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Foreign Language Anxiety, Sexuality and Gender:

Lived Experiences of Four LGBTQ+ Students

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
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Thesis Committee:
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Abstract

The relationship between foreign language anxiety and gender identity has been largely a quantitative endeavor that has shown contradictory results. Furthermore, sexual identity has not been researched in foreign language anxiety literature. A qualitative account of LGBTQ+ language learners with different gender identities has been absent from the literature. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between foreign language anxiety and sexual and gender identity. To gain insight into this relationship, this qualitative study investigated the lived experiences of four LGBTQ+ foreign language university students who represented three gender identities.

Data were collected through multiple, in-depth interviews, observations, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS, Horwitz et al., 1986), and a questionnaire. The four participants were further situated through the results of the FLCAS, which was distributed to the research site and garnered 141 responses. Presentation of the data includes portraits of two of the participants and a cross-case analysis of the four participants.

The portraits provided rich, thick descriptions of the educational and historical backgrounds of the two learners as well as themes related to their individual anxiety levels. The cross-case analysis found that foreign language anxiety across participants related to invalidated identity, privileged identities, context, and trait anxiety. These themes largely caused participants to experience communication apprehension, possible cognitive interference, avoidance behavior, and a lack of willingness to communicate.

This study offers pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research. The data show that language teachers need to be aware of the pervasive nature of foreign language anxiety and how the identities of LGBTQ+ students can play into foreign language anxiety. Furthermore, teachers need to affirm the identities of their students.

Dedication

For Cindy, Alice, and Rodney. Eyes…

Acknowledgements

This thesis is a culmination of time, effort, and most of all, love and support from others. I would like to take this section to thank the many people who have had their hand in the work I have done, which has amounted to my proudest academic accomplishment.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Foreign Language Anxiety and Identity: An Introduction

A student by the name of Mark walks into his German class shortly before class is about to begin. Because he walks into class after many students had almost arrived, there is a lack of available seats. So Mark sits next to a student named Richard, who speaks and studies Russian. Mark feels hesitation to sit next to Richard, however. Why? Because Mark, a student who describes himself as "purely gay," is worried that Richard might be homophobic.

Mark had never had a conversation with Richard about his views, but political events made him hesitate to sit next to Richard. During this period of time, the Chechnya government was purging the country of gay men (Reevell, 2017) in what amounted to slaughter. This vile act of homophobia is significant to Mark, and such acts led him to be weary of Russians, stating that he "doesn't trust them right now" (Interview 1). Mark's lived experience as a gay man from the East Coast shaped this attitude because he grew up in an area where homophobic white supremacists were abundant. As a result, Mark felt unsafe sitting next to this student.

Despite his hesitance, Mark sits next to Richard. At the beginning of class, the German instructor asked the students to work in groups for an activity and discussion. Mark did not engage immediately with the students around him. Though he likes to practice German and feels confident about his German skills, he stared off, expressing avoidance behavior (Horwitz et al., 1986) as a result of not wanting to work with the people next to him. Eventually, Mark grouped up with the people around him, including

Richard. Mark spoke with Richard once during this class; however, he did not make eye contact, still showing avoidance behavior.

This is a true experience of my research participant Mark, which I was able to observe for myself and discuss with Mark in an interview. Such data have the potential to help inform the field of foreign language anxiety about the identities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and other sexual minority (LGBTQ+) students. For decades, researchers have studied, hypothesized, and published on the affective dimensions of language pedagogy. In 1985, Krashen introduced his seminal work on the "input hypothesis," which includes the notion of the "affective filter" – a mental block that is believed to limit a learner from acquiring a language. According to the hypothesis, when a learner is too anxious, is unmotivated, or lacks self-confidence, the learner's affective filter raises, blocking comprehensible input from being acquired (1985). Furthermore, Krashen's affective filter assumes that a combination of anxiety, low self-confidence, and a lack of motivation are characteristics of a poor language learner (Norton, 2000).

Krashen's model, however, received criticism from researchers in the field of second language acquisition. One response to his model was Norton's research (2000, 2013) on immigrant women in Canada, which stated that the affective filter did not take into account the larger social context. She argued that "a language learner's affective filter cannot be understood apart from his or her relationship to larger, and frequently inequitable social structures" (p. 120). Accordingly, her research on immigrant women in Canada (Norton, 2000, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995) informed a framework called *investment*, which considers a language learner's historical, unfixed, and multiple identities dependent on social context.

The idea that context is important in foreign language anxiety is widely accepted. This is reflected in Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) definition of foreign language anxiety as situation-specific. In other words, the context of the language classroom can trigger foreign language anxiety. Furthermore, the importance of context has been established through one of foreign language anxiety's components, fear of negative evaluation. A language learner might feel judged by others in a social interaction in the target language, which often makes the learner feel unintelligent or inferior.

The social aspect of the very nature of foreign language anxiety, however, has not been a focus of research. Instead, many studies have focused on individual learner characteristics such as age and biological gender. Gender has been a problematic pursuit in the field of foreign language anxiety, however. Several studies in the past few decades have attempted to explore relationships between foreign language anxiety and gender (Campbell & Shaw, 1994; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Mejias et al., 1991; Park & French, 2013), but the results of these studies often contradicted each other. Their findings often classify either male students or female students as having higher anxiety. Furthermore, these studies have only taken a quantitative approach and have not considered qualitative methods to research the connection between gender and foreign language anxiety. This is probably a result of how gender has been operationalized in the literature, biologically.

Moreover, a characteristic that has not been considered in foreign language anxiety is sexual identity. Members of the LGTBQ+ community frequently experience discrimination, harassment, and oppression within schools. According to the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN), "81.9% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 38.3% reported being physically harassed and 18.3% reported

being physically assaulted at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation"

(2011, para. 6). Furthermore, 63.5% of LGBT students reported "feeling unsafe at school

because of their sexual orientation" and 43.9% of LGBTQ+ students "felt unsafe because

of their gender expression" (2011, para. 6). In the field of teaching English to speakers of

other languages (TESOL), research has been aiming to address sexual diversity within

classrooms in order to create safe or inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ students (see Mitchell

& Krause, 2016; Nelson, 2009). If one of the goals of addressing sexual diversity in

classrooms is to create a place where LGBTQ+ students can feel safe, then LGBTQ+

identity should be addressed in research about foreign language anxiety.

The language classroom is a contact zone (Pratt, 1991) of people from different

cultures, backgrounds, and with multi-faceted identities. Language learners may

experience foreign language anxiety for a number of reasons. It has been suggested that

the ways in which language learners experience foreign language anxiety are related to

acquiring the "communicative choices" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128) they need to be able

to express their authentic identity. Without these communicative choices, learners are in a

vulnerable position and can even feel like they are losing their L1 self by learning a new

language (Huang, 2014).

Another possibility why learners might experience foreign language anxiety is

because of differences in power between speakers due to a possible inequitable social

context. In response to the question "When do you feel most comfortable speaking

English?," a participant in Norton's study (2000) responded:

> It much depends on the speaker I talk to. If one doesn't constantly show his or her
> superiority my English is more fluent and relaxed. I become tense and tend to

forget even simple grammar rules if one does make comments about my accent (p. 123).

Norton states that a response such as this one is significant because it is evidence that "anxiety is not an inherent trait of a language learner, but one that is socially constructed within and by the lived experiences of language learners" (p. 123). It is possible that such evidence might also have implications for the foreign language classroom, as it is a place where students are most likely interacting with each other and an instructor in the target language.

Purpose of the Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to research the relationships among foreign language anxiety, sexuality, and gender. Both gender and sexuality are analyzed because participants with non-binary gender identities, such as trans or genderqueer, are part of the LGBTQ+ community. With the aim of gaining insights into how LGBTQ+ language learners experience foreign language anxiety, this thesis will investigate the lived experiences of four LGBTQ+ learners and the anxiety they do or do not experience in the foreign language classroom. My research is also concerned with the comparison of individuals with different gender identities and what their experiences with foreign language anxiety are. This thesis aims to shed light on the gap in foreign language anxiety literature on gender, which has been researched with qualitative methods.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature related to the topic of foreign language anxiety, sexuality, and gender. This literature

includes research in foreign language anxiety, the relationship between foreign language anxiety and gender as described by quantitate research, key terms related to sexuality and gender, and identity research in applied linguistics. The chapter further identifies the niche for the research questions, which are presented at the end of the chapter. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework used to collect and analyze data for the present study.

Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 present the results from the present study. Chapter 4 describes the context of the study, Cascadia State University (CSU) as well as highlights findings on the anxiety levels of my participants, Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark, and embeds them in the larger context of anxiety levels present at the university. Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate the lived experiences of Chelsea and Adam as LGBTQ+ students at CSU and discuss their specific triggers of foreign language anxiety. Chapter 7 presents a cross-case analysis of the four participants of the present study and describes the four emergent themes: invalidated identity, privileged identities, context, and trait anxiety.

Finally, Chapter 8 summarized the main findings of the study. It directly answers the two main research questions of this study, as well as provides pedagogical implications for foreign and second language educators. The chapter also presents the limitations of the study as well as suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Foreign Language Anxiety

Horwitz et al. (1986) define foreign language anxiety as a situation-specific anxiety that surfaces in the foreign language classroom and affects even those who may not normally experience anxiety. In other words, they postulate that foreign language anxiety is separate from general anxiety. To substantiate their definition of foreign language anxiety as separate, they found that 38% of their participants attested to the statement "I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes." Additionally, MacIntyre, and Gardner (1989) comparatively researched French, math, and English class anxieties and found that the French class was rated as significantly more anxiety provoking than the math and English classes.

According to Horwitz et al.'s model (1986), foreign language anxiety consists of three performance-related anxieties: test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and communication apprehension. Test anxiety is associated with one's fear of failure in an assessment situation, whether it is a large assessment such as an oral exam or a smaller one like a quiz. Horwitz et al. (1986) state that students often put themselves under pressure to achieve a perfect score on an examination, and anything less than a perfect score is a failure. Students who experience test anxiety might have a difficult time in the language classroom because tests are frequent, and even the best students receive errors on assessments (Horwitz et al., 1986).

In addition to test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation also contributes to foreign language anxiety. It is the apprehension of other's evaluations and a predetermined

expectation that these evaluations are negative. Horwitz et al. (1986) state that fear of negative evaluation is similar to text anxiety, but instead of being limited to a testing context, it covers a broader scope of communicative situations. They state that students could be particularly sensitive to real or imagined negative evaluations by their peers or by the teacher.

Particularly relevant to this thesis is the third component, communication apprehension, in other words the hesitation and fear of speaking with others (Horwitz et al., 1986). Horwitz et al. (1986) states that communication apprehension is a significant factor in the language classroom, where even those who usually do not have trouble speaking in large groups might suddenly become anxious because they feel they are being monitored by their instructors and peers for correctness. Furthermore, learners might not be able to fully express their thoughts and emotions in another language.

Interestingly, researchers have very rarely interpreted this information using research on identity. When a language learner feels unable to express their identity authentically in a target language context, such as in a language classroom, feelings of anxiety can arise in the learner (Horwitz et al., 1986; Huang, 2014). Huang (2014) believes that these feelings of anxiety are associated with the loss of their first language (L1) identity and the development of a second language (L2) self. This was also expressed by Horwitz et al. (1986) in their seminal article on foreign language anxiety:

> … The language learner's self-esteem is vulnerable to the awareness that the range of communicative choices and authenticity is restricted. The importance of the disparity between the "true" self as known to the language learner and the more limited self as can be presented at any given moment in the foreign language would seem to distinguish foreign language anxiety from other academic anxieties such as those associated with mathematics or science. Probably no other field of

study implicates self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does. (p. 128)

In this quote, terms like "true" self and "limited" self clearly refer to different identities. Huang states that because these identities are still developing, "learners might feel incompetent or anxious in the target language environment while using or learning the target language" (2014, p. 69). The connection between self-confidence, self-esteem, and a language learner's identity and sense of self seems to have a great impact on a learner's level of foreign language anxiety.

Foreign Language Anxiety and Gender

Studies have looked at the relationships between foreign language anxiety and a number of factors, such as academic achievement, history of visiting foreign countries, and perceived self-worth (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999). In these, as well as other studies, foreign language anxiety has been commonly measured by the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), a quantitative scale created by Horwitz et al. (1986), which reflects the three performance-related anxieties: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Studies have taken individual learner characteristics into account as well, such as age (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999) and gender (Campbell & Shaw, 1994; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Mejias et al., 1991; Park & French, 2013).

Studies of the relationship between foreign language anxiety and gender are often contradictory. In early research of the topic, Spielberger (1983) stated that in his sample of 224 language learners, "females are more emotionally stable than males in their reactions to highly stressful or relaxing circumstances" (p. 19, as cited in Matsuda &

Gobel, 2004). In contrast, Mejias, Applebaum, Applebaum, and Trotter (1991) found in their study of oral communication apprehension among Mexican American students in the state of Texas that Hispanic males experienced higher anxiety than their female counterparts. Arnold (2002), however, found that among 56 students enrolled in five different sections of a third semester German course, 41% of female students experienced high levels of foreign language anxiety, while 65% of male students experienced low levels of foreign language anxiety.

In another study, MacIntyre, Baker, Clement, and Donovan (2002) investigated the effects of language, gender, and grade on willingness to communicate, anxiety, and perceived communication competence on attitude and motivational variables on junior high school French immersion students. They reported that though anxiety levels remained the same for male students, female students in grades 8 and 9 showed an increase in their willingness to communicate and, at the same time, their anxiety level lowered.

Campbell and Shaw (1994) conducted a study at the Defense Language Institute in San Francisco, CA. Significant differences in anxiety levels were found between male and female students aged between 18 and 21. Their data showed that after two weeks in the program, male students' anxiety levels increased while female students' levels decreased. Campbell and Shaw stated that the data they collected may not be generalizable to all contexts because their study took place in a military context, where the students might feel pressure because their language classes are connected to their careers.

In their study of Japanese students, Matsuda and Gobel (2004) reported that there were only significant findings related to gender in first-year students, where gender was found to be a significant predictor of performance with first-year students. Differing from Campbell and Shaw's (1994) research, Park and French's (2013) study of Korean students found that female students reported a higher level of anxiety. Abdullah Ayash Ezzi's (2012) research of Yemeni university students also contradicts Campbell and Shaw's. In Abdullah Ayash Ezzi's research, however, a limited amount of male students participated, which in turn made the findings between male and female students not as conclusive.

The review of the literature showed no evidence of studies of the relationship between foreign language anxiety and sexual identity. A narrative from a language learner of their own anxieties (or lack of anxieties) may bring better insight into the nature of foreign language anxiety, the relationship between foreign language anxiety and gender, and the relationship between foreign language anxiety and sexual identity. Additionally, all of the studies described in this section utilized quantitative methods. The literature review process identified no empirical study that has qualitatively examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety and gender. Further, there appears to be no study conducted to examine the relationship between foreign language anxiety and sexual identity.

Gender

In the foreign language anxiety research reported above, gender has been represented as a dichotomy – as male vs. female (Abdullah Ayash Ezzi, 2012; Arnold, 2002; Campbell & Shaw, 1994; MacIntyre et al., 2002; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Mejias

et al., 1991; Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999; Park & French, 2013). In the mentioned studies, the terms "male" and "female" are operationalized in a way that suggests only two genders exist, which ignores the notion that gender is a spectrum, a continuum. From a sociological perspective, gender identities exist outside of the male and female classifications. These classifications are often referred to as non-binary identities, and they are commonly erased under the male-female polarity. The term "gender" is not to be confused with the term "sex," which refers to one's biological status. To this end, Lorber (1996) states that "it is important to split what is usually conflated as sex/gender or sex/sexuality/gender into three conceptually distinct categories: sex (or biology, physiology), sexuality (desire, sexual preference, sexual orientation), and gender (a social statues, sometimes with sexual identity" (p. 146). Thus, it is important to this thesis that terms related to gender and sexuality are clearly defined and operationalized.

Gender identity is defined as "a person's deeply-felt, inherent sense of being a boy, a man, or male; a girl, a woman, or female; or an alternative gender... that may or may not correspond to a person's sex assigned at birth or to a person's primary or secondary sex characteristics" (American Psychological Association, 2015, p. 862). Gender identity is often described with the terms "cis-" and "trans-". "Cis-" is used when someone describes themselves as having a gender identity that aligns with their biological sex. For example, a cisgender man would be a person who was assigned male at birth due to his anatomy, and would illustrate their gender identity with terms such as masculine. "Trans-," on the other hand, "denotes a person whose gender identity is not congruent with their biological sex" (Green, 2006, p. 247).

Gender expression is defined as "the presentation of an individual, including physical appearance, clothing choice and accessories, and behaviors that express aspects of gender identity or role. Gender expression may or may not conform to a person's gender identity" (American Psychological Association, 2015, p. 861). In other words, it is the ways in which masculinity or femininity are manifested, and it is an extension of gender identity (Gender Expression, n.d.). Gender expression is the way an individual looks, acts, or dresses, which is congruent with Butler's (1999) notion that gender is socially constructed and performative.

For non-binary identities, "genderqueer" is often an expression that is used. This classifier is used as an umbrella term for those who feel that man, woman, male, or female are not sufficient enough to capture the complexities of their gender identity (Urquhart, 2015). In an article published by *Slate*, a contributor by the name of Kyle Jones writes:

> From [ages] 7 through 9, I believed I was a boy and prayed I'd wake up and have the right body... But, over time, I embraced more of my femaleness, being female but masculine. I was in my 40s when I did some soul-searching and realized that genderqueer really resonated with me because I'd always felt more masculine, but not male. (Urquhart, 2015, para. 6)

The terms "genderqueer" and "non-binary" illustrate the notion that gender identity is a spectrum of identities, performances, and acts of expression. Individuals like Kyle describe their identities in ways that do not conform to what is encompassed by the terms male or female.

Other terms that describe gender identity abound (e.g., agender, genderfluid, femme, butch), but for purposes of this thesis, it is most important to stress the complexities of gender and its non-binary nature. To accurately analyze my data, it is

pertinent to this thesis that an accurate description of one's gender identity is given and illustrated accurately.

Sexuality

Block stated that "there has been an increased interest in sexual identity [in linguistics] and the notion that sexual identity is inextricably linked to gender identity" (2014, p. 43). Though gender identity plays an important role, sexuality is more central to my research. Sexual identity, or the ways in which a person describes their attraction to others, is still an under-researched topic within language learning. As with gender identity, it is important to define the meanings of identifiers under the umbrella of sexuality and how they will be operationalized in this thesis.

Sexual orientation is defined as "a component of identity that includes a person's sexual and emotional attraction to another person and the behavior and/or social affiliation that may result from this attraction. A person may be attracted to men, women, both, neither, or to people who are genderqueer, androgynous, or have other gender identities" (American Psychological Association, 2015, p. 862). The most common terms used to identify sexual orientation are straight (or heterosexual), gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, or queer (the latter is defined below).

In discussions in media, politics, etc., one will often hear the terms "LGBT" or "LGBTQ". This acronym stands for identifiers of sexual minorities: lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer. Some variants of this acronym embrace identifiers that are more precise, such as "LGBTQQIA", "questioning", "intersex", and "ally." For purposes of this thesis, I will use the term "LGBTQ+" in order to ensure conciseness as well as the inclusion of identities that are oppressed.

Identity and Investment

As discussed previously, foreign language anxiety is connected to identity. While gender and sexuality are aspects of one's identity, foreign language anxiety is often caused by language learners' self-perceived inability to express their identity because of the lack of their communicative choices. In second language acquisition (SLA) research, identity has been a research trend since the late 20th century, and has been researched in a number of different contexts (see Block, 2007). One of the leading researchers on identity, Bonny Norton, took a poststructuralist perspective to language learning, claiming that research in SLA has "not developed a comprehensive theory that integrates the language learner and the language learning context" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 12) and "how relations of power in the social world affect social interaction between second language learners and target language speakers" (p. 12). She, therefore, asserted that "notions of the individual and the language learner's personality in SLA theory need to be re-conceptualized in ways that will problematize dichotomous distinctions between the language learner and the language learning context" (p. 13).

Identity is defined as "multiple, changing, and a site of struggle" (Darwin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2000, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995). Norton further defines identity as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (2013, p. 45). To illustrate this point, Norton (2000) described one of her participants, a woman in Canada named Martina. Martina is an immigrant, a mother, a language learner, a worker, and a wife. These identities work together, contradict each other, and emerge at different times in different contexts. Similarly, a student enrolled in

a foreign language class is not just a language learner but could also be a gay man, a barista, and a first-generation student.

If and how these identities are co-constructed in the classroom might be related to power relationships between individuals. Power is an integral component of Norton's definition of identity, which can challenge dominant theories of knowledge and claims to truth (Norton, 2013). Norton defines identity using a feminist poststructuralist framework, which "explores how prevailing power relations between individuals, groups and communities impact on the life chances of individuals at a given time and place" (2000, p. 124). Her definition takes into account that identity should be understood relationally, that one "is often subject of a set of relationships (i.e., in a position of power) or subject to a set of relationships (i.e., in a position of reduced power)" (Norton, 2013, p. 4).

Identity, at least in the way Norton (2000, 2013) defines it, could be connected to foreign language anxiety because language is an important tool for expression of identity. As described earlier, Horwitz et al. (1986) state that language learners' self-esteem is vulnerable when they are aware that their authenticity is restricted by their lack of communicative choices. This connection was also described by Huang (2014), who proposed that language learners could be experiencing foreign language anxiety because they do not feel like they are being themselves. This may be further supported by the case that foreign language anxiety is associated with the "self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Considering that identity should be understood as one's relationship to another, where

one interlocutor could have more power than the other, it might create communication

apprehension and foster fear of negative evaluation.

These implications might be further explained by the framework of investment

(Norton 2000, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995). Investment accounts for the complex social

history of the language learner and assumes that the learner does not have an ahistorical,

unitary, fixed identity. To this end, Norton (2000) stated that:

> The notion [of investment] presupposes that when language learners speak, they
> are not only exchanging information with target language speakers, but they are
> constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they
> relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an
> investment in a learner's own identity, an identity which is constantly changing
> across time and space. (pp. 10-11)

This framework also considers how a learner may have investments in a particular

symbolic or material resource. Symbolic resources, as Norton (2000) defines them, refer

to abstract concepts such as "language, education and friendship" (p. 7), while material

resources refer to tangible products such as "capital goods, real estate and money" (p. 7).

By learning a language, learners can obtain these resources from people in powerful

positions. In other words, investment considers how power and identity can play a large

role in the language learning process.

To further illustrate the framework of investment and that language learners have

unfixed identities and past lived experiences, Martina again serves as a good example.

Norton documented that Martina frequently referred to herself as stupid or inferior

because of her difficulties with speaking English. However, her identity as a mother and

the primary caregiver of her family caused her to persevere and become courageous when

speaking English. To this point, Norton (2013) stated:

> Because Martina was the primary caregiver in the home, she could not - and would not - succumb to the nervousness and anxiety that she often felt when dealing with Canadians. She couldn't give up. Despite what might be considered to be a high affective filter, she refused to be silenced. Her identity as a mother was more powerful than her identity as an immigrant. (p. 132)

Martina is a highly motivated learner. She, like the other participants in Norton's work, took extra courses in English, participated in Norton's diary study, and wished to have more social contact with Anglophone Canadians. Martina's complex identity allowed her to find the strength and courage to speak English in situations where her identity as a mother and caregiver was important.

Investment and Anxiety

In literature about foreign language anxiety, the role of identity relates to the notion that learners cannot express their authentic self (Horwitz et al., 1986), as well as their self-perception (Horwitz et al., 1986) and L2 self (Huang, 2014). However, in Norton's research, themes of anxiety and self-confidence emerged in her data. She stated that "there are a variety of ways in which anxiety and self-confidence influence the extent to which learners create and respond to opportunities to practice the target language" (2000, p. 122). She argues that for language learners, anxiety and self-confidence are not personality traits, but instead are socially-constructed inequitable relations of power. The anxiety that was experienced by the women in her study was "constructed in diverse encounters with target language speakers and [that it] must be understood with reference to their investment in particular kinds of social relationships" (p. 137). A finding like this ties into the idea that foreign language anxiety is a situation-specific anxiety, and thus the framework of investment may explain why foreign language anxiety sometimes manifests in the language classroom.

All of the learners in Norton's study felt uncomfortable speaking English with individuals in whom the learners had a specific symbolic or material investment. One learner in her study, Eva, worked at a fast food restaurant that was resistant to immigrants and "people who aren't Canadian" (Norton, 2000, p. 73). When Eva was to execute money handling tasks, which did not occur frequently, her manager hovered over her, which in turn would make Eva anxious. Eva would then execute orders and tasks incorrectly as she felt her manager was looking for language mistakes. Eva's investment was in a symbolic resource – the chance for her to take charge on a task that was important for the business where she working. Norton (2000) stated that Eva's anxiety was "not invariant personality traits but socially constructed in inequitable relations of power" (p. 73).

It is important to mention here that Norton's research was not completed in a language classroom. Instead, her participants were interviewed about their experiences in their everyday lives, such as Eva's experience working at Munchies or Martina's identity as a mother and provider for her family. Norton's framework of identity and investment, however, might lend itself to the language classroom as well. In the language classroom, learners must interact with peers and an instructor, all of whom have various complex, unfixed pieces of identity. Peers are usually not chosen individuals with whom a student decides to work. Students are sometimes forced by instructors to work with each other, at other times they select partners themselves. This might force a student to work with someone who makes them feel uncomfortable. The instructor of the course also inherently holds power over students as the distributor of grades, who seemingly decides whether or not a student passes or fails a class. They also decide on the development of

the curriculum, classroom activities, and complexity of tests given. To this end, the classroom might serve as an interesting site where identities clash with each other because of the inherent hierarchy of a class and the power imbalances between students and the instructor.

Intersectionality

Gender and sexuality are two different pieces of identity, and thus, a mix of combinations of gender and sexuality can change a person's lived experiences, the privileges they may or may not have, and the prejudice and oppression they endure. Such a concept can be understood under the notion of intersectionality. Intersectionality is a term that was coined by critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, though the framework and discussion began to be developed as early as the 1960s. The term refers to the ways in which the multidimensional intricacies of a person's identity overlap with each other to create a person's lived experience as well as the ways in which a person might experience oppression. To illustrate the point, Crenshaw used an analogy:

> Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them. Similarly, if a Black woman is harmed because she is in an intersection, her injury could result from sex discrimination or race discrimination... But it is not always easy to reconstruct an accident: Sometimes the skid marks and the injuries simply indicate that they occurred simultaneously, frustrating efforts to determine which driver caused the harm. (1989, p. 149)

As shown, intersectionality is a framework that takes into account the whole person, not teasing out one piece of a person and defining them only in such a way.

Many studies in the field of applied linguistics have looked at two pieces of identity and how they flow together to create lived experiences. For example, Norton

(2013) researched the lives of five immigrant women in Canada, investigating the relationships of ethnicity and gender identity and language learning. Motha (2014) conducted a feminist, critical ethnography of four female K-12 ESOL teachers, examining the intersections of race and gender identity. However, neither Norton nor Motha mentioned the term intersectionality specifically. In applied linguistics, the notion of intersectionality is not as well-developed as it is in fields such as gender studies (Block & Corona, 2016). Of course, researchers cannot do everything methodologically, but "applied linguists can show sensitivity, awareness and, ultimately, attentiveness to the necessarily intersectional nature of identity" (Block & Corona, 2016, p. 507).

This thesis primarily examines the intersections between gender and sexual identity. However, because of the intricacies of identity, and following Block and Corona's (2016) statement of sensitivity and attentiveness to identity, the analysis in the thesis will not discount intersections between other identities, such as race or class.

Present Study

As illustrated above, there are large gaps in the literature on foreign language anxiety, gender, sexuality, and investment: first, the designs of these studies have operationalized gender as male-female, not accounting for the notion that gender is a spectrum and that such classifications can be difficult for students who do not identify within the binary. Furthermore, there is a significant lack of qualitative studies of foreign language anxiety and its relationship to gender. Qualitative research aims to describe the lived experiences of individuals, and students' perspectives could give more information about the nature of anxiety. Additionally, a qualitative comparison of levels of foreign language anxiety between genders is missing from literature. The review of literature

indicates that most, if not all, published studies on the relationship between gender

identity and foreign language anxiety within the last 20 years have been conducted

quantitatively.

A lack of research using Norton's notion of investment can be seen clearly from

the research on gender and foreign language anxiety, where gender is the main variable,

as the previous research has not accounted for the complexities of identity. It could be

beneficial to embrace Norton's framework, where context, social interaction, power, and

the complex identity of the learner are taken into consideration.

Additionally, there is a dearth of literature related to foreign language anxiety and

sexual identity. Members of the LGBTQ+ community have rarely been addressed within

language learning literature, and when they are, it is related to English language teaching,

the cultural complexities of when students come to Anglophone, inner-circle countries

and make contact with LGBTQ+ members, and how to address sexual identity in the

language classroom (e.g., Mitchell & Krause, 2016; Nelson, 2009). The present study is

designed to address these gaps by investigating the following guiding research questions:

1. What are LGBTQ+ students' lived experiences with foreign language anxiety in the foreign language classroom?
2. How do learners with different gender identities experience language anxiety?

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used to answer the guiding questions of this study and is divided into the following sections: overall design, site and participant selection, data collection, analysis, researcher bias and trustworthiness, and potential limitations and implications. Before the description of the methodology, I first present the overall design of this study.

It should be stated that from this point on, pseudonyms will be used for any names mentioned in this study. The four main participants chose their respective pseudonyms. The site of the study also received a pseudonym, more specifically the city and the name of the university. Any names mentioned in the study by the participants as well as teachers and students who were incidental participants in this study have been given a pseudonym as well.

Overall Design

This study employs an exploratory, multiple-case study approach. Here, I define a case as each individual student who is participating in the study. Because the goal of the study is to gain insight into LGBTQ+ students' experiences with language learning anxiety, a multiple-case study could provide insight into many kinds of experiences of LGBTQ+ students could have in the foreign language classroom. Additionally, a multiple-case study could allow for contrasts among various gender identities.

A primarily qualitative approach was taken in this study because, as stated in the literature review, there is a methodological gap in research on the relationship between

foreign language anxiety and gender. All of the studies described utilized quantitative methods to make generalizations about the relationship between foreign language anxiety and gender. Furthermore, no studies have looked at possible relationships between foreign language anxiety and sexual identity. An important aspect of this study is the rich, thick description of the lives of the participants whose lived experiences I am attempting to capture in this research. Qualitative approaches have the potential to capture voices of students in ways that quantitative studies do not. It provides a framework in which a participant can be discussed in great detail, and the stories and descriptions a participant gives can be powerful and insightful (Lightfoot, 1997).

Though this study is primarily qualitative, it utilizes one quantitative instrument, but only for the purpose of providing more context for the main participants of this study. This technique is described below. Despite the inclusion of quantitative data, this study should still be considered a qualitative study because of the main sources of data and how they are presented.

Site Selection

Data were collected from a public, urban university on the west coast of the United States: Cascadia State University (CSU). This site has been selected for several reasons. Because it is important that the participants of this study can draw from a large range of language learning experiences in the classroom, I decided that the university needed to offer third and fourth year language classes. Additionally, the site I chose is known to be an LGBTQ+ friendly university. Choosing a site such as this one will not only allow the possibility of including more informants, but this particular site may

produce a set of results that would be different from that of a university in a more politically conservative area. More information about this site is included in Chapter 4.

Participant Selection

In order to answer my research questions and get multiple perspectives, four main participants were recruited for this study. All of the participants of the study are university students who identify somewhere along the LGBTQ+ spectrum and have a variety of gender identities.

Criteria. For students to participate in this study, several criteria were established. I screened students for these criteria when they responded via e-mail to the ads for the study (to be discussed). First, and most obvious, participants had to identify somewhere along the LGBTQ+ spectrum. Second, they had to have been enrolled in a language course of any level during the term the data were collected. This criterion was established because of the observations in which students had to partake (to be discussed).

Recruitment. To recruit participants for this study, several methods were used. First, e-mails were sent to the linguistics and the foreign language department listservs at CSU, asking for students who were interested in participating to send a message to an e-mail address created for the study. Fliers containing the same information were posted in the linguistics department, the foreign language department, and CSU's queer resource center (QRC).

Profiles. Only four students responded to the advertisement of the study, all of whom were excited about participating in the research and sharing their experiences:

Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark. These cases will be discussed further in later chapters of this thesis, but for now, here is a brief look at their profiles, displayed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Participant Profiles

	Chelsea	**Adam**	**Kara**	**Mark**
Age	Mid 20s	Late 20s	Early 20s	Early 20s
Race/Ethnicity	White	White/Native American	White	White
Gender	Cis-female	Trans male	Cis-female	Cis-male
Sexuality	Bi/queer	Queer	Bi	Gay
Nationality	U.S. American	U.S. American	U.S. American	U.S. American
Languages Studied Formally	French (3 years), Russian (1 year)	Spanish (4 years)	Japanese (2 terms), American Sign Language (ASL) (1 year)	French (1 year), German (3 years), Japanese (2 terms)
Language Enrolled in for Study	Russian	Spanish	ASL	German
Level of Language Enrolled in for Study	Beginning	Advanced	Beginning	Advanced
Study Abroad	No	No	No	Yes

Data Collection

Data were collected during a three-month period in the 2016-2017 academic school year. The data collection consisted of a questionnaire, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), interviews, observations, and research notes.

Specific details of each of these data collection methods is provided below. Figure 3.1

shows a diagram of the timeline in which data were collected.
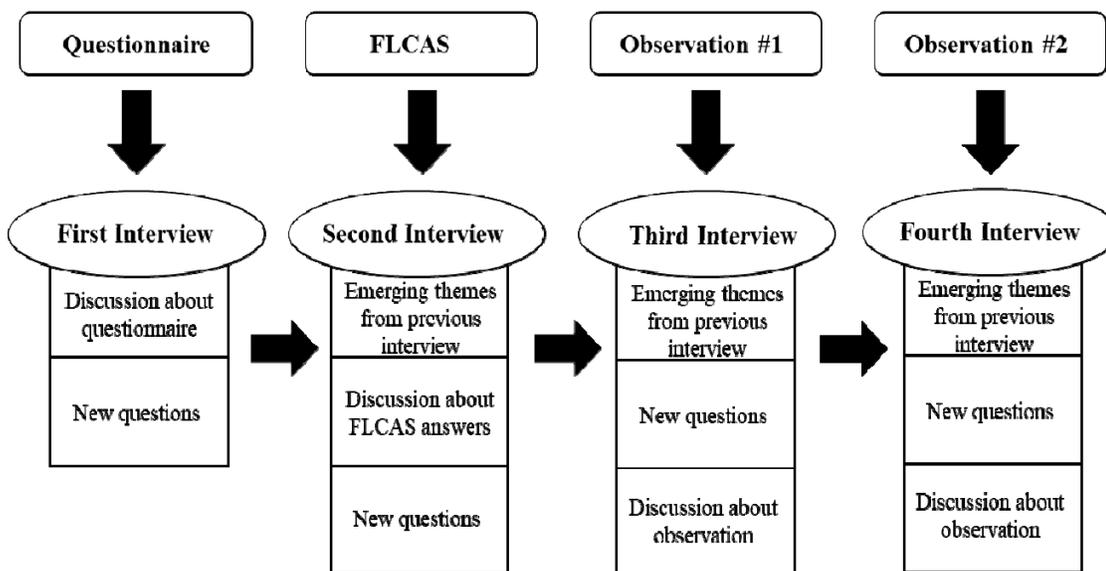
Figure 3.1. *Data Collection Timeline.*

Interviews. To gain insight into the participants' perspectives of their identity and

their experiences with foreign language anxiety, I conducted four interviews with each

participant about every two weeks. The interviews were in-depth and semi-structured in

order to gain a better understanding of the participants' lived experiences as a language

learner, as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and the anxiety they experience. Semi-

structured interviews were appropriate for this thesis because they have the potential to

allow for reliable, comparable data among participants (Bernard, 2011). In other words, I

came to the interview with guiding questions, but I followed the lead of the informant to

probe "into areas that arise during interview interactions" (Hatch, 2002, p. 94). Thus,

while each case talked about similar topics, all of them took different directions

throughout the interviews.

The interviews were face-to-face and ranged from 40 to 90 minutes. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were done orthographically and omitted discourse markers such as "um," "so," and "like" to make the writing clearer to the reader. To maintain authenticity and for the reader to get a clear sense of each participant, I maintained the participants' style of speaking, including swearing and speech errors. Bracketed items were inserted to account for speech errors and make certain points clear. After transcribing the interview, the transcriptions were analyzed for initial emerging themes. For the subsequent interviews, I followed the iterative process, where open-ended questions were designed from the transcriptions of the previous interviews.

Observations. Twice throughout the term, an observation of each participant's language class took place. The purpose of the observations was to gain a sense of holistic classroom dynamics as well as to gain an understanding of participants' behaviors and interactions with instructors and other students.

To conduct the observation, I asked permission from each participant's language instructor to observe their class twice during the term. The instructors were told that the research focused on foreign language learning and emotion and that a participant for the study was in their class. The instructor was not informed of the participant's identity and not told that the study focused on LGBTQ+ learners. They were also asked to allow me to introduce myself to the class and state why I was there and additionally told not to inform students that one of my participants was in the class. When I introduced myself to students on the day of the observation, I told them as well that my research focused on foreign language learning and emotion and that I was there to observe holistic classroom

dynamics. Both students and the instructor were told that their names would not be recorded. I then obtained verbal consent to be in the class for the observation.

During the observation, I maintained a passive presence and tried my best to observe from a place where I could not only keep an unobtrusive presence but also capture the actions and behaviors of my participants. During the observation, several pieces of information were recorded: 1) the instructor's gender expression, 2) a diagram of the class layout, 3) a description of the class with activities, 4) participant behaviors as a result of actions of peers and the instructor in the class, and 5) a description of any nonverbal behaviors that could indicate foreign language anxiety.

To operationalize nonverbal behavior which alluded to anxiety, I used Gregersen's (2005) findings of her exploratory study on nonverbal cues of foreign language anxiety. She observed the nonverbal behavior of anxious and nonanxious students taking an oral exam for a foreign language class. She found evidence of anxiety in students' facial movements, gazing behaviors, posture, and body movements. Table 3.2 describes the behaviors that nonanxious and anxious students display according to these categories.

Table 3.2

Posture and Body Movement Tendencies of Anxious Versus Nonanxious Foreign Language Learners (Gregersen, 2005)

	Nonanxious Behavior	**Anxious Behavior**
Posture		
Leaning Behavior	Slight forward lean toward teacher	Backward lean, back against chair, or sitting upright

Rigidity	Relaxed body position. More gestures.	Tense body position. Fewer gestures
Open/closed body position	Generally open body position, knees slightly apart, hands held on lap when not gesturing	Generally closed body position, legs or ankles closed, arms folded in front. More frequent crossing and recrossing legs
Body Movements		
Body-focused adaptors	None	Adjusted clothing, scratched facial area (chin, forehead), stroked hair, touched legs and stomach, rubbed hands
Object-focused adaptors	Spontaneous, natural, occurred frequently	Played with pens, notebooks, general fidgeting
Speech dependent gestures	Very few	Occurred rarely. When used, gestured generally compensated for vocabulary gaps
Foot/leg movements	Crossed/uncrossed ankles	Bounced/jiggled/tapped foot
Head nodding/shaking	More positive head nodding	Some side to side head movements. Fewer positive head nods.

It should be stated here that Gregersen acknowledged that her study does not come without limitations. In brief terms, she recognized that "nonverbal communication is not language," that "the same nonverbal message can be attributed various meanings," that "nonverbal communication has cultural and contextual implications," that "nonverbal communication is affected by the nature of relationships," and that "we all have idiosyncratic tics" (2005, pp. 394-395). To help remedy these limitations, I asked about

the participants' observations in the interviews. Observation #1 was discussed in the third interview, and Observation #2 was discussed in the fourth interview. By asking about their gestures and tendencies, I aimed to not only gain insight into each participant's general tics but also insight into what was happening in terms of their own individual anxiety – their thoughts, worries, and emotions.

Demographic Questionnaire. A questionnaire was distributed to the students who volunteered to participate before the first interview. It served to help create a portrait of the students and their complex identities, as Norton (2000) discusses. The questionnaire contained general demographic questions about: (1) age, ethnicity, race, and nationality; (2) their gender and sexual identity as well as questions about gender expression; and (3) their education (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was discussed in the first interview in order for participants to help clarify and elaborate on their answers.

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). As stated in the literature review, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) to quantitatively collect self-reported data. This scale is a 33-item Likert-scale survey and asks questions related to foreign language anxiety (see Appendix C). In most quantitative studies of language anxiety, this has been a frequent research instrument that measures an individual's response to language learning, and it has been shown to be a reliable and valid tool of measurement (Horwitz, 1986). Although my research intends to fill a gap in qualitative research, I have chosen the measure as an initial survey in order to gain insight into each participant's self-perceptions related to anxiety. Elaine Horwitz, one of the creators of the FLCAS, gave me permission to use the scale for this study (personal communication, January 16th,

2017). After formally asking students to participate in the study, the FLCAS was given to participants to complete after the first interview and before the second interview via a Qualtrics survey link. The answers from the survey served as a starting point to talk about language anxiety in the second interview.

Research Notes. I took notes immediately after each interview and not during the interview to allow the interviewee to feel as comfortable as possible talking to me as they would a friend or a colleague, creating a more authentic atmosphere. These notes were taken within the first few hours after the interview, before transcription of the interview took place. It was my overall goal for the participants and me to build rapport, as I am an integral instrument in this study.

FLCAS for CSU. As mentioned earlier, this study used one quantitative data source. It was suggested in my proposal meeting that I distribute the FLCAS to the entire CSU student population via a Qualtrics survey link in order to further contextualize the site of the study, and to situate the cases of Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark. Thus, I created the Qualtrics survey with a set of demographic questions, which included year of birth, race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, first language, and when participants took their last language class. In order for the responses of the survey to count, participants must have taken foreign language classes as CSU. Therefore, if the answer to the question on the survey was no, the response did not count and is not included. Results from this survey are included in Chapter 4.

Data Analysis

This study uses an inductive analysis that has been adapted from Hatch (2002). Hatch suggests that analysis begins as data collection is going on, from the very moment

collection starts. As I mentioned earlier, a series of four interviews took place with each participant throughout the academic term of the study. Also mentioned earlier, after each interview was transcribed, emerging themes were identified for subsequent interviews. As this process happened, I began to think about what Hatch (2002) calls my "frames of analysis," or in other words, ways in which my data was broken down into analyzable chunks.

Once all the data were collected, a final analysis was conducted. As the lived experiences of each participant differed, I went through each participant's interviews, observation notes, and research notes to look for the themes that have arisen throughout the entire process of data collection. Once themes were identified, they were turned into codes, or as Hatch (2002) calls it, domains. After they were identified, I created a codebook for each participant. After creating the codebook, I compiled each participant's interview data into a Word document and used the comments function to list the codes for each theme. Because the interview data amounted to over 25,000 words per participant, this allowed for easy searches in the interview data. I then went through all of the other documents again and indicated where the code occurred in the data. Once this was completed for each participant, similarities and differences between each participant were explored.

Themes were initially determined in the interview data and then explored in the other documents to search for triangulation. In the first interview, the simplest themes were chosen related to demographic information that was given (i.e., sexual and gender identity, life history, background in school, background with languages). As more information was gathered from participants in subsequent interviews, theme names were

either chosen because it was the best descriptor that encompassed information given across participants (i.e., privileged identities, context) or because at least one participant used the term (i.e., invalidated identity, frustration). These themes are discussed in the beginning of the sections in the cross-case analysis.

Along with conducting an inductive analysis, I conducted a deductive analysis of the data. For this piece of data analysis, I examined how Norton's framework of investment (2000, 2013) might play a role in the language classroom and among participants. I hypothesized that all of the participants in this study experienced anxiety to some degree. As Norton's research focuses on power and inequitable social relations, it would assume that LGBTQ+ learners would have different experiences with anxiety than their straight counterparts. Furthermore, I deconstructed the term "foreign language anxiety" as Horwitz et al. (1986) describes it under the experiences of my participants as students who are LGBTQ+ and have different gender identities and expressions. These findings are presented throughout the following chapters.

Researcher Bias and Trustworthiness

It is important to note here my own bias with the community that I am studying. I, the researcher, identify as a cisgender gay man. Furthermore, I am an advocate and activist within my own community, mostly in the form of presentations I have given, lessons I have taught in my English classes, and articles that I have published (see Mitchell & Krause, 2016). My desire to conduct research on this community stems from my observations that there is a lack of research in the field of TESOL and applied linguistics about my community and my fellow LGBTQ+ friends, colleagues, peers, students, and community members. Though my identity as a gay man fuels my desire to

research this topic, I do not wish for it to influence the results of this study. Therefore, it is important to establish trustworthiness to validate my results.

Trustworthiness of this study is operationalized using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) evaluative criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Credibility for this study will be established by member-checking. Once the full analysis was conducted and each participant's contribution to the full study was completed and written up, their chapter was sent to them to ensure that I have captured their true thoughts, feelings, and perspectives. Last, the participants were allowed to object to any of the findings that are relevant to them. By doing so, my bias and self-interest as the researcher were not prioritized over the participants' authenticity. Two portraits of this study, Chapters 5 and 6, were sent via e-mail to Chelsea and Adam respectively after several rounds of edits. Similarly, Chapter 7 was sent to all of the participants. Chelsea, Adam, and Mark responded to the emails and gave their full support of what was present in their chapters.

Transferability is concerned with the application of the data in different contexts. This is achieved through rich, thick description. By presenting portraits of select participants, the write-up of this study includes extensive details which argue my points as well as provide the situational characteristics of my study and a detailed description of the participants and their lived experiences, but not to the extent of compromising their true identity.

Dependability shows that the findings of a study are consistent. In order to achieve dependability, an external audit will be conducted. Naturally, because this study is a thesis, my thesis advisor Dr. Nike Arnold, served as a professional who can conduct

an audit of this study. Finally, confirmability is concerned with shaping the findings of the data with the participants' responses and not the researcher's bias. Confirmability of this study was addressed by keeping an audit trait of all the data– transcriptions, notes, and records of the questionnaire and FLCAS.

Presentation of the Data: Portraits and Cross-case Analysis

As stated, I conducted four in-depth, semi-structured interviews and two observations on each participant as well as administered a questionnaire and the FLCAS. To present the findings of this study, I crafted portraits of two of the participants: Chelsea and Adam. Their portraits are presented in separate chapters of this thesis. Only two portraits were drafted due to the scope of the study, as time would not allow for separate chapters of all four participants. I chose to write portraits of Chelsea and Adam because in my subjective opinion, their cases achieved the most depth. Furthermore, I thought it would be interesting to write portraits of Chelsea and Adam because they were the least anxious students according to the FLCAS (to be discussed), though both still experienced anxiety in specific situations. After showcasing Chelsea and Adam's portraits, I present a cross-case analysis which will include the other two participants in this study: Kara and Mark.

In the next chapter, Chapter 4, I present a context statement of Cascadia and CSU. The context statement provides information related to the acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals in the city and university, resources for this population, and academics at the university. Furthermore, it presents the results of the FLCAS for CSU and situates my participants in each of their demographics.

Chapter 4

"Everyone Can Be a Little Gay Here":

A Context Statement of Cascadia State University

Introduction

This chapter functions primarily to extensively describe the context of the research site, Cascadia State University (CSU). In order to protect the identity of the university, I could not cite specific information about Cascadia with regard to the city's political and social climate, the university's academics or resources, or the university's support for the LGBTQ+ community. Thus, to provide insight into the university, perspectives of Cascadia and CSU that participants of this study contributed in interviews were used to help richly describe the context of the study.

Furthermore, this chapter situates all the participants of the present study, Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark, in a larger anxiety profile of the university. To situate the participants, this chapter describes the results of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) for CSU.

A General Overview of Cascadia State University

Cascadia is a large city on the west coast of the United States, home to several million residents who live in its metropolitan area. The city is known to be quite progressive and liberal. In reference to its attitude towards the LGBTQ+ community, Chelsea commented that "I would like to think that most people in Cascadia are pretty progressive and don't give a shit" (Interview 4). Mark additionally commented on the large liberal population and the vastly progressive attitudes of individuals in the city:

> Even if someone was a very vocal white supremacist or "ugh, anti this," they will always be outnumbered by the sheer amount of people who are supportive in everything. So even if there was someone doing a Heil Hitler thing over in the park blocks, the amount of people who will be like "That's fucked up" is so much greater. There's no outwardly public pockets where it's okay to act like that or to have those ideologies. (Interview 4)

Due to the city's liberal nature, all four participants generally agreed that it is safer to be LGBTQ+ in Cascadia than other cities in the United States. Mark was the most enthusiastic about being LGBTQ+ in the city out of all of the participants, stating "everyone can be a little gay here" (Interview 4).

Cascadia is known to have a high number of individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ as well as individuals who identify as genderfluid and non-conforming. Mark, a student from the East Coast, commented on the large population of LGBTQ+ and non-binary identities in Cascadia:

> I came to Cascadia so excited that the gay community was so large here… I could be a part of a cool community and that I could have a bunch of cool friends that could be gay… and I discovered that there are more than two pronouns. [Where I came from] was so far away from any kind of [non-binary] pronoun usage…I came here, and they are asking me what my pronouns were. And I was like "What do you mean?" I literally looked at them and was like "I'm a dude, what do you mean different pronouns?" [laughs] (Interview 4)

Kara identified with a similar sentiment, stating that she "never heard the term non-binary before coming [to Cascadia]" (Interview 3). These experiences helped them grow positively, as Kara expressed: "I think I've been exposed to more lifestyles of [non-binary] people and just like they're a lot more comfortable…. I'm a lot more comfortable because everyone's doing whatever the fuck they want" (Interview 3).

There are several colleges and universities in the Cascadia metro area: private, public, and faith-based. The largest university by far is Cascadia State University (CSU):

a large urban university, located in the city center. As an urban, public university, CSU attracts a large number of students who did not enroll immediately after high school and who must work part-time or full time jobs to be able to make ends meet. Many students transfer into CSU from local community colleges after obtaining associate's degrees. One of these colleges is Cascadia Community College (CCC), which has four locations around the Cascadia metropolitan area.

CSU strives for student leadership, student involvement, and community engagement. CSU has a large student government and offers a broad student activities program, which contains over 100 clubs, societies, and associations. These include academic clubs, fraternities and sororities, spiritual clubs, multicultural societies, international associations, art clubs, business clubs, honorary societies, advocacy clubs, language classes, and political clubs.

As Cascadia is a progressive city, it is no surprise that CSU's general education curriculum aims for students to be educated about social responsibility, diversity, equity, and social justice. Freshman and sophomores at CSU are required to take courses that specifically aim to educate students about these themes.

As designated by new legislature that asks schools to report the university's LGBTQ+ population in order to better serve students, CSU students can confidentially select from a variety of gender identities and sexualities to report to the university's registry. This was well received by Adam, who stated "Cascadia goes out of its way to be extra inclusive of gender identities. You can choose from a list when they ask you what your gender identity is, and it's crazy long. And that's not common I think" (Interview 4). For gender identities, students are able to choose between agender, genderqueer, man,

non-binary, questioning or unsure, trans man, trans woman, transgender, woman, or other. For sexual identities, students are able to select from asexual, bisexual, gay, heterosexual/straight, lesbian, pansexual, queer, questioning or unsure, same gender loving, or other. These directives serve CSU's intention to be as inclusive as possible.

Serving the queer population at CSU is the school's Queer Resource Center (QRC). Equipped with large couches and seats, the QRC offers comfortable spaces for students to relax, spend time with each other, and work on homework, projects, or assignments. Furthermore, the QRC offers resources for queer students, including but not limited to information for LGBTQ+ students studying abroad, maps for all gender bathrooms at the university, information about scholarships for LGBTQ+ students, and legal resources. Additionally, the QRC hosts several events throughout the academic year, including a gay prom, a queer students of color conference, a yearly outlist, and lavender graduation.

CSU also has a Women's Resource Center (WRC). The main lobby of the WRC functions the same way as the QRC, where students can find relaxing and comfortable spaces for their academic and social needs. Similar to the QRC, the WRC hosts events that address sexual assault, educate the university population about feminism, and support students who face adversity.

Academics at Cascadia State University

With over 100 majors, minors, and certificate programs for undergraduate and graduate students, CSU offers a large range of academic disciplines, including majors related to business, engineering, and sciences. Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark are all linguistics students who have motivation to learn foreign languages and enjoy learning

them. As required by CSU, students majoring in linguistics must complete Bachelor of Arts requirements. Additionally, the linguistics department requires that students complete a full two years of language courses in an Indo-European and two terms of classes in a Non Indo-European language. Thus, by the end of their program, Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark will have had a great deal of experiences in the foreign language classroom.

As one would expect from linguistics majors, all of my main participants thoroughly enjoy learning languages and are highly motivated to learn them. For example, Chelsea was enrolled in Russian during the time of the present study purely because she wanted to take Russian. It was not a requirement for her degree. In fact, most of the participants have had plenty of experience learning and speaking second languages prior to the start of their linguistics degree. Additionally, three out of four of these students are either completing a second major or a minor in a foreign language. Chelsea, a French minor, has been taking French classes since she was in middle school. Now in her mid-twenties, she has had well over a decade worth of foreign language experience. Adam, a student in his late-twenties, grew up speaking an Indo-European second language with his father and is now completing a second major in Spanish. Mark, a student in his early twenties, is minoring in German and has the most diverse experience in languages: he has formally studied French, German, and Japanese throughout high school and college, and furthermore has interest in self-studying Norwegian and Lithuanian. Kara is the only student who does not have extensive experience studying languages and is not majoring or minoring in a foreign language. She has only studied Japanese and American Sign Language (ASL) for one year, and does not plan to pursue a

language long term. However, she maintains that she has high motivation to learn languages and finds it a fun challenge. All four main participants show a range of experiences with foreign languages and, thus, have had potential opportunities to experience with foreign language anxiety.

Foreign Language Anxiety at Cascadia State University

To describe the foreign language anxiety levels at CSU, and to situate my participants Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark in a larger context, I distributed the FLCAS to the CSU population as a Qualtrics survey. One hundred seventy-five students responded to a call distributed through CSU's foreign language and linguistics department listservs, Facebook, Twitter, and Craigslist and completed the survey. Relying on social media recruitment, it was necessary to include a screening process to identify eligible participants. Only data were used from respondents who answered "yes" to the questions "Have you studied foreign languages?" and "Have you taken foreign language courses at CSU?" In the end, only 141 surveys could be used.

Table 4.1 presents the demographics of the former and current CSU students who responded to the survey. The majority of the respondents identified as women (n=104) and heterosexual/straight (n=90). Because this study focuses solely on the LGBTQ+ population, the upcoming figures with the exception of Figure 4.1 will use only the results of LGBTQ+ students.

Table 4.1

Demographics of Respondents to CSU FLCAS

Gender		Sexuality		Race/Ethnicity		Student Status in Language Classes	
Agender	1	Asexual	4	White	104		
						Current	79
Man	27	Bisexual	20	African American	5	Former	62
Non-binary	4	Gay	2	Hispanic	9		
Questioning or Unsure	2	Heterosexual/ Straight	90	Asian	13		
Trans Man	3	Lesbian	3	Native American	2		
Trans Woman	0	Pansexual	7	Pacific Islander	3		
Woman	104	Queer	10	Other	5		
		Other	5				

As previously mentioned, the sole purpose of distributing the FLCAS to the wider university population was to understand the general foreign language anxiety levels among CSU students, not to complete statistical analyses and find correlations. The FLCASs that Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark completed were included in these demographics, and in the following figures, they will be clearly represented.

Each respondents' FLCAS was averaged according to directions laid out by Horwitz (2013). To average the score and, therefore, determine a student's foreign language anxiety level, the 33 prompts are scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32 are then reverse scored, meaning that the items are switched. For example, if a student answered "strongly disagree" to an item, it was given a score of 5 as opposed to a normal score of 1. Once each item was scored, the scores were added up and divided by 33. According to

Horwitz (2013), "students with averages around 3 should be considered slightly anxious, while students with averages below 3 are probably not very anxious. Students who average near 4 and above are probably fairly anxious" (p. 235).

Figure 4.1 shows all 141 responses to the FLCAS for CSU. The average score of all CSU respondents was 3.01 out of 5, indicating that the CSU population is slightly anxious. Though the demographics of individuals who responded to the survey are not completely representative of CSU due to a small sample size, it still gives insight to the general atmosphere of foreign language anxiety levels at CSU. The FLCAS scores for Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark are represented among the 141 respondent to the FLCAS for CSU and are shown in Figure 4.1.
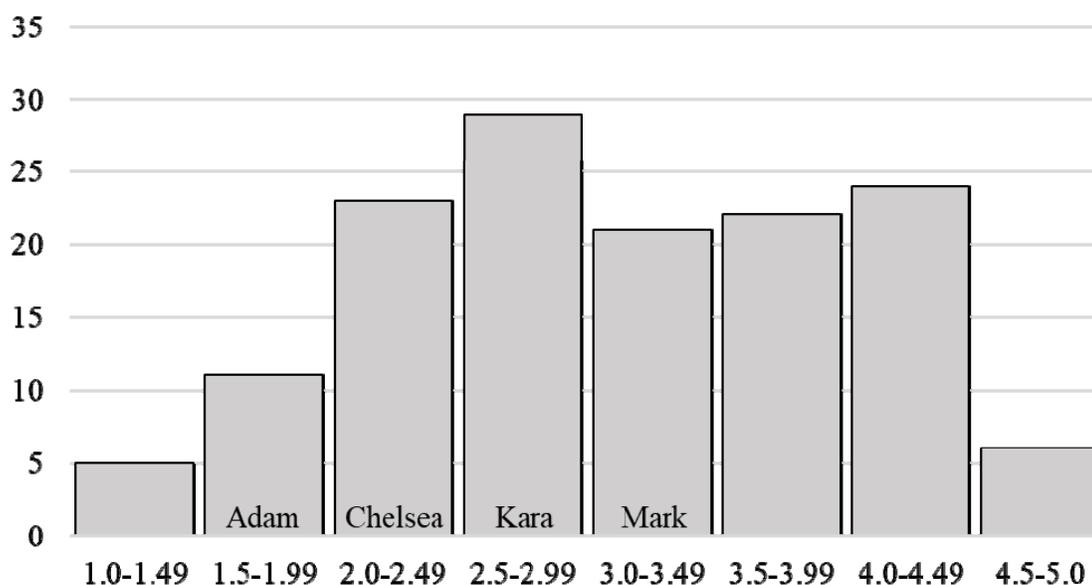
Figure 4.1. *Student Averages of Foreign Language Anxiety Levels*

Out of the four main participants, Adam is the least anxious student, scoring a 1.7 on the FLCAS. Adam was a part of a small group of students with anxiety levels below 2.0, showing that he is one of the least anxious students who participated in the survey. Chelsea also had a low anxiety score, averaging a 2.27, making her a not very anxious student either according to Horwitz (2013). Kara, on the other hand, was approaching slightly anxious behavior with an average score of 2.91, only slightly under the CSU average for anxiety levels. The only participant who was higher than the CSU average score was Mark, who scored a 3.27, which indicates that he is slightly anxious.

It should be noted here that Chelsea, Kara, and Mark have all described their answers as depending on the context. In other words, some classes and situations they can imagine in a language class triggered more anxiety than what is normal for them. For example, Kara and Mark described that some of their answers applied to a very specific language class they no longer attend, but both Kara and Mark were thinking of that class when completing the FLCAS. More specifics about this are presented in Chapter 7.

Anxiety Levels of Gay and Queer+ Men

Figure 4.2 shows the anxiety levels of men who identify as gay, queer, and other identities besides straight (n=9). Bisexual men were not added to this figure and are discussed in a later section. Figure 4.2 represents six cis men, including Mark, and three trans men, including Adam.
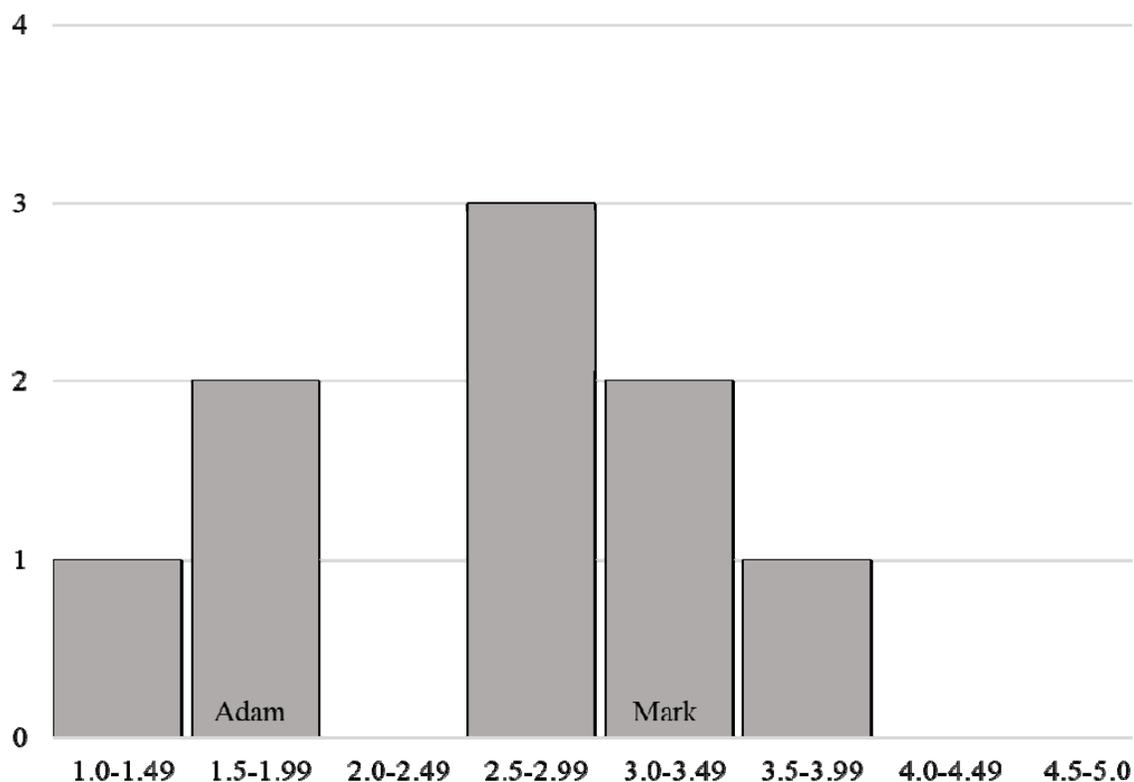
Figure 4.2. *Averages of Men Who Identify as Gay, Queer, Asexual, Pansexual, or Other*

On average, men who identify as gay, queer, or other had an average FLCAS score of 2.59. Thus, Mark has considerably higher levels of anxiety compared to his counterparts (FLCAS = 3.27); only two participants scored higher on the FLCAS. Adam, on the other hand, is on the lower end of the spectrum (FLCAS = 1.7), with only two participants who scored lower than him.

Anxiety Levels of Lesbian and Queer+ Women

Figure 4.3 shows the anxiety levels of women who identify as lesbian, queer, and other identities outside of straight (+). Similar to Figure 4.2, bisexual women were not included in this figure and are discussed in the following section. Trans women would have been included in this section; however, no trans women took part in the survey.
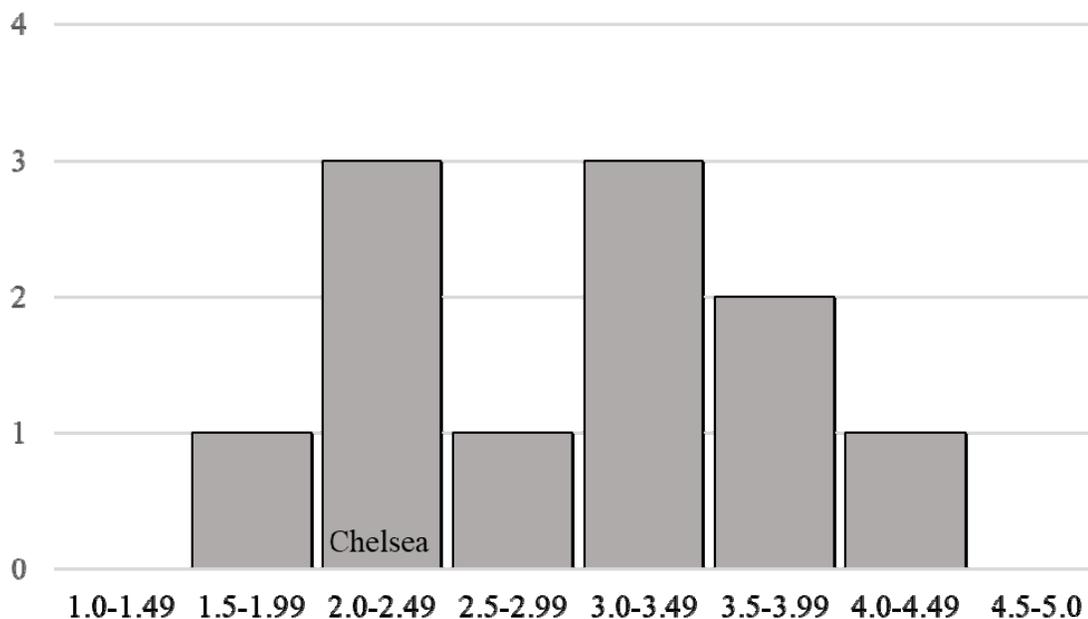
Figure 4.3. *Women Who Identify as Lesbian, Queer, Asexual, Pansexual, and Other*

In total, women who identify as lesbian, queer, asexual, pansexual, and other had an average FLCAS score of 3.0, meaning that this population is slightly anxious. Out of the lesbian and queer+ respondents, Chelsea, who scored a 2.27 out of 5, has lower foreign language anxiety than most of the respondents and is less anxious than the average students in her demographic.

Anxiety Levels of Bisexual Men and Women

Figure 4.4 shows the bisexual men (n=6) and women (n = 14) who completed the FLCAS for CSU. The nature of this figure is binary in gender as no student with a non-binary gender identity identified as bisexual. The figure shows both men and women combined.
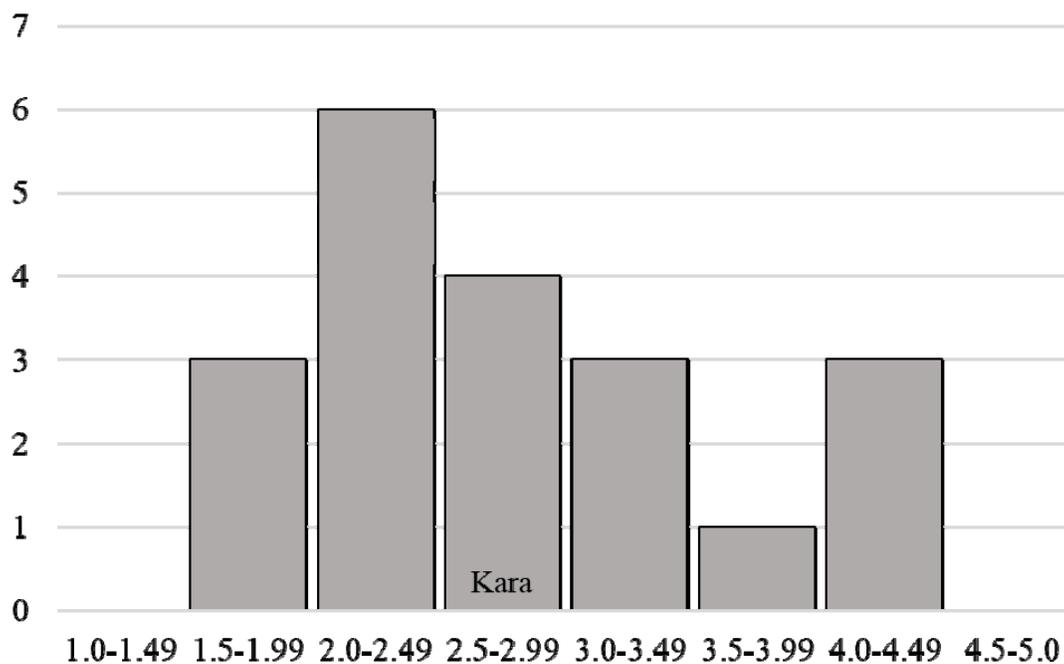
Figure 4.4. *Averages of Bisexual Students*

This demographic averaged at 2.81 altogether, meaning that the bisexual respondents are not approaching anxious. The six bisexual men who participated in the survey averaged at a 2.74, while the 14 bisexual women who participated averaged at a 2.87. Kara not only scored slightly higher than the average for bisexual students, but also bisexual women (FLCAS = 2.91).

Anxiety Levels of Trans, Agender, Gender Non-binary, and Questioning+ Students

Figure 4.5 shows the anxiety levels of the trans, agender, gender non-binary, and questioning participants who took part in the FLCAS for CSU. In total, 10 trans, agender, non-binary, and questioning completed the survey. Out of these 10 students, three identify as trans, one identifies as agender, four identify as non-binary, and two are questioning or unsure of their gender identity.
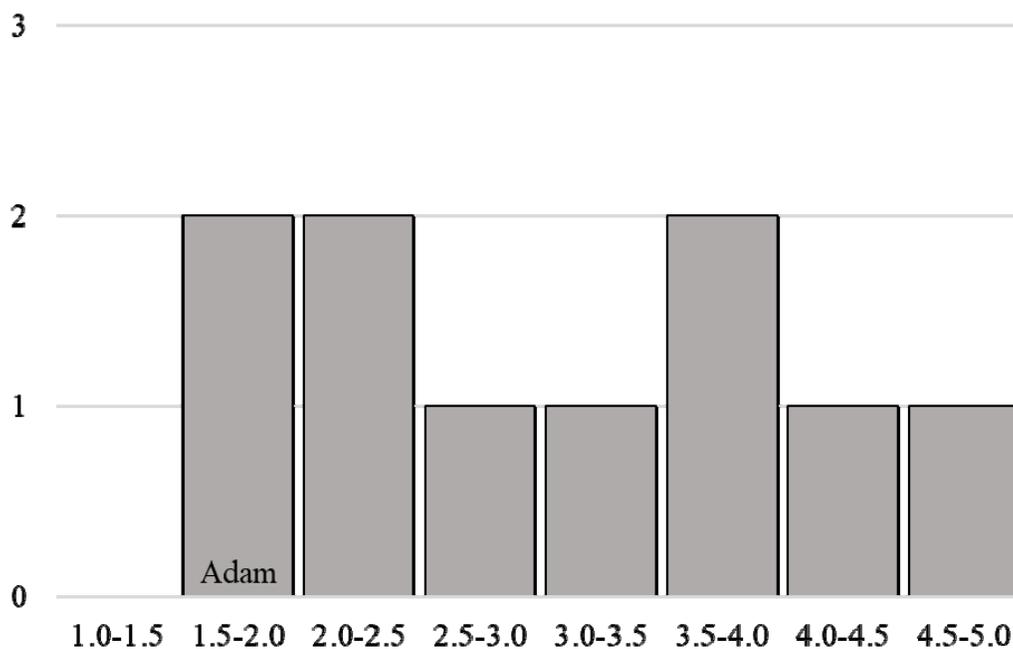
Figure 4.5. *Averages of Trans, Agender, Gender Non-binary, and Questioning Students*

In total, trans, agender, non-binary, and questioning students averaged at 3.09, meaning that this population is slightly anxious. Overall, this population of students covers a greater range in anxiety levels than other demographics. Adam was the least anxious of all of these students who participated in the FLCAS for CSU (FLCAS = 1.7).

Conclusion

Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark varied in anxiety levels compared to each other and compared to their demographics according to their individual FLCAS responses. Chelsea and Adam's scores represent very little foreign language anxiety and are below the average of their representative demographic groups. Adam in particular had a very low score in foreign language anxiety and was the lowest scoring participant in the trans, agender, gender non-binary, and questioning demographic. While Kara's score is even

below what is considered slightly anxious, she scored higher than the average in her demographic. Mark is the only participant who is considered an anxious student according to the FLCAS, and scored quite a bit higher than the average in his demographic.

The following chapters present portraits and cases of two participants in the present study. Chapter 5 illustrates Chelsea's lived experience as a queer woman learning languages and her struggles with behaviors related to foreign language anxiety. Chapter 6 presents Adam's experience as a queer, trans man who strives to perfect his Spanish skills while foreign language anxiety stifles his language processes. Finally, Chapter 7 presents a cross-case analysis, incorporating every participants' lived experience with foreign language anxiety and the common themes that arose in all of the data collected.

Chapter 5

"It's Harder to Navigate Sort of Uncomfortable Situations in Foreign Language":

A Portrait of Chelsea

Introduction

The following chapter introduces Chelsea, a "non-hetero" linguistics and French student who identifies as cis-female. Chelsea is a student in her mid-twenties who recently, as of this study, returned to university to receive her first bachelor's degree. This chapter presents a portrait of Chelsea and the anxiety she experiences, her strong connection to her identity as a "non-hetero" woman, and the lived experiences she has had with problematic students, but wonderful teachers. In the following sections, I present a description of her identity, her historical and educational background, a profile of her social and foreign language anxiety, her experiences with having her identity invalidated by others, and her relationship with discussing sensitive topics in class.

Chelsea's Identity

Chelsea is a white, feminine-presenting cis- female American in her mid-20s. On the questionnaire, Chelsea identified as both "bi" and "queer," and at the time of the first and second interview, Chelsea was dating a trans man named Matthew. I was curious to know why Chelsea identified both as "bi" and "queer" initially, and wanted to discuss the reason she wrote both in further detail. When prompting her to talk about her bi and queer identity, she elaborated:

> I have mostly dated men in the past. I've mostly felt attracted to women, but men are easier. And, it's funny actually. The only person I've talked to [about this study] is my boyfriend, who is a trans man. Because I was like, "Oh, it's for an LGBTQ+..." And I was like, "I swear to God that acronym gets longer everyday."

And he's like "Well, honey, look at me. I think you're the plus." [Laughs] (Interview 1)

Her classification of bisexuality was related to her history of dating men and her attraction to women. When I asked her about her queer identity, she stated that she used it as a blanket term, and further elaborated that "gay doesn't feel expansive enough because I do also like to sleep with men sometimes. And bi feels weird when you bring different gender identities into the mix. It feels limiting. So I kind of just use [queer] as 'not straight' basically" (Interview 1).

Chelsea identified as queer frequently throughout our interviews together; however, she seemed comfortable with her avowed identity as "non-hetero" and her ascribed identity by her then-boyfriend Matthew as "the plus" in the LGBTQ+ spectrum:

J: And then when your partner said you're the plus.

C: Yes.

J: Why are you "the plus" then? Why is it that?

C: I don't know. I consider us to have a straight relationship, but because I am queer or whatever and he's trans... There's a little bit of grey area, I guess. (Interview 1)

For Chelsea, "the plus" represents what the individual categories in LGBTQ do not represent. These categories (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer) for Chelsea do not represent the complete fluidity of her sexuality. Therefore, despite her answers to the questionnaire as "bi" and "queer," I will refer to her as "non-hetero" for the remainder of this study because it best represents her fluidity to her.

Despite comfortably identifying as "non-hetero," I found it particularly interesting that Chelsea mentioned that men were easier for her to date. In the first interview, I asked

her to elaborate on why she said this. Subsequently, Chelsea mentioned that people

generally assume she is straight because of her appearance:

> I know it's totally superficial, but when my hair was super short, everyone
> assumed I was gay and it was easier for me to date women, and now that I've been
> growing out my hair, everyone assumes I'm straight. So men are easier. (Interview
> 1)

In the questionnaire, she answered that she was a "pretty femme cis-woman." She

expanded on this in Interview 1, stating that "I don't want to use the term lipstick lesbian,

but I wear dresses, I wear my hair long, I wear earrings." This made sense to me from my

observations of her and the times that we met for interviews. She tended to wear dresses

and skirts, silk blouses, and open toed shoes, and I had never seen her without a full face

of makeup and dark eyeliner.

Chelsea's Background

Chelsea grew up and attended primary and secondary school on the West Coast.

She was raised outside of a major city in the United States in a tiny town with only about

6,000 residents. Upon starting 9th grade, Chelsea entered a public high school, an

experience she described as "socially brutal." Chelsea did not connect with her peers, as

they were unkind to her, involved in drugs, and formed cliques that were impenetrable.

Her experience freshman year was so terrible that she considered dropping out of school.

Fortunately for her, her grandmother stepped in and decided to help finance better

schooling for her. This funding allowed Chelsea to attend a private liberal arts college

preparation school outside of her hometown. The school was tiny; her graduating class

was only 30 people. She quickly befriended her peers, and had an overall comfortable

experience in her private school. During high school, when she was 17, she started dating her then-boyfriend Allen.

Originally, Chelsea moved to a different city on the west coast to attend her first university, away from Allen, who decided to attend CSU. Chelsea was excited to move because of how tiny her hometown was. In her first quarter there, she took a 16-credit course called "Arts and Letters." The course was part literature, part creative writing, and part visual arts. She liked the class because of how intensive it was, how closely she was working with the professors on her project, and how few students were in the classes. Chelsea claimed she did a lot of good writing in the program. Instead of drawing for the visual arts component, she did a lot of photography because according to her, she "can't draw for shit" (Interview 1).

However, Chelsea was forced to drop out of the university after her first term because the university botched her financial aid application. Upon having to leave school, she was hesitant to return to her hometown because it was tiny and everyone knew each other, but because Allen and a lot of their mutual friends were living in Cascadia, she decided to move to be closer. In order to keep pursuing school and to save money, she started attending CCC in order to obtain her associate's degree, which she completed. After she graduated, she got a full time job working as an executive assistant at a country club in the Cascadia area.

Three years later, in 2016, Chelsea decided to return to school to pursue her bachelor's degree. When she returned, she continued to work full-time at the country club. Eventually, Chelsea became overwhelmed with working and going to school full time:

It was 60 hour weeks. It was like class in the morning, then go to work. Yeah, I didn't sleep for three months, and so I said "fuck it; I'm quitting my job, and I'm focusing on school." (Interview 1)

Once Chelsea quit her job, she started working in childcare to support herself while going to school. Chelsea then got a job working at a bookstore. During the study, she started working for her old employer again, the country club, as a bartender and server on the weekends.

Chelsea's Background in School and Languages

Chelsea thoroughly loves studying languages. Chelsea's earliest experience studying languages began with Spanish when she was in the fourth grade as part of a gate program for gifted and talented students. Chelsea stated that her attendance in the program was "an excuse for [her] mom to get [her] out of the house on Thursday afternoons" (Interview 1). Her Spanish knowledge was supported by the friends she had in elementary school who primarily spoke Spanish at home. However, Chelsea has very little knowledge of the language now. Her comprehension of Spanish is limited to written Spanish, but she can hardly produce it.

In eighth grade, when she was 14, Chelsea had to face a decision: to either be in chorus or take French classes. She despised the thought of singing in front of others, and thus enrolled in French classes. Despite starting her classes nervous because she had not taken a language in several years, she quickly fell in love with learning French. It became her favorite subject in school. Through practice and experience, she become more comfortable with studying and speaking French by the time she reached her junior and senior year. By the time she reached the end of high school, she was highly proficient. During her senior year, she took the advanced placement test for French and scored a 4,

which qualified her to test out of beginning and intermediate level college French classes. French is Chelsea's primary foreign language to date.

Chelsea had a very positive experience taking French classes in high school, also due to her down-to-earth French teacher, Sabine. Sabine is a dual citizen of the United States and France who grew up speaking English and French. Chelsea had French every day in high school with Sabine, who quickly became Chelsea's favorite teacher In fact, they are Facebook friends to this day. Sabine was unique in her approach to teaching classes in Chelsea's high school in general. She was a very liberal teacher, who did not mind teaching swear words to her teenage students – a facet that is highly unheard of in United States high schools. Furthermore, Sabine was the only instructor Chelsea had that introduced queer topics into the classroom, mainly through French film. Sabine showed Chelsea's class the original French film *La Cage aux Folles* (The Birdcage, 1978). The film centers around a gay couple, and heavily features drag culture. Sabine also introduced the class to *Ma Vie en Rose* (My Life in Pink, 1997), a film that centers around a trans girl who is coming out to her community. To Chelsea, it was incredible that a teacher was introducing topics like this to a class, as she went to high school in the mid-late 2000s.

Regardless of testing out of college courses in French, she was required to take the last course in the intermediate French sequence to get her degree from CCC. Chelsea did not mind as she loved taking French courses. In fact, once she completed the course, she enrolled in conversational French courses. That was not enough for Chelsea, as her love of languages built desire to take yet another language, and she enrolled in

accelerated Russian courses. Her inspiration for studying Russian comes from her

family's Polish background, and Polish was not an option at either CCC or CSU:

> Russian, my family is Polish. No one speaks it. When my grandparents came here
> they were like, we're American. We speak English, we're only teaching our kids
> English. So I'm the only person in my immediate family who isn't monolingual.
> And yeah, basically I couldn't find a school that offered Polish, so... No pressure.
> (Interview 1)

Russian was not required for her to get her degree from CCC. She took those classes

purely for fun, and she reached intermediate level classes: "I just think it's an interesting

language. I like hearing it, speaking it, reading it. It's all personal gain rather than like

professional usage" (Interview 4). She found these courses more positively challenging

than her French courses:

> I don't know if I enjoyed one more than the other. I think CCC was a little more
> laid back I guess? I was fresh out of high school, so I was still very much in the
> practice of being a full time student. Because a lot of it was review, it didn't feel
> all that challenging. My French classes were my fun classes. With Russian, it was
> a lot more intensive, it was definitely more enjoyable, but it was all brand new. So
> it was definitely more intense academically. (Interview 1)

After her three-year break from school after graduating from CCC with her

associate's, she returned to school at the beginning of 2016. She intended to major in

English and minor in French. Chelsea's decision to minor in French was because she

thought it was an easy minor. I did not ask Chelsea why she had started as an English

major, but I assumed it was because of her experience at her first university in the 16-

credit course she had taken. As part of the requirements of her English major and French

minor, she was required to take Introductory Linguistics. While taking the course, she fell

in love with the field of linguistics. She was enamored with the instructor of the course

and her passion for and knowledge of linguistics. She promptly decided to change to a

linguistics major. When I asked her why she did not major in French, she simply stated,

"Because I fell in love with linguistics" (Interview 1). Chelsea even found that studying

linguistics and foreign language simultaneously has advantages. She elaborated on that

thought:

> I love studying languages and I am kind of good at it. And now as an adult in the Linguistics program, sort of learning all the stuff that goes on behind L2 learning, and the differences. And structures of different languages, I have an interest in that as well, which sort of makes it easier to learn foreign languages. And then also studying foreign languages makes it easier to study linguistics. They kind of complement each other. (Interview 1)

Chelsea sees herself pursuing teaching as a profession. In fact, she intended to get

the TESL certificate that CSU offers its students. However, during the summer, she

decided to take on one of the core classes required for the certificate, but did not last long

in the course, stating that "life got too complicated" (Interview 1). She stated that "it was

a great class; I just had way too much going on. And that course requires a lot of big

projects and volunteer work, and I had a full-time job… [And] it was crammed into 8

weeks" (Interview 1).

By the time Chelsea enrolled in this study, she had completed several of her

advanced level French courses. She stated that these courses felt like review. For her, she

has good knowledge of grammatical structures in French; she is trying to grasp academic

French and new vocabulary:

> A lot of it felt like review because I had a really good French teacher in high school, but that was I don't want to say how many years ago. [laugh] At this point, it's mostly learning new vocabulary and kind of reviewing, reviewing, reviewing the different tenses and aspects that are harder so conditional, subjective. Mainly those really. And then also getting more into composition. I've been writing a lot of papers in French. That's been my experience with the 300 level. Like, okay you have this language knowledge, let's refresh it and work towards more academic writing in that language.

During the term the study took place, she decided to re-enroll in Russian courses. However, despite reaching intermediate level courses, she decided to re-enroll in a beginner course as she has not taken Russian classes in three years. She finds the course to be basic:

> I'm only three weeks into this Russian class at CSU. It's definitely more...rudimentary. We're still learning...new verbs and sort of reviewing cases and even just practicing writing because it's a different typographic language. So it's more rudimentary I guess. (Interview 1)

Chelsea's Liberal Identity

Politically, Chelsea aligns as a liberal. She believes that everyone should be afforded the same opportunities and access to resources regardless of their personal identity. Moreover, she strives "to be as open minded and understanding and sympathetic and often empathetic as possible with people" (Interview 4), though it comes with caveats. In trying to understand more about her liberal identity, I asked her to define what being liberal means to her:

> C:…You know, I understand everyone has their own struggle or their own journey, but I would rather be understanding about that and see where they're coming from than to rather be like "No, sorry that's different. I'm not about it." Ugh, that's such a shitty answer.
>
> J: No it's not.
>
> C: It's hard to define, you know? I mean, that definitely has a limit. Like, I don't give a shit why you're a neo-Nazi - fuck you. (Interview 4)

Chelsea is unsympathetic about neo-Nazi behavior. In previous interviews, Chelsea discussed themes related to being troubled by homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, and racism, hence her strong dislike of neo-Nazis. However, she had to grow into speaking up against oppressive behavior, as she felt too shy to express her opinions. Chelsea recalls an

experience she had with a peer in a writing class when she was 19 years old and too

afraid to protest:

> I do remember in a writing class.... JUST starting out at CCC. I don't remember what the topic was for the essay, but I was sitting with this group. And I was like 19, and it was me and this dude in his late 20's - early 30's, who was a military vet. He was talking about how he was [in college] and how the VA was paying for it. And this older woman who was in her 40's… and somehow abortion was brought up, because it was a writing class, and she was like "oh you know, well, some women use abortion as birth control" and I was kind of like "... Hm. Okay." And he was like "VERY unfortunately." And I was like... I was 19, so I wasn't going to get into a discussion with these two older people in a classroom setting. (Interview 1)

Since this event, Chelsea has transformed into an outspoken, even confrontational person

who is no longer afraid to challenge individuals on views she finds problematic,

especially with regards to personal identity. The following shows how she would have

approached the above situation years later:

> J: You talked a lot about what you were like when you were 19. How would you have handled that situation now?

> C: I definitely would have been more confrontation and outspoken… Because back then I was 19. I was... I was scared. I still didn't have very good social stills. It was the first year I lived away from my parents in a new state… This is my sixth year in Cascadia. And I am just more comfortable speaking in general now. So yeah, I would have been more confrontational.

Chelsea's FLCAS

As stated in Chapter 3, the FLCAS was distributed via a Qualtrics survey after the

first interview. For the second interview, I asked each participant to elaborate on the

answers that indicated at least a low level of anxiety. After they finished answering all of

my questions, I asked them to look at the other answers and tell me if there was a time

when they might have had a different answer. Chelsea was no exception to this process.

Table 5.1 shows Chelsea's answers to the FLCAS. Answers that indicate at least a small

level of anxiety are bolded:

Table 5.1

Chelsea's Answers to the FLCAS

I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	**Neither agree nor disagree (3)**	I feel confident when I speak in my language class.	Agree (2)
I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	**Disagree (4)**	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	Strongly disagree (1)
I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	Disagree (2)	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	Disagree (2)
It frightens me when I don't understand when the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	Disagree (2)	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	Strongly disagree (1)
It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	Strongly agree (1)	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	Agree (2)
During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	Disagree (2)	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	Disagree (2)
I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	Disagree (2)	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	Disagree (2)
I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	Agree (2)	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	Disagree (2)

I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	**Neither agree nor disagree (3)**	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	Disagree (2)
I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	Disagree (2)	**I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.**	**Neither agree nor disagree (3)**
I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	**Neither agree nor disagree (3)**	When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	Agree (2)
In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	**Agree (4)**	**I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.**	**Agree (4)**
It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	Disagree (2)	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	Disagree (2)
I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	**Disagree (4)**	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	Strongly disagree (1)
I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	Disagree (2)	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	Agree (2)
Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	**Neither agree nor disagree (3)**	**I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.**	**Neither agree nor disagree (3)**
I often feel like not going to my language class.	Strongly disagree (1)	**Average Score**	**2.27**

As shown in Table 5.1, Chelsea scored a 2.27 out of 5 on the FLCAS. Horwitz

(2013) would consider Chelsea as not a very anxious foreign language student.

Obviously, I then was curious about how Chelsea's social anxiety would play or not play

a role in the foreign language anxiety she did experience. When would it emerge, and in what ways?

Chelsea's Observations

As with all of my participants, I conducted two observations of Chelsea's Russian class. Figure 5.1 shows the layout of the classroom during the first observation and the standard seated or standing positions of Chelsea, her fellow students, specifically a friend of hers named Violet, the instructor Anna (who mostly stood at her podium), and myself. Both Anna and Violet are discussed in the upcoming sections. In the first observation, I initially took a seat on the far left side of the classroom. When Chelsea arrived several minutes late to class and took her seat, I could not see her. Thus, I moved to a different seat. This move is represented in the figure.

I did not create a figure for the second observation because the nature of activities during that class. During the second observation, the students were doing group work that required them to move around frequently and work with different individuals. During the first observation, group work was present, but students worked with the same person throughout the class. The person the students worked with seated close to them. Thus, Chelsea only worked with Violet.
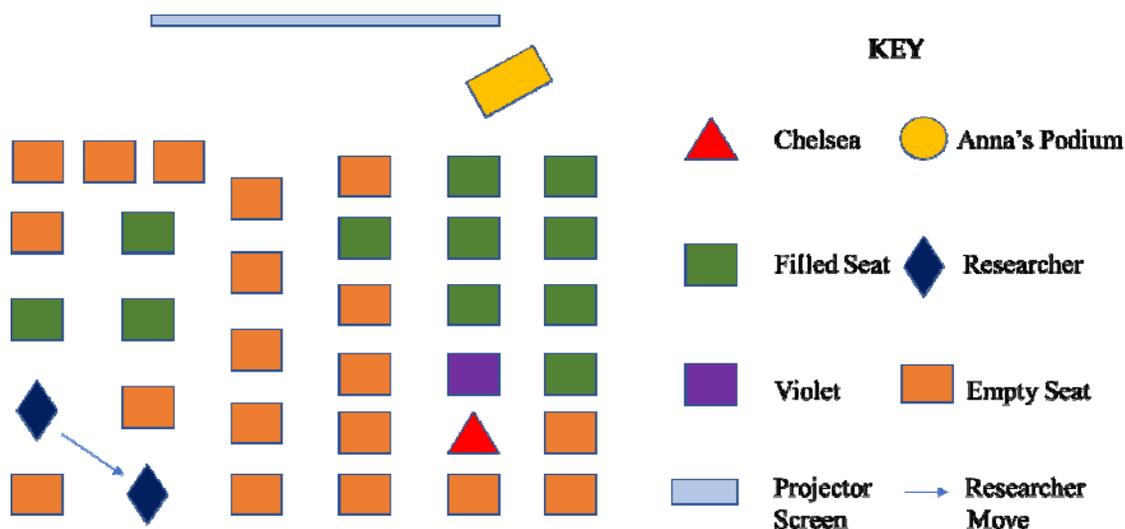
Figure 5.1. *Layout of Chelsea's Russian Class*

I asked Chelsea in the third interview what a typical day in her Russian class looked like. She described a typical day as follows:

> … Now that we're this far into the term, it's pretty comfortable. Pretty relaxed. You know, Anna will start with a little bit of lecturing just to kind of review things. It's a lot of work in small groups and with partners, so. … It's fun, relaxed, interesting...It's generally pretty low stress.

Chelsea is studying Russian purely for fun, and therefore is very laidback when it comes to her Russian class because there is not pressure to make stellar grades. This is not to say that Chelsea does not care about her grades, but the low-key atmosphere of the class helps Chelsea continue to feel relaxed, and it is an especially enjoyable experience for her to go to class.

In the same interview, Chelsea described some of her own context and mental processes during the observation. Chelsea ended her relationship with Matthew a week before the class and was trying to catch up with the material:

> C: … I guess I was a little nervous about class [during the observation] because I missed a couple of classes… Because I was dealing with the breakup.

J: I'm sorry.

C: It's okay. I was thinking it was better to not be in class. And even though I kept on top of the work by emailing with Anna, I was still nervous I was not going to be prepared. And then when I got to class, we were talking about things to study for, so I felt a little more prepared and comfortable.

Table 5.2 describes the activities that took place in the classroom during the first observation. A table was not made for Observation 2 because the bulk of the data for triangulation was found in the first observation. According to Chelsea, Anna generally teaches her class with a balance of instruction in Russian and having students work out of the book that is required to be brought to class; this class was no exception. For the group work, as stated before, Chelsea was grouped with Violet.

Table 5.2

Activities in Observation 1 of Chelsea's Class

Beginning Time of Activity	Description of Activity
8:58	Anna asks students in Russian what the date is, and then gives a brief WWII lesson.
9:00	Students watch video. Anna instructs them to take notes on the video.
9:05	Anna throws Little Red Riding Hood doll to students. Served as review before quiz.
9:07	Quiz.
9:15	Anna groups students together to work on activity in workbook.
9:21	Anna calls students back together as a class to go over answers, calls on students at random to answer questions.
9:27	Anna instructs students to get back into their same groups to work on another activity in the workbook.
9:35	Students come back together. Anna calls on students randomly.
9:44	Students do group work again.
9:53	Anna brings students back together to go over work.
9:58	Anna facilitates an activity from the workbook.
10:01	Class ends.

As described in Chapter 3, I observed the body movement of each participant to look for physical cues of foreign language anxiety as described by Gregersen (2005). Table 5.2 shows the general non-verbal of Chelsea during Observations 1 and 2. The non-verbal cues that Chelsea displayed are highlighted in grey. Chelsea's general behaviors in class are described after the presentation of the table.

Table 5.3

Chelsea's Non-verbal Cues Indicating Anxious and Non-anxious Behavior

Non-verbal Behavior	Non-anxious	Anxious
Leaning Behavior	Slight forward lean toward teacher	Backward lean, back against chair, or sitting upright
Rigidity	Relaxed body position. More gestures.	Tense body position. Fewer gestures
Open/closed body position	Generally open body position, knees slightly apart, hands held on lap when not gesturing	Generally closed body position, legs or ankles closed, arms folded in front. More frequent crossing and recrossing legs
Body-focused adaptors	None	Adjusted clothing, scratched facial area (chin, forehead), stroked hair, touched legs and stomach, rubbed hands
Object-focused adaptors	Spontaneous, natural, occurred frequently	Played with pens, notebooks, general fidgeting
Speech dependent gestures	Very few	Occurred rarely. When used, gestured generally compensated for vocabulary gaps
Foot/leg movements	Crossed/uncrossed ankles	Bounced/jiggled/tapped foot
Head nodding/shaking	More positive head nodding	Some side to side head movements. Fewer positive head nods.

Overall, Chelsea mostly displayed non-anxious behavior. This correlates with her low score on the FLCAS. The only exception in her behavior was in the category of object-focused adaptors. In observation 1, Chelsea played with her book and notebook quite a bit. In the following observation, she displayed similar behavior with the addition of periodically holding onto the coffee cup she brought with her to class and checking her cellphone.

In the following sections, I describe the largest themes that emerged in my data from Chelsea. These themes included her social anxiety, test anxiety, being "put on the spot" and saying the wrong thing, invalidated identity, and sensitive topics.

Chelsea's Social Anxiety

Early in our interviews, Chelsea brought up that she was diagnosed with social anxiety when she was a teenager. Specifically, doctors have diagnosed her with an internalized anxiety disorder and clinical depression. In high school, Chelsea was very quiet and, as she puts it, shut in. When she was attending public school, she did really well in school because her life only consisted of school and homework. She did not socialize with her peers, and the socially brutal high school she attended reinforced this anxiety. Her social anxiety was so extreme that she was in therapy for years. Once Chelsea transferred to the private school, she felt much more comfortable, but it was still hard for her to speak in front of others. This continued into her attendance at CCC and after obtaining her associate's degree.

Chelsea's social anxiety is not as extreme as it used to be. She attributes this to becoming older and having a "more developed frontal cortex" as well as her break up

with Allen when she was 23. This forced her out of her comfort zone because of the

community of which was a part:

> I think it's at that time, I was with the same partner for six years... And not only
> that, it was 17-23, which is a really important time in your life. Even though we
> moved 700 miles away from home, a lot of our friends were up here, so a lot of
> my community was very sheltered. I was spending a lot of time with people I've
> known since I was a teenager, so it was hard to branch out and feel comfortable in
> other social settings. (Interview 1)

Though her social anxiety is not as extreme as it used to be, it still emerges. She further

described what this entails:

> Sometimes I will shut myself in my apartment and not talk to anyone for three
> days, but it's not nearly as often as it used to be. I kind of force myself to
> socialize, and going to school and working and being in a relationship helped me
> stay in tune with socialization.

Chelsea's social anxiety also emerges sometimes with regard to her relationships

with her teachers at CSU. Her relationships with teachers at CSU have not all been

positive, and she claimed to have had teachers laugh at her before for volunteering

answers or asking questions in class. She recalled a specific experience she had with a

professor in the linguistics department, when she was asking a question in class:

> C: Yeah, last term in [class] I asked a question and [the professor] laughed at me
> and said "That's the last question I'm taking on that topic for the day" and moved
> on. I was like "I just need to know if you're okay with me [doing] this this way
> because you're going to be fucking grading me!" That's [the professor]. [Laughs]
> So yeah, I guess just like... Feeling like my intelligence or competence is being
> challenged. If that makes sense.

Experiences such as the one described above can trigger Chelsea's social anxiety

even further. When emerged in a foreign language context, a teacher can trigger this

anxiety through words and actions. Chelsea does not feel this way in her Russian class,

however, because of who Anna is: "super sweet and awesome" (Interview 3). The

identity of others triggering anxiety for Chelsea is further described below.

Test Anxiety

Throughout my interviews with Chelsea, a theme that emerged was test anxiety, a

major component of foreign language anxiety, as described by Horwitz et al. (1986).

Chelsea described her anxiety with taking tests as follows:

> J: You say that you are also neutral for "Even if I'm well prepared for language
> class, I feel anxious about it"
>
> C: Yeah, I guess it depends. I guess if we have a test that day, I'm gonna be
> anxious. Even if I studied. But if it's just a regular lecture and I'm comfortable
> with the material, I'm probably not going to be. (Interview 2)

Further investigation revealed that as soon as Chelsea turns in the test to the

teacher, any nervousness she experiences disappears, further giving insight to how

context-dependent foreign language anxiety is for her.

I thought that Chelsea indicating having test anxiety was especially noteworthy

given that she also agreed to the answer "I am usually at ease during tests in language

class" on her FLCAS. In response, Chelsea stated that she is more comfortable with

written examinations. Oral examinations, on the other hand, are far more likely to make

her anxious. She illustrated her experience with an oral exam that she had to take for her

Russian class a day before my second interview with her:

> C: Like yesterday, we had an exam in my Russian class and there was an oral
> portion and I definitely said a few things wrong. And was panicking because it
> was an exam. Whereas if it was just a classroom review type situation, I'm not
> going to panic probably.
>
> J: Do you remember what the question was?

C: Not precisely. The oral exam was, I was pretending to be a reporter and my professor was a visiting Russian professor, so I had to ask her all these questions about her life, and I couldn't remember the correct conjugation of the word, and panicked, and blurted out the wrong one. (Interview 2)

Chelsea stated additionally that there are times when she does feel pressure to prepare better for class. She recalled the oral examination, expressing that she did not study for the exam. She gave a post-amble saying, "I know I passed it, but had I actually studied, I probably would have done better" (Interview 2).

Preparing for examinations is a strategy for Chelsea to manage her anxiety. Furthermore, written quizzes do not stress out Chelsea as much as larger tests or oral examinations. What is interesting to consider in this example is the intersection of test anxiety and communication apprehension in foreign language anxiety. As Horwitz et al. (1986) detail, oral examinations "have the potential of provoking both test- and oral communication anxiety simultaneously in susceptible students" (p. 128). It is possible that the overlap of these two types of anxiety is the reason Chelsea is more anxious in the context of oral examinations.

Coincidentally, assessments were distributed to the class during both of the observations. During Observation 1, Anna gave a short quiz about verbs in their infinitive form to the class shortly after class began, but not before giving a short review of some of the material on the quiz. On a scale of 1 (not anxious) - 5 (extremely anxious), Chelsea felt that her anxiety level was a 2 that day, but it was only a 2 because of the quiz:

I wasn't very anxious at all. It was just a really short quiz, and I had studied for it. I'm always going to have a little bit of anxiety before any quiz or exam, but because I knew it was going to short, I wasn't very anxious. (Interview 3)

Her lack of anxiety during this quiz is also supported by my observations of her body movement. During the quiz, Chelsea sat in an upright position with her legs uncrossed and still. Having a short written quiz that Chelsea prepared for was significantly less anxiety provoking for Chelsea than having a longer test or an oral exam.

During observation 2, Anna gave a test to her students towards the end of her class. The way she structured her class was similar to observation 1, where she did not immediately give her students the test. Chelsea found this also to be a good strategy:

> It was nice that she didn't start the class with the test, because that makes me more anxious when you walk in and all of a sudden it's starting. Especially because I tend to be a couple of minutes late, but we had a couple of minutes to warm up and get back into the groove of speaking Russian and thinking in Russian, and then we got to take the test in Russian. (Interview 4)

Being "Put on the Spot" and Saying the Wrong Thing

Chelsea's feelings of guilt toward not being prepared well for class and her aversion to oral examinations are tied to the notion of being put on the spot. She described that she can get put in the spot in her Russian class when she is not paying attention or if she is lost in the workbook:

> I have an "oh shit!" moment of "Oh, where are we? What do I need to answer?" That happened to me this morning. I was paying attention; I was just looking at a different part of the worksheet and I was called on, and I was like "Are we doing number 4?" (Interview 4)

Understandably, Chelsea worries about feeling put on the spot because she is concerned about saying the wrong thing. She begins to panic when she feels like she might say the wrong thing, even if she uses linguistic strategies to make up for knowledge she does not have or remember. She revisited her Russian oral exam to give further detail about this:

> C: I think I get nervous. And something I learned in studying languages for so long is … If I can't think of a specific word, I'll use words to describe it.

J: So, like a linguistic strategy of some kind?

C: Right, like if I can't think of one specific vocabulary word, I'll find a way to describe it rather than using the specific vocabulary. And I think I started to do that, but my Russian knowledge isn't great enough - I couldn't complete the process. So I just, I used the right verb, I just did the wrong conjugation.

J: So, what you're saying is when you start to panic, it's just a matter of being so nervous and then...

C: Yeah.

J: What are your thoughts afterword?

C: Usually I'm like "Oh shit, that's the wrong thing to say." [laughs] (Interview 3)

Chelsea believes she should be a good student. She stated:

Say we're going over the homework and maybe I didn't completely finish the assignment or maybe I didn't as much work into the assignment as I should have, and then she asks me a question about it, I feel like I should be better prepared. And then I feel guilty for not studying as hard as I should have. I mean I still learned from it, it just comes to me not feeling as good of a student as I should be. (Interview 2)

However, Chelsea's desire to give correct answers is further fueled by experiences she had with teachers in the past. Chelsea had not had Anna as an instructor before taking her class, so she was mildly apprehensive of Anna. Now, she has grown to be very comfortable with Anna, and thus does not feel as strongly about being perceived as a bad student for not having a correct answer:

I am definitely more comfortable now, but earlier in the term I barely knew her. And I mean, I knew her as a professor - and so I was still nervous not knowing how she would react if I made a mistake or did something wrong. (Interview 3)

This statement is no surprise given Anna's friendly demeanor. In the observations, Anna never failed to approach Chelsea, or any student, with a wide, bright, warm smile.

Chelsea grew to trust Anna, becoming sure that she would not be laughed at or ridiculed by professors like she had in her past.

Invalidated Identity

When a person's character, personality, or lived experience is judged, dismissed, or rejected by others, their identity can potentially be invalidated. In our interviews, the theme of invalidated identity was a central topic of discussion. Chelsea finds topics that could potentially threaten or question someone's personal identity to be offensive. Thus, because Chelsea desires the end of oppression, she tends to be more outspoken when it comes to topics about racism, sexism, or sexual identity, and will call someone out if they express an opinion that is racist, misogynistic, homophobic, or transphobic.

One of Chelsea's first times speaking up for herself was when she was pursuing her associate's degree, a time when she was still fairly shut in and dealing with social anxiety. At the time, she was 19 years old and in a human sexuality class at CCC. The topic of the class was sexual assault. This was a topic close to Chelsea, as she had been sexually assaulted during the previous year by a friend of hers and such topic could bring back horrific memories. During the discussion, a man sitting behind her who was about 10 years her senior decided to chime in and state that a certain percentage of rape allegations is false. A statement such as this one was dismissive of Chelsea's. This infuriated her, and she turned around to address the guy, stating "actually, it's like less than 1%. That's bullshit. Here's the website where you could check that out" (Interview 4). Chelsea was surprised by her ability to stand up for herself during this time of intense emotion and anxiety. Such instances show that Chelsea's identity as female is salient to

her. Chelsea stood up for herself because she recognizes how comments such as the student detailed above invalidates her identity as woman.

Chelsea does not want her sexual identity invalidated either, as it is also salient, probably more so than gender identity. As mentioned, Chelsea passes as a straight woman in the eyes of many. In her personal life, she has felt invalidated even by her friends. Chelsea went out to lunch with a friend in downtown Cascadia. As they were eating and enjoying drinks, the bartender asked them how long they had been together. Chelsea was about to answer his question, just to state that they were not together, her friend chimed in by laughing and answering that they were both straight. This hurt Chelsea, as she had not expected a friend of hers, one who even knew about her queer identity, would be one to invalidate her:

> I felt that she could have just said that we were not together, or something like that. I felt like I had to stick up for myself. Not only that, but I had to out myself to a couple of people, which I thought she knew I was attracted to women and have dated women in the past, but apparently not. (Interview 4)

Chelsea has not had experiences in her foreign language classes with having her identity invalidated, but she does have positive experiences with teachers affirming her queer identity. As stated before, her high school French teacher Sabine introduced queer topics into the classroom. Chelsea mentioned in several interviews that Sabine showed the class *The Birdcage*, the original French film as well as *La Vie en Rose*. Teachers introducing queer topics was not common, but it was an experience that stood out to Chelsea:

> Some of my teachers were very... professional, I guess. Where I mean, they wouldn't really introduce gay topics. I mean, I went to a really liberal college prep school, so like... It was always very welcoming, and no one really gave a shit. But my French teacher specifically showed us the original version of The Birdcage…

She was just like super liberal and didn't give a fuck. She was like "We're gonna watch these movies because I love them and you're gonna love them too." (Interview 4)

Representations of LGBTQ+ characters in media have an impact on the identity development of young adults. In their study on the impact of LGBTQ media representation on LGBTQ emerging adults McInroy and Craig (2017) found that portrayals of LGBTQ characters, "however flawed, gave them a sense of possibility simply because they were seeing LGBTQ identities depicted" (p 38). Thus, it is no surprise that Chelsea appreciated Sabine for validating her sexual identity simply by incorporating LGBTQ+ themes in her classes.

The identity of others is important to Chelsea as well. Chelsea mentioned very early in our interviews that she was more comfortable with female professors, but she quickly retracted this statement:

J: Was there a teacher you did not like or did not get along with very well?

C: Uhm, not that I can think of. I mean there were some I didn't grow as close to, which has... honestly. I tend to get along better with female professors.

J: Why is that? Why do you think that?

C: I don't know. Maybe it's... Lemme rephrase that. I get along a lot better with professors who are not straight men, which is how my life works in general.

J: In your general life, why do you think that is?

C: I don't know. I mean, I think it's sort of having relationships or friendships with straight people in general has always been... More difficult. And I don't know, just the whole aspect of being pursued. If that makes sense.

J: It does. Do you mean in terms of a relationship?

C: Yes. And so it's not like it would have anything to do with school, but that's kind of been my relationship with straight men in general. And so it kind of bleeds into everything. (Interview 1)

As Chelsea stated, her personal relationships with men do not affect her in the classroom, but she stood by her sentiment in the second interview when she stated:

> J: So when you say women are more approachable, could you tell me more about that?
>
> C: Yeah. Maybe. It probably comes down to my specific anxieties that I feel more comfortable around women....
>
> J: May I ask more about what those anxieties might be?
>
> C: Sure. I don't know if I can answer that. I mean I always have a certain level of anxiety around men, if that makes sense. (Interview 2)

Thus, due to her anxiety about straight men, she prefers to work with other women or other LGBTQ+ members. This was further affirmed in information obtained in the observation. During observation 1, she was paired up with a student named Violet. In the third interview, I wanted to know more about Chelsea's relationships with students in her class. Unbeknownst to me, Violet was an LGBTQ+ student, denoted by a rainbow pin that Chelsea noticed she wore. This was a positive factor for Chelsea:

> I feel like we can relate to each other better… I think because I'm straight passing or whatever, I have to kind of hide this whole part of my identity, whereas if someone is wearing a little pride pen and basically openly out, I'm like "That's awesome. Let's talk. We have a lot in common." It just feels more comfortable.

Working with and befriending other LGBTQ+ individuals is a common theme in Chelsea's life because of relatability. With other like-minded individuals, Chelsea does not have to worry about having her identity invalidated.

Sensitive Topics

Chelsea's feelings about being put on the spot and saying the right thing are particularly relevant when sensitive topics are discussed in her foreign language classes.

She desires to represent her feelings as authentically as she would in her first language, especially because she is having sensitive conversations with people that she either does not know or does not know very well. This is particularly important to her and her level of anxiety because of her diagnosis of social anxiety. She elaborated on this phenomenon:

> I have social anxiety as it is, so when you bring sensitive topics in and then, okay how do I say this in a way that conveys what I'm trying to say, but does it come off another way? I want to make sure people know how I feel about things, that I'm expressing myself in an authentic way.

Therefore, Chelsea's approach to talking about sensitive topics is quite different in her second language, depending on what topic is being discussed or what opinion is being expressed. Because Chelsea's identity is particularly salient to her, and because she desires to end oppressive behavior, she wants to represent her feelings accurately.

Wanting to represent her feelings accurately, Chelsea often engages in avoidance behavior when sensitive topics are being discussed in her foreign language. She does not lack experience discussing sensitive topics in classes taught in her first language, particularly from her time at CCC when she was pursuing her associate's degree – a time when she was too anxious to speak up for herself. However, she had changed quite a bit since this interaction, and described in an interview that she would not have a problem calling someone out for views she finds problematic. However, in a language class, Chelsea finds it easy to slip into anxiety:

> I guess sometimes when I'm working in unfamiliar territory when I'm speaking in a foreign language, it's kind of easy for me to slip back into that kind of socially anxious space. Because I feel like a lot of the skills that I've learned and social interactions and dealing with uncomfortable situations - I do in English… It's harder to navigate sort of uncomfortable situations in [a] foreign language for me. (Interview 3)

This is a particularly interesting finding. However, it is no surprise since speaking in foreign language class tends to put student in very vulnerable spaces (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Chelsea further recalled an incident in her advanced level French class during the previous term. Her class was going over a chapter in their book about immigration that spanned several weeks. During the time of the class, the Trump administration implemented a travel ban on seven Middle Eastern countries (Criss, 2017). This context affected the class and the way that they approached the topic. Chelsea's French instructor was liberal as well as an immigrant in the United States. Chelsea recalled that the class did not focus too much on current politics in the United States because the class relied heavily on the material in the chapter, but it was still a nerve wracking experience for her.

Chelsea stated that the atmosphere in this French class was tense, and because of this, she used the strategy of only eliciting the French she was required to for class that day, and did not elaborate on her feelings further. She believes people were concerned about the same thing. However, Chelsea was frequently partnered with a very sweet, older woman in that class. The following quote illustrates how Chelsea approached working with this woman:

> C: We're from different generations and sometimes topics would come up and she would believe one thing and I would just be like... Oh. Okay. That's what we're going with, then I guess that's what we were going with because I don't want to argue with you.
>
> J: How would you go about navigating that if it were in English?
>
> C: Probably speak up more and kind of ask why she felt that way... It would be easier if I could remember what the topic was because it happened a couple of times. But yeah, trying to understand the thought processes behind that opinion

and kind of gently state my opinion: why I felt that way, my personal experience. (Interview 3)

Chelsea's strategy for avoiding a situation that could result in conflict was to stick to only discussing the material in the book and not focus too much on engaging in a political discussion in her second language. Fortunately, Chelsea has never had an interaction in her French class that has upset her like the one she had in her writing class. However, for her, it is hard to engage in a constructive conversation about a sensitive topic. When a conversation about a sensitive topic begins, she "just kind of revert[s] to "okay, I'm in class; I'm just going to agree with whatever they say" (Interview 3). Chelsea even acknowledged that though Cascadia is a very liberal city, she worries about having conflict with her more conservative peers because of how she worries about being inauthentic with her opinions and beliefs:

> We are in Cascadia, but there are still some people with contrasting views to mine about immigration law. So having those conversations can be difficult in general. And I guess I was anxious about it because even though I am usually very comfortable in French, it was a lot of new vocabulary and I didn't want to say the wrong thing and offend someone or what have you.

Chelsea further maintains this strategy because she is concerned about having to work with the same people. She worries about the tension that might build up from an interaction with someone she would continue to have to be in a class with at a later point in time. It is important to Chelsea that she maintains a good rapport with her peers, especially because she has one or two more years of coursework to complete before she receives her bachelor's degree.

Conclusion

In this chapter, my goal was to paint a portrait of Chelsea's lived experience with foreign language anxiety. Chelsea's experience is shaped by her diagnosis of social anxiety, affirmation of her identity from teachers, being comfortable working with individuals in her community, her identity being invalidated by individuals who are not part of her community, and her fear of being invalidated in foreign language classroom settings by those who are oppressive.

Chapter 6

"I Just Keep Trying to Pay Attention until the Next Distraction":

A Portrait of Adam

Introduction

This chapter introduces Adam, a queer, trans student in his mid-late 20s, who is double majoring in Spanish and linguistics. Adam comes from a Native American and European background. He grew up bilingual, speaking a second language with his father as a child; however, he did not have proficiency in this second language at the time of this study. Adam is a highly motivated, self-assured man who has aspirations of obtaining a Ph.D. in Spanish or linguistics with a focus on sociolinguistics. This portrait attempts to richly describe Adam and the anxiety he experiences in foreign language classes.

Meeting Adam

Adam was the first participant that I interviewed for this study. In the first five minutes of our first interview after Adam first walked into the dingy, dimly lit room, the most notable feature of Adam was he confidence he exuded. It became very clear from the first few minutes of our conversation and throughout our interview that Adam was an articulate strong speaker.

Adam and I were able to build good rapport during our time together, especially as our similar sense of humor helped us bond. By the last interview, we found ourselves laughing hysterically throughout our hour and a half together. Adam is truly a funny person.

My routine in conducting the first interview always started with asking the participant what their pseudonym of choice was, followed by why they chose it. Adam

was the only participant who had a hard time choosing a pseudonym. In fact, after the

second interview, we sat down together for about 10 minutes to figure out what name

would suffice. He even remarked "I already had to change names once, and that was hard

enough," referring to his transition. Eventually, we arrived at Adam.

Adam presents as masculine. When answering the questionnaire item "what is the

gender expression?" during the first interview, he answered "more on the masculine end

of the spectrum." To me, that signaled that Adam did not quite identify as fully

masculine. I wanted to know what Adam meant by his response, and asked if he would

elaborate on his answer:

> It's that traditional definition of what masculine presentation means. That's why I had a hard time answering that question, like "what does that even mean?" But I guess, I shop in the men's department for clothes. I don't wear make-up. I don't do anything to emphasize feminine characteristics that I may have, which I don't think I have many ... I just have a hard time committing to terminology like that I guess. It can be kind of a loaded term. I think masculinity is usually also tied into your behavior and kind of more ... Less emotional displays and things like that in public, and you have to be more withdrawn in that sense in terms of body language as well. It's just kind of a confusing subject. And having been socialized not you know in that world, it's kind of difficult for me to navigate sometimes … How do women sit on the train? How do men sit on the train? And then, constantly analyzing what I'm doing in respect to that. But I do think I naturally tend to navigate to the behavior of what is traditionally expected of men in society, I guess. I'm not actively trying to do it; it's just what I feel more comfortable doing is what I observe in other men. (Interview 1)

Later in that first interview, I discovered that Adam has a background in

sociology and has taken gender and sexuality classes, so it came as no surprise to me that

Adam truly problematizes the constructs of "masculine" and "feminine," especially given

his own experience transitioning.

Adam's Gender and Sexual Identity

Adam adamantly described himself as queer in our interviews. He stated that he "always identified as queer from jump street" (Interview 3). Adam lives openly as a queer man, stating that for the most part the majority of people know about his sexual identity. As I did for other participants in this study, I wanted Adam to specifically explain why he identified as queer:

> I use the term queer to talk about myself because I don't choose a partner based on the idea of binary gender. So, I think labels like bi are very restricting in that way so I don't really like that. Queer is more fluid and represents the spectrum a little bit better. That's why I choose that. (Interview 2)

Though Adam is open about his queer identity, the same is not true for his gender identity. Adam began his transition when he was 19, shortly after he moved to Cascadia. According to Adam, only about five people at the university know about his trans identity. These five people are students he met at the Queer Resource Center (QRC), a gender and sexualities professor who Adam came out to in an essay, and I.

Adam's Story

Adam was born and raised in a small town in the Deep South. The area in which he lived consisted of many unincorporated towns that made up the entirety of his community. He described this area in the following statement:

> So it's such a small town that we usually refer to it as [county name] because it's a conglomeration of little small towns that are a 20 minute drive away from each other. So, I could tell you the town I was born in, or the town I lived in, or the town I went to school in. So there's all these weird little things. The town I lived in I think is population 5,000. So there's one that's 2,000. One's like 5,000. They're all really tiny. It's just super rural. There's not a lot going on out there. It's these little residential areas or farms with horses and/or cows on them, or just woods, or little wildlife preserves that we have. So, it's pretty much…you're outdoors, or you're inside doing nothing because the town closes at 6pm... It sucks. It's all old

folks that want to go there and be in nature, retire, and die. It's not where young people should be growing up. (Interview 3)

Adam further described the town as very "rednecky," which to him means that the population consisted of mostly Caucasians who were overtly racist. Additionally, the majority of the population was incredibly homophobic: "People were not shy about being racist or homophobic or anything. It's just the way it was" (Interview 3).

As a child growing up in the South, Adam was forced to perform femininity. He elaborated on his experience, describing that "was basically in involuntary drag for a long time" (Interview 3). This piece of his identity was so salient to him that he became very aware from an early age that he was not cis- gender. However, this piece of his identity was invalidated largely by those who surrounded him, forcing him to remain confined to female gender norms: "Throughout my childhood, so from age 2 … I was saying 'Hey, y'all made a mistake. Y'all have committed an error here.' And it was always just dismiss, dismiss, dismiss" (Interview 3). Despite expressing his dissatisfaction with conforming to a feminine identity, adults in Adam's life continued to ignore him.

As Adam was going through puberty and entering high school, he continued to perform femininity. During the time he attended high school, there was much stigma surrounding expressing masculinity as a woman who was queer. Therefore, Adam continued to attempt to embrace typical femininity, such as make-up, long nails, and feminine clothing, in hopes that his high school experience would be easier:

> The stigma around being either a butch woman or a femme man was so strong when I was young that I was like "I can't be a masculine presenting female bodied person." It was just not a thing I was willing to go through. And I didn't think it really was me anyway. So I was just like "I might as well just go to the other extreme." You know what I mean? Just hyper correct and just have all the things considered feminine to make that process the least painful - that was the better

option for me. Because that would just fly under the radar and people would pay less attention to me, even though I was predominantly dating girls and was considered a femme lesbian I guess.

Adam's experience in high school continued to be a largely dull, not to mention troubling. He continued to be surrounded by peers and teachers who were racist and homophobic. Adam attended his first two years of high school in a place that had a racially mixed population. However, he transferred to a technical school for his last two years, where there were very few people of color and the principal would make references to conservative ideals in pop culture. Outside of school, there was not much to do for recreational activities. For entertainment, he and his friends would "go to Walmart and just people watch. And [they] would play music, like play guitar, and make theme songs about people" (Interview 3).

Adam had always had an interest in Spanish, unsure of why Spanish especially appealed to him so much as a child. It was not until high school when he began to foster his love of the Spanish language. Spanish grew to be a love of his because of the connections that he could build from learning the language and because of how it sets him apart from others:

> It's relatively easy for me to comprehend... Easier than say Japanese would be or something like that. And I just think Spanish is so widespread. It's the second most spoken language in America. And just, I have the opportunity constantly to practice this language. And to meet new people and have these interactions that I otherwise just wouldn't be able to have. And even after just studying it on my own in high school and taking one or two classes, sometimes I would just be the only person in my little Podunk town that could speak or translate or whatever. And I was like this is awesome. I have this connection that no one else around me has. (Interview 1)

Once Adam turned 18, he made the decision to move to the West Coast. He moved to a small city not far from Cascadia – a city with a population of about 20,000

people. He did not stay there long, as he decided to move to Cascadia around the time he was turning 19 years old. Moving to Cascadia opened new doors for Adam, as he began to participate in activities at a center for LGBTQ+ youth. His experience was so positive that he described it as "one of the coolest things Cascadia has for young queers" (Interview 3). Adam's mindset began to grow once he was not surrounded by oppressive individuals: "I started going there and someone asked 'What are your preferred pronouns?' And I said 'what are you talking about?' [laughs] Kind of opened that line of dialogue again. Kind of going there and being around people that weren't small town repressive sort of folks" (Interview 3). Shortly after, Adam started changing his appearance to be more masculine and thus begun his transition.

Adam entered a long term relationship with a woman around the time of his transition. Similar to Chelsea's experience, people started seeing Adam as a cis man who was in a straight looking relationship. He described this experience as erasure of his queer identity, and like Chelsea, said it was invalidating:

> I see a snapshot, and that's 100% of who you are…. That's also layered because if people don't know I'm trans and assume I'm cis and I'm dating a woman, then it's not a queer relationship, or it is a queer relationship. You know? There's all of these things. It's not conventional. It's a hot-ass mess.

Around the time he entered this relationship, he started working at a guitar shop in Cascadia, where he continued to work for five years. During his time working there, he was once again surrounded by homophobic men. These men, however, did not know about Adam's queer or trans identity, especially because of his straight looking relationship. Therefore, his colleagues directly joked about homophobia with him: "I feel like there would be homophobic shit said to me, not around me. Like 'RIGHT?' nudge

nudge. And I'm just like 'Well, you just assumed a whole shit load of things about me.'

All of which were incorrect. I feel like I was invisible."

Adam was not afraid to confront his colleagues about their behavior, however. He

specifically stated that he would call out the people around him all the time for their

problematic, homophobic jokes. He illustrated one of the experiences for me:

> A: There's this guy who's very uncomfortable to be around. And he was like "That
> guy just sucks dick." And I was like "What's wrong with sucking dick, Mike?" I
> don't think most of them knew I was queer. The guy was an asshole. So they were
> laughing at him for being put on the spot. You can find many other ways of
> saying something is shitty. I've had conversations like that, like "I'm not
> homophobic." No, but your words are.

After moving to Cascadia, Adam decided to start attending Cascadia Community

College (CCC). From the start of his college career, Adam intended to transfer to a four-

year university to complete a double major. At the time, he was interested in pursuing

psychology and Spanish. Eventually, however, Adam lost interest in the field of

psychology and turned to sociology:

> I used to be into psychology as an idea of what I wanted to major in…In studies
> of psychology, they treat behaviors and traits as things that occur in humans as
> though we were hermetically sealed, sequestered off from society, and they don't
> take into account external factors, but sociology does. It's just specifically how
> group mentalities work and function on a larger scale, so I thought that was
> interesting. I just wanted to know more about that… And so I thought it was a
> very interesting career path and that you could do a bunch of stuff with it, such as
> analyze stuff. (Interview 3)

Thus, Adam decided to switch to pursing Spanish and sociology as fields of study

instead. At CCC, Adam started taking Spanish classes to much success. He postulates

that Spanish was easier for him because of his bilingual upbringing: "Because of that,

you know, background that I had, I think it's easier for me to read Spanish, understand the

structure…Some things are intuitive to my brain that I feel other folks who have English as their first language - they don't have that" (Interview 2).

Many positive experiences at CCC encouraged Adam to pursue a Ph.D. in Spanish in order to become a Spanish teacher. Most notably, in his second year of taking Spanish classes, he took a class with a teacher by the name of Andra. Adam took his final two terms of Spanish at CC with her. He held Andra in high regard, and to this day still sees her as an inspiration:

> [Andra] maybe really kind of lit the fire. She actually spoke Romanian as her first language, and English as her second, and Spanish as her third. So she was teaching in her third language, which just in itself I thought was awesome. But I think that kind of informed her entire teaching style about being super patient with people and wanting to kind of really draw folks into the overall cultural experience of the language as well. So she would constantly be putting up, you know, fun examples of things. Like, here's comic strips, here's folk songs being played on the guitar. I just thought it was really engaging. And then, trying to think how to relate that to how I felt... It was just really inspiring. Every time I went into class, I was looking forward to it. And I thought she had a personal stake in everybody's success, because it was a very small class. (Interview 1)

Adam sees Andra as a role model for the kind of teacher he wants to become. He found her relatable because she was teaching a language that was not her first language. Furthermore, he felt that she took the time to tend to his needs as a student. On the first day of the term, Andra made a concerted effort to ask each student what their goals were and made an effort to tend to their personal goals: whether it was to become fluent in Spanish or to simply pass the class.

Unlike Chelsea, Adam chose not to finish an associate's degree at CCC. His decision not to finish was because of the words of peers and teachers who said it would just be easier to transfer with the credits he had, particularly because he wanted to double major and the extra spaces for electives can just go into pursing the second major instead

of classes such as public speaking and health. Thus, Adam applied to and was accepted to

attend CSU to pursue his goal of a double major.

Adam started his college career at CSU as a sociology and Spanish major. He had

desires to dabble in linguistics and decided to take the university's introduction to

linguistics course. Adam instantly fell in love with the field of linguistics, and then

thought about merging his love for sociology and linguistics together. He sat down to

have a conversation with the instructor to discuss that topic, and the instructor convinced

him to just pursue linguistics instead:

> I talked to [the instructor] about what I'm interested in doing, and I told her: I'm a
> sociology major and XYZ interests me in that. And she said "do you know
> anything about sociolinguistics?" And I said "I never really heard about it before,
> never really talked about linguistics before." And she was basically like "you
> know, you can study sociology as a whole, and then try to apply it linguistically,
> which seems like what your interest is developing into, or you can be a linguistics
> major and have a micro focus on sociolinguistics and be able to merge the two
> together. (Interview 1)

Once Adam made the decision to switch to a linguistics and Spanish major, he

had the chance to take sociolinguistics for the first time during the term prior to the start

of this study. Because Adam essentially switched to a linguistics major to pursue

sociolinguistics, I was particularly curious as to what topics Adam enjoyed learning about

in the course. The topics related to his own identity as part Native American and as a

queer man:

> J: And then what were some of the topics you liked to discuss in sociolinguistics?
>
> A: We talked about re-contextualizing words and terms in today's lexicon that are
> problematic, kind of taking it back to the root of where it came from and shedding
> light on that for people. Like, "here's that's why this is a fucked up thing to
> say."… My family is Native American and European … And I've had to explain
> to people why it's a shitty thing to say "Indian giver." And they'll say "Oh I had
> no idea where that came from." Kind of like saying that the original story was just

about people not understanding a culture instead of trying to learn about it, they'll make a slur and just demonize it sort of. So, we talked about that and reappropiation of words like "queen" and other things in the queer community, even the word queer. They only used to be pejorative and are now being reclaimed. Even big events like Dyke March, that's becoming a publically okay thing to say because it's being reclaimed by that community. So those are the things that popped out immediately. (Interview 3)

As a linguistics and Spanish major, Adam continued to only have positive experiences taking classes in both departments at CSU. In the Spanish department, he found another instructor who became an inspiration to him: a professor by the name of Camille. Camille had only been encouraging Adam's pursuit of Spanish:

I'm actually taking three consecutive terms with this one professor in the Spanish department… We have common nerd territory… She's just this fountain of everything linguistic that I could ever want to know. If there's down time in class, she'll just start rattling off, "you know this word came from Latin, and in 1547 it converted the H into the F, and now we have this word we see before us right now." And she just retains this information in her mind all the time, and I just think it's fascinating to listen to her. Her lectures are just super engaging…She's just, you know, the source to go to. But at the same time, she also wants people to have fun with it as well, as strict as she can be, and her RateMyProfessor page will attest to that, she can be pretty rigid… It's nice to be able to recognize that in a professor, like "you actually care about my experience and my success." (Interview 1)

Camille has given support to Adam in endeavors related to work and further study as well. When an opportunity arose for Adam to tutor students privately in Spanish, Camille gave Adam a strong recommendation, and thus, he began working as a tutor the term prior to the start of the present study. She has further given Adam an open door to ask her about places to study abroad and has also offered letters of recommendation for those jobs.

Adam's job as a tutor has been one that has made his Spanish skills stronger. He enjoys being able to help students in the same way that Andra has, from whom he has

drawn inspiration as an instructor, particularly with regard to her goal-asking approach:

"[Andra's] part of the reason I ask questions like that, like if you don't give two shits and

just want to pass, then I can keep this really dry. But if you're super passionate about it, I

can tell you cool shit and keep motivating you to learn other stuff. You have to know

your audience" (Interview 1).

Adam's FLCAS

Like Chelsea, I asked Adam to complete the FLCAS via a Qualtrics survey after

the first interview. As per procedure, I asked him to elaborate on the answers that

indicated at least a small level of anxiety during the second interview. Table 6.1 shows

Adam's answers to the FLCAS. Answers that indicate at least a small level of anxiety are

bolded.

Table 6.1

Adam's Answers to the FLCAS

I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	Strongly disagree (1)	I feel confident when I speak in my language class.	Strongly agree (1)
I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	**Disagree (4)**	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	Strongly disagree (1)
I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	Strongly disagree (1)	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	Strongly disagree (1)
It frightens me when I don't understand when the teacher is saying in the	Disagree (2)	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	Strongly disagree (1)

foreign language.			
It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	Strongly agree (1)	**I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.**	**Strongly disagree (5)**
During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	Disagree (2)	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	Strongly disagree (1)
I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	Disagree (2)	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	Disagree (2)
I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	Strongly agree (1)	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	Strongly disagree (1)
I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	Disagree (2)	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	Strongly disagree (1)
I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	**Agree (4)**	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	Strongly disagree (1)
I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	Strongly agree (1)
In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	**Agree (4)**	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	Disagree (2)
It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	Disagree (2)	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	Strongly disagree (1)

I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	Strongly agree (1)	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	Strongly disagree (1)
I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	Disagree (2)	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	Strongly agree (1)
Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	Strongly disagree (1)	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	Strongly disagree (1)
I often feel like not going to my language class.	Strongly disagree (1)	**Average Score**	**1.70**

As shown in Table 6.1, Adam scored a 1.7 out of 5 on the FLCAS. Horwitz (2013) would consider Adam a foreign language student with very little anxiety, thus making Adam an especially interesting case for this study, as Adam had the least amount of foreign language anxiety out of all my participants. It was clear that Adam did not have crippling language anxiety solely based on the FLCAS, but I was curious how the four responses that did indicate anxiety manifest in the language classroom. The interviews and observations aimed to gather such insight.

Adam's Observations

Adam was the first person I observed for this study. He was enrolled in an upper level Spanish class during the term of the study. Although it was a language class, it was not necessarily a language learning course. Instead, the class focused on content related to Spanish linguistics and culture. The class was taught entirely in Spanish, and it was a

requirement to complete the BA in Spanish. Camille, a middle aged woman with a

playful personality, was Adam's instructor for the class. It was his third time taking a

class with her.

Figure 6.1 shows the layout of the classroom. I was given permission from

Camille to sit anywhere I liked and selected a spot that would allow me to see all or most

of Adam's body. As Figure 6.1 shows, I was quite far away from Adam. But my position

in the class still allowed me to see all of his facial and upper body movements. I could

clearly see his interactions with the instructor and other students in the class and how he

responded to prompts. However, his leg movements were completely out of sight. In the

second observations, Adam and I sat in the same seats as the first observation. The

positions of the students varied in the second observations, most notably a student named

Wendell, who will be discussed in the upcoming section.

Figure 6.1. *Diagram of Adam's Spanish Class*

In order to get an idea of what the class structure was like, I asked Adam to tell

me about a typical day in class:

Okay, so first is presentations…. Usually two people present in every class on some dialect of Spanish from somewhere in the world. Typically a little video from somewhere in the world, breaking down some feature in either the lexicon or the phonology of that place. That's usually 10-15 minutes, and then she presents the word of the day…. And this is where the part comes in where everyone wants to talk about themselves and how we're all unicorns. And we all say different words, and they say "when I was 7, I heard someone say this in the country I grew up in" and then that usually lasts way longer than I think Camille wants it to or has allotted time for. And that's usually a tedious part of class, and people go on tangents. And then we will come back to the PowerPoint that Camille usually does. And that usually gets interrupted by tangents of all different flavors. So it goes on and on and on, and that will continue to the end of class. Then we work on questions together. Camille will give us those questions. We'll come back together and attempt to answer all of them and get derailed by more questions and not finish those questions. And I think usually on Thursdays we will have a quiz at the very, very last minute, and then we leave. (Interview 3)

Table 6.2 shows a diagram of the activities and topics of lectures during Observation One. As stated before, Adam's class was primarily content-based rather than filled with language learning activities. Most of the class time was taken up by Camille lecturing about that day's topic - indigenous dialects of Spanish. A diagram was not included for Observation Two because the observation only lasted 20 minutes due to a large exam Camille was giving her class.

Table 6.2

Diagram of Activities and Topics Discussed in Adam's Spanish Class for Observation 1

Beginning Time of Activity	Description of Activity
16:45	Roll Call
16:48	Two student-fronted presentations, including videos titled "The Nahuatl Refuses to Die" and "Giant."
17:10	Teacher-fronted presentation: Word of the Day (sweater or skirt).
17:20	Teacher-fronted presentation: Instructs students to take out paper, presentation about indigenous area of country that speaks target language.
17:35	Video presentations: Scenes from multiple videos, a bit of lecture

	from Camille.
17:54	Teacher-fronted presentation: A famous person's influence on the opinions of the Indian substrate.
18:00	Teacher-fronted presentation: The influence of indigenous people on a variation of target language.
18:12	Group work: Influence of indigenous languages on dialect. T walks around room chatting with students.
18:30	End class

Table 6.3 shows Adam's general body movements that indicate anxious and non-anxious behavior as described by Gregersen (2005) throughout Observation One. Because I could not get a view of Adam's legs throughout the observation, I omitted any language from Gregersen's framework that related to the lower half of the body.

Table 6.3

Adam's Non-verbal Cues Indicating Anxious and Non-anxious Behavior

Non-verbal Behavior	Non-anxious	Anxious
Leaning Behavior	Slight forward lean toward teacher	Backward lean, back against chair, or sitting upright
Rigidity	Relaxed body position. More gestures.	Tense body position. Fewer gestures
Open/closed body position	Generally open body position, hands held on lap when not gesturing	Generally closed body position, arms folded in front.
Body-focused adaptors	None	Adjusted clothing, scratched facial area (chin, forehead), stroked hair, touched stomach, rubbed hands
Object-focused adaptors	Spontaneous, natural, occurred frequently	Played with pens, notebooks, general fidgeting
Speech dependent gestures	Very few	Occurred rarely. When used, gestured generally compensated for vocabulary gaps

Head nodding/shaking	More positive head nodding	Some side to side head movements. Fewer positive head nods.

Overall, Adam displayed non-anxious behavior. During Observation 1, Adam generally displayed both forward and backward learning behavior. While leaning backward, he usually kept his arms crossed as he chewed his gum throughout the class. Furthermore, Adam did use his hands frequently to talk in class, but they were not believed to be speech-dependent gestures, especially because Adam displayed similar hand gestures throughout the interviews.

The observations lent themselves to triangulation of data in the portraits that emerged from the interviews. In the following sections, I discuss the themes that emerged from our interviews, the observations, and the FLCAS.

Frustration

A reoccurring theme in my interviews with Adam was frustration. Though frustration is not inherently part of foreign language anxiety as defined by Horwitz et al. (1986), both are often associated with each other, and it is a piece of what causes foreign language anxiety for Adam. As Adam used the term "frustration" to describe negative experiences in his language classes, I was curious for him to deconstruct what the term meant to him and what frustration did to his learning processes. Adam elaborated on the subject:

> J: What happens when you become frustrated then? What are the things you think of?
>
> A: Or the things I wish I would have said? Or the things I should have said? Just regret. Just like "Ah, I should have just done that." That hindsight is 20/20 feeling. God damn it. Immediately, [I think] that's not what I wanted to say… I just feel

flustered. Just unhappy in general. And then it's hard to focus for a couple of minutes after that. I'll just be fixated on that. Maybe not a couple of minutes, but a minute after.

J: Could you talk more about being unfocused?

A: I just dwell on it for a minute and then I play it back in my head like "I should have done that instead." I just analyze it until it's dead [laughs] and then I move on. (Interview 3)

As Adam illustrated above, frustration plays a large role in the affective processes that he experiences in language classes. When Adam experiences frustration, it causes him to become temporarily distracted from listening to lectures and engaging in the material distributed in class. This distraction could be explained by Tobias's (1986) model of cognitive interference. Tobias's model discusses how anxiety indirectly affects the cognitive resources required in the input, processing, and output stages. If anxiety is triggered during the input phase, it could cause the student to become distracted and fewer stimuli may be encoded. At the processing stage, both comprehension and learning may suffer if the item's meaning is not recognized. Finally, anxiety during the output stage can mean that the student may be not able to retrieve vocabulary, remember appropriate grammar rules, or respond altogether. The frustration that Adam experiences could be triggering anxiety that leads to the distractions that he is experiencing

Furthermore, as shown in the quote above, Adam experiences negative self-talk. Negative self-talk is associated with foreign language anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Students who engage in negative self-talk, like Adam does when ruminating on what he should have said, may experience mental blocks when learning a second language. Negative self-talk thus could affect a student's ability to process information in their second language (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

Adam most easily experiences frustration when it comes to students in the classroom. For example, a male student in his Spanish class by the name of Wendell frustrates Adam significantly and was the center of many of our conversations around external circumstances that create frustration. To Adam, Wendell makes insignificant and irrelevant contributions in class, and this frustration causes Adam to become very distracted:

> J… We talked about this frustration that you have, but what happens with your learning processes when you feel frustrated?
>
> A: I feel like I drift off for a second and lose a bit of what goes on in a conversation. I don't know what exactly goes on in my brain, but I notice I can't pay attention. I just shut it off for a second, shut off everything, and then I'm like "oh fuck, I'm in class right now." I'm trying to catch back up.
>
> J: Do you retain the information that's said when you're drifting off?
>
> A: Sometimes? It's usually very brief, but it's enough of it to be somewhat distracted through the whole thing. And it's pretty fucking consistent through the class. It's not like once or twice a class. Just peppered in.
>
> J: What are the after-effects of that then? So, you drifted off, you didn't get the information - now what?
>
> A: I just keep trying to pay attention until the next distraction. It's frustrating. My blood pressure goes up a bit. Hairline recceeds... [laughs] Sometimes I daydream about what I would say, like "Can you PLEASE shut the FUCK UP?" In English, out of character, like fucking enough! (Interview 4)

Such instances of frustration can be the trigger for foreign language anxiety for Adam, which also manifests itself physically through changes in blood pressure. Clearly, not being able to retain information causes tension for Adam. These triggers are significant for Adam as indicated by him anticipating the next instance that Wendell spoke up in class. Adam felt helpless in these situations, as he felt that it was inappropriate to have a conversation with Wendell after or during class about his

disruptive behavior, stating "it's tough as a student, because you can't just say 'shut up, please.' You can't really do much about that ... I don't really know how to go about it honestly. I just kind of hope that the professor regulates, you know, classroom time a little bit better" (Interview 1). As a consequence, a teacher's disregard to manage the classroom could lead Adam into instances in class that contribute to foreign language anxiety, where for example, he might miss a piece of the conversation and thus would easily make a mistake or be distracted that he misses something he knows.

Type A Personality

Experiencing frustration and distraction in the language classroom might not be so significant to Adam if it was not for his strong identification with having a type A personality. In Adam's terms, his type A personality manifests in traits such at impatience, perfectionism, and a need to be high achieving and controlling. He illustrated in our interviews how significant this is to him:

> A: I'm super type A... So fun story really quick. When I was in my psych class, we took this basic-ass test. It's like 0-200 and if you're close to 0, then you're super type B. And obviously, the other extreme is you're super type A. [The teacher]started at 200, and she's like "raise your hand if you got 200. 180, 160." And I was the only person who raised their hand at one of the higher levels. It was like 140 or something like that and I was like... Really? Nobody else? I guess I know who is going to go bald and have a heart attack first. But that explains a lot. I want to eat fast, walk fast. Everything needs to be done on my time and my terms. If somebody's walking slow in front of me on the sidewalk, I'm filled with "ugh, I just need to get around you." Even if I have nowhere to be. It's just a thing. (Interview 3)

His type A personality can further be seen reflected in his FLCAS responses. Adam strongly disagreed with the statement "I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class," and it creates a significant amount of stress for him. During our

second interview, he even stated "I think everything's about hard work to me." Adam prepares extensively for his classes in order to be a highly successful student.

We know from Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) that perfectionism correlates with type A personalities. Researchers have investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety and perfectionism. Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) explored this relationship by recruiting four anxious and four non-anxious students to react to a previously recorded audiotape of themselves speaking a foreign language. They found that students who were anxious tended to be perfectionists, while their non-anxious counterparts did not display the same behavior.

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, I perceived Adam to have a great deal of confidence. He knows he is a smart, motivated, and hardworking student. Certainly, his experiences with Camille and earning a job as a tutor attest to these traits. Both, his confidence and type A personality, contribute significantly to the anxiety he experiences in his language classes.

Adam's foreign language anxiety is characterized partially by fear of negative evaluation. Adam has a fear of making mistakes in language class, specifically basic language mistakes that were taught in a lower level language class. My assumption about Adam's confidence was thrown off by this discovery about him. I assumed that highly confident people would not care so much about slipping up, but he elaborated on his feelings towards the subject:

> A: Yes, I worry about making mistakes in the language class. … There's a lot of room for error, and that's nerve wracking. And I don't want to make simple mistakes that you learn in first year. So, you don't say "La camisas." You say, "Las camisas." The same thing happens when I have to answer a question and

I don't have time to prepare. So, I don't want the teacher to think "ugh, how remedial, this kid." It's just a matter of a little bit of anxiety.

J: And so you talk about this idea that people will think you're stupid or that the teacher will think you're stupid. Why does that bother you?

A: Because I don't think I am. I think I'm pretty smart. (Interview 2)

The above quote shows that Adam has a sense of his identity as an intelligent student in his first language. His anxiety stems from a lack of being able to convey his identity as an intelligent student in his second language. Such notions of self-concept and foreign language anxiety are described in Horwitz et al. (1986) and in Chapter 2 of the present study.

Minor or major language mistakes happen especially when Adam is put on the spot, similar to Chelsea's experience. He has a strong need to feel very prepared to make insightful contributions in his language classes, but his foreign language anxiety comes from people staring at him when teachers call on him to answer questions, which happens often in Camille's classes because of her confidence in his ability to speak well and know information about linguistics that the other student does not know:

J: … I want you to describe what happens when you become anxious. Like the mental processes.

A: I just hate having to formulate a thoughtful answer while someone's staring at me. Or when I know there's a time limit and I just got put on this little stage and sitting in my chair and maybe engage here and there but now it's like, ready GO! And I'm like [gasps] [laughs]. All I can think of is "I just need a fucking minute." I need a minute, and I can come up with something good for you, but as I'm hearing myself talking I'm like "That's not really what I want to say but I have to continue talking." Or I'll make a simple error, like what I'm saying- if I say a feminine noun and then it ends of being a masculine noun, but you said "las" - and it gets all weird and shit. So all of these things are swirling around in my head at once, and it comes out all jumbled up- and then you don't sound very insightful.

Time processing effects are described in detail in Tobias (1986, as cited in

MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Adam's description of his anxiety aligns with that of

Tobias's claims that anxiety stifles cognitive processing time. For Adam, these

experiences are amplified when it is an assessment for larger projects, such as

presentations. In Camille's class, on a day which I unfortunately could not observe,

Adam gave a presentation to the class. Adam is not bothered by presentations in terms of

content and language: he knows his material, he plans ahead of time, and he constantly

studies. However, the presentation became stressful when spontaneous discussion arose

during the question and answer section while Adam was being evaluated by Camille:

> For instance in the presentation that we did yesterday, I think it went really well.
> We had everything really well planned. We ended right on time; slides were
> pretty well organized. Then there was the Q + A portion. And my friend asked me
> about this random, minute detail. And it was... Like a little after-thought like "Oh
> I noticed they put the subject in this position where it's generally not there in
> normative Spanish. Why?" You know why they did that! Why did they do that is
> a mighty fine question! … But I had to think of all of that answer on the spot, and
> I was like "AHH well." It just took me a minute. So I don't feel like "Yes, I've got
> this! I'm ready to answer your question!" I just feel... We have Camille with the
> glasses and the clipboard in the back, furiously taking notes as you're talking. It's
> nerve wracking. (Interview 4)

Being put under evaluation during spontaneous discussion contributed to test

anxiety that Adam experienced in his language class. Impromptu speaking anxiety is a

significant trigger of foreign language anxiety, as described by Ando (1999). Adam's

rehearsed, well-planned, and well-organized presentation did not cause him anxiety. It

was his friend in class asking him to speak spontaneously that aroused anxiety. He further

explained that "it's nerve wracking for anyone, right? When you're talking in front of a

group of people and there's somebody taking notes as you're going, like you're being

evaluated on the entirety of that performance, even though that's the unscripted after part

of the presentation" (Interview 4). Because the locus of control (Norton Peirce, Swain, &

Hart, 1993, as cited in Norton, 2013) was not in Adam's favor, it could have increased his

level of anxiety. It is possible that if the event was not time dependent, the locus of

control would be in Adam's favor, and he would therefore feel less anxious.

Adam routinely provided examples of why he does not want to disappoint

Camille. As Adam's best source of academic support, he feels pressure to perform well

for her. Camille puts a great deal of trust in Adam to speak correctly and to correctly

answer her questions about linguistics due to his background in the field. Adam stated

that he experiences guilt when he cannot deliver to her high expectations of him: "it's just

like when your parents say 'I'm not mad, I'm disappointed'" (Interview 2), further

contributing to the anxiety Adam feels about not conveying authentic identity as a smart,

capable student in his second language. Adam explained his feelings about disappointing

and impressing Camille in the following quote:

> J: How do you feel like you've disappointed this professor?
>
> A: That would have been a cool opportunity for a teacher-student exchange. Like "Hey, you. I know you know this thing. Why don't you explain it to the class so that I get a break?" And then I can be like "Well in 1864, lalala happened." And then they can say, "good job, Adam. Now moving on." And then [the conversation] just flows nicely, and it's a good exchange. Instead, I'm like "uhhhhhhhhh, ehhhhhhhhh." Just kind of sucks for everyone. Nobody wants to listen to that, and it's not comfortable for me.
>
> J: And how would you feel when you felt like you did impress the professor?
>
> A: Stoked about it. It's a good feeling. Validated. Like, "I already knew you knew that. That's why I'm asking you." (Interview 2)

Opportunities arise frequently for Adam to answer questions in class. Because of

his knowledge of linguistics, Camille will direct questions to Adam to answer. According

to Adam, he answers these questions correctly for the most part, and thus validates his

identity as a high achieving student. This seems to be apparent from my observations as

well, as Adam was called on several times in Observation One. Adam usually responded

with a laugh, and seemed to elicit a positive response from the instructor. Adam even

managed to catch Camille off guard at the beginning of Observation Two. Adam

described this experience to me, as I do not have proficiency in Spanish:

> A: She was trying to recite back that sentence that [a guest lecturer] taught us, which was "Do you wanna speak Palenquero with me?" And I answered "Yes, I want to speak Palenquero with you" and she didn't know what to say.
>
> J: I noticed that when you walked in she said something to you and you said something back to her. It looked like y'all were joking because y'all were laughing.
>
> A: Yeah, she thought she had tricked me and then I stopped her because no one else remembered that sentence… But people were like "UHHH SI!" Yeah. So, that was a fun day. (Interview 4)

As demonstrated by the quotes above, Adam's identity can be validated or invalidated by

Camille. When Adam's identity is validated as a student who is capable, it is a

confidence booster for him. In this particular situation, Adam was the only person who

entered the room with a correct answer to this response. It is not a surprise that when

Adam cannot perform to a standard that he is satisfied with, he becomes frustrated and

his confidence is thrown off. Adam feels a need to be a high achiever due to his type A

personality. Experiences such as being put on the spot to speak eloquently in Spanish,

looking less than intelligent than he is, and disappointing Camille cause him to lose face

in his perception due to this.

Social Aspects

Despite no longer being a sociology major, Adam continues to find sociology

appealing. In fact, he believes it is important to talk about matters that are relevant to

sociology, such as group mentality and social pressures. I had not heard of the concept of

group mentality before, and I asked Adam what his definition of it was:

> How the thoughts and the opinions of people around us end up shaping our own
> idea of ourselves. We construct the idea of the self based on what's around us and
> your collective social experiences. You can't really develop a sense of self without
> contacting other people and having that imprint on you in some sort of way.
> That's really what I mean by that. (Interview 2)

Adam feels it is important to talk about constructs such as gender and sexual

identity in his classes as well. Topics related to matters of race, gender, and sexuality

would arise in his sociology classes, and they proved to be fruitful conversations to

Adam. As one would imagine from such sensitive topics, conflict would arise in class due

to insensitivity or ignorance about a topic. Adam described one of those incidents in an

interview. In a sociology class Adam took, a student in the class stated "Don't all lives

matter?" in reference to the Black Lives Matter movement. Adam's teacher, who

supports the movement like Adam does, responded harshly and negatively to the

student's question. Adam elaborated:

> And she was like, "You know what?! No!" And she was like "I couldn't and I
> won't. And we're not going to do this here. No." And she gave it a minute and
> then she said "I'm sorry. I was really short with you, but I feel really strongly
> about that." and then she was able to explain why he is really fucked up.
> (Interview 1)

As illustrated earlier, Adam feels a strong need to call out problematic language

and oppressive statements. This is no exception to the classroom, as he finds it incredibly

frustrating when students and teachers in classes are contributing to oppressive

ideologies. However, he does not feel like he should have to call it out all on his own:

> J: How do you feel when problematic language doesn't get addressed?
>
> A: I feel like it creates a hostile learning environment. I've had that happen once, a presenter at CCC repetitively did that and the professor didn't do anything and told us it was our jobs to raise our hands and say "You're being homophobic!" and I was like "What if we've had fucking trauma in our life and we don't want to directly call out somebody who's saying fucked up shit in the back of the room when it's your job to do it?" So it just kept getting worse and worse and the less [the teacher] did, the more empowered [the oppressors] became. And I didn't feel like I could focus on that, so I started fucking dreading going to that classroom. (Interview 4)

Instances like the ones above are examples of oppression and how identity is

invalidated in classroom contexts. In such contexts, Adam believes it is the teacher's

responsibility to control classroom environments and call out problematic behavior

because of past trauma in his life surrounding his queer and trans identity. Furthermore,

as described in the quote above, Adam dreaded going to a class with an outspoken

homophobic student. Adam finds comfort in teachers who are able to talk about such

topics in class, as it takes off the tension he feels when encountering a student who holds

oppressive views. This even holds true for reclaimed words such as the N-word. Adam

believes that communities who have had words used against them have the right to

reclaim such words and be the only ones who use them. The following quote illustrates

such thoughts as well as the comfort he places in instructors:

> J: So we talked about word reclaiming, and you talked about getting a lot of satisfaction out of telling someone that they can't use a word. Tell me more about what would happen if you happen to be in a class where someone decided to use a word that was reclaimed, but they weren't part of a community.

A: That has happened. Say like "Can we talk about why you using that word is a problem?" That's what happened twice that I can think about, and they turned out to be a decent conversation in the classroom.

J: What classes were these?

A: One was sociolinguistics, and even though [the instructor] stated he wasn't going to say the N-word, and then a guy said that word. It made me feel kinda gross. And then we had to talk about it, which was easy because [the instructor] was there. And he had a paragraph on the assignment sheet as to why we shouldn't use it.

Unaddressed oppressive behavior and problematic language create a hostile learning environment in Adam's opinion. In these uncomfortable situations, even instances when homophobia, racism, or sexism are not handled well, Adam experiences a great deal of frustration. As stated earlier, this frustration is distracting for Adam.

Wendell, the student in the class taught by Camille, serves as a good example of a problematic person who frustrates Adam. During the beginning of the course, Adam began talking extensively about how frustrating Wendell was in class. He began describing Wendell as a student who goes on too many tangents that are completely irrelevant to topics of discussion. Adam found him so frustrating that he further described him as "he's tall, blonde, white, [and] gross" (Interview 2).

In the beginning of the term, Adam described an incident where Wendell said something very oppressive during class:

We were talking about, you know, words that can mean different things in different dialects in Spanish… We are using examples of like "stingy" or "frugal" and [Wendell] offered up an example, which apparently he thinks is widespread in his country that is harmless use, which basically means to be "Jewish" with your money. He just shared that, like "OH WE JUST SAY THIS!" And a lot of us just go "yeah, a lot of people say that, but it's not great. It's not a good thing to say. It's pejorative." [Camille] kind of told him that like, "yeah, that's derogatory, that's not a good thing to... Yes, it is said, but it's not classroom appropriate to be

talking like that right now." But he just kept persisting with his justifications for it. (Interview 1)

Adam further described that it was poor taste to bring up such a thing in class, and that he could not understand how Wendell thought it was not a pejorative: "For him not to realize that was pejorative is just shocking to me. Him saying 'no, it's a compliment,' arguing actively. But no, not only was it pejorative, but that it was also a positive thing to say about somebody" (Interview 2). Instances like these that involve Wendell contribute to Adam's foreign language anxiety because they create a great deal of frustration.

The above quote also shows Adam's belief that it is up to the teacher to address students' problematic contributions to class. In this case, Adam was satisfied with Camille's response to Wendell's words. However, Camille does not shut down Wendell's tangents all the time. Wendell, as can be seen from the quote above, consistently makes contributions in class, including inappropriate ones. Adam generally feels that the tangents can be shut down: "I think she could be better at shutting down the tangents, it's something that a lot of folks and I have discussed outside of class. We don't get 100% of what she has planned for us" (Interview 3).

As stated earlier, classroom contexts where problematic language is not addressed creates a hostile learning environment. In his class at Cascadia Community College (CCC) when a student used problematic language, Adam dreaded going to class. Anxiety about attending language class is reflected in prompts on the FLCAS such as "I often feel like not going to my language class" and "When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed." Adam respectively strongly disagreed and agreed to the prompts, but because Wendell uses problematic language, it is probably the case that Adam could

have easily slipped into a mental space where he dreaded going to Camille's class as well. Adam already finds Wendell's contributions annoying, frustrating, and distracting, and thus problematic language adds a component to this anxiety. Such environments could contribute to Adam's loss of "investment" (Norton, 2013) in the course, as students "may not be invested in the language practices of a given classroom if the practices are racist, sexist, or homophobic" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 37). There are no indications in my data that this was the case for Adam's foreign language classes, but Adam's relationship with Camille might counteract instances where oppressive behavior and unaddressed language appear.

Conclusion

It was my goal for Adam's portrait to show his lived experiences, particularly with regard to foreign language anxiety and how it is triggered. While Adam does not experience much foreign language anxiety, when he does, it is characterized in part by his feelings of frustration towards problematic individuals such as Wendell, distractions caused by frustration, his type A personality, and his need to impress the instructor and not look unintelligent in front of his peers.

Chapter 7

A Cross-case Analysis of Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark

Introduction

This chapter presents a cross-case analysis of the four participants of this study,

which describes the emergent, most common themes concerning the relationship between

foreign language anxiety and sexual and gender identity among all four participants. As

mentioned in Chapter 3, data were collected from each of the four participants through a

questionnaire, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), four in-depth

interviews, and two classroom observations. The interviews yielded the bulk of the data

presented in this study with about 117,000 words in total, and around 29,000 words for

each participant. The observations provided further insight into each participant's actions

during class.

Identities of the Participants: Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark

Before presenting the cross-case analysis, it might be useful to revisit the four

participants. All four participants have very different identities, personalities, and life

experiences regarding oppression, resilience, and foreign language anxiety. There are,

however, a few things that all four participants have in common: they are students at

Cascadia State University (CSU), they major in linguistics, they have taken foreign

language classes for their degree, and they moved to Cascadia from various places in the

United States.

Throughout the study, I have discussed the participants (Chelsea, Adam, Kara,

and Mark) at various lengths. Chapters 5 and 6 described the cases of Chelsea and Adam.

Chelsea is a femme cis-female French and Russian student in her mid-20s from the West

Coast. She identifies as "non-hetero" or "the plus" in LGBTQ+, and has had experiences

dating men, women, and people who are trans. In our interviews, Chelsea described that

she passes for straight, as she believes her physical appearance does not match the

widespread stereotype of a gay female. Adam is a masculine presenting trans male

Spanish student in his late 20s from the Deep South who has high hopes of being a

Spanish professor in the future. He describes himself as queer, and has disclosed that only

about five people at CSU know about his trans identity.

I introduce the two other participants here. One of them is a feminine, bisexual,

cis-female ASL and Japanese student in her early 20s from the West Coast named Kara.

In high school, she participated in her high school's gay-straight alliance as an officer,

but she did not come out until a few years ago after she had moved to Cascadia:

> I think just [by] moving here and not with my parents who are pretty
> conservative, I was able to talk about [my sexuality] more. And my other
> roommate, she's bi. We kind of talked about it because she kind of came into the
> acceptance of her own sexuality at the same time I did, so we've had long
> discussions about it. Which is really helpful just to accept it, because I was never
> hiding it, but I never really talked or thought about it until I started talking to her
> about it. And then now it's kind of like "cool" I feel a lot more accepted in
> Cascadia. (Interview 2)

At the time of the study, Kara was dating a man she met in her hometown soon

after she graduated high school. Both of them moved to Cascadia together to attend CSU.

After being in this relationship for a year, she decided to come out to her boyfriend as

bisexual, who has shown immense support of her. In our interviews, Kara has expressed

that people normally do not assume she is bi due to her appearance and because she is in

a relationship with a man.

The last participant of the present study is a gay German, French, and Japanese student named Mark. Mark is a masculine presenting cis-male from the East Coast who has a deep enthusiasm for learning languages, which is why he has studied three at CSU thus far. He has aspirations to work in the video game industry upon graduating from CSU. On the questionnaire, Mark identified as "purely gay." I was curious in our interview together why he identified in such a way on the questionnaire:

> J: "Purely gay?" Could you explain more about why you say "purely gay?"
>
> M: Because I don't call myself queer. I just call myself gay.
>
> J: What's the distinction for you?
>
> M: Because queer for me was an offensive term used on the East Coast. So, I never understood that term. And so, I remember coming here my freshman year at orientation and people used that word a whole bunch, and I was like "what's going on?" I was like for me it was like saying "Oh yeah, we're the Faggot Resource Center." It really threw me off. (Interview 1)

Because of past experiences, the term "queer" has negative connotations to Mark and he therefore wanted to distance himself from it by immediately coming out to me as "purely gay."

Anxiety Levels of Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark

As discussed throughout the present study, I administered the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark before the second interview. The results of each participant's FLCAS were already described in more detail in Chapter 4, but here is a quick summary of their results.

Table 7.1

Summary of FLCAS Scores of All Main Participants

Participant	FLCAS Score (Out of 5)	Overall Anxiety Level
Adam	1.7	Not very anxious
Chelsea	2.27	Not very anxious
Kara	2.92	Slightly anxious
Mark	3.27	Slightly anxious

Each participant's overall anxiety level was determined by Horwitz's (2013) classifications of how to score the FLCAS. All of the participants either did not experience much anxiety or were only slightly anxious. No participant experienced moderate or severe foreign language anxiety.

Cross-case Analysis

As mentioned earlier, each case is unique. All participants have different experiences with learning foreign languages, and each participant approached these experiences with varying attitudes and actions. However, several themes across cases arose throughout the data that represent the relationship between foreign language anxiety and gender and sexual identity. Table 7.2 shows a brief overview of the themes that emerged throughout the data of all four participants. The grey shading indicates that the theme was relevant in the student's case. These emergent themes, which were present in at least two cases each, will be discussed in further detail in the upcoming sections.

Table 7.2

Emergent Themes

Theme	Chelsea	Adam	Kara	Mark
Invalidated Identity				
Privileged Identities				
Context				
Trait Anxiety				

Invalidated Identity

The notion of invalidated identity was introduced in Chapter 5 in Chelsea's

portrait, but it appears as a theme for all four participants, who were affected to different

degrees in the classroom. To define invalidated identity, I pull from various sources.

Adam and Chelsea both specifically used the terms "invalidate" and "identity" to talk

about negative experiences they had with others. I asked Chelsea to describe what

invalidated identity meant to her, and she described it as "feel[ing] like I'm being like

dismissed or not believed" (Interview 4). For Chelsea, situations such as her friend telling

the bartender that Chelsea is straight is an example of this feeling of dismissal. Jackson

(2014) describes a very similar concept with regard to identity. She defines contested

identity as "facets or elements of one's identity that are not recognized or accepted by the

people one is in contact with" (p. 919). This definition, however, does not account for the

larger context that my participants have discussed, such as immigration law (Chelsea's

case) or acts to defund sexual health clinics that provide abortions (Kara's case) for

example. Therefore, I pull from both of these sources and conceptualize identity

invalidation as when one's character, personality, or an experience that has shaped them

is judged, dismissed or denied by another or in a larger context (such as politics).

Though all four participants experienced identity invalidation in some form throughout their lives and in classes, not all of them experienced foreign language anxiety as a consequence of having their sexual or gender identity invalidated (to be discussed in further detail). Three out of four of my participants have described instances that triggered foreign language anxiety or have imagined scenarios where they could experience foreign language anxiety because of having their identity invalidated. In all of their cases, invalidated identity contributed to communication apprehension in talking with classmates or participating in larger classroom discussions or interference in cognitive processing (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Tobias, 1986, as cited in Arnold, 2002). In the cases of these participants, the components of fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety were not triggered by invalidated identity.

Female Identity. Chapter 5 discussed identity invalidation in Chelsea's case at length, as it was a prevalent and noticeable theme in her data. Chelsea has had experiences being invalidated by friends, teachers, and peers in classes unrelated to foreign language. To briefly revisit an example provided in Chapter 5, her classmates were discussing how women used abortion as birth control. Chelsea felt that this experience was dismissive of women's experiences, and thus felt as though her identity as a woman was being invalidated.

Chelsea has not experienced having her gender identity invalidated in her foreign language classes, but has experienced invalidation in her personal life and in other classes. I argued in Chapter 5 that her fear of being invalidated has contributed to her hesitation to discuss sensitive topics in the language class. Sensitive topics, any topic that has to do with someone's identity, create communication apprehension for Chelsea

because, as she explained, she worries she might "say the wrong thing" and upset her teachers or peers. She furthermore experiences communication apprehension because navigating sensitive topics in her second language is uncomfortable to her. It could be the case then that because she cannot represent herself as authentically in French or Russian as she could in English, she becomes apprehensive to speak if there is potential for a classroom to become homophobic, transphobic, racist, or sexist due to the topic of discussion. This situation can be explained by Darvin and Norton (2015), who argue that a learner might not be invested in the practices of a classroom if the classroom is racist, sexist, or homophobic. Individuals with these oppressive traits might silence and ultimately threaten Chelsea. Situations where her identity feels threatened can create communication apprehension as described.

Kara was very aware of how legislation could affect her access to resources. In the third interview, she mentioned how conservative men have at least some control over Planned Parenthood, a reproductive and sexual health clinic. Planned Parenthood has received criticism from the political right for providing abortions to women who cannot afford regular clinics. Kara recognizes how such arguments against Planned Parenthood threaten her identity as a woman.

J: So you mentioned the Planned Parenthood thing. Why does that stand out?

K: Just being female. And the whole Donald Trump stuff going on. It angers me so much. And Planned Parenthood is really important to me, just because people who have less privilege than I do need it…. Like Planned Parenthood doesn't just do abortions, and my friend had to take advantage of that when she thought she had an STD. So she had to go because she couldn't' tell her family about it, and she couldn't afford it.

Sentiments like the one described above do not create foreign language anxiety for Kara alone. However, anxiety is triggered in relation to such topics depending on the identity of the person she is talking to. This theme is described in further detail in the following major section.

Erasure. Vandrick (1997) describes sexual identities as "hidden, invisible" identities (p. 153). An added layer of invisibility is present in the cases of Adam, Chelsea, and Kara. Adam, Chelsea, and Kara's identity as queer, non-hetero, and bisexual respectively is very important to them. All three have described having their identities erased because they were not gay or lesbian, the most prominent LGBTQ+ identities. These participants experienced anger or annoyance when labels could not capture the complexities of their identities. Adam discussed how frustrating it is when his queer identity is erased by others on the assumption that he only dates women. This particularly happens when people objectively see him in a relationship with a woman without knowing more about who he is: "That's something that [my friend] and I were talking about, like bi erasure. It's like 'you didn't have me written right in the first place, and now you're rewriting me again.' Like I see a snapshot, and that's 100% of who you are" (Interview 4). As this quote illustrates, the experiences of the erasure of his queer identity is frustrating to him. Three of the participants have described themselves passing as straight, and Adam has stated that not many know of his trans identity. Thus, it is possible the context of the classroom can erase a student's identity.

In a classroom context, erasure created foreign language anxiety only for Kara. Kara had an experience in her ASL class where her bisexual identity was not acknowledged when an opportunity to talk about her identity arose. Kara's textbook

covered terms related to sexual identities, but the book only covered the terms "gay" and "lesbian." Furthermore, the class did not even cover the terms. As a result, Kara felt unrepresented:

> K: I saw that in the textbook that they described "gay" and "lesbian", but nothing else. We didn't cover it. It was just part of the extra vocabulary for describing people. It was just "gay" or "lesbian"… It was at the end of the first textbook. I wonder if there is a formal way to describe bisexuality, pansexuality, or asexuality. There are so many! I don't even think they describe straight! I think it's because of the whole-ingrained feeling maybe that you're born straight and then you turn into something else.
>
> J: How did you feel at least about having some of those sexualities described in the book?
>
> K: I thought it was nice, but then I was like "Where am I in this? Where are my friends? How do I..." I guess I could spell it out…
>
> J: How do you feel about not really having ways to describe your sexual identity?
>
> K: I was kind of... I didn't think about it until now, but I was kind of annoyed because we didn't even turn to that page ever. I only found it because I was flipping through the textbook. I was like "oh, that's how you do it," I was like "Why didn't we cover it?" But I didn't really care. And I'm not included in it anyway. (Interview 4)

Like Adam, Kara experiences the same connection between frustration, annoyance, and foreign language anxiety. Kara mentioned frustration several times throughout our interviews together, particularly in the second interview when elaborating on her answers to the FLCAS. Kara described that when she is annoyed, she becomes more distracted in class and sometimes will engage in doodling or playing games on her phone. This type of distraction prevents her from being an engaged student, and she displays avoidance behavior, a common trait of foreign language anxiety.

An Alternative View of Identity Invalidation. Mark's case presents an interesting perspective of invalidated identity. As stated earlier, Mark is a masculine presenting cis-man. He described the way he dresses as one would imagine a "skater

dude" dressing: tight, dark colored pants, loose fitting T-shirts, and beanies. However, he likes to mix in some feminine related pieces of clothing such as dangling earrings. Furthermore, though he presents as masculine in languages in which he is highly fluent or at least proficient (English, German, and French), he desires to construct his gender identity in Japanese as feminine. This thought is appealing because he enjoys the ways in which Japanese women act more than Japanese men, and views Japanese men as stoic and boring. Mark feels that Japanese women are more emotionally free and are able to express their happiness more than their male counterparts. To achieve that same level of expression, Mark prefers to use feminine pronouns and speak in a higher pitched voice in Japanese than how he normally speaks in English, German, or French.

Mark has had his gender identity invalidated in his Japanese class, in which he was enrolled for two terms prior to the start of the present study. One of his teachers, Ross-sensei, a masculine presenting teaching assistant, was leading a session in class, attempting to elicit a response from students that contains the Japanese form of the first person pronoun "I." In Japanese, there are several options for the first person pronoun: "watashi" (the formal, neutral form), "boku" (the informal, masculine form), and "atashi" (the informal, feminine form). Mark expressed disgust during Interview One at "boku," and refused to use that form in class. Therefore, "atashi" was the most comfortable pick for him. During the session, Ross-sensei called on Mark to elicit a response to a question that contained the first person pronoun. Accordingly, Mark used "atashi" in his answer. Ross-sensei was confused by Mark's response, giving him a head nod and saying "Eh?," Ross-sensei saw what was very clearly a man; however, for Mark, using "atashi" was the most natural response because of his desired gender construction. Mark's response using

"atashi" was not well received by Ross-sensei, who immediately responded by stating "Ugh, chotto chigaimasu [you are a bit incorrect]." Before Mark had a chance to respond, Ross-sensei moved onto another student to answer the question. As a result of Ross-sensei's perceiving Mark's response as incorrect, Mark received a lower score in his participation grade for class that day.

Clearly, Ross-sensei's actions dismissed Mark's identity based on an assumption that Mark was using the so-called incorrect pronoun. Since that day, Mark has switched to using the formal first person pronoun "watashi" to talk about himself. Mark never spoke to Ross-sensei about his wish to be addressed with feminine pronouns in Japanese. He felt that if he did speak to the instructors about this matter, he would be seen as offensive. He was worried that because of his masculine features, his clothes, and he looks, Ross-sensei would question his authenticity.

Mark was disappointed by Ross-sensei's actions, but these feelings of disappointment never led to foreign language anxiety, or any kind of anxiety for that matter. An experience like this would have completely infuriated or upset Adam, Chelsea, or Kara, but Mark only experienced disappointment. This is an interesting connection when considering that Mark has expressed that his sexual identity is not salient to him. He elaborated further:

> J: How important is your sexuality to you?
>
> M: Not really. Despite me being excited about having other people [gay people around] - I see it as a trait. I feel like what makes me myself is like my passion for being a video game developer and my ability to make cool clothes from video game designs, to be able to understand languages quickly- those kinds of things. I feel like those are the things that define myself. I don't feel like my sexuality defines myself. I feel like that's limiting because I can absolutely respect and soak in all of the awesome gay specific things that are happening, [but] if I only choose

to interact with gay related things, then I feel like I can miss out on a lot more wholesome experiences in the world. It's not something I define as me.

J: Can you talk about that and then that someone might be homophobic?

M: I never interact with those people. I had to pretend to be straight around them, but so much closer is that you have the right to your own opinion. If you think that, that's fine. You have that right. But if you take any kind of actions acting upon your homophobia in any way, shape, or form, that's when I have to right to call you out and attack you for that. (Interview 4)

Mark clearly feels some connection to his sexual identity as described in his incident with Ross-sensei. However, it is possible that Mark is better at compartmentalizing when it comes to such discussion because his sexual identity is not as salient to him as Adam, Chelsea, and Kara.

To give an alternative point of view, Mark is also very capable of discussing sensitive topics without feeling the effects of having his identity invalidated. Mark removes his own feelings from conversation, which he states is something that is appealing about Germans:

I really like the fact that you can debate with Germans. You can discuss your feelings about something without getting attacked or "OH my god, why do you think that? That's so stupid. Rawr." Nobody gets angry at you if you dare say "I don't think I agree with that." Nobody will flare up at you. (Interview 4)

Mark welcomes dialogue from people who are oppressive and might be homophobic, especially in Cascadia:

I don't like policing people on their own thoughts, because even those who can directly target me aren't incessantly bad unless they act on it. The only thing that is important to note is that people on the east coast are a lot more prone to acting upon their opinions than here, at least the opinions of [people in my hometown] are a lot less unifying than the opinions that are happening here. (Interview 4)

Expressing homophobic thoughts and committing acts of homophobia are two distinct thoughts for Mark. This could be because of his harsh upbringing in a small

conservative town on the East Coast. Mark is used to hearing homophobic opinions and seeing violence committed against LGBTQ+ members. Opportunities where students can disagree about sexual identities may not affect Mark the same way it does the other participants because of how he has internalized his own experiences. Nevertheless, Mark does not feel anxiety related to his experiences in class.

Identity Validation. The effects of having identity validated make students feel more welcome in classroom settings. This is particularly true with regards to sexual identity, where teachers can create supportive, inclusive classroom spaces for LGBTQ+ students (Mitchell & Krause, 2016). Teachers and peers acknowledging the existence of oppressed identities is powerful for students who have felt marginalized and oppressed by their privileged counterparts. This was certainly the case for Adam's favorite sociology instructor, who shut down a student for saying "all lives matter." As Adam described, classrooms where problematic language is not addressed create hostile and oppressive learning environments for learners who are marginalized. As mentioned in Chapter 6, one such instance was for Adam when one of his professors would not address problematic language and felt it was the student's job. Because a peer's homophobic and invalidating language remained unaddressed, Adam dreaded attending this particular class. Such dread is in accordance with research on microaggressions, defined as "the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership" (Sue, 2010, p. 3). Sue (2010) suggests that microaggressions negatively affect the mental health of oppressed individuals. If Adam's instructor had shut down such problematic dialogue like his

sociology professor, his identity would have been validated, and he would have continued to enjoy going to class. Instances of identity validation such as this one have implications for the foreign or second language classroom.

The inclusion of LBGTQ+ topics in foreign language class contribute to identity validation for LGBTQ+ students. LGBTQ+ topics were not prevalent in any participant's language class, with the exception of Chelsea's French class in high school. As described in Chapter 5, Chelsea's teacher Sabine introduced LGBTQ+ French films into her classroom, which Chelsea liked very much about her. Chelsea grew an appreciation for Sabine because she "queered" (Winans, 2006) her language classroom. The incorporation of LGBTQ+ related materials has implications for creating inclusive spaces for this demographic of students.

Privileged Identities

All four participants in the present study have described the identity of their interlocutor triggering foreign language anxiety. Out of all the components of foreign language anxiety, the participants mainly experienced communication apprehension, avoidance behavior, and a lack of willingness to communicate (Horwitz et al., 1986; McIntyre & Gardner, 1994) under this theme. Their anxiety is informed by their experiences with people of a particular identity, mostly those classified as agent identities – the dominant identities of a group (Hardiman & Jackson, 1997). In other words, the identities that created anxiety for participants of this study are characterized by privilege and power, from social categories such as gender and sexuality (i.e., male and straight) to roles such as teacher and student. For example, as explained in a later subsection, Kara experienced avoidance behavior when imagining conversations with an older, white man

in her ASL class simply because of her experiences with older, white men as being conservative. As an explanation for this anxiety, Norton (2013) argues that a language learner's anxiety is socially constructed by lived experience and is linked to power relationships. Her arguments help support the instances of foreign language anxiety that my participants have or could have experienced in the foreign language classroom.

Identity of Peers. Because of the popularity of the communicative method, foreign and second language classes often require students to interact with each other. In terms of foreign language anxiety, my participants detailed experiences where the identity of another student in the class caused them to experience communication apprehension. Detailed in Chapter 5 is an experience Chelsea described with a woman in her 50's in their French class. Because Chelsea's class was diving into topics such as immigration, Chelsea came face-to-face with her hesitation to discuss sensitive topics in her second language. Particularly, Chelsea felt inferior to the woman she was talking to because of her conflicting opinions with Chelsea's. Chelsea avoided going into further detail about the topic at hand because she perceived her partner to be conservative woman who would not be accepting of Chelsea's liberal views and sexual identity as non-hetero. It could be that if Chelsea were more familiar with this interlocutor, she would not have averted detailed, lengthy conversation about the topic of immigration, especially in the context of Donald Trump's travel ban. This finding is particularly interesting when considering that Chelsea prefers working with people in her own sexual communities.

Because Adam's anxiety comes from a place of frustration, as detailed in Chapter 6, Adam brings a different experience to this finding. Adam did not necessarily

experience communication apprehension because of Wendell, a peer in his class, but Wendell was especially frustrating to Adam. He described Wendell as a straight man who is "tall, blonde, white, [and] gross" (Interview 2), and Wendell made comments that were degrading in class, such as his "Jewish with money" remark. Adam finds ignorant comments that are disrespectful to a person's identity particularly frustrating, which drains his cognitive resources to be able to pay attention in class. It is interesting that Adam pointed out the pieces of Wendell's identity that are classified as agent identities (Hardiman & Jackson, 1997), in other words, the pieces of identity that make him a member of the dominant group in terms of race, gender, and sexuality.

Past experiences with individuals with specific pieces of identity shaped the anxiety that arose within participants, and the thought of speaking with people who have these pieces of identity triggered avoidance behavior in Kara. In discussing her views on Planned Parenthood, Kara expressed having "negative idea[s] of old white men" (Interview 3) because of her perception that they represent conservative values. She elaborated on her feelings further:

> My idea is of white men controlling things like Planned Parenthood and other people's rights [that] they have no need to meddle in….And a lot of conservative old white men meddle with it, taking the way the resources that people need for the things that they think are right, but they just make it worse. (Interview 3)
> Due to this perception, she stereotyped a white man in his 60s in her ASL class.

As of Interview 3, Kara had not worked with him, but during Interview 4, she described working with him pleasantly, stating that he was really sweet and funny. I was interested in knowing more about what the conversation would have been like if he was exactly how she assumed:

I probably would not have enjoyed that conversation. And I would have been grumpy for most of that class. I would have been upset. I get passionate about things. I'm not afraid to tell people when I think they're wrong. And I used to be so passive, but now I'm like fuck you. (Interview 4)

With those feelings in mind, I wondered what being upset would do to her in a classroom setting, such as the one in her ASL class.

Well I'd probably become more closed off because if someone says something like that, I'll probably think on it for a long time and go back into my mind forever and ever. And so I close myself off and I doodle it out on a notepad, but if I think of a good comeback in the moment, I'll probably say something or say it's not worth it. But it changes my mood for part of the day. And sometimes if I get really annoyed, I'll try to remove myself from the situation. I'll go outside or get up and move seats. (Interview 4)

As described earlier, Kara experienced the same cognitive drain that Adam does when she is frustrated. She experiences distraction, negative self-talk, and avoidance behavior, which may disrupt her learning because she feels the need to remove herself completely from the room in order to recover. Therefore, in order to prevent a possible confrontation, Kara avoids older straight, white men as a strategy to save herself from experiencing anxiety.

Mark has had many experiences on the East Coast with people who were considered to be white supremacists. His perception of white supremacists is that they are also homophobic. Due to his frequent encounters with these people in his school setting, he was apprehensive talking to a classmate in his German class named Richard because he was worried that Richard would criticize and reject his gay identity. Due to the purge of gay men in Chechnya, Mark was particularly weary of Richard because he knew he had studied in Russia for some amount of time. He explains:

There's something about him. I don't trust Russians right now. Considering the way they're treating gays in Chechnya... The fact that he studied abroad in Russia for a year, I'm like... That's probably great, but that still scares the crap out of me... It's hard because I come from a place where I have to always be on guard who I can interact with and who I can't. (Interview 2)

Mark's skepticism was characterized by the thought that Russians are not very kind to the LGBTQ+ community, and Richard willingly chose to study abroad there.

Mark feels that he has to protect himself when being around people in class, and does not trust people easily: "Because I could be sitting in a classroom, [and] I could be sitting next to a guy who's probably cool with homosexuals, but other times he could be very violently, aggressively against it. So I don't know who to trust" (Interview 3). Mark's relationship with Richard is significant because Richard's experiences studying Russian caused Mark to ascribe a homophobic identity to Richard, similar to how Kara ascribed a conservative identity to the 60-year-old man in her class. Mark and Kara were initially unwilling to communicate (McIntyre & Gardner, 1994) and apprehensive to talk with these students because of their perceptions of people with identities that have been traditionally aligned with homophobia.

The Teacher. This section addresses two different aspects related to the teacher that were brought up throughout the interviews of the participants. First was the identity of the teacher. There is a big imbalance of power in teacher-student relationships. All four participants were enrolled in classes with teachers who they liked, respected, or admired. They felt remarkably comfortable around these teachers. Thus far, I have introduced Anna and Camille, Chelsea and Adam's teachers respectively. Anna was a sweet woman who wore a smile when teaching her classes and made Chelsea feel welcome in her classes. Camille was a woman Adam respected greatly who helped him

get his job at the tutoring center in Cascadia. Mark adores his teacher Lina, a German

professor from whom he has taken classes since his first term at CSU. He believes that

Lina is a fun teacher who is incredibly supportive of his pursuit of becoming completely

fluent in German. Kara has less than enthusiastic opinions about her teacher, Suzanne;

however, she generally likes her as a person and enjoys her class because it is more

relaxed. The support and care these teachers have for my participants has allowed them to

feel less anxious than they would with others. In several cases, the identity of the teacher

was brought up in interviews.

Let's revisit Chelsea's teachers. In the interviews, Chelsea has predominantly

named female teachers as the ones with whom she has had good experiences.

Furthermore, she stated that she prefers taking classes with women and gay men:

J: Do you prefer to take classes taught by women?

C: Yes.

J: Could you tell me more about that?

C: I'm generally more comfortable with women. I'm more comfortable
approaching women. I guess if unforeseen circumstances come up or something,
I'm more comfortable going to a female professor and saying "Hey this
happened." And I don't know why. I guess it's just... I've always been more
comfortable.

J: What about teachers who are gay in some sort of way?

C: Yeah, I think I've been lucky [here]... [With one exception], all of my
professors have been women and one gay man. (Interview 4)

As stated previously, Chelsea prefers working and conversing with people who

share her gender and sexual identity. Because Chelsea has stated before that she always

feels a little bit of anxiety around men, this in turn means that she would not feel as

anxious in her classes taught by women. Such insight has implications for how the

identity of teachers is important for Chelsea to feel safe in her classes.

Kara had an incredibly negative experience in her Japanese class with the leading

professor of the course. This professor's presence was so significant to Kara that it

caused her immense anxiety, and eventually was what forced her to drop out of her

Japanese class:

> [My relationship with her] made me drop out of Japanese. [laughs] It just kind of
> made me bitter with going into class because it was every day for an hour, and I
> just hated it. I suffer with anxiety and [post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)] and
> all that fun stuff, and that kind of caused [it] a lot - especially when she was in the
> classroom…. It felt like she was judging me from what I know right now.
> Yesterday could have been a good day for me, I could have been able to speak
> excellently, and today might be a bad day, and I might not do as well or raise my
> hand as often and she'll think that I'm a slacker. And that really affected me. I
> wanted to show her I can do it, but I also just didn't care what she thought. It's
> kind of sad. (Interview 1)

Kara's experience with anxiety aligns with Norton's (2013) notion that identity is

in flux and is fluid. This teacher had such a presence that stood out to Kara and caused

her to experience anxiety, illustrating Norton's notion that being anxious is not a

stagnant, fixed trait of a student. During the times when this teacher was not in class and

Kara was not feeling the effects of her social anxiety (to be discussed), Kara was not

nearly as anxious of a student. This was particularly aligned with components of fear of

negative evaluation and test anxiety:

> I think it was because she was so judgmental based on that little bit that she would
> see.... Because she'd only be there a couple of times a term and she's judging us
> on that point in time and what we're learning, and she would sometimes be there
> for our finals which was even more stressful because I think my first final in that
> class, that was the first time I met her. And she was judging me based on that
> final, so I was nervous, scared. (Interview 1)

In his Japanese class, Mark did not wish talk to Ross-sensei, a teaching assistant, about his gender identity. Externally and subjectively, Mark feels that he appears very masculine. He did not want to inform Ross-sensei about his second language gender identity, or L2 self (Dörnyei, 2005), because he was worried about seeming offensive:

> I'm very clearly a man with chest hair and a beard. And if I were to be like "I demand to use feminine pronouns" I think they would look at me and be like "What? Are you trying to screw with us?" I feel like I would come across as offensive to them. So I chose not to and I didn't bother. Just let it pass, but I know if I wanted to in real life, I could use [feminine pronouns] and people will assume that I'm super gay. (Interview 3)

Mark did not feel comfortable coming out to his teacher. This could be particularly telling of a power imbalance because Mark feels comfortable using Japanese feminine pronouns in his everyday life; his hesitation is related specifically to his teachers in his Japanese class. In other words, Mark uses these pronouns with those outside of the inherent power imbalance between the teacher and the student. Alternatively, Mark could have simply been passive about the experience with his teacher because he could use them in other settings and adjust for a classroom context.

The second aspect of this subtheme that was brought up in interviews was the role of the teacher. This subtheme was particularly relevant in Adam's case. Adam feels it is the responsibility of the teacher to mitigate and regulate conversations in class effectively. In his Spanish class, Adam felt frustration because Wendell frequently talked out of turn and went on tangents. As stated in Chapter 6, Adam feels that as a student, he cannot simply ask a student to be more respectful of everyone's time in class. As much as he adores Camille, Adam wishes she would have halted Wendell's comments, even during the first observation:

> I think she could be better at shutting down the tangents. It's something that a lot of folks and I have discussed outside of class. We don't get 100% of what she has planned for us. She's told me on more than one occasion, "I had another activity, but we ran out of time." She told me that two times this term. She will tell me "remind me when I have two minutes left." She tells me to keep her on schedule…. She does want to engage with everybody and answer all their questions. Some questions should not be answered during class. (Interview 3)

This responsibility that he places on the teacher is noticeable when discussing topics related to social aspects. In Chapter 6, a quote from Adam states his belief that it is not the job of the student to call out someone's problematic language: "What if we've had fucking trauma in our life and we don't want to directly call out somebody who's saying fucked up shit in the back of the room when it's your [the teacher's] job to do it?" (Interview 4). To this end, Adam entrusts the teacher to use their power to prevent a hostile learning environment from occurring. In Kara's case, she felt that teachers did not care about her well-being. This brought about more anxiety as indicated by her statement about feeling on edge. The invalidation led to further negative, anxiety-inducing feelings about the course. However, Kara did describe having positive experiences with one of her instructors, her Wednesday teacher:

> I had a lot of positive experiences with this one instructor….Wednesdays we had her…. And she was so nice and…kept everything relevant and overall had a vibe with the class that was lighthearted and just calm, and not super stressful, especially for myself. So just having her around was really a positive experience with the Japanese department because [for] a lot of other ones if you did it wrong, [they would say] "nope, you're done for the day." But she would encourage you to keep trying…help correct you, and wouldn't stop until you got it right…. And it made everybody in the class just calm down that day, which was nice because everybody was stressed out all the time. [laughs] (Interview 1)

For Kara, this instructor brought a sense of comfort, which was important to her at the time because she was also struggling with anxiety. This is especially significant because she made a point to come to class on the days she was teaching, stating, "She was

probably the only reason I came to class, at least on Wednesdays. If I wanted to skip a class, it wouldn't be Wednesdays because I knew she would be there" (Interview 3). Kara felt comfort because she felt as if the teacher really cared about her success, which in turn calmed her anxiety in class.

Context

As detailed in Chapter 2, foreign language anxiety is situation-specific (Horwitz et al., 1986). Research typically describes the context referred to in foreign language anxiety as the foreign language classroom. However, the present study, specifically the experiences of Chelsea, Kara, and Mark, illustrates that foreign language anxiety is embedded in a larger context. This larger context encompassed variables that entailed the political climate during the time of the study as well as the ways in which instructors taught the class.

Political climate. Chapter 4 describes the political attitudes of students at Cascadia State University (CSU) as liberal. Political climate was really important in Chelsea and Mark's cases. Their cases give insight into how identities can change over space and time as political events heightened their anxiety.

For example, in Chelsea's case, the topic of immigration within itself is not controversial, but could easily become controversial depending on how it is discussed. As detailed in Chapter 5, she is very much against neo-Nazi culture. If Donald Trump had not enacted a travel ban that the liberal CSU population might find senseless, would the atmosphere of Chelsea's French class have been less intense? Would it have been a less anxiety-provoking space if there was not a woman in the class who had differing opinions from Chelsea?

In Mark's case, he was particularly disturbed by Chechnya's gay purge. Mark previously had issues with white supremacists in his hometown, particularly concerned about whether or not they would act on homophobic notions in violence or bullying. The purging events in Chechnya were a talking point during our interviews, which Mark connected to the identity of Richard. Because Richard studied and spoke Russian, Mark worried if Richard was homophobic. He was worried that if Richard were homophobic, would he act on his homophobia? To this end, I wonder if Mark would have been as anxious to converse in class with Richard if the purge in Chechnya had not been taking place at the time of the course.

Japanese class. In Kara and Mark's cases, it was particularly interesting that both of them completely despised Japanese class. During the second interview, when being questioned about their answers to the FLCAS, they described some of their answers with the words "it depends" and went on to describe how they agreed to the answers that indicated anxiety when they were taking the Japanese course and not the ASL and German course in which they were enrolled at the time of data collection. Their behaviors related to the instructors and the ways in which the instructors taught the class.

The Japanese class at CSU has a total class time of five hours a week. Students enrolled in the course receive daily participation grades, which are assessed through random questioning by the instructor. Multiple teaching assistants (TAs) and professors teach the course, each one teaching at least an hour a week.

Mark and Kara disliked the very nature of the course. They explained that in both of their classes, students generally struggled with the way the course was structured, with Kara even stating that "people without anxiety were anxious" (Interview 4). Both took

issue with the ways in which the program was structured and the ways in which the

instructors taught. Kara explained her opinions of the course in detail:

> With the Japanese department, I found it to be very behavioralist in that, they had you memorize things, and then just repeat it back. I never knew what I was saying, which was really frustrating for me, which is part of why I dropped it. Just because I didn't feel like I was getting much out of it… (Interview 1)

Mark also stated that students are not allowed to ask questions during the class, and

students were asked to hold questions until the end. He additionally felt as if there were a

disconnect between how the professors wanted the teaching assistants to teach the course

and what the teaching assistants thought was best, and in turn it created learning gaps

within the course.

> The leader of the [first year course] was… really proud of this program… I noticed that the Japanese professors seem to really stick with the platform for the most part. It was the TAs that really struggled with it the most because they didn't know how to bridge the gap between what was being told to them and how to teach in the way the head professor wanted… They were like the rule is you have one class, one hour of English, horribly taught Japanese and the only way you can understand is if you studied linguistics in the 1980's. I study linguistics NOW, so that helped me a lot and I helped a lot of my classmates learn the terms… You can bridge these fancy vocabulary terms and you can use them as a way to help bridge the gap for this language instead of trying to separate it and use the vocabulary that everyone is looking blank-eyed at. That drove me insane. And also, how nitpicky they were to the point of like forgetting a particle and our scripts that we had to memorize and then repeat in class. And I forgot to say "blah" or use "ga" instead of "wa", and then you'll get in trouble if you forget that. And I think in the end, the professors just gave up because nobody could remember that well in detail. (Interview 1)

The intrinsic design of the course, characterized by behaviorist theories of second

language acquisition and multiple teachers with apparent conflicting opinions,

contributed to Mark and Kara's heightened anxieties. The course lost value for Mark and

Kara, as Kara stated she was not getting much out of the course and Mark saying that it

was horribly taught Japanese.

Trait Anxiety

Despite arguments that foreign language anxiety is situation-specific (Horwitz et al., 1986) and not an inherent trait of the learner (Norton, 2013), the literature has not accounted for a learner's general experience with anxiety. Research in foreign language anxiety has taken different perspectives historically, such as trait and state anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Trait anxiety is defined by Spielberger as an individual's likelihood to be anxious in any given situation, whereas state anxiety is defined as anxiety which happens at a specific moment in time (1983, as cited in MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Both Chelsea and Kara have indicated that they have some form of medically diagnosed anxiety, in other words trait anxiety. Anxiety as part of one's identity has implications for the foreign language classroom, as indicated by data from Chelsea and Kara.

Kara has indicated that she suffers from medically diagnosed anxiety and PTSD. At the time of data collection, she was medicated for the anxiety from which she suffers. During her time in her Japanese class, she was not medicated. She believes that being medicated allows her to be calmer in her ASL class, but she still believes that context created a layer of anxiety for her. She felt vulnerable because of the random nature of being called on and the ways in which she was being assessed by instructors. This caused her to skip a lot of classes, which is typical of students with anxiety (Horwitz et al, 1986). The following quote illustrates how her anxiety in the class was affected by the nature of the course.

K: In my ASL class, I don't [feel as nervous] because it [is] mostly volunteer based. And I have a lot more confidence in it because I started medication for anxiety.

J: So did these problems start to emerge when you were taking Japanese class or did you have them before?

K: I had them a little bit before, but it wasn't as intense. I think Japanese just highlighted it because there was a lot resting on my ability in that class, because it was a 50 minute class every day. And if you didn't get it right, you lost your points and you would get called on every so often because there was 30 people in the class. So, I wanted to keep my grade up but I just didn't care at some point because I was like, if they don't care why should I care?

J: Care about what though?

K: Just learning the language. I feel so bad saying that.

J: What did they not care about then? Teaching it?

K: Just kind of like students' wellbeing. Because I had a couple of friends in that class who would feel the same way… But we all kind of had this feeling on edge. And all class, your heart is just beating so fast and… It was very stressful. (Interview 1)

This quote illustrates several important factors in Kara's overall anxiety. First, Kara's social anxiety and PTSD are still a present feature in who she is. During the third interview, when asking her to describe the class for the first observation, she stated "I had a rough night the night before. I hardly got any sleep. I had PTSD, and I was dissociating a lot. It was a bad day." As she illustrates, Kara acknowledged that Japanese class "highlighted" her social anxiety, adding a layer of anxiety to the anxiety she already had, particularly in the area of fear of negative evaluation.

Second, as stated in a previous section, Kara's anxiety was amplified because she thought her teachers did not care about her well-being. Her Wednesday Japanese teacher, however, was able to calm the anxiety she felt about class because of the ways in which

she taught the course. Kara felt that her success in the course mattered to the teacher. Kara stated that her trait anxiety was lowered due to this teacher.

Chapter 5 includes a thorough description of Chelsea's social anxiety, which is further described by her as diagnosed internalized anxiety and clinical depression. Similar to Kara, her social anxiety had improved significantly by the time of the present study. Furthermore, she feels that situations that arise in a foreign language class adds to the socially anxious space: "I have a lot of anxiety in general thanks to brain chemistry. [laughs] I guess when you add learning a foreign language to that process it kind of compounds. You know, I struggled with social anxiety for a long, long time" (Interview 3). Such information is significant because it illustrates that social anxiety can in fact be a part of a language learner's identity, and social context can further exacerbate anxiety on the part of the language learner. In other words, both Kara and Chelsea's cases indicate that trait anxiety can exist in a learner, but situation specific contexts still can add a layer of anxiety onto the learner.

Conclusion

This cross-case explored the four most common themes that emerged in this study: invalidated identity, privileged identities, context, and trait anxiety. My participants' voices supported most of the claims made in this analysis. This chapter attempted to show how identity and social context play a role in foreign language anxiety, a component that is largely missing from the literature. The following chapter concludes this study and directly answers the research questions.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

This study attempted to gather insight into the relationship between foreign language anxiety and sexual and gender identity. To examine this relationship, I interviewed, surveyed, and observed four LGBTQ+ individuals about their lived experiences as an LGBTQ+ and as a foreign language student. In this chapter, I return to the research questions that propelled the present study. After connecting the study's findings to it, I discuss their pedagogical implications, the limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

LGBTQ+ Students' Lived Experiences with Foreign Language Anxiety

What are LGBTQ+ students' lived experiences with foreign language anxiety in the foreign language classroom?

Lived experiences of LGBTQ+ students are numerous, but the present study aimed to explore four students' lived experiences with foreign language anxiety. Each case was complex and unique. They varied in anxiety levels, beliefs and attitudes towards learning languages, and sexual and gender identities. However different these students are from each other, they shared common themes when it comes to the relationship between foreign language anxiety, sexuality, and gender. These themes, discussed in detail in Chapter 7, related to invalidated identity, privileged identities, context, and trait anxiety.

Before returning to the research questions it is important to examine the frameworks that were used in the analysis of this study: foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986) and investment (Norton 2000, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995). As

stated in Chapter 2, foreign language anxiety is characterized by three components: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. However, my participants did not experience all components. Certainly, each participant experienced the three main components of foreign language anxiety in their own right. Chelsea, for example, as discussed in Chapter 5, experienced quite a bit of test anxiety, but test anxiety was not related to the common themes among the participants of the study.

Anxiety manifested in a multitude of ways. Communication apprehension was the most common component of foreign language anxiety that arose among the participants with relation to the themes present in Chapter 7. Furthermore, certain participants experienced avoidance behavior (Horwitz et al., 1986), unwillingness to communicate (McIntyre & Gardner, 1994), and cognitive interference (Tobias, 1986). Test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation were experienced in individual participants, such as Chelsea and Adam, but they were not components in the cross-case analysis.

Bonny Norton's framework of investment lends itself to explaining foreign language anxiety that arises in the classroom. Norton (2013) described how language learners are constantly reorganizing their sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world, and that anxiety can be caused by socially constructed, inequitable relations of power. This notion undoubtedly came into play for participants in this study, as dominant group with agent identities caused anxiety in participants, reflecting just how socially constructed language anxiety can be. For example, Kara experienced anxiety because of the older, white man in her ASL class whom she perceived to be conservative and to believe that Planned Parenthood should be defunded. In Adam's case, Wendell caused Adam a great deal of frustration due to the problematic language he used,

frustration that caused a possible interference in his cognitive processing. Chelsea's relationship with the older woman in her French class caused her to experience a lack of willingness to communicate because of her contrasting, conservative views.

Norton (2013) challenges the notion that learners' identities are unitary, fixed, and coherent and that factors such as motivation and anxiety are not stagnant. My data supports Norton's suggestion that learners have unfixed and contradictory identities in the classroom. Even less anxious students like Chelsea and Adam experience foreign language anxiety depending on individuals in class, classroom tasks, and contexts. Furthermore, the fact that Chelsea and Kara have both been diagnosed with anxiety issues and Kara with PTSD has further implications for the notion that identities are not unitary and fixed. For example, as Kara stated in Chapter 7, on certain days she can be anxiety free and able to converse in her L2 just fine, but on others she can be experiencing the effects of her anxiety and not raise her hand as often. She worried that due to these experiences, her Japanese professor would see her as a slacker, and therefore not a good student.

In certain cases, foreign language anxiety was connected to teachers. This finding was twofold. First, the identity of the teacher was important in the cases of Chelsea, Kara, and Mark, as some participants indicated anxiety triggered by certain teachers. Chelsea, for example, explained that she is more comfortable around women and usually experiences a little anxiety around men. Kara's anxiety was heightened by the leading professor in her Japanese course, and as such, decided to drop out of the class. Mark did not want to convey his L2 Japanese gender identity to Ross-sensei because he felt it would be offensive to do so. Second, the role of the instructor was important to

participants. This was particularly relevant in Adam's case, who did not experience anxiety because of an L2 instructor, but felt it was the teacher's duty to control the classroom to prevent hostile learning environments from occurring.

Peers were also connected to the anxiety that my participants experienced. Chelsea experienced communication apprehension in her French class during a conversation about immigration with a woman who had opposing views from hers. In Adam's case, Wendell, a student who spoke out of turn, went on tangents, and stuck to problematic beliefs, frustrated him and contributed to a possible hostile environment. This frustration distracted Adam and could have possibly caused cognitive interference (Tobias, 1986), which limited Adam's ability to process language. In Mark and Kara's cases, they made assumptions about students in their classes based on stereotypes and engaged in avoidance behavior, a common effect of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al. 1986).

The types of tasks that certain participants were required to engage in also caused foreign language anxiety. Chelsea, for example, had a difficult time engaging in a discussion with peers about the sensitive topic of immigration because it was uncomfortable for her to communicate her views authentically in her second language. Additionally, Chelsea and Adam were prone to anxiety when they felt like they were put on the spot to answer questions for which they were not prepared. In their cases, anxiety arose when speaking publicly in class, either debriefing worksheets that were assigned or during a presentation.

Finally, each student was motivated to learn languages, but certain situations hindered their ability to overcome anxiety. For Kara and Mark, political events tied to

their identities as LGBTQ+ and liberal created communication apprehension and a lack of willingness to communicate. Furthermore, the Japanese class at CSU created a large amount of anxiety for Kara and Mark because of the teachers' methods of instruction, which are seen as behaviorist methods by Kara. These findings show just how situation specific foreign language is.

Every student in this study has had their identity invalidated at some point in their lives, but not always specifically in their L2 classes. The extent to which this invalidation caused anxiety was different for every participant, if they had experienced anxiety at all. In classroom contexts, Chelsea's experience with being invalidated related to past trauma, being perceived as straight, and her identity as a woman. Her experience with invalidation created hesitance to discuss sensitive topics specifically in her second language because they are harder for her to navigate. Kara felt her identity as bisexual was erased from materials used in class, which in turn frustrated her and she engaged in avoidance behavior; however, evidence for this finding was weak. Adam never explicitly mentioned experiences when his identity as queer or trans was invalidated in foreign language class; however, he has described that unaddressed oppression and homophobia make for hostile learning environments that make him not want to attend class. Mark, on the other hand, did not experience anxiety because of the invalidation he experienced.

Furthermore, something important from the theme of invalidated identity is that participants of this study also had their identities validated in numerous ways. The inclusion of LBGTQ+ media in Chelsea's class was significant to her, as it acknowledged her existence. Additionally, Adam's intelligence was frequently validated by Camille.

The findings of this study give further insight not only into the ways in which lived experience and identity shape anxiety, but also the diverse ideologies of LGBTQ+ students. The lived experiences of all participants shaped students' anxiety levels because of potential situations that could have happened, but the extent to which they experienced (or did not experience) anxiety differed. Furthermore, LGBTQ+ students in this study had a specific set of lived experiences that set them apart from their counterparts.

Gender Identity in Foreign Language Anxiety

How do learners with different gender identities experience foreign language anxiety?

Three gender identities were represented in this data: cis-female, cis-male, and trans male. Two participants, Chelsea and Kara, represented the cis-female demographic. Discussed in Chapter 4, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) for CSU was distributed with the intention of obtaining a sense of what the atmosphere of anxiety was at CSU. When looking at the average scores, we know that individuals with non-binary identities (FLCAS = 3.09) averaged higher than their LGBTQ+ male (FLCAS = 2.59) and female (FLCAS = 3.0) counterparts as well as men and women who were bisexual (FLCAS = 2.81).

Participants in this study had different experiences related to gender identity. Chelsea and Kara share the identity of cis-gender women, and both had experienced gender identity invalidation in the language classroom. Adam, a trans man, did not experience gender identity invalidation in the language classroom, but has experienced identity invalidation throughout his personal life and transition. The issue never arose for him in the classroom most likely due to the simple fact that not many people are aware of his identity as trans. Mark, with the exception of his L2 feminine gender identity in

Japanese, never experienced identity invalidation for being a man. One interpretation of this data is the idea that Mark has more privilege in the area of gender because he is a cisgender man. The only circumstance when he experienced gender identity invalidation was when he performed femininity in his Japanese class. While all participants have had their sexual identity invalidated or threatened, Chelsea, Kara, and Adam expressed situations where they felt their gender identity was threatened regularly.

Under the lens of intersectionality (Krenshaw, 1989), the overlap of one's multiple, overlapping identities explain this phenomenon. Intersectionality, as explained by Weber (2010), provides a framework for the complex dynamics of multiple forms of inequality, in this case gender and sexuality. Weber (2010) also states that these differences in oppressive systems show power relationships of dominance and control. In other words, intersectionality explains the intersecting systems of power, oppression, and privilege between agent identities (straight, male) and target identities (LGBTQ+, not male). The lived experiences of Chelsea, Adam, Kara, and Mark informed their apprehension, cognitive interference, or avoidance to speak an L2 in certain circumstances. However, in Mark's case, it never had to do with gender. Though there was not enough data to analyze under this concept, intersectionality can still serve as a concept to help understand how people with overlapping target identities experience more opportunities for oppression than their more privileged counterparts.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings from the present study highlight specific issues related to foreign language anxiety and the identities of LGBTQ+ students. The following sections present themes that educators may consider for their foreign or second language classrooms.

Nature of Foreign Language Anxiety and Trait Anxiety. Foreign language anxiety is pervasive (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Teachers need to be aware of foreign language anxiety and its effects on students (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Even low level anxiety students such as Adam and Chelsea had specific foreign language anxiety triggers. Additionally, this study gave further insight into how contextual and situation-specific foreign language classroom anxiety is, from external factors such as the political climate to tasks such as examinations. Furthermore, teachers should acknowledge that some students have diagnosed trait anxiety, which further gives complexity to the anxiety they may experience in their language classes.

Awareness of LGBTQ+ and Gender Identities. Classrooms are a contact zone of identities. Therefore, educators need to know who their students are in order to create comfortable learning environments inclusive of all students. Research has discussed how LGBTQ+ identities need to be "demystified" in the language classroom (Vandrick, 1997). To this end, teachers need to be properly trained and educated about creating a culture of respect in the classroom. In Adam's case, for example, he expects teachers to mitigate homophobia and other types of oppression in class. Failure to do so can create a hostile learning environment for some learners. For information about how to create awareness of LGBTQ+ identities in the classroom, see Mitchell and Krause (2016) and Nelson (2009).

Validation and Affirmation. We know from Chelsea and Adam's cases that identity validation and affirmation had an impact on their foreign language anxiety levels. Furthermore, Kara's experience with her Wednesday Japanese teacher helped her feel more at ease because she felt her teachers valued her as a student. They felt calmer in

their classes because of this validation and affirmation. Thus, Chelsea's case illustrates that it is important for teachers to integrate LGBTQ+ topics into their classes. Furthermore, Adam and Kara's cases show us the value of teachers giving words of encouragement to their students to help inhibit feelings of anxiety and prevent negative self-talk.

Limitations

Although this study provided useful insights into the relationship between foreign language anxiety, gender identity, and sexual identity, it did not come without methodological limitations. Because this is a qualitative study, the findings cannot be generalized to other contexts. This is applicable to the four main participants of the study as well as the FLCAS for CSU. Furthermore, with regard to the FLCAS for CSU, statistics were not used to identify correlations or generalizability because that was not within the scope of this study.

Additionally, this study took place over one term during the 2016-2017 academic school year, which is a fairly short amount of time. If more time were allowed, more information could have been pulled from each participant to increase the validity of the arguments made in this study. However, time did not allow for a longer study to take place.

By incorporating multiple data collection instruments, I attempted to triangulate my findings. However, the main themes in Chapter 7, the cross-case analysis, mostly arose from interview data. It would have been better to observe more classrooms in the hope that more information about their identity and its connection to foreign language anxiety could be observed.

Finally, the observations proved to be a slight issue. Because of the duration of the study and time restrictions, each participant could only be observed twice. Timing for each observation was essential because of the nature of the interviews. Because classes can be unpredictable, circumstances sometimes prevented a full observation to take place. For example, in Observation Two for Chelsea, Adam, and Mark, I had to leave the class early because of a test or examination because the observation was close to the end of the term. Furthermore, in Observation One in Mark's case, the class ended early due to a fire alarm. Nonetheless, the observations proved to help justify the anxiety levels of each participant.

Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of this study show the need for lived experience to be a part of foreign language anxiety research. As Norton (2013) states, SLA research needs to account for the social and cultural identities of language learners. Gender and sexual identity are not uniform; they are social constructs. The experiences of students are diverse, and as illustrated in this study, they can help inform specific ideologies and attitudes. Norton's research can help inform foreign language anxiety researchers understand how social context can affect anxiety.

A similar study might prove to be very interesting to see if the same themes arise or if new, interesting themes come about, especially with regard to the second research question of how different gender identities experience foreign language anxiety. As stated earlier, the identities of the participants in this study are diverse. They move through life in very different ways. For example, where Mark would entertain a conversation with someone regarding opposing views, students like Chelsea and Adam would more likely

call out someone who was oppressive. More qualitative themes regarding the relationships between foreign language anxiety, sexuality, and gender would help inform applied linguists and language educators about these phenomena.

It would be interesting to understand the experiences of foreign language students in conservative areas of the U.S. or in different political contexts internationally. This study took place at CSU, which is a very liberal campus. Though none of the participants are from Cascadia, they have expressed attitudes related to how much they like to live in Cascadia and expressed positive views about being an LGBTQ+ student at CSU. A similar study at university in a conservative area would help us understand the diverse lived experiences of foreign and second language students.

Conclusion

To conclude, this study sheds light on how social identity, in this case sexual and gender identity, should be included in foreign language anxiety research. As each case shows, foreign language anxiety is not stagnant. Every participant, no matter their FLCAS score, described at least one experience related to their identity that caused them to feel the effects of foreign language anxiety. More research in TESOL and language pedagogy needs to be directed at understanding the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ students. LGBTQ+ students exist; they need to have their voices be heard in applied linguistics, and more so in classroom contexts. Studies such as this one can help teachers be more empathetic towards their students and why they might experience anxiety as a result of a student, a task, or even the teacher. Every student comes to class with a complex identity, a diverse background, and a lifetime of lived experiences. In

understanding students who have been largely marginalized, we move towards inclusive

pedagogy and classroom environments where all students can thrive.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent

Dear prospective participant,

  My name is James Mitchell, and I am a graduate student in Portland State University's Department of Applied Linguistics. I would like to invite you to be a participant in a research study for my MA thesis, which seeks to examine LGBTQ+ students and emotion in foreign language classrooms. This project is being supervised by Dr. Nike Arnold, Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics.

Why have I been asked to participate in this study?

If you receive this, I am assuming that you:

- Identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer, or any classifier outside of heterosexual.

- Are taking a foreign language class in spring term of 2017.

What will I have to do?

If you decide to participate in this project, I will ask that you, over the duration of [term of study]:

- Fill out a general demographic questionnaire.

- Participate in at least four 1-1.5 hour long, one-on-one, face-to-face interviews, which will take place in a private study room in the CSU Library. These interviews will be recorded and transcribed.

- Complete a 33-question Likert-scale survey. I will ask you to complete this during our first interview.

- Give me permission to observe two of the classes that you take.

Are there any risks?

If you participate in this study, there is a small risk that someone will learn your name. I will make sure that I do everything possible to protect your name and identity, which will be discussed below. There is also a risk that you will feel uncomfortable answer questions related to your lived experience as an LGBTQ+ student in foreign language classes. You have permission to decline to answer questions. If in the event need to seek counseling because of questions in the study, I will refer you to Student Health and Counseling Services at CSU.

What are you doing to protect me?

Your privacy is very important to me. I will set up several safeguards to ensure that your safety is protected.

In the dissemination of this study, everyone mentioned, including yourself, will receive a pseudonym. Furthermore, the university itself will be given a pseudonym and will simply be described as a school on the west coast. The classes that you have and are currently taken will only be described in general terms, for example "beginning-level Spanish class" for Spanish 101 or "advanced-level Japanese class" for Japanese 401.

I will not tell anyone if you participate in this study or not. I will be the only one who knows your identity. When I ask permission from the instructor of your class to observe, I will not say I am observing you. I will only tell them that a participant of mine is in their class. The instructor of the class will not know that LGBTQ+ learners are part of my study.

Your answers will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. This means that the names of the people who participate in the study will not be given to anyone else.

Additionally, pseudonyms will be used. Your real name will not be disclosed.

The transcripts of your interviews, research notes, observation notes, and answers to your survey and questionnaire will only be shared with my committee, but they will not include your true identity. You will have access to all of these documents as well. All files will be electronic.

These electronic files will be kept on the PSU H drive and my computer, which are password protected. Once your interview has been transcribed (within a week of the interview), the recording will be deleted. All notes taken and answers from your questionnaires and surveys will be typed up, and then promptly destroyed. The electronic files will only contain your pseudonym, and any names that you bring up will be replaced with pseudonyms as well. The final write up of this thesis will use the pseudonym you will pick for yourself.

What will I gain by participate in this study?

I will gift you four $5 gift cards from Starbucks or another coffee place of your choice over the course of the study. You will receive the gift card at the end of each interview.

Furthermore, if you participate, you may be helping me learn about lived experiences of LGBTQ+ students in academic literature regarding language learning and identity.

What happens if I decide not to participate in this study?

You do not have to participate in this study. Your participation is voluntary.

You can change your mind and stop at any time, even if you first said yes.

If you decide to not participate or decide you do not want to continue the study any longer, it will not affect your relationship with the Department of Applied Linguistics at PSU, Department of World Languages at CSU, the instructor of your class, Dr. Nike Arnold, or me.

Any Questions?

If you have any questions about this study, this form or the project you can:

- Talk to the researcher (James Mitchell, (985)285-6781, jmit2@pdx.edu)

- Talk to the faculty advisor (Nike Arnold, (503)725-8258, marnold@pdx.edu)

- Contact the Human Subjects Committee of Portland State University about your rights as a research participant. They can be contacted at:

  - PSU Institutional Review Board
    Office of Research Integrity
    1600 SW 4th Ave., Market Center Building, Ste. 620
    Portland, OR 97201
    (503) 725-2227 or 1 (877) 480-4400
    Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

The Portland State University Institutional Review Board has reviewed this project. If you have any concerns about your rights in this study, please contact the PSU Office of Research Integrity at (503) 725-2227 or email hsrrc@pdx.edu.

If I sign, what does it mean?

This is a consent form. Your signature below means that:

- You have read and understood what this form says. You are willing to take part in the study through interviews, observations, diaries, and questionnaire and survey.

- You know that you do not have to take part in this study. And even if you agree, you can change your mind and stop at any time.

- You will get a copy of this form to keep for yourself.

_____

Participant signature and date

_____

Participant name, printed

Appendix B: Demographic Questionnaire

Part 1: General Information

Highest level of education:

Age Group: 18-24   25-34   35-44   45-54   55-64

Nationality:

Race/ethnicity:

Where did you grow up:

Part 2: Gender and Sexual Identity

1. How do you define and describe your gender identity?

2. How do you define and describe your sexual identity?

3. Can you describe more about your gender expression?

Part 3: Education

What language(s) have you studied and where?

How long have you attended this university?

Did transfer from another university? If so, which one?

What languages courses have you taken and when?

Have you studied abroad? If so, what university? What courses did you take?

Appendix C: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz et al., 1986)

(All participants were asked to rate each of the prompts as either strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree)

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.

2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.

3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.

4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.

5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.

6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.

7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.

8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.

9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.

10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.

11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.

12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.

13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.

14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.

15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.

16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.

17. I often feel like not going to my language class.

18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.

19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.

20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.

21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.

22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.

23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.

24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.

25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.

26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.

27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.

28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.

30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

Appendix D: Questions for Interview One

1. What would you like to use as a pseudonym for this study?

2. Why did you choose to study at [university name]?

3. What has your overall experience been studying [language of study] at [university name]? (If applicable: how does it compare to studying language at other colleges or universities?)

4. Why have you decided to become a language major? Why are you studying [language of study]?

5. How open are you about your sexual identity with instructors or peers?

6. Can you describe your experience with talking about sexual identity in your language classes?

7. Can you address instances where instructors have given you a chance to talk about relationships, family, etc.?

Appendix E: Questions for Interview Two

Adam

1. What pronouns do you prefer?
2. What does queer mean to you? Could you define and describe it?
3. You have to complete two terms of another language. What language will you take and when?
4. You said in the last interview that you used to be a sociology major. Why were you interested in pursuing sociology?
5. I understand that you decided to major in linguistics after taking Intro to Linguistics. Why did you primarily pick linguistics as a major? What drew you to linguistics?
6. What were the topics you liked to discuss in sociolinguistics?
7. I want you to look at these three prompts and your answers. Could you explain more about your answers and give me examples?
   - I don't worry about making mistakes in the language class. – Disagree
   - In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know. – Agree
   - I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class. – Agree
8. If you look at your other answers, were there times you might have chosen a different answer?
9. You said in your last interview *"In general, it can be very frustrating if you don't get something right away. You're not allowed to speak English in the classroom, and if you don't know exactly how to express yourself and you don't have the words to express the question, then you just feel kind of stuck, and then if they call on you to answer a question, that can be a little embarrassing."* Could you elaborate more on this quote? Could you give an example?
10. You said in your last interview, *"But it's pretty common to get called on to read something out loud, which for me is not a problem. But I think the Spanish linguistics professor, I think would call on me a little more in her classes because she knows that I've studied linguistics in English as well. So she'll ask to me to explain what an allophone is, or what a minimal pair is, but the problem is that I've just started to learn these terms in Spanish, so I want to like speak Spanglish or lapse back into English or something like that, so I can get kind of frustrated and, you know, I don't want to disappoint the professor by not knowing the information that, you know, we both know that I have it in my mind, you know what I mean?"* Could you explain more about how you feel you might disappoint the professor? Could you explain what happens when you feel like you might impress the professor? How often do you experience these different feelings?
11. Could you describe what makes you feel confident in a language classroom? What about what makes you motivated?

Chelsea

1. How often did you take advantage of office hours of your professors
2. Tell me more about these quotes:
    o Uhm, not that I can think of. I mean there were some I didn't grow as close to, which has... honestly. I tend to get along better with female professors. I don't know. Maybe it's... Lemme rephrase that. I get along a lot better with professors who are not straight men, which is how my life works in general.
    o [About writing course] It becoming very apparent that some of my political views and personal views differed greatly with some people in class. When you read someone's essay and you see things that would invalidate your identity.
    o I was at CCC, I think it was [class names]? It was one of those conversational classes. And I remember, again, I was 19 maybe 20 at this point, and we had to give presentations about a French artist of some sort. And I just remember feeling confident in giving that presentation. I was still feeling dealing with a lot of social anxiety back then. So the fact that I was able to get up in front of this class and speak in a foreign language to other people and I knew what I was talking about and I knew how I was saying it, yeah. It felt really good. And I ended up getting an A in that class. So that helped.
3. I want you to look at these prompts and your answers. Could you explain more about your answers and give me examples?
    • Items 2, 9, 11 – 12, 14, 16, 27, 29, 33
4. If you look at your other answers, were there times you might have chosen a different answer?
5. Could you describe what makes you feel confident in a language classroom? What about what makes you motivated?

Kara

1. Would you mind explaining a bit more about your social anxiety that you mentioned in the last interview?
2. Tell me more about these quotes:
    • It just kind of made me bitter with going into class because it was everyday for an hour and I just hated it. I suffer with anxiety and PTSD and all that fun stuff, and that kind of cause a lot- especially when she was in the classroom, because she was only there once or twice during the term. It felt like she was judging me from what I know right now.
    • Yesterday could have been a good day for me, I could have been able to speak excellently, and today might be a bad day and I might not do as well or raise my hand as often and she'll think that I'm a slacker. And that really affected me. I wanted to show her I can do it, but I also just didn't care what she thought. It's kind of sad.

3. I want you to look at these prompts and your answers. Could you explain more about your answers and give me examples?
   - Items 3-4, 6-11, 14-15, 22, 24, 29, 31-33
4. If you look at your other answers, were there times you might have chosen a different answer?
5. Could you describe what makes you feel confident in a language classroom? What about what makes you motivated?

Mark

1. What is generally your relationship with other students in your language classes?
2. Who do/did you become friends with in your classes? Who do/did you keep your distance from?
3. I want you to look at these prompts and your answers. Could you explain more about your answers and give me examples?
   - Items 1-4, 9-10, 12, 15-20, 22-29
4. If you look at your other answers, were there times you might have chosen a different answer?
5. Could you describe what makes you feel confident in a language classroom? What about what makes you motivated?

Appendix F: Questions for Interview Three

All Participants

Part 2: Observations

1. Walk me through a typical day in class for you.
2. How do you make decisions on where to sit in class?
3. Is the spot where you sat on the day of the observation the same as usual?
4. Could you tell me about class the day of the observation?
5. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your anxiety levels? Why?
6. How about motivation? Why?
7. How about confidence? Why?
8. Tell me more about your feelings towards the strategies/activities that the teacher uses in class.
9. What are your feelings towards other students in class? Any that stand out to you?
10. How do you make decisions about when to use your second language and when to use your first language?

Adam

Part 1: Previous Interview

1. Tell me more about this quote: It's that traditional definition of what masculine presentation means. That's what I had a hard time answering that question, like "what does that even mean?"
2. Tell me more about this: [on the term 'masculinity] Yeah, I just have a hard time committing to terminology like that I guess. It can be kind of a loaded term.
3. Talk more about this: [community college instructor] So, there's one teacher in particular that maybe really kind of lit the fire. She actually spoke Romanian as her first language. And English as her second, and Spanish as her third. So she was teaching in her third language, which just in itself I thought was awesome.
4. Tell me more about this: [on the same instructor] And I thought she had a personal stake in everybody's success, because it was a very small class.
5. Tell me more about this: [current instructor] it's nice to be able to recognize that in a professor, like "you actually care about my experience and my success and things like that."
6. Tell me more about this: You're not allowed to speak English in the classroom, and if you don't know exactly how to express yourself and you don't have the words to express the question, then you just feel kind of stuck, and then if they call on you to answer a question, that can be a little embarrassing.
7. Tell me more about this: In like a sociology class, when you call someone out you say "hey that's problematic language" - "whoa don't attack me" kind of shutting down the dialogue.

      a. Tell me more about problematic language. Why would you call someone out on it?

8. Tell me more about this: I just thought it was missing a lot of things that we appealing about the study of sociology, like things that are relevant and important to talk about.

9. You mentioned that one of the things that is really important to talk about is group mentality, and you said that you can't really develop a sense of self without contacting other people and having that imprint on you in some sort of way. Could you explain more about what this means for you then? Any examples in your case?

10. You mentioned that not only do people frustrate you in class, but you become frustrated when you can't ask a clarifying question because of a lack of vocabulary or don't answer a question correctly.
      a. Could you define frustration? What does frustration mean to you?
      b. What exactly happens to you when you do become frustrated? Could you give an example?
      c. Could you tell me more about your frustrations with other people in class?

11. You talked about linguistic reclaiming in your last interview. You said: So, we talked about that and reappropriation of words like "queen" and other things in the queer community, even the word queer. They only used to be pejorative and are now being reclaimed. What are your thoughts on linguistic reclaiming of words like queen and queer?

12. Tell me more about this: There's a lot of room for error, and that's nerve wracking. And I don't want to make simple mistakes that you learn in first year. So like, you don't say "La camisas." You say, "Las camisas." Or something like that. The same thing happens when I have to answer a question and I don't have time to prepare. So, I don't want the teacher to think "ugh, how remedial, this kid." It's just a matter of a little bit of anxiety.

13. Tell me more about this: First, revisit the question then group my thoughts together and then see everyone looking at me, like - we're all waiting for this kid to talk. So. That makes me nervous and I forget. Train of thought, or something. Tell me more about getting nervous when people are looking at you.

14. Tell me more about this: Just being in front of the whole room makes me a little bit nervous in general.

15. Tell me more about this: [being fluent] "Well in 1864, lalala happened." And then they can say, good job Adam. Now moving on... And then just flows nicely and it's a good exchange. Instead I'm like "uhhhhhhhhh, ehhhhhhhhh." Just kind of sucks for everyone. Nobody wants to listen to that, and it's not comfortable for me.

16. Could you characterize yourself in Spanish in terms of language, expression, presentation?

Part 2: Observations

1. Tell me more about the two students next to you.

2. I noticed that at several points in the class, you were talking to yourself. Do you remember what that was about?

Chelsea

Part 1: Previous Interviews

1. Tell me more about your decision to not live in the dorms.
2. Tell me more about the following: "Yeah. I don't know. I know it's totally superficial, but when my hair was short, everyone assumed I was gay. And it was easier for me to date women. And now that I've been growing out my hair, everyone assumes I'm straight. So, men are easier."
3. Tell me more about the following: "Well, I don't want to use the term lipstick lesbian, but I wear dresses, I wear my hair long, I wear earrings. I usually go for pretty femme women. And the men I date tend to be a little bit gay."
4. Tell me more about the following: "Yeah, I needed to get out of my hometown because it's tiny."
5. Tell me more about the following: "I liked the way- So [that university] doesn't do grades; they do evaluations. I spent one quarter there and I learned so much."
6. Tell me more about the following: "Yeah, I wouldn't say I found a different community per se, but I definitely found myself. And felt like I could go out and make friends with who I wanted to for the first time. And that certainly helped a lot with confidence and being comfortable in social settings."
7. Tell me more about the following: "I'm still getting to know this professor, so it's still a little nerve wracking to make a mistake in front of her."
8. Tell me more about the following: "The oral exam was, I was pretending to be a reporter and my professor was a visiting Russian professor, so I had to ask her all these questions about her life, and I couldn't remember the correct conjugation of the word, and panicked, and blurted out the wrong one." Walk me through what happens when you "panic."
9. Tell me more about the following: "She was like 'You understand, but you don't speak very well, huh?' And I was like [Russian for 'yes']. She got it. Tell me more about what this makes you feel."
10. Tell me more about the following: "I remember last term, it just so happened that in French class that the chapter we were studying was on immigration when all of this shit was going on with Trump's immigration laws. And so that was a little nerve wracking because my professor made it very clear what her views were, but it's a little, I mean it's difficult to have those conversations with people you don't know well in your native tongue, whereas having them in a foreign language where I'm worried I might say the wrong thing, it adds to the anxiety."
    a. Tell me more about what makes it nerve wracking.
    b. Tell me more about having these conversations with people you don't know very well.
    c. Tell me more about the anxiety you feel when you say you might say the wrong thing.

11. Walk me through what happens when you're "put on the spot."
12. Tell me more about the following: "She was very liberal. She's an immigrant, so we were on the same page."
13. We talked in the last interview about invalidating identity. Could you tell me about your identity?
14. You said that studying Russian is more enjoyable than studying French. Can you tell me more about this?
15. About the situation that happened in your writing class: You said that you would handle that situation a lot differently now than you did then. In what ways would you be different?
    a. Are there any examples of times when you did this in classes? What about outside of class?
16. Tell me more about how you come to be close to your French teacher from high school.
17. When choosing classes, are there any teachers you actively avoid?
18. Could you characterize yourself in French? Through language, expression, presentation.
19. How about in Russian?
20. How are these identities different than how you present yourself in English?

Part 2: Observations

1. Tell me more about the student that you were working with (blonde female, 20's).
2. Tell me more about the student that you were working with

Kara

Part 1: Previous Interview

1. Tell me more about why you hated high school.
2. Tell me more about this: [on Cascadia]: "I feel at peace here."
    a. What exactly causes you to feel at peace?
3. Tell me more about this: "They are a lot more accepting here, especially in the LGBTQ+ community. I feel like it's a lot safer almost."
4. Tell me more about your separation between school and your personal life.
5. Tell me more about: "Like yeah, like having other people be supportive, and sometimes I'll be judgmental, but here it's a lot of 'Do you get this' 'No' 'Well me neither, like we should study this together' and not just 'Oh, she's stupid. She doesn't know it.' Which is what I experienced a lot in my old schools."
6. Tell me more about this: [Japanese professor] But yeah, she kept everything relevant and like, overall had a vibe with the class that was lighthearted and just calm, and not super stressful, especially for myself. So just having her around was really a positive experience with the Japanese department, because a lot of other

ones if you did it wrong, like "nope, you're done for the day." But she would encourage you to keep trying and like help correct you and wouldn't stop until you got it right.

7. Talk more about this: "I feel a lot more accepted in Cascadia."
8. Talk more about this: "I'm a very focused on my grades kind of person."
9. Please tell me more about the student you called Hermione.
10. You said in one interview that I could have been able to speak excellently, and today might be a bad day and I might not do as well or raise my hand as often and she'll think that I'm a slacker. Tell me more about what slacker behavior is.
11. When thinking about these things, what comes up for you?
12. When you think about yourself in Japanese class and in ASL, what things come up for you?
13. What are some differences between what happens in a language classroom versus what happens in a regular classroom for you?
14. What are some things you know about yourself as a language learner?

Part 2: Observations

1. Tell me more about how you feel about the teacher.

Mark

Part 1: Previous Interview

2. Tell me more about this:
   J: How often do you do things like that where you're doing something that would be considered more feminine to do?
   M: Uhm, mostly? Uhm, like if I'm in a really good mood, I'm just like "I'm going to experiment with my clothing some more." And wear more whatever. Other than that, that's pretty much it. I mostly only wear clothes that are clean right now. [laughs]
3. Tell me more about this: "Because I hated [state]. Very much so. Everyone was like "Yay! I'm going to university in [state]! [state university]!" All these horrible ass [state] colleges, where like all the high school cliques were going to like continue their high school cliques in college. And I was like 'Fuck you people. I'm moving 2,500 miles away and going nowhere near this, and I'm actually going to enjoy my life.'"
4. You characterized yourself in Japanese. Could you say more about this?
   o In French?
   o In German?
5. How are these identities different than how you present yourself in English?

6. You say that you use feminine particles in Japanese.
   o Could you describe this more?
   o How did the teacher perceive this?
   o Tell me more about how other students reacted.
   o Tell me more about how other Japanese people perceive this.
   o Are there times when you do not use feminine particles?
   o Did you ever have a conversation with your Japanese professor about using those pronouns?
7. You said this experience made you feel disappointed. Could you describe what you mean by "disappointment"?
8. You said that the teachers "shamed" you for not knowing the answer or not knowing the script.
9. Could you describe more about what it means to be "shamed?"
   o What would the teachers do?
   o How would other students respond?
   o How would you respond to this shaming?
10. Could you describe the professor and the TAs in the Japanese class?
11. You say you really hate partner work. Walk me through your mental process when assigned partner work.
    o What about in your other classes?
12. One of your best friends now is from Japanese. You said all that you would do is "bitch" about the class. Tell me more about that.
13. Tell me more about this: "And like, how did I bridge the gap between spoken and written French, because that was always my problem. And she's just like 'Okay, practice.' And I'm like 'Alright, great.' Where? How? How is this helping me? I thought this class was supposed to be the point where I could get help and get practice for this. But instead I'm being dinged for not knowing the difference very well. It was very weird."
14. Tell me more about this: I guess the only one that I can pull from for example is this guy who studied abroad in Russia for a while in my 303 class that I'm taking right now. There's something about him. Like, I don't trust Russians right now. Considering the way they're treating gays in Chechnya and I'm just like... You know. The fact that he studied abroad in Russia for a year, I'm like... That's probably great, but that still scares the crap out of me. But it's mostly things like that. It's hard because I come from a place where I have to always be on guard who I can interact with and who I can't. I don't know.
15. Tell me more about this: [on white supremacists]
    J: You've had that issue in classes here?
    M: No, not here at all. And that's why it's weird. Even after 4 years of being away, I still find myself having to say "It's okay to be gay here in Portland." You don't

have to be like "What is your intention." It's weird. Yeah, but for the most part it's been fine and everyone is accepting compared to Maryland.

J: And you carry that with you in your classes?

M: Oh yeah, very much so. I always have to be careful. I don't know.

16. Tell me more about this: "Unless I very strongly know what it is, I hate being called out in class period."

17. Tell me more about this:

"J: You say you agree to "I'm afraid that my language teacher is going to correct every language mistake I make." I wonder what class this is about.

M: Yes, sounds like Japanese doesn't it? And I want to say it's specifically Japanese. All the people in German department have been awesome in that regard."

How are they awesome? How is it different in German? What happens when a mistake is corrected?

18. Tell me more about: "[failing class] I took it last year and I think I just never went to class, but that was nothing besides not liking to go to class."

Why did you never go to class?

19. Tell me more about: "I got to the point where they gave you five weeks to master the katakana and another five weeks to master hiragana in [class]. And I was like 'ugh, I can't catch up with this. I am just trying to get katakana and now you're pushing hiragana on me?' So like, that was really weird and an example of why that frustrates me."

Could you tell me more about frustration?

Part 2: Observations

1. A few students in your class used English to speak with the instructor in front of the class. What do you think about that?

Appendix G: Questions for Interview Four

All Participants

Part 2: New Questions

1. Do you know how to describe your sexual identity in the language that you're learning? And if you can, how do you feel about that?
2. Did teachers give you resources to talk about that piece of your identity? How do you feel about that?
3. If no, how would you feel if they did?
4. How open are you about your sexual identity?
   a. What about with instructors?
   b. Peers?
   c. Is it different in the language classroom?
5. How would you feel about talking about your sexual identity talking with native speakers about your sexual identity?
6. Have there been opportunities for you to talk about your sexual identity in your language classes?
7. How does this compare to experiences talking about sexual identity outside of the language classroom?
8. Do you think your experiences being an (open) LGBTQ+ student would be different at a different university?

Part 3: Observation

1. Could you tell me about class the day of the observation?
2. On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your anxiety levels? Why?
3. How about motivation? Why?
4. How about confidence? Why?

Part 4: Final Interview Questions

1. Is there anything else you would like to add that relates to what we've talked about throughout the study?
2. Is there anything that you can think of that we've talked about that you would like for me not to add into the study?

Adam

Part 1: Previous Interview

1. Are there times when you are not confident? [You say you think you're pretty smart]

2. Tell me about what happens to your learning process when you are frustrated.
3. When you're dwelling on an incident in class, describe more about what this means for your learning process.
4. Tell me more about why you felt it was important to do a pronoun check-in.
5. Tell me more about what would happen if someone were to use a reclaimed pejorative in class that doesn't belong to that community.
6. You talked about group mentality and how there is a cause-effect process because of social interactions. Can you describe how this might relate to interactions you've had in the language class?
7. What prompted you to become involved in the [newspaper] committee?
8. You've talked about having your identity invalidated mostly before your transition.
   a. What pieces of your identity still are invalidated?
   b. What does invalidation mean to you?
9. You say that the sociology class is a good place to call someone out on problematic language because it's a safe space, what about in other settings?
   a. Would you be able to have a conversation like this in your Spanish class?
10. What happens when you can't be funny in Spanish?
11. Have you reflected more on who you are in Spanish?
12. Please characterize yourself as a Type A person and what that means for you as a student.

Part 3: Observation

1. Tell me about the exam you took.

Chelsea

Part 1: Previous Interview

1. What are your goals for learning languages that you've studied?
2. When do you feel most comfortable speaking French? Russian?
3. Tell me more about this: "I think it felt good to him that we were a straight couple."
4. You said in your last interview: "I had this preconceived notion of 'oh this is how gay women have to be.'" Could you identify what parameters you had for gay women at this time versus now?
5. "If someone had anti-immigration or racist views, then I would know that, and then I would be in class with them throughout the entire program and that would make people uncomfortable."
6. "You know, in any sort of context I get nervous about using any term in a language class. But with a sensitive topic, it sort of compounded if that makes sense."
   a. Could you tell me more about this?

      b. Could you define sensitive topics? Are there topics that are more sensitive for you?

7. Tell me more about this: [on anxiety] "I guess when you add learning foreign language to that process it kind of compounds… I feel like it's really easy for me to go back into that space. It's sort of hard to navigate sensitive topics…"
8. If a student were to say something "fucked up" in a language class, how would you go about addressing it?
      a. What topics would you address and not address?
9. When you say you get anxious when you're put on the spot, what exactly happens for you mentally?
10. Are there topics that are harder for you to address when you are put on the spot?
11. You say that you are liberal. Could you define that and talk more about it?
12. What exactly do you mean when someone "invalidates" your identity?
13. What does it mean to you when someone invalidates your identity?
14. You said your high school French teacher "was comfortable introducing [Birdcage] in the class?" Tell me more about that.
15. You say that you're more relaxed in French, and more rigid and formal in Russian. Tell me more about that. What does this mean in practice?
16. Why do you like group work?
17. [about blonde with glasses] You said you were happy to find out she was queer- "Oh you're one of my people, let's work together." Can you talk more about that?
      a. Are you more comfortable?

Part 3: Observation

1. How do you feel about being purposefully placed into groups?
2. You let out a heavy sigh before beginning a task with a partner. Tell me more about that.
3. Describe your process working with a partner on workbook activities.

Kara

Part 1: Previous Interview

1. Do you think that the teacher you liked in high school thought you were part of the LGBTQ+ community?
2. You talked in the last interview about bi-privilege. Talk a bit more about that.
3. You say your hometown was pretty liberal. Can you define what liberal means to you?
4. Have you had experiences here with bi discrimination?
5. You mention that you are looking for people to be proud of you. Tell me more about that.

6. You talk about your experience in Japanese, stating that you put in little effort to speak when it wasn't the Wednesday professor. How differently do you feel about your ASL instructor?
7. Is your social anxiety heightened in language classes?
8. You said that you prefer lecture type classes, and were annoyed by discussion type classes, but you were annoyed in class during the last observation because Suzanne kept telling stories. Could you explain more about that?
9. Do you worry about being judged by Suzanne?
10. What would happen if you were placed in a group with the old white man in class?

Part 3: Observation

1. What do you think about the student who sat to your right?
2. Anything you want to say about anybody else in the class?
3. What was your impression of the videos that were being used in the class?
    a. What about the book that you use? How do you use that book?

Mark

Part 1: Previous Interview

1. Have you had anymore situations happen between you and the guy who studies Russians?
2. Have you changed your opinion of him?
3. What were your interactions with him like before?
4. And when you did have to talk with this guy, how would you feel when you had to talk to him?
5. What are some things in class that just generally give you a lot of discomfort?