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Dewaele, Jean-Marc (2016) Multi-competence and emotion. In: Wei, Li and Cook, V. (eds.) The Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Multi-competence. Cambridge Handbooks in Language and Linguistics. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 461-477. ISBN 9781107059214.

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Chapter 22 Multi-competence and emotion¹

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INTRODUCTION

Cook (2012) defines multi-competence as ‘the knowledge of more than one language in the same mind or the same community’ (p.1), by which he means ‘everything a single person or a single community knows about all the languages they use’ (p.1). Reading the definition one might be forgiven thinking that this is not about emotion. Indeed: ‘Multi-competence therefore involves the whole mind of the speaker, not simply their first language (L1) or their second’ (p.1).

However, Cook (personal communication) clarified that emotions are presumably located in the mind and that his use of ‘mind’ was supposed to include emotions and anything else ‘mental’. An important aspect of the multi-competence perspective is the positive outlook: rather than focusing on deficits in the languages, it investigates the deviations and celebrates the intricate interactions between the languages.

Pavlenko (2003, p.58) concluded her chapter with a very apt quote by the Polish-English writer Eva Hoffman:

When I speak Polish now, it is infiltrated, permeated, and inflected by the English in my head. Each language modifies the other, crossbreeds with it, fertilises it. Each language makes the other relative (Hoffman 1989, p.273)

While Cook’s perspective is resolutely cognitive, he has not excluded enquiries outside this domain, thus agreeing that the acquisition of a second language (L2) can have consequences that are not strictly linguistic: ‘Acquiring another language alters the L2 user’s mind in ways that go beyond the actual knowledge of language itself’ (Cook 2002, p.7).

One aspect that has gradually been taken up by applied linguists (Herdina and Jessner 2002; Schmid 2011) is the idea that multi-competence is highly dynamic, and in a constant state of flux. In Dewaele and Pavlenko (2003) we argued that an individual’s multi-competence is not a fixed end-state¹. There is constant variation both within and between multilinguals. It is highly unlikely that two multilinguals would ever have isomorphic multi-competence (the same is true for monolinguals) as subtle differences in linguistic input and output could have consequences on individuals’ multi-competence. We used a paint metaphor to compare the two languages in contact in the multilingual’s mind to:

... two liquid colours that blend unevenly, i.e. some areas will take on the new colour resulting from the mixing, but other areas will retain the original colour while still others may look like the new colour, but a closer look may reveal a slightly different hue according to the viewer’s angle (p.137).

We thus defended a view of multi-competence as an ever-changing and highly complex system. Parts of the system can be in equilibrium for a while, but an unexpected change in the internal and external environment, i.e. a change in the frequency or nature of the linguistic input, or a specific linguistic activity – such as the reading of a book or the watching of a film with an unfamiliar sociolect – can cause widespread restructuring with some ‘islands’ remaining in their original state (Dewaele and Pavlenko 2003).

1) ¹ To appear (2016) In Li Wei & V. Cook (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Multi-competence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 461-477.

This view is particularly important in considering emotion, because of the inherent variability in emotional responses between people in similar contexts. People from the same speech community might find some emotional expressions uttered by one member of the community harmless but could perceive emotionally loaded expressions or terms uttered by another member of the community as offensive. A typical example is the use of racial terms that are acceptable from fellow members of the community, but deemed racist when used by outsiders. Even a single individual might react differently at different moments in time depending on mood, tiredness or state of inebriation, and be judged differently by the people around him/her.

Moreover, emotions are displayed very differently depending on the occasion: ‘one may turn red with anger, glower and shout in one situation and appear white-faced, expressionless and icily polite in another’ (Wierzbicka and Harkins 2001, p.2). A lot depends on the degree of self-control of the individual, it may be harder to control involuntary signs of emotion compared to the conscious uttering of emotional speech.

We have argued that the learning of multiple languages, and the resulting multi-competence, affects not just phonology, morphology, syntax, lexical choices, but also pragmatics, where the communication of emotion is situated (Dewaele 2013; Pavlenko 2005). Just as Cook and Bassetti (2011) argue that L2 users think differently from monolinguals, we would also argue that they express their feelings differently. In other words, the fact of learning to recognise and express emotions in different languages affects how these emotions are recognised and expressed in the multilingual’s various languages. Again, L2 users have been shown to have a slightly different linguistic knowledge of their L1 (Cook and Bassetti 2011), they probably also have shifted a little in their ability to recognise and express emotions.

The following section will briefly discuss the difficult distinction between effects of language and culture on conceptual change in bi- and multilinguals. After that, we will present an overview of research that combined emotion and multilingualism research, sometimes with explicit references to the multi-competence perspective. We will look more specifically at multi-competence in the grammar and lexicon of emotion, and in language choices to express emotion. After that we will focus on emotional acculturation. The final section will consider the emotional range of multi-competent individuals and the resulting hybrid sense of self.

WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF LANGUAGE, WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF CULTURE?

While the multi-competence perspective focuses on the effect of the new language rather than the new culture on the mind of the speaker, it is in fact quite difficult to separate these two entwined variables. They can be considered separate sides of the same coin. That does not stop some politicians from trying to filter out the cultural element in foreign language teaching in order to preserve national cultural loyalty: English is considered to be language of the enemy in many countries, with ‘ridiculous’ ideas about personal freedom and democracy. Yet, the need for English is such that authorities have to organise its teaching, but in such a way that no cultural-ideological ‘contamination’ could occur. This does pose a problem, because knowing a language involves more than purely linguistic knowledge. However, this probably worries the authorities less than having their students create imaginary alternative identities for themselves (Lvovich 1997).

While new cultural knowledge might lag behind the acquisition of new linguistic knowledge in the first stages of foreign language (FL) learning in a context of formal instruction, cultural knowledge will gradually seep in through contact with newspapers, books and films in the FL, and with speakers of that language. Pavlenko (1999) offered a nice example of this in her study on conceptual differences between Russian and American English in the notions of privacy and personal space. Monolingual Americans mentioned these notions in retelling silent films that showed a violation of privacy and personal space, something Russian monolinguals did not mention. She repeated the experiment with two groups of Russian-English bilinguals, a group living in the US who had plenty of cultural knowledge, and a group of Russian FL learners of

English who had much less cultural knowledge or awareness. While the former group mentioned the invasion of privacy and violation of personal space, both in English and – strikingly – in Russian, the latter group did not mention it, despite knowing the meaning of the English word *privacy*. Pavlenko (1999) pointed out that semantic representations (defined as ‘explicitly available information on the meaning of various forms’) need to be distinguished from conceptual representations (defined as ‘multi-modal mental representations’ (p.212), and that the latter typically require more time to develop. One example of this is my own conceptual representation of ‘horse’, in French it is *cheval*, in Dutch *paard* – which seem like perfect translation equivalents of the English word. I became aware of the very different conceptual representation British people have of ‘horse’ when meat lasagnes sold in British shops were found to contain horsemeat. It provoked a national scandal, as if some form of cannibalism was involved. The French and Dutch concept of ‘horse’ brings to mind the gentle animal that allows rich people to ride on, but also one of the possible meats you can order at your local butcher. In other words, I realised that eating horsemeat is a taboo for the British because of cultural values embedded in their conceptual representation of that animal. It would therefore be interesting to see whether the conceptual representation of ‘horse’ among British people in horse-eating countries has evolved.

MULTI-COMPETENCE AND THE EXPRESSION OF EMOTION

Grammar

Pavlenko (2008) and Pavlenko and Driagina (2007) have investigated the structural non-equivalence of the expression of emotion in English and Russian, and the consequences that this has on users of these languages. While both languages have emotion nouns, adjectives, transitive and intransitive verbs and have comparable morphosyntactic categories, the distribution is quite different (Pavlenko and Driagina 2007, p.215). Russian has more intransitive emotion verbs. The pattern of emotion coding is also quite different in both languages, with L1 users of English favouring adjectival constructions in combination with copula verbs to express emotions, while L1 users of Russian favour verbs, specifically intransitive and reflexive emotion verbs (p.215).

The analysis of retellings of short silent films mentioned earlier showed that the L1 English speakers favoured emotion adjectives such as *upset* (75% of emotion word tokens) whereas the Russian L1 speakers preferred emotion verbs (51% of emotion word tokens), such as *rasstroit'sia* ‘to get upset’ (Pavlenko 2002, p.67). Advanced North American learners transferred the L1 preference to their Russian L2, resulting in negative transfer, for example *become* with emotion adjectives such as *stala serditoi* ‘became angry’, while native speakers of Russian consistently used emotion verbs, saying *ona rasserdilas* ‘she got angry’ (Pavlenko 2008, p.153). Interestingly, from a multi-competence point of view, Pavlenko (2003) found that 21 Russian native speakers who had English as an L2, and who had been living in the US for less than 10 years, exhibited extensive L2 influence on the L1. As some bilinguals retold the films in Russian, they framed emotions linguistically as states, rather than as active processes, violating both semantic and syntactic constraints of Russian.

Lexicon

Pavlenko and Driagina (2007) also considered how the American learners of Russian, and the native speakers of English and Russian, use of emotion words that lack translation equivalents in the other language. For example, the Russian verb *perezživat* that refers to ‘the process of worrying, taking things hard and experiencing them keenly, or, literally, suffering things through’ (p.217). In turn, common English emotion words as *fun* or *frustration* have no single-word equivalents in Russian (p.217). The authors found that the American learners did not use *perezživat* a single time in their film retellings, despite admitting in post-experiment debriefings to having encountered this verb before (p.226).

The Russian bilinguals (with L2 English) in Pavlenko (2003) were aware that their exposure to English had affected their ability to express their emotions in Russian. One participant complained about the lack of a Russian translation of the English concept *privacy*

(p.54), another used the English word *clumsy* in describing how she felt using Russian: 'I feel more and more *clumsy*, uncomfortable, when I speak Russian' (p.55). Strikingly, only one bilingual participant used the Russian word *perezhiivat*, which dominated the narratives of Russian monolinguals (p.56). It thus seems that intense exposure to the L2, and to L2 culture, leads to a 'conceptual restructuring' of emotion concepts in the L1, namely 'readjustment of the category structure and boundaries in accordance with the constraints of the target linguistic category' as well as 'conceptual development' defined as 'development of new multimodal representations that allows speakers to map new words onto real-world referents similar to native speakers of the target language' (Pavlenko 2009, p.141). Pavlenko (2003) concluded that 'the complex phenomenon of L2 influence on L1 is best understood from a multi-competence perspective' (p.58).

Another major contribution in this area of research is the work by Stepanova Sachs and Coley (2006), who compared representations of Russian and English translation equivalents in 22 English and 22 Russian monolinguals and 22 Russian-English bilinguals of the pair *jealousy/revnost* and *envy/zavist*. In English the words *jealous* and *envious* can be used as overlapping, as synonyms, on many occasions, but in Russian their translation equivalents cannot because they are categorically distinct. The Russian nouns *revnost* and *zavist* go with distinct adjectives, and Russian monolinguals favour the emotion verbs *revnuet* and *zaviduet*. Participants had to select a word to describe a jealousy or an envy story they had heard. The English monolinguals considered the words *envious* and *jealous* as being equally appropriate for describing the emotions of characters in envy stories. Bilinguals tested in Russian distinguished jealousy and envy stories, whereas they made no distinction for envy stories in English, just like native English speakers (p.226). The authors found a greater differentiation between *revnuet* and *zaviduet* in envy stories for Russian monolinguals than for bilinguals tested in Russian. It thus seems that the advanced knowledge of L2 English had blurred the bilinguals' category boundary between '*revnuet*' and '*zaviduet*' in their L1. In a second experiment, involving a free sorting task, English monolinguals and bilinguals were more likely to group envy and jealousy situations together than were Russian monolinguals.

Finally, Ozanska-Ponikwia (2013) investigated changes in the emotional repertoire of 102 Polish L2 users who had lived, or were living, in English-speaking countries. She found that L2 socialization had influenced the bilinguals' perception of the specific Polish emotion of *tesknota* ('yearning/longing/Sehnsucht'). Participants had to describe the emotion felt by the main character in two short stories in Polish and English. A control group of Poles, with English as L2, who had never lived outside Poland all mentioned *tesknota*. Three quarters of the Polish-English bilinguals of the experimental group produced *tesknota* in the Polish version of the story, the others used other Polish emotion words or English emotions words (*nostalgia, anxiety*). After reading the English version of the story, a third of the bilinguals wrote the English words *loneliness*, followed by *sadness, homesickness, longing*, with only 7% producing *tesknota*. Ozanska-Ponikwia thus concluded that their L2 socialisation had blurred their perception of this specific Polish emotion. To sum up, there is clear evidence of conceptual restructuring in the expression of emotion among multi-competent speakers, both in their grammar and their lexicon.

Language choices

The first large-scale investigation into language choices of multilingual and multicultural individuals was based on data collected through the Bilingualism and Emotions Questionnaire (BEQ) (Dewaele and Pavlenko 2001-2003) from more than 1500 multilinguals (Dewaele 2013). Multilinguals' dominant language, typically their L1, was the preferred language to express emotions. However, other languages were sometimes used to express emotion. This could be interpreted as evidence of multi-competence, as these multilinguals were not longer restricted to a single channel to express their emotions. Participants who had learned a foreign language (LX, which could be a L2, L3, L4 or L5) through classroom instruction and had simultaneously used that language to communicate outside the classroom, and participants who were early starters in the acquisition of the LX tended to use that language more frequently to express emotion than

participants who had purely formal instruction and were later starters. An LX that was used frequently was typically also used frequently to express emotion. An analysis of individual variation in perceived emotional force of swearwords in the multilinguals' different languages and the perceived emotional weight of the phrase 'I love you' revealed similar patterns (Dewaele 2004b; 2008; 2013).

Balanced bi- or multilinguals – reporting shared dominance in two languages – were not using their languages in equal measure to express emotions (Dewaele 2011). The 386 multilinguals from the BEQ with maximal proficiency in a L1 and a LX, who used both languages constantly, did prefer the L1 for communicating feelings and anger, and for swearing. Participants reported that their L1 was emotionally stronger than the LX and that they felt less anxious in their L1. The analysis of interviews between the interviewer (Benedetta Bassetti) and 20 participants on the topics covered by the BEQ revealed that a longer stay in the LX culture was linked to a gradual shift in language preferences and perceptions, with the LX starting to match the L1 in hearts and minds. It also emerged that LX linguistic practices seeped into L1 exchanges with interlocutors sharing the same linguistic profile. Interviewees' views on swearing in their different languages drew particularly rich responses, possibly because it is felt to be a relatively 'safer' topic of conversation than display of anger or of romantic feelings.

Michelle (Taiwanese L1, Mandarin L2, English L3), a Chinese Londoner, married to an Englishman, reported equal fluency in English and Mandarin. She reported that, despite the fact that Chinese sociocultural norms forbade her from swearing, she did use mild English swearwords in interactions in Mandarin with her Chinese friends in London:

B: Do you ever use Chinese with your husband?

Mi: No! not even I swear or, because I don't swear in Chinese you see.

B: I see yeah.

Mi: It's not because I'm good, it's just because education, you see ehm it's different, ehm, English swearing is different from Chinese swearing. English swearing is quite common to even, you know, whatever you educated whatever you are, you do it, but in Chinese you really, most educated people don't swear.

B: So do feel something is missing when you speak Chinese, because you can't swear?

Mi: Ah ah! I haven't thought about that!

B: [laughs]

Mi: Maybe, yes, maybe, no. It's funny, you do get by isn't it without swearing, you still get by, but I just think that even now I swear, I swear when I'm with my friends, Chinese friends, you have to say 'oh shoot' or 'sugar' or whatever, and you know and then you say that in English, so...

B: While you speak in Chinese?

Mi: Yeah.

B: While you speak in Chinese you swear in English?

Mi: Yeah.

B: Or while you speak in English?

Mi: While I speak in Chinese, both. I never, I still swear because again I think it's a habit, because that reaction just come out, so it's a bit like you have to ask yourself what do I do before I knew English swearing, ehm, how do I survive?

(Dewaele 2013, pp.119-120).

Layla (Tunisian Arabic L1, English L2), who feels equally proficient in both languages and has lived for 5 years in English-speaking countries, reports that swearing is taboo in her L1 culture, but that she might use mild swearwords in English:

L: Speaking of swearing, (...) I never swear in Arabic, never never at all, because I know exactly what it means, because it's my language anyway, and how offensive it would be to swear, but in English because it's not my native language, sometimes I use some swearwords, but I don't really aware I'm not really aware of how immense those words.

One of the words that sometimes I use is 'bloody', 'bloody rude' you know, this is the only swearword I use.

B: The only one? I see

L: Yeah. Sometimes I use another one, you want to know what, you want to hear what kind of words I use?

B: Yes

L: Sometimes I say 'shit'.

B: Ok, right

L: But it's just because I know many, many of my friends they keep using it, and I'm not really aware of how immense and strong this word, because it's not my native language so I feel like, I feel much more confident in swearing in English than Arabic

B: But if you're speaking Arabic and you are in a situation where you would normally use the s-word in English, what do you say in Arabic?

L: I don't, I don't because it's just, I was raised up in, my family never swear, (...) and I never got used to it, and basically it's part of my, not only how I raised, it's also part of my beliefs that I don't like to swear because I think it's uncivilized, it's uncivilized way of speaking, and I feel that I can use any, although sometimes you really really feel you'd like to do it, but I don't in Arabic, I never never say any swearword in Arabic, I never really honestly. (Dewaele 2013, pp.124-125).

The effect of strong socialisation in L2 English has an effect on language preferences to express anger among Japanese returnees. It allows multilinguals to vent their anger in a socially acceptable way:

Ryoko (Japanese L1, English L2): I tend to use English when I am angry, Japanese when I'm hurt or sad, both when I am happy or excited (...). My other bilingual friends who are all returnees like me said the same thing about using English when they're angry. I guess I like the sound of the swearing words since I heard it so many times during my stay in the US. This swearing doesn't happen so often in Japan. It's a cultural difference. (Dewaele 2013, p.122).

Another Japanese participant, Miho (Japanese L1, English L2, Thai L3, German L4, dominant in L1 and L2) expresses strong emotions in English with bilingual interlocutors, but sticks to English or Japanese with monolingual interlocutors. She looked surprised when asked how she expresses her anger in Japanese and explains that she does it without words:

B: You're angry at a Japanese friend who doesn't understand English, which language do you use?

M: Um, Japanese.

B: Ah-ah.

M: But I don't know how to say.

B: So what do you say?

M: I just show angry face?

B: Ah ah.

M: Yeah. (Dewaele 2013: 122).

Tomomi (Japanese L1, English L2, Italian L3, Spanish L4, married to an Italian, dominant in Japanese and living in the UK for 4 years) mentions L1 sociocultural constraints weighing on the use of Japanese swearwords in Japan. When asked about language preferences to express anger, she explains that she prefers Japanese when alone, Japanese or English in written communication with bilingual addressees because she can express her feelings more clearly (p.209). Reflecting on the advantages of Japanese and English, she mentions that Japanese goes deeper but that English is straighter:

T: if I wanna express more deep then it's better in Japanese, but I feel like Japanese language is not really straight, so if I wanna show really anger to somebody it's much better in English actually. (Dewaele 2013, pp.209-210).

She claims that she does not swear in any language:

B: Do you swear?

T: I don't.

B: No, never, in any language?

T: No, in Japanese we don't really have swearword, and English swearword I don't like it, especially you know with the kids, they can get so easily, so I don't have this habit to use swearword so I don't.

B: Have you learnt any Italian swearwords?

T: I know it because you know some people around me say that, but I don't, I don't use any. (Dewaele 2013, p.124).

Quipinia (Cantonese L1, English L2), living in Hong Kong, reported that her parents frowned upon the expression of emotion, 'therefore I feel a lot easier to use another language to express the feelings and the different personality inside me' (Dewaele 2013, pp.122-123). She remembers an argument in which she burst out in English at her parents who are proficient in English but with whom she usually uses Cantonese:

Quipinia: But I remember one time when they were arguing with me and I was soooooooooo angry that I shouted out 'IT'S UNFAIR!!!!' I guess it's regarded quite impolite if I shouted at my parents (you know Chinese Traditional family) but at that point I feel that I had to express my anger and let myself just do it in another language; perhaps I feel I'm another person if I say that in English. (Dewaele 2013, p.123).

Veronica Zhengdao Ye, a Chinese scholar who emigrated to Australia at the age of 23, and whose 2004 paper will be discussed in the next section, also reported that using swearwords in Chinese L1 is impossible for her, but that using English swearwords in the Australian context is perfectly acceptable, as that she realises she might be overdoing it:

I belong to the group of people who are brought up with the notion that swearing is uncivil. And I have NEVER used swear and taboo words in my L1. But I do use words in English which native English speakers would consider uncivil to use, such as 'shit' and 'pissed off'. I could use them exactly because I do not have the same sense of emotional weight of these words as do the native people. My only clue of how 'strong' these words are was from people's reaction when I used them. My friends are often astonished when I use them, because they say that I do not look like the person who could say those words. When I use them, they say that they knew I feel something very strong about something. I myself don't mind using those English swear words, as when I use them, I have fun of being another person for a moment! (personal communication, September 2004)

Several participants, typically of Asian or Arabic origin, thus reported using an LX to express emotions, including some swearwords, to escape the L1 social and cultural constraints. Contact with English language and culture had made them more inclined to express anger in the English way, even when communicating in the L1. This could include the use of mild swearwords. There was a considerable amount of variation both between and within individuals: some stuck to non-verbal communication of anger in interactions with monolingual Japanese, many expressed a different language preference depending on the identity of the interlocutor/s. Some liked the directness of expressing anger in English, but rejected swearing in that language. All had spent a considerable amount of time in an English-speaking environment and were highly proficient in English. They could probably be described as multi-competent biculturals who had reflected on the differences between their L1 norms and the English norms and had thus developed a good amount of meta-pragmatic awareness. Those who did not use English systematically within the family reported language preferences and swearing practices situated halfway between L1 norms and English LX norms. Layla and Michelle reported using weak English swearwords, and in doing so, clearly distinguished themselves from their L1 monolingual and monocultural peers. Veronica Zhengdao Ye on the other hand, seemed to be enjoying the transgression of her L1 rules, in swearing like her fellow Australians.

EMOTIONAL ACCULTURATION

Veronica Zhengdao Ye refers in the title of her 2004 paper *La Double Vie de Veronica* to the brilliant and dramatic 1991 French- and Polish-language film by Krzysztof Kieslowski *La double vie de Véronique*. The main characters are Weronika, a Polish choir soprano, and her double, Véronique, a French music teacher, both interpreted by Irène Jacob. Although the two women do not know each other, they share a mysterious emotional bond that transcends language and country. Ye explains in a footnote that the film title and topic was appropriate for the account of her double life as a Chinese and English bilingual living within two cultures. It reflected her own travels to and fro between English, Mandarin Chinese, and Shanghainese, her mother tongue. The relationship between the languages is a constant struggle: ‘When speaking English, I may think in English, but only partially; the next moment, it flicks back to Chinese. Sometimes I get confused and the two languages merge – one on top of the other’ (Ye 2004, p.138). She prefers the Chinese way of expressing emotions: ‘subtle, implicit and without words’ (pp.139-140). She describes her first parting from her parents, just before boarding the plane to Australia (pp.140-142):

‘we fought back our tears and urged each other repeatedly to take care; we wore the biggest smiles to wave good-bye to each other, to soothe each others’ worries. Just like any other Chinese parting between those who love each other – there were no hugs and no ‘I love you’. Yet I have never doubted my parents’ profound love for me’.

She explains that at the beginning of her stay in Australia, she felt uncomfortable talking about her true feelings, it made her inner self feel ‘stripped and vulnerable’. She was struck by the ease with which Australians use emotion words which made her blush. She gradually understood that these expressions are niceties for social purposes. She needed some time before she was able to recognize the emotions displayed in the Australian context accurately and deal with them appropriately. Interestingly, two years later, on the plane home to attend her father’s funeral, she deeply regrets never having hugged him, and decides to give her mother a big long hug ‘to abridge the physical separation’. Ye’s experience could be described as the development of linguistic and emotional multi-competence, and as the typical emotional acculturation of an immigrant. De Leersnyder, Mesquita and Kim (2011, pp.452-462) define it as ‘changes in emotional patterns due to an immigrant’s exposure to and contact with a new or second cultural context’ (p.452). The authors point out that the emotional experiences of people who live together (dyads, groups, cultures) tend to be similar and that immigrants’ emotions probably approximate host culture patterns of emotional experience. Although they do not refer to multi-competence – as they are not specifically interested in language – there are some striking similarities. Indeed, the emotional experience of the immigrants shifts as a result of the contact with inhabitants of the host culture. The authors carried out a first study on 47 Korean immigrants and 44 European Americans in the United States and a second study on 59 first- and 85 second generation Turkish immigrants as well as 83 Flemish Belgians living in Belgium. They used the Emotional Patterns Questionnaire to collect data on emotional experiences of immigrants and host group members. They calculated differences in emotional patterns using comparable emotional situations. Participants were asked to describe an event from their own daily life that met the description of an emotional situation in a particular prompt. No significant differences emerged in reported emotional events across cultural groups nor across acculturation levels. However, ‘patterns of emotional experiences differed in ways that may be considered evidence for emotional acculturation’ (p.460). The degree of immigrants’ emotional similarity to the host group was reflected in a correlation value of their individual emotional patterns with that of the average pattern of the host group. Immigrants’ exposure to and engagement in the host culture predicted emotional acculturation. In other words, immigrants who had spent a larger proportion of their life in the host country were more likely to have emotionally acculturated as a result of intercultural interactions and relationships. Interestingly, emotional concordance was found to be higher for the positive than for the

negative situations. It may thus be easier for an immigrant to learn, and adapt to, the host culture's emotional pattern in positive rather than in negative emotional situations.

The authors raise a question about the changes that underlie the shifts in emotional patterns: is it because immigrants in the new culture experience different situations or because they start appraising the same situations differently? Finally, emotional concordance with the host culture was not linked to immigrants' attitudes toward the adoption of values and traditions, nor to social relationships with members of the mainstream. In other words, emotional acculturation seems unrelated to the attitudes toward acculturation (i.e. explicit beliefs) (p.462).

ARE MULTI-COMPETENT PEOPLE MULTI-EMOTIONAL?

One of the themes that emerged from previous sections was the extension of the conceptual and emotional range that multilinguals experienced. In other words, their multi-competence was linked to a new-found capacity, and freedom to express emotions, typically through code-switching, that they would not have expressed as monolinguals. This might lead to a different perception of self in the various languages, as Ye exclaimed: 'I have fun of being another person for a moment!'

Pavlenko (2006) analysed the feedback from 1039 participants of the BEQ (Dewaele and Pavlenko 2001-2003) and found that almost two thirds of participants reported that they feel like different people when they change languages, a quarter of participants felt no difference, with the remaining 10% of participants giving no clear response (Pavlenko 2006, p.10). Many participants answered that they felt more 'real' and 'natural' in their L1, and more 'fake', 'artificial' in later learned languages (p.18).

This finding was confirmed in Dewaele and Nakano (2012), where 106 multilinguals reported feeling significantly less logical, less serious, less emotional and increasingly fake when using the L2, L3 and L4 compared to their L1.

Wilson (2013) investigated the positive feelings about using foreign languages among 172 adult first-language English speakers learning a LX for pleasure or using it in a social setting with other L1 English speakers. Several LX users reported that operating in the LX gave them a sense of freedom and enabled them to speak and behave in ways that were different from their usual modes.

Ozanska-Ponikwia (2012) studied self-reported feelings of differences linked to using an L2 among 102 Polish L2 users of English who had never been abroad and Polish-English bilinguals who had spent some time in an English-speaking country. She found that self-perceived changes in behaviour when using the L2 were linked to the personality traits Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness, Emotion expression, Empathy, Social awareness, Emotion perception, Emotion management, Emotionality and Sociability. She argues that participants who scored high on these dimensions were more likely to be aware of changes in their behaviour when switching languages.

A pioneer in this area of research, Koven (1998; 2001; 2006), building on the work of Ervin-Tripp (1967) with Japanese-English bilingual women married to American men, asked two French-Portuguese bilinguals to tell the same story in both languages and subsequently interviewed them about how they felt while telling the story. She found that both participants: 'perform(ed), enact(ed), or inhabit(ed) the role of their characters in the stories quite differently (...) Isabel sounds like an angry, hip suburbanite in French, whereas in Portuguese, she seems a frustrated, but patient, well-mannered bank customer who does not want to draw attention to the fact that she is an émigré' (Koven 1998, p.435). The two women seemed to let themselves be pushed around more when they spoke Portuguese and stood up for themselves more when they spoke French (Koven 1998). The different languages allowed the women to 'perform a variety of cultural selves' (Koven 2001, p.513). Koven focused specifically on Linda, who was asked to tell stories about the same bad experience in Portuguese and in French, to a Portuguese-French bilingual of her own age (Koven 2006). A formal analysis of interlocutory devices and different styles suggested that she was 'angrier, more forceful and more aggressive in French' (p.107).

Koven notes that Linda is aware that her lack of profane or vulgar vocabulary in Portuguese affects her presentation in that language: 'Linda may not be free to perform an aggressive persona in Portuguese' (p.108).

CONCLUSION

The overview of research of multilingualism and emotion from a multi-competence perspective leads to a number of general observations. The addition of a language (or a culture) to an individual's repertoire has profound repercussions on the whole system, including the individual's emotional geography. The acquisition of new emotion concepts, and of new sociopragmatic and sociocultural information governing their use, affects the L1 emotion concepts and the way they are verbalised. These effects include unconscious blurring of categories, but can also trigger a highly conscious progression into new emotional territory. The L1 concepts, values and practices remain important for these multilinguals. They typically rate their L1 as being more emotional than their LX. However, there are clear instances of blending of L1 and LX values and practices. While they may be able to keep their languages apart in interactions, more permeability develops between the two languages at a conceptual level. LX affective socialization results in a unique multi-competent behaviour both in the L1 and LX. Swearing in the LX illustrates the newfound freedom to express oneself without violating L1 norms. The new language and culture offer LX users new potential emotional selves which they can deploy according to their needs. Hoffman (1989) referred to cross-fertilisation between her languages. Metaphorically multi-competence could be illustrated through a garden metaphor where emotion concepts in language 1 are laid out in neat separate patches of red flowers (think of a formal French garden), and where the acquisition of emotion concepts in language 2 or 3 lead to the emergence of blue and orange flowers between the red flowers in slightly different patches. As a consequence, red flowers start appearing where they did not grow before, intermingling with the patches of blue and orange flowers who also develop their own unique shapes and hues (in other words, an English herbaceous border).

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank Aneta Pavlenko for her feedback on parts of this chapter.

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ⁱ As one reviewer pointed out, the same is true of competence – an individual's knowledge of language at any stage, i.e. a 5-year-old's competence which is evolving daily.