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CHAPTER 8

EXPLAINING AFFECTIVITY IN SECOND/FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Danuta Gabryś-Barker

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The affective dimension of language learning is a very complex and extensive area to be covered in one chapter. Thus, discussion of it here has to be limited to just an indication and sketch of the major factors that constitute learner affectivity, which are well-covered in other sources, and to expanding on less well-known but I believe equally important areas. The chapter starts with the presentation of argument in favour of the holistic nature of learning, seen as a combination of cognition and affectivity, but giving primacy to the latter. This complementary nature of the two dimensions is argued for by numerous psychological and, more recently, neurological research findings. Next, the chapter overviews the major affective factors such as selected personality traits (extroversion and introversion, anxiety, self-esteem and empathy), motivation to learn a FL and attitudes to the target language community (TLC). The concept of appraisal systems is discussed at greater length as I believe it is not often enough referred to as a significant dimension of language learning in the literature. It exemplifies the role of **great sensitivity to personal and contextual circumstances** as the reason for the complexity of the affective domain (Ben-Ze'ev 2000). Despite the fact that psychological research has been interested in appraisals for a long time, applications of this research have not found their way into the theory and practice of foreign language teaching and learning.

Second language acquisition and foreign language learning are complex processes as they comprise cognitive dimensions (thinking and conceptualizing

new constructs), educational experiences (or immersion) and affective functioning. The focus of this chapter is on affectivity, defined by psychology as “consisting of four basic prototypes: emotions, moods, sentiments, and affective traits” (Ben-Ze’ev 2000: 114–115). This text looks at the emotions and affective traits of an individual as constituting the major factor in cognition, self-evaluation and motivation to act (to learn). The interest in affectivity in educational contexts appeared with the development of humanistic psychology of Rogers (1969) among others, who saw education as overtly interested in the cognitive aspect of an individual disregarding the affective dimension. The humanistic psychologists “stressed the need to unite the cognitive and affective domains in order to educate the whole person” (Arnold 1999: 5). It followed from this ideology that other scholars (Moskowitz or Stevick as perhaps the key figures) introduced a humanistic approach in second/foreign language learning and unconventional methods took SL/FL classrooms by storm. Examples of this are Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Total Physical Response and Counselling Language Learning (for a detailed description see Larsen-Freeman 1986). They accepted the importance of individualisation, autonomy and the affective states of the learner as crucial to his/her learning success.

It is especially in the context of language learning that affectivity plays a dominant role, as language is a vehicle for the communication and expression of self. Affectivity, emotions and feelings in educational contexts, have been considered major variables in obtaining successful outcomes in teaching and learning processes since the humanistic approach was introduced. Numerous (mostly psychological) studies reporting on the role of motivation and goal-orientation and generally affective personality factors (for example self-confidence and esteem, and attitudes) highlight the fact that the affective domain has to be the centre of interest both of teachers trying to create conditions conducive to learning and of learners themselves, in order to make them recognize their own emotions and feelings and how they influence their success or determines their failure (Gabryś-Barker in press).

Language learning processes are context-dependent, that is why they are very different in the two environments: that of a second language in the target language context (acquisition mostly through immersion) and that of a foreign language which is learnt through formal instruction in the classroom. These two processes are not only cognitively different; the differences are visible at the level of affectivity. This chapter focuses on the latter, that is to say, the context of FL instruction as relevant for Polish learners of English.

8.2 DEFINING AFFECTIVITY

Following Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia's (1964) understanding of the concept and its range, Brown (2000) defines affectivity at the level of **receiving**, **responding**, **valuing**, **organization of values** and **value system** itself (Table 1).

Table 1 Understanding affectivity (following Brown 2000: 143–144)

Level	Description
Receiving	"Persons must be aware of the environment surrounding them and be conscious of situations, phenomena, people, objects; be willing to receive – to tolerate a stimulus, not avoid it – and give a stimulus their controlled or selective attention."
Responding	"[...] committing themselves in at least some small measure to a phenomenon or a person. Such responding in one dimension may be in acquiescence, but in another, higher dimension the person is willing to respond voluntarily without coercion, and then to receive satisfaction from that response."
Valuing	"[...] placing worth on a thing, behavior, or a person. Valuing takes on characteristics of beliefs or attitudes as values are internalized. Individuals do not merely accept a value to the point of being willing to be identified with it, but commit themselves to the value to pursue it, and want it, finally, to the point of conviction."
Organization of values	"Organization of values into a system of beliefs, determining interrelationships among them, and establishing a hierarchy of values within the system."
Value system	"[...] individuals become characterized by and understand themselves in terms of their value systems. Individuals act consistently in accordance with the values they have internalized and integrate beliefs, ideas, and attitudes into a total philosophy or world view."

The roles of affectivity and its expression (emotions) are described in the following words:

First, they serve as interpersonal communication mechanisms. They communicate behavioural tendencies and intentions, regulating social behaviour. Second, they are internal goal management mechanisms. They co-ordinate mental and physical activities whose role is to satisfy individual's goals in an unpredictable environment. Hence, they regulate and monitor goal-directed behaviour.

Third, they are behaviour-preparation mechanisms with distinct emotions connected with distinct desired behaviour. (Piechurska-Kuciel 2008: 24)

It seems from the above that affectivity is omnipresent at every stage of an individual's performance, where cognition (thinking) interacts with emotions. It colours the action undertaken, its course and effects, and also importantly evaluation of it. The question then arises, what is the relation between the two dimensions, cognition and affectivity?

8.3 COGNITION VS EMOTION

Psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic research demonstrate that there is interaction between the "thinking" brain and the "feeling" brain and that furthermore the information entering the brain is received first by the emotional brain and filtered through it (Schumann 1997). It has been known for quite some time now which parts of the brain are responsible for the processing of emotions. It was in the 1940s when neurologists observed that the removal or disconnection of the part of the lower brain (the prefrontal cortex) results in lack of emotional processing in a patient:

The prefrontal cortex, which is the part of the neocortex, what Goleman calls the "thinking brain", interacts with an evolutionary older part of the brain called the limbic system – what Goleman calls the "emotional brain". A part of limbic system called amygdala is, in Goleman's words, "the seat of all passions", and it has been in the identification of the function of this region that scientists have begun to understand the paths that emotions take in forming. (Gabriel 2000: 2)

Affectivity functions as a stimulus for any action and type of approach taken, as well as a monitor and controller of cognitive processing, grounded in an individual learning situation, which is influenced by not only the person with his/her character complexity but also by the context in which it takes place, and by individual on-going evaluation of the learning process and outcome [...]" (Efklides and Volet 2005: 378). At every stage of language processing emotions and feelings are omnipresent. For example, in a classroom context, they are most significant for success and failure in learning at the stage of input, the first exposure to a task, language, instruction received, and in general, a situation itself. The processing at the exposure stage can be described as a three-phase process: pre-perception, perception and the attention-noticing stage.

The pre-perception stage, the so-called "alertness stage", shows "a general predisposition to be involved in the learning task, so-called "pre-actional stage" (Dörnyei 2002). According to Manolopoulou-Sergi (2004: 432), what can be seen at this stage of input are

motivational influences which might inhibit learners from being involved in the task at this pre-actional stage [...] such as various goal properties, values associated with the learning process, attitudes, expectancy of success or failure, learner beliefs and strategies, environmental support or hindrance”.

Of course, the picture may be reversed. The task itself may have a facilitative power and create a positive attitude. However positivity works best if it precedes the given learning situation and a learner is willing to get involved in it as “attitudes prepare individuals to evaluate the experience of the language situation/outcome before they actually get involved with the learning experience and therefore, react to it in a fairly stereotyped way” (Monolopoulou-Sergi 2004: 432).

At the pre-perception stage the learning goals and performance goals will be formulated by a learner. The learner’s focus on learning goals is shown by various studies as more conducive to learning success than when the emphasis is on performance and achievement. As stated in Gabryś-Barker (2010: 58–59), the focus on each of the goals will result in different approaches to a task:

Learning goals are seen as challenging the ability (even if it is perceived as low) one has and promote risk taking as the tasks/skill to be developed by it is interesting/novel/important (etc.) enough.

Performance goals promote defensive/withdrawal strategies if one’s ability is seen as low and the ultimate goal of the task (as seen/appraised by an individual) is evaluation of his/her ability/result of the performance.

The perception stage of the input exposure is a stage of processing determined by focus on the learning goals vs the performance goals. This approach may be described as either open to input or activation of switch-off mechanisms or of limited perception both in bottom-up and top-down processing (Gabryś-Barker in press). Only selected elements of the input will be attended to and consequently, noticed and possibly stored in the long term memory (LTM), and hence, open to further processing, as stated by noticing hypothesis. This selection will not only be determined by the cognitive factors, but also affective ones resulting from the past experience and present appraisal of it. So it can be predicted that the input stage will have a direct impact on the later stages of central processing and the output stage, as it will “enhance or block the learner’s intention to be involved in the task or their strategic approach to the task” (Manolopoulou-Sergi 2004: 436, quoted in Gabryś-Barker in press).

8.4 THE NEURAL BASIS OF EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS: VERBAL INTELLIGENCE VS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

It can also be stated unequivocally that affectivity and emotion have a neural basis, since they are demonstrated by certain physio-anatomical symptoms of bodily behaviour and reactions. For example, when angry or anxious our body tells us (and others) that we are angry (a red face, flushes, trembling hands, loud voice, etc.). Neurolinguistics, with its focus on investigation of the structure of the brain and ways of activation in different contexts and for different purposes, provides preliminary evidence of the way affectivity works and shows what the connections of the so-called “emotional brain” (LeDoux 1996) and the cognitive functioning of an individual, the so-called “thinking brain”, are like. The use of neuroimaging techniques has allowed scientists to observe that there are specific areas of the brain responsible for forming and processing emotions – the amygdala (a part of limbic system) and separate ones responsible for cognitive functions – the prefrontal cortex. Various research projects (among them LeDoux 1996) demonstrate that there is interaction between “the two brains” and furthermore that the information entering the brain is received first by the emotional brain and filtered through it. So it may be assumed that success in learning (in this case of a foreign language) is all emotionally-driven (Schumann 1997, Gabryś-Barker 2011).

Not only past research but also classroom practice of language teaching have to be seen as overwhelmingly concerned with learners’ cognitive capacities, as measured by intelligence tests and IQ (Gabryś-Barker 2011). However, since 1998 and the coining by Goleman of the term “emotional intelligence” (EI), with its level measured as an affectivity quotient (AQ), the attention of both researchers and practitioners has turned to focusing on the development of emotional literacy (EI) in educational contexts. Emotional intelligence was defined by Goleman (1998) as the “capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships” (quoted in Killick 2006: 9). It has been believed generally since then that:

Emotional difficulties underlie behavioural and motivational problems.
Emotional development develops resilience and aids skill acquisition for all,
not just those with problems.
Developing emotional literacy in children and young people can help learning,
confidence and cooperation in the classroom.
These skills aid development of interpersonal and leadership skills in the work-
place. (Killick 2006: 7)

For Killick (2006; reported in Gabryś-Barker in press), who is a pedagogue and a therapist involved directly with school work, the development of emotional intelligence consists in facilitating learners' ability to become:

- more self-aware in relation to recognizing one's feelings when they occur and reflecting on them and their consequences; being able to define one's self-concept;
- more able to handle one's feelings, especially strong ones like for example feelings of fear or anger, instead of repressing them;
- more able to motivate oneself towards individually set short- and long-term goals;
- more empathetically-oriented, that is, developing social perceptiveness in terms of understanding the feelings of others and on the basis of this forming relationships;
- more socially competent in interpersonal skills.

Table 2 presents five pathways to developing emotional intelligence:

Table 2 Pathways to Emotional Intelligence (based on Killick 2006: 41–53; quoted in Gabryś-Barker in press)

Pathway	Defining	Comment
1	2	3
Self-awareness	"Knowing one's own emotions at any one time. Recognising a feeling when it is being experienced and being aware of the thoughts that have led to the experience of the feeling."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "A positive, integrated sense of self." • "A vocabulary of feelings." • "Thought catching." • "The feeling thermometer."
Affect (or self regulation) of emotion	"[...] the ability to manage one's emotions and to be able to handle them, especially strong feelings, appropriately."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Self-control." • "Self-soothing – to calm oneself." • "Frustration tolerance." • "Positive self-talk." • "Stress management."
Motivation	"The ability to motivate oneself to achieve desired goals."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Intrinsic and extrinsic." • "Immediate or long-term rewards." • "Delayed gratification." • "Ambivalence" (mixed or conflicting feelings about some behaviour).
Empathy (social perceptiveness)	"The ability to recognise emotions in others."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Reflective listening – listening to feelings." • "Theory of Mind." • "The foundations of compassion." • "The importance of experiencing empathy."

1	2	3
Social competence and interpersonal skills	Conversation and negotiation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Initiation of a conversation, turn-take and maintaining conversation, terminating it.” • “Negotiating meaning, expressing agreement and disagreement, mediating and solving problems.”

It is generally believed that the level of one’s emotional intelligence is more related to the personality profile of a person rather than his/her verbal intelligence or IQ (Petrides *et al.* 2004). However it has to be remembered that

although personality and temperament certainly influence one’s emotional make-up, it is important to see emotional intelligence as the practice of thinking about feeling and that it is more changeable than personality. (Killick 2006: 11)

Thus, as personality is inborn, it is a permanent characteristic of everyone. On the other hand, it can be assumed that thinking about one’s affectivity is temporary and may derive directly from a given situation, as well as from the past experience and prior knowledge. It will also be shaped by one’s aptitude at the cognitive level for analysis, evaluation and (importantly) prediction – when one needs to apply past experience to one’s present outlook on a given situation (Gabryś-Barker 2011).

8.5 INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN AFFECTIVITY

8.5.1 *Personality*

The Five Factor Model of Personality

There is no doubt that personality traits have a direct influence on learning processes which in the case of language learning will be really prominent factors, as the target in acquiring language competence is being able to use language as a tool in expressing oneself. The most commonly researched character traits are extroversion and introversion; the results however of these studies are not very conclusive. Extroversion and introversion affect certain areas of language learning success; for example it is generally believed that an extrovert will more easily and successfully develop his/her speaking skills, whereas an introvert will be more accurate in his/her language production.

McCrae and Costa (2003) offered the Five Factor Model, arguing that the five personality dimensions that are significant in language achievement are **agreeableness**, **extroversion**, **openness**, **conscientiousness** and **neuroticism**. These are a combination of cognitive and affective personality factors.

Table 3 The Five Factor Model (based on McCrae and Costa 2003)

Personality trait	Description
Agreeableness	altruism vs egoism, affective vs cold and indifferent, empathetic, compassionate and cooperative vs cynical and un-cooperative
Extroversion	energetic, enthusiastic, sociable, jolly and involved vs passive, reserved, withdrawn and quiet
Openness	flexible, creative, stimulated, likes challenges and innovation vs conventional, practical and conservative
Conscientiousness	in-control of oneself, organised, efficient, focused on planning and self-disciplined vs disorganised, careless, passive, not always working hard and disorganised
Neuroticism	high levels of anxiety, emotional negativity, unstable and insecure vs self-confidence, emotionally-controlled and stable

As may be predicted, McCrae and Costa (2003) assume that a successful language learner will possess the following affective characteristics:

- being altruistic, affectively-oriented and thus empathetic and compassionate, open to cooperation with others;
- being enthusiastic in one's undertakings and thus active and energetic, flexible and creative, open to new challenges and problem-solving;
- being positive and controlling one's emotions and anxiety levels, and thus self-confident.

Certainly it is not a single feature of one's personality but a combination of them that will be more conducive to success. However it is generally believed that motivation is the strongest predictor of achievement (Tarone and Swierzbin 2009). The construct of personality is a very complex one, not only in terms of number of traits but also their intensity and interrelatedness. This has been thoroughly described in the literature, so only selected personality factors are discussed in more detail in the following sections, specifically anxiety, self-esteem, empathy and (most significant of all) motivation to learn.

Anxiety

One of the major personality traits understood to be conducive to the way we behave is anxiety, seen as the way in which we respond to a situation we perceive

as potentially threatening. Following Pekrun's (1992) and Kiekolt's (1994) line of reasoning, Piechurska-Kuciel (2008: 28) describes the experience of anxiety as depending on

the individual's appraisal of the situation that may be threatening, and their own capacity of dealing with it. [...] feelings of anxiety rest on two components: appraisal of events as threatening or non threatening and appraisal of one's own self-efficacy in dealing with those events.

Anxiety is a complex three-component construct relating to cognition, physiology and behaviour. The cognitive component is manifest in the ways in which a certain situation is perceived and how this perception influences the processing of it and ultimately one's performance (expecting positive results vs being threatened). The physiological component is observed in the way somebody reacts to the uncertainty of a situation by tensing muscles, uncontrolled movements of limbs, or even panic – resulting in a rapid heart-beat or profuse sweating. These symptoms are mostly observed in negatively assessed situations. The behavioural aspect of anxiety results in an individual using a strategy of avoidance to escape the threat a situation may pose (a subjective assessment of the situation) (Piechurska-Kuciel 2008). It seems from the above that in most cases anxiety will be a negative feeling, however, in the case of some individuals, it is a driving force and lets an individual respond to challenges by “pulling himself/herself together.” Anxiety may have different causes and consequences and evolves according to individual traits, situational variables and other factors.

Table 4 Types of anxiety (based on Piechurska-Kuciel 2008)

Type of anxiety	Description
General (including manifest anxiety)	Refers to responses to all kinds of situations, when threat is anticipated, due to previous experience, mostly negative in its symptoms (affective and bodily), there may be no apparent cause for its arousal
Social	Anticipation and fear of negative evaluation, may result from a perceived gap between one's own vs the group's expectations, expressed as: experience of uneasiness (discomfort) that may result in social avoidance of people and/or certain situations
Performance	Connected with social anxiety and fear of speaking (performing in public) and negative evaluation (also of being under-valued and exposed) at each stage: pre-, during- and after-performance

In her presentation of types of anxiety, Piechurska-Kuciel (2008) presents an overview of its typology, and discusses the positive vs negative effects of anxiety. The former is called facilitative anxiety and the latter debilitating (debilitating)

anxiety: “Lower levels of anxiety facilitate performance and learning [...], higher levels of anxiety have a hindering effect on learning and performance” (2008: 39).

Additionally, the author divides anxiety into **general** (or conceptual), **social** and **performance anxiety** (cf. Table 4).

Piechurska-Kuciel subsequently looks in more detail at general anxiety and following other psychologists discusses it as **state**, **trait** and **situational anxiety**:

The *state* type denotes subjective and conscious feelings of apprehension and tension accompanied by stimulation and activation of the autonomous nervous system (Spielberger 1966) [...]. State anxiety can also be viewed as a transitory condition of unpleasant, consciously perceived feelings of tension, apprehension and nervousness that vary in intensity and fluctuate in time as a reaction to circumstances that are perceived as threatening (Novy and Nelson 1995).

Trait anxiety [...] is a theoretical construct designating a motif or required behavioural disposition, due to which a human being perceives a wide variety of objectively unthreatening situations as threatening, which causes their disproportional overreaction to such situations (Spielberger 1966).

Situation-specific anxiety signifies a stable trait that defines a likelihood of becoming anxious in particular situations or a single context, where behaviour is seen as a function of a class of external, yet transient factors acting on individuals. (2008: 42–43)

In the context of FL learning the concept of anxiety is often discussed in relation to language anxiety (FLA), which mostly manifest itself in learners' approaches to listening and to speaking in a foreign language. It is especially speaking that is influenced by fear of one's negatively evaluated performance or being misunderstood. Obstacles to speaking a FL are numerous and one of them is foreign language anxiety (FLA), which itself is a complex construct. It is seen as relating to processes involved in oral production (performance), namely: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. (Piechurska-Kuciel 2008: 61). A strongly felt FLA is the manifestation of fear of losing face or being misunderstood by interlocutor(s). It may lead to avoidance of communication and thus limiting one's opportunities for developing speaking skills in a foreign language. Additionally, FLA may result in a low evaluation of one's language competence (so-called self-perceived language competence) and contribute significantly to a decline in one's self-esteem.

Self-esteem, inhibition and empathy

Another set of interrelated personality features that are conducive to being successful are **self-esteem**, **inhibition** and **empathy**. They exhibit different degrees of stability in an individual. Self-confidence may be fairly stable, but it may also vary according to different situations and it may have a direct influence on the inhibitions that one exhibits. Empathy, on the other hand, is considered to be an innate feature of character expressing itself in being more compassionate and understanding than many other people.

Coopersmith (1967) pioneered research on **self-esteem** and offered one of the first definitions of the construct:

By self-esteem we refer to the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval, or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. In short, self-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individual holds towards himself. (pp. 4–5)

Of course, it cannot be stated for good and all that self-esteem is primary and decides about one's success, as it is unclear whether success promotes the growth of self-esteem, or whether it is the other way around. In other words, they are interrelated in a complex way (Brown 1994). Since self-esteem is not a stable trait, it is broken down into global, situational and specific self-esteem:

Table 5 Levels of self-esteem (based on Brown 1994)

Levels of self-esteem	Description
Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a fairly stable feature at a mature age - may be influenced by life experiences
Situational / specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one's self-assessment in different life situations (home, work, social life) - focuses on a specific trait (e.g. intelligence, empathy, interactive skills)
Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appraisal of oneself for a given task (e.g. language performance, sports competition) - relates to a specific trait (e.g. speaking in a foreign language)

All three levels, global, situational and task self-esteem, were demonstrated to be conducive to success in personal and professional life, including success in second language learning (Gardener and Lambert 1972). Undeniably, self-esteem correlates positively with one's self-confidence and risk-taking, which

are good predictors of willingness to try new things and in the case of language learning readiness to experiment with language. Risk-taking allows a learner to look for opportunities to discover language through individually-searched-for exposure to it and its uninhibited use both in the classroom and beyond. However, a word of caution should be expressed here. Too much risk-taking may result in fossilized or incomprehensible language. Speakers with low-self-esteem will not in general be risk-takers, as too much exposure may threaten losing face.

The discussion of self-esteem would not be complete if the notion of **inhibition** was not mentioned as a trait resulting from self-esteem. It is observed that over the life cycle, we build a set of defences of our individuality (our ego) which acts upon among others, various inhibitions. Brown (1994: 138) states:

The process of building defences continues into adulthood. Some persons – those with high self-esteem and ego strength – are more able to withstand threats to their existence and thus their defences are lower. Those with weaker self-esteem maintain walls of inhibition to protect what is self-perceived to be a weak or fragile ego, or a lack of self-confidence in a situation or task.

The pioneering (and now classic) work of Guira *et al.* (1972) focused on the language ego. The language ego relates to an individual's way of second language acquisition and his/her personal response to this process as involving "some degree of identity conflict as language learners take on a new identity with their newly acquitted competence" (Brown 1994: 138).

Another affectively-grounded trait is empathy. Like other emotion-based traits, it is not easy to define. In general terms, empathy means "reaching beyond the self and understanding and feeling what another person is understanding or feeling" (Brown 1994: 143). As language is a tool of communicating, understanding and responding, empathy has to be seen as a significant factor in second/foreign language development. It means that a second language speaker has to be capable of recognising his/her interlocutor both on the level of thinking (ideas) and feeling (emotions). Thus a person who is more empathetic might find it easier to become a successful L2/FL user. The construct of empathy relates directly to ego boundaries:

[...] empathetic individuals have more fluid language ego boundaries – that is, they may be more willing to imagine being someone from the TL community, and more likely to pronounce the new language like them. Learners with less empathy [...] may have solidified their native language (L1) ego boundaries and hold on to their native pronunciation patterns, or accents to differentiate themselves from speakers of the TL. (Tarone and Swierzbinska 2009: 4)

Empathy is a social phenomenon, as it expresses itself in social interaction and communication. It also has to be seen as culture-specific because any communication act is grounded in social and cultural norms. Thus awareness of the degree of openness, compassion and understanding that is (un)acceptable in the TL culture becomes an important aspect of developing one's communicative competence. The inborn trait of empathy may be in conflict with what is acceptable in another cultural context. For example, in Anglo-Saxon cultures less demonstration of empathy is probably expected than in the southern European tradition.

8.5.2 *Motivation to learn*

Motivation is what is behind all our actions. It is a complex construct with cognitive, affective and pragmatic dimensions, which is defined as “the driving force/s that elicits, perpetuates and maintains goal-oriented behaviour, the reason that individuals do what they do” (Winstanley 2006: 161). Dörnyei and Otto (1998: 65) define motivation in the following way:

The dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out. So in other words, the key factors in defining motivation are choice of an action and ways leading to it, engagement in the action and maintaining persistent effort. The persistence and effort investment and its durability and intensity will come from one's interest and relevance of the action to individual needs, and what is expected as outcome.

Motivation is explained in psychology as resulting from physiological, psychological and/or behavioural stimuli.

Table 6 Different levels of motivational drives (based on Winstanley 2006)

Levels	Description/examples
Physiological	primary drives: satisfying individual drives and needs relating to hunger, thirst or sex
Behavioural	higher level drives socially situated, e.g. working to earn one's living and being able to satisfy the primary needs
Psychological	instinctual drives of affiliation (a sense of belonging) and self-actualization in a given situation

The last two levels, behavioural and psychological, are affectively marked since they relate to relationships with others and our place within a group and appraisal of the situation in terms of our achievement, success and failure. This hierarchical understanding of motivation coincides with Maslow's pyramid of needs, in which he views motivation as

a construct in which ultimate attainment of goals was possible only by passing through a hierarchy of needs, three of which were solidly grounded in community, belonging, and social status. Maslow saw motivation as dependent on the satisfaction first of fundamental physical necessities (air, water, food), then of community, security, identity, and self-esteem, the fulfilment of which finally leads to *self-actualization*. (Brown 2000: 161; after Maslow 1970)

In his overview of motivation as a construct, Brown (2000) distinguishes three approaches to its understanding: **behaviouristic**, **cognitive** and **constructivist**. The first one, behaviouristic, follows the perception that every stimulus brings a response, which is to be reinforced to remain significant. Positive reinforcement is a reward, the anticipation of which constitutes a driving force. This approach sees motivation as deriving from external sources. The second one, cognitive, on the other hand, sees motivation as deriving from within, from internal desires to fulfil human needs of a higher order, e.g. exploration and achievement, which are controlled by individual strength and effort. The third one, the constructivist approach, emphasizes the role of context and the social aspects of motivation deriving from acting within a group and participating in its dynamics (structure, roles played, creating one's status within the group). Here the internal desire to belong and feel secure, but at the same time to achieve some status in a group, are driving forces, internal in nature but deriving from external interactions (Brown 2000).

Motivation is not a permanent feature and it may fluctuate depending on a situation, intensity of desire and willingness to invest effort in pursuit of something. It will involve conscious decisions concerning the action to be undertaken on the level of thinking and reasoning, but it will also have a strong affective side to it, in evaluating one's prospects of success or fear of failure, among other emotions and feelings that accompany any act of behaviour. Dörnyei (2001: 16) believes that:

When we talk about sustained, long-term activities, such as the mastering of a L2, motivation does not remain constant during the course of months or years. Rather, it is characterised by regular (re-)appraisal and balancing of the various internal and external influences to which the individual is exposed.

The role of internal and external factors in motivation led researchers to dichotomize the construct as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation means that an individual does not expect any kind of external reward for his/her performance (e.g. in the form of grades), but derives pleasure from action (e.g. learning a language) itself. The reward is here internal, “*competence and self-determination*” (Deci 1975: 23). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is driven externally and the tangible reward for achievement is its main driving force (e.g. grades, prize or money depending on the context). In terms of effectiveness, numerous studies, both older and more recent, show that intrinsically-oriented learners may be more successful than those externally driven (Bruner 1966, Maslow 1970, Dörnyei 1998, or Brown 1990).

Another perspective for looking at types of motivation presents the dichotomy of integrative vs instrumental motivation (Gardner and Lambert 1972), one of the oldest taxonomies. Integrative motivation occurs when the “L2 learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g. for immigration or marriage),” and as such it is also intrinsic, whereas when “someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons” (e.g. parents) (Brown 1994: 156), it is extrinsic. On the other hand, instrumental motivation is intrinsic when “L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilizing L2 (e.g. for a career)” and it is extrinsic in the case when “External power wants L2 learner to learn L2 (e.g. a corporation sends a Japanese businessman to U.S. for language training)” (Gardner and Lambert 1972: 156).

Brown (2000) claims that it is the distinction between the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that should be applied in the context of language learning and teaching, as it offers clearly definable and relevant to the contexts variables. This was demonstrated by the survey study of Dörnyei and Csiz'er (1998) who investigated Hungarian teachers' motivations to teach. On the basis of their results, they proposed a classification of motivating factors, which turned out to contain mostly intrinsic types of variables, such as “developing a relationship with learners, building learners' self-confidence and autonomy, personalizing the learning process, and increasing learners' goal-orientation” (Brown 2000: 165). Apart from their intrinsic character, they also point to the affective dimension of the teaching-learning process.

Additionally to motivation itself, **attitude** has been considered a significant variable in the learning context, constituting a significant factor in the development of motivation. It is defined as

consistent thoughts or feelings towards a thing, person, object or issue, and is likely to determine how the individual would react towards it. Attitudes often relate to an individual's belief systems, values and personal “ideals”, and can underpin the value or disregard that an individual may place on particular objects, issues or people. (Winstanley 2006: 35)

In a revised model of motivation, Tremblay and Gardner (1995) suggest that language attitudes constitute a starting point for the development of motivation. The process follows the sequence “*language attitudes – motivational behaviour – achievement*” (Dörnyei 2001: 53). Language attitudes include attitudes towards L2 speakers and integrative orientation, general interest in foreign languages but they also relate to the immediate context of instruction, i.e. the L2 course itself and instrumental orientation towards it.

This short presentation of motivation would not be complete without mentioning other context theories important for the classroom, namely Achievement Motivation Theory (Atkinson and Raynor 1974), Attribution Theory (Weiner 1992, Graham 1994) and Self-efficacy Theory (Bandura 1993). These theories follow the “expectancy-value framework” (Dörnyei 2001: 20), which places value on two factors: the individual’s **expectancy of success** in a given task, the **value** the individual attaches to success in that task. The greater the perceived likelihood of goal-attainment and the greater the incentive value of the goal, the higher the degree of the individual’s positive motivation.

The Achievement Theory claims that achievement is attained if there is an **expectation of success** and the task offers **incentive values**. It also points out that individuals with a high **need for achievement** and a low **fear of failure** will be more likely to succeed. This has obvious implications for classroom instruction, for example it emphasises the need to develop learners’ self-esteem and to implement language goals that will be perceived as relevant for an individual. The theory has also implications for helping every individual to develop a positive perception of their potential.

The Attribution Theory, on the other hand, places value on past learning experience and in this way, it comes close to the appraisal systems and their role (discussed later in this chapter). The main assumptions of this theory state that as a consequence of the past, the perception of the present will be strongly influenced by the following factors: an ability to perform a task, the effort invested in it, task difficulty, but also more subjective factors, like perception of one’s luck and mood. It also takes into account externally determined factors, family background and the assistance (or its lack) of others. Dörnyei (2001: 22) comments on the significance of these factors:

Among these, *ability* and *effort* have been identified as the most dominant perceived causes in the western culture. Past failure that is ascribed to stable and uncontrollable factors such as low ability (e.g. “I failed because I am stupid”) hinders future achievement behaviour more than failure that is ascribed to unstable and uncontrollable factors (i.e. ones that the learner can change, such as effort, e.g. “I didn’t pass the test because I hadn’t prepared enough for it”).

The importance of this theory lies in understanding that learners' often affective perceptions of themselves will determine their achievements, successes or failures. Developing their awareness of the role of the above variables may become an important way of facilitating their learning.

The third theory, Self-efficacy Theory (Bandura 1993) partly replicates the attributions in Weiner's understanding. It sees learner self-efficacy as deriving from four factors: "previous performance, vicarious learning (i.e. learning through observing models), verbal encouragement by others, one's physiological reactions (e.g. anxiety)" (Dörnyei 2001: 22). Bandura (1993: 118) himself comments on the above factors:

People make casual contributions to their own functioning through mechanisms of personal agency. Among the mechanisms of agency, none is more central or pervasive than people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning or over events that affect their lives. Efficacy beliefs influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave.

In the light of this theory, it seems that developing a strong sense of self-efficacy in the classroom will constitute a fair predictor of success. These self-efficacy beliefs are only beliefs and as such they are affective, so not necessarily grounded in reality. They derive from one's opinions and not facts. Positive feedback from a teacher or peers will be conducive to facilitating self-efficacy of learners. (For a more extensive discussion of motivation and research on motivation, see Dörnyei 2001).

8.6 THE ROLE OF EXPERIENCE AND APPRAISALS

The focus of this section is on appraisals as significant variables in language learning contexts, seen from psychological and neurological perspectives. Schumann (1997) in describing the biological basis of motivation in human activity, in language learning among others, discusses two innate systems operating in a human, those of homeostatic (bodily/survival) and socio-static (interacting with others) regulation that motivate all our actions. As well as innate regulation systems, everyone develops an individual system of somatic values:

[...] through experience in the world, individuals accrue idiosyncratic preferences and aversions, which lead them to like certain things and dislike others [...]. The value mechanisms influence the cognition (perception, attention, memory, and action) that is devoted to learning. (Schumann 1997: 2)

The three values (homeostatic, socio-static and somatic) constitute the so-called emotional memory (Schumann 1997: 36), which gives rise to individual (idiosyncratic) appraisal systems. Since what constitutes the somatic value system is gathered throughout an individual's experience (e.g. in a learning context), appraisal systems are unique to a given individual and even the same stimulus may activate different appraisals. In the context of language learning, as Schumann rightly emphasizes, they will determine the approach a learner takes, e.g. towards the teacher, peers, methods, materials – in fact, to all the variables of a learning process, and will “guide our learning and foster the long-term cognitive effort (action tendencies) necessary to achieve high levels of mastery and expertise” (Schumann 1997: 36).

Other researchers in the area, Smith and Lazarus (1993: 234), define/characterize appraisals as:

[...] an evaluation of what one's relationship to the environment implies for personal well-being. Each positive emotion is said to be produced by a particular kind of appraised benefit, and each negative emotion by a particular kind of appraised harm. The emotional response is hypothesized to prepare and mobilize the person to cope with the particular appraised harm or benefit in an adaptive manner, that is, to avoid, minimize, or alleviate an appraised harm, or to seek, maximize, or maintain an appraised benefit. Whether a particular set of circumstances is appraised as harmful or beneficial depends, in part, on the person's specific configuration of goals, and beliefs. Appraisal thus serves the important mediational role of linking emotional responses to environmental circumstances on the one hand, and personal goals and beliefs on the other.

So to conclude, appraisals are understood as values held by an individual that activate some kind of response (positive vs negative) depending on the characteristics of appraisals made. Various theories categorize criteria of appraisals differently (e.g. those of Scherer 1984, Frijda 1993 and Clore 1994). Here the taxonomy of appraisals according to Scherer (2001) is presented, as it is one of the major models of stimulus appraisal related directly to the motivational dimension of undertaking an action (for example to perform a language task). Scherer (2001) proposes the following factors in appraisal.

Various studies use Scherer's appraisal checks to measure different emotions (e.g. fear or anger) by means of closed-type questionnaires or computer simulations (Scherer 1993). In psychological studies of appraisal systems the research tools employed are learner appraisal questionnaires, introspective diary studies and learner biographies (see e.g. Schumann 1997). They give verbal evidence of the appraisal variables and their evaluation in creating motivations and approaches to learning, idiosyncratically grounded in one's own person, and

Table 7 Appraisals according to Scherer (2001)

Appraisal value	Focus
Novelty	a degree of familiarity of the stimulus (task/data/action to be undertaken)
Intrinsic pleasantness	how pleasant is the stimulus which will determine the approach to it (indulgence vs avoidance)
Goal/need significance	evaluation of how relevant, significant and immediate the stimulus (task/action) is for an individual
Coping potential	the check of one's ability of coping or changing the stimulus to adjust to one's potential
Norm/self compatibility	evaluation of the social/cultural appropriacy of the stimulus

past and present observable context determined by an individual system of values. Thus they contribute to our understanding of which feelings and emotions contribute positively/negatively to a learning task (or any other behaviour).

It is clear from the above presentation of appraisal systems that although emotionally-driven they have a cognitive dimension also in that they consider:

- goal relevance for an individual
- compatibility with one's goals
- preference to perform certain actions in a specific context (involvement vs avoidance).

So emotion is not devoid of cognition. By studying the localization and type of brain activation in the process of appraisal, this relation may be uncovered as the appraisal systems (like any other activity) are stored and recalled by certain neural mechanisms of brain operations in processing the stimulus/data. It is neurolinguistic studies that can offer an explanation of appraisal systems and the relation between affective and cognitive functioning. Their relevance for educational contexts should not therefore be neglected.

The stimulus one is exposed to enters the brain first through the areas responsible for emotions and thus it is the affective filter that responds to cognitive in nature stimuli (described in a greatly simplified way). In more detail, Paradis (2004: 24) recapitulates:

A neural mechanism consisting of the amygdala, the ventromedial prefrontal cortex the nucleus accumbens, the dopamime system and the peripheral nervous system assesses the motivational relevance and emotional significance of stimuli such as desirability of L2 (Schumann 1990, 1998). Inputs to the orbital cortex and the amygdala allow these brain structures to evaluate reward value for incoming stimuli.

Schumann (1997) clearly sees the relation between motivation and appraisal systems constituting a generative mechanism for motivation. However, he also emphasizes the role of one's contextual adaptation, (partly) irrespective of past experience and degree of open-mindedness as significant variables in one's goal achievement. Additionally, Schumann (1997) believes that the relative plasticity of the prefrontal areas of the brain contribute to possible adjustments of the appraisals systems. These evaluations and adjustments are based on the appraisal systems and relate to various features such as pleasantness, individual needs and coping potential, among many others. The neural mechanism explains then why variability in L2 achievement is commonly observed in the context of L2 acquisition/learning, as it relates directly to this emotional appraisal of the stimulus in a given learning context. This is the clearest proof for what was more or less intuitively proposed by psychology and consequently by language instruction theories, namely the importance of the affective domain and more precisely, motivation in a language learning environment. So we are bound to accept the view that all human actions are directed by appraisal systems and values either accepted and as a consequence directing one's actions, or rejected and as a consequence leading to avoidance of certain actions by an individual.

8.7 CONCLUSIONS

Affectivity is basic to all our behaviour, thus necessary to take into consideration in describing learning processes. Despite individual personality traits discussed earlier in this chapter, it is also important to bear in mind that our learners function in a certain context. Language learning that occurs at school needs to be embedded in a context conducive to positive affective states. As Dufeu (1994: 89–90) puts it, it is important to inculcate an appropriate affective climate in a classroom: “[...] one has to create a climate of acceptance that will stimulate self-confidence, and encourage participants to experiment and to discover the target language, allowing themselves to take risks without feeling embarrassed.”

Affectivity in language learning is a very complex dimension of this process. The overview presented here is by no means exhaustive. Certain areas have not even been touched upon. They are for example:

- on the level of an individual: becoming aware and recognizing one's emotions, finding ways of dealing with them (coping strategies), appropriate tools used for this purpose (diary, cooperation); learning styles and their affective dimensions (e.g. tolerance of ambiguity);
- on the group level: group dynamics and its role in the affective dimension of learning a language, ways of developing positive group dynamics.

Also it is the case that there are two agents in the classroom. Learners and teachers cannot pass unnoticed in the discussion of affectivity in learning contexts. The affectivity of a learner has been discussed in this chapter at some length. However, a separate discussion could be presented on teacher affectivity, as teachers also “tend to have emotional reactions during teaching-learning situations” and “the affective dimension is integral to reflective thinking and teaching” (Stanley 1999: 123).

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ROLA SFERY EMOCJONALNEJ W UCZENIU SIĘ JĘZYKA OBCEGO

Streszczenie

Rozdział ukazuje rolę, jaką odgrywa sfera emocji w uczeniu się języka obcego, a także relacje między emocjami i kognitywną sferą funkcjonowania człowieka, wskazując prymarną rolę afektu. Zależności przedstawione zostały w świetle badań psycholingwistycznych i neurolingwistycznych. Omówiono również poszczególne cechy składające się na charakterystykę emocjonalną człowieka oraz cechy osobowości, np. samoświadomość i samoocenę, poczucie bezpieczeństwa i motywację do działania. Każda z tych cech przedstawiona jest w kontekście uczenia się języka obcego oraz jej wpływu na sukces bądź porażkę. Rozdział ukazuje również przykładowe rozwiązania pedagogiczne służące rozwojowi sfery emocjonalnej ucznia, szczególnie w kontekście nauczania języka obcego.

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DIE ROLLE DER EMOTIONALEN SPHÄRE BEIM FREMDSPRACHENLERNEN

Zusammenfassung

Das Kapitel schildert die Rolle der emotionalen Sphäre bei dem Fremdsprachenlernen. Im Lichte psycholinguistischer und neurolinguistischer Untersuchungen zeigt die Verfasserin die Zusammenhänge zwischen Emotionen und der kognitiven Sphäre des menschlichen Lebens, und deutet dabei auf eine primäre Rolle des Affektes hin. Sie bespricht die einzelnen Merkmale des emotionalen Charakterzugs des Menschen, z.B.: Selbstbewusstsein und Selbsteinschätzung, Sicherheitsgefühl und Arbeitsmotivation. Jedes Merkmal ist im Kontext des Fremdsprachenunterrichts und dessen Einflusses auf Erfolg oder Misserfolg betrachtet. In dem Kapitel findet man auch Beispiele für solche pädagogische Maßnahmen, die der Weiterentwicklung von der emotionalen Sphäre des Schülers im Fremdsprachenunterricht behilflich sein können.