

SUMMARY

For a few decades the literature in the field of SLA overwhelmingly concentrated on negative emotions, with positive emotions not being as widely studied. This has changed with the advent of positive psychology (PP), the tenets of which have been applied by the researchers in the field of SLA. The positive emotion of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) was conceptualized and operationalized in 2014 by Dewaele and MacIntyre, and since that moment it has been regarded as a response to the widely examined concept of foreign language anxiety (FLA).

The present study aimed to address the scarcity of research on the relationship between the two emotions in the Polish context. Thus, the objective of the study was to examine the relationship between FLE and FLA among 356 Polish secondary grammar school students learning English as a FL. The results revealed that the students experiencing a high level of FLA report a lower level of FLE and actual and self-perceived skills in English. These findings suggest that the relationship between FLE, FLA and proficiency in a FL seems to be linear, with more proficient learners experiencing a higher level of FLE and a lower level of FLA than their less proficient peers. Nevertheless, further analyses suggest that some FL learners may experience a high level of FLE despite reporting low actual and self-perceived skills in English, while others experience a high level of FLA despite declaring a very good command in English. Additionally, the results revealed that while the level of FLA remains unwavering over the course of secondary education, the level of FLE is sadly decreasing, which might be attributed to the specificity of Polish education, the stress associated with the Matura (the Polish secondary school exit) exam, and boredom, among others. Eventually, it was shown that it is most common for FL students to experience a high level of one emotion and a low level of the other. Yet, it is not impossible that some FL learners experience low or high levels of both emotions. Therefore, the balance between negative emotions and positive emotions in the FL classroom seems to be more crucial than the presence or the absence of either enjoyment or anxiety. Taking into account the fact that low anxiety appears to play a key role in the process of language learning and teaching, both FL teachers and researchers in the field of SLA should take measures to reduce learners' negative emotions and stimulate positive emotions in the FL classroom.

Key words: foreign language enjoyment, foreign language anxiety, SLA, positive emotions, negative emotions