



Walter Ulrika

Perspectives on students' emotions when coming to a foreign language school

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Näkökulmia oppilaiden tunteisiin tullessa vieraskieliseen kouluun (Ulrika Walter)

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Tässä opinnäytetyössä pyritään löytämään näkökulmia oppilaiden tunteisiin, kun he tulevat vieraskieliseen kouluun, jossa heillä ei välttämättä ole edes yhteistä kieltä, jolla kommunikoida. Aluksi pyrin määrittelemään joitakin tämän kirjallisuuskatsauksen kannalta keskeisiä käsitteitä, mutta tutkimuksen kuluessa kävi ilmi, että tunteiden tai toisen/vieraan kielen kaltaisten käsitteiden määrittely on niiden monimutkaisuuden vuoksi lähes mahdotonta. Määrittelyn sijaan pyrinkin tutkimuksessani kuvaamaan näiden käsitteiden moniulotteisuutta. Tunteita ei voida nähdä puhtaasti biologisina, kognitiivisina, kulttuurisina tai sosiaalisina, vaan pikemminkin ilmiönä, jossa nämä näkökohdat ovat vuorovaikutuksessa keskenään. Vieraan ja toisen kielen selkeä erottelu ei myöskään ole mahdollista eikä riittävän inklusiivinen, kun ajatellaan, miten erilaisista lähtökohdista vieraskieliseen kouluun voi tulla.

Tunteiden tutkimisen tärkeyttä kouluympäristössä/opetuksessa esitellään erilaisten tutkimustulosten kautta, jotka käsittelevät tunteiden vaikutusta oppimiseen. Tunnetilan vaikutus oppimiseen on selvä, esimerkiksi nuoremmilla oppilailla on vaara, että he pitävät oppimisprosessin aikana tapahtuvaa jatkuvaa virheiden arviointia ja korjaamista epäonnistumisena, mikä voi käynnistää oppilaan negatiivisten tunteiden noidankehän. Korjaamisen tai arvioinnin pelossa eläminen vaikuttaa varmasti kykyyn keskittyä tai edes yrittää puhua oppituntien aikana. Se voi jopa neurologisesta näkökulmasta vaikuttaa muistiin tai kykyyn hakea esimerkiksi sanastoa muistista. Positiivisten emotionien taas katsotaan lisäävän luovuutta, parantavan ajattelu- ja ongelmanratkaisutaitoja ja jopa laajentavan ajatusprosesseja.

Maahanmuuttajien kasvavan määrän vuoksi tämän opinnäytetyön lopussa suositellaan jatkotutkimusta myös nuorempien oppilaiden tunnetiloista heidän tullessaan vieraskieliseen kouluun. Näissä tutkimuksissa ei tulisi keskittyä vain negatiivisiin tunteisiin eikä myöskään puhtaasti kielen oppimiseen, vaan niissä tulisi olla laajempi näkökulma ympäristön muutokseen oppilaan elämässä.

Aavainsanat: tunteet, vieras kieli, toinen kieli, vieraan kielen ahdistus

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In this thesis the aim is to find perspectives to students' emotions when they are coming to a foreign language school, where there might not even be a common language to communicate with. In the beginning was the attempt to define some concepts central to this literature review, but it was realized that defining concepts like emotion or second/foreign language is a sheer impossibility, due to their complexity. In the end it was clear that it is wiser to describe rather than to define these terms. Emotion cannot be seen purely as biological or cognitive or cultural or social, but rather as a phenomenon, where these aspects are interacting with each other. Also, a clear distinction of foreign and second language is not possible nor inclusive enough, to think of the diverse backgrounds one can have coming to a foreign language school.

The importance of researching emotions in a school setting/education is introduced by presenting study results on the impact of emotions in learning. The impact of the emotional state in the learning is clear. In for example younger students, exists a risk of seeing the constant evaluation and correcting measures of one's mistakes in the learning process, as a failure, which can start a vicious cycle of negative emotions in the student. Living under fear of being corrected or evaluated must have an impact on the ability to concentrate or even try to speak during lessons. It can even from a neurological point of view have an impact on the memory or the ability to retrieve for example vocabulary from the memory. Positive emotions on the other hand are seen to enhance creativity, to improve thinking and problem-solving skills and even to broaden thought processes.

Due to the growing number of immigrants, it is recommended in the end of this thesis to do further research on the emotional states of also younger students when coming to a foreign language school. The focus in these studies should not only be in the negative emotions nor in learning a language but have a broader aspect of the environmental change in the student's life.

Keywords: emotion, foreign language, second language, foreign language anxiety

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Introduction

In August 2021 I had the privilege of working at the Oulu International School (OIS), where I was working as a summer aid and was pointed to help at starting of the *Transition Class* at OIS. The aim of this specific class is to help students, who come from abroad, but do not pass the English test to get signed into a so-called normal class at OIS, to achieve the level of English proficiency needed to get integrated into general classes. Since the families of these students do not plan on staying for good in Finland, they are not advised to go to a Finnish preparatory class. The first class started with ten students, aged 7-14, coming from Japan, Switzerland, Romania, India and Russia. Some of the students did not speak English at all, but for some it was possible to communicate in a satisfying way. After ending my work at the school, I started to reflect on my work experience, and found myself thinking how tough of a situation it must be for the students in this class: coming to a foreign country maybe even without any common language to communicate with. What kind of emotions do they experience? Frustration? Anxiety? Excitement? This experience gave me the starting point for this topic and the drive to learn more about emotions in a setting like this.

Not only my own experience but the realization of a growing population of immigrants or expatriate families, rises the importance of researching the effects of a movement like this. Unfortunately, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, even highlights the significance of this topic, at least from a European perspective. It has also been recognized scientifically that emotions are an important part of education. Different research fields (neurology, psychology, educational science, etc.) have acknowledged that emotions have a significant impact on the learning processes (Lu Li, et al. 2020; Ogasa, 2011). For example, negative emotions have been seen to hinder the learning process in many ways (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014), which will be discussed more in detail in chapter three of this thesis.

The first part of this thesis is about the conceptualization of the terms central to the study of emotions in foreign language learning. The definition of emotion is said to be impossible, due to the complexity of it. In the end it was easier to not define it, but rather to describe the different processes and dimensions of emotions. It is also shortly discussed why emotions are an important part of a educational research. In the second part of the thesis the focus is on the emotional side of coming into foreign-language school. The starting point and setting for this thesis is quite specific and not researched per se. That is why the focus is on the role of emotions in

foreign language learning, which is a well-researched topic, and does to some extent suit this setting. Foreign language anxiety has been studied for a long time, but positive emotions like enjoyment, pride or sense of security are not enough included in the scope of researching emotions in foreign language learning. In the end I am also discussing the importance of studying not only the emotions in learning a foreign language, but also the emotions of leaving one's native country and living in an environment, which language one does not understand.

In this thesis I am looking into to **what the roles of emotions are when learning a foreign language** and **what affects the emotions to arise**. To answer these questions, I made a literature review on the existing research on these topics.

Defining the concepts

It is essential for this thesis to try to give a definition of what emotion is, even though many researchers have in the past highlighted the impossibility to define emotion in a satisfying way:

Emotion is a peculiar word. Nearly everyone thinks, one knows what is meant by it until one tries to define it. Then, practically no-one claims to understand it (Schmidt-Atzert, 1996, p. 25, as cited in Ogasa, 2010, 41. Translated by Walter, 2022).

In the end of this chapter the aim is to have a definition of emotion which fits the context of this research. But also, one key question in this thesis is to think of why it is important to discuss emotions in educational research.

2.1 An attempt to define emotion

When talking about emotion, one can find different words that are sometimes used almost synonymously to it, but which might be understood differently: *feeling*, *mood* and *affect*. The term *feeling* is often understood as something only the individual can describe, since there has not been found a method to access the feelings of a person without having an input from the person itself to tell about the feeling (Ogasa, 2010, p. 43-44). In comparison, emotions can be measured or captured through different indicators like physiological reactions, behavior or the feeling described by the person (Ogasa, 2010, p. 44). Damasio (2000, as cited in Ogasa, 2010, p. 44) also thinks of a feeling being the private/personal or mental experience of an emotion, whereby emotion is seen as the term to describe the visible reactions of an emotion. *Mood* on the other hand can be differentiated from emotion by the duration of it, where moods might last for hours or even days, and emotions significantly last for less time (Ekman, 1994 & Kagan, 1994, as cited in Ogasa, 2010, p. 47). The characteristics of moods are more seen as something of low intensity and the cause behind the mood is not in the focus of attention (Ogasa, 2010, p. 45) and might not even be known. *Affect* is seen as a generic term, which affects the behavior of the individual through emotions, feelings and moods (Ogasa, 2010, p. 47). In this research emotion as a term is the most suitable one, since it is something which can be measured not only through personal recalling, but also through different indicators, and is not too broad (vs. affect).

The Oxford English Dictionary (2022) defines emotion as “any strong mental or instinctive feeling, as pleasure, grief, hope, fear, etc. deriving esp. from one’s circumstances, mood or relationship with others.” The origin of the word *emotion* comes from the Latin word *movere*–

movement, with prefix *e* – away, so together it means moving away, which describes one characteristic of emotion: emotion causes a reaction which ends in an action (Ogasa, 2010, p. 42) like a facial expression or difference in the heart rate. Even though there might not be a common understanding on what exactly emotions are (Sotiria, 2018, 47) the definition given on the Oxford English Dictionary grasps an important understanding of emotion by defining it as a response to one's surroundings and the individual's given position in the world including for example societal, cultural and discursive contexts (Sotiria, 2018, 48). Ogasa (2010, p. 42) reflects on the difficulty to define emotion in a satisfying way, by suggesting that, it derives from the complexity and subjectivity of emotional experiences. The key focus on most of the theories on emotion, is to get an understanding of the mechanism behind emotional experiences and behavior, and to recognize the effect of these mechanisms on the human psyche (Meyer et al., 2001, Bd 1, 40, as cited in Ogasa 2010, p. 52).

Izard (2010) asked 35 scientists from within the study field of emotion to conceptualize emotion, but as expected Izard was not able to get a common understanding of the nature of emotion. One thing where researchers were able to have a common agreement on, is the multidimensionality of emotion, which means that “emotion consists of neural circuits, response systems, and processes that motivate and organize cognition and action.” (Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 2). Izard also pointed out the multiple functions of emotions, which impact the development of a person's adaptive or maladaptive behavior, one's motivation and social interaction (Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 3). Even though emotion is studied in the fields of biology, psycho-evolution, psychophysiology, cognitive psychology, and for example from the perspective of culture, there is one central debate on the causes of emotion: if they are biological or cognitive (Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 4).

From a cognitive perspective an emotion can only occur, if there has been some cognitive processing (Lazarus, 1991; Scherer, 1994; Weiner, 1986; as cited in Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 5). Plutchik (1984, as cited in Ogasa 2010, p. 58) for example sees emotions as complex sequences of reactions to a stimulus, like cognitive assessments, activation of autonomous and central nervous systems and impulses to action. This perspective includes also the social constructivist theory on emotion, where emotions are tightly bound to social interactions/situations (TenHouten, 2021, p. 613). In the biological approach emotions are not seen as being dependent on cognition (Izard, 1989 as cited in Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 5), but can occur automatically (Ekman, 1992a, as cited in Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 5) and are seen as innate capabilities

(TenHouten, 2021, p. 616). Buck (1994) introduces an integrative view, where in humans operate two systems to regulate and activate emotions: firstly, the biologically innate system in which the subcortical brain processes emotional stimuli automatically and involuntarily, and secondly the cognitive system which developed over time through the development of the cortical brain. The cognitive system evaluates the emotional stimulus through one's history in the sociocultural context and assesses if the stimulus is of importance and what its meaning is (Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 5). In other words, the two separate systems complement each other (Borges & Del-Ben, 2019; TenHouten, 2021).

Another aspect to look at this integrative view is to think of primary and secondary emotions, which has also been a central discussion in emotion theories. There is a consensus on the existence of primary emotions also called basic emotions, but the question on how many there are and which they are has been under discussion for a long time (Borges & Del-Ben, 2019, p. 9). Basic emotion theory is an evolutionary theory, where it is suggested that there is a set of basic emotions, which do not need to be learned through cognitive systems, like human language, but are biologically programmed (TenHouten, 2021, p. 616). The research on facial expressions linked to emotions has been one way to study these basic emotions in for example infants (Borges & Del-Ben, 2019; TenHouten, 2021). The discussion of primary emotions implies the existence of secondary emotions. Facial expression studies have not only focused on the basic emotions, but also on the study of secondary emotions. Du et al. (2014, as cited in TenHouten, 2021, p. 618) studied through facial expressions second-order mixed expression, in other words secondary emotions, which are mixtures of basic emotions, which need some kind of cognitive processing. If secondary emotions are seen as mixtures of primary emotions, like creating new colors out of the primary colors, both perspectives, biological and cognitive, are central to the study of emotions.

Another way to describe emotions and emotional processes is a multicomponent model, which is introduced in Ogasa's book (2010, p. 48-49). She introduces four different components: affective, cognitive, physiological, expressive and motivational. The affective component is seen as the subjective experience of an emotion; the cognitive component includes the perception and evaluation of an emotional situation and the effect on the activation of the brain in naming the emotion and the strategic emotional action regulation; the physiological component includes the different physical reactions in the body, like heartrate, blood pressure, sweating, blushing or breathing, when experiencing an emotion; the expressive component constitutes of facial expressions, gestures and postures; the motivational component describes the need to search

for pleasant situations and to avoid unpleasant situations, which are based on the emotional experiences of situations (Ogasa, 2010, p. 48-49).

In the end it is hard to find a definition of emotion, but it is rather easier to think of a description. Emotions are complex processes, which are affected by different dimensions, like physiological and cognitive components, and cannot be separated as purely cognitive or biological processes. Taking into account the focus of this research, it is crucial to be aware of the complexity and subjectivity of emotions and understand that there are several factors affecting emotions to arise and be formed.

2.2 Emotions in a school setting

Emotions are part of everyone's life and all organizations, including schools (Hargreaves, 1998, 835). Krashen (1982, as cited in Ogasa, 2011, p. 24) developed the "affective-Filter-Hypothesis", where he attempts to explain the differences in learning outcomes in learners, even though all get the same input through for example a teacher. Based on this hypothesis a learner's learning outcome is linked to their affective filter, which includes three categories: motivation, self-confidence and fear. This filter can hinder the input to reach one's LAD (language acquisition device, a concept proposed by Chomsky in the 1960s) (Ogasa, 2011, p. 24). This means, when the motivation and attitude towards the learning object is optimal, the affective filter makes it easier for the information to reach the LAD (Ogasa, 2011, p. 24). Ogasa (2011, p. 25) brings up a critic towards the one-sided research on cognitive concepts, like language learning, where there has been the thought of learning being purely a cognitive process. Recent research has raised the thought of cognitive processing in the brain being accompanied also by brain structures, which are in charge of the development of emotions (Ogasa, 2011, p. 25) This means there might not be any cognitive processing/learning without it being in contact with the emotional processes in the brain (Ogasa, 2011, p. 25).

When looking more into the neuropsychological aspect of learning and emotions different research papers conclude that emotions have a significant impact on the learning processes, which is acknowledged by both neurology and psychology (Li, Gow & Zhou, 2020; Ogasa, 2011). During the last decade neuroscience has made it possible to learn more about the processes in the brain (Li et al., 2020, p. 232), and this has been also realized in the educational field. The research on the interconnected nature of the brain has raised the question of emotions being a key aspect of the different ways of learning (Li et al., 2020, p. 231). The limbic system of the

brain (including the mesolimbic system, the Hippocampus and the Amygdala) has a central part in not just emotions but also in memory (Ogasa, 2011, p. 109), and memory on the other hand plays a significant part in learning, for example a language. Ogasa (2011, p. 109) still raises the question on how exactly the individual experiences, as emotional factors, impact, for example the language learning situation, in a concrete way. In other words which emotions and in which ways they impact the language learning process.

Zembylas (2007, p. 58) also brings up the missing discussion on different methodologies when researching emotions in educational contexts and presents in his paper three theoretical approaches to study emotions in an educational setting: the individual approach, the sociocultural approach and the interactional approach. The individual approach consists of three different views (intrapsychic, psychodynamic and cognitivist) on how emotions are understood. Emotions in this approach are typically understood as instantaneous and are seen as something that happens to passive individuals, who do not have an impact on how they feel (Parkinson, 1995 in Zembylas, 2007, p. 60). The second approach, sociocultural, is so to say the opposite to the individual approach, where emotions are not seen purely as an internal state, but as constructions, which are not genetically determined, but based on evaluations and interpretations on a specific situation (Zembylas, 2007, p. 61-62). These evaluations and interpretations are seen to stem from earlier experiences, knowledge and beliefs (Zembylas, 2007, p. 62). The third approach, the interactional one, takes into account both the individual and the psychodynamic dimensions as well as the social and cultural aspects of emotions (Zembylas, 2007, p. 63). Zembylas (2007, p. 64) suggests that in educational research should be paid attention to the varying contexts of emotions and highlights the role of language, bodily performance and culture, have on the constitution of emotions in the classroom. That is why, also in this research the interactionalist approach is heavily influencing the way the topic of emotions in an educational setting is covered.

2.3 What is understood as foreign language and second language?

This chapter examines the differences or similarities of learning a foreign language versus a second language. Can these terms be used interchangeably?

Foreign language is in the Oxford Dictionary (cited 17.3.2023) defined as another language than one's own. Ehlich (2009) discusses one way how foreign language can be understood. *Foreign* as an expression indicates on something being distant and can be seen as a relational

expression, tight to point of reference (Ehlich, 2009, p. 26-27). When speaking of language being foreign, it could be seen as foreignness *for* an individual, who feels distant to the foreign language (Ehlich, 2009, p. 27), point of reference is the individual who thinks the language being foreign to itself.

Vivian Cook (2009, p. 151) introduces the coexistence of two languages in the same mind as a central fact in second language acquisition research. Historically has been a thought that the two languages, the first and second one, are separate and that even the first language might have been hindering the learning of the second one (Cook, 2009, p. 152). This view has been changing during the growing amount in research of second language acquisition, where it is nowadays acknowledged, that the two languages are in a constant relationship and impacting each other in several ways (Cook, 2009, p. 153-154). But what if the so-called target language is the third one? Hawkins (2005, p. 26) lists many possibilities in naming for example English as a second language (ESL): ESOL (English as Second or Other Language), EAL (English as an Additional Language), ELL (English Language Learner) or even LES (Limited English Speaking) or NNES (Non-Native English Speakers). In Hawkins' article the terms EAL and ELL are selected since those were seen as the most inclusive ones, which do not indicate for example that the learner would lack knowledge. Just the fact that there are several efforts to just name the learning of an additional language, raises the question of the impossibility to even define it in a suitable way.

A proposed distinction between second language acquisition and foreign language acquisition is introduced by Ehlich (2009, p. 38), where SLA is seen as a natural process based on living in a lingual, different from one's own, environment, and FLA happens in institutions through teaching. At the same time Ehlich (2009, p. 38) discusses how these different types of learning a language have been mixed in various ways, which makes the distinction more complex. Van Els (2005, p. 971) criticizes a distinction between FL and SL, since it can only be applied to a few societies. The learning of English by Dutch speaking students serves as an example: the learning of English in the Netherlands is considered as foreign language learning, but students receive extracurricular support of English nowadays beyond classroom teaching (van Els, 2005, p. 971), especially through social media etc., which for example does not fit the distinction made by Ehlich mentioned above, where English should be learned or taught only in for example the school. Even the Oxford Dictionary (cited 17.3.2023) grasps the complexity of distinguishing these two languages from another by defining a second language as a language that is the *first foreign language* learned. This provokes to think when does a first language then turns into

a second language or can there even be made such a distinction. This is why also in this thesis it was chosen to use these terms parallel to each other and to not make a distinction of those terms.

The role of emotions when coming to a foreign-language school

This chapter examines the different emotions which might arise in students when starting in a school, where there is no common language to communicate. Since there is not research made that much in such a specific context, the main studies chosen for this chapter (or thesis?) are linked generally to the emotions in language learning. Language is the most central key in interacting with peers and teachers, but what happens in students' minds when this is not a possibility?

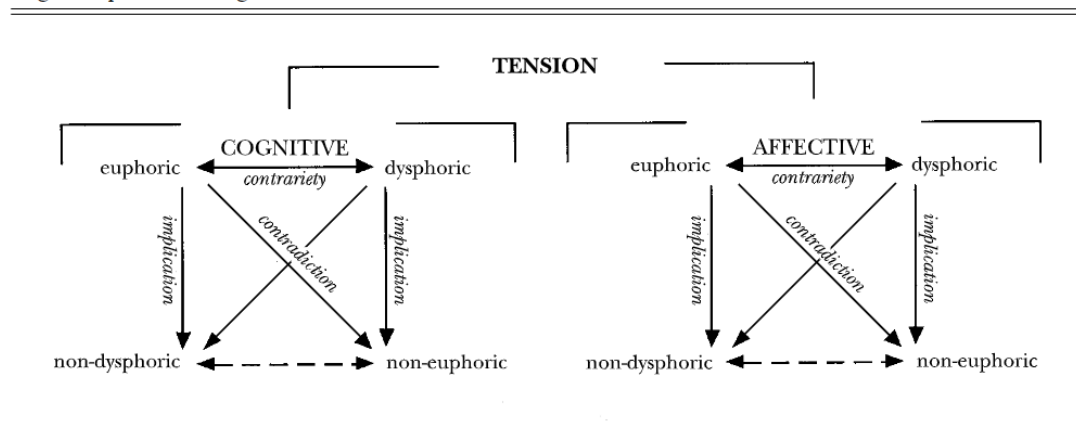
3.1 Foreign language anxiety

Language anxiety is one of the most researched emotions in language learning due to its large impact on the learning process (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 33; Arnold & Brown, 1999 as cited in Dörnyei, 2010, p. 198). Anxiety might be seen mostly as a negative factor, but there are different ways to see and define anxiety. Could it be a motivational component or is it a personality trait or an emotion (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 198)? Anxiety is a complex term which has different characteristics (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 198). Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986, p. 128) conclude foreign language anxiety also as a complex phenomenon consisting of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors. It is an emotional reaction while learning or using a second language (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 27, as cited in Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 238). Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) distinct the negative/positive thought of anxiety as dysphoric tension, which is a state marked by feelings of unease and discomfort, and as euphoric tension, which is a state marked by feelings of well-being and cheerfulness (Oxford English Dictionary, cited 11th of May, 2022).

Talking about anxiety one must distinct it to beneficial versus inhibitory anxiety, and state versus trait anxiety (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 198). In the distinction between beneficial or facilitative and inhibitory anxiety the focus is on the outcome of the anxiety: does it promote or inhibit performance. Anxiety does not always hinder the learning, on the contrary, it can even promote the learning process especially at milder levels where effort to keep on working on one's language skills might be an outcome of anxiety (MacIntyre, 2002 as cited in Dewaele & MacIntyre 2014, p. 199). Dörnyei (2010, p. 198) sees the affective, in other words the emotional, part as a facilitative factor for learning. Worry on the other hand is seen as a cognitive dimension which might hinder the learning process. There are two different domains in the minds of the human being in which anxiety comes up: affective and cognitive. Both domains, due to Spielmann and

Radnofsky (2001, p. 263), have a dysphoric (negative) and euphoric (positive) dimension. Affective is the emotional part of anxiety, or tension like Spielmann & Radnofsky wanted to define it, where something in the learning process is seen as enjoyable or not. Cognitively something can be seen as beneficial for the learning process, but not enjoyable in the affective sense,

FIGURE 1
Logical Squares for Cognitive and Affective Tension



something makes sense but does not feel like it. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014, p. 261) studied foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) and concluded that enjoyment and anxiety are independent emotions, but that there is also a relation between those two dimensions. They can coexist and are not seen as opposite ends of one dimension.

Another component of defining anxiety is if it is seen as a trait or state anxiety. Trait anxiety refers to personality traits, which means it is seen as a stable predisposition to get anxious in stressful situation (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 198), this means there is constant risk of getting anxious and there is a higher tendency to have chronic anxiety, in persons who have this kind of a personality trait (Ferreira & Silva, 2016, p.2). Whereas in state anxiety a person reacts emotionally from moment to moment to the current situation at hand (Dörnyei, 2010, p. 198). This state is linked to the autonomic nervous system and its heightened activity, where the intensity of state anxiety varies in intensity and is defined by the consciously subjective realization of the felt tension (Ferreira & Silva, 2016, p. 2).

What kind of a role does anxiety play in the language learning process? Students who come to a foreign language school, are starting first with learning the target language. Through language you're able to be part of the society: "language learning is the process of becoming a member

of a sociocultural group.” (Willett, 1995, p. 475, as cited in Spielmann&Radnofsky, 2001, p. 274). Language learning as a process threatens an individual’s self, which might put the individual in an unpleasant state (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 125). Spielmann & Radnofsky (2001) researched participants at the beginner’s class at the French School of Middlebury College, where students came for a seven-week intensive study period to learn French. One main finding in studying the arising tensions in learning a language was the reinvention of oneself. With this they mean a metamorphosis where there happens a shift or change in oneself when using the second language. Guiora & Acton (1979, p. 199, as cited in Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001, p. 267) named this psychological construct *language ego*. In Spielmann’s & Radnofsky’s (2001) research participants brought up the linguistic limitations to outlive their true personalities in the target language, which forced them to develop a L2 (second language) self. One participant in the study named these new selves as *masks* (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001, p. 267). The term mask describes the feeling of becoming or acting differently compared to the behavior when using one’s native language (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001, p. 267). Li and Girvan (2004) described the outcome of this metamorphosis as *the third place*, where a foreign language class environment could be transformed into an intercultural place, which is not tied to the constraints of the target native group. The thought of the third place also opens up the potential of an individual to be more than a sum of two cultures (Li & Girvan, 2004, pp. 13).

When thinking of a process where one must reconstruct oneself to become part of a society whose language is to be learned, it is quite understandable that it arises feelings of anxiety. It threatens the student’s sense of security and self-esteem and might arise, while communicating in a foreign language, a feeling of being incompetent or ridiculous due to the lack of the ability to express themselves to the level of the ability to communicate in one’s native language (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 33; Spielmann&Radnofsky, 2001, p. 268). Ogasa (2011, p. 192) brings up in her study about second language learners in Germany, that the fear of change in one’s self-esteem in a negative way through making a mistake, which takes a toll on their image. The question asked by Spielmann & Radnofsky (2001, p. 267) is the type of anxiety, or tension, it arouses and what kind of outcomes it has on the process, which are to be discussed further on in this thesis.

3.2 What affects the emotions to arise?

Reading about emotions in foreign/second language research, it is mostly about anxiety. Another negative emotion, the lack of enjoyment, comes also up in research, but the question to ask is what is behind the emotion: is it boredom, irrelevance to one's own life/learning, hatred towards the subject or something else (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 242)? Hager (2011, p. 215) describes the process behind getting emotional as a failed attempt in carrying out one's plan and achieving the sense of control over one's surroundings, which is not always possible after which the individual has to make adjustments in the neurological system (Pribram, 1971, p. 208 as cited in Hager, 2011, p. 215) and therefore gets emotional. Henry & Stephens (1977, as cited in Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2011, p. 271) bring up the effect of a stressor, which varies based on the ability to adjust and take advantage of the stressful situation.

Gregersen (2003, as cited in Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016, p. 239) brings up the propensity to anxiety in the language learning process due to its focus on error, seen as a key source of anxiety, and the correction of those errors which are essential to the learning process of a language. Horwitz et al. (1986, p.127) defined the fear of negative evaluation as one FLA type. Here they defined the fear of negative evaluation not only in the sense of test-taking, which is another FLA type in their research, but in a broader sense where the student might feel constantly evaluated negatively in any social situation, for example from peers. The challenge with error correction or evaluation is that students are seeing it always as a failure (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128, 130). After repeatedly getting or interpreting the constant feedback as negative, language learning anxiety seems to arise (Atay & Kurt, 2006; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; von Wörde, 2003 cited in Hager, 2011, p. 204). The teacher is seen as one factor in language learning anxiety (Frantzen & Magnan, 2005; von Wörde, 2003 cited in Hager, 2011, p. 204) and there has not been a lot of focus on for example the teachers' response to students' emotions (Song & Park, 2021, p. 254). Seikkula-Leino (2002, p. 130) brings up, in her study about immigrant students in Finland, that their self-esteem was influenced by the feeling of being an outsider since they were not sure of the consequences of their actions on others. The uncertainty about what other people/peers think can easily lower self-esteem, especially the sense of community and safety.

Seikkula-Leino (2002, p. 131) brings up the self-consciousness of second language learners where she sees that the developmental psychology factors could to some extent explain the low self-esteem of L2 learners. Lado's *Linguistic Across Cultures* introduces the assumption of the

connection between the first language habits and the second language learning process, whose possible problems are linked to the first-language habits (Lado, 1957, as cited in Li & Girvan, 2004, p. 2). The acquisition of language, which is one of the developmental psychology factors, builds complex mental operations without one cannot communicate (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). The communication in L2 challenges one's self-concept as a capable communicator and thus affect the L2 learners' self-esteem, which was found to be in Seikkula-Leino's study significantly lower in the students studying in a foreign language compared to the one's studying in their first language (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128; Seikkula-Leino, 2002, p. 131).

Earlier on in this thesis has been discussed the L2-self, which is linked to the feeling of someone else speaking (Horwitz et al., 1983, p. 128). When a person is restricted to express oneself in the target language, one might start to develop another language ego. This does not necessarily mean it is negative since someone can search for comfort in thinking of someone else is speaking and not their true self (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). But on the other hand, it can raise feelings of discomfort and frustration to the point where one starts to feel anxious in a negative way (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 33; Spielmann&Radnofsky, 2001, p. 268).

Another aspect to look at when talking about the reasons and triggers behind the emotional states of the students is their background. Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001, p. 273) point out the individuality in the emotional state. Based on their research they found out that the tension is closely linked to students' personal expectations and their beliefs about learning. In Dewaele & MacIntyre's research (2014, p. 263) they found a coherence between the participants cultural background (North American, Asian, South American/Arabs/European) to the level of joy and anxiety. Asians experienced the least joy but the highest anxiety in foreign language learning, on the other hand North American experienced low levels of anxiety and high levels of enjoyment. South Americans, Arabs and Europeans scored in the middle with the same amount of enjoyment and anxiety in foreign language learning. Stephan & Stephan (2002 cited in Hager, 2011, p. 194) linked the cultural background to the cognitive structures which are controlled by it through generating the structures that process information. According to Stephan & Stephan, affect is shaped by culture through the atmosphere on how emotions are acceptable to show and expressed in one's culture. Hager (2011) concludes in his book that it depends on the culture how one thinks of an emotion being positive or negative and brings up the emotional complexity, which is exists more in East Asian than Western cultures (Schimmack et al., 2002, as cited in Hager, 2011, p. 199). Even though individuals in every society and culture thrive to better their lives and thus have common key psychological motivations (Heine, 2007, as cited in

Hager, 2011, p.216), Hager (2011, p. 217) claims that cultural meaning systems do influence the human motivation.

3.3 The impact of emotions in the learning process

Emotions, both positive and negative, are an important part of the human being and their cognition which impacts learning (Hager, 2011, p. 194). Positive and negative emotions have different effects on the learning process, which is why there is made a distinction between the positive and negative emotions in this chapter (Hager, 2011, p. 194, 198). Pavlenko (2005, p. 32) rephrases the affective-filter-hypothesis, explained earlier in this thesis, where a language learner with a positive attitude and low anxiety can reach a high proficiency compared to one with high anxiety and negative attitude, where the learner's input to learn is affected by the negativity and anxiety. It is important to be aware of the context in this research where the focus is on students coming to a totally foreign language school, where the impact of different emotions is not only on the language learning process but on all learning in the school since every subject and the whole environment is in a foreign language. Song & Park (2021, p. 263) bring up the environment in where language learning happens. It does not only happen in the language classroom but in the students' social relations (Seikkula-Leino, 2002, p.131). The effect of learning a subject matter in the foreign language has also an impact on learning to operate in the foreign language, but to enable this kind of a process, students need to be active and capable of a process like this (Seikkula-Leino, 2002, p. 131).

Negative emotions have been seen to hinder the learning process in many ways and especially FLA (foreign language anxiety) can be seen as deceptive and as the factor which obstructs the learning process the most (Arnold & Brown, 1999, p. 2 as cited in Dörnyei, 2010, p. 198; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 238-242). Hager (2011, p. 203) gives a good example of the vicious circle which anxiety, or in other words dysphoric tension, might put the language learner into. Communication apprehension, a kind of shyness which indicates fear or anxiety to communicate with people (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127), affects the performance negatively, which builds up anxiety after experiencing failing time after time and then becomes foreign language anxiety and FLA affects in the end again the performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; von Würde, 2003; as cited in Hager, 2011, p. 203). Arnold & Brown (1999, p. 2, as cited in Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 238) bring up the neurological effect on memory of FLA through disrupting the necessary functioning of the prefrontal lobe of the brain. This affects for example

the ability to retrieve vocabulary during communication which again leads to communication apprehension, the willingness to communicate (MacIntyre & Seeroul, 2015, as cited in Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 238). Ogasa (2010) presents in her study analysis that negative feelings in general affect the language learners' ability to concentrate and willingness to learn. She draws the conclusion that the inability to concentrate and the unwillingness to learn is due to the feeling of unease. A learner's organism gets the signal of unease and must decide on what kind of action the individual must take, which is either to search to get to the bottom of the feeling arisen or to escape it (Ogasa, 2010, p. 194). Some language learners with FLA allege to hear some kind of a *buzz* when hearing the foreign language, which indicates that the more anxious a learner is the more difficulty one has, to segregate the sounds and structures of the target language (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 126). In the end, some of the concrete outcomes of dysphoric tension could be fleeing the learning task by engaging in escapist activities like skipping classes or homework or just zooming out in the lesson and not concentrating (Bailey, 1983; Chastain, 1975; Kleinmann 1977; Scovel 1978, as cited in Pavlenko, 2005, p. 33; Ogasa, 2010, p. 194).

Anxiety does not always affect the behavior or learning process in a negative way, but the frustration the language learner experiences might motivate the learner to study even more (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127). As mentioned above anxiety is a complex phenomenon which can also be seen as a positive emotion. Positive emotions, like enjoyment, are linked to playfulness, creativity and going out of one's comfort zone, which all are important in language learning due to the connection of for example play with constructing social bonds and one's brain development (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 220). Also, Isen (2008, as cited in Hager, 2011, p. 198-199) highlights the impact of positive feelings in the learning process through improvement in thinking, efficiency and thoroughness emerging in for example better problem-solving skills. In Song & Park's (2021, p. 246) study on emotional scaffolding they emphasize the importance of security and excitement in the promotion of interactions among language learners. Fredrickson (2001, p. 219) introduces the *broaden-and-build* theory, where positive emotions, like joy, contentment, pride, interest and love, broaden an individual's transient thought-action resource and build one's physical, intellectual, social and psychological resources. In testing this theory Fredrickson (2001, p. 221) finds prove to the broadening of thought processes after experiencing positive emotions: it does widen the variety of thought and actions that come to mind. This broadening, connected to positive emotions and searching for positive meaning in ordinary events, builds an individual's psychological resilience and emotional well-being (Fredrickson,

2001, p. 223). Through the lens of this theory, positive emotions enhance a student's well-being, which does have an impact also on learning outcomes.

Discussion

In this thesis my aim was to find perspectives to students' emotions when they are coming to a foreign language school, where there might not even be a common language to communicate with. I started by trying to define some concepts central to this literature review and realized that defining concepts like emotion or second/foreign language is a sheer impossibility, due to their complexity. In the end it was clear that it is more wise to describe rather than to define these terms. Throughout history there has been different attempts to define emotion, but in recent years it has been acknowledged that an integrative view on this matter is getting closer to its reality. Emotion cannot be seen purely as biological or cognitive or cultural or social, but rather as a phenomenon, where these aspects are interacting with each other. What comes to foreign and second language, it became obvious, that it is hard to make a clear distinction between these two. These terms were not used consistently in the research I investigated and were mostly used interchangeably without proper reasoning. In the end I raised the question of when does a foreign language turn into a second language. Linked to the starting point of this thesis, I think a central question is: when a student comes to a foreign language school in a foreign language country, is the starting point of the teacher to teach a foreign language or a second language? Or does this even play a role in the teacher's pedagogical approaches?

The reason this literature review consists of mostly research on foreign or second language acquisition, is due to the lack of research of students' emotions generally in learning who come to a foreign language school/environment. However, as language learning is one of the first key things in integrating to a new society, the use of research on foreign language and second language acquisition can be justified in this research. It became obvious that the most researched emotion in FLA/SLA (foreign/second language acquisition) is anxiety, generally as a negative emotion. Anxiety all in all is a complex emotion and can be even split into several emotions or feelings underlying it. When thinking of the distinction of a feeling and an emotion, I ponder if anxiety might be even more a feeling than an emotion, since it mostly is expressed as a feeling - "I feel anxious". Compared to for example fear or joy, which can be expressed through using it as a verb - "I fear" or "I enjoy". Of course, this does vary from language to language, to which can be drawn a link to the cultural dimension of experiencing foreign language anxiety. Students' backgrounds are seen to be a factor in the way and in which intensity anxiety or also joy is experienced. I think it can also be linked to learning in general since students' personal

expectations and beliefs about learning influence their emotional state (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001). Other aspects in emotional arising are the focus on error in learning a language and the process of constructing a new so-called language ego, which understandably raises feelings of discomfort, but can also be seen as positive process of integration. Anxiety does not have to be seen always as a negative feeling but can also have positive outcomes in the learning process. This angle to research anxiety, was underrepresented in the chosen research for this thesis.

When learning a language, the focus on error is one of the key sources in anxiety. There is a constant evaluation of the use of the target language and a teacher and maybe even peers, are in a constant readiness state to correct the errors made by others. Especially in younger students, exists a risk of seeing this constant evaluation and correcting measures as a failure, which can start a vicious cycle of negative emotions in the student. Living under fear of being corrected or evaluated must have an impact on the ability to concentrate or even try to speak during lessons. It can even from a neurological point of view have an impact on the memory or the ability to retrieve for example vocabulary from the memory. Positive psychology on the other hand is more and more integrated into educational research and there can be seen the effect of positive emotions in the learning. Positive emotions are seen to enhance creativity, to improve thinking and problem-solving skills and even to broaden thought processes. There is plenty of research on the effects of positive emotions, but not so much in the scope of foreign language teaching or learning.

The impact of the emotional state in the learning is clear, that is why I see it as an important factor to consider as a teacher. Especially thinking of the setting, where a student voluntarily or involuntarily, comes to a foreign school with a foreign language, it is crucial to consider the emotional processes of the student. Only through realizing and including the aspects of emotion being a central part of every human being in one's pedagogy, a student can feel safe enough to learn and to start building a new identity as bi- or multilingual. As a teacher it is important to see the possible lack of a common language to communicate not just as a hindrance, but also as a possibility to create an environment where everyone can learn from each other.

Due to the growing number of immigrants, it is recommended to do further research on the emotional states of also younger students when coming to a foreign language school. The focus in these studies should not only be in the negative emotions nor in learning a language but have a broader aspect of the environmental change in the student's life.

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