

EMOTIONS AND LANGUAGE CHOICE IN ARABIC-ENGLISH CODE SWITCHING AMONG JORDANIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Marwan Mohammad Al-Thunabat & Manvender Kaur Sarjit Singh

School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy
College of Arts and Sciences
Universiti Utara Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the contribution of emotions for language choice in Arabic-English code switching among Jordanian university students. This study discusses whether emotions can trigger switching between two languages such as Arabic and English. Facebook is chosen the context of the study where Jordanian university students highly use Arabic-English code switching. The study problematizes the idea through appearing contradictory studies. Hence, the study provides literature with practical explanation for the impact of emotions on language choice and code switching. Then, for data collection, a focus group is conducted among 10 participants. These participants are chosen relying on purposive method of sampling as Jordanian university students who highly use Arabic-English code switching in their Facebook communication. After data analysis using INTENCHECK, the results showed there are no relationships between language choice and code switching on one hand, and emotions on the other hand. Finally, the researcher recommends explaining code switching from other factors such as phonological patterns.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study investigates emotions of first language (L1) and second language (L2) in code switching context. The study distinguishes between Arabic and English words in code switching emotionally. Bilinguals' Emotion is an issue in code switching. Various studies discussed the difference between L1 and L2 emotion words. These studies differed to determine which language is more emotional (Caldwell-Harris, 2015). The difference between emotion words in first and second/foreign language is still argumentative. Ponari et al., (2015) stated, results to measure the emotionality of first and second language are not consistent. Thus, this study investigates the effect of emotion in language choice. Particularly, Heredia and Altarriba (2001) and Wei (2002) argued that emotions could motivate code switching where bilinguals use a language over another. Also, emotions were used to discuss the bilingual lexicon and cognitive mechanism which are still problematic (Catalán and Dewaele, 2017).

Discussing bilinguals' emotions is an important step to investigate code switching. Bilinguals' emotions through code switching discourse were the issue in many previous research works. However, these studies differed in their results regarding bilinguals' emotions. This study provides literature with an explanation regarding the difference between first and foreign language emotions. The study shows which language is more emotional if the difference occurs. Also, determining the emotions among bilingual languages assists literature to define the bilingual cognitive mechanism and the nature of bilingual lexicon (Catalan and Dewaele, 2017).

The study takes place in Jordan where Facebook communication is a part of their daily routines. Coincidentally, Jordanian people have a positive attitude toward English language in their communication (Drbseh, 2013). Therefore, people use to switch between Arabic and English in Facebook communication. Purposively, the study focuses on a group of Jordanian university students to be under the investigation. Furthermore, these samples have not been under

psycholinguistic study to justify their use to Arabic-English code switching. Thus, the study focuses on Arabic-English code switching among Jordanian university students. These students are considered as highly use this type of speech.

2. LANGUAGE AND EMOTION

There is a strong relationship between emotion and language. Various studies have discussed the relationship between emotion and language. Thus, language is considered a tool to translate emotions into words. The relationship between language and emotion was discussed mainly by psychology, linguistics, and neuroscience (Lindquist et al., 2016). The relationship between language and emotions depends on word choice which represent a target emotion. According to Marian and Kaushanskaya (2008), words are represented differently through the cognitive process in the lexicon.

Emotions of bilinguals using two languages are discussed previously. Ozanska-Panikwia (2012) stated, emotions which associated with foreign language have been in many studies, such as Dewaele (2006, 2009, 2010, 2011), Pavlenko (2004, 2005, 2006, 2011), Wierzbicka (1999, 2004, 2009), and Wilson (2008). According to Ozanska-Panikwia (2004, P: 87), “often, the very reason why a bilingual speaker shifts from one language to another is that the meaning they want to express belongs to the other language” (Wierzbicka, 2004, P. 102). Therefore, emotions which represent meaning relate to switching between languages.

Ozanska-Panikwia (2004) considered the reason of code switching depends on emotions. People lead to use their first language for emotions rather than their second language. Also, strong emotions can motivate more CS (Ozanska-Panikwia, 2004). Basnight-Brown and Altarriba (2007) argued that emotions could activate CS where bilinguals like to use a language over another for an emotion.

Many studies discussed how foreign language processes were weaker than first language (Caldwell-Harris, 2015). These studies found a difference between emotion words in first and second/Foreign language. They justified the difference referring to the weakness of second language acquisition (Ponari et al., 2015). Most studies argued that first language is more efficient than second language in using emotion words (Ponari et al., 2015).

The difference between emotion and non-emotion words was not the only issue (Marian and Kaushanskaya, 2008). There was a difference even between emotional words themselves. Marian and Kaushanskaya (2008) found emotion-laden words are more frequently used in first language than second language. On the other hand, according to Bond and Lai (as cited in Marian and Kaushanskaya, 2008), emotion words have more chance to occur in second language than in first language. Also, Wierzbicka (2004) stated, not only bilinguals use different languages to express emotions, but even words within the same language.

Different emotions occur in the same lexicon for monolinguals, but separated lexica for bilinguals. Previous theories considered bilinguals have two lexica. This idea was supported by the difference between first and second language emotions. Accordingly, a bilingual's speaking is affected by emotions to make lexicon choice, whereas monolinguals make style choice within one lexicon (Wierzbicka, 2004).

Positive and negative emotion words had not been excluded from the discussion of language and emotions. Some studies discussed negative and positive emotions in language use. Studies such as

Ponari et al. (2015) explored negative and positive emotion words as processed differently in the brain. Also, MacIntyre and Vincze (2017) discussed the important role of emotions to acquire second language. He considered negative emotion words as less efficient than positive emotion words.

Summing up, it appears that code switching is an interesting phenomenon to be discussed through emotions. This type of discussion enables testing theories and exploring language boundaries in order to investigate code switching triggers. Wierzbicka (2004) mentioned, the discussion can be interesting and inspiring through investigating different emotions in code switching use.

3. PREVIOUS STUDIES RELATING EMOTIONS TO CODE SWITCHING

The topic of emotions in terms of bilinguals' language has been the issue for many studies. Studies discussed a difference in using emotions between bilinguals' two languages, such as Pavlenko (2008). Studies found language choice depended on emotions. Regarding these studies, there were a strong relationship between emotions and bilinguals' languages. They realized this relationship through the difference between first and second language use for emotions. Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012) proved that the use of emotion vocabulary in L2 is weaker because of variables, such as language cultures, language proficiency, gender, and context interaction. On the other hand, Iacozza, Costa, and Duñabeitia (2017) considered different emotions refer to the difference between acquiring foreign language and first language. Acquiring foreign language happens in an academic situation which results neutral emotions.

Previous studies proved the relationship between emotions and language. They considered the relationship is stronger in first language than in second language. Baumeister, Foroni, Conrad, Rumiati, and Winkielman (2017) found that emotional memory is more effective in first language than second language. Most of studies argued that the body language like facial expressions appeared more while speaking first language and disappear while second language production (see Baumeister et al., 2017). Mergen and Kuruoglu (2017) adopted the main argument where different systems govern emotions. Therefore, it appeared that first language is more emotional than second language (Pavlenko, 2004, 2012). Several studies agreed about the difference between first and second language emotions (Brase and Mani, 2017). Also, according to Colbeck and Bowers (2012), emotion words are difficult to appear in second language.

Chen, P., Lin, Chen, B., Lu, and Guo (2015) investigated emotions among Chinese-English bilinguals. The results indicated emotion words of first language were faster and more automatic than their counterparts in second language. Also, Fan (2018) in his study among Chinese-English bilinguals, showed second language was weaker in using emotion words. Antonela and Sanja (2017) argued about bilinguals' languages regarding their use for emotions. It explained the cognitive process of bilingualism, too. The analysis was done qualitatively with an open-ended questionnaire. It revealed that both languages were used for emotions, but there was a dominant language over another. Additionally, Pavlenko (2005) discussed a framework to express using emotions requires a language over another. Most of analysis showed first language as more emotional, but emotions of anger were mostly used by the second language.

Pavlenko (2008) discussed emotions of bilinguals through code switching. The study clarified the model of bilingual lexicon. It investigated the structure of bilingual lexicon through separate emotions; especially between abstract and concrete words. Also, the study was done to discuss the difference between concept lexicon of bilinguals and monolinguals. Then, it argued that emotions

affect the bilingual lexicon. The study discussed emotions motivate code switching and bilingual language choice, too. The study concluded that emotion words among bilinguals should be discussed by future models of language choice. Thus, code switching, and language choice should be discussed depending on emotions. It was found a difference between the two languages of code switching emotionally, where the first language had stronger relationship with emotions.

The difference between first and second language in terms of emotions was the argument among previous studies. Some studies rejected differences between bilinguals' emotions. Ponari et al., (2015) conducted a study to discuss negative, positive, and neutral words of bilinguals. According to the study, word decision method was used to collect data. The findings reflected no difference between these types of words among bilinguals. Mergen and Kuruoglu (2017) stated, many studies like Harris (2004), and Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown (2007) found the relationship between emotion and bilinguals as weak where no difference appeared between using emotion words in first and second language. Mergen and Kuruoglu (2017) investigated the use of emotions among Turkish and English bilinguals. It did not find any relationship between bilinguals' languages and emotions.

Although the focus of previous studies was on emotional and neutral words, some studies discussed positive and negative words. For example, Sheikh and Titone (2016) argued about different types of words. In this study, positive emotion words were faster than neutral words, and second language used positive rather than negative emotions. Past studies determined word types of abstract and concrete words (Pavlenko, 2008), whereas current psycholinguists classify words into emotion and emotion-laden words (Altarriba and Canary, 2004). Cacioppo and Grdner (1999) explained, the difference did not occur only between emotional and non-emotional language production, but there is a difference even within emotion words themselves.

The cognitive processes differ between positive and negative emotion words. Anooshian and Hertel (1994) explained that emotion-laden words are more frequently used in first language than second language. On the other hand, according to Bond and Lai (1986), it appeared that emotional words had more chance to be in second language than first language.

Studies regarding the relationship between emotion and language use are still contradictory. There is not permanent and fixed conclusion about the difference between emotions in first and second language. Also, the vague difference includes positive and negative emotion words.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study depends on qualitative research approach discussing the impact of emotions in triggering code switching. The study discusses the frequency of emotion, non-emotion, positive, and negative words to find the impact of emotions in language choice. The population of study selected as Jordanian university students because they highly use Arabic English code switching in their Facebook communication. The data are collected using a focus group among 10 students at Jordanian university students. These students are chosen following the purposive method of sampling in order to arrive to the target samples who serve the study. The students are asked via a Facebook post to write about universities they study in. The study relies on a software specialized for emotion analysis. This software is INTENCHECK which enables to separate words into emotion, non-emotion, positive and negative words. The results and the discussion are showed deductively arguing previous literature.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study depends on a focus group to collect data. The data were collected as Arabic-English code-switching style of language. Then, the researcher translated Arabic words into English, and separated from English words. Arabic words are translated and separated to be suitable to the tool of analysis which introduce frequency analysis for emotion words. Afterward, the analysis of both Arabic and English words appeared as the following:

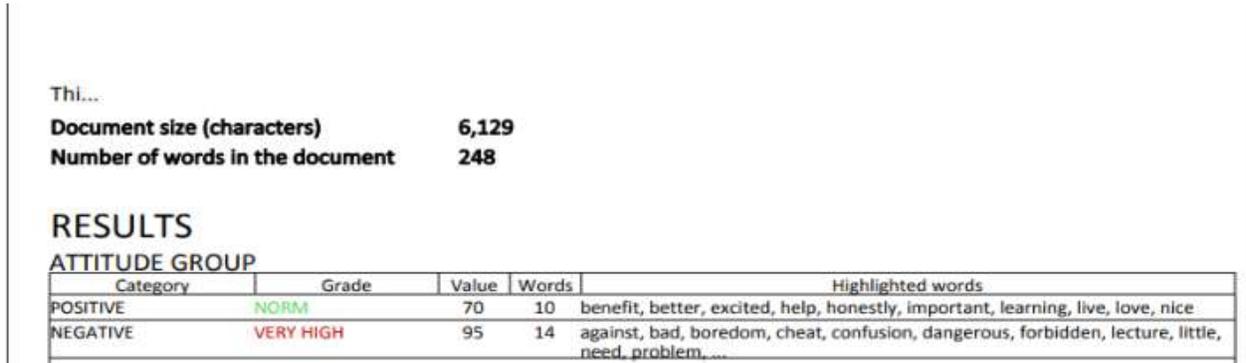


Fig. 1. Emotion analysis of Arabic word

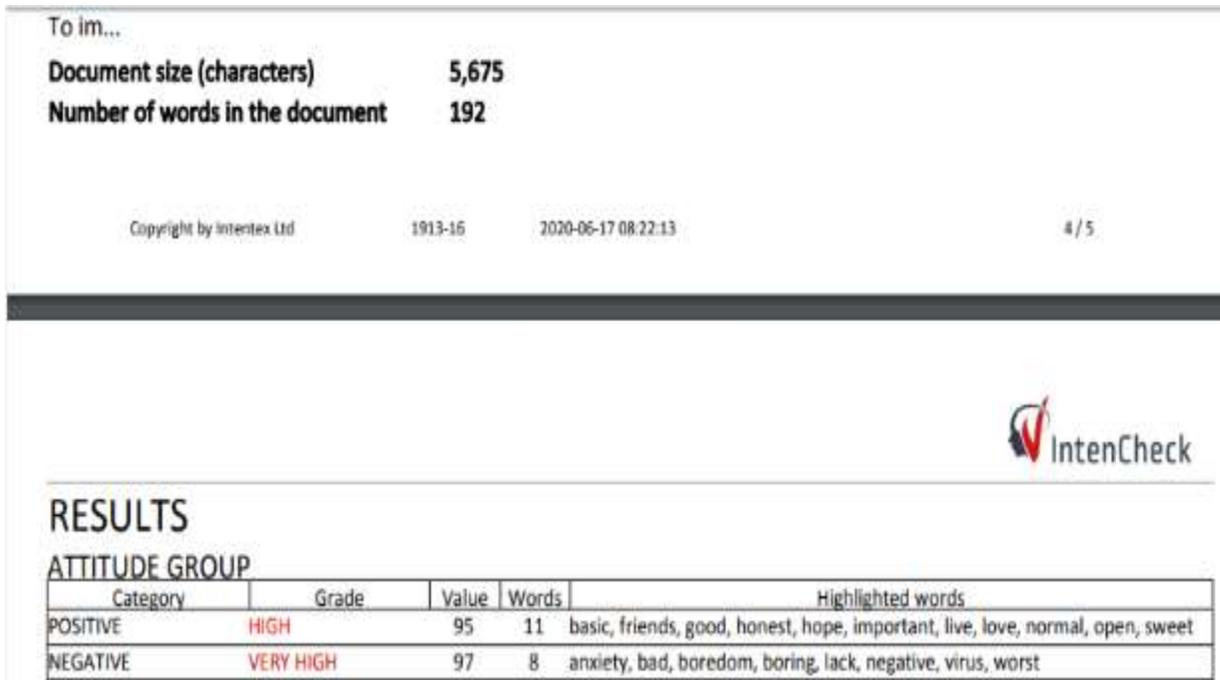


Fig. 2. Emotion analysis of English words

Most studies considered emotions detect language choice among bilinguals. These studies differentiated between emotion, non-emotion, negative, and positive words. Studies such as Baumeister et al. (2017) and Mergen and Kuruoglu (2017) considered that emotion words appeared much in first language than second language. Furthermore, Sheikh and Titone (2016) and others idealized that positive emotions detect first language more than second language in bilingual choice of language. However, this study resulted that emotions do not detect and trace language choice where first language is not more emotional than second language.

Following the two figures representing Arabic and English words in code switching among Jordanian university students, emotions do not govern language choice. Data are collected including 440 words through Arabic-English code-switching sentences. These words distinguished into 248 Arabic words and 192 English words. Then, using INTENCHECK software for emotion analysis, the results showed emotions do not control language choice. Arabic words are showed as 248 words including 24 emotion words divided into 10 positive words and 14 negative words. On the other hand, English words are 192 words including 19 emotion words separated into 11 positive words and 8 negative words. Hence, the percentage of emotions and non-emotions presented that 9.7 % of Arabic words are emotion words whereas English words include 9.8 % of emotion words. Moreover, in Arabic words, the percentage of positive words perform 4 %, but negative words are 6 %. However, English positive words are 6% while negative words are 4 %. Thus, English as a second language appears more in positive words than Arabic as a first language.

Summing up, there are no relationships between emotions and language choice among Jordanian university students in their use to Arabic-English code switching. Thus, the study supports previous literature such as Ponari et al. (2015), Mergen and Kuruoglu (2017), and Sutton, Altarriba et al. (2007), where there are weak relations between language and emotions. Also, positive emotions are not a sign for a first language as mentioned in Sheikh and Titone (2016). Finally, emotions do not motivate Arabic-English code switching among Jordanian university students.

6. CONCLUSION

The study is conducted to investigate the impact of emotions on language choice in code switching and how emotions participate in motivating code switching. This study takes Facebook context where the populations highly use code switching. Then, 10 students are asked to enter a focus group and comment on a post talking about their universities. Data are analyzed using INTENCHECK software for emotion analysis.

The results showed that there are no relationships between language choice and code switching on one hand, and emotions on the other hand. Emotions do not lead people to switch between two languages. Furthermore, there is not a language over another emotionally or positively. Therefore, the study recommends investigating other factors affecting language choice such as phonological patterns.

REFERENCES

- (1) Altarriba, J., & Canary, T. M. (2004). The Influence of Emotional Arousal on Affective Priming in Monolingual and Bilingual Speakers. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 25(2–3), 248–265.
- (2) Anoshian, L., & Hertel, P. T. (1994). Emotionality in Free Recall: A Case of Language Specificity in Bilingual Memory. *Cognition & Emotion*, 8(6), 503–514.
- (3) Antonela, B., & Sanja, Š. (2017). The Relationship between Bilingualism and Identity in Expressing Emotions and Thoughts. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 22(1), 33–54.
- (4) Basnight-Brown, D. M., & Altarriba, J. (2007). Code-switching and Code-mixing in Bilinguals: Cognitive, Development, and Empirical approaches. *Speech and Language Disorders in Bilinguals*, 69–89.
- (5) Baumeister, J. C., Foroni, J. C. B. F., Conrad, M., Rumiati, R. I., & Winkielman, P. (2017). Embodiment and Emotional Memory in First VS. Second Language. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 394–405.
- (6) Bond, M. H., & Lai, T. M. (1986). Embarrassment and Code-switching into a Second Language. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 126(2), 179–186.
- (7) Brase, J., & Mani, N. (2017). Effects of Learning Context on the Acquisition and Processing of Emotional Words in Bilinguals. *Emotion*, 17(4), 628–639.
- (8) Caldwell-Harris, C. L. (2015). Emotionality Differences between a Native and Foreign Language: Implications for Everyday Life. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 24(3), 214–219.
- (9) Catalán, R. M. J., & Dewaele, J.-M. (2017). Lexical Availability of Young Spanish EFL Learners: Emotion Words Versus Non-emotion Words. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 30(3), 283–299.
- (10) Chen, P., Lin, J., Chen, B., Lu, C., & Guo, T. (2015). Processing Emotional Words in Two Languages with One Brain: ERP and fMRI evidence from Chinese English Bilinguals. *Cortex*, 71, 34–48.
- (11) Colbeck, K., & Bowers, J. S. (2012). Blinded by taboo words in L1 but not L2. *Emotion*, 12(2), 217–222.
- (12) Dewaele, J.-M. (2006). Expressing Anger in Multiple Languages. In A. Pavlenko (Ed.), *Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (Bilingual, Vol. 56, pp. 118–151).
- (13) Dewaele, J.-M. (2009). The effect of age of acquisition on self-perceived proficiency and language choice among adult multilinguals. *EUROSLAW Yearbook*, 9(1), 245–268.
- (14) Dewaele, J.-M. (2010). *Emotions in multiple languages*. Springer.
- (15) Dewaele, J.-M. (2011). Reflections on the emotional and psychological aspects of foreign language learning and use. *Anglistik: International Journal of English Studies*, 22(1), 23–42.
- (16) Drbseh, M. M. H. (2013). The Spread of Language in Jordan. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 3(9), 1–5.
- (17) Fan, L., Xu, Q., Wang, X., Xu, F., Yang, Y., & Lu, Z. (2018). The Automatic Activation of Emotion Words Measured Using the Emotion Face-Word Stroop Task in Late Chinese-English Bilinguals. *Cognition and Emotion*, 32(2), 315–324.
- (18) Harris, C. (2004). Bilingual Speakers in the Lab: Psychophysiological Measures of Emotional Reactivity. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 25(2–3), 223–247.
- (19) Heredia, R. R., & Altarriba, J. (2001). Bilingual Language Mixing: Why Do Bilinguals

- Code-switch? *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 10(5), 164–168.
- (20) Iacozza, S., Costa, A., & Duñabeitia, J. A. (2017). What Do Your Eyes Reveal about your Foreign Language? Reading Emotional Sentences in a Native and Foreign Language. *PLoS One*, 12(10), e0186027.
- (21) Lindquist, K. A., Gendron, M., Satpute, A. B., Barrett, L., Lewis, M., & Haviland-Jones, J. (2016). Language and Emotion: Putting Words into Feelings and Feelings into Words. In *Handbook of Emotions* (pp. 579–594).
- (22) MacIntyre, P. D., & Vincze, L. (2017). Positive and Negative Emotions Underlie Motivation for L2 Learning. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 7(1), 61–88.
- (23) Marian, V., & Kaushanskaya, M. (2008). Words, Feelings, and Bilingualism: Cross-Linguistic Differences in Emotionality of Autobiographical Memories. *The Mental Lexicon*, 3(1), 72–91.
- (24) Mergen, F., & Kuruoglu, G. (2017). A Comparison of Turkish-English Bilinguals' Processing of Emotion Words in their two Languages. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 3(2), 89–98.
- (25) Ożańska-Ponikwia, K. (2004). Code-switching Practices among Immigrant Polish L2 Users of English. *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition*, 2(1), 87–102.
- (26) Ożańska-Ponikwia, K. (2012). Emotional Expression in a Foreign Language. What Factors Influence the Choice of a Non-native Language While Expressing Emotions. *Linguistica Silesiana*, 33, 203–213.
- (27) Pavlenko, A. (2004). “Stop Doing That, Ia Komu Skazala!”: Language Choice and Emotions in Parent—Child Communication. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 25(2–3), 179–203.
- (28) Pavlenko, A. (2005). *Emotions and multilingualism*. Cambridge University Press.
- (29) Pavlenko, A. (2006). *Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experience, Expression, and Representation*. Multilingual Matters.
- (30) Pavlenko, A. (2008). Emotion and Emotion-laden Words in the Bilingual Lexicon. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 11(2), 147–164.
- (31) Pavlenko, A. (2011). *Thinking and Speaking in two Languages*. Multilingual Matters.
- (32) Pavlenko, A. (2012). Affective Processing in Bilingual Speakers: Disembodied Cognition? *International Journal of Psychology*, 47(6), 405–428.
- (33) Ponari, M., Rodríguez-Cuadrado, S., Vinson, D., Fox, N., Costa, A., & Vigliocco, G. (2015). Processing Advantage for Emotional Words in Bilingual speakers. *Emotion*, 15(5), 644–652.
- (34) Sheikh, N. A., & Titone, D. (2016). The Embodiment of Emotional Words in a Second Language: An Eye-Movement Study. *Cognition and Emotion*, 30(3), 488–500.
- (35) Sutton, T. M., Altarriba, J., Gianico, J. L., & Basnight-Brown, D. M. (2007). The Automatic Access of Emotion: Emotional Stroop Effects in Spanish–English Bilingual Speakers. *Cognition and Emotion*, 21(5), 1077–1090.
- (36) Wei, L. (2002). The Bilingual Mental Lexicon and Speech Production Process. *Brain and Language*, 81(1–3), 691–707.
- (37) Wierzbicka, A. (1999). *Emotions across Languages and Cultures: Diversity and*

- Universals*. Cambridge University Press.
- (38) Wierzbicka, A. (2004). Preface: Bilingual Lives, Bilingual Experience. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 25(2-3), 94-104.
- (39) Wierzbicka, A. (2009). Language and Metalanguage: Key Issues in Emotion Research. *Emotion Review*, 1(1), 3-14.
- (40) Wilson, R. J. (2008). “*Another Language is Another Soul*”: *Individual Differences in the Presentation of Self in a Foreign Language*. Doctoral dissertation, University of London.