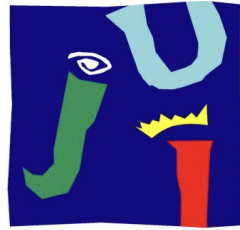


ENGLISH STUDIES DEGREE

**FINAL UNDERGRADUATE
DISSERTATION**



**UNIVERSITAT
JAUME·I**

**Multilingualism and its affective factors: Narrative
analysis of students' linguistic biography at
Universitat Jaume I**

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Abstract

The emergence of positive or negative attitudes towards language learning, also known as the affective factors, can significantly affect not only students' academic but also private lifetime. According to Henter (2013), negative attitudes and lack of motivation of learners can turn out to be the major stumbling block to language learning. However, Henter's hypothesis is limited because there are many other reasons which can affect students' learning processes such as feeling anxious towards a language due to their personal experiences. Thus, the aim of the present paper is to analyze students' life histories based on their language experiences, also known as narratives, at Universitat Jaume I in order to find out if any affective factors were present during the acquisition of a specific language. The analysis will be based on semi-structured interviews using 7 questions which will be freely answered by multilingual students between 21 and 27 years old. The study will seek to observe the affective factors which have influenced students more deeply, according to their narratives. Drawing from the semi-structured interviews and the analysis of the resulting narratives, the results revealed that most of the students have become multilinguals thanks to: 1) motivation and positive attitudes they have received from the people surrounding them; 2) positive attitudes because of their self-study watching TV series and talking with foreign friends. Nonetheless, there was one result coming out of the blue which had to do with religion affecting positively a devotee in her private lifetime.

Keywords: affective factors, multilingual students, language experiences, narratives, semi-structured interviews.

Introduction

In present days, many universities support multilingual students in order to have an influence on a group of individuals, also known as societal multilinguals sharing knowledge of two or more languages (Fortanet-Gómez, 2013). Besides, it is important to take into account that multilinguals use more than two languages according to the environment and people they are surrounded by (Blommaert, Collins, & Slembrouck, 2005). For that reason, those universities represent a multilingual environment because of the huge variety of foreign students.

However, even though there are many multilingual students at universities, there are some affective factors such as lack of motivation or anxiety which affect students' linguistic development when they are holding face-to-face communication with others, for instance. Therefore, affective factors - motivation, anxiety and attitude - could be considered as acumen and beliefs that individuals perceive about themselves, and as a result gives a positive or negative outcome according to the feedback they receive from the social environment (Sikhwari, 2007). Moreover, apart from the common negative aspects, there are positive effects such as the real interest in learning other foreign languages. It must be noted that the main point at issue is not only the way students interact with their friends at universities but also the method they have applied throughout their lives in order to turn into bilingual or multilingual students. Perhaps some students are not confident to talk in a specific language with their friends or parents just because their family does not like it, and the most affective factor in this sort of situation is the attitude students have towards particular languages due to their parents' denial to speak those languages.

Considering the ideas stated above, the aim of the present paper is to examine those affective factors which can emotionally influence students in becoming multilingual. In order to begin with the analysis of the study, first of all I will send a personal data questionnaire consisting of 9 questions. Afterwards, I will arrange a day for each participant in order to undertake the semi-structured interviews along with 7 open questions which will help me to study the affective factors. At the end, after having collected and analysed all the interviews relying on their linguistic narratives, I will observe the affective factors that have helped students to become multilinguals discussing the results and giving the final conclusions.

Theoretical Background

1. Multilingualism

According to Fortanet-Gómez (2013), multilingualism can be defined as a social and individual circumstances in which two or more languages related to the concepts of time, space and identity are used by speakers. Furthermore, multilingualism is classified by two different types (Fortanet-Gómez, 2013):

- a) *Societal multilingualism*: which has to do with a group of people sharing the knowledge of two or more languages in relation to social status, geographic bilingualism, language use and planning and cultural identity. For instance, Aronin & Singleton (2012) claimed that the small amount of knowledge of a foreign language, could be considered as an important factor which would lead to the development of a narrower explanation of societal multilingualism.
- b) *Individual multilingualism*: where the attention is focused on the analysis of languages learnt by an individual who has specific knowledge of them. In order to carry out the examination, it is important to take into account the relative competence in both languages, cognitive organisation, age and context of acquisition, social cultural status and cultural identity.

Regarding the advantages multilingualism provides, as Cenoz (2013) demonstrated, there are more possibilities to get cognitive competences in order to communicate being a multilingual speaker, especially in an educational context. Besides, there are more possibilities to achieve motivation studying other languages when the linguistic abilities are gained. Furthermore, according to Pavlenko (2007b), learners creating positive attitudes and low anxiety have more possibilities to reach high proficiency in foreign languages, while learners with high anxiety and negative attitudes would face obstacles in order to increase their learning skills.

Moreover, another important aspect related to multilingualism is the multilingual lexicon. As Cenoz, Hufeisen, & Jessner (2003) stated, when the speech production of different languages used by a multilingual speaker can potentially share more complexity and

specific features based on cross-linguistics influence. According to the cross-linguistics influence, it is a particular ability that allows multilingual speakers to activate several languages at the same time using one or more languages when they are speaking in a third or fourth language (Cenoz, Hufeisen, & Jessner, 2003).

In addition to the multilingual lexicon, Cenoz (2013) also pointed out the presence of translanguaging in multilingual identities. It is very usual to witness how multilingual students change from one language to another in a face-to-face conversation. Actually, switching from one language to another has to do with the students' attitudes towards that particular language depending on the people surrounding them. Hence, these attitudes also can be defined as one of the affective factors influencing in a positive or negative way the learning system.

2. Affective factors

As claimed by Kasatkina-Kubyshkina (2018), affective factors are a series of emotions and attitudes speakers have about themselves or the environment surrounding them. When speakers are going through a learning process learning a foreign language, these factors stand out, presenting positive or even negative effects depending on the emotions and attitudes learners have. Apart from that, as Ni (2012) declared, affective factors are not only considered to be useful in a learning process, but also in a didactic sphere helping teachers to improve their teaching methodology relying on distinct factors produced by students. According to Henter (2014), there are three different types of affective factors which are involved in learning foreign languages: motivation, anxiety and attitude.

a. Motivation

Gardner (1985, as cited in Ni, 2012) noted that motivation is a mix of effort and desire so as to achieve an auspicious attitude to learn that language. In other words, when there is a desire and a big effort in acquiring a foreign language, there will always be a motivated behaviour towards that particular language. Therefore, Ni (2012) mentioned that "motivation is the process by which goal-directed behavior is stimulated in language learning." and "it drives and directs behavior" (p.1509).

In addition to the information mentioned above, Ni (2012) proved how deep motivation affects the use of foreign language learning (FLL) and how much learners can

improve their language proficiency depending on how motivated they are towards the language.

b. Anxiety

Anxiety is known as one of the emotional feelings which blocks the learning process of a speaker. This kind of obstacle is very frequent in foreign students especially those who do not feel comfortable with their language proficiency when communicating with other students or lecturers, who are native speakers. According to Spielberger (1983, as cited in Horwitz, 2001, p. 113), ‘anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system’. Regarding universities, it can catch sight of anxious students when they are not sure if their multilingual lexicon is pronounced in a correct way or motivated students learning languages without fear of not being able to sound as a native speaker. Actually, as Horwitz (2001) explains, anxiety has been studied and examined in the field of “psychology & education” where it has been proved the psychological influence while learning a FL. Therefore, many students who achieved a high level of control in a foreign language reported to have also experienced anxiety (Horwitz, 2001).

Notwithstanding that, according to Bailey, Daley, & Onwuegbuzie (1999), anxiety can be moderated with the use of learning styles, as well. If students have some difficulties employing a foreign language for academic or daily life purposes, they use their learning styles in order to improve their skills. In fact, specific learning styles can also help students feel self-confident about their language fluency by doing tasks without overwhelming and submerging them into a state of mental block (Kasatkina-Kubyshkina, 2018).

c. Attitude

The third affective factor which plays an important role in language learning development is the attitude, also known as a mental and emotional reality that classifies an individual (Kasatkina-Kubyshkina, 2018). Moreover, as it is stated by Wood (2000, as cited in Kasatkina-Kubyshkina, 2018), attitude can be either positive or negative relying on the occasions influencing the mentality of a person relying on the people surrounding him/her. It must be noted that a positive attitude can be present in students as it allows them to look for additional resources in order to acquire foreign language skills. In fact, if students show

positive attitudes instead of negative ones, their motivation towards the languages could be increased significantly.

According to Bartram (2012), one of the reasons for negative attitudes while learning a FL by students is the lack of its usage in an enjoyable way in the classroom. Actually, as it has been declared by Bartram (2012), the lack of enjoyment of a language usually comes about because of the perceived difficulty in acquiring it. Therefore, students who understand and assimilate the information more quickly, are generally more motivated thanks to their positive attitudes. Overall, there are plenty of influential factors such as specific situations in the past, education, mass media, class relationship, residence, culture, intelligence, age, interests, and so on, which can generate positive or negative attitudes in students' FL learning (Breer & Loccke, 1967, as cited in Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011). Hence, these factors can be identified fluently thanks to the semi-interviews between the interviewer and the students.

3. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews, also known as informal or conversational interviews, can be defined as an interactive conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee, in which the former strives to draw out significant information from the latter by asking specific questions (Longhurst, 2003). Fundamentally, there are three different types of interviews: structured, unstructured and semi-structured. Dunn (2005) claimed that structured interviews are followed by a predetermined list of questions which are asked in almost the same order. In the case of the unstructured interviews, Dunn (2005) stated that there is a conversation directed by the informant instead of a list of questions. As for the last type, semi-structured interviews present flexibility in answering the question stated (Dunn, 2005). Although the interviewer may use predefined questions as a guideline template in order to orient the interview with them, semi-structured interviews give the opportunity for the participants to feel free in mentioning those events they consider important creating an open response (Longhurst, 2003). In order to create a semi-structured interview, it is important to take into account the questions, selection of participants, the location chosen and finally, the data transcription (Longhurst, 2003).

Regarding the questions, it is important to take into account their order in the interview. As Leech (2002) affirmed, it is better to ask easy questions at the beginning in order to create a less threatening environment. Apart from that, Longhurst (2003) reported that before starting with the questions if the interviewer warms up the atmosphere so as the

participant would feel comfortable answering the questions, the interview would be soft and pleasant for both of them. That is, if the participants take their time to prepare themselves, then they would be more open to the questions. As for the settings, it is more favourable that both the participant and the interviewer meet in a neutral and informal environment, with the aim of creating a comfortable surrounding (Longhurst, 2003). The semi-structured interviews can be also recorded as it will allow the interviewer to pay total attention to the participant without the pressure of taking notes (Longhurst, 2003). Afterwards, the interviewer can proceed with the data analysis by writing down the most relevant parts of the study so as to be able then analyse the narratives of each participant.

4. Analysis of narratives

As Pavlenko (2007a) stated, the analysis of narratives is the study of linguistic biographies of an individual characterised by extracts of events he or she has lived over his/her life. It can also be defined as a way of close scrutiny of learner's diaries with the purpose to look for the main factors which have affected the learning process. Moreover, Norton & Early (2011) claimed that extracts of events or short stories point out different identity positions, which means that the analysis of narratives also reflects the individuals' identities. There are two ways to analyse narratives: Functional analysis and Componential analysis (Gimenez, 2010). The Componential analysis is focused on the basic structure of a narrative, looking into the order of its sentences, whereas the Functional analysis focuses on the representational function, pointing out how the participants describe themselves, the world and their identities.

Apart from that, it is essential to bear in mind that there are three types of autobiographic narratives that can be used in researching language acquisition, and all of them stand out in their own way. As Pavlenko (2007a) established, these three classifications are:

- *Diaries and Journals*, written by learners naturally or using a guide and answering research questionnaires.
- *Linguistic biographies and autobiographies*, based on the life histories drawing attention to the languages of the participants, supporting additional information about the way these languages were acquired, and why they were used or abandoned by speakers.

- *Language memoirs*, also known as accounts of learning and teaching backgrounds, written by teachers, scholars, or professional writers providing specific descriptions of their fact-finding methods (Benson, 2014).

In addition to this, the autobiographies, also known as narrative inquiries (Benson, 2014), cover strategies of the analysis such as ‘case study, ethnography, longitudinal research, and diary study’ (p. 156), also considered as narrative research. In the present paper, the interviews are going to be analysed considering linguistic biographies or autobiographies and focusing the attention on the languages acquired, used and abandoned by students.

Methodology

1.1.Participants

In order to carry out the analysis of narratives, this research has looked for 5 undergraduate students, ages between 21 to 27 years old, from Universitat Jaume I in Castellón, Spain. All the students had their individual codes in brackets in order to be identified while the results were presented. There were 3 students from English Studies, two females of 23 and 25 years old both from Romania and one male whose age is 27 years old. The first female (S1) from Romania speaks Romanian, English and Valencian and the other female (S2) speaks the same languages along with Korean. Regarding the male (S3), he speaks Valencian, Spanish, English, Japanese and Italian because of his father’s origins. The last two participants were females of 21 years old. One of them (S4) from Spain speaks Spanish, Valencian, English and French and the other one (S5) from Morocco who not only speaks these languages, but also Arabic, Moroccan and the Syriac language.

1.2.Materials

The materials which were used in order to carry out the process of analysis were: a) personal data questionnaire which was elaborated through google forms, and b) questionnaire formed by 6 questions for the semi-structured interviews.

1.2.1 Personal data questionnaire

In order to get both quantitative and qualitative data from the students, I created a questionnaire consisting of 9 questions. This questionnaire was written in Spanish as there were some students who could not manage well in English. The questionnaire was elaborated with the purpose of obtaining personal information of each student. As for the structure, there were two different types of questions: questions related to the age, gender, their native country, where their parents come from, name and year of the degree students were enrolled in and other questions in relation to language. These questions regarding the language were elaborated in order to find out the L1 of each participant, which language they use to communicate with their family at home, the languages they speak and when and where they have learnt them. *(See Appendix 1)*

1.2.2 Questions used for the semi-structured interview

The second part of the materials used were questions elaborated for the semi-structured interviews. These inquiries were made up of 7 questions which were answered freely by students in order to get the qualitative data and carry on with analysis of narratives. These questions were created in Spanish as well as all of the participants felt more comfortable and relaxed speaking in Spanish.

Regarding the questions, they were created to understand how students have acquired those languages already known and which is their relationship with those languages. Table 1 shows the 7 questions used for the interview with the participants. According to the first question, it was asked in order to analyse how many languages they have known together with another question asking the level they have on each language mentioned before. As for the second question, I asked students how and when they have learnt those languages and after that, the next question was asked so as to obtain qualitative data about how and for which purposes they usually use each language. Moreover, I elaborated the fourth question asking which language they like the most and which one the least, receiving an open response. The fifth question was created as an activity where students had to associate each language they speak with one descriptive word: Difficult, Useful, Emotional, Academic, Enjoyment, Family, School, Work. Hence, thanks to this activity, the study of affective factors was more clear and straightforward. In relation to the last two questions, I asked students whether they noticed any kind of influence while they were learning new languages

thanks to the previous knowledge of other languages they have learnt before. Conclusively, the last question was created in order to specify if it is important for the participants to know languages. Along with this question, the study asked students if they would persist in learning new languages and improving their language skills with languages they have already studied.

Questions for the semi-structured interview	
1.	¿Cuántas lenguas conoces? ¿Qué nivel crees que tienes de cada una de ellas? <i>How many languages do you know? Which level do you think you have on each one of them?</i>
2.	¿Cómo y cuándo aprendiste estas lenguas? <i>How and when have you learnt those languages?</i>
3.	¿Cómo y para qué las utilizas? <i>How do you use those languages? For which purposes do you use them?</i>
4.	¿Qué lengua te gusta más? ¿Cuál es la que te gusta menos? ¿Por qué? <i>What language do you like most and least? Why?</i>
5.	¿Qué lengua asocias con cada una de estas palabras? Dificil, útil, emocional, académica, diversión, familia, escuela, trabajo. <i>Which language would you associate with these words? Difficult, useful, emotional, academic, enjoyment, family, school, work.</i>
6.	¿Cómo crees que ha influido el conocimiento previo de otras lenguas en el aprendizaje de lenguas nuevas? <i>How do you think your previous knowledge of other languages has influenced the acquisitions of recent languages?</i>
7.	¿Es importante para ti el conocimiento de lenguas? ¿Vas a seguir aprendiendo otras lenguas? ¿Vas a seguir profundizando en las lenguas que conoces? <i>Is it important for you to know languages? Will you continue learning other languages? Will you carry on delving into the languages you already know?</i>

Table 1. Questions used for the semi-structured interview.

1.3.Procedure

In order to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data, I created a personal data questionnaire which was sent to the students via email created with Google Forms. This questionnaire, as it is said above, was elaborated with the purpose of having some particular information of each individual before starting with the interviews. After having received their answers, I began with the second part of the study, the semi-structured interviews.

Regarding the second part, at first I got in touch with the participants in order to arrange a day for the semi-structured interviews which were accomplished by an online platform for video-chatting, known as Google Meet, due to COVID-19 pandemic. All students were interviewed individually on different occasions. Furthermore, each interview was analyzed depending on the time it has lasted as all the participants expanded on their answers in depth creating an open response. Regarding the questions, the order in which they were asked has been taken into consideration. For that reason easy questions were posed at the beginning in order to warm up the interview. All the Meet sessions were recorded and transcribed after each interview came to an end.

Results and Discussion

After having analysed the obtained data, the results of the 7 questions were presented and discussed considering the affective factors: motivation, anxiety and attitudes. In order to do so, I looked into the affective factors thanks to the students' linguistic narratives from question number two on. Furthermore, the examples of the analyses of narratives of each student are presented with students' codes, i.e. S1=student number 1.

1) Students' number and level of languages

According to Table 2, S1 and S4 master the 4 languages with a high level of fluency. Both of them are fluent in Spanish, Valencian and English even if S4 is at a level higher in those 3 languages. I suppose this happens because S4 is from Spain and she shows positive attitudes towards Valencian and Spanish due to her family who speaks only Valencian and Spanish. Moreover, S4 also has a B1 in French and C1 in English since she feels more motivated to learn new languages which can lead to many doors being opened in the future. According to S3, he knows 5 languages, but only 3 of them he can use fluently. However, even though S3 has an A2 level in Italian and Japanese, it does not discourage him as he feels motivated because of the Japanese music and Italian origins because of his Italian father. With regard to S2, who is also Romanian as S1, she gives the impression of a very positive and motivated person who wants to learn languages on her own. According to S2, she has a B2 level in Korean because of her Korean friends and her favorite Korean music. She prefers to learn language without help due to the fact that she can enjoy the learning process watching TV programs or listening to music. Lastly, the participant who amazed me the most

was S5 having amazing language skills. She knows 7 languages: a C2 in Moroccan due to her mother and sisters, a B2 in French because of her father, the Arabic language thanks to her religion, a B1 in English because of her academic issues and Syrian, Spanish, Valencian as a result of her friends and school. This participant has amazed me because she demonstrated high motivation and very positive attitudes towards languages. Even though she does not like English at all, she would keep learning because of the importance of knowing this language nowadays.

Students' code	Level of languages they speak
S1	Romanian (C2), Spanish (C1), Valencian (C1), English (B2)
S2	Spanish (C1), Romanian (C2), English (C1), Valencian (B2), Korean (B2)
S3	Spanish (C1), English (C1), Valencian (B1), Italian (A2), Japanese (A2)
S4	Spanish (C2), Valencian (C2), French (B1), English (C1)
S5	Moroccan (C2), Arabic (C2), Syrian (C1), Spanish (C1), Valencian (C1), English (B1), French (B2)

Table 2. Number of languages students speak together with their levels.

2) How and when they have learnt those languages

Next, I analysed the students' narratives regarding the way in which they learned those languages (answers to questions 2 and 4) comparing those data with the main affective factors - motivation, anxiety and positive or negative attitudes. Some students learned languages at home as a mother tongue, and others in a formal instruction setting, at school. With regard to the relationships they establish with those languages, some students related them with religion, whereas others did with leisure. This occurred in the following examples.

(1) **El Árabe como es un idioma del Corán**, lo aprendí porque cada día **me siento más identificada con el rezo sacrificado**, el rezo del viernes a Allah. (S5)

As the Arabic language is used in the Koran, I learnt it because I feel that as time goes by I am feeling more identified with the sacrificial praying, the Friday's praying to Allah.

(2) Me interesaba aprenderlo para **leer libros y cómics americanos** ya que **el contenido en Inglés es más divertido**. (S3)

I get interested in learning it (English) in order to read books and American comics as the original version in English seems to be more entertaining.

(3) no estudié a fondo con libros pero **me motivaba a buscar y traducir palabras cuando lo hablaba con mis amigos y mi ex pareja**. (S2)

I did not learn it (Korean) by heart with books but I felt motivated looking for new words when I used it with my friends and my ex boyfriend.

According to the following examples, I interpreted them as the main reason which has affected them in order to continue developing their learning skills with Arabic (S5), English (S3) and Korean (S2). According to the S5, she can be considered as a religious person because of the religious attitudes towards the Arabic language. Moreover, she had mentioned her father who had talked to her only in French. He also had motivated her in order to get the official French certificate of B2 as she had demonstrated abilities to speak French. However, I only mentioned the example of Arabic language because it seems to me that S5 is more interested in Arabic because nobody compelled her to learn that language. In relation to the S3 and S2, these students explained that they felt really motivated to study English (S3) and Korean (S2), because they felt the desire to achieve an ability in order to understand American comics in their original English version (S3) and be able to follow their friends (S2). For this reason, regarding these narratives, in order to learn a language it is noteworthy to feel motivated without having the necessity of studying a language from books and learning by heart the vocabulary. As S5, S3 and S2 demonstrated in their lives, it is more entertaining and enjoyable to study a language by ourselves and as a consequence the motivation will increase.

3) Use of the languages

In the following section, the narratives I have scrutinized (answers to question 3), have confirmed that most students felt more anxiety and showed negative attitudes towards particular languages. In the following examples I present those negative attitudes and anxious aspects seen in the narratives.

(4) El valenciano lo utilizo pero sinceramente preferiría no utilizarlo, lo veo pesado y encima me agobia utilizar los *pronoms febles*, me pongo nerviosa. (S4)

I use valencian but I would rather not use it, sincerely. I consider it annoying and it makes me feel overwhelmed when I use weak pronouns, I get frustrated.

(5) No me atrevo a hablarlo (Japonés) hasta que tenga confianza de saber que voy a pronunciar como toca. (S3)

I don't dare speak this language (Japanese) until I will be confident to know that I am pronouncing it in the correct way.

In these two examples I can clearly observe that there is frustration and anxiety towards the use of Valencian and Japanese. According to example (4), S4 has a high level of Valencian (C1) regarding the data but she does not seem to be confident because of the difficulty she demonstrates by using weak pronouns. This problem can provoke both anxiety and negative attitudes towards Valencian. I assume that sometimes people show some problems while using foreign languages even if they have a good level of them. This occurs because of the fact that usually when we speak in a non native language, we have the fear of not being able to produce the speech in a correct way even if our language skills are more sophisticated. The same problem occurs in example (5), in his case S3 has not achieved a C1 but he still has basic knowledge in order to practice his oral skills in Japanese. Moreover, I presuppose that a person who is learning a foreign language, as S3, can not feel comfortable with her/his language level when communicating with other people who have a high level of communication and that can cause a stumbling block in their linguistic growth. Furthermore, the negative attitudes can also be linked to the anxious students as they can generate negative thoughts about the use of foreign languages. In fact, there are many factors which can vary the attitude and produce anxiety. These factors can be the people they are surrounded by and how they react to the way they use the foreign language. Perhaps, if those people are very chauvinistic and they do not like how their native language is used, that can also produce a negative effect on the participants. I also observed this case in example 6.

(6) El valenciano no lo utilizo apenas, incluso si alguien me habla valenciano prefiero contestar en castellano, me siento más cómoda. (S2)

I almost do not use Valencian, even if someone is talking to me in Valencian, I prefer to answer in Castilian as I feel more comfortable.

With regard to example (6) S2 does not feel comfortable when someone speaks to her in Valencian, as she had a negative experience towards that language when she was in high

school. The problem was that her Valencian teacher was overly patriotic and he did not like foreign students. Therefore, he was always picking on her while she was doing an oral presentation or sitting an exam of Valencian. Finally, S2 started to dislike not only her teacher but unconsciously also the Valencian language. Thus, I interpret that it is highly important to take into account the people who are surrounding us when we are learning or speaking a language, otherwise we will suffer the consequences of feeling anxious by using that language.

4) Language associations

Another important aspect to discuss is the students' language associations when they use each language and which language is the favorite and abhorred one. This can be observed in the answers to question 5. As Table 3 shows, S1 has demonstrated that, for her, English can be both difficult and useful at the same time as this language can open up doors in the future for everyone. Apart from that, S1 mentioned that English is her favorite language because of the way it sounds and how helpful it is nowadays. This association can be considered as a positive attitude because even though it seems difficult to study English, she keeps going with it, putting a lot of effort in order to achieve success in her future. The same thing happens to S2 but she has a high level in English so she did not associate it as a difficult language. According to Spanish and Valencian, the S1 has associated Valencian as an academic language and language which she has been using in her school. Even though with Spanish happens the same, she considers the Spanish language as an emotional one because it is easier to express herself in Spanish than in other languages. Perhaps, this occurs because of her Spanish boyfriend and friends with whom she talks in Spanish. For this reason it is considerable to pay attention to people who are surrounding you as they can also create affective factors in other people. The same thing has happened to S4 with Valencian as she said that when she gets angry, she automatically uses Valencian in order to express her irritation. Nevertheless, despite the emotional associations with Spanish and Valencian, both S1 and S2 and S4 have chosen Valencian as the most abhorred language. This can create some misconceptions with the affective factors according to S4, however, after having analysed her narrative, I understood that she uses Valencian when she gets angry because she does not care how she is pronouncing and using the weak pronouns in those particular moments. Regarding S1 and S2, I have analysed in their narratives negative attitudes and anxiety in relation to Valencian. According to S2, she said that she did not like Valencian not

only due to her past experiences with her teacher of Valencian but also how tedious Valencian could become. In my opinion, I believe that this association of difficulty and tediousness with Valencian comes after the anxiety and negative attitude after having bad experiences in life. As for S1, she just said that after putting aside the use of Valencian, she had lost interest in it. I consider this narrative also interesting because S1 also shows negative attitudes towards Valencian, but in her case, she has done it due to the non-use.

In relation to the S3, he only mentioned Italian in the sphere of family due to his father's Italian origins. Actually, he associates Italian as an abhorred language even though it is one of his native languages. After having analysed his interview, I realized that he detested Italian due to his school times with his classmates. He was overwhelmed by his classmates asking him every single day to say something in Italian, after that he reached a point in which he started to hate this language. However, he keeps thinking that Italian would help him to look for a job as a translator. In this case, his association can be compared with motivation in relation to the work and future but he has some negative attitudes due to his bad experiences at school in the past. In relation to the S5, she has chosen Moroccan as an emotional and familiar language because of her parents and proverbs in her native language, Moroccan. According to S5, she demonstrates huge motivation and positive attitudes towards her mother tongue in view of the fact that the wise sayings are in her blood. Nevertheless, the less desired language for her is English which provokes her anxiety because of the grammar rules and the use of phrasal verbs. One of the main reasons for feeling anxiety again is the tediousness of learning a language. For this reason, I am convinced that, if she had learnt English in a different way using it in her daily life, she would feel much more comfortable and motivated.

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5
Difficult	English	Valencian	Japanese	Valencian	English
Useful	English	English	English	English	Spanish
Emotional	Spanish	Romanian	Valencian	Valencian	Moroccan
Academic	English, Spanish & Valencian	English	English & Spanish	Spanish	English
Enjoyment	Romanian & Spanish	Korean	English & Japanese	Spanish	Spanish
Family	Romanian	Romania	Spanish & Italian	Valencian	Moroccan & French
School	Spanish & Valencian	Spanish & English	Spanish & Valencian	Valencian	Spanish
Work	English	English	Japanese, English & Italian	Spanish & Valencian	Valencian

Table 3. Language association according to the students' experiences.

5) The value of knowing languages and their influences

The last aspects which I analysed was the influence of knowing languages and the importance of learning new languages and improving those languages the participants have already known. In order to examine the role of the affective factors in students' knowledge, questions 6 and 7 were considered.

First of all, according to the language influence (question 6), only one student has answered the question in the negative, the other 4 students have demonstrated a lot of motivation and positive attitude towards the influence of other languages which has helped them to carry out their linguistic skills. According to S1, the influence of Romanian has helped her to acquire Valencian because of the similarity between those two languages. For instance, in order to say "a bull with trousers has escaped", in Valencian is "Ha fugit un bou en pantalons curts" and in Romanian "A fugit un bou în pantaloni scurți". In both languages it sounds equally and for this reason, the S1 has shown positive attitudes towards not only Valencian but also the other languages she already knows or will learn in the future. Moreover, almost all of the students mentioned the same phrase while answering question 6. All the four students, without taking into consideration the S5, said that the more languages they know, the better they will be prepared for acquiring new languages. This sentence has proved that all the four students are very motivated due to the number of languages they control. However, the S5 showed negative attitudes towards her life experiences learning languages. According to S5, she considered that talking in your native language at home when you are in a foreign country, can negatively affect the learning of the foreign language. She demonstrates a negative attitude even if she can be considered as a multilingual speaker. This occurs because she has problems in order to manage all the languages she knows as a native speaker because of the mixture of those languages. I observed that in example 7.

(7) Mal porque tengo mezcla de idiomas, parezco como la campana del ayuntamiento "te suena todo pero no oyes nada". Cuando no tienes asentado un idioma, el peor error que puedes cometer es empezar otro idioma. (S5)

Bad as I have a blend of languages, I look like a bell from City Hall "it rings you a bell but no sound is heard". When you don't have a firm understanding of a language, the worst possible mistake you can make is begin with a new language.

According to question 7, I analysed some negative attitudes and anxiety according to the narratives of S1 and S2. Both of them showed negative attitudes due to the lack of interest and enthusiasm towards different languages. I could observed that in the following examples:

(8) Seguiré profundizando en todas las lenguas menos el Valenciano. No puedo utilizarlo en ningún sitio y no tengo amigos valencianos. (S2)

I will go on delving into all the languages except Valencian. I can't use it anywhere and I don't have valencian friends either.

(9) Me gustaría profundizar en todos los idiomas porque si te gusta un idioma no piensas en la dificultad, pero si no te gusta ya empiezas a echarte para atrás. (S1)

*I would rather delve into all the languages because **when you enjoy learning one language, you don't think of the level of difficulty, unless you start to develop a negative view of that language.***

According to S2, it must be considered the environment and the people with whom we usually interact and what languages we employ with them. As S2 said, she would not continue improving her Valencian language skills as she has no Valencian friends saying it as an excuse in order to withdraw the importance of that language. With this argument I can interpret that she showed negative attitudes towards Valencian during the whole interview as a result of the anxiety and negative attitudes. This occurred not only because of her personal experiences but also people who are surrounding her nowadays. Apart from that, S1 also had mentioned that she is surrounded by people who do not use valencian in their daily lives. Thus, S1 would also put Valencian aside because of her surroundings, for that reason I consider that the affective factors can positively affect in order to become multilingual when there is an influence from the people close to us. All in all, S1 also mentioned that she would continue learning new languages showing a lot of enthusiasm and motivation unless she would give in because of the displeasure of that language. For this reason, I assume that the aversion and disfavour of a language can provoke the lack of motivation and positive attitudes in most students, as well.

Conclusion

The results of the study lead to the following conclusions from the observations undertaken. Thanks to the examination of students' narratives, the present study has observed how the affective factors alter students' learning skills. First of all, all the participants have demonstrated to be very motivated to learn languages because of their future. All of them are thinking ahead pointing out the importance of knowing languages because of the plenty of opportunities they can achieve by being multilinguals. Furthermore, most students have given the impression of feeling more motivated to undertake self-study. This alternative was mentioned on different occasions depending on the languages. For that purpose, anxiety or negative attitudes appear most of the time at schools, high schools, even at universities because of the assessment awareness or even boring teaching methods. For this reason Bartram (2012) mentioned that sometimes negative attitudes appear in classrooms when students feel exhausted and bored. Therefore, in order to get rid of negative factors, it is better to initiate a self-study where students can use more entertaining learning methods without feeling anxious by lecturers. However, the matter of religion also takes part in affective factors, particularly in language attitudes. It is important to take into account if the person is a follower or not because he/she can be influenced emotionally while learning a language. In addition, multilingual students can also feel motivated or anxious depending on the people who are surrounding them. This may happen due to the fact of how students get mentally persuaded by outsiders (Wood, 2000, as cited in Kasatkina-Kubyshkina, 2018).

As in the case of all experimental studies, the present work has some limitations and leads to suggestions for future studies. One of the limitations that make me feel moderated is the number of participants for the present study. This study has interviewed only 5 students from different degrees and ages, otherwise the students' results would have been too extensive. The second limitation has to do with the questions of the questionnaire for the semi-structured interviews. The present study only posed 7 questions in order to collect the minimum necessary information for the examination of the affective factors. The third limitation concerns the affective factors as the topic in order to analyse the student's narratives. In this study, the students' answers were analysed relying only on the affective factors without taking into account other individual differences. Finally, the last fourth limitation refers to the semi-structured interviews. This study has interviewed the participants

using the semi-structured interviews with the aim of obtaining an open response from the participants.

Nonetheless, the present paper could investigate more deeply multilingual students taking into account the learning styles together with the affective factors. Furthermore, the questionnaire could be more accurate in order to obtain more precise data. In addition, if the number of students had been triplicated, the results would have been more elaborated.

In closing, according to the linguistic biographies, the main affective factors: motivation, anxiety and attitudes have an effect on multilingual students during their whole life. Therefore, when we talk about multilingual students, it is significant to look upon the language acquisition from another perspective as it goes beyond the academic education.

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Appendix

Appendix 1:

Cuestionario para la investigación del trabajo de fin de grado.

Datos personales de los estudiantes de la Universitat Jaume I.

* Obligatòria

1. ¿Qué edad tienes? *

2. Sexo *

Maqueu només un oval.

Mujer

Hombre

Personalizado

3. ¿Qué carrera y año estás cursando? *

4. ¿Dónde naciste? *

5. ¿De dónde son tus padres? *

6. ¿Cuál es tu lengua materna? *

7. ¿Qué lengua hablas con tu familia? *

8. ¿Qué otras lenguas hablas? *

9. ¿Cuándo y dónde las aprendiste? *
