

Sveučilište u Zagrebu

Filozofski fakultet

Odsjek za anglistiku

Katedra za metodiku

EXPRESSING EMOTIONS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

Diplomski rad

Studentica: Gabrijela Radoš

Mentor: dr. sc. Marta Medved Krajnović, izv. prof.

Zagreb, prosinac 2014.

University of Zagreb

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of English

TEFL Section

EXPRESSING EMOTIONS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

Graduation thesis

Student: Gabrijela Radoš

Supervisor: Professor Marta Medved Krajnović, Ph.D.

Zagreb, December 2014

Examining Committee:

Renata Geld, Ph.D.

Mateusz-Milan Stanojević, Ph.D.

Professor Marta Medved Krajnović, Ph.D.

Table of contents

Abstract	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Language and Emotions	5
2.1. Research on emotions and language	6
2.2. Multilingualism and Emotions	6
2.3. Positive and Negative Emotions	7
2.3.1. Language and Swearing.....	7
2.4. The Role of Emotions in Foreign Language Learning.....	9
3. The study on Language and Emotions.....	11
3.1 The Pilot study	11
3.1.1. Participants	11
3.1.2. Research instrument	11
3.1.3. Procedure	12
3.1.4. Results	12
3.2. The Main study.....	19
3.2.1. Aim	19
3.2.2. Sample	19
3.2.3. Research instrument	19
3.2.4. Procedure	20
3.2.5. Results	20
3.2.6. Discussion.....	25

3.2.7. Conclusion and suggestion for further research	27
4. References	29
5. Sažetak.....	31
Appendix A.....	32

Abstract

This thesis focuses on expressing emotions in different languages by bi- and multilingual speakers. It first provides a brief overview of what emotion by definition is, how multilinguals experience emotions, whether they express in the same way their emotions in all languages they speak, which languages they use to express positive and negative emotions, in which languages they swear, and what role emotions play in second language learning.

In the second part a study conducted with twenty participants is described. It provides insights into how emotions are important in life of multilinguals when they switch between their languages. The results showed that speakers of several languages are emotionally attached to their first language or their dominant languages. Although they can be linguistically proficient more in their L3, L4 or L5, they still switch to their mother tongue when it comes to the deepest feelings or inner speech, and their dominant language if they live with a partner whose mother tongue is different. Furthermore, the study showed that when it comes to emotions participants use more languages learned in a naturalistic way than languages learned in an instructed way.

Key words: multilingualism, perception of emotion, perceptions of bi- and multilinguals

1. Introduction

Emotions play a major role in everyday human life. Everything we do, we include our emotions in it, being listening to music, doing our job or talking with our friends.

Damasio (1996, as cited in Wela 2003, p. 17) points out two interesting aspects of human emotions. The first is that there are no human experiences that are free of emotion. The second is that all our memories of past events preserve emotions that we experienced when those memories were formed.

But what exactly is an emotion? In psychology, emotion is often defined as a complex state of feeling that results in physical and psychological changes that influence thought and behavior.¹

According to Dewaele (2010, p. 16) “we may have an intuitive understanding of emotions, but their sheer complexity makes them difficult to define.”

Bulmer (1975, as cited in Wela 2003, p. 20) calls an emotion an individual's subjective feeling of pleasantness or unpleasantness which is associated with internal reactions e.g. blood pressure, heart rate, sweating, etc; external facial reactions e.g. smiling, laughing and crying and bodily reactions like nervousness, gestures, change in voice or tone.

According to Clark (1990, as cited in Wela 2003, p. 21) emotions are always about something we perceive. She illustrates this in the following way, which she calls a cognitive sequence: “When a person sees a bear, that stimulus information is processed and interpreted as spelling danger, resulting in the emotion of fear.”

¹ <http://psychology.about.com/od/psychologytopics/a/theories-of-emotion.htm> Cherry, Kendra Theories of Emotion

Finally, emotions are strong, instinctive and intuitive feelings, which we sometimes cannot control. Because of its complexity this topic has become hotly debated not just between philosophers and psychologists but between linguists as well.

2. Language and Emotions

Sharing emotions is also a part of our life. We sympathize with people when something bad happens and console them with our words. On the other hand we support them when something good happens as well. However, in both ways we use words, we communicate and interact with people around us. Furthermore, we socialize with people and show empathy, which means that “emotions play a crucial part in the lives of monolinguals and multilinguals” (Dewaele, 2010, p. 1).

In his book *Emotions in Multiple Languages* Dewaele (2010, p.1) explains how he personally discovered the importance of sharing emotions while being with his monolingual host family in Salamanca. Since he was a complete beginner in Spanish he was unable to share his sense of frustration or his exhilaration and discovered that it is hard to socialize using emotionless textbook phrases.

Both language and emotions are complex and multifaceted phenomena (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 191) especially when we talk about multilinguals. What happens when people who speak more than one language come into situation when their feelings talk and they cannot control their languages, but instead their languages control them? How do you feel if you are a beginner in one language and you are surrounded by monolinguals of that language and you would like to tell a joke to socialize, but you are not proficient enough? Do you feel a different person when talking to different people in different languages? Are you emotionally connected to your different languages? Do swear and taboo words in your different languages have the same emotional weight for you? Answers to these questions will be looked for in the chapters to come.

2.1. Research on emotions and language

“The study of emotions has gained much attention in the last two decades in the interdisciplinary fields of psychology, philosophy, ethnology, anthropology, sociology, and linguistics (Rosaldo, 1980; Lutz, 1986; Kövecses, 1990; Wierzbicka, 1992; works of Pavlenko and Dewaele, among others)” (Paik, 2010, p. 4).

However, Pavlenko (2005, p. 35) pointed out that research about emotions and SLA has not been discussed enough. Researches do write about both, language and emotions, but not how emotions influence the second language acquisition, which means that this topic will occupy and be hotly debated by researchers in the future.

2.2. Multilingualism and Emotions

We discuss our feelings by using words, so the language is closely related to emotional expression. Advantage of being bi- or multilingual is to switch between languages, which is “an ordinary fact of life in many multilingual societies” (Cook, 2008, p. 175) particularly in emotional situations. A myth that people only express emotions in their first language has been denied by Pavlenko (2005, p. 23) who, herself multilingual, uses both English and Russian when talking about emotions. She speaks English to her English-speaking partner and Russian to her Russian-speaking grandmother.

When bilingual parents use a language to express their emotions with their children it does not have to be their first language, but the language in which they feel more comfortable to express their emotional state.²

Grojean gives an example of an adult English-French bilingual who moved to France in early adulthood. When it came to emotions she spoke only French and not English. Her explanation was that it was in French that she had discovered what love meant.³

² <http://bigthink.com/ideafeed/different-languages-express-emotion-differently>

2.3. Positive and Negative Emotions

Languages and emotions are tied to national and ethnic identities, but as well to cultural, racial, or religious identities. Positive things encourage us to fall in love with other cultures or languages, like did Julia in France and French language. She even wrote a book about the part of her life spent there.⁴

A friend of mine from Poland, who fell in love with an Argentinean, told me that she sometimes could not imagine her expressing the positive emotions to her boyfriend in Polish; it would not have any sense since they spoke Spanish language from the beginning of their relationship. The Spanish language has become the language of love for her.

On the other side Pavlenko (2005, p. 194) has mention 'language of enemy', which is connected to negative emotions. That means that language-related emotions can influence individual's decisions when it comes to ethnic conflict. We witness a similar situation in the Croatian city of Vukovar, where Croatian people do not want Cyrillic signs as a consequence of the recent historical events. "The languages we speak or refuse to speak have a lot to do with who we are, what subject positions we claim or contest, and what futures we invest in." (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 223)

2.3.1. Language and Swearing

One way of expressing emotions is swearing. "The main purpose of swearing is to express emotions, especially anger and frustration." (Jay and Janschewitz, 2008, p. 267) As already mentioned above bi- and multilinguals may favor a particular language for emotional expression, but most often find themselves expressing emotions in more than one language. Which language to choose when it comes to the deepest emotions? Spending four months with a

³ <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/life-bilingual/201108/emotions-in-more-one-language>

⁴ <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/life-bilingual/201201/falling-in-love-culture-and-language>

bilingual Croatian-British family in London I observed their language use in different situations. When it comes to swearing, Jane, who is a really polite British woman and who is British and learned Croatian in her adulthood, used only Croatian to express her anger and negative feelings with her husband. As an explanation she said that when she swears in Croatian it does not feel 'real'. However, she uses English to express her positive emotions. This is according to Pavlenko (2005, p. 140) a notion of 'double selves' which is common to individuals who learned the target language as adults and they "may feel that their L 1 selves are emotionally 'true' and 'natural', while affective selves in LX are 'fake' and 'artificial'."

Pavlenko points out several reasons which language and why have been chosen for communication of emotions:

"- language that feels 'natural' (mothers using L1 or partners arguing in their respective L1s)

- to hurt the interlocutor (partners delivering 'poisonous barbs' in the language most emotional for the interlocutor)

- to avoid hurting the interlocutor (partners reverting to a language the interlocutor does not speak)

- to exercise self-control and perhaps even practice the language (partners arguing in LX)

- to perform authority (using the language that has the most prestige in a particular context)

- to express a specific emotional meaning (code-switching to talk about 'frustration' or 'excitement')" (Pavlenko 2005, p. 140)

"Starting the language learning process at a young age heightens the probability of swearing in that language" (Dewaele 2004, p. 102) which is case with Jane's husband who moved to English speaking environment at young age and learned language in a naturalistic way. Results on research on swearwords and taboo words (ST-words) carried out by Dewaele (2004) showed that:

"- self-reported language choice for ST-words is higher in the first language of speakers and is gradually lower in language learned subsequently or in the attrited L1

- participants who learned a language in a naturalistic –or mixed- context prefer this language for swearing compared to participants who learned it in a purely instructed context
- participants who started learning an L2 at a younger age, or use the different languages more frequently, report using these languages more frequently for swearing” (Dewaele 2004, p. 102)

I personally experienced a situation when I was overpowered by my L1 in Poland as an AIESEC intern. When we wanted to travel by train, which people do often in Poland, we would have bought a student ticket with the international student identity card, but every time in the train during the ticket control, the controller would have told us, that our ticket was not valid and that only Polish students with Polish student identity can buy ticket with student discount. It was even hard to argue with them, since they usually spoke only Polish. So once on our way from Poznan to Gdansk, when the controller came and saw our tickets and told us they are not valid I became angry in a second. I yelled at him and asked how it is possible that the same people working in the same company sell us those cards and then the other tell us, it is not valid. He wanted us to buy new tickets in train, which I refused. He started speaking something in Polish which made me even angrier and I started to swear in Croatian.

2.4. The Role of Emotions in Foreign Language Learning

The acquisition of the second language, as already mentioned, can be learned in a naturalistic or in an instructed way. If we are talking about naturalistic way it can be connected to immigration, in which case people are often obligated to learn a language to survive and they learn basics to be able to communicate. Some people even refuse to speak their first language, as an example of a Jewish refugee who immigrated to America and embraced America and the English language and refused to speak German (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 192).

Another example of learning a second language may be because of a communication with loved ones or curiosity to understand what other people are talking about. One example is a couple mentioned above, British woman who married a Croatian man. They have lived in London, but every year they visited his parents in Croatia. Since her mother-in-law did not speak English and every time they visited them and her mother-in-law spoke with her husband, she thought they were talking about her. The husband needed to translate and retell her, what they

were talking about, but sometimes she did not believe his words and she decided to learn Croatian. She took classes of Croatian in London and talked as much as possible with her husband and her two children who were already bilingual, since the father spoke Croatian with them since their birth. She went to the supermarkets in Croatia alone and used every opportunity to improve. Nowadays, she has a normal communication in Croatian with some grammar mistakes, which does not bother her, because her mission has been completed.

When talking about instructed way of learning “emotion is the basis of any learning, or absence of learning” (Dewaele, 2010, p. 21). As already mentioned above, there are positive and negative emotions. Both positive and negative emotions are assessed in and influence a learning situation. That means if the stimulus for learning is positive, the learner will put an effort and be devoted to it, which will encourage the learner to approach the similar stimuli in the future. On the other hand, if the stimulus is negative, less effort and attention will be devoted to it, and negative results may promote avoidance in the future. Similarly, emotions play a crucial part in the foreign language classroom. A classroom is a community of students and teachers. A good classroom atmosphere and relations between teachers and students, but also among students can influence learning in a positive way and enhance students to be a part of the classroom community. Equally, negative emotions can push them toward ending the membership of the classroom community (Schumann 1997, as cited in Dewaele 2010, p. 21).

There is a difference between non-native and native speakers when it comes to emotions. To express their emotions requires more linguistic processing while searching for words, grammar rules and pragmatic rules, metaphoric expressions, etc, for non-native speakers than for native speakers. (Paik, 2010, p. 14) This often leads to anger and negative emotions towards learning the language.

Therefore, “L2 learners’ beliefs about bilingualism and monolingualism are also important” (Cook 2001, as cited in Paik 2010, p. 55). L2 learners need to know more about the target language than just the phonological, morpho-syntactic rules of the second language. In this case, culture of the target language is very important. The more L2 learner positively identifies with the L2 culture and its people, the more he/she will be integrating in the L2 context, assimilating with native speakers of the L2, and as a result, the more successful the learner will be.

3. The study on Language and Emotions

3.1 The Pilot study

In order to improve the main study's quality and efficiency and to be sure that all questions are understandable and to gather the information I need, I conducted a pilot study prior to the main one. Since all of the participants live abroad, the study was conducted via e-mail. The questionnaire was filled out between 20 July 2013 and 25 July 2013.

3.1.1. Participants

The pilot study was conducted with three people, one from Ukraine, one from Italy and one from Austria. The participants were selected randomly among other potential participants. Two of them, one from Ukraine and one from Italy were females and one from Austria was male.

3.1.2. Research instrument

The research instrument was a modified *Bilingualism and Emotions Questionnaire* (Deweale and Pavlenko, 2001-2003) (see Appendix 1). It was used to elicit the participants' answers about how emotions are important in their everyday life. It consisted of three parts. The first part included 7 questions relating to participants' background information (gender, age, education level, nationality, country of residence and occupation). The second part consisted of 5 questions relating to participants' linguistic information (languages known, dominant languages, chronological order of language acquisition, frequency of use, code-switching). The third and the last part focused on languages and emotions and consisted of 13 questions. 5 questions were close-ended Likert-type questions on language choice for expressing anger, use of swear-words, foreign language anxiety. 8 questions were open-ended questions which asked about the weight of phrase "I love you" in their different languages, the emotional significance on their languages,

the language used for personal diary, the preferred language to recall bad or difficult memories, the language spoken at home and language in which they argue in, feeling like a different person when using different languages and ease of difficulty to talk about emotional topics in a second or third language. A final open question invited the participants to comment or to share anything interesting in their life considering language and emotions.

3.1.3. Procedure

After the purpose of the study had been explained, the participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire and report if they had any trouble completing it. All three participants reported having filled in the questionnaire with ease and that questions were clear enough.

3.1.4. Results

The results of the pilot study indicated that the questionnaire did not need improvement. Furthermore, according to the participants the research topic was very interesting, and they were interested to see the results as well. The main goal of this questionnaire was to elicit information about people's own emotions toward different languages they speak.

The first part of the questionnaire was about background information of the participants. The participant from Ukraine is 23 years old, with master in translating English and German, which means that her occupation is related to all her languages on everyday basis. The participant from Italy, age 30, is a Tour operator which means that she speaks several languages when she works. The third participant's nationality is Albanian but the country of his residence is Austria. He is 25 years old and has been studying languages in Austria.

When it comes to linguistic information, all three participants are pentalinguals. The Ukrainian participant learned her L1 (Russian) and L2 (Ukrainian) both in natural and instructed context since birth, L3 (Bulgarian) only in non-instructed context, and L4 (English) and L5 (German) only in instructed context. She considers her L1, L2 and L3 mother tongue languages.

“My parents spoke different languages before they met – my father was speaking Ukrainian and my mother – Bulgarian. They started to talk to each other in Russian because both of them were

born in the Soviet Union where this language was official and everyone knew it. That is the reason why I was learning three languages while growing up.”

The participant from Italy listed Ukrainian as her L1, Russian as L2, Italian as L3, Polish as L4 and English as L5. She uses all her languages actively, even more her L3 than L1 because she married an Italian and that is the language they use at home.

“I was born in Western Ukraine and lived there till I was 5. Then we moved to Poland for 1 year, then we came back and lived in Ukraine, then we lived 1 year in Russia and I left for Italy when I was 17 after school to live with my mum who worked in Milan. After 1 year I came back and started university in Ukraine and after I got my MA I moved to Italy to stay with my actual husband, when I was 22.”

It is also important to point out that both female participants were born in Ukraine, but one of them finds Russian as her dominant language, which she listed as L1 and the other finds her Ukrainian (which she listed as L1) and Italian (which she listed as L3) as her dominant languages.

The third participant is Albanian, but he was born and raised in Montenegro, so he has listed Albanian as his L1, BCS as his L2, which means Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, languages that have been learned together at the University in Austria, where he currently lives and studies. Until the age of seven, he was surrounded only by Albanian language at his home and in his town, and with seven he started learning other languages as well, including German and English. It is interesting that he finds his L3 (German) dominant language.

The next question in the questionnaire (Table 1) was how frequently they use each of the languages and with whom, which was surprisingly active when it comes to their L3, L4 and L5. The participant from Italy uses her L5 several hours a day at her work place, which is more than her L1, which she uses with her family. Participant from Austria uses his L2, L3 and L4 every day, with his friends, at the university and at work. The participant from Ukraine uses her L4 everyday and her L3 every year, what was somewhat surprising, since she, as already mentioned, considers her L3 (Bulgarian) her mother tongue. On the other hand it is not surprising, because Russian was spoken at home, and she speaks Bulgarian only with some relatives who she sees once a year.

Table 1 – Frequency and context of use of the participants' languages

	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
Never					
Every year			✓		
Every month					✓✓
Every week		✓		✓	
Every day	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	
Several hours a day	✓	✓	✓		✓
With whom?	all the people who surround me/ family/ friends	Ukrainian speaking people/ friends/ university	Bulgarian relatives/family/ friend/university/ work	employees at work/friends from foreign countries/ friends/ work	Just read some literature/ work/friends

Switching from one language to another during conversation is a typical feature in life in many multilingual societies. When it comes to switching languages with certain people, participants do switch which can be seen in table 2. They switch in all situations; two of them

switch sometimes when speaking with strangers and in public, two of them switch frequently when speaking with friends and family and strangers, two of them switch all the time when speaking with friends and family, one when speaking in public and all three at work.

When they talk about certain matters (Table 3) the male participant from Austria does not switch at all. Both female participants switch rarely when speaking about neutral, personal and emotional matters, one switches sometimes when speaking about personal matters, and one frequently when speaking about emotional matters.

All in all, the results show that they switch more with people who they know better, as friends, family members, and colleagues and talk frequently about personal and emotional topics.

Figure 1 – Frequency of switching languages with different interlocutors

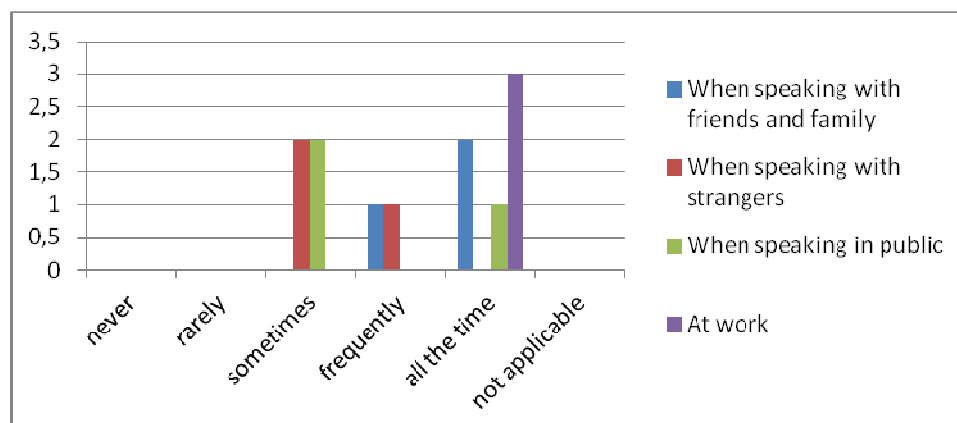
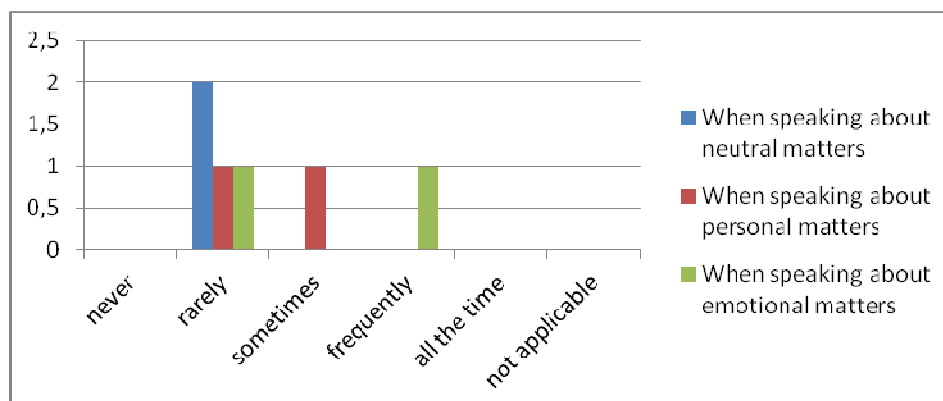


Figure 2 – Frequency of switching languages when talking about certain matters



We rarely think of the ‘emotional force of swearwords’, as Jean-Marc Dewaele (2004) puts it. In the situations when people would usually swear they will swear in the language which seems most natural to them and almost automatically. However, there are situations when people try to avoid hurting the other side which is the case of the participant from Italy:

“I tend to swear in Italian when I visit my relatives in Ukraine and I prefer Russian/Ukrainian swear words when I'm in Italy. I use them like euphemisms.”

Overall, the results show that the participants use mostly their L1 and their dominant language as well when it comes to swearing. The same result was for the question about expressing the deepest feelings. On the other hand the question on anxiety showed that all three participants are more anxious when speaking their L4 and L5.

When it comes to inner speech, two participants form sentences silently in their L1 all the time. This result can be compared to the analysis Dewaele made from his research (2004) – he also claims L1 dominance affects heavily silent speech and mental calculation. However, Dewaele (2010, p.103) also claims that pentalinguals are most likely to express their feeling in the L1 and least likely to do so in the L5 which is not the case with the female from Italy, who put that she uses her inner speech rarely for her L1 and L2 and frequently for her L3, L4 and L5.

Last eight questions were open-ended questions in which participants could have explained their emotions with their own words. I will select some interesting answers. This is what “I love you” means to the participants in different languages.

“Indeed, this phrase has various impacts on me in different languages. Probably, it is connected with the context where I hear it. If “I love you” is said in Russian or Ukrainian, which are my mother tongues, it has the strongest impact because I usually hear it from the dearest people. This phrase said in Bulgarian I hear very rarely and it is associated with several people, so it has a specific impact on me. English and German variants are much more neutral because they are so often used everywhere, especially for advertising, that they do not evoke strong emotions.”

“It has the same emotional weight for all languages except English.”

“I love you feels strongest in my L1.”

I wanted to know whether their languages have different emotional significance for them:

“Yes, they are different for me. I think the most appropriate language to express emotions is Italian, also because of the very articulated body languages with accompanies it. It is followed by Ukrainian which is the most natural, then Russian/Polish and the last is English.”

“As I am bilingual, I have two languages that are emotionally significant for me – Russian and Ukrainian. The more emotional I get, the harder it makes to talk in foreign languages (English and German).”

When I asked in which language they would write a personal diary and recall some bad or difficult memories, all of them wrote that they would use their L1, but one would use also L2 and one L5.

“I used to write a personal diary in Russian. There is a simple reason – writing a diary means expressing my thoughts. As I am always thinking in L1 (Russian), so the language of my diary is obvious.”

“I would prefer to discuss bad and difficult memories in Russian (L1) and Ukrainian (L2) because it would be easier to find the words to describe my feelings.”

“I write a dairy partially in Ukrainian (L1) and partially in English (L5).”

“I'd like to do it in Ukrainian because this language comes as the most natural for me.”

“ALBANIAN, BECOUSE IT'S MY MOTHER TONGUE AND IT'S EASIER FOR ME TO EXPRESS MYSELF AND MY EMOTIONS.”

One of the three participants is married, so when it comes to arguing with her husband, she wrote:

“I speak my L3 (Italian) with my husband and we argue in L3 too. When I am super angry I can say something in Ukrainian or in Russian because I know he doesn't understand; in such a case he can answer me in a local dialect.”

Generally, talking about emotional topics in the mother tongue is not easy and we cannot find right words to express ourselves, especially in different languages and if it is too personal. Two of the participants agreed that it is harder to talk about emotional topics in their L3, L4, L5, but the third participant does not see much difference since her dominant language is L3.

“Yes, there is a difference. When I talk about emotional topics in foreign language, i.e. English, I need to think about not only what to say but also how to say it. While talking in my mother tongue I express my emotions more vividly. Moreover, if I am not a native speaker, I might not know some peculiarities and shades of lexical meaning and that is also a kind of an obstacle for expressing emotions. For example, usually when I tell someone an emotional story in English, I usually gesticulate more. The reason for that is my unconscious striving to fill the gaps in my speech caused by lack of words which are charged enough emotionally.”

“YES, BECOUSE IT’S HARDER TO FIND THE RIGHT WORDS, IT’S HARDER TO SAY EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN.”

“No, there’s no such difference. I think that Ukrainian/Russian/Italian are very similar for emotional topics.”

Last question in the questionnaire was to write comments and/or interesting moments in their life considering language and emotions that they would like to share.

“According to my observation, each language contains some specific words and expressions which cannot be translated without losing some connotation, specific meaning. Usually these lexemes can be fully understood only by native speakers. It is one of the reasons why people with more pleasure speak their native language. Moreover, people have strong emotional connection with their native language. Therefore, they start missing their native language while living abroad for a long time.”

3.2. The Main study

3.2.1. Aim

When you live in a mostly monolingual country where people usually have their L1 as dominant language, which is of course the mother tongue learned in a naturalistic way, sometimes it is hard to believe that any other language learned later can become your dominant language. But as we can see from the pilot study, sometimes multilinguals have their L3 as dominant language, even though learned later in life. The main aim of this study can be seen in the title of this thesis. People express emotions in their different languages. But whether they use all languages at the same level to express negative emotions such as anger or swear words or positive such as expressing love or whether they feel like a different person when they use their different languages, we will try to find out in this study.

3.2.2. Sample

The sample comprised a group of 20 participants - 15 female and five male. The youngest participant was 19 and the oldest 61 years old. Two participants had a high school degree, nine a BA and nine an MA. There were two bilinguals, three trilinguals, seven quadrilinguals, six pentalinguals, one sextalingual and one septalingual. Participants were native speakers of Croatian (n = 10), Filipino (n = 2), Serbian (n = 1), English (n = 1), Polish (n = 1), Finnish (n = 1), Spanish (n = 1), German (n = 1), Slovene (n = 1), Hungarian (n = 1).

3.2.3. Research instrument

The research instrument was again, as in the Pilot study, a modified *Bilingualism and Emotions Questionnaire* (Deweale and Pavlenko, 2001-2003) (see Appendix 1). It was used to elicit the participants' answers about how emotions are important in their everyday life. It consisted of three parts. The first part included 7 questions relating to participants' background information (gender, age, education level, nationality, country of residence and occupation). The second part consisted of 5 questions relating to participants' linguistic information (languages

known, dominant languages, chronological order of language acquisition, frequency of use, code-switching). The third and the last part focused on languages and emotions and consisted of 13 questions. 5 questions were close-ended Likert-type questions on language choice for expressing anger, use of swear-words, foreign language anxiety. 8 questions were open-ended questions which asked about the weight of phrase “I love you” in their different languages, the emotional significance of their languages, the language used for personal diary, the preferred language to recall bad or difficult memories, the language spoken at home and language in which they argue in, whether feeling like a different person when using different languages and ease or difficulty to talk about emotional topics in a second or third language. A final open question invited the participants to comment or to share anything interesting in their life considering language and emotions.

3.2.4. Procedure

The study was conducted via e-mail. The questionnaire was filled out between 28 August 2013 and 9 September 2013. The participants were given a short introduction on the purpose of the study and the way in which the questionnaire should be filled in. It was made clear that the survey was anonymous and that the results would be used for research purposes only and that they should therefore answer the questions honestly.

3.2.5. Results

As Bond & Lai (1986) explained, some people consider their L1 to be the best tool to express their emotions in comparison to other languages they speak:

“My mother language has the highest emotional significance and is most appropriate to express my emotions in. However, sometimes I find English to be the best to express some emotions in. German I use rarely for this, and Czech hardly ever.”

“I think Filipino language is much more emotional and sincere. When you tell someone your feelings (like when you're confessing to someone) it's more felt when it's in Filipino. I think this is mostly because English phrases are commonly heard or said in movies or whatever, reducing

its intensity. It kinda sounds fake or a cliché. However, I think English is appropriate when you're mad. I'm not sure how to explain this but you sound more serious when you use English so I usually use more when I'm mad, and in other serious situations like in school, office, or any formal setting. Spanish, on the other hand, I only use it when I'm in my Spanish school because no one else will understand me."

"I express my emotions easier in Croatian thus Croatian is the most significant for me. In other languages (especially English and Spanish) I can express myself, but I prefer using Croatian."

Results show also that participants use their mother tongue the most, which is not necessary L1, but L2 as well, which is the case with two participants; one who comes from Italy, but from South Tyrol, part of the Italy where the majority of the population is of Austro-Bavarian heritage and speaks German and the other who was born and raised in Austria, but the dominant language at home was Croatian:

"Both my mother tongues have emotional significance to me, because there I'm able to play with the meaning of the words."

"I grew up in Austria and German was the language I had to speak everyday, all the time, no matter where. I learned it in school, so German is probably the language I speak better than Croatian. I feel comfortable when I speak German, I can express myself very well without thinking about what I'm going to say. It's different with Croatian. I never had courses in Croatian language till the day I went to university; I learned it at home, from my parents. When I was little I always thought my Croatian wasn't good enough, so I was afraid to speak Croatian in public. When we visited family in Croatia I talked to them in Croatian, but I never felt really comfortable, 'cause I knew I was making mistakes. But as I grew up I realized how much I loved this language and I started to have more interest in learning it. Now I feel pretty comfortable with both languages, you may say both Croatian and German are my mother tongue."

Participants switch between the languages with family and friends more than with strangers and they speak more frequently about personal and emotional than neutral matters. When asked about their dominant language, most of the participants listed their L1 plus one other language. One participant whose mother tongue is Croatian listed L2 (English) as dominant language. What is interesting to mention is that in comparison to participants' other languages

learned in an instructed way which they use every year or every month, eight out of 20 participant listed English, which they also learned in an instructed way, as dominant language, although they have never lived in an English speaking country.

Linguists suggest that the relationship between emotions and native language is very complicated and profound because even with all the characteristics of attrition present, it seems that emotional connotations are still very strong in L1 as is the case with one participant whose mother tongue is Hungarian, but she moved to Germany as a child. She married a German and their language of communication is German. But on my question what language would she use to write a personal diary, she answered:

“I would probably use Hungarian, because this is my “language of my emotions”. But German became also very strong last time, as I use it on everyday basis at University and also in my relationship with my husband and with friends. Still I would choose Hungarian, even though I can express myself in some cases better in German. I think, it’s because I am emotionally very attached to my mother tongue and because I am maybe afraid, I could lose my language skills in Hungarian...”

Some say that the longer they stayed in L2 environment they grew more accustomed to expressing their feelings in this other language. Two participants from the study were a couple. She comes from Spain and he from Italy. These are their comments:

“I met my boyfriend abroad, since I didn't manage German, English was the only common language that we were using. At some point, from one day to another, we switched to German and we speak that language since then. It is completely strange to speak in a different language with someone with who you are used to speak in some other language but now English would sound weird again!”

“My grandfather told me that it is possible only to learn language if you hear it when you are young or you learn it in the bed :-)”

The phrase “I love you” feels the strongest in L1 according the most participants, exactly 14 of them. Here are some explanations and that last one shows that there are people who will never consider their L2 as *their* language, even though they use it for everyday activities.

“It's much stronger in Filipino. It's more felt and has a heavier impact. When people say "Mahal kita" it sounds more sincere than the usual "I love you".”

“Feels strongest in Chinese. Very overused in English that it loses its meaning. Chinese, being my Mother Tongue, is a language I can identify with stronger in terms of emotions.”

“It probably should have the same emotional weight in German and Croatian, 'cause I grew up in Austria and have been living here ever since a was a little girl. But to be honest, it really doesn't. It has more weight in Croatian, 'cause I know that I'm always going to be Croatian, no matter how long I've been living in an other country. I consider myself Croatian, therefore the phrase 'I love you' has much more meaning if someone says it to me in 'my' language.”

The rest of the participants, six of them, are in a bilingual relationship so they pointed out that the phrase “I love you” has the same emotional weight for them in their different languages, especially their L1 and the L1 of the partner.

“Since my boyfriend is German, I want to express my love to him either in my mother tongue (Finnish) or at his mother tongue (German). I think saying “I love you” in Finnish or in German has the strongest feeling in.”

One of the participant, whose mother tongue is Croatian and the mother tongue of her husband Dutch explained that expressing love to each other is slightly stronger in English and according to her there is no special reason, it is just a habit.

When it comes to arguing, those who live in bilingual relationships usually argue in the language which they use as the dominant language for their relationship, sometimes L1 of the partner which can be L2 or L3 for the other partner. But sometimes they both use their L2, if they met in a foreign country and live there, as the Spanish-Italian couple mentioned above. Here are some more comments:

“My L1 is Croatian, but I had a relationship with a native speaker of Dutch/Flemish, a Belgian man with whom I communicated in English, but after some time I started learning Dutch so we would sometimes speak Dutch. We would argue in English and we never faced the situation when we wouldn't able to express ourselves, as we were/are both very fluent in English.”

“We / I use German. If I swear, I use Hungarian. Also in situations I want to say something really nice to him (like a “nickname”) I often use Hungarian.”

“My boyfriend’s mother tongue is German and we live together in Finland. We use German almost all the time at home and we argue also in German. Nowadays we rarely use some Finnish because my boyfriend is trying to learn it.”

Finally, the results show that for almost all participants is the easiest to talk about emotions in their L1. Some of them do it very well in their L2, but when it comes to L3 they agree that they all lack vocabulary to do it as they do it in their mother tongue:

“It is more difficult to talk about emotional topics in foreign languages! Somehow you are emotionally attached to “your” language and it is normal to talk about emotional topics, 'cause you feel comfortable, you know how to express certain things, you're able to give good advice, you know how to comfort someone or calm someone down. I wouldn't be able to give such good advice in for example English (L3), although I consider my English as pretty good.”

“I feel that I can also express myself well in my second language (German), especially when talking with my boyfriend because he knows me so well. With strangers it is harder. In my third language (English) talking about emotional topics is perhaps a bit more difficult, because I don’t need to do it so often.”

“I think it's not that difficult to express emotional topics in English (L2) because English language has a rich collection of words that really means a lot of things. Besides, Filipinos are really knowledgeable in this language so there's really no problem about that. Most of the time when I discuss something emotional online with my friends or boyfriend, or even through text messages, I usually write in English as to let them know the seriousness of the issue and also to be able to express it in a clearer picture. However, sharing emotional stuff in Spanish (L3) would be difficult for me because I'm not really that good as of the moment since I don't practice it outside school and very limited people can understand me.”

Although is easier for all participants to express their emotions in their mother tongue, study shows that 15 out of 20 participants do not feel like a different person when they use their different languages. Five of them who do feel like a different person explained it like this:

“Somehow, because I can’t express all my feelings, ideas. I feel limited by the different language. I can’t feel 100% free using a foreign language.”

“Sometimes it gives the impression of being more professional when using the English language while using Spanish makes me feel like a Spanish person as well.”

“Yes. If I use Hungarian I feel a little younger, because I left Slovakia as I was 18 (I grew up in a village which is mostly Hungarian and with my family I speak Hungarian) and this time I couldn’t express things I just learned in Germany – I think for example I can discuss topics like politics, culture etc. better in German, so if I speak German, I feel more adult somehow. Whereas I speak Hungarian with my family, it is more “banal” what I am saying and I am more a “child”...”

“Yes, definitely. I feel like I have a multiple personality syndrome ☺ I often feel more comfortable and relaxed when using L2, L3 or L4 (despite the fact that I still make mistakes when I use L4 – Dutch).”

“When I use something other than German and Croatian I do feel like an other person.”

3.2.6. Discussion

The study that was carried out provided insights into the expressing emotions in different languages of the bi- and multilinguals. Conducting this study, I came to several conclusions. Conducting a language and emotion research is a very complex process. For most of the question in this questionnaire, as for example for code-switching, swear words, foreign language anxiety, a separate research could have been carried out.

Both, the Pilot study and the Main study mostly confirmed the findings from other, larger scale studies found in literature. Most of participant use their mother tongue when it comes to expressing emotions or when they form sentences silently (inner speech). Participants switch between the languages with family and friends and with their colleagues at work more than with strangers and they speak more frequently about personal and emotional than neutral matters.

Figure 1 – Frequency of switching languages with different interlocutors

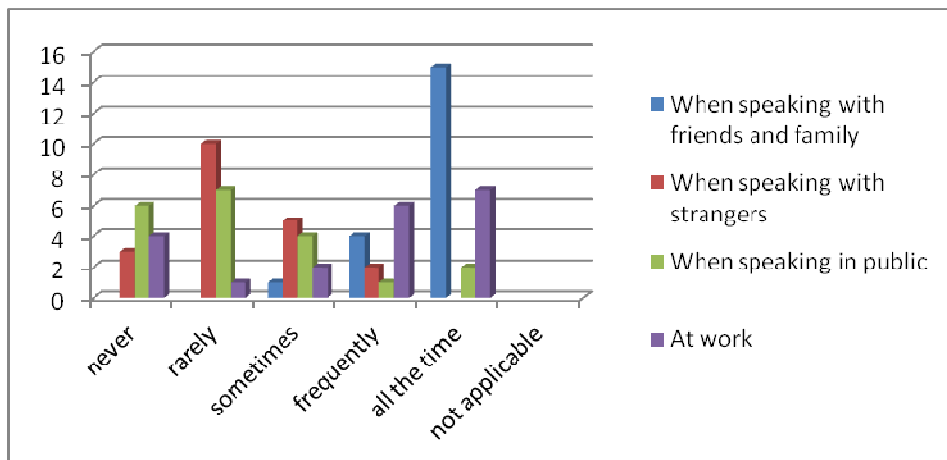
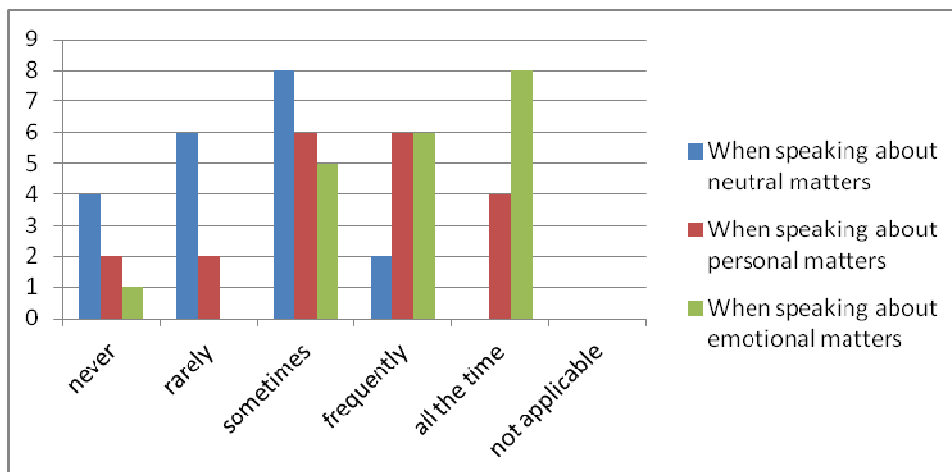


Figure 2 – Frequency of switching languages when talking about certain matters



There are some interesting results as to the question of how anxious the participants are when speaking different languages with different people in different situations. I expected similar answers as in Dewaele (2010, p. 188) where he puts that participants with lower education are slightly more anxious when using foreign languages than participants with higher education. Since I personally know almost all of my participants, I can confirm that their anxiety is connected to their personality more than to their education, which means that those participants who are anxious about everything in their life, they are also anxious when they need

to speak language that is not their mother tongue and opposite. Furthermore, the only two participants with a high school degree in this questionnaire are not anxious at all when it comes to their different languages. They both also stated that they do not feel like a different person sometimes when they use their different languages and that there is no difference and no difficulties when they need to talk about emotional topics in their second or third language.

After conducting the Pilot study in which one male did not switch within languages when talking about certain matters, I expected similar answers from the male participants in the Main study. Opposite to that, one of them said that he switches all the time when it comes to certain matters, and the other four switch frequently as well so there are no differences between male and female participants, although I did not have enough number of male participants to make more reliable comparison.

The study shows that those participants who learned their languages in a naturalistic way share emotions more than those who learned their languages in an instructed way which confirms the statement made by Dewaele (2010, p.219) that “emotion-free LX classes do not prepare LX learners to become proficient LX users”. One participant, whose mother tongue is Croatian but she grew up in Austria explained it pretty well:

“Although I speak several languages, I love to hear someone speaking Croatian in places, cities where I don't really expect it. It's a certain feeling of unity. In Croatia you have a pretty cool phrase which says “on/ona je naš”. It means something like „he is one of us“ but in a more beautiful way, it really means so much more. You can tell from that, that Croatians really love their country and language and people and we love to find Croatian all over the world and connect with them over our beautiful language. I also do think that the Croatian language has a really rich vocabulary, some things you just can't express as beautiful as you can say them in Croatian :)”

3.2.7. Conclusion and suggestion for further research

Expressing emotion is a complex phenomenon not just in different languages but in speaker's mother tongue as well, because not even your first language consists of words that can cover everything you wish to express or everything you feel. Overall, the study showed us that it

is easier to express emotions in speaker's L1. Still for some of the participants there is no difference in expressing emotion in their different languages.

Since the questionnaire used in this study covered different situations in the life of multilinguals, the future research could focus only on particular topics. Furthermore, the results showed that participants use languages that they learned in a structured context, i.e. school, less when it comes to expressing emotions. This topic could be debated in the future, especially in the field of foreign language learning. It would be interesting to conduct a study that would focus on expressing emotions in the foreign language classroom.

Studies carried out in the future will provide more information on this complex phenomenon. I hope my study was a modest contribution to it.

4. References

Bond, M., & Lai, T.-M. (1986). *Embarrassment and code-switching into a second language*. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 126, 179-186.

Cook, V. (2008) *Second Language Acquisition and Teaching*. London, Hodder Education.

Dewaele, J.-M. (2010) *Emotions in Multiple Languages*. Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dewaele, J.-M. (2004) *Blistering barnacles! What language do multilinguals swear in?!* Appeared in *Estudios de Sociolingüística* 5 (1), Special issue "Bilingualism and emotion", (guest-eds. A.Pavlenko & J.-M. Dewaele). 83-105.

Dewaele, J.-M. (2004) (Forthcoming b). „*The Emotional Force of Swearwords and Taboo Words in the Speech of Multilinguals*“. Special issue of the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*. 102.

Jay, T. and Janschewitz, K. (2008) *The pragmatics of swearing*. *Journal of Politeness Research*, 4, 267-288.

Pavlenko, A. (2005) *Emotions and Multilingualism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wela, V.-P. (2003) *EXPRESSING EMOTION. How emotion is encoded in language and the role of emotion during conflict transformation*. A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of D litt in Communication Science. University of Zululand (Durban Campus). 17-21.

Paik, J.-G. (2010) *Expressing emotions in a first and second language: Evidence from French and English*. A dissertation presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Texas at Austin in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy The University of Texas at Austin. 55.

Internet:

1. <http://bigthink.com/ideafeed/different-languages-express-emotion-differently>

2. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/life-bilingual/201108/emotions-in-more-one-language>
3. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/life-bilingual/201201/falling-in-love-culture-and-language>
4. <http://psychology.about.com/od/psychologytopics/a/theories-of-emotion.htm>

5. Sažetak

Ovaj rad istražuje izražavanje emocija na različitim jezicima kod dvo- i višejezičnih govornika. U radu se najprije daje kratak pregled definicije emocija, te povezanost emocija s jezicima i koliki je utjecaj emocija na govornike, tj. kontroliraju li oni jezike koje govore kada se radi o najdubljim emocijama ili emocije kontroliraju njihove jezike. Također se govori o emocijama u nastavi stranog jezika. Autoričina studija provedena među govornicima više jezika pruža uvid u to koji jezik govornici koriste najviše kada se radi o emocijama. U istraživanju je sudjelovalo ukupno 20 ispitanika. Iako je ova tema kompleksna za analiziranje a upitnik je pokrивao više jedinica o kojima bi se mogla provesti posebna studija, rezultati su pokazali da govornici najviše koriste materinski jezik i jezik koji je dominantan u njihovom životu za izražavanje emocija. Nadalje, govornici također više koriste jezike koje su naučili prirodnim putem u odnosu na one naučene isključivo u školi.

Ključne riječi: multilingualizam, izražavanje emocija

Appendix A

Bilingualism and Emotions Questionnaire

Background Information

1. Gender: male/female

 2. Age:

 4. Education level:

 5. Nationality:

 6. Country of residence:

 7. a) Occupation/Profession:
 b) Is your occupation related to your bilingualism or languages in any way:
-

Linguistic information

8. Which **languages** do you know and what order did you learn them in?
Was acquisition **naturalistic** (outside of school), **instructed** (at school), or both?

	Language	Age at which you started learning the language	Context of Acquisition
1 st LANGUAGE (L1)			
2 nd LANGUAGE (L2)			

3 rd LANGUAGE (L3)			
4 th LANGUAGE (L4)			
5 th LANGUAGE (L5)			

9. Which do you consider to be your dominant language(s)? _____

10. How frequently do you use each of the languages and with whom?

Never=0, every year=1, every month=2, every week=3, every day=4, several hours a day=5)

	With whom	Frequency
L1		
L2		
L3		
L4		
L5		

11. Do you switch between languages within a conversation with certain people?

Never=0, rarely=1, sometimes=2, frequently=3, all the time=4, not applicable=5

When speaking with friends and family	
--	--

When speaking with strangers	
When speaking in public	
At work	

12. Do you switch between languages when talking about certain matters?

Never=0, rarely=1, sometimes=2, frequently=3, all the time=4, not applicable=5

When speaking about neutral matters	
When speaking about personal matters	
When speaking about emotional matters	

Languages and Emotions

13. If you are **angry**, what language do you typically use to express your anger?

Never=0, rarely=1, sometimes=2, frequently=3, all the time=4, not applicable=5

	When alone	In letters and e-mail	When talking to friends	When talking to parents/partners	When talking to strangers
--	------------	-----------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------

L1					
L2					
L3					
L4					
L5					

14. If you **swear** in general, what language do you typically swear in?

Never=0, rarely=1, sometimes=2, frequently=3, all the time=4, not applicable=5

L1	
L2	
L3	
L4	
L5	

15. Do **swear** and **taboo words** in your different languages have the same **emotional weight** for you? *Not strong=0, little=1, fairly=2, strong=3, very strong=4, not applicable=5*

L1	
L2	

L3	
L4	
L5	

16. What language do you express your **deepest feelings** in?

Never=0, maybe=1, probably=2, certainly=3, without any doubt=4, not applicable=5

	When alone	In letters and e-mail	When talking to friends	When talking to parents/partners	When talking to strangers
L1					
L2					
L3					
L4					
L5					

17. How **anxious** are you when speaking your different languages with different people in different situations?

Not at all=0, a little=1, quite anxious=2, very anxious=3, extremely anxious=4, not applicable=5

	When speaking with friends	When speaking with colleagues	When speaking with strangers	When speaking on the telephone	When speaking in public

L1					
L2					
L3					
L4					
L5					

18. If you form sentences silently (**inner speech**), what language do you typically use?

Never=0, rarely=1, sometimes=2, frequently=3, all the time=4, not applicable=5

L1	
L2	
L3	
L4	
L5	

19. Does the phrase “**I love you**” have the same emotional weight for you in your different languages? Which language does it feel strongest in?

20. Do your languages have different **emotional significance** for you? If yes, then how do you see this significance for each language? Is one more appropriate as the language of your emotions than others?

21. If you do write in a **personal diary** – or were to write in one – what language(s) do you or would you use and why?

22. If you were to recall some **bad or difficult memories**, what language would you prefer to discuss them in and why?

23. If you are married to or living with a speaker of a language that is not your L1, what language do you generally use at home? What language do you **argue** in?

24. Do you feel like a **different person** sometimes when you use your different languages?

25. Is it easier or more difficult for you to **talk about emotional topics** in your second or third language? If there is a difference, could you tell us about that and perhaps provide some examples?

26. Do you have any other **comments** and/or interesting moments in your life considering language and emotions that you would like to share?