

Different Intensity of Emotions in Bilingualism

Yohan Hwang
(Konyang University)

Hwang, Yohan. "Different Intensity of Emotions in Bilingualism." *Studies in English Language & Literature* 42.2 (2018): 349-370. The principle of linguistic relativism supports that the language we use influences the way we think and how we perceive the world, leading to a number of studies on bilinguals' different thinking and feeling process made available by each language. From this perspective, the main purpose of this paper is to examine bilingual speakers' perception, categorization, and construction of emotions: how they experience the difference of emotional intensity across two languages. To accomplish this goal, this paper reviews relevant research conducted on bilingualism and emotions and potential of autobiographical writing in the field. This study not only examines several language memoirs written by bilingual writers illustrating their life experiences that specifically elicit the different emotional intensities when living with two languages, but also it analyzes a web-based survey from Korean-English bilinguals who are learning English as their second language. The findings suggest that bilinguals experience different emotional intensities and resonances depending on the various internal and external factors acting on language acquisition and learning. (Konyang University)

Key Words: bilingualism, emotional intensity, linguistic relativism, autobiographical writing, language memoir

I. Introduction

Bilingualism is becoming a common phenomenon all around the world. In fact, it is reported that 70% of the population on the earth is considered bilinguals or multilinguals (Trask, 1999). Even though the reasons for this huge population of bilingualism vary greatly, it seems obvious that a large portion of people have

become translating themselves into cross-linguistic and cultural communication (Besemeres, 2011). From a perspective of cognitive development, being able to speak two languages could be good news as numerous studies have found that bilinguals have greater benefits in information processing (Bialystok, 2009; Fan et al, 2002), language functioning (Bogards, 2001), and divergent thinking ability (Reynolds, 1991). However, it is also important to consider a certain amount of cognitive tensions and sociocultural misunderstandings that may arise from different thinking and feeling processes made available by each language. The main purpose of this paper is to shed light on this tension or dissonance in bilinguals' minds, examining how they perceive, produce and experience the difference of emotional intensities when living with two languages and learning a second language (L2 hereafter) after the first language is acquired (L1 hereafter). In order to accomplish this goal, through an in-depth review of relevant research on emotions and bilingualism, this paper closely examines some famous English literature, language memoirs written by bilinguals, from a qualitative tradition. Furthermore, it conducts a quantitative analysis based on a web-based survey questions containing emotional issues that language memoir authors raise in their books to 110 Korean university students who are learning English as their L2.

In the field of L2 acquisition and learning, a variety of definitions of bilingualism have been introduced over the decades such as early, sequential, late, additive, subtractive, folk, and elite bilinguals. Each term distinguishes bilinguals differently depending on "age" and "context" of acquisition (see De Groot, 2011 for review). In this study, I focus on the sequential and late bilinguals (when L2 is acquired after the age of puberty) as well as subtractive and folk bilinguals (L1 is less valued and not well maintained in a L2 community). This is because a number of researchers have found these group of people are expected to experience more difficulties than early, additive and elite bilinguals as they are somehow - whether it is social, educational, political, or neoliberal - forced to learn and use L2 (Butler & Hakuta, 2004; Pavelnko, 2005; Pizarro, 1995).

II. Literature Review

2.1 Living with Two Languages from a Perspective of Linguistic Relativism

Speaking two languages has a close relationship with individual's cognitive development because the language we speak and perceive is associated with the way we think. This view is supported by linguistic relativism. Different theories exist regarding the link between language and thought, and a large body of literature refutes the linguistic relativism under the premise that there are universal conceptual categories in the human mind regardless of languages (Bernard, 1981). Although far from conclusive, in this paper, I adopt the principle of linguistic relativity, which supports the view that our thoughts and emotions are affected by a language we speak (Wolff & Holmes, 2011). From this perspective, bilinguals may think and feel differently depending on which language they use. In fact, the existing literature on bilingualism and emotions is extensive and focuses particularly on linguistic and social contextual influences as a contributing factor of the differences between two conceptual worlds made available by each language. For example, Wierzbicka (1994) claims that the way people interpret their own emotions depends on the vocabulary provided by their native language. Following this line of argument, Pavlenko (2005) argues that in the case of bilinguals who are operating in two different languages, the interpretation of emotions might change because of exposure to L2. They believe emotional conceptualizations and representations are highly associated in the semantic network; therefore, bilinguals face with more degrees of conflicts from a pre-existing world in their mind set made by their L1 and experience different emotions in the process of translating them into a new language and some sort of corresponding conceptual categories.

Metaphorically speaking, bilingualism seems to be a process where the L1 (water) and the additional language (oil) are mixed. Scientifically, although water and oil fall under the same category as liquid, they cannot be simply mixed in tandem because

the molecular structure is different from each other. It could be possible to combine two substances by shaking; however, they will be separated again a few minutes later due to a surface tension which refers to the existence of force that the surface of a liquid creates to resist in contact with external force (Gray, 1922). Likewise, when oil (L2) is added into a bilingual's mind already soaked with water (L1), a pre-existing system of L1 that underlies its own process and encoding of understanding the world may make L2 to be floating on the surface instead of being mixed. The bilinguals need some helping substances such as detergents or soaps to combine water and oil to avoid problems that may arise from the perception of two languages and worlds. With this in mind, numerous researchers have attempted to understand how emotions and emotion-laden words or concepts made by two different languages are encoded and processed in the bilingual internal and external world.

2.2 Previous Studies on Different Emotional Intensity

When bilinguals encounter another conceptual world shaped by L2, an important question needs to be asked: how are their thoughts and emotions affected by the two different languages and worlds? While some have found that there is no different emotional perception or encoding between L1 and L2 (Eilola et al., 2007; Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2007), others have revealed that speaking in L1 carries a greater emotion compared to L2 (Schrauf & Rubin, 1998), showing patterns of differences in memory and recall tasks of emotional words between two languages. Specifically, various cognitive and psycho, physiological methods (e.g., affective priming task, emotional stroop task, skin conductance response task) provide empirical evidences from an examination of automatic processing of emotional stimuli that bilinguals feel a higher emotional intensity in their dominant language when looking at the emotional lexicon, watching movies and sharing memories (Pavelenko, 2012).

In addition to automatic processing of emotional word stimuli, researchers have investigated sociolinguistic variables influencing on language learning as a

contributing factor for the emotional differences between various languages. They believe that emotional stimuli are affected by the proficiency level, duration of language immersion, and frequency of L2 use (Degner, Doycheva, & Wentura, 2012; Harris, Gleason, & Aycicegi, 2003). For example, Dewaele (2004) gathers data of a web questionnaire from 1,039 bilinguals and multilinguals to examine differences in perception of the emotional impact of swear words or taboo words. The result shows that the participants perceive the higher level of emotional force in their L1 compared with L2 as the more strong emotional intensity is detected on the perception task (among the words that are often socially and culturally unacceptable). The researcher also reveals that early bilinguals prefer the L2 for swearing in their own speech and rate the emotional force of L2 swear words and taboo words more highly, which indicates that late and/or less proficient L2 learners may feel a higher emotional weight in their native language than L2. Dewaele (2008) also conducts a similar study to see the perception of the positive emotional expression, "I love you" with 1,459 bilinguals and multilinguals. The same pattern is found here as well. Most of the participants feel more emotional weight of "I love you" in their L1 and the gap of this intensity is filled by the increased fluency and use of subsequent languages. These results suggest that bilinguals experience the different emotional impacts when showing their feelings in two languages.

In addition, Dewaele and Pavlenko (2002), through an analysis of interview data from 29 Dutch(L1)-French(L2) and 34 English(L1)-Russian (L2) bilinguals, reveal that those who have a higher proficiency of L2 use more emotional words on Pavlenko's corpora of film retellings and argue that gender, extraversion, and the type of linguistic material influences their use of emotional vocabulary. The authors conclude that "it is possible that ideologies of gender and emotion, the value of emotion talk in a particular speech community, the context of the interaction, and the identity of the interlocutors all affect the choice of emotion vocabulary and the frequency and the range of use of emotion words" (p. 296). They also highlight the role of "emotional resonances", which refers to the "subjective feelings that emerge

from both physiological states and an individuals' prior history of reacting to stimuli, shaped by cultural and other environmental factors" (Caldwell-Harris et al., 2012, p. 5) acting on both cognitive and social developments of bilinguals. This view is further supported by Pavlenko (2004) who examines the role of emotion-related factors in language choice in multilingual families. Based on an examination of participants' sociobiographical information, via a web questionnaire, she reveals that language choice and use are governed by "communicative purposes, linguistic competence and dominance of the interlocutors, interactional setting, community norms and status of the parent's language" (p. 181).

In the same vein, Wierzbicka (2005) finds the evidence of emotional differences in two languages from a semantic analysis of Polish-English lexicon. From various examples of untranslatable emotional expressions of her native language, Polish (e.g., hurt, sad, offended, worried, nervous, anxious), she discovers that there are key social and cultural concepts encoded in the Polish lexicon, which has no counterparts in English, and vice versa. This result shows that although the semantic differences between two languages can be thinkable, they cannot instantly carry the same feelings and emotions. Taken all together, there is a certain degree of agreement that sociocultural and linguistic variables play a crucial role in understanding how bilinguals perceive, encode, and express their emotions. In this light, researchers have extended the scope of research on bilingualism and emotions to a qualitative dimension, examining autobiographical memory of bilinguals describing their sociocultural life experiences that specifically elicit emotions, which arises from living with two languages (Knickerbocker & Altarriba, 2011).

2.3 Potential of Autobiographical Writing from a Qualitative Tradition

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in a genre of autobiographical writing as a research tool to explore the bilinguals' life and development, especially with regard to emotions. This is because an analysis of autobiographical narratives

provides researchers with more direct methods of eliciting data from exploration of bilingual's memories and actual life experiences from cognitive and social perspective (Besmeres, 2011). According to Holland and Kensinger (2010), memory is usually referred to as an "ability to remember past experiences in a coherent fashion" rather than ability to "intentionally memorize disconnected bits of information" (p. 88). Conway and Rubin (1993) add that a memory "constitutes a major crossroads in human cognition where considerations relating to the self, emotion, goals, and personal meanings all intersect" (p. 103). In the same vein, Knickerbocker and Altarriba (2011) identify that the autobiographical narratives serve as "cued memories" that contain specific and personal information about the self and events. They argue that as memories recall various emotion-laden experiences, bilingual's narrative can illustrate the emotional gaps and cognitive associations that are formed with two languages depending on a variety of contexts of language use. Wierzbicka (2005) claims that autobiographical writing is "necessarily selective, and inevitably impose a particular, culturally and historically conditioned, shape on the life they represent" (p. 120). Therefore, it serves as a powerful tool to explore the dynamic aspects of cultural and linguistic shifts of bilinguals in terms of maintenance, loss, adjustment through a retroactive and selective exploration of their past and current experiences in L2 acquisition and learning (Pavlenko, 2007). All things considered, the study of autobiographical writing has its unique value in examining the bilingual's mental and social life within various contexts where the subsequent language is perceived, processed, and encoded.

III. Research Methodology

3.1 Language Memoirs as Qualitative Data

To date, various language memoirs (e.g., Rodriguez's *Hunger of Memory*,

Kaplan's French Lessons, Dorfman's Heading South, Looking North, Stavans's On Borrowed Words) have been published. They have provided a great insight on how bilinguals' life in two languages, expressing their emotional struggle, overcome, and adaptation. In this study, I closely examined four language memoirs books. The rationale for choosing these books is that they have been widely read in the field of L2 learning and acquisition. In addition, they explicitly express emotional struggles in their life story as a beginner of L2. All of them are the late, sequential and/or subtractive bilinguals mentioned earlier in the introduction section. The Table 1 summarizes information of memoir books analyzed in this research.

(Table 1. List of Language Memoirs)

Title	Author (Year)	Gender	L1	L2	Bilinguals
Lost in Translation	Hoffman (1989)	Female	Polish	English	Subtractive bilingual
Dreaming in Chinese	Fallows (2011)	Female	English	Chinese	Late bilingual
Dreaming in Hindi	Rich (2010)	Female	English	Hindi	Late bilingual
Two Languages, Two cultures, One(?) Self	Wierzbicka (2007)	Female	Polish	English	Late bilingual

The examination of language memoirs above provided me with a rich amount of qualitative data to explore the specific experiences and connected emotions in bilingual's life. Especially, sociolinguistic variables described by these writers served me as significant contextual data to see how bilinguals experience a particular emotional intensity in different languages. In other words, the examination of language memoir gave me a comprehensive lens to examine bilingual's inner world on the one hand and their relationship with an outer world on the other hand.

3.2 Different Perception of Emotional Expression as Quantitative Data

In order to provide more rigorous data in terms of reflectivity and to see whether a certain emotional difference is just happening to bilingual writers or not, I also conducted the survey to 110 Korean-English bilinguals who learned their second language, English, as adults. They were the first and second year university students in the courses where I have taught English as a foreign language, and their language proficiency varied from beginner to intermediate. In order to examine their perception, categorization, and construction of emotions, web-based survey questions summarized in Table 2 below were distributed via Google online form. Especially, the questions came from the issues raised from the four language memoirs books to see how late bilinguals who has a low proficiency level also see, perceive, and experience the emotional differences between L1 and L2. All questions were asked in Korean, then translated into English.

(Table 2. Web-based Survey Questions)

Strongly Agree (5)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1. Do you feel more “coldness” (distance and detachment) when you hear and speak English than Korean?				
2. When you reject someone’s request, do you feel a stronger intention of refusal if you say “안돼요 (an-dwae-yo)” than “No”?				
3. Do you feel more emotions of politeness when you say “제발 (jebal)” than “Please”?				
4. Do you feel more emotional impacts when you say “미안해 (mi-an-hae)” than “I am sorry”?				
5. Do you feel more emotions when you hear “I am moved” than “감동이야 (gam-dong-i-ya)”?				
6. Do you feel more emotional intensities when they think of “우정 (u-jeong)” than “Friendship”?				
7. Do you feel more emotional intensities when you say “사랑해 (sa-rang-hae)” than “I love you” to your beloved?				

4. Findings and Discussion

In this section, I will present some interesting findings from language memoirs of bilinguals written in English, which shows their categorization, experiences and adaptation of emotional struggles when living with two languages. Importantly, the findings also go with the discussion of web-based survey results in order to compare with the perception of emotions by late Korean-English bilinguals who learned their second language, English, as adults. First, consider the following excerpt from Hoffman (1989)'s memoir book, *Lost in Translation*:

My mother says I'm becoming "English." This hurts me, because I know she means I'm becoming cold. I'm no colder than I've ever been, but I'm learning to be less demonstrative [...] I learn restraint from Penny, who looks offended when I shake her by the arm in excitement, as if my gesture had been one of aggression instead of friendliness. I learn it from a girl who pulls away when I hook my arm through hers as we walk down the street — this movement of friendly intimacy is an embarrassment to her. [...] Perhaps my mother is right, after all; perhaps I'm becoming colder. After a while, emotion follow action, response grows warmer or cooler according to gesture. I'm more careful about what I say, how loud I laugh, whether I give vent to grief. (p. 146-147)

Hoffman was born in Poland and emigrated to Vancouver, Canada with her family after the age of puberty. In the story above, Hoffman's mother's felt her as colder because she no longer expressed her feelings or thoughts as the way she did in her home country. In the process of adapting the different social behavioral norms, she certainly perceived that her native language (Polish) has a higher emotional involvement whereas English is experienced as colder, more distant, and more detached from her feelings and gestures. Pavlenko (2005) supports this view from psycholinguistic explorations: "when a second language is learned after puberty the two languages may differ in their emotional impact, with the first being the

language of personal involvement and the second the language of distance and detachment, or at least the language of lesser emotional hold on the individual (p. 47). Interestingly, of the 110 participants who completed the web-based survey, almost two-thirds of the participants (28% of Strongly Agree and 44% of Somewhat Agree) indicated that they feel “being colder” when they hear and use English than their first language, Korean. Furthermore, in a response to another question, “When you reject someone’s request, do you feel a stronger intention of refusal when you say 안돼요 (an-dwae-yo) than No?”, a majority of participants (42% of Strongly Agree and 43% of Somewhat Agree) indicated that they feel more higher emotional impacts of rejections when they hear “No” in English than their native language. It suggests that a particular term in either language relate differently to the same emotion-laden situation, and the L2 is being felt stronger, firmer, and more determined in the situation of rejection.

A similar example can be found in English-Chinese bilingual, Fallows (2011)’s language memoirs of Chinese immersion, *Dreaming in Chinese*. When she came to China with her husband to work on her research on Internet use, she was a very beginner of Chinese. In her book, she illustrates an interesting event about different emotional intensities on the expressions of declining in English (L1) and Chinese (L2) resulted from a different cultural understanding of rudeness. Each morning, when she traced the same path from her school to home, she struggled with the same group of young guys selling know-off goods on the sidewalk. She used Chinese to decline by saying “Bu yao” (Don’t want) every morning, and one day she got really annoyed and ended up expressing her anger in L2: “Yesterday, don’t want! Today, don’t want! Tomorrow don’t want!” She felt that she was very rude because she used the direct form of declining offers, but the response from a young Chinese boy made her surprised: “Day after tomorrow?” The L1 Chinese speaker did not get offended by her direct decline at all. Fallows may have felt a strong intention of rejection in her use of L2, which does not carry the same emotional impact to the native speakers of Chinese. She provides other examples when she felt

coldness and rudeness in hearing L2 expressions around her daily life in a Chinese community.

Passengers inside jam-packed subway cars jostle and yell “Xia che!” “Off the car!” There is no “Excuse me,” “pardon me” or “Sorry” to be heard” [...] Fuwuyuan! Fuwuyuan! Or Waitress! Waitress! Dinners cry to demand a glass, a bowl, or a pair of chopsticks. And no “Miss, could you please get me another beer?” (p. 26).

When she experienced these moments, she felt that Chinese (L2) is emotionally colder, extremely detached from politeness. However, she learned from different social and cultural understandings that they did not seem intended because in many Asian cultures inserting words that the L1 speaker of English consider politeness may transfer to social distance. She demonstrates the specific moment when Chinese actually considers a polite expression as inserting a formality in a relationship which sets some kind of distance.

My Chinese friends say they notice that Westerners use lots of pleases (qing) and thank you (xie xie) when speaking Chinese. And actually, they say, we use way too many of them for Chinese tastes. A Chinese linguist, Kaidi Zhan, says that using a please as in “Please pass the salt” actually has the opposite effect of politeness here in China. The Chinese way of being polite to each other with words is to shorten the social distance between you. And saying please serves to insert a kind of buffer or space that says, in effect, that we need some formality between us here. (p. 33)

For a similar example, saying “please” to a child or “thank you” to the best friend can be heard as something formal and/or icy in a Korean culture as well. Most of the Korean-English bilinguals who responded to the survey expressed a different degree of emotional weights on the English expressions of politeness (please) or apology (I am sorry). When asked whether they feel more emotions of politeness when they say 제발 (jebal) than please, 85% (51% of Strongly Agree and 34% of Somewhat Agree) of the respondents reported that they feel more emotions

in using their native language. This finding may explain why many L2 learners of English from Asian cultures are less likely to use “please” when it is very often hearable in US culture. In addition, in response to the survey question: Do you feel more emotional impacts when you say 미안해 (mi-an-hae) than I am sorry?, 65% (27% of Strongly Agree and 38% of Somewhat Agree) of participants answered making an apology in their native language, Korean, carries their emotion in a more sincere way.

Another bilingual writer, Rich (2010), moved to India after getting cancer and threw her life in learning a new language, Hindi. In her book, *Dreaming in Hindi*, she illustrates how languages resonate with former emotions and word connections. She calls this process “spreading activation network” (p. 82). For example, she experienced speakers of Hindi often use “we” for “I” in English for a politeness convention and more humbling. She found the reason as she experienced various daily conversations with local people and learned that Indians feel more emotions and social bonds in the word “We” than the way how she feels in her L1. She also lists emotion-laden vocabulary and their related concepts that are missing in Hindi such as appointment, female orgasm, and no difference between marriage and wedding.

Each missing word was a shock to discover, one thing more that had become a figment of my imagination. For if you can't express something to anyone around you, doesn't it exist only in your mind? Each missing word was a loss, a piece of the old world falling away. [...] In India, there's no female orgasm, not to speak of. “Orgasm” applied only to men. “Interested” was not a word. There weren't separate terms for “marriage” and “wedding.” Your shaadi was your wedding and your marriage, a small distinction, but in the early days of my marriage to Hindi, I was acutely aware of what was missing. “Privacy” most of all. (p. 85)

In fact, Rich finds the reasons of this difference from social understanding and cultural experiences that people in Hindi cannot put the same emotion in the

English words that do not exist in their conceptual categorization. Wierzbicka (2007) provides a more direct example that illustrates the different feeling of an emotional expression between her L1 (Polish) and L2 (English) in her book chapter, *Two Languages, Two Cultures, One(?) Self*. She introduces her struggles of L2 writing from untranslatable Polish expression of “being touched.” When she wrote a thank you letter to her English friend who gave a gift of CD to her, she wanted to express her thoughts something like “I listened with emotion,” which clearly came to her mind in Polish. However, she realized that it was difficult to think of the equivalent expression that conveys the same feeling she wanted to deliver in English. She ended up writing with “I listened with great pleasure” as shown in the excerpt below:

The closest one could say to convey the message that I intended would be ‘I listened with emotion’, but this would sound so archaic and so literary that it would be totally inappropriate in an informal email. So the only practical solution was to change the intended message and to say something like ‘I listened with great pleasure’, or ‘I really enjoyed listening to...’ And that’s what I did – but in doing so, I felt that I was changing not only my intended message but also my own self. To tell the truth, I don’t really like the English word ‘enjoy’... and it does not feel natural to me to describe my feelings in those terms. ‘Pleasure’, which does have an equivalent in Polish, feels all right to me in many contexts, but this is not what I wanted to express on this occasion (p. 97).

The major point made by Wierzbicka here is that the emotional difference becomes more intense when it comes to an emotion-laden expression that cannot be translated into L2. She used L2 word “pleasure” as a substitution of her L1 emotion, but the same emotion was not automatically arousal to her mind, and it accordingly failed to activate another affective connotation that carries the same meaning with “listen with emotion.” More interestingly, she points out the different sociolinguistic factors acting on the expression of “being moved” between two languages:

In English, being moved is a momentary emotion and there are no words or forms which would allow the speaker to present the same emotion as extended in time. Presumably, the idea of being ‘moved’ for a long time is inconsistent with the Anglo cultural script of emotional control: one can admit to having been moved briefly, and there are linguistic resources for reporting such an episode, but evidently, people are not usually expected to be ‘moved’ for a long time. (p. 97)

For this reason, when she thought of the emotion-laden expression “being moved” in her L2, she did not feel the same amount of emotions and impression in terms of continuation. This emotional difference can also be found in the survey answers among Korean-English bilinguals. In a response to the question, Do you feel more emotions when you hear “I am moved” than “감동이야 (gam-dong-i-ya)?”, the majority of participants (37% of Somewhat Disagree and 21% of Strongly Disagree) answered that “being moved” cannot convey the exact and same emotions accessible by the use of their L1, Korean. Another similar example was elicited with the concept of a word, friendship. Through an analysis of difference between Polish and English, Wierzbicka (1994) finds that there is a non-equivalence of two languages for human relationship, friendship in particular. She states:

We like each other quite well, though I’m not sure that what is between us is “friendship” - a word which in Polish has connotations of strong loyalty and attachment bordering on love. At first, I try to preserve the distinction between ‘friends’ and ‘acquaintances’ scrupulously, because it feels like a small lie to say ‘friend’ when you don’t really mean it, but after a while, I give it up. ‘Friend’, in English, is such as good-natured, easygoing sort of term, covering all kinds of territory and ‘acquaintances’ is something an uptight, snobbish kind of person might say. (p. 148)

From this story, Wierzbicka (2005) argues that a semantic domain of the social relationship is differently carved in the word, friend, shaped by different categories, which fails to evoke the same emotions. Likewise, 70% (37% of Strongly Agree and

33% of Somewhat Agree) of those who were surveyed indicated that they feel a more higher emotional bond when they think of 우정 (u-jeong) than the same English word, friendship. This is because the Korean word, 정 (jeong), is one of the unthinkable and untranslatable word into other languages. Therefore, English suffix, -ship, can not evoke the same amount of feelings or social emotions. Fallows (2011) also mentions this different social relationship that arises from different categories between English and Chinese. She overheard the word, Laobaixing, in everywhere (e.g., subways and elevators or on when passing by a park bench; radio in taxi, TV news, train stations, shopping malls, and temples). From the dictionary translation, she found that it means the common folk, ordinary people: the average Chinese Joe. However, she felt that there is a more meaning going on this word. She learned from many people (e.g., academic, a young city woman, veteran American diplomat, and seasoned French businessman) that this word is vital to understand the inner life of Chinese because it carries the social value and life of crowds in China where 1.3 billion people live together. This finding suggests that feeling the same nuances of laobaixing, which is entrenched in the middle of normal, everyday, chaotic, crowded life in China, cannot be understood by the equivalent emotion in English translation, ordinary Joe.

In the same vein, Fallows also finds the differences on particular emotion of love. When she talked to her friend Julia, a L1 Chinese-L2 learner of English speaker, in English, in a response to Fallows's question: "I'm sure you must love your husband a lot", Julia said "Yes, I love him for now." Fallows started to wonder what Julia meant by "for now." She found that there was an emotional veil across the languages, which is produced by one of the linguistic affects, verb tense. She states that:

Love, this English word: like other English words it has tense. 'Loved' or 'will love' or 'have loved.' All these specific tense mean Love is time-limited thing. Not infinite. It only exists in particular period of time [sic]. In Chinese, Love is (ai). It has no tense. No past and future. Love in Chinese means a being, a situation, a circumstance. Love is existence, holding past and future... Julia, talking about love in

cold, practical terms, and actually punctuating its transitory nature by saying she loves her husband ‘for now.’ (p. 21)

This finding echoes with Wierzbicka’s experience of “being moved” in that both authors experience different emotional intensity between two languages from the different semantic domain of time related to linguistic variables. Furthermore, from an observation of people talking on the street, Fallows actually provides an evidence of studies conducted by Pavlenko (2004) and Dewaele (2008) mentioned in the previous section. Whenever she heard the words, *ai* (to love), she felt that many Chinese people toss the expression “I love you” lightly in many situations. Even though there might be some contexts where Chinese actually use it lightly, it is also possible that she was less emotionally involved when she heard “I love you” in her L2. In regard to this issue, what is interesting about the data from the survey is that almost two-thirds of the participants (41% of Strongly Agree and 37% of Somewhat Agree) said that they feel a stronger emotion of love in their native language when answering to the survey question, “Do you feel more emotions when you say 사랑해 (sa-rang-hae) than I love you?” This result suggests that bilinguals perceive emotional words or expressions differently across two languages, and emotion-laden expressions are more deeply perceived and encoded in the L1 than L2.

IV. Conclusion

The results of this study identify how bilinguals perceive, produce, and experience emotions differently between two languages. Specifically, the personal reflections from sociocultural experiences in language memoirs convincingly reveal that bilinguals experience emotional resonances and dissonances when translating themselves into L2. Furthermore, the answers of Korean-English bilinguals from the web-based survey show emotional vocabulary and expressions in L1 can be

delivered more accurately and vividly in their mind. These findings suggest that if bilinguals have different conceptual concepts and categories across two languages, they experience different emotional intensities depending on the various internal and external factors acting on L2 acquisition and learning. The generalisability of the present research is subject to certain limitations in terms of the small sample size of language memoirs and the absence of close examination of differences on gender and proficiency level in bilinguals. Notwithstanding these limitations, the study certainly extends the scope of research on bilingualism. Especially, it raises important questions to our understanding on bilinguals' mind, laying the groundwork for future research on different emotional intensities across various languages and sociocultural contexts. When bilinguals encounter a subsequent language, they will encounter a different conceptual world embodied by different cultural norms and social behaviors. Therefore, without understanding how they perceive, categorize, and encode their emotions in this transforming process, it will be difficult to truly understand the nature of bilingualism, which is importantly associated with the corresponding process of identity (re)construction. As bilingual writers put their emotions in the language memoirs in this study, I close this paper with my emotion as a bilingual (Hwang, 2013).

10 Pounds Love

Bilinguals frequently report feeling a higher emotional weight in their native language and experiencing reduced emotion when using their second language. (Pavlenko, 2005)

I don't know how to measure love in pound.
Many times I've used love in English expression
I need an emotional scale to weigh love instead.
I've never made love lighter, desperate, dead,

but I experience less resonance in English emotion.
I don't know how to measure love in pound.

because in South Korea, we allow kilogram to be measured.
10 pounds of love are enough? There's no answer to this question.

I need an emotional convertor to weigh love instead.
All over the world, love's color is red,
but we all have different redness in our perception.
I don't know how to measure love in emotional rebounds.

Convertor teaches me 4.3 kg is equal to 10 pounds.
Well, it was not heavy enough to seed my affection.
I needed an emotional convertor to weigh love, instead,

I feel much more love from 사랑해 (sa-rang-hae) you said.
Vivid smell of love still lingers on my impression.
I don't know how to measure love in pound.
I need 사랑 (sa-rang) to weigh your love instead.

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Hwang Yohan

Address: (35357) 190-18 Parkhills 6, Gwanjeodong-ro, Seo-gu, Daejeon, Korea

Email: baseble@naver.com

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