

Editorial

The first 2022 issue of *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* brings together five papers, all of which constitute reports of original empirical studies. The common thread running through the first two contributions is their focus on the role of emotions in second and foreign language learning. Richard J. Sampson adopted the “small lens” approach (Ushioda, 2016) to examine the emergence of emotionally significant episodes in short conversation sessions conducted by 28 first-year science and technology majors learning English as a foreign language in Japan. Discursive data, obtained from video-recordings of these conversations and their transcripts, and introspective data in the form of reflective journals, were collected. Zooming in on one communicative event, he was able to shed light on the learner-internal and learner-external influences on participants’ emotional moves. Mariusz Kruk, Mirosław Pawlak, Majid Elahi Shirvan, Tahereh Taherian, and Elham Yazdanmehr applied Q methodology, which uses quantitative and qualitative data to explore individuals’ viewpoints in specific contexts (Watts & Stenner, 2012), to illuminate the sources of foreign language learning boredom from the perspective of 37 learners of English in Iran. Using a Q-set of 40 statements and interviews with selected participants, they identified three factors underpinning the occurrence of this aversive emotion, reflecting, in the order of the amount of variance accounted for, teacher-induced boredom, student-induced boredom, and activity-induced boredom. The researchers argue that, since different learner prototypes experience boredom in distinct ways, teachers should be prepared to vary the strategies that they use to prevent and manage this emotion in their classrooms. In the third paper, Scott Aubrey shifts the focus to the concept of cognitive-affective engagement. His study investigated differences in engagement, operationalized in terms of focus and interest, as well as its dynamics in two computer-mediated writing tasks performed by eight pairs of students in Hong Kong, one in text-chat mode and one in video-mode. Using self-ratings of interest and focus made at three-minute intervals, and stimulated recall interviews, he found significantly higher engagement in the video-chat, which he accounted for in terms

of immediacy of processing multimodal information, triggering higher levels of attention and interest. He also identified distinct patterns in the changes of engagement, attributing them to learner, task design, task process, and task condition factors. Subsequently, Ali Derakhshan, Zohreh R. Eslami, Samantha Curle and Kiyana Zhaleh present the findings of a study that examined the predictive role of teacher immediacy (i.e., psychological and physical proximity) and stroke behaviors (i.e., actions taken to appreciate another person's worth and presence) in the occurrence of academic burnout in the case of 631 university students in Iran. Using confirmatory factor analysis, correlational analyses, and structural equation modeling, they found that teacher immediacy and stroke subscales were negatively related to student burnout and that the two constructs and their subcomponents constituted important predictors of this negative phenomenon. These findings lead to the conclusion that effective communication in the classroom, based on positive teacher-student interactions and good rapport, plays a key role in L2 instruction. Finally, Mehmet Altay, Samantha Curle, Dogan Yuksel, and Adem Soruç report an investigation which examined the impact of general English proficiency and academic success in courses taught in Turkish on achievement in English medium instruction. The data collected from 716 students were analyzed at the macro (i.e., academic division), meso (i.e., academic department), and micro (i.e., academic program) levels. Regression analyses yielded evidence of subtle differences at each of these levels but, on the whole, English language proficiency was consistently a stronger predictor of EMI success in the case of social science rather than mathematical, physical and life sciences students. Given the innovative nature of all the studies, either in terms of their focus or methodology, I am confident that they will provide an impulse for more empirical inquiry in their areas, thus helping us better understand the intricacies of second language learning and teaching in different contexts.

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