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This book is dedicated to Earl Stevick. For many foreign and second language professionals, much of our information about language teaching has come to us from his work. But, more importantly, our attitude towards language teaching, our relationship with the people in our classrooms and our vision of what we would like to achieve as language teachers have all been influenced by his thinking. And I stress the word *thinking* – deep, experience-based thinking – because in Earl Stevick’s writing what predominates is not the little statistic, although it may also be there to inform us, but the big idea to inspire us. In his dialogue with the reader, we find ourselves in the presence of a philosopher and a master storyteller, as well as a great language teacher and teacher trainer. For many of us Earl Stevick’s work has been not only a significant factor in the origin of our interest in the affective aspects of language learning and teaching but also a continuing source of wisdom for our minds and our hearts as we strive to develop our students’ second language abilities and their potential as human beings. It has touched and enriched our lives.

Jane Arnold, Seville, 1999

## Contents

	Contributors	page ix
	Acknowledgements	x
	Preface	xi
<b>Part A</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>I</b>
1	A map of the terrain <i>Jane Arnold and H. Douglas Brown</i>	I
<b>Part B</b>	<b>Exploring the learner's space</b>	<b>25</b>
2	A neurobiological perspective on affect and methodology in second language learning <i>John H. Schumann</i>	28
3	Affect in learning and memory: from alchemy to chemistry <i>Earl W. Stevick</i>	43
4	Anxiety and the language learner: new insights <i>Rebecca L. Oxford</i>	58
5	Ego boundaries and tolerance of ambiguity in second language learning <i>Madeline Ehrman</i>	68
6	Self-esteem in the classroom or the metamorphosis of butterflies <i>Verónica de Andrés</i>	87
	Part B: Questions and tasks	103
<b>Part C</b>	<b>Exploring the teacher's space</b>	<b>105</b>
7	Learning to think, feel and teach reflectively <i>Claire Stanley</i>	109
		vii

## Contents

8	Facilitation in language teaching <i>Adrian Underhill</i>	125
9	Affect and the role of teachers in the development of learner autonomy <i>Naoko Aoki</i>	142
10	The role of group dynamics in foreign language learning and teaching <i>Zoltán Dörnyei and Angi Malderez</i>	155
	Part C: Questions and tasks	170
<b>Part D</b>	<b>Exploring the interactional space</b>	<b>173</b>
11	Enhancing personal development: humanistic activities at work <i>Gertrude Moskowitz</i>	177
12	The humanistic exercise <i>Mario Rinvolucri</i>	194
13	Learning by heart: a Lozanov perspective <i>Grethe Hooper Hansen</i>	211
14	Cooperative language learning and affective factors <i>JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall</i>	226
15	Creating a learning culture to which students want to belong: the application of Neuro-Linguistic Programming to language teaching <i>Herbert Puchta</i>	246
16	Visualization: language learning with the mind's eye <i>Jane Arnold</i>	260
17	Authentic assessment in affective foreign language education <i>Viljo Kohonen</i>	279
	Part D: Questions and tasks	295
<b>Part E</b>	<b>Epilogue</b>	<b>297</b>
18	Affect in the classroom: problems, politics and pragmatics <i>Joy Reid</i>	297
	References	307
	Subject index	334
	Author index	341

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‘Why There Can Be No Best Method for Teaching a Second Language’, pp. 38–41 from *The Clarion, Magazine of The European Second Language Association*; Figure 1, p. 49 from *Working with Teaching Methods: What’s at Stake?* by Earl Stevick © Heinle & Heinle; ‘I like you, you’re different’, ‘Fortune cookies’, ‘How strong I am’, pp. 190–1, from *Caring and Sharing in the Foreign Language Class: A Sourcebook on Humanistic Techniques* by Gertrude Moskowitz © 1978 Heinle & Heinle; Figure 1, p. 252 from *Visionary Leadership Skills* by R. Dilts © Meta Publications, P.O. Box 1910, Capitola, CA 95010, USA.

## Preface

The term ‘feeling’ is a synonym for emotion, although with a broader range. In the older psychological literature the term ‘affect’ was used. It is still used to imply an even wider range of phenomena that have anything to do with emotions, moods, dispositions, and preferences.  
(Oatley and Jenkins 1996:124)

As an English teacher in Singapore, Bob is concerned with creating materials that are of relevance to his students’ lives in order to increase the motivational effectiveness of his classes and to develop his learners’ potential on both linguistic and personal levels. Janice, a textbook writer and teacher in the UK, feels it is important to communicate positive messages in the classroom to enhance students’ self-esteem since their beliefs about their abilities strongly influence their performance. In his intermediate-level English classes in Argentina, Vicente considers very carefully his treatment of errors in order to maintain a relaxed atmosphere in which his students are not afraid to speak. Meg, a researcher in the USA, has found that personality factors are closely related to how language learners’ feelings affect their learning behaviours. As she trains ESL teachers in Australia, Donna encourages them to expand their awareness of the person behind whatever method they use in the classroom. Working in very different contexts, all of these educators are involved with affect in language learning.

When dealing with a topic as varied as the affective aspects of second and foreign language learning, we can recall the well-known fable of the blind men who come across an elephant. One touches a leg and says, ‘Ah, ha. An elephant is like a column’. Another touches the trunk and says, ‘No. An elephant is like a thick rope’. A third, touching a large, rough ear, says, ‘Oh, that can’t be. An elephant is like a carpet’. Each, touching only one part, conceived of the whole in a very different way. None was entirely wrong in his perception, and yet none really understood what an elephant was.

Likewise, the affective domain in language learning can be ap-

## *Preface*

proached from several quite different but not mutually exclusive perspectives, such as the mainly theoretical, the empirical, the humanistic or the experiential. This book aims to bring together some of the many varied facets of the whole picture for the reader. Both novice and experienced second and foreign language teaching professionals can find much in *Affect in Language Learning* to guide their classroom practice. Similarly, those involved in the planning of language courses, materials developers and students of applied linguistics can benefit from a greater knowledge of the role of affect in language learning.

Specialists in language teaching often do not agree about the relative importance of theory and practice. Writing of educators in general, Howard Gardner, Harvard professor and creator of the influential theory of multiple intelligences, notes that ‘theorists wish that their methods could be instantly transferred to the untidy and unpredictable classroom, while practitioners search for the generative power of an appropriate theoretical base for their techniques’ (Gardner 1993:120). In this book the place of both theory and practice is recognized since neither should be ignored when dealing with language learning. Thus, a basic theoretical introduction to each topic is generally provided, and then some practical applications for the foreign and second language classroom are included.

The authors in this volume are not proposing that attention to affect will provide the solution to all learning problems or that we can now be less concerned with the cognitive aspects of the learning process, but rather that it can be very beneficial for language teachers to choose to focus at times on affective questions. Countering allegations that these matters are not part of teachers’ obligations, Underhill (1989:252) points out that ‘teachers who claim it is not their job to take these phenomena into account may miss out on some of the most essential ingredients in the management of successful learning’. Indeed, from one point of view we are abdicating our responsibility if we do not address these questions. Bruner (1996) reminds us that if our educational institutions do not deal with values and affective issues, such as self-esteem, which are the basis for healthy value systems, learners will turn to a myriad of ‘anti-schools’ that will certainly provide them with models – though very probably not the most socially desirable ones.

Affective language learning fits within what appears to be an emerging paradigm that stretches far beyond language teaching. There is evidence from a wide variety of fields which indicates that attention to affect-related concepts is playing a very important role in the solution to many types of problems and in the attainment of a more fulfilling way of life. British law enforcement officers are making use of contributions from Neuro-Linguistic Programming to be more ‘affectively’ sensitive.

*Preface*

Olympic ski teams and other sports participants incorporate visualization techniques as a regular part of their training to put themselves into optimal affective states. Stress management programmes are blossoming in business centres all over the world. British architect Norman Foster is known for designing buildings which, while using the most advanced technology, are especially adapted to transmit feelings of tranquillity and well-being to the people who will use them. Violinist Yehudi Menuhin, working with MUS-E International, a multicultural educational project, has pointed out that education today is directed towards training learners' thinking rather than their emotions. He stresses that there is a need to create a voice to give a vehicle for emotion and calls for a change in the present educational system (Fancelli and Vidal-Folch 1997). Fritjof Capra (1982) has documented further signs of this paradigm shift in areas such as physics, medicine, psychology and economics.

In very diverse areas of experience there is a growing concern for humanistic approaches and for the affective side of life. Perhaps the common ground upon which all rest – both in language learning and the greater whole of society – is a desire to contribute to the growth of human potential.

In this book *diversity* is indeed a key word. Diversity in the areas of learning experience covered. Diversity in the backgrounds of the contributors – geographic diversity (from Europe to North and South America and Asia) and professional diversity with contributors involved in foreign or second language research, teaching and teacher training in state and private educational facilities, on primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Yet within this variety there is a communality among the authors, a sense of unity in the commitment to a type of teaching that makes the book in a very real sense the product of a gathering of friends.

After the first chapter, in which Jane Arnold and H. Douglas Brown present an overview of affective factors related to language learning, our incursions into the domain of affect are within three main spaces. The first deals with aspects located within the learner, such as memory or personality traits, the second is mainly in the realm of the teacher, and the third brings us to the interactional space, where the resources at our disposal are put to use. However, these 'spaces' are, of course, not elements which can be topographically circumscribed. The chapters within them are rather like dunes in the desert which shift positions around a few permanent oases that serve as orientation. In the concluding chapter, Joy Reid takes a brief look at several general issues, including learning styles, an area that has been touched on in several parts of this volume, and points to directions for future research.

## *Preface*

After each of the three main parts there is a list of questions and tasks. This is offered as a way to bring the reader into dialogue with the authors, either through individual reading or in classroom group discussion. Hopefully, additional questions will be raised and will lead researchers to illuminate new areas of affective language learning.

With whatever I have done to prepare *Affect in Language Learning* – thinking, planning, writing, editing, revising – work and pleasure have, at every moment, been indistinguishable, indeed a perfect example of flow. At different stages in the maturation of the volume, I have been fortunate to have received a good deal of assistance. In the Mesón del Moro in Seville, in what were once Moorish baths, working lunches, first with Mario Rinvolucrí and later with Doug Brown, provided the occasion to reflect on the direction the volume was to take and to clarify aspects of its development. Grethe Hooper Hansen injected enthusiasm and vision into the project when she was in Seville in 1995 for a conference on Humanistic Language Teaching. At the same conference I had the undeniable pleasure of spending many hours throughout the week conversing with Earl Stevick about the book and language teaching and learning in general. All four have provided invaluable continued support. Both at the 1997 TESOL Convention in Orlando and later, Madeline Ehrman offered many useful suggestions. My colleagues in the English Language Department at the University of Seville have also helped in several ways; a special thanks to Mary O’Sullivan. My gratitude also goes to Tim Murphey and Leo van Lier for their helpful ideas and to Tammi Santana and Jo Bruton for proofreading. Financial support for aspects of the preparation of the book was made available by the Junta de Andalucía.

Alison Sharpe at Cambridge University Press provided encouragement from the very beginning. Had it not been for that, this book might have been just another good idea which never got off the ground. Mickey Bonin’s editorial assistance in the later stages and comments on the manuscript from the reviewers were most appreciated.

Facing the beginning of the third millennium, all evidence points to the fallacy of Pangloss’ advice to Candide; this certainly does not seem to be the best of all possible worlds. Thus, change is advisable, though not easy. Margaret Mead said, ‘Small groups of thoughtful concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has’.

It is my hope that this book, written by a number of thoughtful, concerned authors, may contribute to the process of change by reaching out to a special group of people – the worldwide language teaching community.