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# Adapting Tools To Measure Students' Affective Filter For The Elementary Dual-Immersion Context

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ADAPTING TOOLS TO MEASURE STUDENTS' AFFECTIVE FILTER FOR THE  
ELEMENTARY DUAL-IMMERSION CONTEXT

by

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A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Arts in English as a Second Language.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introduction**

#### **The Importance of Knowing English Language Learners**

According to the National Center for Education Linguistics (2017), in 2015, 9.4 percent of students in the United States, or 4.6 million students, were English Language Learners (ELLs) (Carr, 2017). ELLs make up a significant part of our student populations and our communities. They come to classrooms with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Their prior experiences with school can vary greatly; some have been in formal school settings for years, while others have had their schooling interrupted by extenuating circumstances. These factors have the potential to impact ELLs academic and linguistic achievement. Learning about students, getting to know them and building strong relationships in the classroom are key to impacting student behavior and academic achievement.

Language educators also need to know about how ELLs feel in language classes. Are they comfortable in the classroom? Are they excited about learning a new language? Are they confident that they will succeed in doing so? These emotions, feelings, and attitudes are affective factors that comprise an affective filter, which also impacts a

learner's ability to acquire a new language (Gardner, 1985; Krashen, 1985). Through this capstone project I seek to better understand how affective factors impact language learning and what tools are available to educators to measure the degree of students' affective filters. In the remainder of this chapter I will further define the affective filter and explain my personal and professional interest in this investigation. Then I will outline my research plan and state the guiding questions of this capstone.

### **Affective Filter Hypothesis**

The term affective filter, which refers to the language-learning barrier created by negative affective factors, was coined by Stephen D. Krashen when he proposed the Affective Filter Hypothesis in 1985. The Affective Filter Hypothesis posited that, "Even though the language acquirer understands certain input, anxiety, low self-esteem, or a sense that he or she is not a potential member of the group that speaks the language – the affective filter – will keep linguistic input out" (As cited by Wright, 2015, p. 52). Many other ESL researchers (Aida, 1994; Dogan & Tuncer, 2016; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre, P.D. & Gardner, R. C., 1991; Young, 1999) have tested this theory and found that the negative factors believed to contribute to the affective filter do impact second language acquisition. In light of Krashen's theory, Wright asserts that "a major goal in language teaching and learning is to 'lower' the affective filter to maximize comprehensible input thus increasing the amount of progress students are able to make in language learning" (2015, p.52). Based on my personal and educational experiences, I agree with Wright's assessment. Furthermore, I would add that in order to be able to 'lower' the affective filter we must understand its components and

be able to measure the strength of the affective filter. Only then will we be able to know if our efforts at lowering the filter are successful.

### **Personal and Professional Experiences**

I am a language learner and a bilingual educator. My first language is English and my second language is Spanish. I started learning Spanish as a foreign language in sixth grade and studied it intermittently until I graduated from high school. I was fascinated by the language and by the vibrant cultures comprised of Spanish-speakers around the world. As I started my undergraduate studies I decided to continue studying Spanish because I enjoyed studying the language and believed that being able to speak Spanish proficiently would be useful in the future. You could say I was highly motivated. However, Spanish was also not something that came easily to me. I struggled to grasp grammar rules and to transfer new words to my working vocabulary; I made so many mistakes. I remember sitting anxiously in my Spanish Advanced Placement exam with an individual tape recorder poised to respond to an oral language prompt being read by the proctor. The proctor finished reading the prompt, and I froze. I could not even remember the prompt. My mind was blank. I looked around the room at the other students rattling off responses into their recorders and wondered what I was doing in that room. Now, as a language educator, I observe my students struggling to produce or acquire new linguistic forms, and I wonder if they are experiencing the same affective block. I want to understand what feelings and emotions they are experiencing that may be affecting their learning.

I began my teaching career seven years ago in San Antonio, Texas in a bilingual opportunity classroom. Seventy five percent of our class was native English speakers and

twenty five percent was native Spanish speakers. Ninety eight percent of our class was Latino. Since this was not a dual immersion program, English was the only target language and the small group of native Spanish speakers were supported through bilingual content instruction and thirty minutes of English Language instruction each day. I observed that some students were excited about ESL time while others dreaded being separated from the rest of the class. A couple of the students were excited about learning English and practiced whenever they got a chance, while others refused to attempt communication in the target language (L2).

I am currently working in an urban dual immersion school in the Midwest where approximately sixty percent of our class is native English speakers and forty percent is native Spanish speakers. Because we follow the dual language program model English is the target language during literacy, and Spanish is the target language during math and science. Additionally, thirty-eight percent of students receive ESL services. While most students in our school are successful in meeting projected English Proficiency growth goals, one student in particular, who has been at our school for five years now, is not showing growth on any of the English Language Assessment measures. His mother is very concerned about his lack of progress in English, and I have been working with her, school staff and district administrators to figure out why the student has not been progressing in English proficiency. While there are a myriad of possibilities, I wonder if he may have a stronger Affective Filter than other students in his program. Perhaps affective factors are preventing him from accessing the comprehensible input he is exposed to in his language classes. If I could test this theory, the results could be valuable in this process of figuring out the best way to meet this child's linguistic needs.



## **My Research Plan**

Based on the observations and research laid out above I believe that the affective filter is a significant barrier to language acquisition. If language teachers can measure students' affective filter and analyze its components, we will better understand how to meet the needs of language learners. However, I am not currently aware of any assessments that educators can use for this purpose. In this Capstone project I will review the current research on the affective filter and its components. I will seek out valid assessments that could be used in measuring the affective filter and its components. If no composite assessments exist I will look into each of the components individually. After reviewing the current research I plan to adapt or create a tool that educators can use to assess the strength of the affective filter. This tool will be useful for setting goals with students, planning classroom instruction, and communicating with families and other stakeholders regarding student progress in second language acquisition. Both language educators and general education teachers could use this tool to better understand their ELL students and the barriers they face. They could use this information to make pedagogical decisions that would support ELLs. Additionally, in the dual language setting teachers could also use this tool to better understand the barriers Spanish Language Learners face.

## **Guiding Questions**

Knowing that Krashen's affective filter (1985) correlates strongly with student's second language acquisition success, I wonder: *What tools can support educators in measuring students' affective filter?*

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the number of ELLs in the United States is increasing. Through personal and professional observations, I have identified emotions and other affective factors that language learners' experiences. Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Theory, supports my observations and further hypothesizes that affective factors interact to impede second language acquisition. At this point I wonder what measures are available to educators to assess the strength of students' affective filters. In Chapter Two I will review the current literature and discuss any valid assessments I find. In Chapter Three I will explain how I will choose the measures I will adapt and the process I will use for creating an assessment for use in my current teaching context.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

The affective filter, as it applies to second language acquisition, was developed by Stephen D. Krashen in 1985 as a way to explain some of the barriers language learners faced on the road to proficiency. This theory became foundational for research in this field. Through this literature review I investigate: *What tools can support educators in measuring the degree of students' affective filter?* In subtopic one I will further explain Krashen's Affective Filter Theory. Subtopics two and three will analyze the key factors that contribute to the affective filter. Specifically, subtopic two will define language learner anxiety, explain its effects on second language acquisition, and analyze the best ways to measure it. Subtopic three will define language learner motivation, learner self-esteem, and learner sense of belonging to target language community; explain how these three factors are interrelated; describe the impact they have on second language acquisition; and analyze the best ways to measure them. Each of these components are essential to understanding how the affective filter works, its impact on ELLs and how it can best be measured. The following section explains the Affective Filter Hypothesis and its components.

### **Affective Filter Hypothesis**

The Affective Filter Hypothesis, developed by Stephen D. Krashen, is foundational to understanding how English Language Learners (ELL) acquire a second language (as cited by Wright, 2015). Krashen (1985) posited that ELLs will acquire language if they are given appropriate input and nothing is hindering their uptake of language. Additionally, Krashen asserted that, for many students, language acquisition is hindered by an affective filter. According to Zhu and Zhou (2012), the affective filter is made up many affective factors or “aspects of emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behaviors in second language learning acquisition” (p. 1). Specifically, several authors (Bernaus, Moore, & Azevedo, 2007; Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner, 1985; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015; Krashen, 1985; Zhu & Zhou, 2012) describe how language learner anxiety, learner motivation, learner self-esteem, and a learners’ sense of belonging or potential belonging to the target language (L2) community are key components of the affective filter.

Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis inspired many researchers (Aida, 1994; Dogan & Tuncer, 2016; Elkhafai, 2005; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Young, 1999) to investigate whether learners who experience high language learning anxiety, low language learning motivation, low self-esteem, or who do not feel as if they have the potential to belong to the target language community acquire language as quickly as their peers who do not have these barriers. These studies have led to the creation of various measures (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner, 1995; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991;) to gauge the extent to which students experience these affective factors and the impact they have on student

language acquisition and academic achievement. The following section explores what is known about language learner anxiety, its impact on language learning, and different ways of measuring it.

### **Language Learner Anxiety**

A key factor of the affective filter is language learning anxiety. Young (1999) defines foreign language anxiety as “the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or utilizing a second language” (p. 27). Horwitz et al. (1986), other prominent voices in the discussion of language learning anxiety, define it as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p. 128). Gardner (1985) identified two different aspects of language learning anxiety: anxiety related to the language classroom and anxiety related to using the target language.

Although these researchers define the term in slightly different ways, all agree that language learning anxiety negatively correlates with students’ ability to learn a new language. Language learner anxiety blocks crucial input and decreases the rate of language acquisition (Bernaus et al., 2007; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Knell & Chi, 2012; Sadiq, 2017). Furthermore, it is also important to note that language learning anxiety is not a fixed trait, but rather fluctuates throughout a language learners journey towards proficiency. As one would expect, learner anxiety has been shown to decrease as language proficiency increases (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). Additionally, anxiety has been shown to increase as students spend more time in formal language learning programs (Bernaus et al., 2007; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015). These

findings suggest that learner anxiety can be measured and teachers can make adjustments to the learning environment to positively influence student levels of anxiety.

Knowing that language learner anxiety can have such profound impacts on learner proficiency and linguistic achievement, many researchers have developed ways to identify and measure the construct of language learner anxiety and its impact on the language learning process (Bernaus et al., 2007; Gardner, 1985; Horwitz et al., 1986; Zhu & Zhou, 2012). In the review of the research literature for this capstone project two prominent student questionnaires, which measure language learning anxiety, were located. They are: Gardner's (1985) Attitude Motivation Test Battery Manual (AMTB) and Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The next section will analyze Gardner's AMTB.

### **Attitude Motivation Test Battery**

In 1985, Gardner conceptualized the AMTB to measure various aspects of the affective filter, as they applied to English speaking Canadian students learning French in grades seven through eleven (see Appendix A for sample AMTB items). It measured five key affective factors, one of which was language anxiety. Gardner believed that general language anxiety was made up of two separate components: language class anxiety and language use anxiety (as cited by Bernaus et al., 2007).

The AMTB anxiety sub-test included only five items that assessed both of these components. The other eighteen subtests contained over one hundred items, which suggests that Gardner viewed language learner anxiety to be one of the less influential affective factors (Gardner, 1985). These items required students to respond to various statements using a 7-point Likert scale. Possible responses ranged from strongly disagree

to strongly agree. All of the statements were positively worded because the Boards of Education managing the schools in which Gardner conducted his research insisted that positively worded items would be most easily understood by primary school children (1985). Gardner recognized that positively wording the items may have resulted in higher levels of response bias and acquiescence, but defended the reliability and validity of the AMTB using Cronbach coefficient data. Since then, the AMTB has been translated and adapted by many researchers (Bernaus et al., 2007; Sánchez-Herrero & Sanchez, 1992) to apply in different contexts. It remains one of the most cited and adapted measures for assessing language learner anxiety as part of affective filter multi-factor studies. However, due to the small number of assessment items, it is not ideal for measuring language learner anxiety in isolation. For that purpose the questionnaire explained in the following paragraphs may be more appropriate.

### **Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale**

The other most frequently cited learner anxiety questionnaire, and perhaps the most prominent measure for detecting language learning anxiety in isolation, is Horwitz's 1986 Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (see Appendix B for sample items). It was developed by Horwitz et al. in 1986. Horwitz et al. interviewed 30 University of Texas foreign language students about their language learning experiences and difficulties. They identified common themes in student responses and used this data to develop the FLCAS.

In contrast to Gardner's binary evaluation of language learner anxiety, Horwitz et al. claimed that students experience three types of anxiety while learning a foreign language: apprehension to communicate; anxiety in situations of evaluation; and

embarrassment related to a negative evaluation by teachers and classmates (as cited in Sanchez-Herrero & Sanchez, 1992). As such, the FLCAS was designed to measure students speaking anxiety in language class, interest towards language class, and anxiety of talking with native speakers (as cited in Dogan & Tuncer, 2016).

It contained thirty-three items, some worded positively and some negatively (Horwitz et al., 1986). For each item, language learners responded to the given statements using a five-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Horwitz et al., 1986). The FLCAS was piloted with seventy-five university students enrolled in introductory Spanish classes during the third week of the semester and showed internal reliability (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Since its creation this scale has been used and adapted by many researchers in the foreign language academic community (Aida, 1994; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Dogan & Tuncer, 2016; Sadiq, 2017). However, it has also been severely critiqued (Park, 2014; Sparks & Ganschow 2007; Sparks & Patton, 2013). For example, Sparks and Patton (2013) challenged the FLCAS “on the grounds that it may also assess language learning skills” (p. 870). They argued that the FLCAS should not be used to support negative correlations between language learner anxiety and learner target language development because the questionnaire measures general language skills and aptitude. Sparks and Patton supported their assertion by comparing students’ first language skills assessment scores with FLCAS results. They found that students who earned lower first language aptitude test scores obtained higher language learning anxiety scores on the FLCAS.

While this and other similar critiques (Park, 2014; Sparks & Ganschow, 2007; Sparks & Patton, 2013) raise some valid questions about the relationship between



language learner anxiety and second language acquisition, the negative correlation between these two phenomena cannot be denied (Trang, 2011). Furthermore, FLCAS remains one of the most cited and adapted measures of language learning anxiety as a distinct affective factor, and has been shown to be valid and reliable (Dogan & Tuncer, 2016; Lin, Chao & Huang, 2015; Sadiq, 2017; Trang, 2011).

Language learner anxiety has been shown to negatively correlate with second language acquisition (Bernaus, 2007; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Gardner, 1985; Horwitz et al., 1986; Knell & Chi, 2012; Sadiq, 2017; Trang, 2012). The more language learning anxiety a learner experiences the slower they are to acquire second language proficiency. Since it can have such profound impacts on ELLs, educators can benefit from knowing how much anxiety the ELLs they work with are experiencing in their classes. Of the many ways to measure language learning anxiety, the most cited and successfully adapted instrument is Horwitz's FLCAS.

### **Language Learner Motivation: Learner Self-esteem, and Sense of Belonging**

Other factors that comprise the Affective Filter are language learner motivation, learner self-esteem, and a perceived or potential sense of belonging to the L2 community. What follows in this subsection is largely a discussion on language learner motivation because the wealth of research on these topics indicates that, while initially described as separate affective factors, learner self-esteem and a sense of belonging to the L2 community are components of language learner motivation (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei, 2001; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Dörnyei & Csizér 2005; Zhu & Zhou, 2012).

Language learner motivation is defined by Gardner as “the learner’s desires, attitudes, and efforts put forth to learn the target language” (as cited by Knell & Chi,

2012, p. 68). Gardner (1985) further described two specific types of learner motivation: Integrative Motivation and Instrumental Motivation. Integrative Motivation is what Krashen and others referred to when naming a sense of belonging to the L2 community as one of the key affective factors; it constitutes a desire to learn about the culture, customs, and lifestyles of the L2 speakers (Dörnyei 2001; Gardner, 1985; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015; Krashen, 1988; MacIntyre, 1994). Those with high integrative motivation have a “positive outlook on the L2 and its culture, to the extent that learners [...] may want to integrate themselves into the L2 culture and become similar to the L2 speakers” (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005, p. 20). On the other hand, Instrumental Motivation relates directly to the practicality and utility of learning the target language. If learners perceive that external rewards will be granted when they further develop L2 proficiency, they will be more motivated to behave in a way that will help them meet those goals.

In light of Gardner’s theories regarding language learner motivation, other researchers (Bernaus et al., 2007; Bernaus & Gardner, 2004; Clément et al., 1994) began to wonder if the definition could be expanded. They showed that classroom dynamics and the learning environment impact language learner motivation as well. For example, motivation has also been shown to decrease as students spend sustained periods of time in formal language learning settings (Bernaus & Gardner, 2004; Chambers, 1999; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015; Knell & Chi, 2012; Williams, Burden, & Lanvers, 2002). There is some aspect of the formal learning environment that is having a negative effect on ELL’s integrative motivation levels.

Building on these new observations, Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) deconstructed motivation in an attempt to analyze all of its components. They found that language

learner motivation is comprised of a number of variables including learner Self-confidence, Milieu, the Vitality of the L2 Community, Cultural Interest, learner Attitudes toward L2 Speakers, Instrumentality, and Integrativeness (2005). However, of these variables, two emerged as the most essential components of language learner motivation: Integrativeness and Instrumentality (2005). This analysis supported Gardner's definition of the affective factor: learner motivation.

Like language learner anxiety, learner motivation levels have profound impacts on students' second language acquisition success. Krashen hypothesized that high levels of learner motivation would correlate with second language acquisition achievement (1985). Research has shown that this is the case; learner motivation positively correlates with learner achievement (Bernaus et al., 2007; Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner, 1985; Zhu & Zhou, 2012).

Since learner motivation correlates strongly with second language acquisition rates, researchers have proposed various ways to conceptualize and measure this affective factor. In reviewing the research literature for this capstone project three noteworthy frameworks emerged. They are:

- Gardner's 1995 Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)
- Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System
- Adaptations of the AMTB based on Dörnyei's Motivation Framework

### **Attitude Motivation Test Battery**

The first measure developed, Gardner's AMTB, was previously discussed in relation to language learner anxiety. It measured five different variables Gardner believed to affect second language acquisition: motivation, attitudes toward the learning situation,

integrativeness, instrumentality, and language anxiety (Bernaus et al., 2007). The first variable measured by the AMTB is motivation. Gardner focused on measuring three different aspects of motivation: Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn the Language, and Attitudes Toward Learning the Language (as cited in Bernaus et al., 2007). The first two aspects were assessed using subtests, each of which contained ten multiple choice items and had possible total scores ranging from zero to thirty (Gardner, 2004). The third sub-test, assessing Attitudes Towards the Target Language, contained ten items, which students ranked on a seven-point Likert scale. Five of the items were positively worded and five were negatively worded. Scores from each of the three subtests were combined to yield a composite index reported as ELL Motivation.

While much of the ESL research community (Bernaus et al., 2007; Pellettieri, 2011; Zhu & Zhou, 2012) accepted Gardner's AMTB as a valid assessment of motivation and sought to adapt it for their own research contexts, Dörnyei expressed concerns that Gardner's view of ELL motivation was too narrow and did not adequately analyze the complex, multi-faceted nature of ELL motivation (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei's then proposed a new framework of motivation.

### **L2 Motivational Self System**

The second key framework of ELL motivation that emerged from the literature reviewed for this project was Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System which, according to Heras and Lasagabaster (2015), approached learner motivation from "a more dynamic perspective that takes into account the learning environment" (p. 73). This framework was made up of three major components: the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self, and the L2 Learning Experience. The Ideal L2 Self describes the degree to which

ELLs can see themselves as an L2 speaker and have the desires, aspirations, and hopes to become one. The Ought-to L2 Self describes the degree to which ELLs will work to become an L2 speaker to avoid possible negative outcomes. Finally, the L2 Learning Experience describes the impact the teachers, curriculum, peer groups and/or experiences of academic/linguistic success can have on ELL motivation (Heras and Lasagabaster, 2015). Dörnyei (2009) further broke down these selves into their various components (see Appendix C for a diagram of the L2 Motivational Self System components). He proposed a seven factor model of ELL motivation and tested the interrelatedness of the seven factors to determine which were most influential (Csizér and Dörnyei, 2005). Csizér and Dörnyei found that Integrativeness and Instrumentality were the most powerful factors of ELL motivation. Interestingly, both of these factors were tested by Gardner's AMTB as well (1985). However, he did not include them in the composite Motivation index. He tested them using separate subtests and listed them as separate indices (Gardner, 2004). Although Dörnyei approached the topic of ELL motivation from a different perspective and defined it differently than Gardner, he employed some of Gardner's assessment techniques in testing his theories, and his new framework supported the work Gardner had done with the AMTB.

### **Adaptations of the AMTB Based on the L2 Motivational Self System**

Recently, many other researchers (Bernaus et al., 2007; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015; Pellettieri, 2011; Sandoval-Pineda, 2011; Zhu & Zhou, 2012) have drawn on the work of Gardner and Dörnyei to research ELL motivation in their own contexts. This is the third noteworthy approach to assessing ELL motivation: adapting motivation questionnaires, such as Gardner's AMTB, through the lens of Dörnyei's L2 Motivational

Self System. One of the most notable adaptations of a motivation questionnaire was completed by Angelica Sandoval-Pineda in 2011 (see Appendix D for sample items). She followed a process proposed by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) for creating and adapting second language acquisition questionnaires.

Sandoval-Pineda (2011) adapted Gardner's AMTB to measure Mexican ELL University students' motivation. Sandoval-Pineda's questionnaire consisted of ten subtests rather than the original nineteen; she eliminated the subtests that were not applicable to measuring motivation or did not apply to Mexican University students. She then translated the questionnaire into Spanish so that the university students could take it in their native language. Finally, she sought feedback on the translations, piloted the questionnaire with thirty-nine students, and determined that it was reliable using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient data. By analyzing Sandoval-Pineda's process, other researchers can adapt Gardner's AMTB for use in various contexts with diverse ELL student populations.

Sandoval-Pineda's adaptation of the AMTB was the product of a research-based adaptation process. It is evident that she analyzed every component of the questionnaire and analyzed it to ensure that the items she presented to students were culturally relevant, linguistically appropriate, and easy to understand (2011). However, not all adaptations of Gardner's AMTB or other motivation questionnaires have been as successful as Sandoval-Pineda's.

For example, Bernaus et al. (2007) combined Gardner's AMTB and questionnaires referred to by Dörnyei to create their own motivation questionnaire for use in a multilingual context with university ELLs in Catalonia, Spain. They claimed that this

was groundbreaking because questionnaires rooted in two different language learning models had not previously been combined (2007). However, their questionnaire yielded very low reliability coefficients, and has not been used in other studies (Bernaus et al., 2007). This could be because they administered the questionnaire to a linguistically and culturally diverse group of students in a language other than first language. When creating or adapting assessments such as the AMTB researchers need to carefully consider the context in which the assessment will be given and the participants who will be taking the questionnaire (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010).

### **Conclusion**

In summary, Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985), asserted that various dynamic affective factors: language learner anxiety, language learner motivation, learner self-esteem, and learner sense of belonging to the L2 community influence second language acquisition rates.

Language learner anxiety negatively correlates with second language acquisition success; the more anxious a child is the less likely they are to acquire a second language as quickly as their less anxious peers. To measure language learning anxiety most researchers have turned to the FLCAS questionnaire created by Horwitz et al. in 1986. Although its validity has been criticized, it remains the most accepted measure for language learner anxiety in the ESL academic community.

Language learner motivation is a complex, multifaceted construct that correlates positively with second language acquisition success. The more motivated a student is to learn a new language, the more successful they will be in doing so. If students are confident in their abilities to learn a new language, they are considered to have high

linguistic self-esteem. This is a component, albeit a minor one, of learner motivation (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005). Sense of belonging to the L2 community is also a key component of learner motivation. It is often referred to as integrativeness. Students who experience high levels of integrativeness, meaning that they can see themselves as part of the L2 community and consider this to be a desirable goal, will be more motivated and will have more success with second language acquisition (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005; Gardner, 1985).

The most effective way to measure language learner motivation is to adapt Gardner's initial AMTB using Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System as a framework and following the processes he proposed (Dörnyei, 2001; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). Sandoval-Pineda provides us with a great example of this approach in her 2011 study. The affective filter impacts the second language acquisition of ELLs and many tools are available to educators who are willing to adapt them as necessary to meet the cultural, linguistic, and developmental needs of their students. In the next chapter I will further explain the methodology I will follow to select and adapt questionnaires to measure students' affective filters in an elementary bilingual (Spanish-English) dual-immersion context.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Project Description**

#### **Introduction**

In the preceding chapters I discussed the educational experiences that led me to the research question *What tools can support educators in measuring the degree of students' affective filter?*, as well as the research that has been done in the field of English as Second Language (ESL) related to this query. In this chapter I will explain how this previous work inspired the project I have developed, describe the project in depth, identify the target audience, and explain the timeline I followed in completing this project.

#### **Research Paradigm and Methods**

This project is rooted in Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985) which was defined in the previous chapter. Krashen's 1985 Affective Filter Theory synthesized observations about language learning made by other researchers such as Gardner and Clément during the 1980s. Since Krashen posited this theory many researchers have tested it in various contexts, and their results have supported his analysis of the language learning process (Aida, 1994; Dogan & Tuncer, 2016; Elkhafaifi, 2005; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Horwitz, 1986; Krashen, 1988; Young, 1999).

The affective filter can be broken down into various factors including language learning anxiety, learner motivation, learner self-esteem, and learner sense of belonging to the target language (L2) community. Of these factors, the most widely investigated are language learner anxiety and learner motivation. Very little research has been done regarding how learner language self-esteem and learner sense of belonging to the L2 community specifically correlate with academic achievement as isolated factors. The two main affective factors: language learner anxiety and motivation have been measured using questionnaires and analyzed independently by researchers in the ESL community. However, a specific questionnaire that measures the composite strength of these two affective filter components in English Language Learners at the elementary level in the dual immersion context has not yet been developed. The goal of this project was to compile and adapt previously created questionnaires into one survey that would measure the affective factors of language learner anxiety and language learner motivation in elementary-level learners in and give educators a composite score that measures the strength of a student's affective filter.

To assess language learning anxiety I drew primarily on the early work of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) who designed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). Their thirty-three positively and negatively worded survey items address various aspects of language learner anxiety. Their work is the most cited in recent studies on language learner anxiety and has been widely supported and validated. While Gardner (1985) also assessed language learner anxiety as part of his Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) Only one of the nineteen subtests that make up the AMTB directly deals with learner language anxiety. All of the items are positively worded. Although

they have been used by many researchers to measure language anxiety, I believe that Horwitz's FLCAS more completely assesses this factor.

To assess language learner motivation I followed Sandoval Pineda's (2011) example and drew from both Gardner (1985) and Dörnyei (2001; 2009). Specifically, I adapted Gardner's AMTB based on the findings of Dörnyei and his proposed framework, the L2 Motivational Self System. Gardner's AMTB is one of the most widely accepted and adapted assessments for measuring language learner's motivation. It is multi-faceted and measures many key components of language learner motivation. Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) analyzed these components of language learner motivation and showed which facets of motivation are most prominent. Sandoval-Pineda (2011) used Dörnyei's conclusions to select which AMTB items she would use in her adaptation of the questionnaire. I followed this same process, isolating the subtests which I believed most directly addressed language learner motivation and would be applicable to third through fifth grade students in the two-way dual immersion setting.

I decided not to assess language learner self-esteem or sense of belonging to the L2 community in isolation. Rather, made sure that items on the FLCAS and the AMTB relating to language learner self-esteem and sense of belonging to the L2 community were included in the final adapted questionnaires. Specifically, I chose three specific subtests from the AMTB which measured a learner's Attitudes toward Learning French, Motivational Intensity, and Desire to Learn French. From the thirty items in these subtests I selected fifteen that I thought would be applicable to the learning experience of an elementary student in a dual-immersion context. For example, one of the items talked about use of the target language outside of the classroom. The most similar relevant

situation for our elementary students is whether or not they choose to speak the target language at recess because there is no predetermined language of communication at this time. Therefore I modified the item to reflect this learner experience. I followed a similar process for adapting the FLCAS. The FLCAS contains thirty-three items. I narrowed this down to fifteen as well, selecting the items that would be most easily understood by third through fifth grade students.

Once the items were selected they were compiled into an English pilot survey and also translated into a Spanish pilot survey. The surveys were distributed to ten elementary level teachers who interact with the target population on a daily basis. These educators were asked to evaluate the items for content validity by indicating which construct they believed each item assessed. They were presented with the options of motivation, anxiety, both, or neither for each item and asked to circle the response that most accurately indicated what each item assessed. These experts were also asked to provide open ended feedback on the cultural and linguistic relevance, developmental appropriateness, and understandability of each item.

Based on the feedback from these educators the pilot survey was narrowed down to twenty items. They believed that thirty items was too many. All items kept in the survey were correctly identified by at least eight of the ten teachers as measuring what they were intended to measure giving them content validity. The items that were eliminated were chosen because they lacked content validity or were not culturally or developmentally appropriate. For example, one of the motivation items asked students if they ask for help from their teachers when they are confused. Although asking for help can be evidence of strong learner motivation, it is less common for students from Latino

cultures to ask teachers for help. As such this item was eliminated on the basis of cultural bias. The final twenty items were then compiled into the final English and Spanish versions of the surveys. By building on and adapting these previously developed affective filter assessments, I created two cohesive questionnaires, one in English and one in Spanish, that measure the affective filter of language learners at a specific moment in time. These questionnaires have been included in a resource guide along with instructions, a scoring guide, and a list of resources to be used once the survey results are obtained. These resources will support educators in choosing appropriate pedagogy to address the affective needs of their ELLs.

### **Participants and Audience**

These surveys were designed for use in a two-way Spanish-English dual immersion school in a large urban school district in the Midwest. The school is comprised of roughly five hundred students. Sixty percent of the students are native English speakers; forty percent are native Spanish speakers. Fifty-five percent of students identify as Hispanic, thirty-seven percent as white, and five percent as African American. Thirty-eight percent of students receive ELL services. Forty-eight percent qualify for free and reduced lunch, and seven percent receive special education services.

The mission of the school is to prepare children from linguistically and ethnically diverse backgrounds for success in school and lifelong learning. As such it is essential that both general education teachers and language teachers understand the degree to which students are facing affective barriers to second language acquisition. In this context, the composite questionnaire has been designed in both Spanish and English. It will be given to assess both native Spanish speakers' affective filter as it relates to

learning English as well as native English speakers' affective filter as it relates to learning Spanish. The questionnaire needed to be culturally and linguistically relevant to each of these distinct groups. These questionnaires will give teachers a better understanding of the affective factors affecting students' second language acquisition. Comparisons may even be done between the groups of students learning English as a Second Language and the groups of students Learning Spanish as a Second Language to see if both groups experience the affective barriers similarly or if some barriers are stronger for one group than the other.

Finally, the relevance of this assessment extends beyond the school context in which I plan to use it. It could be useful for foreign language educators in the U.S. who desire to better understand the extent to which affective factors are impacting their students' additional language acquisition. It could also be useful for educators who work with ELLs and desire to better understand the affective barriers students may be facing in content classes taught in the target language. They may be able to redesign their instruction to minimize these affective barriers.

### **Timeline**

The research presented in these first three chapters took place between September and December of 2017. As of mid December 2017 I had chosen the questionnaires I would adapt to assess language learner anxiety and motivation. At this point I took some time off from the project. In early February I resumed work on adapting the survey items. In mid-February I contacted the authors of these questionnaires to resolve any copyright issues. I continued researching the best way to adapt these surveys, selecting the items from each questionnaire that would be used in the pilot questionnaire, adapting them so

that they were culturally relevant, eliminating irrelevant items, adjusting the Likert scale so that it will be easier for elementary students to access, and drafting the composite questionnaires in English and Spanish. By mid-March I had finished selecting the items for the pilot questionnaire, which contained thirty questions assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. I then distributed the pilot questionnaire to ten ESL and bilingual colleagues. I asked them to determine what each item on the pilot survey was intended to measure and to give any additional feedback they might have. I then revised the questionnaire based on their feedback, eliminating and editing items based on the feedback I received from my colleagues. I completed the final survey versions at the beginning of April.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout this chapter, I have cited the relevant theories and paradigms, which I encountered while investigating the question: *What tools can support educators in measuring the degree of students' affective filter?* I have selected the most prominent assessments for measuring language learner anxiety and language learner motivation: Horwitz's FLCAS and Gardner's AMTB. I explained how I synthesized and adapted these surveys to create two new composite surveys, one in English and one in Spanish. These questionnaires will be administered to language learners in an elementary dual language context. Student responses may help educators in this context better understand the affective challenges students face in working towards second language acquisition. In Chapter Four I will reflect on the questionnaire development process, connections with the previously presented literature, limitations of the questionnaires, and possibilities for further research in this area.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Conclusions**

### **Introduction**

The goal of this project was to investigate: *What tools can support educators in measuring students' affective filter?* Research has widely supported the notion that language learners can acquire the target language more or less efficiently based on a number of factors. One of these key factors is the Affective Filter which was hypothesized by Krashen in 1985 and has since been corroborated by a number of researchers in the field of Second Language Acquisition (Aida, 1994; Dogan & Tuncer, 2016; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre, P.D. & Gardner, R. C., 1991; Young, 1999). Better understanding the affective filter and how to measure it can help teachers make more effective instructional decisions for students.

### **Literature Review Connections**

Through investigation of the literature on this topic I discovered that the affective filter is believed to be comprised of four main factors: motivation, anxiety, self-esteem, and one's ability to see him/herself as part of the target language community (Bernaus, Moore, & Azevedo, 2007; Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner, 1985; Heras & Lasagabaster, 2015; Krashen, 1985; Zhu & Zhou, 2012). Most recently, self-esteem and one's ability to see



him/herself as part of the target language community have been absorbed into complex multifactorial analyses of learner motivation and they are no longer viewed as affective factors distinct from learner motivation (Dörnyei, 2009).

I also discovered that a number of measures have already been created to measure these aspects of the affective filter in secondary and university aged French language learners. Gardner's AMTB was developed in 1985 and contained nineteen different subtests which measured various aspects of the affective filter and yielded a composite score of affective filter strength. The AMTB has since been adapted for use with different language learner populations (Bernaus et. al., 2007; Sandoval-Pineda, 2011). However, no adaptations were created for native Spanish-speaking elementary-aged language learners. Another influential measure, the FLCAS, was created by Horwitz et. al in 1986 and assessed students' level of language learning anxiety. This inventory contained thirty-three items and again was designed for secondary and university level language learners. A gap existed in the literature. No language learning anxiety assessments existed for elementary-aged language learners and this project sought to fill this gap.

### **Project Description**

After these influential surveys had been identified I sought to adapt and modify them for the target population. The process I followed in creating these surveys closely followed Sandoval Pineda's (2011) process. She adapted the AMTB for use with Mexican University students and her example for how to do so was invaluable.

I chose three specific subtests from the AMTB which measured a learner's Attitudes toward Learning French, Motivational Intensity, and Desire to Learn French. From the thirty items in these subtests I selected fifteen that I thought would be

applicable to the learning experience of an elementary student in a dual-immersion context. I similarly selected relevant items from the FLCAS. Once the items were selected they were compiled into an English pilot survey. I also translated the items into a Spanish pilot survey. The surveys were distributed to ten elementary level teachers who interact with the target population on a daily basis. These educators were asked to evaluate the items for content validity by indicating which construct they believed each item assessed and provide open ended feedback on the cultural and linguistic relevance, developmental appropriateness, and understandability of each item.

Based on the feedback from these educators the pilot survey was narrowed down to twenty items. The items that were eliminated were chosen because they lacked content validity or were not culturally or developmentally appropriate. For example, one of the motivation items asked students if they ask for help from their teachers when they are confused. Although asking for help can be evidence of strong learner motivation, it is less common for students from Latino cultures to ask teachers for help. As such this item was eliminated on the basis of cultural bias. The final twenty items were then compiled into the final English and Spanish versions of the surveys.

Finally, these surveys have been made available in a resource guide for teachers. They are accompanied by administration instructions, a scoring guide, and a list of resources which include strategies for increasing learner motivation and decreasing learner anxiety. They will be made available to other educators through the Hamline Digital Commons.

### **Project Implications and Limitations**

These surveys can be a useful tool for many educators in the two-way dual language immersion setting. They will measure language learners' affective filters and give teachers insight as to whether students struggle predominantly with motivation or anxiety. Once teachers have identified the primary affective obstacle their students face they should be able to make more informed instructional decisions to meet learners where they are at. This is especially relevant in the dual immersion setting as assessing and then comparing and contrasting the affective factors of English learners and Spanish learners in this context could give valuable insight into how the program design is benefiting each specific population. Do both learner populations have affective filters of similar strengths? Does one group struggle more with motivation or anxiety than the other? What intentional instructional strategies can then be employed to ensure that all students are comfortable and motivated and thus able to acquire the target language to their full potential? These surveys will provide educators with the information necessary to start answering these questions.

However, it must be noted that these surveys have some limitations. They have not yet been field tested with students and as such no reliability or validity tests have been conducted apart from the content validity feedback which was given by expert educators. The most important next step for this resource guide is to conduct this field test with a number of students in dual language immersion settings and run the reliability and validity tests. Furthermore, these survey items were intended to be answered by Spanish speaking students learning English and English speaking students learning Spanish. If they are going to be used with other student populations the items should be reviewed for cultural and linguistic relevancy.

In the future, I would like to continue to further develop the resource guide based on actual student data. After students have taken the surveys and the strength of their affective filter factors has been determined, it would be valuable to conduct research as to which of the suggested strategies for increasing student motivation and lowering learner anxiety are most effective with the target population.

### **Personal Reflection**

In my capstone practicum course, Vivian Johnson posted a quote by Kenneth Burke from *The Philosophy of Literary Form* that has stuck with me. He wrote,

Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion [...] You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar [...] However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress. (1973, pp. 110-111)

This quote rings true to my capstone experience. I started this capstone with a curiosity based on my own teaching and learning experiences. As I dug into the literature I found theories to support and explain my experiences and the phenomena I observed around me. As Burkey would put it, I entered the parlor and listened. From there I realized that there were many researchers interested in testing these theories and measuring their outcomes. Furthermore, they had already developed instruments that would be invaluable in my own pursuit of answers. I built on and modified their measures to fit a different target population and in doing so, hopefully added to the greater discussion. It is my hope

that someone else will find the project I have completed useful and informative, and ultimately that the discussion will continue.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I have found that tools do exist for educators to measure students' affective filter. There is a myriad of them depending on the intended factor of measurement and the target population. However, Gardner's 1985 AMTB and the FLCAS developed by Horwitz et. al. in 1986 are two of the most prominent. These measures were designed for secondary and university level language learners. Therefore, I adapted and modified the surveys to create a new composite for use with elementary level English and Spanish learners in a two-way dual immersion setting. This fills an important gap in the scholarship, and will help educators identify the affective barriers language learners are facing and choose instructional strategies to minimize them.

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## Appendix A

### Attitude Motivation Test Battery

The Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was developed by Gardner in 1985 to measure various affective factors. Tables B1 and B2 below shows sample items from the AMTB.

Table B1

#### Interest in Foreign Languages

1. If I were visiting a foreign country I would like to be able to speak the language of the people.
2. Even though Canada is relatively far from countries speaking other languages, it is important for Canadians to learn foreign languages.
3. I wish I could speak another language perfectly.
4. I want to read the literature of a foreign language in the original language rather than a translation.
5. I often wish I could read newspapers and magazines in another language.
6. I would really like to learn a lot of foreign languages.
7. If I planned to stay in another country, I would make a great effort to learn the language even though I could get along in English.
8. I would study a foreign language in school even if it were not required.
9. I enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak other languages.
10. Studying a foreign language is an enjoyable experience.

Table B2

**Integrative Orientation**

1. Studying French can be important to me because it will allow me to be more at ease with fellow Canadians who speak French.
2. Studying French can be important for me because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people.
3. Studying French can be important for me because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate French Canadian art and literature.
4. Studying French can be important for me because I will be able to participate more freely in the activities of other cultural groups.

**Instrumental Orientation**

1. Studying French can be important for me only because I'll need it for my future career.
2. Studying French can be important for me because it will make me a more knowledgeable person.
3. Studying French can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job.
4. Studying French can be important for me because other people will respect me more if I have a knowledge of a foreign language.

**French Class Anxiety**

1. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in our French class.
2. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in our French class.
3. I always feel that the other students speak French better than I do.
4. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my French class.
5. I am afraid the other students will laugh at me when I speak French.

## Appendix B

### Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope in 1986 to measure the students' language learning anxiety. Table A below lists sample items from the 1986 FLCAS "with the percentages of students selecting each alternative" (p. 129).

Table A

FLCAS Items with Percentages of Students Selecting  
Each Alternative

	SA*	A	N	D	SD
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	11**	51	17	20	1
2. I <i>don't</i> worry about making mistakes in language class.	11	23	1	53	12
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	5	16	31	29	19
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	8	27	29	20	16
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	15	47	12	16	11
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	7	19	31	32	12
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	13	25	20	28	13
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	5	35	19	20	21
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	12	37	19	28	4
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	25	17	12	29	16

## Appendix C

## L2 Motivational Self System Components Diagram

In 2005, Csizér and Dörnyei conducted a study in which they analyzed the interactions of the various components they believed to comprise language learner motivation. Diagram C below shows the results of this study (Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005, p. 28).

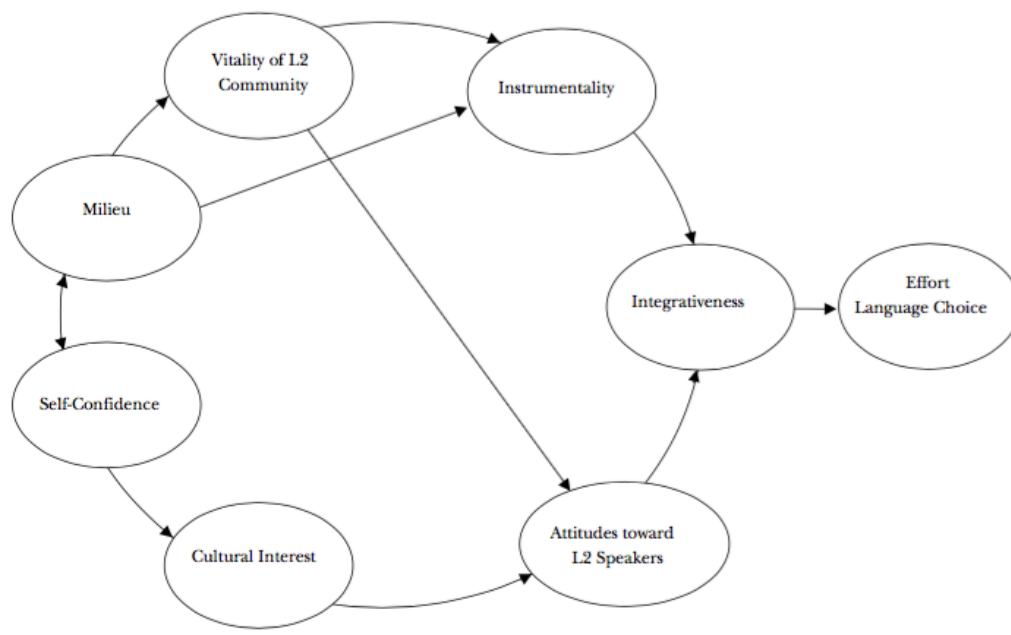
Diagram C

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FIGURE 3

The Interrelationship of the Motivational Variables and the Criterion Measures



## Appendix D

### Sandoval-Pineda's 2011 Adaptation of Gardner's Attitude Motivation Test Battery

For her 2011 dissertation, Sandoval-Pineda adapted Gardner's AMTB to measure language learner motivation in Mexican University Students. Table D below is page one of the Spanish Version of the questionnaire she created (Sandoval-Pineda, 2011, p. 195).

Table D



**SPANISH VERSION**  
Código del estudiante \_\_\_\_\_

**Versión adaptada del *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery***

**I. Instrucciones:**

Nos gustaría conocer tu opinión acerca de cada uno de los siguientes enunciados. **Encierra** en un círculo la alternativa que más se acerque a tu opinión. Por favor no dejes preguntas sin contestar. Utiliza esta escala como referencia.

En total desacuerdo	Moderadamente en desacuerdo	Ligeramente en desacuerdo	Neutral	Ligeramente de acuerdo	Moderadamente de acuerdo	En total acuerdo
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1	Me gustaría hablar muchos idiomas perfectamente.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	Me gusta mucho ir a mi clase de inglés porque mi maestro/a es muy bueno para enseñar su materia.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Estudiar inglés es fabuloso.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Si México no tuviera contacto con países de habla inglesa, sería una gran pérdida para nuestro país.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Estudiar inglés es importante porque me permitirá sentirme cómodo/a cuando me relacione con personas que hablen inglés.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Siento un fuerte deseo por conocer todos los aspectos de la lengua inglesa.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Pongo mucha atención para tratar de entender todo el inglés que veo y escucho.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Estudiar inglés es importante porque lo necesitare en mi desempeño profesional.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Preferiría pasar más tiempo en mi clase de inglés que en otras clases.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Desearía poder leer periódicos, libros y revistas en muchas otras lenguas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Mi maestra/o de inglés es mejor maestra/o que cualquiera de mis otros maestros.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Realmente disfruto aprender inglés.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	La mayoría de los hablantes nativos del inglés son tan amistosos y es tan fácil de llevarse bien con ellos que siento que somos muy afortunados de tenerlos como vecinos.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Siento que estudiar inglés es importante porque me permitiría comunicarme con un número mayor de personas de diferentes culturas en el mundo.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Si por mí fuera, me pasaría todo el tiempo aprendiendo inglés.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Me mantengo al corriente con mi clase de inglés trabajando a diario en ella.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Estudiar inglés es importante porque es indispensable para uno sea reconocido como una persona con educación.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	Desearía tener a muchos hablantes nativos del inglés como amigos.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	Disfruto las actividades de mi clase de inglés más que las de las otras clases.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	Me gustaría mucho aprender muchas lenguas extranjeras.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	Mi maestro/a de inglés tiene un estilo de enseñanza dinámico e interesante.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	La clase de inglés es una parte muy importante del programa de estudios en mi carrera.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	Los hablantes nativos del inglés son muy amables y sociables.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Estudiar inglés es importante porque me permitirá entender y apreciar mejor la cultura angloparlante.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25	Quiero aprender el inglés tan bien hasta que parezca mi lengua materna.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26	Los hablantes nativos del inglés tienen mucho de qué sentirse orgullosos porque han hecho contribuciones valiosas para el mundo.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7