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Emotions as Language Learning Enhancers of Grade 11 Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the emotional experiences of 11th-grade students to enhance language learning. Language learning is a complex and demanding process, and emotions can play a critical role in shaping students' learning experiences. Therefore, the study adopted a qualitative approach and a Grounded Theory research design to examine the impact of emotions on language learning. Data were collected from ten 11th-grade students through interviews and journals. The findings revealed that emotional experiences significantly influenced the behavior of students during classroom instruction. Students' motivation was significantly impacted by their emotions, as positive and negative emotions could either activate or deactivate their motivational behavior. Furthermore, the study found that experiencing positive and negative emotions could benefit students as it helped them develop emotional control and improve their language learning. Students who were able to regulate their emotions were better able to manage stress, remain focused, and perform better in their language learning tasks. The study highlighted the importance of understanding emotions in language learning and emphasized the role of epistemic emotions, which refer to emotions that arise during the learning process. By understanding how emotions impact language learning, educators can develop more effective teaching strategies that account for the emotional needs of their students.

INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to ascertain whether feelings play a significant role as enhancers of language learning. A teacher will get a better chance to get to know his or her students in this way, which can help him or her decide how to interact with them, how to keep their full attention during language classroom instruction, and how to help students learn languages. The role of emotions in language learning has been emphasized by Gardner and Lambert (1972), who argued that affective factors are just as important as language aptitude for language learning success.

Students' feelings and emotions are important for understanding learning processes, motivating students, and effective teaching (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002; Meyer & Turner, 2006; Sansone & Thoman). For learners of a foreign language, previous positive or negative experiences and the difference in the learning environment can affect their emotions and, therefore, their motivation (Purcia, 2018). Emotions can have distinct meanings and effects on different students' motivation (Do & Schallert, 2004).

Inspiration is intensely impacted by students' characters as well as by private encounters, mental cycles and the social setting (Purcia and Velarde, 2022). The need to safeguard self-worth and self-image, as well as the influence of significant others and social and cultural context, can affect learners' behavior. The complexity of various student and situational factors determines learners' motivation to learn a foreign language.

Research on affective factors in foreign language learning has focused on constructs like students' beliefs

and self-esteem (Arago, 2011). Emotions have not yet received sufficient attention in research on foreign language learning, despite the fact that this research has improved our understanding of these factors (Imai, 2010). Motivation research in foreign language learning has largely focused on a quantitative approach, leading to various outcomes in English language teaching (Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006). This study aims to contribute to our understanding of the impact of emotional experiences on the motivation of English language learners, with a focus on exploring emotions' influence on motivation to learn a second language.

The following was the focus of this study: What impact do emotional experiences have on the motivation of English language learners? As a result, the goal of this study is to add to our understanding of how emotions influence motivation to learn a second language.

This study is moored to the Attribution hypothesis that expects that human inspiration is a consequence of the need to know the motivation behind why something has occurred. As a result, a person or environmental factors can be blamed for a phenomenon. For instance, if a student has had extremely negative learning experiences that he or she attributes to their capacities, he or she may be unwilling to participate in any learning activity again because he or she believes that the reason for failure is something that cannot be changed (their cognitive ability); in any case, assuming that a student thinks about that the justification behind disappointment is that the person in question didn't put forth their best attempt, then, at that point, the individual could go into another learning circumstance with the demeanor to put forth their best

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attempt so the person can have improved results this time. As per the most notable researcher Weiner (1980), “The most striking causal derivations are capacity and exertion, yet numerous different variables are likewise compelling”. According to Covington (1992), self-worth theory “(...) assumes that the search for self-acceptance is the highest human priority, and that in schools self-acceptance comes to depend on one’s ability to achieve competitively” (p. 74). This study is also based on this statement. As a result, students’ abilities to achieve educational objectives set by teachers and schools are regarded as equally valuable. In that capacity, an understudy’s worth is estimated exclusively through school accomplishment. Because of this, students take a variety of actions to safeguard their self-image in school achievement, the focus of student life. In schools, ability equals value, and because of this premise, students develop strategies like overworking or cheating to protect themselves from peer criticism of their abilities. The study is grounded in the Attribution theory, which posits that motivation is a result of the need to know why something has happened. Learners’ attribution of success or failure can influence their motivation to engage in language learning activities. For instance, if a learner attributes their failure to their cognitive ability, they may be unwilling to participate in any learning activity again. However, if they attribute their failure to not putting in enough effort, they may approach a new learning situation with the attitude to put forth their best effort for improved results. According to Weiner (1980), “The most striking causal derivations are ability and effort, but many other factors are also influential”. Overall, understanding the role of emotions in language learning can help language teachers create a more effective learning environment that fosters positive emotions and enhances learners’ motivation to learn a second language.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Grounded theory, whose emphasis on humans as active rather than passive agents is influenced by Strauss, guided the data analysis further. Additionally, emergent processes on social and subjective meanings were emphasized by Strauss (1969). This study utilized a qualitative methodology guided by Grounded Theory to thoroughly understand the emotional responses sparked during language instruction.

This research was carried out at the Senior High School Department of Calbayog City National High School in Calbayog City, Samar. A convenient sampling method was used to select a group of ten Grade 11 students from among the enrolled students to participate in this study. The study was conducted at the Senior High School Department of Calbayog City National High School in Calbayog City, Samar, with a group of ten Grade 11 students selected using a convenient sampling method. The research objectives and activities were explained to the students, who freely agreed to discuss their emotional experiences during classroom language instruction. Because they freely agreed to discuss their emotional

experiences during classroom language instruction, these students were the best candidates. The investigation’s objectives and activities were explained to students. Since the researcher teaches English, this study is relevant to the subject he teaches and allows him to learn how emotions affect language learning.

According to Barbour (2008), qualitative methods enable in-depth comprehension of human behavior’s motivations. Personal narratives, a journal of emotional responses, and semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. To avoid limiting their emotional descriptions, participants completed these three techniques in their native or mother tongue.

Individual stories were chosen as the instrument to learn about the improvement of understudies’ inspiration to learn English language. The study period began with the writing of personal narratives. “Writing language learning histories gives learners the opportunity to describe their own language learner experiences and express their feelings about those experiences,” states Oxford (1995). The researcher believed that this instrument would be best suited for determining not only the source of students’ motivation but also the feelings they experienced during those specific times when motivation developed because this study is focused on students’ feelings. According to Pavlenko (2002) and (2007), one of the main advantages of personal narratives is that they provide us with rich data and provide access into the private worlds of students. The best way to learn about people’s feelings and emotions is to let them tell us about them because emotions can’t always be seen.

It was decided that interviews would be a good way to get information about students’ affective experiences. “(...) studies that encourage learner reflection through interviews (...) would appear to have the potential to yield a richer understanding of learners’ perceptions (...)” according to Yan and Horwitz (2008).

As a general guide, a semi-structured interview guide was created so that participants could discuss topics they thought were important but the researcher had not considered. After being recorded, transcribed, and analyzed, ten interviews were conducted. The journals in this study were primarily concerned with instances in classroom instruction that caused students to experience an emotional response. For four weeks, students were required to keep a journal. In their weekly journal entries, students were free to express any emotion they felt. As per Hascher (2008), understudies’ diaries “(...) are a valuable subjective way to deal with investigate understudies’ feelings (...) they offer an exact view on a singular’s viewpoint and they empower a setting delicate comprehension of feelings in schools”. To collect data, personal narratives, emotional journals, and semi-structured interviews were used, all completed in the participants’ native or mother tongue to avoid limiting their emotional descriptions. Personal narratives were used to learn about the improvement of students’ motivation to learn the English language. The writing of personal

narratives allowed learners to describe their own language learner experiences and express their feelings about those experiences. Interviews were conducted to obtain information about students' affective experiences, and journals were kept for four weeks to document instances of emotional response during classroom instruction.

A Grounded Theory approach to data analysis was used in the study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which consists of a set of data collection and analytic procedures that the researcher uses to develop an abstract theory of a particular phenomenon's process, action, or interaction (Charmaz, 2004; 2009 Creswell). The information examination was isolated into four phases.

To comprehend the events that motivated students to learn English, personal narratives were read in the first stage. In the second stage, over the course of four weeks, students' emotional journal entries were read to determine how they felt during classroom instruction. The transcription and analysis of the interviews were part of stage three. The researcher was able to confirm that some patterns found in journals were also present in the final interviews at this stage. Interviews and journal sets were analyzed in the final stage. Text units were given titles and grouped together in analytical categories. To ensure that references under analytical categories supported these categories,

data were systematically reviewed. A Grounded Theory approach to data analysis was used, involving four phases. The first stage involved reading personal narratives to comprehend the events that motivated students to learn English. The second stage involved reading students' emotional journal entries over four weeks to determine how they felt during classroom instruction. The third stage involved transcribing and analyzing interviews to confirm patterns found in journals. Finally, in the fourth stage, text units were given titles and grouped together in analytical categories, which were systematically reviewed to ensure that references under analytical categories supported them.

Qualitative methods were used to gain an in-depth comprehension of human behavior's motivations, with a focus on students' feelings and emotions during language instruction. This study provides a context-sensitive understanding of emotions in schools, which is valuable for developing effective teaching strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The four categories that emerged from the analysis of the data are presented here: negative effects of positive emotions, positive effects of negative emotions, and negative effects of positive emotions.

Table 1: Categories

Effects of Emotional Experiences on Language Learning Motivation			
Category 1 Constructive results of positive emotions (+,+)	Category 2 Undesirable results of positive emotions (-,+)	Category 3 Undesirable results of negative emotions (-,-)	Category 4 Constructive results of negative emotions (+,-)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-worth • Constructive atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too unobtrusive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling self-doubting • Deprived lesson contribution • Adverse studying setting • Studying English language professed as tough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing motivational Stratagems

Effects of Emotional Experiences on Language Learners' Motivation

According to the study, people's feelings were good because they made them think about their role as language learners, made them realize which areas they needed to work on, and, most importantly, made them think about their duty as language learners.

I sometimes feel the need to study harder and learn more because I don't want it to happen again. Sometimes, the bad feelings I experienced are the ones that drive me to learn more.

Effects of Positive Emotions

The students' positive emotions made it possible for them to feel more self-assured. These sentiments permitted them to demonstrate their language progression, which added to eliminating their frailty and giving them certainty,

as communicated by certain understudies:

When my teacher gives me good feedback, I feel good about myself and like I'm doing the right thing. It makes me happy and makes me feel good, so I'm motivated to participate. Students with confidence were able to take risks in their language learning, and some started to think of mistakes as something they have to do to learn a second language.

Negative Effects of Positive Emotions

After completing tasks successfully, students felt self-assured. Despite this, the analysis revealed that despite feeling good, they did nothing to advance their language learning process:

Students reported that after a positive emotion, there was nothing to do but enjoy the feeling, so they did not think about it.

Well, if I do well in class, it is sufficient; this indicates that I already know, so I would rather concentrate on the skills that I lack. Positive emotions had no negative impact on students' motivation other than this.

Effects of Negative Emotions

This group of students frequently experienced negative emotions. There were a variety of things that made me feel bad, like: the learning environment, feedback methods, and marking systems used by teachers.

When I saw that the sentences I had constructed in the word bank had been corrected, I felt awful about myself and started comparing myself to my classmates, who had received fewer or no corrections at all.

Their fears were exacerbated by their uncertainty regarding their ability to learn the language. Additionally, these worries led them to believe that learning English is a challenging undertaking.

I did poorly once more. There are a lot of things in English that are hard to understand. Conjunctions are so hard to understand. I keep thinking about whether I could at any point advance once more!

This discernment was much more portrayed by the presence of a high level gathering of understudies in class. Students were able to see how far apart they were from the advanced group by comparing their performance to that of this group. When students started comparing themselves to other students in the group who were more proficient, their confidence dropped. Due to the disparity in language proficiency, there was a lack of group cohesiveness, rendering the learning environment extremely ineffective:

In class, we had a poetry presentation. In fact, it was a requirement for us to complete. A poem must be presented by two to three students each day. Throughout the recitation, I was extremely nervous and trembling when it was my turn. I felt so threatened in light of the fact that I realize that E*****, I**** and M**** are there. I assumed they would make fun of me and criticize me because they are one of those high achievers in class. I doubt I'll recite again the next time.

Students' perceptions of being denied practice time and space were exacerbated by a lack of group cohesion. Because of this, they believed they were not progressing and that their pronunciation was inferior to that of their classmates. Because they were aware that some of their classmates would make fun of them, this limited their participation in the class. Students stopped trying in class because they were afraid of the teacher's feedback and the ridicule of their peers. This made some students feel bad about themselves, but they said that sometimes they were more afraid of being mocked than they were of speaking well.

Positive Effects of Negative Emotions

Even before the first day of classes, negative emotions began to surface. The students had very little knowledge, and when they couldn't understand what the teacher

was saying or explaining, they started to panic. During English class, students experienced the most negative emotions of fear, worry, and sadness. Students reported being anxious about not being able to comprehend everything the teachers were explaining, worried about being laughed at, and sad about their lack of vocabulary, which limited their participation in class activities. The group's disparity in language proficiency encouraged low-proficient students to improve their language skills. Students began to develop a sense of responsibility for their language learning as a result, and as a result, they developed learning and motivational strategies as early as the first week of the term:

I made sure to ask someone from home to show me how to pronounce the word correctly so that when I have to read or speak in front of the class again, I will already know how to do so. I must improve, even though I am not very good.

Understudies embraced gloomy feelings as learning open doors since they allude to these pessimistic occasions in class as an approach to understanding what they were fouling up and how to enhance that specific expertise.

Some students stated that they needed to overcome these negative experiences if they wanted to not only pass the class but also learn the language in its current form. Understudies considered these negative encounters as need might have arisen to be confronted on the off chance that they wanted to communicate in English.

It is said that mistakes are gateways to discovery. Every time I make a mistake, I learn something new. I acquire knowledge of correctness, appropriateness, and accuracy. All of the participants agreed that it was their own responsibility to keep their motivation up. However, they also took into account the fact that teachers could significantly contribute to it by making learning activities more enjoyable and classes more dynamic. Students also acknowledged that their families were also accountable for this. They thought that to get back on their feet, they needed the emotional push from their parents, siblings, and friends. When students talked about being motivated, they thought about the values in their families.

It appeared that students had developed resilience in the face of negative emotions. The students agreed that having negative emotions was beneficial to their language learning process. They were all aware that they would have to deal with a lot of bad things in their future lives, so they had to be ready for them.

CONCLUSION

It was determined that students' emotional experiences had a significant impact on their classroom instruction behavior. Garret & Young (2009) found that students' motivation to learn is significantly affected by their feelings. 2010 by Bown and White; Imai, 2010). In place of truth, members in this review expressed that their thoughtfulness regarding influence was the justification for the distinction in persuasive conduct they showed in their language classes.

Profound encounters altogether affected understudies' inspiration. Both positive and negative emotions have a significant impact on the motivation of students of second languages because they can either activate or deactivate motivational behavior (Pekrun *et al.*, 2002). Because they assisted students in regulating their emotions and learning, it was believed that students' experience of both types of emotions was crucial to the process of learning a language. It became abundantly clear that motivation is a fluid and shifting force. Emotional factors had an impact on the motivational behavior of this study's participants. Students turned their negative experiences into positive outcomes, despite the fact that they had more negative experiences than positive ones. The study's predominance of negative activating emotions (fear, worry, and sadness) may have sparked the students' motivation to overcome those negative emotions in future academic tasks, which may explain their motivation maintenance.

As a result of negative emotions, some students engaged in behavior that was demotivating. On the other hand, students revealed that feeling bad made them reflect on the event and adjust their motivation accordingly. Participants claimed that there was a stage in the reflection process known as "attribution" in which students provided themselves with an explanation of the reason why the event caused them to feel the way they did (Weiner, 1992). The participants in this study came to the realization that, despite the fact that a variety of factors influenced how they responded to emotional experiences, the only thing that could change similar events in the future was an increase in their language level.

In a vacuum, it is impossible to develop motivation for language learning; Several prerequisites must be met before motivation can begin. Language teachers must be able to appropriately manage their students' emotions in order to help them use their emotions to their advantage rather than disadvantage because learning a language involves both positive and negative emotions. Therefore, creating a positive learning environment ought to be the first objective for language teachers. Advancing gathering cohesiveness and encouraging positive connections among instructors and understudies are two methods for accomplishing this. By demonstrating genuine interest in the learning processes of their students, teachers will foster trust, confidence, and a motivating learning environment.

Reflection should also be encouraged for students to have a better understanding of their emotions as learners. Students may be able to achieve specific goals with the assistance of this. A friend support program could be laid out to furnish understudies with a gathering in which they can communicate concerns in regards to their scholastic exhibition and encourage a feeling of local area. Understudies ought to be urged to lead self-assessments on a week by week or month to month premise so they can assess the procedures they are utilizing, decide if they are prevailing with them, and lay out new objectives for themselves.

Additional research in a variety of settings is required to learn what outcomes are derived from negative emotions and how specific contexts alter their impact on motivation. Future research must also contrast the emotional experiences of proficient and lower-level learners. Do students of varying levels respond in different ways to the same emotional experiences?

This study found that motivation to learn a language is influenced by a variety of context-dependent factors. In addition, it demonstrates the growth of motivation and responsibility in language learners.

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