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Learner emotions, autonomy and trait emotional intelligence in 'in-person' versus emergency remote English foreign language teaching in Europe[1]

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Abstract
Due to the spread of Covid-19, universities had to move their courses online abruptly. This paper explores its impact on 510 European tertiary-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' classroom emotions and analyses possible links to their trait emotional intelligence (TEI) and learner autonomy. Statistical analyses of data gathered with a web survey revealed that students rated their 'in-person' classes as significantly more enjoyable and also more anxiety-provoking. Overall, levels of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) were positively correlated between both contexts. The moderate negative correlation between FLE and FLCA in 'in-person' classes disappeared in emergency remotely taught classes. TEI and learner autonomy were positively correlated, and both were positively linked to FLE and negatively to FLCA in both contexts. This means that more autonomous, emotionally intelligent students tend to be able to enjoy the FL class more – even more so under particularly challenging circumstances. Overall, it seems that learners not being physically present in classrooms weakens all emotions, and breaks the relationship between them. One possible explanation is that disembodied classes have less emotional resonance.
Keywords: Covid-19; foreign language classroom anxiety; foreign language enjoyment; learner autonomy; trait emotional intelligence

1 Introduction

On March 11 2020, the World Health Organisation (2020) declared Covid-19 a pandemic and the world saw itself facing an unprecedented crisis, which required immediate action. Mass gatherings in public were prohibited, quarantine, and lockdowns were imposed. As a consequence, many schools and universities across the globe were closed and education was abruptly moved online, often with little time for teachers and learners to adjust. Hodges et al. (2020) argue that teachers had to turn suddenly into "instructional MacGyvers[1], having to improvise quick solutions in less-than-ideal circumstances".

These special circumstances called for coining a new term to describe this new and unique teaching context, "emergency remote teaching" (ERT), defined as "a temporary shift

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of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances" (Hodges et al. 2020), which at tertiary level equalled moving courses online during the pandemic. ERT requires creativity, flexibility and rapid implementation to offer and ensure education in times of great uncertainty. It is exactly the suddenness of the emotional burden that distinguishes it fundamentally from regular online classes, which have been researched widely (see, e.g., Means et al. 2014). As such, it can be assumed to have had an impact on learner emotions (MacIntyre and Gregersen 2012).

In this paper, we therefore decided to focus on the impact of ERT on students' foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014, 2016). With a web survey, we collected data from 510 tertiary-level English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in the European context. This allows an exploration of the impact of ERT on students' classroom emotions by means of investigating the possible context-specificity of FLE and FLCA in such an emergency situation. As previous studies have shown that they differ, for instance, in first (L1) and LX classes (Resnik and Dewaele 2020) but also according to teaching methods (De Smet et al. 2018) and individual teachers (Dewaele and Dewaele 2020), investigating them more closely in ERT contexts as opposed to regular classes is vital as ERT bears unique challenges for both teachers and learners alike.

Additionally, the generally acknowledged relevance of learners' ability to self-regulate their emotions and their wellbeing (Mercer et al. 2019) in their successful learning trajectories might be even more important in crises modes. One lower-order personality trait, Trait emotional intelligence (TEI) (Petrides 2009), has been shown to be linked to learners' emotional self-regulation and subsequent achievements (e.g., Li 2020). Previous studies furthermore demonstrated its strong links to classroom emotions (e.g., Li and Xu 2019), which are seen as the fuel for the learning (Dewaele 2015). Therefore, one of the aims of the present paper is to investigate possible links between TEI and learners' FLE and FLCA in on-site and ERT classes to see if emotionally intelligent students cope better with online LX classes than students scoring lower on TEI.

As studies have shown, well planned online courses require considerable learner autonomy too (Daniels and Stupnisky 2012), partly due to learners seeming to have more control with regard to what and when to learn than they usually do in regular classes taught 'in-person' (Marchand and Gutierrez 2012). While ERT differs considerably from well-planned online teaching in certain aspects, it is similar to it in requiring more autonomy from learners than is usually the case in classes taught on site. Thus, this paper also focuses on possible links between TEI, FLE, FLCA and learner autonomy, as the latter might be of great relevance to students' emotions in ERT contexts and might be linked to learners' wellbeing.

2 Literature review

2.1 Differences between emergency remote teaching and planned online courses

While ERT during the Covid-19 pandemic is similar to, for instance, distance education in offering education despite geographical and possibly temporal distance (Moore et al. 2011), it differs radically in terms of time for implementation.

Previous studies have shown that online classes have many benefits, including increased flexibility and accessibility (Waschull 2001), and can be just as effective as classes taught in person if prepared well (Hodges et al. 2020). However, designing them meaningfully requires a different pedagogical approach, different skills, extensive experience and time (Boling et al. 2012). Hodges et al. (2020), for instance, mention that planning a regular online course at tertiary level in a meaningful way usually takes in between six to nine months before it is delivered. Thus, as Kuong (2015: 1003) states, "an effective online class is more than just converting materials from a traditional course into electronic format" and it too requires a high level of motivation, self-directedness and goal-orientedness from the learners

themselves, asking them to be able to filter what is relevant with less dependence on their teachers (Broadbent and Poon 2015; Kuong 2011).

Additionally, learners might easily feel isolated when taught online, which has been shown to have a negative impact on their own satisfaction with their learning experience in regular online classes (Kuong 2015), and lockdown due to a pandemic might increase this perception of being socially disconnected. Thus, another aspect that distinguishes ERT from any other online setting is the enormous stress both teachers and learners experience in such an emergency situation and the general emotional rollercoaster they need to navigate, which can affect their wellbeing (Müller and Goldenberg 2020). Previous research has demonstrated the crucial role of learners' and teachers' emotions in planned online learning environments (Atrino Jr. 2012). Sansone et al. (2012), for example, investigated students' use of strategies to regulate their motivation and interest longitudinally over the course of one semester in online versus 'in-person' classes. While both groups of learners used the same outcome-based motivational strategies, only in the case of learners in online classes was exploration positively linked to interest and negatively to exam grades.

Other achievement emotions, such as boredom, anxiety and enjoyment, have been investigated in both settings too: Tempelaar et al. (2012) concluded from their study, in which they investigated 730 students of maths and statistics, that enjoyment has a positive impact and boredom a negative one on the intensity with which students engage online in blended settings. Artino Jr. and Jones' (2012) study on achievement emotions in online contexts also demonstrated that positive emotions, in their case enjoyment, enhance metacognition and elaboration, while negative emotions showed the reversed pattern. Interestingly, they found that frustration was a positive predictor of metacognition, making them conclude that the role of achievement emotions in learners' self-regulatory behaviour is complex. Thus, we need to be aware of there being "occasions when pleasant emotions are not necessarily 'good' for students and unpleasant emotions are not necessarily 'bad'" (Daniels and Stupnisky 2012: 223).

While online learning has been explored extensively in different disciplines, systematic comparative research into LX classes in regular and online settings, specifically, has been scarce (Caldwell-Harris et al. 2014). Caldwell-Harris et al. (2014) were the first to investigate the impact of learning an unknown LX, Samoan, from a live instructor versus learning it via video by means of the Total Physical Response technique. An experienced language teacher taught her first introductory class to 275 psychology undergraduates who either watched the teacher act out or acted out commands themselves in both contexts. The findings demonstrate an increase in learning and learners' enjoyment when taught by a (charismatic) live instructor. Only weak links were shown depending on whether commands were acted out as opposed to merely watching a teacher. As highlighted above, ERT is not comparable to regular, planned online courses though.

2.2 Foreign language classroom anxiety and foreign language enjoyment

Among the various emotions learners experience in the process of learning and using another language, their FLCA has been most widely studied (Gkonou et al. 2017). In their pioneering study, Horwitz et al. (1986) developed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), the context-specificity of which was demonstrated in its validation (Horwitz 1986). (Foreign/Second) Language Anxiety was defined as an "individual's tendency to be anxious in […] the *situation* [original emphasis] of language learning", which can be described as individuals "having the *trait* of feeling *state* [original emphases] anxiety when participating in (or sometimes even thinking about) language learning and/or use" (Horwitz 2017: 33). Recent research on FLCA acknowledges its complexity, non-linear development and dynamic interactions with other variables (see, e.g., Boudreau et al. 2018).

While the experience of negative emotions hinders progress in learning an LX (Botes, Greiff et al. 2020c), the experience of positive emotions facilitates learning and performance (Botes, Dewaele et al. 2020b). In their seminal paper, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) drew on Fredrickson's (2004) *broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions*, arguing it was time to explore classroom emotions more holistically by focusing on the role of positive emotions too for their different impact on language learners. Following this suggestion, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014, 2016) conducted a large-scale study with a web survey, in which they investigated learners' positive and negative emotions in the FL class. More specifically, they measured participants' FLCA with eight items extracted from Horwitz et al.'s (1986) FLCAS scale and complemented it with a 21-item scale with which they measured FLE. Their conceptualisation of enjoyment is in line with Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi's (2000) claim that it differs from pleasure in it being "a complex emotion, capturing interacting components of challenge and perceived ability that reflect the human drive for success in the face of a difficult task" (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2016: 216). The authors furthermore stress that it consists of personal and social dimensions, i.e. FLE depends on the learners themselves, but also the peers and the teacher. These dimensions have recently been captured in a revised, shortened three-factor model of FLE by means of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, which consists of nine items that capture 'personal enjoyment', 'social enjoyment' and 'teacher appreciation' (Botes et al. 2020a).

To this end, research using both scales has provided a nuanced understanding of FLCA and FLE in classes taught in person. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) found that both variables were moderately negatively correlated. On the contrary, learners can experience both simultaneously or even none of them. Their findings also revealed that their respondents generally experienced higher levels of FLE than FLCA (Dewaele and MacItyre 2014). This was replicated in another study by Resnik and Dewaele (2020), in which the same was shown for learners' enjoyment and anxiety in first language (L1) classes. Participants' sociobiographical background, their linguistic background and language use were linked to both too: Participants who knew more languages, who perceived themselves as highly proficient in the FL and considered their relative standing in the group of learners as above average experienced lower levels of FLCA and more FLE than others. This also applied to older learners and highly educated participants. Males scored lower on both negative and positive emotions than females (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014).

Additionally, both emotions were shown to be linked to LX performance (Botes et al. 2020b). In their study investigating 1307 Chinese learners of English with a web survey, Li et al. (2018) also identified both classroom emotions as good predictors of learners' self-rated proficiency. These studies demonstrate the crucial role of getting "the emotional temperature right" (Resnik and Dewaele 2020), meaning that teachers should focus on enhancing students' positive emotions rather than trying to counteract their negative ones (Dewaele and Dewaele 2020; Dewaele et al. 2019). FLE and FLCA are also strong (positive and negative) predictors of willingness to communicate (Dewaele 2019; Dewaele and Dewaele 2018).

Previous studies have also pointed towards the context-specificity of classroom emotions: Resnik and Dewaele (2020) investigated enjoyment and anxiety in L1 (German) and EFL classes among 768 learners at secondary and tertiary level. Their findings revealed higher enjoyment of LX classes but also higher FLCA than language anxiety experienced in L1 classes. While the reason for the latter is likely to be increased self-confidence due to a higher level of proficiency, learners repeatedly mentioned boredom due to different didactic approaches and a missing sense of accomplishment as reasons for their lower enjoyment of L1 classes. A comparative study on classroom emotions in content and language integrated learning (CLIL) and non-CLIL settings in French-speaking Belgium revealed that also the status of the LX in local society and the didactic approach matter (De Smet et al. 2018): Learners who studied "cool" English scored higher on FLE and lower on FLCA than students

of Dutch and learners with CLIL classes were less anxious than learners with exposure to the LX in regular LX classes. Additionally, studies from the Chinese context pointed towards cultural variability: Chinese EFL learners scored comparatively low on FLE (e.g., Li 2020) and relatively high on FLCA (e.g., Jiang and Dewaele 2019) compared to international samples. Considering the context-specificity of FLE and FLCA, it is likely that these emotions will also be different in ERT settings versus in-person teaching.

2.3 Learner autonomy

Holec (1981) was the first to define learner autonomy in the context of language learners, which he considered having empowering potential in adult education. He described it as the "ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec 1981: 3), which is, according to him, not inherent in anyone, but must be learned. Learner autonomy is complex and multidimensional behaviour that involves learners' self-control of their learning, typically outside the context of formal instruction (Benson 2013). Ruelens (2019) mentions that students in higher education are usually expected to be more independent learners than at secondary level but she furthermore points out that also at tertiary level, learners need guidance in becoming more autonomous in their learning. Hence, it is also a social phenomenon (Little et al. 2017) linked to learners' psychological, cognitive and metacognitive characteristics (Macaskill and Taylor 2010; Ruelens 2019).

In this context, Lamb (2008a) adds that recent learning modes based on new technologies require teachers to consider their students' learner autonomy carefully to find an effective balance between learning in the classroom and doing so independently. Indeed, online learning not only offers learners more flexibility but it also requires considerable autonomy, which leads to greater responsibilities on the side of the learners too (Daniels and Stupnisky 2012). Shifting control from teachers to learners may have emotional consequences, as control is seen as an antecedent of emotion (Daniels and Stupnisky 2012). It is thus highly likely that university students' perceived learner autonomy is linked to their emotional experiences in regular 'in-person' classes and in ERT settings where more autonomous learners may have been better equipped to cope with rapid educational changes due to the emergency situation. While learner autonomy has been widely researched in different modes of online learning environments (Hamilton 2013; Little 2016), to the best of our knowledge no research to date has investigated its links to learners' emotions in ERT contexts and TEI so far. This is one of the aims of the present paper.

2.4 Trait Emotional Intelligence

Petrides and Furnham (2006: 554) conceptualise TEI as a "constellation of emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions (e.g., emotion perception, emotion management, empathy, impulsivity)" and, consequently, as a "lower order personality trait". It differs from *ability* EI in its form of measurement: While assessment of ability EI is performance-based, TEI is measured by means of self-report.

Previous research into the role of TEI in SLA and multilingualism has revealed links to anxiety (Dewaele et al. 2008). The authors found that among 464 participants, those with a higher TEI reported lower levels of anxiety in all their languages in different situations of language use. Shao et al. (2013) identified a moderate to strong negative correlation between EI, FLA, perceived and actual achievement in their research into 510 Chinese EFL learners' emotions in the LX class. TEI was shown to be partially mediated by FLA in its impact on learners' achievement. Recent PP-inspired research explored its links to LX learners' positive emotions too: In her study on 1307 Chinese secondary-level EFL learners, Li (2020) identified a positive correlation between TEI and FLE and found that both were positively

linked with learners' perceived and actual achievement. In a recent study, Li and Xu (2019) revealed links between TEI and both learners' positive and negative classroom emotions.

The importance of TEI in L1 and LX classroom emotions has emerged in Resnik and Dewaele (2020). Their study on 768 language learners' positive and negative classroom emotions in L1 (German) and LX (English) classes revealed positive correlations between students' enjoyment ratings and their TEI and negative ones between learners' FLCA and their TEI in both contexts. Links between anxiety and TEI were generally stronger, pointing to anxiety being more stable than enjoyment, and TEI and L1 classroom-related variables shared more variance.

3 The present study

This study investigates learners' positive and negative emotions experienced in foreign language classes taught in person and in ERT just after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. This allows identifying unique, context-specific aspects related to affective variables in EFL classes taught online in crisis mode. The analyses furthermore attempt to provide a deeper understanding of possible links between learners' FLE and FLCA and their TEI, which can be considered crucial in times of unprecedented (emotional) challenges in unprecedented circumstances too. Additionally, possible links to learner autonomy will be taken into account considering its great relevance in online settings.

3.1 Research questions

The following research questions were formulated:
RQ1: To what extent do foreign language enjoyment and foreign language anxiety differ in classes taught in person and in ERT?
RQ2: How strongly are learners' anxiety and enjoyment ratings linked in each context and across both contexts?
RQ3: What is the relationship between TEI and learner autonomy and how strongly are they linked to learners' classroom emotions in both teaching/learning contexts?

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Participants

In total, 510 tertiary-level EFL students participated in this study. The vast majority were female ($n = 429$, 84.1%) with 72 (14.1%) male respondents. Nine students did not disclose their gender. This female predominance reflects the EFL student population. Their age ranged from 18 years to 53 years, the mean age being 22.66 ($SD = 3.78$). Most students were Austrian ($n = 448$, 87.84%), followed by Croatian ($n = 8$, 1.6%), Italian ($n = 8$, 1.6%), German ($n = 5$, 1%), Polish ($n = 5$, 1%), Bosnian ($n = 4$, .8%) and Serbian ($n = 4$, .8%) respondents. The remaining learners were from various other nationalities, including, among others, Belgium, Hungary and Spain.

All were studying in Europe. Additionally, they all had EFL classes in the term before university courses were moved online due to Covid-19 and had continued their classes in ERT at the time of the data collection. They were either enrolled in English and American studies and had various subjects taught in EFL in which their language competence played a role in their assessment (e.g., linguistics or language competence ones), or had EFL classes as a mandatory subject in their degree (e.g., teacher trainees for the primary level or students enrolled in International Business Studies). This way we managed to reach a variety of EFL learners at tertiary level from diverse backgrounds. The most common L1s were German ($n =$

460, 90.2%), Croatian (n = 9, 1.8), Polish (n = 7, 1.4), Serbian (n = 5, 1%) and Italian (n = 5, 1%). They were all LX users of English and rated their knowledge of it on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = 'very poorly', 2 = 'poorly', 3 = 'adequately', 4 = 'well', 5 = 'very well'), on average, as very high (M = 4.57, min. = 2, max. = 5, SD = .609, n = 510). They also described themselves as frequent users of English on a scale from 1 ('hardly ever') to 5 ('almost always') (M = 4.04, min. = 1, max. = 5, SD = .677, n = 510).

The sample consisted of 46 learners (9.02%) knowing four or more LXs, 134 (26.27%) reported knowledge of three LXs, 234 (45.88%) spoke two and 96 (18.82%) only spoke one LX on top of the L1(s).

3.2.2 Procedure

The web survey was made accessible via the online questionnaire application LimeSurvey in April 2020 and remained online until mid-May 2020. Anonymity of the participants, their teachers and specific institutions was guaranteed. The research project and related tools received ethical approval from the first author's research institution. Colleagues at various departments of English at European universities and university colleges of teacher education were contacted and asked to forward the link to the survey to their students. It was also distributed via mailing lists, such as the one of AAUTE (Austrian Association of University Teachers of English). We thus tried to capture a great variety of EFL learners at tertiary level. As in many other web survey-based studies, self-selection bias also poses a problem in this one as we depended on learners' willingness to complete the survey, which was particularly challenging at the beginning of this crisis, a time of great uncertainty and distress. Via convenience and snowball sampling (Dewaele 2018), we still managed to reach an acceptable participant number and a broad spectrum of tertiary-level learners within relatively little time.

At the beginning of the survey, the participants were informed about the study, data collection and what the findings will be used for and they were then asked for their consent.

3.2.3 Instrument

Respondents were asked to complete several sets of questions. The first set covered background questions on participants' demographics (e.g., gender, age, nationality and current residence) and language learner history (e.g., languages known, perceived proficiency and frequency of use of English) as well as learners' previous experiences with online classes. This was followed by a set of questions capturing students' FLE and FLCA in their regular 'in-person' classes before the Covid-19 crisis and in ERT classes. Then they rated their TEI and their learner autonomy on two widely-used psychometric scales, all of which are described in detail below. At the very end, we included two optional open questions, where students were asked what other emotions they experienced in both contexts and their perceived main differences between these classroom settings. The first question was answered by 274 students and the second one by 271, amounting to a corpus of 19,414 words.

3.2.3.1 Foreign language enjoyment

Students' FLE was measured with the psychometrically validated *Short-Form Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale* (Botes et al. 2020a; see Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014 for the original scale). This short form consists of nine positively-phrased items (see appendix), which reflect three dimensions, consisting of three items each: 'personal enjoyment' (e.g., "In my online/'in-person' English class, I feel proud of my accomplishments"), 'social enjoyment' (e.g., "We laugh a lot" in the LX class) and 'teacher appreciation' (to what extent the teacher is perceived as encouraging, friendly and supportive). Answers were given on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = 'strongly disagree' to 5 = 'strongly agree' for both 'in-person' classes and ERT. In both cases, internal reliability was good (Dörnyei 2010), with Cronbach's alpha being .809 ($N = 9$) for 'in-person' classes and .841 ($N = 9$) for remotely taught classes. It also ranged from acceptable to very good in the subscales (personal enjoyment$_{FTF}$: Cronbach's alpha = .651, $N = 3$; social enjoyment$_{FTF}$: Cronbach's alpha = .711, $N = 3$; teacher appreciation$_{FTF}$: Cronbach's alpha = .851; personal enjoyment$_{Online}$: Cronbach's alpha = .769, $N = 3$; social enjoyment$_{Online}$: Cronbach's alpha = .756, $N = 3$; teacher appreciation$_{Online}$: Cronbach's alpha = .874, $N = 3$).

3.2.3.2 Foreign language classroom anxiety

Eight items from Horwitz et al.'s (1986) *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)* were used twice to measure learners' experienced FLCA in both in-person teaching and ERT. This scale has been widely used (see, e.g., Dewaele and Dewaele 2020; Dewaele et al., 2019; Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014, 2016). In this study, it was slightly adapted: "online English class" and "'in-person' English class" were used instead of "foreign language class". As in the enjoyment scales, learners were asked to rate their anxiety on the same 5-point Likert scale (1 = 'strongly disagree', 2 = 'disagree', 3 = 'undecided', 4 = 'agree', 5 = 'strongly agree') for both learning contexts. The items in this scale intend to capture learners' physical anxiety-related symptoms, their self-confidence and nervousness (see Appendix). Scale analyses revealed high internal consistency of both scales with Cronbach's alpha being .899 ($N = 8$) for the FLCA measured in in-person teaching environments and .853 ($N = 8$) for the online context (Field, 2014).

3.2.3.3 Learner autonomy

Students' autonomy was measured on a scale consisting of 12 items (see Appendix). It is a slightly adapted version of Macaskill and Taylor's (2010) *Autonomous Learning Scale*, which is a psychometrically sound and short scale that captures tertiary learners' study habits (e.g., procrastination, time management-related issues and working independently), and aspects related to learners' enjoyment of new learning experiences, their open-mindedness and intrinsic motivation. Two items of the original scale were slightly rephrased (items 1 and 8) to put a slightly more explicit focus on learners' self-management and self-control. Responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'fully disagree' to 'fully agree'. Internal reliability of the scale was good: Cronbach's alpha = .80 ($N = 12$).

3.2.3.4 Trait Emotional Intelligence

The 30-item *Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form* (TEIQue-SF) (Petrides 2009) was used in this study. It contains two items of each of the 15 dimensions included in the long version and, this way, allows measuring a global TEI-score reliably in a comparatively short time. It captures participants' *emotionality*, *self-control*, *sociability* and *well-being*. Answers are distributed on 7-point Likert-type scales (from 1 = 'completely disagree' to 7 = 'completely agree'). Scale analysis revealed high internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha being .86 ($N = 30$).

Q-Q (quantile-quantile) plots show that the dependent variables follow the normal distribution reasonably well apart from the extreme tails (see Figures 1 to 6) and we thus opted for the more powerful parametric tests, namely t-tests and Pearson correlations. Apart from kurtosis being borderline for FLCA in 'in-person' classes, other variables are well within acceptable ranges (see Table 1).

Table 1
Descriptive statistics for FLE 'in-person', FLE online, FLCA 'in-person', FLCA online, learner autonomy and TEI.

Variable	N	Mean	*SD*	Median	Mode	Min	Max	Skewness	SE1	Kurtosis	SE2
FLE 'in-person'	510	3.98	.49	4.00	3.89	2.56	5.00	-.080	.108	-.411	.216
Personal FLE 'in-person'	510	3.88	.6	4.00	4.00	1.67	5.00	-.296	.108	.297	.216
Social FLE 'in-person'	510	3.65	.72	3.67	3.33	1.33	5.00	-.096	.108	-.088	.216
Teacher Appreciation 'in-person'	510	4.42	.57	4.50	5.00	2.00	5.00	-.825	.108	.662	.216
FLE online	453	3.33	.66	3.33	3.00	1.67	5.00	-.032	.115	-.504	.229
Personal FLE Online	453	2.95	.86	3.00	2.67	1.00	5.00	.16	.115	-.302	.229
Social FLE Online	453	2.77	.91	2.67	3.00	1.00	5.00	.282	.115	-.407	.229
Teacher Appreciation Online	453	4.23	.71	4.33	5.00	2.00	5.00	-.625	.115	-.366	.229
FLCA 'in-person'	472	2.62	.89	2.63	2.38	1.00	5.00	.18	.112	-.727	.224
FLCA online	438	2.53	.77	2.50	3	1.00	4.50	.087	.117	-.418	.233
Autonomy	425	3.75	.56	3.75	3.67	2.25	5.00	-.08	.118	-.408	.236
TEI	431	154.43	19.19	156	150	101	203	-.309	.118	-.295	.235

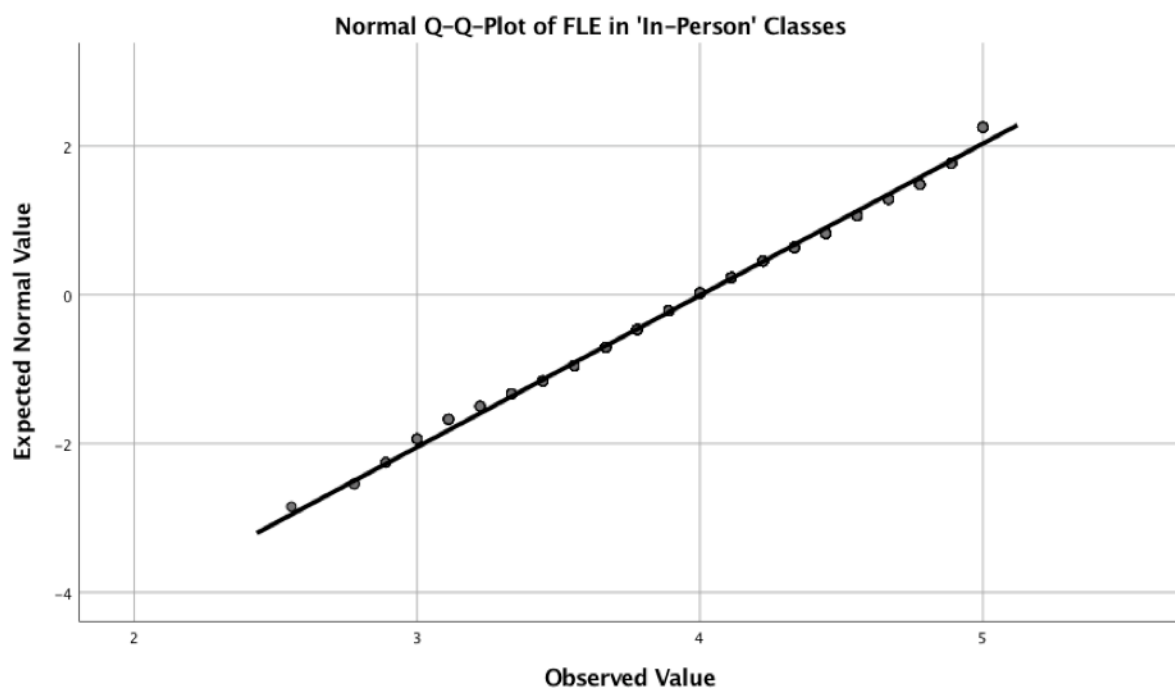Normal Q–Q-Plot of FLE in 'In-Person' Classes

Fig. 1. Quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot for distribution of FLE scores in 'in-person' classes.
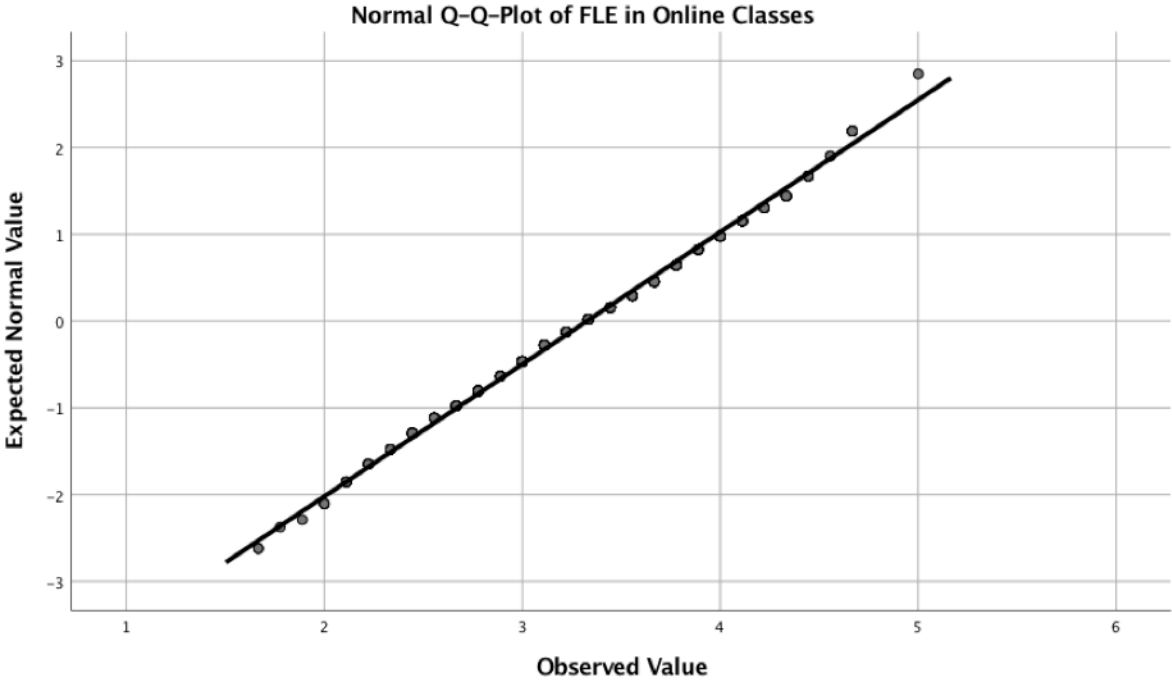

Fig. 2. Quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot for distribution of FLE scores in online classes.
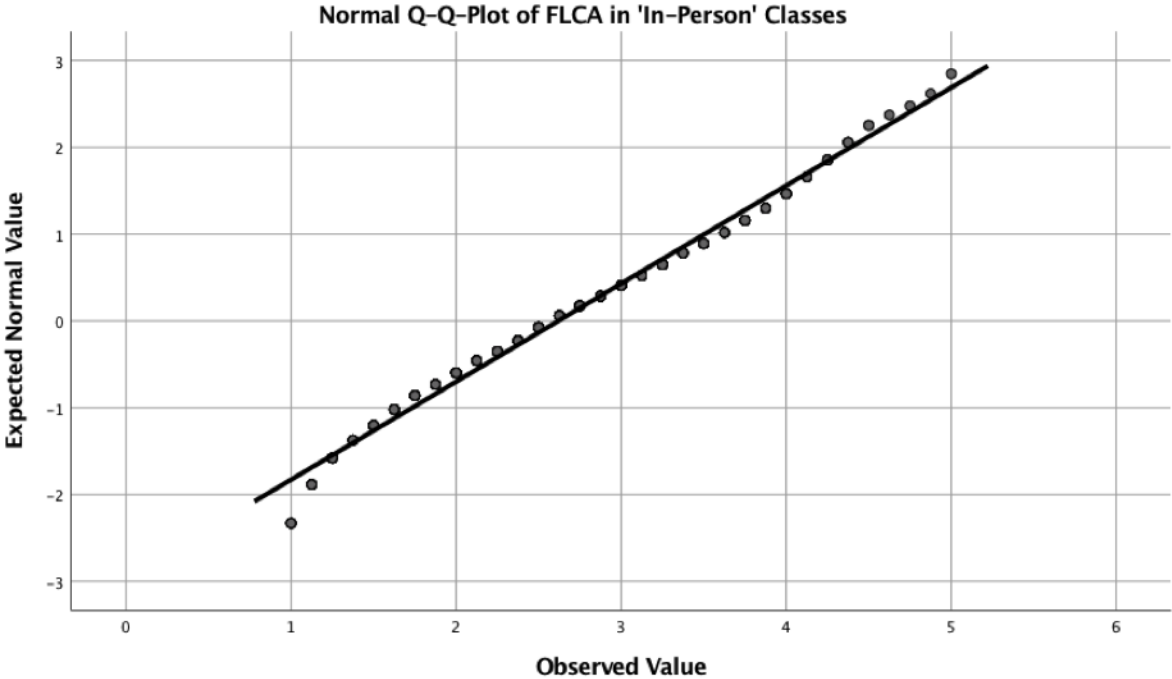

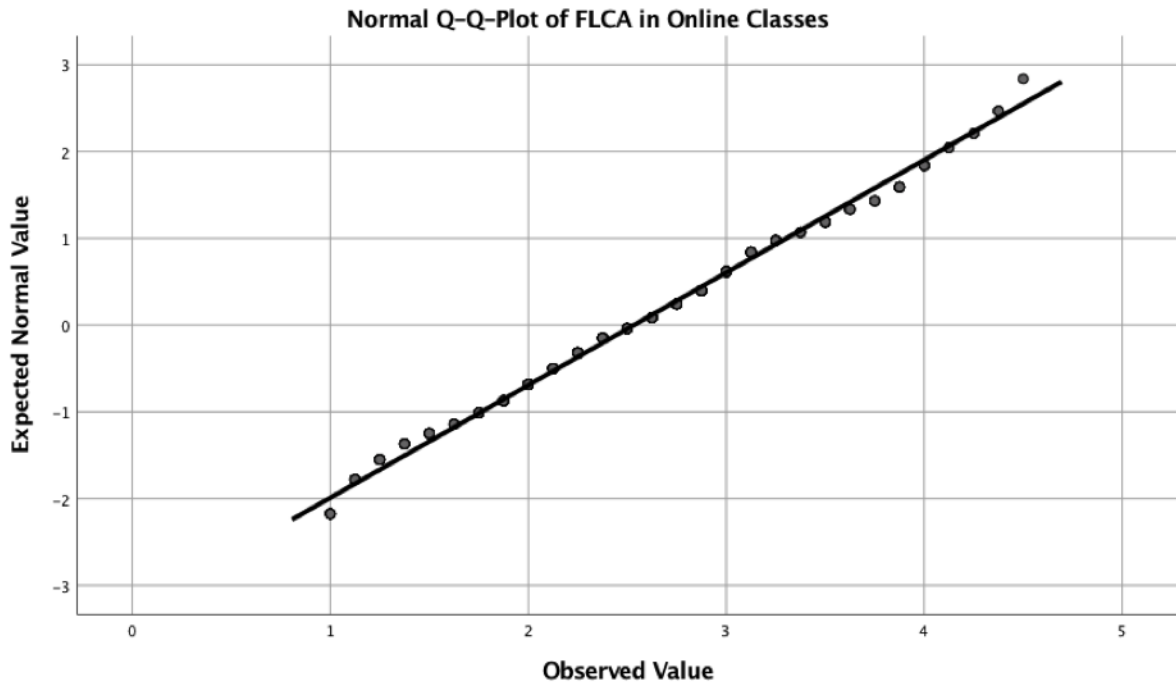Fig. 3. Quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot for distribution of FLCA scores in 'in-person' classes.

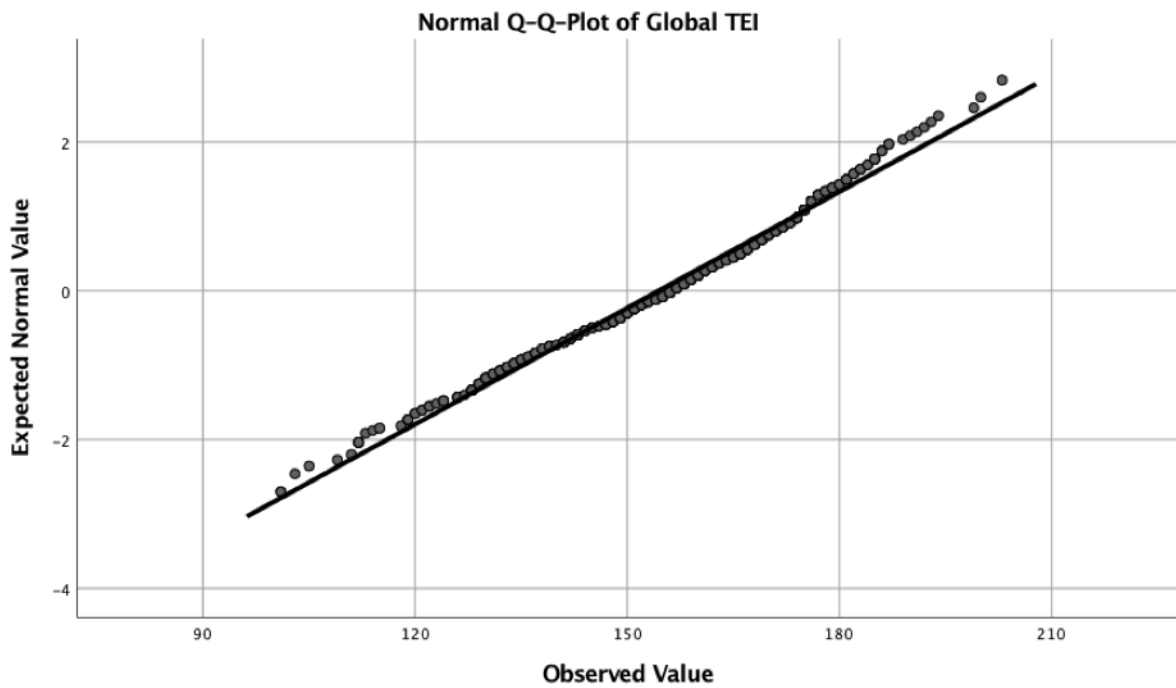Fig. 4. Quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot for distribution of FLCA scores in online classes.

Fig. 5. Quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot for distribution of global TEI scores.
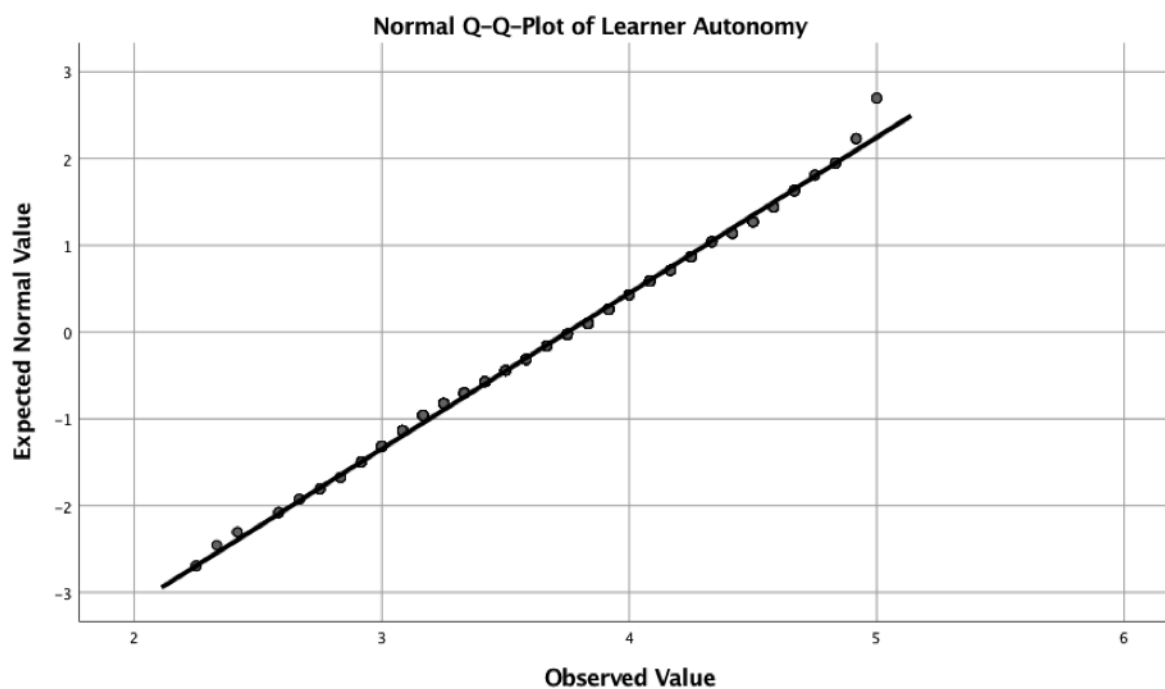
Fig. 6. Quantile-quantile (Q-Q) plot for distribution of learner autonomy scores.

Data obtained from the two open questions will only be used to support the quantitative analyses and to allow participants to add their own views on and reasons for the statistical trends.

4 Results

4.1 Differences in enjoyment ratings across regular and ERT LX classes

In order to compare students' enjoyment of LX classes in both contexts, a series of paired t-tests was run. They demonstrated a significant decline in learners' overall FLE [$t(452)$ = 18.95, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = .89$.] in ERT ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .66$, $n = 453$) as opposed to classes taught in person ($M = 3.89$, $SD = .49$, $n = 510$). This pattern was reflected on all subscales, i.e. learners' personal enjoyment in 'in-person' classes ($M = 3.88$, $SD = .6$, $n = 510$) in comparison to their personal enjoyment of ERT classes ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .86$, $n = 453$), [$t(452)$ = 19.8, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = .93$]; their social FLE in regular classes pre-Covid-19 ($M = 3.65$, $SD = .72$, $n = 510$) versus their social FLE during the Covid-19 online phase ($M = 2.77$, $SD = .91$, $n = 453$), [$t(452) = 18.06$, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = .85$]; as well as teacher appreciation in pre-Covid-19 classes taught on site ($M = 4.42$, $SD = .57$, $n = 510$) as opposed to teacher appreciation in ERT classes ($M = 4.26$, $SD = .71$, $n = 453$), [$t(452) = 5.33$, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = .25$] (see also Table 1).

As illustrated in Figure 7, teacher appreciation remained most stable and the decline was smallest on this subscale. As can be seen, Cohen's d (Cohen 1988) indicates a small effect on this subscale too, while indicating a large effect on all other levels.
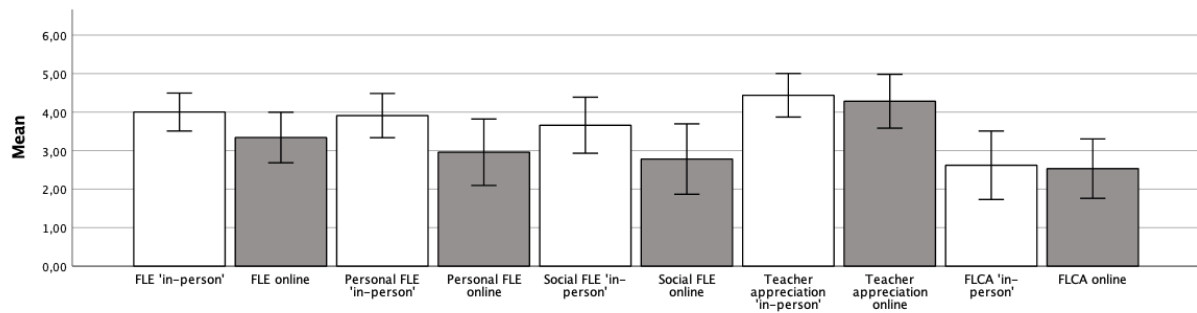
Fig. 7. A comparison of mean enjoyment and anxiety scores in 'in-person' and online classes (with SD).

A series of Pearson correlations was run to investigate links between the subscales within and across contexts. As Table 2 shows, students' personal FLE in regular classes was moderately and positively linked to their social FLE (they share 18.4% of the variance) and teacher appreciation in classes taught on site (they share 12% of the variance). However, it was not linked to any of these aspects in ERT. Students' social FLE of classes taught in person showed quite strong positive links to teacher appreciation in this context (they share 22% of the variance) and it was weakly positively linked to social FLE (sharing 3.7% of the variance) and teacher appreciation in online classes (they share 1.3% of the variance). While teacher appreciation was not linked to students' personal and social enjoyment of online classes, it showed moderate positive links to teacher appreciation in 'in-person' LX classes, both sharing 15.9% of the variance. This means that students who appreciated their teachers more in classes taught on site also reported doing so more in ERT. Students' personal FLE in online classes showed a strong positive link to their social FLE (both share 27.9% of the variance) and a moderate one to teacher appreciation in the online mode (they share 14.4% of the variance). However, no links to any of the FLE subscales in regular classes were identified. Students' social FLE in online classes is linked to teacher appreciation in the online mode too (they share 16.6% of the variance). Overall, it seems that personal FLE in ERT is independent from previous experiences made in regular classes, while social enjoyment and teacher appreciation, especially, are moderately to strongly linked to the enjoyment experiences in classes pre Covid-19 (Cohen 1988).

Table 2
Correlations among personal FLE, social FLE and teacher appreciation in 'in-person' and online classes.

Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6
Personal FLE 'in-person'	Pearson r	-	.429**	.346**	-.003	-.083	.078
	p		.000	.000	.947	.077	.098
Social FLE 'in-person'	Pearson r	.429**	-	.469**	-.016	.192**	.133**
	p	.000		.000	.728	.000	.005
Teacher appreciation 'in-person'	Pearson r	.346**	.469**	-	.079	.106	.399**
	p	.000	.000		.093	.025	.000
Personal FLE	Pearson r	-.003	-.016	.079	-	.528**	.380**

		Col1	Col2	Col3	Col4	Col5	Col6
online							
	p	.947	.728	.093		.000	.000
Social FLE online	Pearson *r*	-.083	.192**	.106	.528**	-	.408**
	p	.077	.000	.025	.000		.000
Teacher appreciation online	Pearson *r*	.078	.133**	.399**	.380**	.408**	-
	p	.098	.005	.000	.000	.000	

Note: **indicates statistical significance at a p < .008
FLE = foreign language enjoyment

About 'personal FLE', students frequently described their ERT classes in the open questions as "a bit more boring" and "less interesting" (participant no. 79) due to less interaction and involvement in the class. Participant no. 24 furthermore stated that classes are "not as fun as they would be if we had 'in-person' classes". Learners' explanations were mostly related to 'social FLE' though, as participant no. 482 explains: "To me, something that is strongly missing, is the group dynamic in class. Not just a good teacher makes a class but also the group, the motivated ones pulling the others along, the funny ones who tend to relax class with their jokes, etc." What learners seemed to miss most was "interaction with fellow students but also with teachers" (participant no. 98), making them feel "more isolated" (participant no. 33) and not knowing any of the classmates made participant no. 280 conclude, "any sense of community is lost". Interacting with teachers and peers was linked to "joking around" in class, "giving and receiving feedback" (participant no. 366) but also "talk[ing] about your personal life before class" (no. 82) and reflecting with peers on the content covered in class over coffee afterwards. As participant no. 409 stated, many of them missed the opportunity to form friendships too: "what I personally consider worst is that you do not get to know new people. I think one of the most inspiring and enriching things during university time is that you make new friends and with online classes you do not really get the opportunity to do so." What can be observed in students' answers to the open questions too is 'teacher appreciation': Despite them often criticising that lecturers "squeeze too much into a scheduled meeting", they frequently described them as "really supportive and do[ing] their best to facilitate our learning" (participant no. 104). Overall, students seemed to appreciate their teachers' efforts and many of them showed understanding. Participant no. 482, for instance, stated: "the situation we are confronted with is new and the times are confusing - so I cannot really blame the teachers for not being on top of their game at the moment".

4.2 Differences in anxiety ratings across regular and ERT classes

Another paired t-test revealed that learners' experienced significantly less FLCA in ERT (*M* = 2.53, *SD* = .77, *n* = 438) than in regular classes taught in person (*M* = 2.62, *SD* = .89, *n* = 472); [*t*(438) = 2.32, *p* = .021; Cohen's *d* = .11] (see Table 1). Cohen's *d* indicates that the difference is very small (see Figure 7). While students frequently mentioned feeling "anxious about task achievement or (not) having fully understood a task and therefore not doing it correctly" (participant no. 16) in ERT classes in the responses to the open questions, many of them mentioned feeling "more relaxed, not feeling observed (anonymous)" (participant no. 14) and feeling less "'forced' to share thoughts" (participant no. 13). For students with a high level of FLCA, contributing to online classes was less stressful, as participant no. 223 explained:

> For me, personally, I find it very much easier to take part in online classes now. I normally would not really talk in 'in-person' classes out of fear of people staring at me

(I have quite an issue with stage fright […]). So with this new learning experience of online classes, I engage way more with the chat, teacher and students.

Overall, student no. 124 described the emotions experienced in ERT classes the following way: "It is simply 'less'. Less everything."

4.3 Differences between enjoyment and anxiety ratings in regular and ERT classes

Additionally, paired t-tests were run to investigate whether learners' overall enjoyment and anxiety ratings differed in each context. The results show a significant difference between enjoyment and anxiety ratings in classes taught in person [$t(472) = 26.35$, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = 1.22$] as well as online [$t(438) = 15.78$, $p < .001$; Cohen's $d = .76$]. A comparison of mean scores (see Table 1) reveals that the experience of enjoyment outweighs that of anxiety in both contexts and Cohen's d indicates large effects (see also Figure 7).

4.4 Relationships between students' enjoyment and anxiety in and across both contexts

In order to analyse possible links between students' enjoyment and anxiety ratings in both contexts, a series of Pearson correlations were run. The correlations with a Bonferroni correction ($p < .008$) (see Table 3) indicate highly significant positive correlations between learners' enjoyment of regular classes and online classes and their experienced anxiety in both contexts. This means that students who reported experiencing more enjoyment in 'in-person' classes also did so in ERT. The same pattern emerged for FLCA: higher FLCA scores in regular LX classes were linked to higher FLCA scores in online classes. While this relation was weak for FLE (enjoyment ratings sharing 2.1% of the variance), the relationship between learners' FLCA ratings in both contexts was strong, with anxiety ratings sharing 32.1% of the variance (Cohen 1988).

FLE and FLCA showed a highly significant moderate negative correlation in 'in-person' classes (9.1% of shared variance). This means students scoring higher on enjoyment scored lower on anxiety in 'in-person' classes. Students' enjoyment and anxiety in ERT contexts were not linked.

4.5 Links between Trait Emotional Intelligence, learner autonomy ratings and students' FLE and FLCA in both contexts

Additionally, Pearson correlations were run to investigate to what extent participants' self-rated learner autonomy and their TEI are linked to their FLE and FLCA in both contexts. Students' global TEI – the scores of which ranged from 101 to 203 points ($M = 154.43$, $SD = 19.19$, $n = 431$) – is positively linked to students' perceived FLE in both contexts (Table 3). While links to the former are close to moderate, links to the latter are weak (TEI and FLE in traditional classes share 8.5% of the variance, in online classes they share 2.2%). For FLCA, the opposite pattern emerges, suggesting that emotionally intelligent students tend to experience lower levels of anxiety in both contexts. While TEI and learners' FLCA experienced in traditional classes shared 11.6% of the variance, TEI and FLCA experienced in online classes also showed a medium effect, sharing 10.1% of the variance (see, e.g., Field 2014).

Learner autonomy ($M = 3.75$, $SD = .56$, $n = 425$) and TEI are strongly positively linked, learners with higher TEI being more autonomous (Table 3). They share 21.9% of the variance. The correlations furthermore demonstrate a highly significant positive link between learner autonomy and FLE in both contexts, with learner autonomy and FLE in traditional settings sharing 3.4% and autonomy and the FLE experienced by learners in emergency remote contexts sharing 5% of the variance (Table 3). This suggests that more autonomous learners tend to be able to enjoy the LX classroom more than less autonomous ones – even

more so under unusual, particularly challenging circumstances. Participant no. 129, for instance, who scored very high on autonomy ($M = 4.67$), wrote the following: "I love it! I have now more time to understand the things of the course, because we get the ppt´s with recording and I can listen to them as often as I like." Participant no. 134 concluded: "Overall, I enjoy them as I can work at my own pace - I have much better time management now!"

FLCA showed a different pattern: while it was unrelated to learner autonomy in 'in-person' classes, a weak negative link was shown for online classes, with both variables sharing 2.1% (Field, 2014) of the variance. These findings suggest stronger links between learner autonomy and the experience of enjoyment in the language classroom as well as large effects for the links between learner autonomy and TEI (see Table 3). One possible explanation might be learner autonomy playing a more important role in ERT contexts, as participant no. 37 explains: "the student bears more responsibility due to less frequent/strict monitoring by the teacher", which some of them prefer as they "feel more in control now" (participant no. 34): "I quite enjoy not having a fixed schedule as I am able to plan my day more effectively" (participant no. 69). Others feel quite overwhelmed by it and interpret it as having "to teach ourselves more" (participant no. 59), which sometimes leaves them "completely stressed out and close to a break down" (participant no. 36).

Table 3
Correlations among FLE and FLCA in 'in-person' and online classes, TEI, and learner autonomy.

Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6
FLE 'in-person'	Pearson r	-	.146**	-.301**	-.087	.292**	.183**
	p		.002	.000	.069	.000	.000
FLE online	Pearson r	.146**	-	.089	-.122	.147**	.223**
	p	.002		.058	.011	.002	.000
FLCA 'in-person'	Pearson r	-.301**	-.089	-	.567**	-.341**	-.022
	p	.000	.058		.000	.000	.655
FLCA online	Pearson r	-.087	-.122	.567**	-	-.317**	-.143**
	p	.069	.011	.000		.000	.003
TEI	Pearson r	.292**	.147**	-.341**	-.317**	-	.468**
	p	.000	.002	.000	.000		.000
Learner autonomy	Pearson r	.183**	.223**	-.022	-.143**	.468**	-
	p	.000	.000	.655	.003	.000	

Note: **indicates statistical significance at a $p < .008$
FLCA = foreign language classroom anxiety; FLE = foreign language enjoyment; TEI = trait emotional intelligence

5 Discussion

Learners reported lower levels of both positive and negative classroom emotions in ERT settings than in 'in-person' classes. Paired t-tests revealed an overall drop in students' FLE in ERT settings, which was reflected on the three sub-dimensions. On the level of personal enjoyment of LX classes, students perceived classes as less interesting, more monotonous and repetitive, which could lead to boredom (Pawlak et al. 2020). Boredom was linked to students' lower engagement in ERT classes which they described as "more teacher-centred" (participant no. 79). A pedagogical implication of this finding is that teachers need to ensure engaging students as much as they can in ERT and they could do so by using, for instance, 'breakout rooms' in which the students can collaborate on tasks, be among each other in discussions without the teacher necessarily being present or they could peer-teach each other on topics, which might make them share the joy of helping and supporting each other rather than focusing solely on themselves (Murphey 2014). This could also help boost aspects related to the social dimension of FLE, which were most frequently mentioned by the participants: not forming a tight group, not laughing as much as they usually do in 'in-person' classes (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014, 2016) and not even being able to get to know their teachers or peers and form friendships is what they missed most in ERT settings. Interestingly, teacher appreciation remained most stable across contexts. Despite them often feeling overwhelmed by the workload, they show respect and empathy for their teachers and awareness of the emotional burden teachers might experience too in times of crisis. Additionally, they seem to be aware of new technologies and teaching modes requiring considerable autonomy and learning from their teachers as well (Lamb 2008a, 2008b) and that they are challenging for learners and teachers alike.

Learners also experienced significantly lower levels of FLCA in ERT. This might easily be misinterpreted as something positive due to the presence of strong negative emotions usually hindering progress (MacIntyre and Gregersen 2012). However, in this specific case, the perceived anonymity of online classes, little interaction and students feeling that it is easier to hide (like participant no. 14) might lead to a drop in FLCA. Thus, it might simply be linked to students' reporting not using the LX orally as extensively in ERT classes as in 'in-person' classes. Overall, it seems that virtual classrooms dull students' emotions. One possible explanation is that disembodied classes have less emotional resonance. Positive links emerged between FLE in regular classes and FLE in ERT settings. As positive emotions were shown to directly impact performance in previous studies on regular 'in-person' classes (e.g., Saito et al. 2018) and enjoyment was shown to have a positive impact on the extent to which learners engage online in blended learning (Tempelaar et al. 2012), the need to boost learners' FLE in ERT settings is crucial. As mentioned previously, this could be achieved by means of engaging the learners more in the online class, supporting the establishment of relationships and by means of giving extensive feedback, to name but a few options, in order to boost learners' sense of accomplishment (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2016) when facing the challenging task of learning in relative social isolation. In regular LX classes, teachers were shown to have more influence on their learners' FLE than their FLCA (Dewaele and Dewaele 2020). This was also supported in the present study, which showed weak links between FLE in both contexts, while FLCA ratings shared 32.5% of the variance across contexts (see also Resnik and Dewaele 2020).

Overall, enjoyment outweighed anxiety in both contexts and is in line with previous research on 'in-person' contexts (e.g., Resnik and Dewaele 2020). This might be linked to participants' comparatively advanced LX competence (Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014). This study furthermore suggests that learners' emotions seem to be generally less intense in ERT settings. Longitudinal studies would be needed to investigate the impact of learners' dulled emotions in ERT settings on their achievements. While a moderate negative correlation was shown for FLE and FLCA in LX classes taught in person, as also indicated in previous studies (e.g., Dewaele and MacIntyre 2014), in classes taught remotely in this emergency situation, the link disappeared, which supports Dewaele and MacIntyre's (2014) claim of them not being opposite poles of the same continuum. Moreover, it demonstrates that – similar to planned online classes (Artino Jr. and Jones 2012) – ERT affects learners in complex and, possibly, unique ways.

TEI was once more shown to be an important learner-internal variable (Resnik and Dewaele 2020): it was positively linked to FLE and negatively to FLCA in both contexts (Li 2020). This suggests that students who are able to regulate their emotions better tend to be able to enjoy the LX class more and experience less FLCA, which applies to ERT too. It demonstrates the need for including learners' wellbeing widely as a general teaching objective (Mercer et al. 2019) especially in times of unprecedented crisis. The previously established positive impact of PP-inspired interventions (Li and Xu 2019) might be particularly beneficial in ERT settings as self-reflection on emotions benefits wellbeing. Helgesen (2014), for instance, mentioned the positive impact of PP-inspired classroom activities and the discussion of learners' wellbeing on their enjoyment and performance in the context of regular LX classes and this should be considered by teachers in ERT too.

Additionally, learner autonomy was strongly positively linked to TEI in the ERT context, with both sharing 21.9% of the variance, but it was furthermore positively linked to FLE in both contexts. This link was stronger in ERT contexts, suggesting that learner autonomy might play a crucial role in empowering learners to cope with such situations and to, consequently, enjoy sudden changes in teaching and entirely new learning experiences. Previous research demonstrated that planned online classes require considerable autonomy from learners (Daniels and Stupnisky 2012) and our findings showed that this applies to ERT too. Students reported having more control (Marchand and Gutierrez 2012) and enjoyed being able to study at their own pace. Overall, more autonomous learners seem to be able to enjoy this education setting, in which they depend less on their teacher and are more in charge of their own learning (Holec 1981). This also points to the need to support tertiary-level learners more in becoming co-owners of their learning (Ruelens 2019) in order to equip them with the tools needed in times which require more initiative, reflection and control than usual.

6 Conclusion

The current study set out to investigate the effect of the abrupt introduction of ERT following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic on the emotions of European EFL learners. They reported higher enjoyment than anxiety in both 'in-person' and ERT contexts. However, students' FLE was significantly lower in ERT settings than in 'in-person' classes. An analysis of the sub-dimensions revealed that teacher appreciation remained most stable across contexts but that personal FLE and especially social FLE dropped significantly in the ERT context. Learners also experienced significantly less FLCA in ERT settings than in 'in-person' classes. From the feedback on the open questions it emerged that learners felt the ERT setting changed the classroom dynamics by making it more remote, which was regretted by many but also appreciated by some. Participants' enjoyment and anxiety were positively linked across

the two settings. While FLE and FLCA were moderately negatively linked in 'in-person' classes, they were not linked in ERT settings. Further analyses revealed that students with high levels of TEI experienced more FLE and lower levels of FLCA in both contexts. TEI was also positively linked to learner autonomy. Finally, more autonomous learners were found to enjoy the EFL classroom more than less autonomous peers in both settings.

The current study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining Likert-type responses with written feedback to two open questions. The resulting data were rich but future studies on ERT could include interviews to capture the complexity and nuances of learners' unprecedented experiences.

To conclude, the massive and abrupt move to ERT with the onset of the pandemic represented a heroic effort on the part of teachers and an adjustment by both teachers and students to a new type of interaction. ERT allowed learners to continue their studies but it came at a price, as the mere projection of two-dimensional thumb-size faces of teachers and peers on a screen, combined with the tinny sound of their voices through computer loudspeakers, do not have the same emotional impact as being in their physical presence.

Further research could explore whether learner emotions in an ERT context might grow stronger as it becomes more established practice.

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Appendix

Face-to-face/Online enjoyment scale
1. In my online/'in-person' English class, I feel proud of my accomplishments.
2. I enjoy/ed it.
3. It's/was fun.
4. The teacher is/was encouraging.
5. The teacher is/was friendly.
6. The teacher is/was supportive.
7. There is/was a good atmosphere.
8. We form/ed a tight group.
9. We laugh/ed a lot.

Face-to-face/Online anxiety scale
1. Even if I am/was well prepared for my online/'in-person' English class, I feel/felt anxious about it
2. I always feel/felt that the other students speak English better than I do
3. I can/could feel my heart pounding when I'm/was going to be called on in my online/'in-person' English class
4. I don't/didn't worry about making mistakes in my online/'in-person' English class
5. I feel/felt confident when I speak/spoke in my online/'in-person' English class
6. I get/got nervous and confused when I am/was speaking in my online/'in-person' English class
7. I start/ed to panic when I have/had to speak without preparation in my online/'in-person' English class
8. It embarrasses/ed me to volunteer answers in my online/'in-person' English class

Learner autonomy scale
1. I'm good at searching information about new topics on my own.
2. I frequently find excuses for not getting down to work.
3. I'm good at meeting deadlines.
4. My time management is good.
5. I'm happy working on my own.
6. Even when tasks are difficult I try to stick with them.
7. I am open to new ways of doing familiar things.
8. I'm good at handling challenging tasks.
9. I plan my time for study effectively.
10. I tend to be motivated to work by assessment deadlines.
11. I take responsibility for my learning experiences.
12. I enjoy new learning experiences.

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[1] The heroic title character in the action-adventure TV series *MacGyver*.