evoke negative emotions due to the absence of psychological security.

Instructor friendliness was found to be positively or negatively related to FLLB. This corroborates the pattern Li (2022) revealed for FLLB⁽⁴⁾. Undoubtedly, teachers who are friendly to students are more likely to establish warm and congenial bonds with students and thus create a positive and relaxing classroom atmosphere. In such an atmosphere, students feel psychologically safer, positive emotions get nurtured, and negative feelings get buffered or mitigated. Positive emotional experiences in students can diminish negative emotions like fear and FLLB while creating positive emotions⁽³⁸⁾. This, in turn, cultivates a positive and captivating classroom environment and stimulates active involvement in class activities⁽³⁹⁾. The results align with research in educational psychology, indicating a correlation between good emotions and heightened engagement as well as negative emotions and disengagement^(40 & 41).

Regarding the instructor's use of the target language, it was not one of the predictors of FLLB. The pattern for

FLLB differed from that reported by Li (2022) in the Chinese context. This could be explained by the fact that Saudi students are accustomed to the instructor's heavy use of Arabic in English courses since elementary school. All English instructors in the K-12 Saudi educational system are non-native speakers of English. Arabic is still used in English classes at the university level, as reported by Alzamil (2019), who argued that Arabic is the preferred language among Saudi EFL students when communicating important information. Saudi instructors often believe that the Arabic language can be a tool for ease rather than an obstacle⁽⁴²⁾. Therefore, it can be incorporated into many classroom activities without impeding students' exposure to the English language⁽⁴³⁾.

When examining the simultaneous impact of learner internal and instructor variables, results showed that the most prominent predictors of FLLB were instructor friendliness and attitudes towards the target language, followed by instructor predictability. These results partially confirm the findings reported by Li (2022), who found that instructors' friendliness was the strongest predictor of boredom among Chinese EFL students.

Implications

The results of this study have implications for language practitioners and researchers. One of the implications of this study is that students' advisors and mentors should help students develop an awareness of the importance of appreciating the target language and culture they are studying. Having a positive attitude towards the target language helps reduce boredom and enhances students' learning experience.

The development of language abilities unquestionably requires a classroom setting that is both entertaining and stimulating, free from boredom⁽¹⁾. Language instructors can help their students cope with the aftereffects of FLLB by implementing strategies that enhance student engagement, comprehension, and application of course material. Making the classroom a welcoming place where students feel like they belong is one way to accomplish this goal for maintaining their interest and participation. Teachers can foster an environment where students feel safe expressing themselves by establishing a supportive and nonjudgmental tone. According to Li and Dewaele (2021), students who suffer from anxiety can overcome its crippling effects by engaging in language lessons that are both fun and challenging⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Limitations and Future Directions for Research

Some limitations exist in the current investigation. Since this study's data was collected from a single university sample, students speaking the same native language, its conclusions might not apply to other demographics or languages. We also recognize the need to use caution

when interpreting self-reported data, even if surveys have been used to measure emotions in the past. Future studies should include qualitative data from interviews in order to have more comprehensive results. In addition, the current study did not measure other emotions related to boredom and may have contributed to students' levels of FLLB. Studies that examine boredom along with enjoyment and anxiety may offer new insights.

Conclusion

This study is one of few studies that examines the emerging construct of boredom in the underexplored Saudi context. It is an attempt to extend the line of research on the recent interest in boredom as one of the emotions that affect language learning. Examining the learner's internal and instructor variables and their potential role in affecting boredom has yielded significant results. First, attitude towards the target language was the only predictor of FLLB, while instructors' friendliness and predictability were the predictors of FLLB. When examining the simultaneous impact of learner internal and instructor variables, results showed that the most significant predictors of FLLB were instructor friendliness and attitudes towards the target language, followed by instructor predictability.

Conflict of Interest

The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

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Data Availability Statement

The Data used in the course of this study are available on request from the author.

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