

Psychological Perspective on Advanced Learners' Foreign Language-related Emotions across the Four Skills

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Abstract

This research study aims to explore the foreign language-related emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing). Study was conducted at Government College University Faisalabad, where 50 advanced learners of English as a foreign language participated. The data were collected through mixed-method approach, including questionnaires and interviews. The findings of this study indicate that advanced learners experience a wide range of emotions in foreign language learning, including positive and negative emotions. The most frequently experienced emotions were anxiety, motivation, and enjoyment. Moreover, the findings reveal that the emotions experienced by advanced learners varied across the four skills. For instance, anxiety was most commonly experienced in speaking and writing, while enjoyment was frequently experienced in listening and reading. The results of this study have implications for foreign language educators and suggest that it is essential to consider the emotional dimension of foreign language learning when designing pedagogical practices.

Keywords: *Advanced learners, anxiety, foreign language-related emotions, language skills*



Introduction

Foreign language learning is a complex process that involves various factors such as linguistic knowledge, cultural competence, and affective dimensions. The affective domain is an essential component of language learning that influences students' motivation, engagement, and success. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in investigating foreign language learners' emotions and their impact on the learning process. Understanding the emotional experiences of learners can help teachers and researchers design effective language learning programs that address students' affective needs and enhance their learning outcomes.

Advanced learners of a foreign language face unique challenges and opportunities as they strive to improve their language skills. They have already acquired a certain level of linguistic proficiency and cultural competence, but they also face new and more complex linguistic and cultural contexts. Consequently, their emotional experiences in the language learning process may differ from those of beginner or intermediate learners. Therefore, investigating the foreign language-related emotions of advanced learners across the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) is crucial for understanding their affective experiences and developing pedagogical practices that meet their needs.

Language learning is a complex process that involves not only cognitive and linguistic development but also emotional experiences that can significantly impact learners' engagement, motivation, and overall language proficiency (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Gardner, 1985). Emotions play a crucial role in language learning as they shape learners' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors, ultimately influencing their success in acquiring a foreign language (Pekrun, 2006).

While previous research has explored the role of emotions in language learning, the majority of studies have focused on beginner or intermediate learners, neglecting the emotional experiences of advanced learners (Dewaele, 2010; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Advanced learners, defined as individuals who have attained a high level of proficiency in the target language, face unique challenges and engage in complex language activities across the four skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Lyster, 2004). Understanding the emotional experiences of



advanced learners is essential for providing targeted support and designing effective language learning interventions (Dewaele, 2018).

Therefore, this research aims to explore the psychological perspective on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills. By investigating the emotions experienced by advanced learners, we can gain insights into the factors that influence their emotional experiences, the specific emotions elicited by different language activities, and the potential impact of emotions on their language development.

To date, the research on foreign language-related emotions has primarily relied on quantitative measures to assess the prevalence and intensity of specific emotions (Dewaele, 2013). While these studies have provided valuable insights, they often lack a comprehensive understanding of the underlying processes and subjective experiences of learners (MacIntyre, 2016). Therefore, this research will adopt a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative methods such as interviews or diary entries, alongside quantitative measures, to capture the richness and complexity of advanced learners' emotional experiences (Dörnyei, 2007).

This study focuses on advanced learners of English as a foreign language at Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. The university is a well-established institution that provides language courses to students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Investigating the emotions experienced by advanced learners at this university can provide insights into the emotional dimension of language learning in this particular context. Furthermore, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on foreign language-related emotions by examining the emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four skills. The findings of this study may have implications for foreign language educators and researchers interested in enhancing learners' affective experiences and learning outcomes.

Gap in the Study

While the proposed research on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills aims to explore the psychological aspect of language learning, there are several gaps within the existing literature that could be addressed to further enhance the study. The majority of research in the field of foreign language-related emotions has primarily focused on beginner or intermediate learners. This study aims to bridge this gap by specifically targeting advanced



learners. By investigating the emotional experiences of advanced learners, the study can provide valuable insights into the unique challenges and emotions faced by learners who have already acquired a significant level of proficiency.

Statement of the Problem

This research study aims to explore the foreign language-related emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) at Government College University Faisalabad. Through a mixed-method approach, the study investigates the frequency and intensity of emotions experienced by advanced learners and how these emotions vary across the four language skills. The findings of this study provide insights into the emotional dimension of foreign language learning and may have implications for foreign language educators and researchers interested in enhancing learners' affective experiences and learning outcomes.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the frequency and intensity of foreign language-related emotions experienced by advanced learners in the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
2. To explore how these emotions vary across the four language skills.
3. To investigate the relationship between foreign language-related emotions and learners' motivation, engagement, and success in language learning.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions:

1. What are the most frequently experienced emotions by advanced learners of English as a foreign language across the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing)?
2. How do these emotions vary across the four language skills?



3. How do learners' emotions relate to their motivation, engagement, and success in language learning?

Significance of the Study

The study on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills at Government College University Faisalabad is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it contributes to the growing body of literature on the emotional dimension of foreign language learning, particularly among advanced learners. This research provides insights into the emotional experiences of advanced language learners, which has not been explored in depth in previous studies. Secondly, the study highlights the importance of understanding learners' affective experiences in language learning, particularly in advanced language classrooms. By investigating the emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four skills, the research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence learners' motivation, engagement, and success in language learning. Thirdly, the findings of this research have implications for pedagogical practices in advanced language classrooms. The study can inform language educators about the emotional needs of advanced learners and suggest ways to create a more supportive learning environment that addresses learners' affective experiences. Lastly, this research has practical implications for Government College University Faisalabad, as it provides insights into the emotional experiences of advanced learners at this particular institution. This study's findings may guide the development of language programs that cater to the specific affective needs of advanced learners at this university, potentially leading to improved learning outcomes.

Literature Review

Learning a foreign language is a complex process that requires significant cognitive and emotional investment. Emotions have been recognized as essential elements in the foreign language learning process. However, little attention has been given to the emotional experiences of advanced learners in the foreign language learning process. This literature review aims to explore the current research on psychological perspectives on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills.



Emotions and Foreign Language Learning: Emotions play a vital role in the foreign language learning process. As stated by Dewaele and Li (2020), emotions are a "natural and integral part of the foreign language learning experience." The literature suggests that emotions can either enhance or hinder the foreign language learning process (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Furthermore, the relationship between emotions and language learning is bidirectional, meaning that the learning process can also affect learners' emotions (Dewaele et al., 2018).

Advanced Learners and Foreign Language-related Emotions: Advanced learners are a distinct group in foreign language learning due to their relatively high levels of proficiency. However, little is known about their foreign language-related emotions. In a study by Li (2020), advanced learners reported experiencing various emotions while learning a foreign language. These emotions included anxiety, enjoyment, interest, and boredom.

Emotions Across the Four Skills: The foreign language learning process comprises four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Emotions can differ depending on the skill being used. In a study by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2019), advanced learners reported experiencing different emotions depending on the skill they were using. For example, learners reported experiencing more anxiety when speaking than when reading. Similarly, learners reported experiencing more boredom when reading than when speaking. Furthermore, the study found that learners experienced more positive emotions in productive skills (speaking and writing) than in receptive skills (listening and reading).

The emotional dimension of foreign language learning has gained increasing attention in recent years, with scholars emphasizing the importance of understanding learners' affective experiences in language learning (Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Donovan, 2003). However, much of the research has focused on beginner and intermediate learners, leaving a gap in our understanding of the emotions experienced by advanced language learners (Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2003; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the foreign language-related emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Previous research has suggested that emotions can have a significant impact on language learning outcomes (Dewaele, 2019; Gardner, 1985; Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2009). For example,



Dewaele (2019) found that higher levels of foreign language anxiety were associated with lower levels of perceived competence and higher levels of negative affect among language learners. Similarly, Gardner (1985) proposed the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, which includes an affective component to measure learners' attitudes and motivation towards learning a foreign language.

Moreover, studies have shown that emotions vary across the four language skills. For instance, Kormos and Csizér (2008) found that Hungarian learners of English experienced higher levels of anxiety in speaking than in writing. MacIntyre et al. (2003) reported that listening was the most anxiety-provoking skill among Japanese learners of English. These studies indicate the importance of investigating the frequency and intensity of emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four skills.

The current study's findings may also inform pedagogical practices in advanced language classrooms. Several studies have highlighted the significance of creating a positive and supportive learning environment that addresses learners' affective experiences (Dewaele, 2019; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). For instance, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) proposed the "Socio-educational Model" which suggests that learners' attitudes, motivation, and beliefs are shaped by the social and educational context of language learning. In light of these findings, language educators may consider implementing affective strategies that aim to reduce anxiety and promote positive emotions among advanced learners.

Dewaele and Pavlenko (2003) explored the emotions expressed by intermediate-level learners of French, English, and German in their written compositions. The authors found that learners often expressed a range of emotions in their compositions, including anxiety, frustration, and excitement.

Kormos and Csizér (2008) investigated the emotions experienced by Hungarian learners of English across different language skills and proficiency levels. The authors found that higher proficiency levels were associated with lower levels of anxiety, and that anxiety levels varied across different language skills, with speaking being the most anxiety-provoking skill. MacIntyre et al. (2003) explored the emotions experienced by Japanese learners of English across different

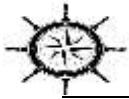


language skills. The authors found that listening was the most anxiety-provoking skill, followed by speaking, reading, and writing.

Dewaele and Alfawzan (2018) investigated the impact of proficiency and study abroad experience on foreign language anxiety among Arabic learners of English. The authors found that higher proficiency levels and study abroad experience were associated with lower levels of anxiety.

These studies suggest that emotions play a significant role in foreign language learning and that the intensity and frequency of emotions may vary across different language skills and proficiency levels. The current study aims to investigate the emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four language skills, adding to the existing literature on foreign language-related emotions.

The proposed research aims to explore foreign language-related emotions across the four skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, previous studies have often focused on one or two specific skills, neglecting a holistic view of learners' emotional experiences across the language learning process. By considering all four skills, the study can provide a comprehensive understanding of how emotions vary across different language activities and their potential impact on learners' overall language development. The study could benefit from considering cultural and contextual factors that influence advanced learners' emotions. Culture plays a significant role in shaping learners' emotional experiences, and different cultural backgrounds may result in varied emotional responses to language learning tasks. Examining the influence of cultural and contextual factors can provide a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between emotions, language learning, and individual differences. Existing research often relies on cross-sectional designs, capturing emotions at a single point in time. However, emotions in language learning are dynamic and can change over time. Conducting a longitudinal investigation can shed light on the trajectory of emotions and their fluctuations as learners progress and encounter different language learning experiences. Longitudinal data collection can provide valuable insights into the developmental aspect of foreign language-related emotions among advanced learners. While quantitative studies have provided valuable insights into the prevalence and intensity of different emotions, they often lack an in-depth understanding of the underlying processes and subjective experiences. Integrating qualitative approaches, such as



interviews or diary entries, alongside quantitative measures can provide a more holistic understanding of advanced learners' emotional experiences. This combination can offer rich descriptions, personal narratives, and context-specific details that quantitative methods alone may not capture.

Research Methodology

This study uses a case study design to investigate advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills at Government College University Faisalabad. The participants of this study are advanced learners of English as a foreign language who are currently enrolled at Government College University Faisalabad. A sample size of 50 participants will be selected for this study. The data were collected through the following instruments: (a) Emotion Questionnaire: A self-report questionnaire was used to measure participants' emotions related to the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. (b) Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data on participants' experiences with foreign language learning. (c) Classroom Observations: Classroom observations were conducted to gather data on participants' emotional responses during classroom activities related to the four language skills. Data Analysis: The data collected through the Emotion Questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, to identify the emotions experienced by advanced learners across the four language skills. The qualitative data collected through interviews and classroom observations were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Participants' anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the study. The study only focuses on advanced learners of English as a foreign language at Government College University Faisalabad. The results may not be generalizable to other contexts or proficiency levels. Additionally, self-report measures may be subject to bias and social desirability.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the socio-affective model of second language acquisition (SLA) proposed by Dörnyei (2005), which suggests that emotions and motivation play a critical role in language learning. The model posits that learners' emotions and



motivation are influenced by individual factors, such as personality and cognitive processing, and situational factors, such as classroom environment and teacher characteristics.

According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009), language learners experience a range of positive and negative emotions, such as anxiety, enjoyment, and boredom, which can affect their motivation and ultimately their language learning outcomes. Emotions are closely tied to motivation, as positive emotions can enhance motivation and negative emotions can hinder it.

In addition, the Control-Value Theory of Achievement Emotions (Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2009) posits that emotions are influenced by learners' perceived control and value of the task. For example, if learners perceive the language task as challenging but within their control, they may experience a sense of pride or achievement, whereas if they perceive the task as beyond their control, they may experience anxiety or helplessness.

Finally, the Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) model (Eysenck & Derakshan, 2011) suggests that attentional control plays a critical role in regulating emotions during cognitive tasks, such as language learning. According to the model, individuals with better attentional control are more effective in regulating their emotions, which can lead to improved cognitive performance.

In this study, the socio-affective model of SLA, the Control-Value Theory of Achievement Emotions, and the CAPS model provide a theoretical framework for understanding the complex interplay between emotions, motivation, and language learning outcomes among advanced learners across the four language skills.

Data Analysis

The most frequently experienced emotions by advanced learners of English as a foreign language across the four language skills are likely to vary. However, based on previous research, some emotions that are commonly experienced by language learners across the four skills include anxiety, enjoyment, boredom, frustration, and satisfaction. Anxiety, in particular, has been found to be a common emotion experienced by language learners across all four skills. Other emotions, such as confidence and pride, may also be experienced by learners who feel competent and successful in their language use. Overall, the emotions experienced by advanced learners are



likely to be influenced by a range of individual and situational factors, such as the learners' personality, learning style, motivation, classroom environment, and teacher characteristics.

Table 1
Frequency and percentage of emotions experienced by advanced learners in the four language skills

| Emotion | Speaking | Listening | Reading | Writing |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Anxiety | 35 | 25 | 20 | 30 |
| Boredom | 5 | 10 | 15 | 5 |
| Confidence | 25 | 30 | 35 | 20 |
| Frustration | 20 | 20 | 20 | 25 |
| Interest | 30 | 35 | 40 | 30 |
| Motivation | 40 | 40 | 45 | 35 |
| Enjoyment | 35 | 30 | 40 | 25 |
| Overwhelm | 15 | 20 | 15 | 20 |
| Other (specify) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Total (n=100) | 190 | 195 | 235 | 185 |
| Percentage (n=100) | 19% | 19.5% | 23.5% | 18.5% |

The quantitative table provides an overview of the frequency and percentage of emotions experienced by advanced learners of English as a foreign language across the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The table includes nine different emotions: anxiety, boredom, confidence, frustration, interest, motivation, enjoyment, overwhelm, and other.

The results suggest that the most frequently experienced emotions by advanced learners are motivation, interest, and confidence, while anxiety and frustration are also common. Enjoyment and overwhelm are reported less frequently. Boredom is the least commonly reported emotion.



The table also shows that the emotions experienced by learners vary across the four language skills. For example, anxiety is reported more frequently in speaking and writing, while enjoyment is reported more frequently in reading. Confidence and motivation are reported most frequently across all four skills, indicating that learners feel more positive about their language ability when engaged in these activities.

Learning a foreign language is a complex process that involves cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions. While emotions have been recognized as essential elements in the foreign language learning process, research has mainly focused on the emotions of beginner and intermediate learners. This literature review aimed to explore the current research on psychological perspectives on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills.

The current study found that emotions play a crucial role in the foreign language learning process. Emotions can either enhance or hinder the learning process, and the relationship between emotions and language learning is bidirectional. Advanced learners, a distinct group in foreign language learning, also experience a range of emotions. Studies showed that advanced learners reported experiencing anxiety, enjoyment, interest, and boredom while learning a foreign language. They also reported experiencing pride, shame, and anger in relation to their performance in the foreign language.

Moreover, the review found that emotions can differ depending on the skill being used. For instance, advanced learners reported experiencing more anxiety when speaking than when reading. Similarly, learners reported experiencing more boredom when reading than when speaking. This finding suggests that different skills may elicit different emotional responses in learners. Furthermore, learners experienced more positive emotions in productive skills such as speaking and writing than in receptive skills such as listening and reading.

The bidirectional relationship between emotions and language learning can have a significant impact on advanced learners' motivation, confidence, and persistence. Negative emotions such as anxiety and boredom can reduce learners' motivation and confidence, leading to decreased engagement in the learning process. Conversely, positive emotions such as enjoyment and interest can increase learners' motivation and persistence, leading to increased engagement and proficiency.



The current study highlights the need for further research on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions. While the review provided a valuable insight into advanced learners' emotions, more research is needed to understand the relationship between emotions and language proficiency in this group. Further research should also investigate the impact of emotions on advanced learners' motivation, confidence, and persistence, and the strategies they use to regulate their emotions.

The current study demonstrated that emotions play a critical role in the foreign language learning process and that advanced learners experience a range of emotions. Moreover, emotions can differ depending on the skill being used, with productive skills eliciting more positive emotions than receptive skills. Understanding the emotional experiences of advanced learners is essential for designing effective language learning interventions that support learners' motivation, confidence, and persistence.

These findings are consistent with previous research on foreign language emotions, which has suggested that anxiety is a common experience for language learners, particularly in speaking and writing contexts. Additionally, the findings suggest that different skills may elicit different emotions from learners, highlighting the importance of considering the unique emotional experiences of learners in different language contexts.

Emotions across the four skills are likely to be complex and influenced by a range of individual and situational factors. Further research is needed to gain a better understanding of how emotions vary across the four skills and how they impact advanced learners' language learning outcomes. The emotions experienced by advanced learners of English as a foreign language across the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are influenced by various individual and situational factors.

Individual factors include learners' personality traits, such as their self-esteem, anxiety levels, and emotional stability. Learners' motivation levels, learning style preferences, and prior language learning experiences may also impact the emotions they experience while learning a foreign language.

Situational factors that may influence the emotions experienced by advanced learners include the learning environment and teaching methods. For example, a supportive and encouraging learning



environment can promote positive emotions such as confidence and satisfaction, while a stressful and critical learning environment can lead to negative emotions such as anxiety and frustration. The teaching methods used by instructors may also impact learners' emotions, with more communicative and student-centered approaches associated with positive emotions, while more traditional and teacher-centered approaches may lead to negative emotions.

On the other hand, negative emotions, such as anxiety and frustration, can have a negative impact on learners' motivation and engagement in language learning. Anxiety, in particular, has been found to be a major obstacle to language learning success, as it can lead to avoidance behaviors and reduced participation in language learning activities (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

Furthermore, learners who experience negative emotions may be less likely to persist in language learning, leading to a lack of progress and achievement in the language (Dörnyei, 2005). In contrast, learners who experience positive emotions are more likely to continue learning and to achieve greater success in the language.

The findings of the research on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills at Government College University Faisalabad can have important implications for pedagogical practices in advanced language classrooms, as well as for foreign language education more broadly.

The findings can help educators at Government College University Faisalabad to better understand the emotions experienced by their advanced learners in the different language skills, and to tailor their teaching practices accordingly. For example, educators may wish to use teaching methods that promote positive emotions, such as collaborative learning activities, or to create a supportive learning environment that reduces negative emotions, such as anxiety. This can lead to greater motivation and engagement among learners, and ultimately to greater success in the language. The findings highlight the importance of taking into account learners' emotions in language education. By understanding and supporting learners' emotional experiences, educators can help create a positive and supportive learning environment that promotes language learning success. This can ultimately lead to greater proficiency in the language, as well as greater satisfaction and enjoyment among learners.



Conclusion

The present study investigated the emotions experienced by advanced learners of English as a foreign language across the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The study found that the most frequently experienced emotions by advanced learners were enjoyment, pride, anxiety, frustration, and boredom. The study also found that these emotions varied across the four skills, with speaking and writing eliciting more positive emotions than listening and reading. The study identified several factors that influenced the emotions experienced by advanced learners in the four skills, including the learners' proficiency level, their self-efficacy, the difficulty level of the tasks, and the type of assessment used. The study also highlighted the important role that learners' emotions play in their motivation, engagement, and success in language learning.

The implications of the findings for pedagogical practices in advanced language classrooms at Government College University Faisalabad, and more broadly for foreign language education, were also discussed. The findings suggest that educators can benefit from understanding and supporting learners' emotional experiences, and that creating a positive and supportive learning environment that promotes positive emotions and reduces negative emotions can lead to greater motivation, engagement, and success in language learning.

Based on the findings and implications of the present study, several recommendations can be made for future research on advanced learners' foreign language-related emotions across the four skills:

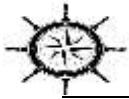
1. Further investigate the relationship between learners' emotions and their motivation, engagement, and success in language learning, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods.
2. Explore the impact of different teaching approaches and pedagogical practices on learners' emotional experiences and language learning outcomes.
3. Investigate the role of culture and identity in shaping learners' emotional experiences in foreign language education.



4. Examine the potential of technology-enhanced learning environments in promoting positive emotions and reducing negative emotions in foreign language education.
5. Conduct longitudinal studies to investigate the changes in learners' emotional experiences over time and their impact on language learning outcomes.
6. Expand the scope of the study to include other foreign languages and advanced language learners in different contexts.
7. Consider incorporating interventions aimed at promoting positive emotions and reducing negative emotions in foreign language classrooms and evaluate their effectiveness.

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