Assessing the Effect of Emotioncy Model on Non-Persian Students’ Attitude

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Teaching Persian language to non-Persian speakers has various purposes such as making them familiar with the Iranian culture and customs, establishing more interpersonal interactions, enhancing business and professional communication, and finally increasing mutual understanding between two cultures. Persian language classes and instructors play a fundamental role in satisfying the mentioned goals through modifying the learners’ attitudes. Attitude, as a set of beliefs, emotions, and behavioral intentions toward an object, a person, or an event, significantly influences the language learners’ overall success or failure. One of the factors influencing students’ attitudes is involving their senses and emotions. A pertinent concept which juxtaposes senses and their resultant emotions is emotioncy. Drawing upon the emotioncy model, in this study, the researchers made an attempt to teach Persian language cultural issues and, thereafter investigate the effect of this model on the attitudes of the Persian learners and their learning outcome.

The concept of emotioncy was first introduced by Pishghadam, Tabatabaeyan, and Navari (2013). This model is based on the psychological findings of the developmental individual-differences relationship-based (DIR) model, and it assumes that emotions are the foundation of evolution and learning (Greenspan & Weider, 1997). According to the emotioncy model of Pishghadam (2015), when a language learner has never heard of a subject, s/he has no emotion for it (null emotioncy). When s/he hears about the subject, the degree of emotioncy of that word

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moves from the null to the auditory level, and if he sees or even touches that item, then the emotioncy can be raised from the auditory level to the visual and kinesthetic levels, respectively. If his experiences of this subject increase, in the next steps, the inner emotioncy of the word is created, and the learner can achieve an arch emotioncy by doing research. At this stage, an accurate understanding of the subject will be formed which will lead to profound learning.

2. Methodology

In the present study, the results of interviews with 60 non-Persian language learners from 16 countries (including India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Turkey, Egypt, Madagascar, Burundi, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Libya, Tajikistan, Lebanon, Iraq, Guinea-Bissau, Syria, and Indonesia) who were studying at Al-Mostafa International University were analyzed. To get the most information and a deep understanding of the participants' attitude, the learners were not selected randomly, but they were all purposefully selected from a group with similar relative knowledge of Persian. All participants in the study were non-Persian and female. They were between 17 and 30 years old (M= 23.5). The level of fluency in the Persian language was the same for all of them (Book Seven). All were studying at Al-Mostafa International University, and on average, one year had passed from their presence in Iran. Semi-structured interviews were used as for the qualitative phase. Based on the cultural topic taught in each class, with "Why" and "How" questions (Dornyei, 2007) students were asked to express their feelings about the topic and then to provide more explanations about their answers in two minutes. Therefore, according to the purpose of the study, their positive or negative attitudes toward the subject taught in the class were determined, and the change in their attitudes toward learning was evaluated. Four different cultural issues which were selected are as follows: "Yazd badgir" (Yazd windproof), "Ajil-e-moshgelgosha" (problem-solving nuts), "Mirzaqasemi" (a kind of Iranian food), "Zal and Simorgh's Story". Learners did not have any information about these subjects being completely related to the Iranian's culture and customs. The subjects were taught in four classes (each class included 15 learners), by the same lecturer according to the different levels of the emotioncy model (Pishghadam, 2015) and in 6 sessions (each session lasted 50 minutes including 20 minutes of teaching and 30 minutes of interviewing (two minutes per participant)). Subsequent to teaching each subject, an interview was conducted to determine the participants' attitudes and emotions towards learning based on the emotioncy model.

3. Discussion

The results of the answers related to the auditory session showed that the learners did not have an effective relationship with the subject during this session and did not have a very positive attitude toward the subjects taught. According to the received responses, the observed results at the visual stage improved. The change in the attitude of the learners from negative to positive was also evident in the kinesthetic sessions. At this stage, since there was a more active engagement of the language
learner with the subject, we also monitored a deeper attitude toward the subject, and the language learners gave convincing reasons for their responses and emotional experiences. In the fifth session (inner), having brought the necessary and relevant subjects into the class, the instructor asked the learners to simulate the subject taught. In the final session (Arch), the learners were asked to explore the resources available (cyberspace, library, etc.) about the topics taught during the fifth session (inner session).

4. Conclusion
In the emotioncy model proposed by Pishghadam (2015), levels of avolvement, exvolvement (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic), and involvement (inner and arch) are considered separately based on the subjects’ emotional experiences. That is, to teach a subject and gradually increase the level of emotion of an individual, six sessions are required to allow the learner to reach the desired level. However, according to the model proposed in this study, due to the time constraints, the small number of teaching sessions for each book, and the skills mentioned therein, it was not necessary to hold separate sessions at the exvolvement stage in teaching Persian to non-Persian speakers. Because the results of the study showed that learners can reach the desired level leading to positive attitudes by participating in involvement (inner and arch) sessions. Therefore, auditory, visual, and kinesthetic sessions could be integrated into the inner session simultaneously, and during the inner session, the tools used for all auditory, visual, and kinesthetic sessions were also used. According to the mentioned model, a teacher can engage students' emotions when teaching different subjects of the Persian language, especially cultural subjects. The teacher can integrate all aforementioned sessions while stimulating visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, etc. senses. so that learners learn more effectively. In addition, recommended strategies can be useful for Persian language instructors, textbook authors, and holders of Persian language workshops to provide them with appropriate materials for teaching.

**Keywords:** Emotioncy, Attitude, Non-Persian learners, Sense, Emotion

**References (in Persian)**

**References (in English)**