From motivation to emotion: A new chapter in applied linguistics research

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ABSTRACT

Within the field of applied linguistics, research into language learner motivation has been high on the research agenda for some years. At the same time, another psychological construct – emotion – has been the victim of significant neglect, and is almost absent from the same research agenda. This review first traces the development of motivation research from the early work of Gardner and Lambert (1959) through to the recent focus on Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivation Self System and the most current emphasis on Dynamic Systems Theory (Dörnyei, 2009; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008), before progressing to the slowly building canon of literature on emotions in applied linguistics, which has 'trickled-down' from mainstream and educational psychology. A comprehensive overview of the existing literature on emotions will be provided including a strong rationale for why a focus on language learner emotions should be stronger. Finally, recommendations for future research in the area of applied linguistics and language education will be put forward.

INTRODUCTION

The motives of language learners have featured strongly on the research agenda within the field of applied linguistics for some time. From the 1950s, with the early work of Gardner and Lambert (1959),

attention has been given to motivational variables in language, particularly affective and attitudinal factors. This has resulted in motivational research moving gradually through several phases, with other researchers taking up the challenge and developing new theories of motivation including Gardner's (2001) concept of 'integrative motivation'; Dörnyei and Otto's (1998) 'process model'; the current dominant theory of language learning motivation – Dörnyei's (2005, 2009a) L2 Motivational Self System; and the emerging area of Dynamic Systems Theory.

The general trend in motivation research has been to focus on cognitive aspects of language learning and the manner in which these relate to and impact upon motivation. Whilst the motivational theories that have been developed and researched hold immense value, another critical factor – emotions – has been the victim of significant neglect. The issues of confidence and anxiety have received a great deal of attention in the literature, but beyond this there exists very little research with regard to emotions. This is a situation that mirrors the fields of both mainstream and educational psychology. The reasons for this neglect are varied, but puzzling, especially considering that within mainstream psychology numerous other areas have been covered extensively, such as cognition, motivation, learning, physiology, personality, psychopathology and social processes. Perhaps one of the dominant explanations of why emotions have not received the attention in the literature they deserve is that they are not an objectively observable phenomenon. Rather, they are by nature highly subjective and as a result are extremely difficult to measure in a reliable manner (Rosenberg & Fredrickson, 1998).

It is even more surprising that research into language learner emotions is so limited considering the intimate relationship between emotions and motivation, as pointed out by MacIntyre, MacKinnon and Clément (2009, p. 47) when they describe the role of emotions as "fundamentally important motivators". Whilst the focus on cognition that has dominated applied linguistics research in general and particularly that of motivation research can be understood, cognition should not be considered alone at the expense of emotions.

This view is supported by Swain (2013), who posits that emotions and cognition cannot be separated and that this deserves attention in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research, but that adequate attention cannot be given to emotions while they remain the "elephants in the room – poorly studied, poorly understood, seen as inferior to rational thought" (p. 205). This is a powerful indictment indeed, and sums up well the significant lack of research that exists.

Emotions inhabit a central role in all human beings and have a significant impact and relationship with both motivation and cognition, and as such should not be forgotten. Relatively little is understood about them at the present juncture, and this becomes more problematic when, as Oxford (1990) posits, "the affective side of the learner is probably one of the very biggest influences on language learning success or failure" (p. 140). This is supported further by López and Aguilar (2013), who emphasise that due to the fact that emotions and feelings are involved at every level of the learning process, and particularly in the learning of a language, the significance of the role that emotional experiences can play should never be underestimated.

This leads us to the purpose of the current review, which is twofold. First of all, an overview of the progression of motivation research in SLA will be provided outlining important theoretical developments and a gradual broadening of the research agenda. It will be shown that emotions, however, are noticeably absent from this agenda, an absence that will then lead into an overview of the literature associated with emotion research. The second aim of the review is to provide a summary of research into emotions in SLA. However, due to its limited availability in the field of applied linguistics, an initial discussion of developments in emotion research in the broad realm of mainstream psychology and from within the sphere of educational psychology will be provided. Following this comprehensive review of the literature, future research directions will be discussed.

OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The review of the literature to be provided in the following sections will begin with the phases through which motivation research has passed, and then cover relevant and important research into emotions from within the realms of mainstream psychology, educational psychology, and SLA. The review of motivation research is necessitated by the intertwining nature of motivation and emotion in the psychology of the language learner.

Foreign language learning motivation

Foreign language learning motivation research is firmly rooted within the theories and constructs of mainstream psychology. Growth within the area of foreign language learning can be traced back to the seminal work of Gardner and Lambert (1959). They asserted that "an individual acquiring a second language adopts certain behaviour patterns which are characteristic of another cultural group and that his attitudes toward that group will at least partly determine his success at learning a new language" (Gardner & Lambert, 1959, p. 267). It was this radical change in the assumptions underlying language learning that led to a major focus being placed on foreign language learning motivation in its own right.

The three main phases of research into foreign language learning motivation have been the social psychological phase (1959-1990), progressing to the cognitive-situated phase (1990s), and entering the process-oriented phase at the beginning of the 2000s. It is important to also note that, presently, language learning motivation research is well and truly into a fourth and exciting phase – the socio-dynamic phase (2005-present). The key element of the socio-dynamic phase is the growing focus on notions of self and identity, and this phase continues to grow and develop around these notions.

1. Social psychological phase (1959-1990)

In its early period, language learning motivation research was largely dominated by the work of Robert Gardner and his colleagues. Gardner and Lambert (1972) singled out motivation as the dominant force in either promoting or preventing intercultural communication and understanding. Essentially, the social psychological phase is

characterized by the merging of "traditional motivation research – which used to focus entirely on the individual – with social psychological insights and methods concerning the relationship between the L1 and L2 communities" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 67). It was an important progression in the understanding of second language acquisition and development, as it was in the work of Gardner and associates that attention was first paid to affective variables in language learning. This was in stark contrast to previous assumptions, which were that that to successfully acquire a foreign language a certain level of intelligence or aptitude was required (Gardner, 2001). The affective variables in which Gardner and Lambert showed most interest were of an attitudinal nature: in particular, they viewed language learners' attitudes towards the target language itself, along with members of the target language community as being major determinants of a range of behaviours in their language learning. What this focus on attitudes towards the target language community produced were the two concepts that form perhaps the most significant contribution of Gardner's work – integrative and instrumental motivation. These concepts were presented in Gardner and Smythe's (1975) socio-educational model, in which integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation are seen as correlates that together produce motivation (Gardner, 2000), with some consideration also given to other factors. In the model, 'integrativeness' refers to the genuine interest of a language learner in "learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community" (Gardner, 2001, p. 5) and it is this concept that was central in Gardner's work.

Over the decades the socio-educational model, and in particular the notion of integrativeness, has played an important role in language learning motivation research and inquiry. Indeed, following a large-scale project involving a large sample in Hungary, Dörnyei and Clément (2001) were able to confirm "the uncontested superiority of integrativeness as a predictor of language choice" (p. 423) and that the same could be said for the degree of effort learners intended to put into their language learning.

2. Cognitive-situated phase (1990s)

Upon entering the 1990s, a shift occurred in motivation research, largely triggered by Crookes and Schmidt's (1991) seminal article calling for the motivation research agenda to be 're-opened'. The direction motivation research took from this point in the early 1990s was towards the 'cognitive-situated period', which was characterized by two main trends. Firstly, it was deemed as important for language learning motivation research to draw level with parallel advances within mainstream psychology and to take on some of the influential concepts from that arena. The second trend characterizing this period was the narrowing of the focus in L2 motivational inquiry from the macroperspective (incorporating whole communities) that was a feature of the social psychological approach, to a microperspective encompassing a more situated analysis of motivation as it operates in actual learning situations and environments (Dörnyei, 2005). The goal of this new focus was to expand and enhance the motivation theoretical framework to include these new cognitive perspectives, and perhaps the most important example of this expansion is evident in Tremblay and Gardner's (1995) model of L2 motivation, which built upon Gardner's original conceptualisation of the integrative motive.

3. Process-oriented phase (early 2000s)

Succeeding the cognitive-situated phase of L2 motivation research was the process-oriented phase. It was inspired by the recognition that motivation possesses a dynamic, not static, character and is open to temporal variation (Dörnyei, 2005). This prompted researchers to approach motivation from a time-focused perspective. This could be seen in the work of Williams and Burden (1997), who observed the stages of motivation in relation to a time continuum: 'reasons for doing something → deciding to do something → persisting, or sustaining effort at something'. This helped in distinguishing between the motivation an individual feels for engaging in a task or activity, and the motivation one feels during a task or activity – an important conceptual distinction.

Emerging from this period was a focus on motivational strategies directly related to the situated classroom environment (Dörnyei, 2001). In particular this was in relation to strategies applied by the

teacher in the classroom, self-motivating strategies, and then teacher motivation. Self-motivating strategies are of particular interest as these are one of the few areas in which it is possible to see emotions being given some attention. Specifically, one of the five classes of self-motivating strategies Dörnyei (2001) established was that of 'emotion control strategies', which essentially focused on the generation of emotions that encourage and support goal attainment and suppress those that do not.

The process model

The desire to show the manner in which motivation can change over time saw the development of an elaborate model, the process model, by Dörnyei and Ottó (1998). Within their model, the motivational process is broken down into several discrete temporal segments, or events. There are two main dimensions that make up the process model: motivational influences and action sequences. Motivational influences included energy sources and motivational sources that provide the foundations of the behavioural process. On top of this foundation rest the three phases of the process model, the preactional, actional, and postactional phases. These phases drew on Heckhausen and Kuhl's (1985) Action Control Theory, and demonstrate the behavioural process in which "initial wishes, hopes and desires are first transformed into goals, then into intentions, leading eventually to action and, hopefully, to the accomplishment of the goals, after which the process is submitted to final evaluation" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 65).

The validity of the process model was reconsidered by Dörnyei (2009b) himself due to the fact that it appeared to present motivation as a process that was almost entirely linear. He stated that:

> *In retrospect, however, I can see that the model I was proposing had multiple, parallel, and interacting cause-effect relationships, accompanied by several circular feedback loops, making the validity of the overall linear nature highly questionable. (pp. 196-197)*

While the model was developed out of a desire to represent the dynamic temporal nature of motivation, in the end it made the

mistake of assuming that there was a start and end point in the motivational process and that processes occurred in isolation with no overlap.

4. *Socio-dynamic phase (2005-present)*

Language learning motivation research currently finds itself in the socio-dynamic phase, which has gradually evolved in reaction to the criticisms that have been levelled at motivation being viewed in a linear fashion with a focus on cause-effect relationships between variables. This is echoed by Sealey and Carter (2004), who state that the fundamental difference between a relational view of motivation (the current view being adopted) and a linear one is that a relational view is not at all interested in identifying different variables and any cause-effect relationships between them. Instead, a relational view focuses on the evolving network or dynamic system of relationships that exist among relevant features.

The most important conceptualisation of L2 motivation that has emerged from the socio-dynamic phase is Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System.

Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System

Research into language learner motivation began to place a stronger focus on the notion of identity throughout the socio-dynamic phase, in particular in relation to the learner. The learners themselves are viewed as individuals whose own personal identities are constantly evolving and developing, and this undoubtedly has an effect on their language learning motivation and, indeed, achievement. Individuals of all ages are undergoing a perpetual process of identity formation, developing new ideas about themselves, others, and their surrounding environment. It could be said that this process is intensified for the foreign language learner who is forced to face a range of both linguistic and cultural challenges on their path to constructing a language learner identity.

In order to meet the need for a broader theoretical construct with which to understand language learning motivation, Dörnyei developed the L2 Motivational Self System. He states that the self system is a construct that "represents a major reformation of previous

motivational thinking by its explicit utilization of psychological theories of the self, yet its roots are firmly set in research in the L2 field" (Dörnyei, 2009a, p. 9). Essentially, here he refers to the 'borrowing' of the concept of possible selves, and of ideal selves, presented by Markus and Nurius (1986) and by Higgins (1987) from within mainstream psychology respectively, whilst keeping the framework compatible with other important developments in L2 motivation research such as Gardner's (2001) concept of 'integrativeness', Noels's (2003) work on self-determination in language learning motivation, and Ushioda's (2001, 2009) qualitative approach.

The L2 Motivational Self System is comprised of three key components – the Ideal L2 Self, the Ought-to L2 Self and the L2 Learning Experience – and it is in the first two of these that the influence of theoretical developments within mainstream psychology can be seen. Of the three components, it is the Ideal L2 Self that is the most closely associated with notions of identity and self-concept. The Ideal L2 Self ostensibly replaces integrativeness as the concept most fundamental to gaining an understanding of an individual's identification with a language and a language community. Without disregarding the key tenets of integrativeness, Dörnyei aims to build on the concept by adding more emphasis on aspects such as individual personality, the social environment of the learner, and the invariably different sociocultural values that exist in the language learning context. Further to this, the Ideal L2 Self followed on from Markus and Nurius's (1986) previously mentioned possible selves concept within mainstream psychology. Their conceptualisation of possible selves provided the scope to harness the motivational function of imagination (Taylor, Pham, Rivkin, & Armor, 1998). The power of this motivational function was also stressed by Markus (2006):

> *We were impressed by the fact that people spend an enormous amount of time envisioning their futures. We now know that this imaginative work has powerful consequences. Possible selves can work to energize actions and to buffer the current self from everyday dragons and many less overt indignities as well … People*

across a wide array of contexts are capable and willing to generate possible selves. (p. xii)

This belief in the power of mental imagery and personal visions has carried across to the L2 Motivational Self System, and now rests as the central ideal in the Ideal L2 Self.

Dynamic Systems Theory in SLA

The current state of research into language learning motivation, and more broadly speaking into the psychology of the language learner in general, revolves around a new approach known as Dynamic Systems Theory (DST). The theory is closely related to three other theories of *complexity theory*, *chaos theory*, and *emergentism*. Of these theories, it was complexity theory that was first picked up by applied linguists (see Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008), but since that time it has been primarily the theory of DST that has received the most attention. To provide a simplistic definition, DST moves beyond static and linear models into the territory of complex dynamical systems. For example, past research has centred around scenarios where one dependent variable exists and an outcome for that variable is created, or determined by two or more independent variables. However, DST sees the relationship between the variables as much more dynamic, where a change in one variable will impact upon all the others. Further, all variables are considered in relation to time, so 'static' concepts disappear and all variables are viewed as changing over time.

Whilst it would be possible to delve into a more detailed explanation and definition of precisely what DST is in the more general sense, it is more useful to look at the relevance it holds for SLA researchers. This relevance was summed up effectively by Dörnyei (2009b) as being that it can offer a perspective that has not been adopted before and that presents a more realistic situation and does not avoid variables or phenomena that have previously been ignored. Dörnyei's view is further supported by De Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2007), who explain:

What DST provides is a set of ideas and a wide range of tools to study complex systems. We can no longer work with simple cause-and-effect models in which the outcome can be predicted, but we

> *must use case studies to discover relevant sub-systems and*
> *simulate the processes. (p. 19)*

If the language learning experience, or process, and all associated and interrelated variables, is considered to be a complex dynamic system, then DST can provide a framework for observing and analyzing these interactions at all levels of the system. As such, it has the potential to be used as an overall theory of language development.

Finally, to further clarify what DST means for SLA research, it is helpful to briefly outline some of the guiding principles for applied linguistics. Not surprisingly, two of these focus on the notion of time, and they are the principles of a focus on change rather than variables and also a focus on longitudinal research. Others include a move away from the traditional approach of quantitative research methods by not accepting any cause-effect relationship as being fully predictable, a focus on context and environment, and finally a focus on both mixed methods research with a heavier leaning toward qualitative rather than a quantitative approach.

The shift towards a DST approach has opened avenues for motivation research that had not previously been considered. For example, Waninge *et al.* (2014) incorporate the use of a novel research instrument, the Motometer, to measure changes in the motivation of learners over the course of a lesson. This allowed an observation of the dynamics of motivation in a classroom to occur with consideration given to context and change. Another new concept in Directed Motivational Currents has been developed by Dornyei *et al.* (2015). This concept is defined as an "intense motivational drive which is capable of both stimulating and supporting long-term behaviour" (Dornyei *et al.*, 2014, p. 9), and links with the dynamic nature of motivation in line with DST at the same time as emphasising the critical role of a salient goal vision in motivational intensity and longevity.

The new focus on DST in motivation research is timely, as it necessitates a reconfiguration of contemporary theories such as the L2 Motivational Self System to incorporate the vital element of language learner emotions, which are at the core of the psychological system of not only language learners, but humans in general. Before

progressing to a reflection on the emotion literature within the domain of applied linguistics, it is important to note that not only does the role of emotions in future motivational theories and concepts demand greater attention and focus, but emotions themselves are emerging as the next step in SLA research.

EMOTIONS

The following sections will attempt to outline developments in research into emotions not only within mainstream psychology, but also across other more specified branches of psychological inquiry. However, before launching into an in-depth review of emotion literature, it would be prudent to provide a definition of exactly what is meant by the term 'emotion'. In general, emotions are defined as individual responses to events or experiences involving experiential, physiological, and behavioural activity (Keltner & Ekman, 2000). In essence, emotions are conscious feelings that evoke reactions in individuals. However, it has also been argued that there are emotions that are not necessarily felt (Prinz, 2005), and this creates further difficulty in producing a satisfactory definition. Parrott (2004) outlines the difficulty in deciding to include other states in a definition of emotions such as moods (depression, irritability), long-term emotions (love that is not momentary, but that continues for a prolonged period), dispositions (benevolence), motivational feelings (hunger, sexual arousal), cognitive feelings (confusion, déjà vu). This uncertainty surrounding even the very definition of emotions goes some way towards explaining why researchers have shied away from deeper investigation of emotions in the past.

In the current section, just how emotions have been dealt with in mainstream psychology will be discussed initially before progressing to a focus on educational psychology, and then on to emotions in SLA research within the field of applied linguistics. Dörnyei (2009b) emphasized the fact that the neglect of emotions in psychological research has filtered down to these other areas:

> *Everybody knows that classrooms are venues for a great deal of emotional turmoil, yet affect has been an almost completely neglected topic in educational psychology. Everybody knows that*

> *the study of a second language can be an emotionally rather*
> *taxing experience, yet affect has been an almost completely*
> *neglected topic in applied linguistics. (p. 219)*

As will be seen, the development of theories of emotion in
mainstream psychology have had a run-on effect into education and
applied linguistics (as well as other fields), and theories and
theoretical frameworks have been adopted and adapted to suit.

Emotions in Mainstream Psychology

As mentioned previously, whilst emotion is an area that is gradually
beginning to receive more attention in mainstream psychology and its
derivatives, it is one that was largely ignored for a long time. One of
the primary reasons for this was the dominance of behaviourist
psychology for much of the twentieth century up to the 1960s.
Several criticisms were levelled at behaviourism that still apply today.
Among these, it is the sole focus on that which can be observed that
remains the strongest case against it. Harzem (2004) draws specific
attention to the fact that it is impossible to ignore variables that are
not distinctly observable or easy to measure when he says "the failure
to deal effectively with concepts that *seemed* to have no singular,
identifiable, and observable counterparts was the basic conceptual
error of original behaviourism, and it is what is wrong with
behaviourism now" (p. 11). Without question, emotions fall into that
category of concepts that are both extremely subjective in nature,
and are not easily observable and measurable – the opposite of the
behaviourist perspective.

The current dominant psychological direction is that of cognitive
psychology, and whilst emotions have received more attention here
than with behaviourism, it still cannot be said that the study of
emotions has been embraced (Dörnyei, 2009b). This can be put down
to the long period of time that cognition and affect have been
perceived as totally different paradigms. However, it should be
mentioned that although these paradigms have always been deemed
separate, the same cannot be said for emotions and the manner in
which they are closely intertwined with the specific cognitive

function of appraisal. Carver (2005) explains this interlocking nature of emotions and cognitive processes:

> *I am among those inclined to ignore the assumption that appraisal and emotion are distinct functions. How can appraising an event as having adverse implications for the self not imply negative affect? How can negative affect exist apart from registering (at some level, not necessarily conscious) that an event has adverse implications for the self? These seem two sides of the same coin.* (p. 199)

So, it can be said that whilst cognitive processes are almost inextricably linked with emotions, it is essential to acknowledge that emotions should not be considered another class of cognition. Emotion is a distinctly different class of experience, and this can be seen, to give one example, in the link between emotional experience and physiological changes in the body.

At present, emotions are beginning to receive more attention, and it is becoming possible to see emotion standing alongside cognition and motivation as three vital elements of human experience.

Emotions in Educational Psychology

To date, the amount of research into emotions in an educational context is relatively minimal. This reflects the similar neglect of emotion that has existed for such an extended period within the realm of mainstream psychology. This neglect is somewhat bemusing as "because of their subjective importance, educational settings are infused with intense emotional experiences that direct interactions, affect learning and performance, and influence personal growth in both students and teachers" (Pekrun, Frenzel, Goetz & Perry, 2007, p. 13). Of the vast range of emotions that most would agree are common, and also some that are less common but present within a classroom setting, it is only the emotion of learner anxiety that has received significant attention. Early on, the work of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) was groundbreaking with the development of the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale, while Zeidner (1998) directed attention toward the anxiety experienced in test situations. In more recent work on anxiety, Pae (2013) focuses on the anxieties that arise

from specific language-related skills, such as listening anxiety. In addition, Gregersen *et al.* (2014) adopts the novel idiodynamic approach to gauge changes in learners' physiological experience of anxiety on a moment-by-moment basis while giving an oral presentation, and Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) observed the anxiety of a large sample of learners in comparison to their experience of the positive emotion of enjoyment. What studies such as these provide is an insight into the antecedents and effects of the emotion of anxiety. In turn, this aids in developing and implementing measures to reduce or eliminate any negative effects if the emotion occurs. . It should also be noted that the work of Weiner (1985) placed a large emphasis on emotions as he deemed emotions to play a vital driving role in the attribution process as described in his attribution theory of motivation.

In the current environment, in which psychological theories of motivation are centred on the notion of the self and identity, emotion plays a pivotal role due to the intensely personal nature of the phenomenon. Maehr (2001) outlined this when he posited that "the focus on self and self-worth reinforces the need to rediscover the role of the emotions in motivation" (p. 184). It seems inadequate to be in possession of a clear and well-defined theory of anxiety in educational settings, developed from a range of relevant and valid empirical research (over 1,000 studies conducted over a period of approximately fifty years [Schutz & Pekrun, 2007]), but to have minimal insight into other emotions of the classroom. These emotions might include positive emotions such as enjoyment, happiness, hope, surprise, or pride, or may include negative emotions, which, of course, also arise in classrooms and beyond, such as anger, fear, sadness, hopelessness, disgust, shame, guilt, or boredom. Such emotions are no less common than anxiety; in fact, they may be even more prevalent in the day-to-day routine of student learning than anxiety, which has traditionally been studied in relation to tests and exams.

One major theory that has developed out of the need for increased emphasis and attention on emotions in the educational sphere is that of Pekrun's (2000, 2006) *Control-Value Theory of Achievement Emotions*, which arose out of a perceived need to remedy the

fragmented state in which emotion research had found itself through the pursuit of a more integrated approach. The integrated nature of the theory is derived from the drawing together of assumptions from a range of theories such as expectancy-value theories of emotions (Pekrun, 1984, 1992; Turner & Schallert, 2001), transactional theories of stress appraisals and related emotions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985), control theories (Patrick, Skinner & Connell, 1993; Perry, 1991, 2003), and attributional theories of achievement emotions (Weiner, 1985), to name perhaps the most relevant and important areas.

The focus of the theory, as the name implies, is on *achievement emotions*. Achievement emotions are defined as "emotions tied directly to achievement activities or achievement outcomes" (Pekrun *et al.*, 2007, p. 14). Achievement activities can refer to actual tasks conducted in class, for example, whilst achievement outcomes refer to end-states. To clarify this, examples of activity-related achievement emotions could include student excitement they experience form learning, boredom experienced in classroom settings, or anger about task demands. Outcome-related achievement emotions include feelings of joy or pride when academic goals are met, or the frustration, disappointment and shame felt if they are not.

The critical element of the control-value theory of achievement emotions revolves around the idea of control-appraisals and value-appraisals, and the fact that these appraisal types are the proximal determinants of achievement emotions. That is to say that specific achievement emotions will be felt by individuals, in this case students, when they feel in control of, or out of control of, achievement activities and outcomes that are subjectively important to them.

Emotions in SLA/Applied Linguistics

In much the same fashion as within mainstream psychology and educational psychology, the field of applied linguistics and second language acquisition research has also suffered from a lack of understanding of the role of emotions in learning. This is supported by Scovel (2001), who states that "affective variables are the area that SLA researchers understand the least" (p. 140). The value of understanding the role of emotions is espoused by López and Aguilar

(2013) who emphasise that due to the fact that emotions and feelings are involved at every level of the learning process, and particularly in the learning of a language, the significance of the role that emotional experiences can play should never be underestimated. The reasons behind the neglect are also similar, as the difficulties associated with researching emotions are put down to the lack of a clear definition of emotions and precisely what constitutes affect (Bown & White, 2010a).

Over the decades that have been dedicated to motivation research, the role that social context plays has been given increasing attention, moving on from the very early and narrow views that regard language learning as primarily a mental activity with little regard for social context. Several researchers (Block, 2003; Gass & Mackey, 2006) have emphasised this, stressing that due to the fact that language acts as a social tool, the social context is indeed of extreme importance.

In conjunction with this increased emphasis on the social context, there has been an increase in research into emotions with this in mind, and this is particularly evident in the push for a sociocognitive approach to language acquisition. This push did not begin recently as is the case with the focus on emotions, and Atkinson (2002) drew attention to the fact that research into language acquisition needed to continue to move beyond the purely cognitive and consider the idea that language acquisition is a process "simultaneously occurring and interactively constructed both 'in the head' and 'in the world'" (p. 525). Once this idea had taken shape in relation to a general approach to second language acquisition research, it also caught on in an approach to research into affect. This is evident in Bown and White's (2010a) social cognitive model of emotion in language learning.

This model is of relevance and holds great potential, as it does not brush aside the importance of cognitive element in order to focus on emotions, rather it draws in social context and combines it with cognition in order to observe and study affect. This particular model was developed from a qualitative research approach, and stresses the social antecedents of emotions, the importance of cognitive

appraisals of situations, and the regulation of emotion (Bown and White, 2010b). The model is a good indication of the direction in which SLA research is heading – towards a greater emphasis on the emotions, which are quite possibly "the most influential force in language acquisition" (Scovel, 2001, p. 40).

The emphasis on the social context attached to language learning is also visible in the work of Pavlenko (2005), who has explored the expression of emotions by bilinguals and their reasoning behind selecting one language over another. Further, the work of Dörnyei (2005, 2009b) can be said to have arisen out of the same focus on social context, but with a greater focus on how emotions intersect with motivation and identities.

Alongside the gradual build-up of momentum that has been occurring regarding research into emotions in SLA there has been an emphasis on a qualitative research approach, as discussed in the work of those above. A qualitative approach is generally considered to be the most suitable approach for investigating emotions and this is also in line with a DST approach to research, which is the current direction for SLA research. Spielmann and Radnofsky (2001) call for more qualitative enquiry into the holistic nature of the language learning experience, whilst Garrett and Young (2009) point to the critical importance of the interview process as a means of discovery.

The final aspect that will be looked at in the limited literature on emotions in SLA that currently exists is the specific contexts within which learners encounter their emotional experiences. Batstone (2002) pointed out the dual contexts that learners confront. He describes the contexts as the *communicative* and *learning* contexts. Learning contexts mean attending to form and also taking risks in order to improve linguistic competence – as such these contexts can be likened to class and formal education contexts. On the other hand, communicative contexts require using the L2 to participate in social interactions outside of the situated classroom learning context. This distinction is important, as it is extremely difficult to argue that learners in the classroom environment regularly confront the affective variables that are inherent in L2 social and interpersonal functions beyond the classroom. Thus, consideration needs to be

given to the differing contexts of EFL and ESL. In EFL contexts, the communicative context does not exist in the same way as in ESL contexts, so opportunities for authentic use beyond the classroom need to be created and encouraged. In ESL settings, on the other hand, a balance between the communicative and learning contexts needs to be struck, as learners need to use their L2 in class *and* in the interpersonal and social functions associated with their L2 use outside the classroom.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

It can be seen that the shift from a purely cognitive and motivational focus towards a broader and more realistic view of the language learner that incorporates and acknowledges the value of their emotional experiences is occurring. This increased focus follows similar changes within mainstream psychology and educational psychology. However, it is important for this momentum to not only be maintained, but also to be increased in order to truly be able to capitalise on the invaluable insights for language education that the emotional experiences of learners can provide. This momentum can be strengthened in several ways.

Firstly, it is critical that the move away from the narrow focus on only issues of confidence and anxiety continue. The variety of emotions available to the human experience is immense, and we would be foolish to remain focused on only the most obvious at the expense of so many others.

Secondly, more work needs to occur in understanding the range and intensity of 'negative' emotions at the same time as providing some focus on the 'positive' emotions and the effect they can have on learning. Positive emotions, in particular, have suffered from a lack of research in the past, and this is likely due to a lack of understanding of how they can influence learners and the learning process. This could be achieved by targeting the Emotional Intelligence (EI) of both teachers and learners through research. Salovey and Mayer (1990) define EI as the "ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action" (p.

189). Future studies investigating how to increase the EI of both language teachers and learners would be of great benefit.

It should also be pointed out that raising awareness of the range and value of positive emotions experienced by learners carries the added benefit of discouraging any complacency associated with the experience of positive emotions. An example of such complacency can be seen in the study conducted by López and Aguilar (2013), in which one of the participants talked of being spurred to action by negative emotions, but when reflecting on a good result they felt there was nothing to reflect on or analyse as they were already happy.

A final important point to make about the future of research into emotions in SLA is, as Long (1997) posits, that SLA research would benefit significantly from a context-sensitive, participant-sensitive, generally sociolinguistic approach. The nature and range of different emotions necessitates this, and is something that should be strived for by current researchers.

CONCLUSION

The development of motivational theories of language learning from Gardner and Smythe's (1975) socio-educational model through to the current interest in DST have succeeded in providing a deep understanding as to what drives language learners, and will surely continue to do so. However, these models all seem somewhat incomplete when we note the focus on cognitive aspects of the learning process, and the absence of any emphasis on emotions. It could be said that these theories needed to be developed so that researchers could arrive at a focus on emotions from a more solid position. This is understandable due to the inherent difficulty in observing and measuring them.

As can be seen from the review of the motivation literature provided, the research agenda continues to widen, and it has now done so to the point where the influence of emotions can no longer be ignored – a realisation that occurred within mainstream psychology and educational psychology before the same realisation was reached in applied linguistics. Now, the stage is set, and the

opportunity present, for a rising swell of emotion research that will benefit the academic sphere, but even more importantly, that will provide deep and valuable insights into exactly who our learners are, and what they feel and experience when they study, learn, and use a foreign language.

It is so important to remember that emotions are at the very core of our existence, and can never be separated from cognition, which is of course critical to learning, but will never survive on its own.

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