

Emotions from a Bilingual Point of View

Emotions from a Bilingual Point of View:
Personality and Emotional Intelligence
in Relation to Perception and Expression
of Emotions in the L1 and L2

By

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**CAMBRIDGE
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P U B L I S H I N G

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book reports an investigation into the relationship between immersion in a foreign language and perception and expression of emotions in a native and non-native language. The purposes of this study were (a) to examine informants who were immersed in an L2 language and culture and those who were not in order to investigate whether such exposure to a foreign language changes the perception and expression of emotions in both L1 and L2 and (b) to identify possible factors which might play a role in probable changes in the perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2. A literature review considers this relationship from a range of perspectives, including that of monolingual speakers, bilingual speakers and L2 users and shows that immersion in a foreign language and culture together with affective socialization processes might influence one's emotional repertoire and contribute to changes in the perception and expression of emotions in both L1 and L2, as well as result in cognitive changes in semantic and conceptual levels of emotional representation. An investigation was conducted to research possible changes in the emotional repertoire of Polish monolinguals, Polish L2 users of English and Polish-English bilinguals, operating in two typologically distant languages. An online questionnaire consisted of various testing instruments including self-report questionnaires, open-ended questionnaires and personality tests such as the Big-Five personality test and Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue). Both quantitative and qualitative analysis found that immersion and socialization into L2 language and culture influenced the perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2. The findings also revealed a relationship between personality traits and emotional intelligence, as well self-perceived L2 proficiency and perception and expression of emotions in the first and second language. It was suggested that the complex relationship between personality, emotional intelligence, immersion in a foreign language and culture and perception/expression of emotions should be further analysed.

This book is composed of six chapters. Chapter One introduces the main themes and provides a general overview of the topic. Following a brief introduction of the research on emotions, the discussion is narrowed to some specific studies that investigated different aspects potentially

influencing perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2 including: sociobiographical data, personality traits, cultural differences. The notion of universal vs. culture-specific emotions or untranslatability of the emotions among various languages was also addressed, alongside evidence for a conceptual shift among bilinguals.

Chapter Two presents a wide-ranging review of the literature relating to the themes of language, culture, emotion, and personality. The focus throughout is on how individuals perceive and express emotions in an L2 that is typologically distant from their L1, and how immersion in a foreign language and culture might influence or shape this perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2 alike. The discussion begins by placing the current research in the context of theories of language and thought, and subsequently aims to describe a complex interplay of such concepts as language, culture, personality and emotions. The research studies reviewed are organized and grouped into three main research areas: culture and emotions, perception and expression of emotions in the L2, and personality and emotions. The first research area of language, culture and emotions discusses crosslinguistic influences in language and cognition, different ways of perceiving and expressing emotions in different cultures, the notion of the linguistic untranslatability of some emotions, cultural scripts of expressing emotions as well as both linguistic and cultural differences in the two languages under examination in this book, Polish and English. This section draws on both empirical and autobiographical data in order to describe the complexity of the topic and provide further support for the view that the core of emotions is largely influenced by the culture in which we live and the language we speak (Panayiotou, 2001: 70). The second section provides an overview of up-to-date research on emotions, presenting at the same time different ways of approaching the vast subject of research on the perception and expression of emotions in an L2. The last section is devoted to personality and emotions, and examines the possible influence of some higher and lower order personality factors including “OCEAN” and trait emotional intelligence (EI) on the perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2.

Chapter Three describes the research procedures and tools used in the present book. Five testing instruments consisted of a: personal background questionnaire, questionnaire measuring the perception and expression of emotions in a foreign language, exposure to an L2 questionnaire, an OCEAN personality test, and a TEIQue (Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire). All these instruments are described in detail together with

various scales adapted for scoring purposes. This chapter also presents participants' profiles, administration procedures.

Chapter Four presents the statistical procedures and the empirical findings of the present research. A detailed statistical analysis of all the measured factors is provided, as well as a discussion of the findings.

Chapter Five provides a detailed qualitative data analysis supported throughout by the analysis of respondents' insights concerning the complex relationship between language, culture, and emotion perception and use that complements the quantitative data analysis presented in Chapter Four.

The book concludes in Chapter Six with a more general discussion of the findings and of the possible role of immersion in a foreign language and culture in the process of the perception and expression of emotions in native and non-native language, as well as the conceptual shift that might occur due to such exposure.

I would like to conclude the preface by acknowledging and thanking those people who have been most influential in writing of this book. The people to whom I am scholarly most indebted are Professor Aneta Pavlenko and Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele, whose ideas I develop in this book.

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Finally, I wish to thank my family members, especially my husband Daniel and my daughter Julia for their unstinting support and for putting up with it all.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
LGS	Length of stay
ESC	English-speaking country
EI	Emotional Intelligence
TEI	Trait Emotional Intelligence
OCEAN	Personality test measuring such factors as Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism
TEIQue	Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire
IPIP	International Personality Item Pool

CHAPTER ONE

BILINGUALISM AND PERCEPTION AND EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONS

1.1. Introduction

Emotions are perceived as very important to human life (Wierzbicka, 1992). They enable us to function in a given environment and are the threads that weave together the fabric of society (Smith, 1759). Many anthropologists now claim that differences between emotional experiences around the world are minor compared with the similarities (Evans, 2001: xiv). However, it is impossible not to acknowledge that every culture has its own emotional climate. Emotional climates depend on underlying emotional culture, and both influence, and are affected by, emotional atmosphere (de Rivera, 1992). Tagiuri (1968) notes that emotional climate is a molar concept (like personality) but that it is experienced as external to the person (as part of the environment), although the person may feel he or she contributes to its nature, and that it has a connotation of continuity, but is not as lasting as culture. Emotional climate is “the relatively enduring quality of the total environment that (a) is experienced by the occupants, (b) influences their behavior, and (c) can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics (or attributes) of the environment” (Tagiuri, 1968:25). Emotional climate specific emotional experiences in different cultures, as described by Wierzbicka:

“Different languages are linked with different ways of thinking as well as different ways of feeling; they are linked with different attitudes, different ways of relating to people, different ways of expressing one’s feelings” (Wierzbicka, 2004: 98)

The main issue that is to be addressed in the present book is connected both with the universality and cultural differences of emotions. It aims to

examine whether exposure to a foreign language and culture changes the perception and expression of emotions in both L1 and L2 and the possible influence of the personality traits and emotional intelligence on this process. It secondarily addresses the notion of feeling different or being a different person when operating in a foreign language.

1.2. A personal reflection

The idea of carrying out research on the perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2 among bilinguals and L2 users resulted from my own experiences. I spent four years in Ireland, where I was using English, my L2, on an everyday basis both for professional and personal purposes. It is important to mention that prior to my stay in Ireland I graduated in English Philology in Poland so I was used to reading, writing and conversing in English (my L2) as I had been doing so for the previous five years. Nevertheless, after being immersed in English language and culture and not having so many opportunities to communicate in Polish, I noticed that not only am I a different person when operating in my L2, but I also started to feel differently, as if I were the same person but with an enlarged emotional repertoire. In some instances I felt in Polish and in others in English; even if these emotions could be linguistically translated from one language into another they still felt different. This was quite a new observation for me. Even though I had been using English for professional purposes for a long time prior to this, I had never observed any changes in my behavior or perception of emotions imposed by L2 use. Following this path I started interviewing Polish native speakers with a high command of English who had been living in an English-speaking country (ESC) for two years or more. My inquiry concerned whether there had been any change in the perception and expression of emotions in these two languages after some period of exposure to L2 language and culture.

This informal pilot study revealed that most of my respondents noted a change, either in behavior while using their L2 or in “feeling different” while operating in it. Some interviewees even claimed to feel different emotions than those learned and known in their L1, as if using a foreign language changed their emotional repertoire. The next step was interviewing friends from the Polish University who had studied English with me. Most of them had graduated with an MA degree in English Philology, so their command of English was very high. The only criterion for choosing these informants was no or a very limited stay in an ESC. They were asked the same question concerning any noticeable changes in behavior, perception or expression of emotions while operating in L2 and

most of them admitted that they felt more self-confident knowing that they had acquired a high command of a foreign language and were able to converse in it on any topic, but they rarely pointed to any behavioral or emotional changes imposed by operating in a second language. This pilot study was based on interviewing approximately 15 people in Ireland in person and about 18 in Poland either in person or by sending an e-mail. I found that the majority of informants who were living in an Ireland and were exposed to L2 culture and language pointed to some kind of undefined change in behavior and perception or expression of emotions, whereas the group of graduates who were highly proficient in L2, but had spent no (or very limited) time in an ESC, failed to report such changes, at least to such an extent as the group of Polish immigrants to Ireland.

These findings resulted in my growing interest in the topic and an intention to research it in order to find out whether exposure to a foreign language and culture can change the perception and expression of emotions in both L1 and L2. I decided to research the influence of exposure to foreign language and culture on the perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2 because if any change occurs, it most likely influences our emotional repertoire as such, and not a specific L2 emotional perception. Based on personal experience, I felt this to be true but I needed to find out how to empirically research such an “emotional” topic, which led me to a very fascinating field of culture and emotions.

1.3. Culture and emotions

“What is an emotion?” That question was asked in precisely that form by James over 100 years ago (James, 1884). But philosophers have been concerned about the nature of emotion since Socrates as emotions have always been important, often perceived as threat to reason and danger to philosophy (Solomon, 2004). Emotion is the complex psychophysiological experience of an individual’s state of mind as interacting with biochemical (internal) and environmental (external) influences. In humans, emotion fundamentally involves “physiological arousal, expressive behaviors, and conscious experience” and is associated with mood, temperament, personality and disposition, and motivation (Myers, 2004). The cultural theory of emotions claims that emotions are learned behaviors, transmitted culturally, much like languages (Evans, 2001). According to this view, people living in different cultures should experience different emotions. But is it really the case? Pavlenko (2008) rightly notes that people feel the same emotions but different languages might provide different means to access our feelings as well as shape the way we express our emotions.

As already mentioned by Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012), the relationship between culture and emotion is a very important one, as culture “shapes” the perception and expression of emotion through the social constructions of reality that presumably characterize important aspects of one’s culture (e.g., American culture is individualistic; East Asian cultures are collectivistic and group oriented; Mexican culture is family oriented, etc.) (Matsumoto, 2006: 422). As Matsumoto stated:

“Because cultural worldviews can differ across cultures, they can help to construct different self-concepts in people of different cultures. Like the concept of the self (Markus, 1977), which is also a social construction, cultural worldviews are ideological belief systems that individuals use as guidelines to explain their and others’ behaviors. When reappraising events, therefore, it is likely that individuals will tap into these cultural and personal ideologies to retrieve guidelines for ways in which they should evaluate or appraise emotion-eliciting situations” (Matsumoto, 2006: 422)

Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012) writes that many researchers have suggested that any theory concerning emotion should include a linguistic and cultural element (Panayiotou, 2001; Rosaldo, 1980; Wierzbicka, 1994a, 1998). An argument supporting such a claim rests on the observation that some emotions that are key concepts in some cultures may be linguistically non-existent in others (Panayiotou, 2001). It has been argued by many researchers that some concepts like “*amae*” (Doi, 1990), “*fago*” (Lutz, 1988), “*perezhivat*” (Pavlenko, 2002), “*stenahoria*” (Panayiotou, 2006), or “*tęsknota*” (Wierzbicka, 1992) may not be translated into other languages when taking their cultural manifestation into account (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2012). Nevertheless, Pavlenko noted that:

“To say that emotion concepts vary does not imply that speakers of different languages have distinct physiological experiences. Rather, it means that they may have somewhat different vantage points from which to evaluate and interpret their own and others’ emotional experiences” (Pavlenko, 2008: 150).

In support of Pavlenko’s (2008) statement, there is a body of research which claims that there are more similarities than differences in the perception of emotions in the typologically distant languages that are Japanese, Chinese and English than had been previously assumed (Moore, Romney, Hsia & Rush, 1999). Moore, Romney, Hsia & Rush (1999) demonstrated that culture had a shared cognitive structure among all languages and that there were important similarities in the perception of given emotion terms in dissimilar languages (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2012).

Their suggestions might relate to the important question of universal vs. culture-specific aspect of emotions.

1.3.1. Universal or culture-specific?

The debate concerning whether emotions are universal or culture-specific dates back to Darwin (1872), who described the universal nature of facial expressions. Ekman (1969) in the late 1960's provided the first scientific evidence that the cultural theory of emotion, which stated that emotions are learned behaviors, might not be entirely accurate. By showing photographs portraying various emotions to people from remote cultures, Ekman discovered that they were able to recognize the given emotion and assign a situation that could elicit it. Although the cultural theory of emotion was very popular at that time, Ekman scientifically proved that some of the emotions are "hardwired into a human brain" (Evans, 2001) and present in all cultures. His research changed the approach to studying emotions and it is now widely accepted among emotion researchers that some emotions are not learned, but universal and innate (Evans, 2001: 6). Among such universal emotions Ekman enumerated: joy, distress, anger, fear, surprise, and disgust. This suggests two categories of emotions: universal emotions that are innate and common to all human beings on the one hand, and culture-specific emotions that can be developed only if you are exposed to them by your culture (Wierzbicka, 1999) on the other.

"Our common emotional heritage binds humanity together in a way that transcends cultural difference. In all places and all times, human beings have shared the same basic emotional repertoire. Different cultures have elaborated on this repertoire, exalting different emotion downgrading others, and embellishing the common feelings of cultural nuances" (Evans 2001: 11).

The debate concerning whether emotions are universal or culture-specific implies a binary decision between universality and specificity. However, it had already been suggested that emotions could be both universal and recognizable in all cultures, as demonstrated by Ekman, and culture specific, like the emotion of "being a wild pig" felt by the Gururumba people of New Guinea that is apparently never experienced by people from other cultures. People who experience it behave just like wild pigs: they run wild, looting articles of small value and attacking bystanders (Evans, 2001). This could suggest that undoubtedly we are equipped with a set of universal emotions but at the same time the culture we happen to

live in provides us with means of expressing them or with another set of culture-specific and unique emotions. This point of view could explain why we are able to recognize basic emotions among various nations but at the same time experience and learn new emotions like English “frustration” (Panayiotou, 2004), Russian “perezhivat” (Pavlenko, 2002; Pavlenko & Driagina, 2007), Polish “tęsknota” (Wierzbicka, 1992), Greek “stenahoria” (Panayiotou, 2004), Italian “fare festa a qualcuno” (Parks, 1996) and many more by means of immersing in a foreign language and culture (that is living in a foreign country and using its language on everyday basis). Lantolf (1999), notes that immersion in the second culture seems to play an important role in the learners’ ability to construct conceptual organizations and lexical paradigms similar to those of native speakers. Panayiotou’s (2004) studies with Greek-English bilinguals show a number of language-specific terms that are perceived as untranslatable. One such term is the English word “frustration” used in a code-switched utterance by Greek-English bilinguals during a conversation in Greek in order to describe a specific feeling. A similar situation arises with respect to a Greek emotion of “stenahoria”: a socioculturally determined pattern of experience and expression which is acquired and subsequently felt in the body, featuring in specific social situations, which could be loosely translated into English as sadness, discomfort, or suffocation (Panayiotou, 2004). What is of great importance here is the fact that Greek-English bilinguals would never use this term in English as they claim that one cannot feel “stenahoria” in English; this is not because of the lack of an equivalent term in English but rather because of the lack of an appropriate situation which could evoke it in English (Panayiotou, 2004: 133). Pavlenko and Driagina (2007) used a narrative elicitation of two short films in order to investigate the non-equivalent emotion words “frustration” and “perezhivat”, which could be translated as to suffer, to worry, or to experience things keenly. They found that monolingual Russian speakers systematically used the term “perezhivat” to describe the feelings of the main characters in the film, whereas American L2 learners of Russian and Russian-English bilinguals residing in the USA did not use the term at all. Nevertheless some of them borrowed the word “frustration” into Russian to describe the main character (Pavlenko, 2009: 139). This suggests that there is a possibility of acquiring new ways of expressing emotions by means of affective socialization and immersion in a L2 culture and language. Similarly, Dewaele (2008b: 249) suggested, with respect to the Italian concept “fare festa” that this could be learned only through a process of socialization and that second language learners of Italian might be able to learn to recognize such concepts only through

exposure to Italian culture. Consequently, if exposure to a foreign language facilitates or enables a learner to acquire new emotion concepts it would be plausible to ask how this new “emotional” knowledge influences the perception and expression of emotions in both L1 and L2 as well as what is the role of sociolinguistic and socio-cultural competence in that process.

1.4. Sociolinguistic and socio-cultural competence

Language and culture are closely tied to one another and have a profound influence on both verbal and non-verbal communication. Snow (1999) suggests that apart from the cognitive aspects of L2 learning (i.e. problems faced by L2 learners and users while acquiring a complex system that has overlap with the complex systems already acquired) the societal context of bilingualism also has to be acquired, as “language use is tied closely to personal identity, to cultural identification, to national or ethnic pride, to specific communicative tasks or situation, and to a set of attitudes and beliefs that influence the course of SLA” (Snow, 1999: 468). In this respect, sociolinguistic competence comes into play, described by Ranney (1992: 25) as “the ability to perform various speech acts, the ability to manage conversational turns and topics, sensitivity to variation in register and politeness, and an understanding of how these aspects of language vary across the social roles and settings”. Some components of communication are culturally-dependent, including the degree of formality in one’s speech or body language (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981), and the significance of the length of a pause or of a change in tone (Chun, 1998). Acquisition of sociolinguistic and socio-cultural factors could not only broaden knowledge of cultural and social norms present in every society (and as a result facilitate communication processes) but also enlarge the emotional repertoire by means of which acquisition of new concepts takes place. It was suggested that only by a process of secondary affective socialization might foreign language learners internalize concepts that are non-existent in their L1 (Pavlenko, 2008). Only by immersion in the L2 language and culture can all components of socio-cultural competence be fully acquired, including social contextual factors, stylistic appropriateness factors, cultural factors, and non-verbal communicative factors (Celce-Murcia, Dorneyi & Thurrell, 1995). It is believed that some L2 concepts connected with sociolinguistic and socio-cultural competence could be acquired only by socialization in the L2 culture (Arabski, 2006; Dewaele, 2008b; Pavlenko, 2008; Wierzbicka, 2004). In this respect, Wierzbicka (2004: 97) notes that Polish and English concepts are linked with different

cultural models and different emotional scripts. Apart from evoking possible linguistic misunderstandings, there is a cultural and emotional mismatch which could be overcome by contact with L2 culture (Wierzbicka, 2004). Similarly, Arabski (2006: 15) comments that “it is the culture which is transformed, language structures being a part of it”. Meanwhile, Regan, Howard & Lemée (2009:3) state that:

“In our globalized multicultural/multilingual world, communities are constantly shifting and individuals move in and out of them. People need to adapt to that constant shift in communities and find their own place in the speech community which they currently inhabit. Knowledge of grammatical and structural elements of the L2 is only a part of the skills and competencies which are necessary for this process of adaptation; sociolinguistic and sociocultural competences are equally important. These competences condition the L2 speaker’s view of themselves in the L2 speech community, their view of their own community as well as the way they are perceived by the L2 community in turn, and this consequently affects the place they occupy in that community or communities and their progress through it”.

1.5. Bilingualism and emotions

Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012), notes that according to Matsumoto (1994) in the case of bi-cultural bilinguals, each language may access a different set of cultural values. He also hypothesized that the behavior of bilingual individuals would depend on the language that is in current use. At the same time, Wierzbicka (1999) claimed that the way people interpret their own emotions depends on the vocabulary provided by their native language. Following this line of argument it could be stated that in the case of bilinguals or L2 users who are operating in two typologically distant languages this interpretation of emotions might change due to exposure to a foreign language (Pavlenko, 2005).

It has been empirically demonstrated that emotion concepts vary across languages and cultures (Pavlenko, 2008). By emotion concepts we understand:

“Prototypical scripts that are formed as a result of repeated experiences and involve causal antecedents, appraisals, physiological reactions, consequences, and means of regulation and display.” (Pavlenko, 2008: 150).

Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012) writes after Russell (1991a) that these concepts are embedded within larger systems of beliefs of psychological and social processes, often viewed as cognitive models, folk theories of

mind, or ethno-psychologies. Pavlenko (2008: 151) enumerates three possible relationships between concepts encoded in two different languages in her analysis of concept comparability: similar or identical concepts across the two languages; a concept from one language which has no counterpart in the other language; and two or more concepts from the two different languages which are in partial overlap. In the first case complete overlap of concepts in L1 and L2 may facilitate positive transfer in the L2 learning process. In the second case learners find no translation equivalent in their L1 conceptual and linguistic repertoires and in order to internalize such concepts, L2 learners have to undergo the process of secondary affective socialization and develop prototypical scripts for these emotions. In the last case one concept may represent a subpart of another or refer to a lexically and conceptually different term in other language.

In the case of bilinguals or second language users living in a foreign country, interpretation of emotions might change due to exposure to a foreign language (Pavlenko, 2005) and a conceptual shift may occur. This conceptual shift can be hypothesized to take place in the lexicon of the L2 user residing in an L2 context, where representations of partially overlapping concepts have shifted in the direction of L2-based concepts. Such a conceptual shift was observed in the performance of Russian-English bilinguals when producing Russian (L1) narratives; they used a combination of change-of-state verbs and adjectives to describe emotions as states, rather than as processes, as is common in Russian (L1), thus displaying an influence of L2 on L1 performance (Pavlenko, 2002; Stepanova Sachs & Coley, 2006).

On the basis of the research detailed above, it can be concluded that bilinguals indeed appear to express emotions differently to monolinguals, and that immersion in a foreign language and culture might change the perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2. Nevertheless, a key outstanding question concerns the influence of personality on this process. None of the studies presented above considered both personality traits and emotional intelligence as contributing factors. This insufficiency could be partly attributable to the fact that research carried out from a linguistic point of view traditionally concentrates on linguistic variables and avoids incorporating psychological variables. In this respect, Dewaele & van Oudenhoven (2009: 4) noted: "Experts on multilingualism do focus on the linguistic aspects of immigration and acculturation, but typically pay less attention to psychological aspects". However, inclusion of individual differences seems to be justified in an investigation of crosslinguistic differences and similarities. It is important to consider a "real person" behind the data, a reality which cannot be reduced to one or

two linguistic variables (most frequently linguistic history and linguistic performance). Rather, the situation is much more complex and needs to be addressed from the psychological point of view as well as from the linguistic one. It has already been demonstrated that some crosslinguistic differences could be entirely accounted for by individual differences and not crosslinguistic differences (Matsumoto, 2006). Therefore, inclusion of psychological variables such as personality traits and emotional intelligence is of vital importance in any crosslinguistic research as it yields a much richer picture than that gained by examination of linguistic variables alone.

1.6. Personality and emotions

Child (1986: 239) has defined personality as: “the more or less stable and enduring organization of a person’s character, temperament, intellect and physique which determines his unique adjustment to the environment”. Major approach to the study of human personality is “trait theory” and trait theorists are primarily interested in the measurement of “traits”, which can be defined as habitual patterns of behavior, thought, and emotion (Kassin, 2003). As noted by Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012) Allport & Odbert (1936), pioneers in the study of traits, divided traits into “central” and “secondary” traits. In their approach, “secondary traits” are those that could be recognized within a given culture and “central traits” are those by which an individual may be recognized or characterized (Allport & Odbert, 1936). There is an unlimited number of potential traits that could be used to describe personality, however many psychologists currently believe that five factors are sufficient (Costa & McCrae, 1992a). Among these five factors, later called “higher-order personality traits” or “The Big Five”, are: Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism. Nevertheless, it is very important to remember that the evidence suggests that personality traits are hierarchically organized with more specific or lower-order traits (like EI) combining to form more generalized higher-order traits (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2012). At the same time there are good reasons to consider that both higher-and lower-order levels of the hierarchy are important for understanding personality (Livesley et al. 1998) that shapes various aspects of our life including SLA or affective socialization processes (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2012).

According to Stern (1983: 379), there are certain personality characteristics that “are helpful or detrimental to successful language learning”. Extraversion, for example, is seen as the factor influencing speech production both in L1 and L2. Its effect on communicative speech production in situations of varying formality makes this variable

particularly interesting from the point of view of expression of emotions in the first and second language. Extravert people are said not to have any problems with communication as they are more spontaneous and while interacting with a speaker of the target language they do not place as much emphasis on form, grammatical rules or linguistic structures (Klein, 1995). Generally, an extravert can be characterized an impulsive individual, who always has a ready answer, and generally likes change; (s)he is carefree, easy-going, optimistic, and does not keep feelings under tight control. On the other hand, the typical introvert is a quiet, retiring, introspective, fond of books rather than people and reserved and distant except to intimate friends. An introvert keeps feelings under close control, seldom behaves in an aggressive manner, and does not lose his/her temper easily (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964: 8). Given this description of a single trait (Extraversion), it could be suggested that some personality traits might influence emotional expression in both L1 and L2. Consequently, personality traits should be incorporated as mediating variables in studies on bilingual emotion perception and expression as well as in studies on SLA as they might shed some light on the complex process of acquiring a foreign language.

The acquisition of a foreign language is a complex process, characterized by Ellis (1985: 4-6) as:

“The product of many factors pertaining to many interrelated factors. Acquisition refers to picking up a second language through exposure to the subconscious or conscious process by which a language is learnt in a natural or tutored setting. It covers the development of phonology, lexis, grammar and pragmatic knowledge.”

Learning a foreign language abroad, among native-speakers, favours the acquisition of vocabulary, pronunciation and the subconscious use of grammatical structures. The motivation for communication is likely to be stronger in this environment and therefore, the achievement of success in SLA might seem to be more certain. However, learning in a tutored setting, based on a more regular system can be conducive to the gradual assimilation of knowledge which is potentially more suitable for some personality types.

Dewaele (2008b) and Pavlenko (2008) commented that immersion in a foreign language and culture is necessary for the affective socialization process under consideration in the present study. The current study hypothesized that some personality traits such as Extraversion may facilitate such a socialization process, since extraverts, who can be characterized as “talkative” and “sociable”, do not have any problems with interpersonal relationships; they are very responsive, and this is

significantly related to measures of language development. Introverted people, on the other hand, avoid interpersonal contact, are not willing participants in class activities and concentrate on form more than content. Introverts prefer to remain silent rather than to produce an utterance which violates form or grammatical rules. This hinders their interaction with speakers of the target language and prevents them from practicing the target language effectively. At the same time it was hypothesized that apart from higher-order personality traits also lower-order trait of emotional intelligence might influence the affective socialization process.

The lower-order trait of emotional intelligence (EI) (Petrides, 2001) is a fairly new concept in SLA research. Dewaele, Petrides & Furnham (2008) researched the effects of emotional intelligence (EI) and sociobiographical variables on communicative anxiety in the first language and on foreign language anxiety in the second, third, and fourth languages of adult multilinguals. They found that higher scores on trait EI corresponded to significantly lower communicative anxiety and foreign language anxiety. Nevertheless, it appears that none of studies that researched perception or expression of emotions in the L2 have ever incorporated EI, with the exception of Dewaele (2008). Since emotional intelligence (EI) involves the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008), incorporation of the EI as the mediating variable in a study of perception and expression of emotions seems appropriate. The current study hypothesized that the more emotionally intelligent a given person was, the more easily he/she would notice changes in behavior or perception of emotions caused by operating in a foreign language. It was important to find out whether emotionally intelligent informants would report such changes more frequently than respondents with a lower level of EI.

Based on the review of the literature reported above, the present research seeks to address not only immersion in a foreign language and culture, but also the role of individual differences in the perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2. Some individual differences, such as higher- (OCEAN personality test) and lower-order personality traits (Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire) were therefore included in the current study as it was hypothesized that they might influence perception and expression of emotions in both L1 and L2.

It is crucial to note here that even if personality is more or less stable throughout one's lifespan, it can still be shaped by environmental factors (Furnham & Heaven, 1999; Jang et al., 1996; McCrae et al., 2000). Dewaele & van Oudenhoven (2009: 12) showed that certain personality

dimensions of young teenagers were linked to their multilingualism and multiculturalism. They found that there was a relation between the number of languages mastered and multicultural personality dimensions: multilinguals scored significantly higher on the dimensions of Cultural Empathy and Openmindedness, and scored significantly lower on the dimension of Emotional Stability compared to mere incipient bilinguals, i.e. classroom learners of a second language. Another important finding was that language dominance had a significant effect on the five personality dimensions. On closer examination, it appeared that multidominance corresponded with significantly higher scores on the dimensions of Openmindedness, marginally higher scores on Cultural Empathy and significantly lower scores on Emotional Stability compared with participants who were dominant in a single language (Dewaele & van Oudenhoven, 2009: 12). Similarly, Hull (1987, 1990) showed that bilinguals might score differently on the same personality test depending on the language in which it was presented.

This review of the literature might suggest that we might indeed display different personalities depending on the language that we are using and that the number of known and used languages might be related to personality dimensions. Therefore incorporating such psychological variables that take into account individual differences and emotional intelligence might shed more light on the very complex relationship between language, culture, and personality.

1.7. Researching emotions

While considering the various studies researching emotions, the variety of methodologies and approaches employed was striking. Some research concentrated on perception, while others focussed on expression. Some studied emotions in the context of the first language and some in the context of the second language, or cross-linguistically. Since the present research focuses on the perception and expression of emotions in both L1 and L2, and concentrates on two languages governed by different emotional scripts, the aim of this section is to provide a brief overview of research conducted in the related fields of the perception and expression of emotions. It also addresses cultural aspects of emotion perception and expression as well as the notion of “feeling different” while operating in a foreign language. A brief overview of the research on the perception and expression of emotions in a foreign language follows below.

1.7.1. Perception and expression of emotions in a foreign language

A number of studies have considered the perception of emotions in a foreign language. Among them was research carried out by Rintell (1984). She asked Arabic, Chinese and Spanish informants to listen to a taped conversation in their L2 (English) and then to identify the emotion expressed and rate its intensity. She discovered that L2 proficiency and native language had a strong effect on the perception of emotions in the L2. Another similar study conducted by Graham, Hamblin and Feldstein (2001) required informants to listen to a conversation and to select an appropriate emotion. This resulted in the similar finding that native language is an important factor, and in particular when it is typologically similar to L2 it facilitates perception of emotions in a foreign language.

A number of recent studies demonstrate that bilinguals with languages that differ in their grammatical and lexical categories may shift their cognitive representation of those categories towards that of monolingual speakers of their second language (Imai and Mazuka, 2003; Levinson, 1996; Levinson, Kita, Haun and Rasch, 2002; Lucy and Gaskins, 2001, 2003; Majid, Bowerman, Kita, Haunand, Levinson, 2004; Roberson, 2005). Athanasopoulos (2008) suggested that the acquisition of an L2 with different concepts from the L1 can serve to reorganize the cognition of bilingual speakers, and that the degree of that reorganization is linked to the acquisition of specific grammatical categories which are present and obligatory in the L2 but absent, or optional, in the L1. Athanasopoulos (2009) examined the cognitive representation of color categories in bilinguals with languages that differ in the way they code the color space. Results showed a shift in focus placement with the level of bilingualism, but minimal differences in the extension of color terms on color space. This demonstrates that concepts in the human mind are not stable and fixed, but flexible and changing, susceptible to both linguistic and cultural influences. Czechowska & Evert (2010) claim that there is a possibility that change in bilingual perceptions takes place even if no differences are to be found in the linguistic domain. Their study consisted of two experiments whose aim was to investigate the influence of linguistic structures encoding motion on the perception of two aspects of motion: manner and path among Polish and English monolinguals and Polish-English bilinguals. According to Talmy (1985, 2000), languages can be divided into two groups on the basis of how they encode two aspects of motion-manner and path. The group of “satellite-framed” languages, e.g. the Germanic group, conveys primarily manner of motion, which is

encoded in a main verb in a sentence, while path of motion is expressed by a preposition or a particle, i.e. a satellite. The group of “verb-framed” languages, e.g. the Romance group, conveys primarily path of motion, which is encoded in a main verb in a sentence, while manner of motion is expressed only additionally in an adverbial phrase or other verbs. Slobin (2003) suggested that these lexicalization strategies have cognitive consequences for speakers of a given language group: speakers of “satellite-framed” languages pay more attention to manner of motion, while speakers of “verb-framed” languages pay more attention to path of motion. In other words, the way in which a particular language encodes motion might influence how one conceptualizes actions, attracting the speaker’s attention to the feature that is encoded more saliently in language, i.e. either manner or path (Czechowska & Ewert, 2010). Polish and English belong to the same group of satellite-framed languages that encode manner of motion more saliently than its path. Nevertheless, despite many similarities in motion lexicalization, there are some crucial differences between these two languages and it was hypothesized that mentioned differences in motion lexicalization between Polish and English will have cognitive consequences in that speakers of English will pay additional attention to path of motion in comparison to speakers of Polish (Czechowska & Ewert, 2010). Czechowska & Ewert’s (2010) experiments made use of nonlinguistic materials in order to avoid examining the influence of language on language, i.e. linguistic transfer (Lucy, 1992). They have found that the conceptualization of motion by English monolinguals appears to be influenced by the linguistic structures of their language. The same holds true for Polish monolinguals; in comparison to speakers of English they do not pay as much attention to path, as this aspect of motion seems not to be encoded as saliently in Polish as it is in English. These findings support the hypothesis that differences in motion lexicalization between Polish and English have cognitive consequences for speakers of these languages. Their research on bilinguals showed the conceptual shift towards the L2 even in the least proficient bilinguals and a restructuring of the conceptual domain in the two most proficient groups. This might suggest that with acquisition of a foreign language we undergo a conceptual shift that takes place in L2 users’ and bilinguals’ perceptions even if it does not show in the linguistic domain.

Some other studies have looked at perception of emotions in a foreign language by using a Stroop test that measures interference in a color naming task (Stroop, 1935). This methodology is based on the finding that it takes participants longer to identify the ink color of incongruent color words (e.g. the word BLUE printed in red ink) than of congruent color

(e.g. the word BLUE printed in blue ink) or control stimuli (e.g. XXX printed in blue ink). Among studies employing this methodology, Altarriba and Mathis (1997) taught Spanish color words to English monolinguals with no prior knowledge of Spanish and found that monolingual English participants produced a significant Stroop interference effect for Spanish color words, after a single learning session. Similar patterns of the classic Stroop effect have been observed in monolingual and bilingual populations, and for fluent bilinguals the Stroop effect seems to be equivalent in size between L1 and L2 (i.e., Rosselli et al., 2002; cf. Eilola et al, 2007: 9).

Another version of the Stroop task is an Emotional Stroop task, adapted to examine emotional stimuli. In the emotional Stroop task, participants are presented with emotion words (e.g., anger, fear, jealousy) and neutral words (e.g., boat, car, train) instead of color congruent (RED in red ink) and color incongruent (RED in blue ink) words. It was intended that this would yield information regarding the automatic capture of attention of the emotional components of word stimuli (see e.g., Sutton & Altarriba, 2008; Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, & Basnight-Brown, 2007). The data indicated that negative emotion words lead to slower reaction times for color naming than positive or neutral words (Altarriba & Basnight-Brown, 2007). Santiago-Rivera & Altarriba (2002) suggest that emotional words are more deeply encoded in L1 than in L2 as they are experienced in a greater variety of contexts and therefore able to develop multiple memory traces, strengthening their semantic representation at the same time.

Many researchers have also examined the expression of emotions in a foreign language (e.g. Dewaele, 2004; Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002; Panayiotou 2004, 2006; Pavlenko, 2005, 2006, 2008); a consistent finding has been that L2 users experience more difficulties in expressing emotions in their L2 (Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2002; Pavlenko, 2004, 2005, 2006). Dewaele and Pavlenko (2002) also examined how emotion vocabulary is incorporated and used in interlanguage. In the case of Flemish students, recorded while conversing about everyday topics, Extraversion, gender and L2 proficiency were significant predictors of use of emotion vocabulary in the interlanguage. In the case of Russian L2 learners of English and Russian- English bilinguals who were asked to retell a short film showing violations of privacy: a roommate reading someone else's letter without his or her permission. Informants of the study were to describe what they just saw in the film. In both studies gender and cultural differences in the perception of the notion of privacy were found to be significant factors. Another important finding was a conceptual shift that